

# The BETTER HOME

April May June 1946



SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION SERIES

On earth peace . . .



. . . a peaceful world in which our children may grow up. We encourage them to study from their own Bibles the message of Jesus, who teaches us how to live together. But what of the children who have no Bibles? How are they to learn God's way so that they may grow up to build with our children a peaceful world?

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# The Better

# HOME

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## IN THIS ISSUE . . .

### Contents

For Your General Reading	
	PAGE
Editorially Speaking (GUEST EDITORIAL) . . . . .	2
<i>H. F. Cope</i>	
The Best Advantage . . . . .	3
<i>Elsie Williams</i>	
Song of the Twenty-third Psalm . . . . .	5
<i>Seraph Llewellyn</i>	
You and Your Books . . . . .	6
<i>Roy E. McFee</i>	
Thanks! . . . . .	9
<i>Nancy Brewer</i>	
Let Us Remember (A Trilogy) . . . . .	11
<i>Anne Reiley Nesom</i> <i>Walter Blackstock, Jr.</i> <i>Eva Sparks Taylor</i>	
Company's Coming! . . . . .	12
<i>Irma Hegel</i>	
Playing "Saturday Night" . . . . .	13
<i>Mary S. Stover</i>	

### For Your Daily Devotions

Altar Fires, "Jesus and His Friends" . . . . .	14
<i>J. M. Dawson</i>	

### Comments

What is your children's most precious asset—education, health, a start in business? Read "The Best Advantage," by Elsie Williams, to see what one family discovered.

Seraph Llewellyn's "Song of the Twenty-third Psalm" is based upon Matthew's Bible, a translation dated 1537. The capitalized portion is the Scripture text; the rest is Miss Llewellyn's poetic interpretation of the psalm.

A library in your house? Certainly! Roy E. McFee, in "You and Your Books," tells the "whys" and "hows" of a library in every home.

Jim Tait was a cripple at forty-five, doomed to a lifetime of dependence on other people. Nancy Brewer's story of his triumph over gloom is entitled simply "Thanks!"

"Jesus and His Friends" is the unit of devotionals prepared by J. M. Dawson for "Altar Fires." Dr. Dawson, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Waco, Texas, is chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention's Committee on World Peace and attended the San Francisco Conference last year.

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## Editorially Speaking

### A Child Needs Two Parents

Is there any good reason why, while so readily granting that mothers should belong to mothers' clubs, study child psychology, hygiene of infancy, domestic science, and eugenics, we should assume that fathers may safely dispense with all such knowledge? There are men who sit up nights studying how to grow the biggest radishes in the block, men who toil through technical handbooks on the game of golf, who would look at you in open-eyed wonder if you should suggest the duty of studying their children with equal scientific patience! They, of course, desire ideal children but they are not willing to learn how to grow them. It takes intelligence and effort to keep the confidence of your boy so that he will freely talk of his own life and needs to you. Those much-to-be-desired open doors are kept open, not by accident, nor by our sentiment or wishes alone. A boy changes so fast that a man has to be alert, trying to understand and sympathize all the time. We keep the open door of confidence only as by steady endeavor we keep in real touch with the boy's world. The lad needs masculinity. If he gets neither in school nor in the home he will find it on the street corner, the degrading pool room, or the alley.

—H. F. COPE, *Religious Education in the Family*, p. 264.

Both the fathers and the mothers of boys and girls will find our guest editor's comments to be thought-provoking. Permission to quote this passage has been graciously granted by The University of Chicago Press, copyright owners.

## The Best Advantage



ELSIE WILLIAMS

Two young fathers were sitting on the front porch of a small suburban home watching their children playing on the lawn. The four children—two little girls, their small brother, and their little cousin—were having a great time with swings and slides.

"You know, Dave," said the younger man, who was meticulously dressed and groomed, "I have—that is, Agnes and I have already started a fund for young Bill's college education. I remember how extremely difficult it was for me to finish my schooling. I want Bill to have more freedom than I ever had. Best advantage I ever had was my college education. Why I'm the youngest executive at Wright and Baldwin's today!"

Dave Anderson leaned forward in the porch chair. His arms rested on his knees. His eyes were intent on his scarred and oil-blackened hands. For a moment he did not speak. Then:

"Well Cliff, I'm glad you feel that way. Mother and I had a stiff go during your last year at college—especially after Dad died. But I can't help thinking that the best advantage a man can give his child is to help him get in business for himself. Now that I've got my garage business on its feet, I feel like I can lick anything! Of course I don't expect my girls to run a garage, but I hope Glenn will have a knack for machine work. There's a deal of satisfaction in working with your hands."

Three women—the two wives and the mother—came out to the porch from the living room.

"Someone say girls?" asked Agnes cheerfully. "That's it! We turn our backs and they talk about us, don't they, Mary?" She turned toward her sister-in-law, who was helping Mother Anderson into a comfortable chair.

Mary smiled in answer. She sat down in the porch swing. Before she spoke she

glanced out at the four children playing happily on the lawn.

"Perhaps they were not speaking about us, Agnes. Two little girls out there, you know. Right, Cliff?"

"That's right," agreed Cliff. "We were talking about advantages for our children—whether an education or a start in business was the best, and things like that. I held out for education."

"Well, be sure to remember that higher education is a distinct social advantage, too," said Agnes, David's wife. "So many more doors are open to one. I'm sure it has helped us in the city. Perhaps it's not so necessary here in a small town."

Mary laughed. "Well, hardly! The extent of our social life here is P-T.A., Red Cross, and church organizations." She added more soberly, "No, I think the very best advantage you can give your child is to build for him a strong and healthy body. Without health and energy—well, just what have you got without health?"

Cliff turned his head toward the gently moving porch swing. "Why, Mary! Don't tell me you couldn't name ten famous people who succeeded in spite of ill-health!"

Old Mrs. Anderson had been listening to the talk flowing back and forth about her, but she had not put in a word. Now she sat up straighter in her chair. She rested both hands on the head of her cane.

"It appears to me you've all missed it going and coming," she said a bit tartly.

"How do you mean, Mother?" asked Dave quietly.

"I may be old-fashioned. Reckon I am," his mother answered, "but I've always said the best advantage parents can give their children is a Christian home."

"You're—you're right, Mother Anderson," said Mary after a slight pause.

"Indeed I am! Oh, I haven't raised so many that I'm one of these authorities on

child-rearing! But I've lived a long time and seen many a youngster grow to manhood and womanhood. Those from God-fearing homes make mighty good citizens."

"I see what you mean, Mother," said Cliff. "Education is a fine thing but it's the Christian education we get that really counts in our lives."

Agnes wrinkled her brow in thought. "Let me see. Haven't I read somewhere in the Bible about 'Train up a child in the way he should go; and . . .'" She paused, unable to think of the rest of the passage.

" . . . And when he is old, he will not depart from it," finished Mother Anderson promptly. "Yes, that is from Proverbs. You know, the book of Proverbs is rich in advice, good old-fashioned advice, to parents."

Dave touched his mother's shoulder gently and he laughingly asked, "Is that where you got the advice not to spare the rod, Mother?"

Everyone laughed, Mother Anderson with them. After a bit Mary said softly, "I like

to think of Timothy being brought up from a child to know the holy Scriptures." Then she added, "We need more Bible training today."

"We do that." Mother Anderson spoke vigorously. "Much more. It seems to me you've all mentioned many good advantages for your children—advantages to make them fit citizens of this world. But we need to prepare them for the world to come. We need Christian homes where they are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, as Paul writes in Ephesians."

"Mother's right," said Cliff, rising. He went to sit on the arm of his mother's chair. "We're apt to rush along and not give enough thought to the really important things of life. What do you say we all heed Mother's advice?" He looked at his wife as he spoke, at his brother Dave, and then at his brother's wife.

They all agreed with him and then fell silent, watching the four young children playing in the late afternoon sunshine.

## A WOMAN'S PRAYER

We are just women, Lord, as Mary was,  
With hearts as tender as her own;  
Her hopes and joys—aye, too, her bitter tears—  
Down through the ages we have known.  
So give us, Lord, her sweet and gentle grace,  
Her humble yielding to thy will,  
Her thoughtful mind that kept the shepherds' words  
To ponder them when all was still.

And show us, Lord, how we may make a home  
Like that in Nazareth of old,  
Where children growing up may learn of thee  
Through thine own Word, so often told.  
Plain women, Lord, are we, as Mary was,  
So teach us how she kept serene  
While he, her Son, went forth to live his life  
And she but guessed what it would mean.

Then grant us, Lord, her trust that asked not why  
When Calvary claimed her blessed Son,  
And light our hearts with Mary's Easter joy  
When his great victory was won.  
We may not know such sorrow as was hers,  
But lend us, Lord, some little share  
Of her sweet grace who gave to us the Christ.  
We need these gifts, Lord—hear our prayer!

MAUDE IRENE EVANS

## Song of the Twenty-third Psalm

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD  
*I hearken to his voice alone.*  
I CAN WANT NOTHING  
*for he "is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup."*  
HE FEEDETH ME IN A GREEN PASTURE  
*of quiet meditation*  
AND LEADETH ME TO A FRESH WATER  
*where my thirsting spirit is renewed.*  
HE QUICKENETH MY SOUL  
*with the beauties of his handiwork*  
AND BRINGETH ME FORTH  
*from perilous crags and unseen pitfalls*  
IN THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,  
*wherein I shall uprightly walk*  
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE.

THOUGH I SHOULD WALK NOW  
*in places of bloodstained devastation, yea even*  
IN THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH,  
YET I FEAR NO EVIL;  
*I will safely reach the fold.*  
FOR THOU ART WITH ME  
*even unto the gate of heaven;*  
THY STAFF AND THY SHEEPHOOK  
*restrain me and*  
COMFORT ME.

THOU PREPAREST A TABLE . . .  
*to sustain me*  
AGAINST MINE ENEMIES.  
THOU ANOINTEST MY HEAD WITH OIL  
*of thy tender compassion*  
AND FILLEST MY CUP FULL  
*of joy in thy goodness.*

OH LET THY LOVING-KINDNESS AND MERCY FOLLOW ME  
*and support me*  
ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE,  
THAT I MAY  
*stand sinless before thy throne in the presence of Christ my redeemer, and with him*  
DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD  
FOREVER.

Arranged by SERAPH LLEWELLYN.  
The capitalized wording follows the text of the Twenty-third Psalm as it is found in Matthew's Bible, of A. D. 1537.

# YOU and Your Books

ROY E. MCFEE

So this is your home! You have furnished it to suit yourself and your family, possibly with the mahogany from Aunt Mabel. Or perhaps you have budgeted just long enough to afford the clean-cut simplicity of Swedish modern throughout the apartment. On the other hand, yours may be a furnished room on the dark side of the house—not at all what you have always planned for—but it is yours, and you love it, and nothing pleases you more than to hear your guests say, "I'd know this was your place even if you were out of town. It just looks like you."

The chances are that they will gravitate to the bookcase, knowing that it, too, will express your personality. Your library, be it a single shelf or a whole room, tells the world about you and your family, and it can be a center of interest for your visitors.

But a home library, even in its distinctiveness, fulfils its highest function as it serves your family in the process of everyday living. This is because the library influence is part of the environment in which the whole family, including the children, is to live and work; therefore the books for the home collection should be selected with extreme care. They are to express the personality and taste of the family, and in turn they are part of the home influence which is to shape the lives and characters of those who dwell there.

The home library may well be the most prominent feature of the family abode. That home is fortunate where a separate room can be set aside for the library. But in such case the room should really be separate and not just an annex to the living room. The ideal library is somewhat isolated for protection against common household disturbances.

For most of us, however, the books must be kept in the living room and in other rooms devoted to general use. In such homes the bookcases, whether separate

pieces of furniture or cabinets built into the walls, should be accessible and convenient. Open shelves are perhaps more inviting and friendly than glass doors, but glass keeps the books clean, which is an important consideration.

What should compose a family library? First of all, a good library contains a great deal more than so-called best sellers just off the press. While any family with good reading taste will, of course, wish to read some recent books, such books will generally form a small part of the collection.

The home library should certainly begin with representative classics. No group of books is quite complete if it does not have a King James Version of the Bible, a few of the better known plays of Shakespeare, *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, Lincoln's addresses, *Tom Sawyer*, and *Alice in Wonderland*, to mention only a few.

The library should also have a first-class dictionary and a good atlas for constant reference. If a small encyclopedia can be afforded, so much the better, for the home collection is in a sense a reference library, especially if any member of the family follows a profession or when there are children of school age. Other important reference books include *The World Almanac*, school yearbooks, and a one-volume handbook of general information.

But the home library is also the appropriate storehouse for miscellaneous scholarly and literary collections. Logical items are personal diaries and journals, notebooks, scrapbooks, children's schoolwork and scholarship records, and family documents and photographs. If, for example, a member of the family is engaging in genealogical research, such records certainly are part of the family library, and they add interest.

Every family through the years collects other material which can be classified and filed as part of the library. Such material

includes pamphlets, clippings, maps, and stamp albums. Magazines with articles of especial interest or value may also be saved. If a member of the family is writing for publication, his published works certainly should become a permanent part of the home library.

It never occurs to some persons that the textbooks of one's school years are an important part of a private library. Yet, what could be more true? As a record of a person's intellectual development they are perhaps the most valuable books that can be owned, at least by any person who is studious throughout his lifetime. Their familiar pages and pencil notes make them not only very personal but also unrivaled for quick review of their respective subjects. For the sake of later generations all such books should be dated and inscribed with the names of the owners.

School textbooks used by other generations in the family, books kept from childhood, books written by one's teachers, and old first editions likewise belong on the family's bookshelves.

The personality of a home library reflects that of the owners in the way in which the books are grouped. Perhaps some member of the family follows a profession. Probably he has a large collection of professional books—on law, medicine, engineering, or teaching, for example. Such books are a library in themselves and should be kept together to emphasize their professional significance.

Often, too, someone in the family has special interests such as gardening, bird study, or travel. Quite possibly he has some local fame because of

such interest and activity. What is more fitting, then, than that visitors to the home should find a shelf of books devoted to his special field?

There are always volumes which the book lover wishes to have at arm's reach because he likes to turn to them for relaxation. Such might be Cooper's *Deerslayer*, or *The Swiss Family Robinson*, or Parkman's *Conspiracy of Pontiac*. Or perhaps he might want ready access to the writings of his favorite philosopher, be he Marcus Aurelius, Ralph Waldo Emerson, or William Lyon Phelps, as the best possible substitute for having him as a next door neighbor.

If a family enjoys studying history, there is one group of books which can surpass all others in interest. This is a group of books which centers about the history of the family itself. Among these are published family

*In choosing books for children these rules, recently laid down by an author of books for boys, are worth the consideration of parents:*

"Read your children's books yourself. Or better still, get your boy or girl to read them aloud to you. Ask yourself during the reading:

'Does this book lay stress on villainy, deception or treachery?'

'Are all the incidents wholesome, probable and true to life?'

'Does it show young people contemptuous toward their elders and successfully opposing them?'

'Do the young characters in the book show respect for teachers and others in authority?'

'Are these characters the kind of young people you wish your children to associate with?'

'Does this book speak of and describe pranks, practical jokes and pieces of thoughtless and cruel mischief as though they were funny and worthy of imitation?'

'Is the English good and is the story written in good style?'

"Rules for Choosing Books"

ONE HUNDRED AND ONE FAMOUS POEMS

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histories and genealogies of which there are hundreds. Many families will find their own ancestral lines contained in them. In addition, nearly every section in the United States has its county histories or histories of particular valleys or regions. While these are often in limited editions, they can usually be found after patient search. Those that pertain to the locality where the family originated clearly belong on the bookshelves with the genealogies. Biographies of ancestors or distant relatives can also be grouped with other intimate family records.

Building a family library means the careful purchasing of books over the years. It is cheering to know that, as a rule, the better the book, the lower the cost. The masterpieces of literature, unlike the great works of art, are within the means of everyone.

It is generally better to buy books in separate volumes rather than in sets. In this way personal taste can better be gratified.

There is no point in having a book if it is not readable, and for that reason one should be careful about buying cheap reprints. If the type is so small and unattractive that it tires the eyes, the book should be left in the store. However, the eager book buyer can profit by watching book sales, and he will occasionally find,

among the mass of books there, one which he really wants.

Incidentally, the way to purchase books is not to wander through a bookstore and select from the stock on hand. Bookstores as a rule carry only the books for which there is wide popular demand. Decide first which books you want and then ask the store to order them for you.

In choosing books for a private library, a person may well take heed of advice once given by Theodore Roosevelt. This great booklover said that individual taste is a large factor in the enjoyment of books, and that even though a book has great worth it may nevertheless be uninteresting to certain individuals. He explained that this is no reflection on the intellectuality of the reader, but rather indicates personal discrimination.

A good private library is not collected in a day or a month. It takes a lifetime of careful selection and persistent buying, especially when only a few books can be afforded each year. But discernment and patience are rewarded with the knowledge that a treasury of interest and genuine value is being created. Added satisfaction comes in knowing that your library is one means by which your family can let its distinctive light shine out upon its circle of friends and the surrounding world.

## EACH TASK ACCOMPLISHED

NELLIE G. BOURDEAUX

I said, "A poem calls for leisure, time  
To dream, imagine, and to reach sublime  
Emotion. I must meet the day's demands—  
I'll lay aside my dream." My busy hands  
Restored soft comfort to a tumbled bed,  
Composed a pudding and created bread.  
I polished silver, found a tarnished spoon  
Concealed the cold white luster of the moon.  
Stars glistened in my rows of gleaming glass;  
The scrubbed floor seemed as sweet as rain-washed  
grass.

Each task accomplished added harmony  
Until the measured hours sang to me.  
I wondered as I trimmed the flower border  
If poetry is beauty, set in order.



# Thanks!

NANCY BREWER



Jim Tait, sitting at the front window of his room, saw the two young men lift the wheel chair from the delivery truck. At sight of it his heart seemed to die completely.

A cripple at fifty—tied to that miserable wheel chair by arthritis! For the rest of his life he would be utterly dependent on other people, eternally taking help for which he could only say "Thanks," now the emptiest word in the world.

He talked to himself in whispers, said, "Martha bought that chair for you, Jim. She took the price from her own little savings. You simply have to act pleased."

The feet of the delivery men sounded on the front veranda. Their knock called Martha from the kitchen. Jim listened, heard low murmurs, and waited until Martha came into his room, pushing the beautiful, upholstered rubber-tired chair.

Her lips were pursed into a beautiful smile as she said, "Hello, Jim. Look this way."

In face of so great joy, Jim had to be pleased. He began, "What a beauty. It must have cost you plenty, Martha!"

"The chair's a present from the boys at the office, Jim," Martha returned. "There's a beautiful card with it and on it all their names. You'll want to keep it."

The boys at the office!

Jim suddenly saw them all—the white-haired men with whom he had worked twenty years. The middle-aged ones with boys and girls in high school and college. The young ones, struggling to make a home. All of them men who needed all their salaries for themselves and their families.

Now as Martha stood by the beautiful, new wheel chair, Jim noticed the stoop of

her shoulders. "Her helping me lift myself onto my crutch has done that. Maybe the wheel chair will be easier for her. I'll make myself stand saying 'Thanks' again to the boys and to everybody who pushes me in it for her sake."

"The boys" all jumped to their feet that afternoon when Martha wheeled him into the office and gathered around him.

Jim cleared his throat to make the beautiful speech he had planned, gulped, and found it stuck together. All he could manage was a very lame, "Thanks."

When the boys learned Martha had shopping to do, they insisted Jim stay with them. For a time he visited at the different desks. Then remembering how much work they all had to do so early in the month, he started his chair toward a window and said he'd like to watch the crowd in the street below.

Then he realized that Luke Withrow was standing at the window beside him, talking in low tones, telling him about the trouble he was having with young Keith, now in college.

"His mathematics teacher isn't going to let him play in the next football game. Seems he had some work to make up and got rude to her about it," Luke said, his voice hurt and aching. "Keith says if he doesn't get to play in that game, he's coming home."

Luke's voice broke and Jim thought of the years Luke had saved and dreamed of his boy graduating from college. A catch came into his own throat.

Suddenly he said, "Luke, let me write him a letter. Remember how he used to watch me 'wite' when he was tiny?"

Then he was back at his old desk, now

## LITTLE TOWN

HARRIET MARKHAM GILL

I love a little town  
Where friendly faces greet  
A stranger as he passes  
Down the village street.  
Where it is still the custom  
To borrow and to lend;  
Where doors are left unlocked at night  
And every man's a friend.

unused, writing Luke's son, Keith, the letter he would have written to a son of his own. He made him see his father as he had dreamed through the years of the day his beloved son would graduate from the university he never had been able to attend.

He added, "It was always hard for me to apologize, Keith. Stubborn birds like you and me always hurt folks by postponing apologies. We just don't take time to look ahead and see how much tragedy little words like 'I'm sorry' might save the folks we love."

Luke came to the Talt home early the next evening. He swung up the walk as buoyantly as a young chap. He waved at Martha who was across the street, talking to a neighbor. He called, "I'm going in to chin with your old man."

He began the minute he was in the room with Jim. "The boy's going to play Saturday. He apologized and the teacher's staying at nights to help him make up the work. He'll finish school after all. And your letter did it, Jim. He said it did."

He put his arm across Jim's shoulder and hugged him as if they were boys again. "Let's listen to that game Saturday together."

He talked of other things, affairs of the office. He told of how young Dick Trevor's wife was going to leave him. "She says she's tired of drudging away at home and looking after children all day long."

A cloud crossed Jim's face, but he didn't tell Luke how Dick Trevor had confided in him his joy over his little home and the tiny sons in it.

The next morning he said, "Seeing to-day's your sewing society meeting, Martha, I think I'll take this afternoon off and visit Dick Trevor's little boys. Last night I got up some speed with the chair."

"Oh, Jim," Martha looked across the table at him with radiant eyes, "the girls have been wanting me to come to the club so badly. They say there's nobody to mark the quilting patterns since I stopped coming. You're sure you can keep busy?"

"Martha," Jim almost forgot his plan of keeping silent, to say, "I've work enough for a whole week to do this afternoon."

When they sat across from each other at the supper table that evening, she told him, "Playing with those Trevor children certainly gave you a color, Jim."

Excitedly she talked about the club meeting, but Jim looked past her and seemed to see young Nora Trevor again and hear her say, "Oh, Mr. Talt, I'll always love you for telling me how hard Dick works at the office and does without treats and things to buy things for us! And making me see how children need their fathers. I just didn't realize, that's all. You made me grow up this afternoon."

Luke Withrow hardly had taken off his worn overcoat Saturday afternoon before he said, "You'll be interested, Jim, in knowing the Trevors have patched up their troubles. Dick whistles every time he goes into the hall. And he brought us all some cookies she made for us the other night, just like the wives of us old chaps do."

Jim's eyes shone. Then his hands were dialling his radio and the two of them were listening to the announcements preliminary to the big university game.

About an hour and a half later the two of them were sitting looking at each other, not able to talk. For Keith Withrow had won the game for his school and they were staging a parade for him to lead.

Finally, Luke Withrow rose and crossed to his old friend. "You did that, Jim," he said, his voice unsteady. "You did it, and all we can say is 'Thanks!' Just 'Thanks!'"

Jim Talt took Luke's hand. "Old chap," he said and never in all his life had his voice sounded so earnest and sincere, "That's the greatest word in the world—'Thanks.' I've learned that myself."

## BROTHERS

ARWY REILEY NESOM

Brothers!

Brother to all men, white or brown?  
Must we suffer the woes of those that are down,  
Fighting their wars but not for renown,  
And winning the victory, turn not away  
But shoulder to shoulder as friendly neighbors  
Toil to hold to the fruit of our labors  
By all the just means that any man may?

Brothers!

Sharing together whatever befall,  
Must we respond to a brother's call?  
We live as brothers or not at all!



## NO LITTLE THING

WALTER BLACKSTOCK, JR.

It was no little thing to leave a place  
Enriched by living, love, and that which speaks  
A friendly warmth—to turn away from fields  
Deep-plowed and redder than the sunset streaks.

It was no little thing to make farewells  
To singing, mint-cool streams and secret woods  
Where every year the first spring robins come,  
Where wild flowers lift their multicolored hoods.

It was no little thing that soldiers took  
Some road away from these—a path to war  
Which chokes the beautiful; and yet of all  
I know, home was most worth the "dying for."

## HOME

EVA SPARKS TAYLOR

Some call it home but use its shelter for  
Their sleeping hours or dressing for a show,  
Turning their keys at midnight in its door,  
Staying, sometimes, because they cannot go.  
We live within your walls, dear little home,  
Reading old books before your cheery fire,  
Choosing your comfort while the restless roam,  
Thankful that you hold all our hearts' desire.

Homing hearts are happiest, and still  
So many seek afar the joys we share  
Certain that over some enchanted hill  
Life must be excitingly more fair.  
Anxiously moving, in never-ending quest,  
They lock their doors on what in life is best.



## Company's Coming!

The war may be over, but the housing problem certainly isn't! Our family is still cramped into a minute apartment, and the adjustments made in emergency have, in many cases, grown into pleasant family customs.

"Having company" was one of the experiences we were forced to share and we used our ingenuity to make the venture a success.

In the before-the-war days, my husband and I always gave the children their meal ahead of time and put them to bed when we had company. Now, since the bedrooms as well as the dining-room are all on one floor, it appeared better to let the children dine with us. The privilege, I explained to Betty, age five and Junior, age four, would demand their help in return. Betty straightway became my "Table Decorator" receiving a small paper flower and a tag, bearing her duty. That she acquitted herself with honor goes without saying. She learned to set a beautiful table, taking as much pride in the correct placing of silver as she ever had in dressing dolls.

Junior became my "Knight of the Bath" receiving a small star-shaped pin of soap. Junior's duties were to see that there were ample supplies of soap, clean towels, and a clean water glass in evidence in the bathroom. He further took it upon himself to escort guests to the bathroom for the washing up process, always explaining to them that the fine appearance of the bathroom was his special job.

If children are given a share in preparing for guests, they are less likely to be tongue-tied in the presence of strangers. Moreover, they sense the great dignity of their responsibilities as hosts and hostesses, which does away with the urge to show off.

When I am busy in the kitchen adding a few last touches to the dinner, I am confident that Betty and Junior are entertaining the guests. Of course, my husband and I do take time to discuss the guests beforehand. If it is Mr. Brown, who is an amateur photographer, we put out the snapshot album, instructing Junior to show the pic-

IRMA HEGEL

tures and suggesting that Betty listen carefully for points on taking pictures. Maybe it is Miss Kerr who is calling, and since we don't know just what Miss Kerr likes, the children suggest a game of jackstraws. Most grown people enjoy a simple game with children.

Prior to the war, royal children in Europe were strictly trained in the technique of entering a room and greeting the people there in the manner prescribed by court etiquette. These children of kings and princes were tirelessly rehearsed in state apartments, bowing before endless chairs and tables and saying the correct phrases to each imaginary dignitary.

I have never emphasized courtesy with Betty and Junior. Instead I have read my children the Bible stories that describe the stranger within the gates and how he was given generously of his host's store, however meager that store might be. I have read stories of primitive people abroad and at home, stressing particularly the hospitality of these simple folk to their guests.

To teach children generosity of heart is the first step in good manners. The "politely correct things to do" follows naturally.

## GRANDMOTHER'S GARDEN

GOLDIE E. LESHER

Oh, many gardens I have seen,  
And many gardens planted;  
But Grandmother's was the only one  
In which I stood enchanted.

How bright her flowers bloomed each year!

I marveled through the seasons,  
And now I know her faithful care  
And knowledge were the reasons.

The garden seemed no work for her—  
It was her recreation;  
And there I think she worshiped God  
And helped with his creation.



The twins showed healthy zeal about wanting their playmates to attend Sunday school with them, and Ruth was equally eager to take Sue, her little next door neighbor. But oh, the times that all three were disappointed altogether, and the times when they were tardy because they had to wait for their companions!

"Everybody but us gets up late on Sunday, I guess," mourned Jean. "The kids never have their things ready—no offering or even clean clothes and hankies!"

John nodded scornful agreement, and Ruth's worried face bore witness to the same problem at Sue's house.

"I told Fred about our having baths and laying out our clothes on Saturday night and putting our Bibles and Sunday school money and quarterlies together too," John added in a tone which made his mother thrill over the pride he already felt in their

## Playing "Saturday Night"

MARY S. STOVER

family custom. She thanked God for the tradition reaching back to early generations for whom the sabbath began early each Saturday evening.

"Let's have a new game to play with your friends," she suggested brightly. "Even Little Sue can be in on what we'll call 'The Game of Saturday Night.' Practice it for a while by yourselves right now with Ruth as inspector. Later you can take turns inspecting."

The word "Inspector" aroused their interest, and they promptly caught the idea as Mother said, "Each of you may take some part of this room for your house. Pretend to be very busy getting different things ready to snatch up on Sunday morning. Miss Inspector will go around for reports." "Make an inspector's badge, Mother," Jean urged.

"We'll cut out pictures of Bibles, money, purses, shoes—just everything to lay out beforehand!" shouted John. "I want to be inspector next after Ruth. You know inspectors are usually men anyway."

They began playing the game with imaginary objects and prideful airs. Next day they cut game materials from an old mail-order catalogue. Having pictured objects appealed to the imaginations of all the young guests, and of course everybody wanted to make the rounds decked out in the imposing badge and visored cap of the inspector. The game of Saturday Night proved to be surprisingly popular, and it had good effect for weekdays as well as for Sunday mornings. (Ruth, Jean, and John had not been beyond the need of some improvement there!)

Little Sue's mother and the other parents took no offense but entered into the game and aided their young hopefuls in preparing for inspection in game periods. Moreover, they co-operated in real life and helped to get their children ready for Sunday school on time.

## REWARD

RAMONA G. YARMY

A mother's life may come to this:  
Locating the things her children miss;  
Washday every Monday bright;  
Coaxing a budget to come out right;

Trying desperately not to scold  
A full-of-tinger four-year-old;  
Skipling for bonds and life insurance—  
A battle of wits and long endurance;

Packing kits for overseas;  
Shelling early garden peas;  
Knitting sweaters; baking pies;  
Spraying potato bugs and flies;

Making kite tails; mending socks;  
Nursing colds and chicken pox;  
A mother's life may come to this  
But she's repaid with one small kiss.



# ALTAR FIRES

Recommended for Daily Worship in the Home

Prepared by J. M. Dawson

JESUS AND HIS FRIENDS

Second Quarter, 1946

LESSON FOR APRIL 7, 1946

## Friends of Jesus

Mark 10:13-14; Luke 6:13-16; 8:1-3; 15:1-2; John 3:1-2a

Explained in Daily Readings for Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday

Memory Selection: Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. John 15:14.

### MONDAY, APRIL 1

Jesus Blesses Little Children—Mark 10:13-16

13 ¶ And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

14 But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

There is nothing on earth half so holy  
As the innocent heart of a child,  
They are idols of hearts and of households;  
They are angels of God in disguise;

Those truants from home and from heaven,  
Have made me more manly and mild;  
And I know now how Jesus could liken  
The kingdom of God to a child.

—CHARLES M. DICKINSON

There is no lovelier picture of our Saviour nor one more revealing of his tender grace than the scene of his embrace of the little children brought to him by eager mothers. It was an act peculiar to him. He alone of all earth's teachers looked at men and women with level eyes. No other so hon-

ored motherhood or had such regard for the sanctity of childhood. He went to the center of supreme influence and importance—the mother with her child in her arms. We read nowhere of Moses or Elijah or even Paul taking little children in their arms. Jesus exalted the humility and teachableness, the simplicity and faith of a child; and he reminded his hearers that only those who possessed such a childlike spirit could be citizens of his kingdom.

¶ Lord, teach us to love little children and to have their spirit of simple faith and gentleness. Amen.

### TUESDAY, APRIL 2

The First Followers of Jesus—John 1:38-45

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the

Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

43 ¶ The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

A strange preacher, John the Baptist, was preaching an even stranger gospel in the region of the Jordan. The multitudes had flocked to hear him, and his dynamic personality had drawn to him a group of young men.

Some sixty miles away in the little village of Nazareth a young man, Jesus, heard of the Jordan revival and came forth to be baptized of John and to be publicly announced by him as the Lamb of God. Two of John's disciples immediately accepted his attestation and followed the new-found friend; and they, in a never-to-be-forgotten day spent with him, accepted him as the Messiah. What an enriching experience to spend some time each day with the Master!

So completely were they won to him that Andrew immediately found his brother Simon Peter and led him to the Saviour. The next day a fellow townsman and friend, Philip, answered the simple invitation of Jesus embraced in two words, "Follow me." He eagerly found his friend Nathaniel who, despite his quibbling and criticism, was also won to the great Teacher. Thus the kingdom was born in the hearts of five young men.

¶ Thou who seekest all men, help us to follow more faithfully after thee; give us the passion to win loved ones and friends to a knowledge of thee. Amen.

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

Friends Become Jesus' Helpers—Luke 6:12-16

12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

13 ¶ And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

14 Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes,

16 And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

Jesus was at the very height of his popularity with the people. The multitudes were thronging after him, seeking his beneficent healing and listening to those words such as never man spake. Coincident with this adulation of the masses came the bitter hatred of the Pharisees and Herodians, who, though they belonged to antagonistic parties, were joined in a common enmity.

Jesus, feeling the need of help to carry on his mission and also longing for human sympathy and companionship, prepared to choose a group to be with him in his great service. Even more important in his thinking were the plans he had to assure and carry forward his kingdom under a group of specially trained men. As in every crisis, he spent long hours in prayer, tarrying with his Father through the night.

Those whom he chose to be his helpers were humble men. Perhaps no others were available. It is the glory of history that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the . . . mighty" (1 Cor. 1:27).

¶ Dear Lord, make us fit to be disciples of thine, to follow thee in paths of service. Amen.

### THURSDAY, APRIL 4

A Friend at All Times—Luke 8:1-3

1 And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him.

2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

Perhaps because he was the good physician and doubtless because he had more regard for womanhood, we are indebted to "Dr. Luke" as the only Gospel writer who offers this delicate word of appreciation of the gentle women who ministered to Jesus of their substance. We cannot forget that Jesus was a man as truly as he was God and that his physical needs must be met.

Like a gleam of sunlight on the tollsome road of his unbounded ministry comes this simple statement that there were those whose loving hearts prompted them to provide creature comforts for the divine Son of God. This was an expression of their gratitude for personal blessings, for soul healing which they had received. All true love expresses itself in service and never counts itself as doing anything, if there is anything left to do.

In this simple story we are reminded of the immortality of those who render service in his name. Perhaps the cynical Pharisees and Sadducees paid little heed to the travel-stained Galilean and his humble followers. Doubtless they scorned the modest women who ministered, but God took notice, and their names are written in the Book of books and are known around the world.

¶ In the name of him who went about doing good, give to us the spirit of love that would express itself in deeds of kindness. Amen.

## FRIDAY, APRIL 5

The Friend of Sinners—Matthew 9:9-13

9 ¶ And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

10 ¶ And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?

12 But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

It was not merely the taunt of his enemies but also the proof of his divinity that Jesus loved sinners. No other ever compassed all humanity in its uttermost reaches of sin and misery. We can scarcely conceive of a more audacious act than that the great Teacher should invite a despised publican into his college of disciples, that innermost circle of men who were to live intimately with him and to be taught of him for three golden years.

Not content with so daring an act, he also attended a feast given by Matthew to which all his outcast friends were invited. But his cavilling critics were reminded that the physician came not to minister to those who were whole but to those who were sick.

How abundant was the blessing received by Matthew, who had immediately and unquestioningly given obedience to his call. Doubtless he had suffered deservedly from the cold hatred and contempt of his fellow countrymen. But here was One who was able to see beyond the avaricious tax-gatherer to discover a heart that was hungering for love, a soul longing to be made whole.

¶ O thou divine Saviour, give us hearts of compassion that see divine possibilities in all people. Amen.

## SATURDAY, APRIL 6

"Ye Are My Friends"—John 15:12-21

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: and whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not

of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

What rich content Jesus put into the word "friend." It is fitting that John, the apostle of love, should write about this new and precious intimacy to which the disciples were admitted. How wonderful were the Master's words revealing a love so great for his friends that he would lay down his life for them. Upon such love was based his right to ask that they keep his commandments.

What dignity and meaning to any life who counts Jesus as a friend! We are told that such friendship originates in and is initiated by him. It is because of his seeking and drawing love that our enmity through sin may be changed to blessed friendship. Could there be any relationship more fruitful, more comforting?

In all the circumstances of life we are able to meet every test in courage and confidence with him as our friend.

¶ Dear Master, give us the consciousness of thy presence, the assurance of thy companionship, the blessing of thy friendship in all of life's ways. Amen.

## SUNDAY, APRIL 7

Friends in the Home—Luke 10:38-42

38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Perhaps the best loved of all the homes of the Book is that one at Bethany, which so often extended to our Lord its gracious hospitality. Here abode two sisters, Mary and Martha, with their brother Lazarus.

About the names of these dear friends of Jesus cluster hallowed associations. The sisters were of different natures. Martha was the practical woman, never happy unless serving, never resting unless working. Doubtless Jesus repaid often to the lovely home kept scrupulously clean and neat, for refreshment and rest.

Mary, who had rare spiritual discernment, sat at his feet and of her he said that she had chosen that good part which would abide when material values were gone. Perhaps practical Martha profited by the gentle rebuke, for in a later instance it was to her that he first spoke the immortal words—"I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25).

¶ Dear Master, come and dwell in our home. May we be strengthened by the sweet privilege of sitting at thy feet. Amen.

## HOME FIRE

CLARENCE EDWIN FLYNN

Our first forefathers built a fire

When night's long shadows met,

And so was born some deep desire

Their sons cannot forget.

Through wheeling ages, as the days

Of progress slowly came,

Men loved to end their tollsome ways

Around an evening flame.

Though that was very long ago,

And far our feet have come,

Men still desire a firelight glow

To make a house a home.

To these things do the hearts of men

Instinctively aspire—

A spot of ground, a house, and then

Some wood to make a fire.

## BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Paul Before Felix. Acts 24:1-27

T.—Paul Before Agrippa. Acts 26:1-18

W.—Agrippa's Verdict. Acts 26:19-32

T.—Paul in Rome. Acts 28:16-30

F.—Beginning of Wisdom. Prov. 1:1-10

S.—Friends of Jesus. Mark 10:13-14; Luke 6:13-16;

8:1-3; 15:1-2; John 3:1-2a

S.—Jehovah Giveth Wisdom. Prov. 2:1-10

# Our Response to Christ's Call

Mark 1:16-20; 5:18-20; 10:46, 52; Luke 5:27-28

Explained in Daily Readings for Monday, Tuesday, and Friday

Memory Selection: He left all, rose up, and followed him. Luke 5:28.

## MONDAY, APRIL 9

Responding to the Call—Mark 1:16-20

16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

When the golden evening gathered on the shore of Galilee, When the fishing boats lay quiet by the sea, Long ago the people wondered, though no sign was in the sky, For the glory of the Lord was passing by.

—W. J. DAWSON  
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The two pairs of brothers had seen Jesus' glory by the Jordan, whether or not they had beheld the divine display and heard the Father's voice. Immediately they had yielded themselves to his saviourhood and lordship. But now came a higher call, that of vocation.

The two calls were not thus coincidental. Reflection had in this instance deepened conviction; pondering had intensified love for their new-found Friend; so when he came walking by their fishing docks and made his call, they immediately and wholeheartedly responded.

Lead us, Saviour and Lord, as we remember thy forgiveness and salvation, to make prompt answer to thy call for service. May we be able to see, as did these two sets of brothers, how our very calling may serve thee. Amen.

## TUESDAY, APRIL 9

The Call to Righteousness—Luke 5:27-39

27 ¶ And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

29 And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

33 ¶ And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

36 ¶ And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.

39 No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

Was this conversion as sudden as it appears? Many people believe that Levi, later called Matthew, may have been a previous listener to Jesus' sermons and a witness to his marvelous healing, so that he was ready for the call. But whatever the earlier influences, his first impulse was to honor his gracious, divine Friend and to introduce him to his associates.

There had been no halfhearted response to the invitation of Jesus to follow, and the banquet must have been a token of the all-out manner in which he meant to keep on following. Accordingly he spared neither trouble nor expense to present Jesus under the most favorable circumstances, knowing Jesus would make good use of them.

O Jesus, who hast brought to us such riches, see how we would have others know thee! Enable us not to count the cost or to mention the pain of witnessing for thee, for thou deservest more than we can give. Amen.

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10

True Worth Recognized—John 3:22-30

22 ¶ After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

23 ¶ And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

25 ¶ Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

John the Baptist had many solid virtues,

but none was more appealing than his humility. This was all the more marked because of his ruggedness, his courage, his conscious integrity. Under the conditions of superabounding success which attended his glorious ministry, he might have been expected to exhibit ambition and jealousy. But it was of Jesus that he was testifying, and when the object of his prophecy appeared, there was unhesitating and prompt acknowledgment on his part.

John the Baptist possessed the insight to discern, and the lofty moral quality to accord, merit where it belonged. It is regrettable that so often men and women lack this quality in respect to appraisal of others. Surely, however, in the light of all that we know about Jesus we should be as ready to give unqualified recognition to Jesus, the Saviour of the world.

O Jesus, forgive that we have waited so long to acknowledge thee before men. Forgive, too, our wavering allegiance from day to day. Amen.

## THURSDAY, APRIL 11

The Basis of Discipleship—Matthew 5:1-12

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so

persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

If the Sermon on the Mount is the character of the kingdom of God, then the Beatitudes describe the character of its citizens; and if this teaching of our Saviour is to be called the manual of the family of God, then these characterizations are descriptive of his children.

Under whatever figure they may be regarded, they reveal the fundamental qualities of Christians. Not alone because of their beauty but also because of their sincerity and essentiality, they hold an utter fascination for all believers. Poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, mercy, purity of heart, peaceableness, and willingness to bear persecution for righteousness' sake are the virtues required for citizenship or sonship in the company of God's elect.

Lord Jesus, thou knowest that we have not attained, but like Paul, forgetting the things which are behind and reaching forth unto the things which are before, we press forward toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Amen.

#### FRIDAY, APRIL 12

A Faith That Saves—Mark 10:46-52

46 ¶ And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he called thee.

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

While it would seem that Jesus fixed upon faith in the blind beggar as the one thing in him which merited the boon of healing, we cannot fail to note the man's importunate prayer. In his persistence he brooked no denial. People might scoff at him and try to stop him, but he would cry out the louder until Jesus stopped and called for him.

Ah, how welcome was that invitation of Jesus! The blind man threw off his coat, sprang to his feet, and stumbled toward the Saviour. When sight dawned upon him, his only thought was to follow Jesus.

We conclude, therefore, that the faith that saves is an eager faith, a persistent faith, an obedient faith. And what encouragement Jesus gives to those who have faith like this blind beggar's!

Lord, Saviour and Healer, look with compassion upon all who are blind of soul and speak thy healing, that they may see thee, love thee, and follow thee eagerly. Amen.

#### SATURDAY, APRIL 13

Testifying for Christ—Acts 26:9-20

9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.

11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.

12 Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,

13 At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose,

to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,

18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

Anyone with any depth of conviction whatever is moved to share it with others. Just listen to the babel of voices all around you. All those clamoring for a hearing are obviously in earnest. They cannot keep silent; they are burning with passion to impart what they feel is important to others.

How is it with Christian believers? Do they share their personal experience, make plain its meaning to others? The angel said to the discoverers of the resurrection, "Go . . . tell." Paul felt he could do nothing else, so we find him testifying before all comers as to what Jesus Christ had done for him.

Lord Jesus, empower all who are thine with holy boldness, with eagerness, by word of mouth and deed of life to let all men know of thy saving power. Amen.

#### SUNDAY, APRIL 14

Continue in Love—John 21:15-23

15 ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said

unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

Peter the impulsive required a long time to attain stability. Even after the delicate and effective restoration accorded him by Jesus, he still wavered. Jealousy of John crept into his heart despite his protestations of love to the Saviour, even misgiving as to what honors or favors might be shown a brother disciple. The incisive reply to such questioning given by Jesus brought him to his senses. Would his love hold up under all circumstances?

The power of perseverance is among the greatest and most desirable of any capacities. Most of us are good at short suffering but incapable of long suffering. To hold to the very end is the highest achievement.

Lord, help us never to look back or to waver, but give us the power of sustained service. Amen.

#### BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Rewards of Wisdom. Prov. 3:13-26  
T.—Avoid Wicked Paths. Prov. 4:1-10, 20-24  
W.—Beware of Idleness. Prov. 6:1-19  
T.—Beware the Foolish Woman. Prov. 9:1-18  
F.—Liberality Praised. Prov. 11:24-31  
S.—Our Response to Christ's Call. Mark 1:16-20; 5:18-20; 10:46; 52; Luke 5:27-28  
S.—Use of the Tongue. Prov. 12:13-25



# Fellowship with the Living Lord

Luke 24:13-21, 25-31

Explained in Daily Readings for Friday and Saturday

**Memory Selection:** They said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? Luke 24:32.

## MONDAY, APRIL 15

Christ Is Risen—Luke 24:1-7

1 Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

Clement of Alexandria said of Jesus that he has turned all our sunsets into sunrises. This saying is most fitting as it applies to the disciples on that first Easter morning.

"Why do you look among the dead for him who is alive?" This question asked of the women at the tomb by the men in dazzling garments is pertinent today. We worship no dead Christ; we worship the living Christ. Ours is not a religion confined to the past, however glorious its history; it is not bound by ages gone by. It has a living leader who marches on "in the foremost files of time."

Precious as is the assurance of our own immortality and resurrection, we rejoice even more that he goes forward and shall never know defeat and never sound retreat, the Comrade Christ in all the remaining days of time.

God is not dumb, that He should speak no more!

If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness And findest not Sinai—'tis thy soul is poor! There towers the mountain of the Voice no less, Which whoso seeks shall find—but he who bends Intent on manna still and mortal ends, Sees it not—neither hears its thundered lore.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

☉ O thou living Christ, speak to me. Amen.

## TUESDAY, APRIL 16

Receiving the Glad News—John 20:1-8

1 The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

7 And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

No news could have possibly meant as much to these believers as the fact that Jesus was alive. We behold the eagerness of these men and women. They received the news with faith. Can the eagerness

of believers in the resurrection of Jesus ever be restrained?

Alas, for many it does pulse slowly. Yet how it would transform our dull witness in soul-winning, how it would stimulate our service! The outstanding personalities of Christendom today are those who have caught and retained something of the early eagerness. Why do we not all have it? Is there some spiritual obtuseness or some grievous blinding sin in our lives?

☉ O living Christ, may we have eyes no longer holden but widely opened to the wonder of thy deathless power. Amen.

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

Mary Magdalene Talks with Jesus—John 20:11-18

11 ¶ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

She who was forgiven most loved most, and to the one who loved most, Jesus showed himself first. We cannot but feel that the holy love of Mary Magdalene was due to a large spiritual capacity—a capacity which, if abused, could sin greatly but which, once redeemed, could rise to supreme heights.

Hers was the concern which led her first to the tomb, and hers was the honor of being first to tell that he had risen.

Mary Magdalene heard wondrous words from the Master that morning, "my God, and your God." Here is the divine revelation of the fact of sharing in the family of God, with God our Father, Jesus Christ our elder Brother and all believers as children of God!

☉ Lord Jesus, we thank thee that through thee we may henceforth call our God—Father. Amen.

## THURSDAY, APRIL 18

Others Hear the News—Mark 16:7-14

9 ¶ Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

10 And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 ¶ After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

13 And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

14 ¶ Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

First to Mary Magdalene, afterward to two of them as they were walking along on their way into the country, still later to the eleven, Jesus appeared to his disciples, reports Mark. But we must have reports of all the Gospel writers in order to get the full account of the stupendous event.

When we read all of them, we are quite impressed with their differences which reach the maximum in the resurrection stories. The varying purposes of the writers explains this, and this fact is further proof that there was no collusion, no prior agreement among them. Neither are their stories myths which assume a uniform, crystalized order, but the honest truth—the reports of witnesses who told everything as they saw it, hence presented aspects in each instance which another would fail to see or else would see in another light.

No one of them actually saw the resurrection, they were extremely reluctant to accept such a supernatural fact, and they only became convinced after the most compelling evidence. But when once the glad news had been established beyond the peradventure of doubt, it transformed them. Instead of being cowardly they were courageous; instead of despairing they became the evangelists of hope; instead of dallying they embarked on a course of turning the world upside down.

Lord, our living leader, teach us that thou art invincible and that through thee we can conquer. Amen.

#### FRIDAY, APRIL 19

Two Friends Talk with Jesus—Luke 24:13-27

13 ¶ And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

President John A. Mackay of Princeton Theological Seminary has interpreted the road to Emmaus for us moderns as perhaps no other man has.

Says Dr. Mackay: "The Road to Emmaus is the road of our time. In the two travelers who trudged along that rugged path nineteen centuries ago we behold ourselves and our contemporaries. We, like them, had dreamed of a new age. Like them we have known the bitterness of disillusionment. Christendom has been disrupted. Millions of our fellow travelers have taken farewell of Christ and Christian civilization and Christian hope. An era has closed. The Road to Emmaus has become our road. A mood of quiet desperation has become our mood. Theology has a new task today, the task of bringing back meaning into life, the task of restoring the foundation upon which all true life and thought are built."

Who can doubt that it is Jesus who can do all this?

Lord, we who lose our way in the maze of modern doubt need thee as much as any have ever needed thee. Show thyself to us and warm our hearts. Amen.

#### SATURDAY, APRIL 20

Recognizing the Christ—Luke 24:28-35

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

\*Prefaces to Christian Theology. Vol. II, pp. 2-3. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

"Then their eyes were opened and they knew him" (Goodspeed). Blissful is that moment when the eyes of the soul recognize Jesus. It may be in the moment of conversion; it may be in some troubled hour; but whenever that spiritual vision opens to the soul our hearts will glow.

What is it that dims our soul's power to see? Often it may be disappointment and sorrow, as in the case of the two, or as in the case of Thomas. Some of the bravest in the world walk in darkness in such hours.

The patience and tact of Jesus must be ours in dealing with them in such dark hours. God is in eclipse for them, for the black cloud has temporarily obscured his face. But when they recognize that Jesus is with them or when they see him in their sorrow, there is no describing their radiance.

Even so, Lord Jesus, come to us in our lonely ways and illumine our paths. Oh, show us thyself! Amen.

#### SUNDAY, APRIL 21

Fellowship with the Living Lord—I Corinthians 15:50-58

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

In Paul's sublime ode to the resurrection, he reaches his climax in victory over death and the grave and rises to a shout over the believer's stability and security.

This is the best committal service ever devised for a believer. These should be the last words heard at the funeral of anyone who rests in Christ. That victory, however, is not a far-off divine event; it is a present fact in our everyday living. We can read the climax to Paul's triumph song, the closing verses of the eighth chapter of Romans, and feel that neither "things present, nor things to come" can separate us from the love and presence of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Such a fellowship not only affords unspeakable comfort always, but it makes us in all things more than conquerors. It was the realization of this fact that caused Dr. B. H. Carroll, the founder of Southwestern Seminary, to rise in a railway car and shout, "Jesus is alive—I can do it!"

O conquering Saviour, let all who have believed on thee know assuredly that with thee they can do all things. Amen.

#### BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

- M.—The Rich and the Poor. Prov. 22:1-18
- T.—Avoid the Wine Cup. Prov. 23:20-33
- W.—The Worthy Woman. Prov. 31:20-30
- T.—All Things Are Vanity. Eccl. 1
- F.—Vanity of Possessions. Eccl. 2:1-11
- S.—Fellowship with the Living Lord. Luke 24:13-21, 25-31
- S.—Vanity of Labor. Eccl. 2:18-28

# The Development of a Rocklike Character

John 1:42; Mark 8:27-29; Luke 22:54-57, 61-62; John 21:15-17; Acts 5:29

Explained in Daily Readings for Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday

Memory Selection: We ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5:29.

## MONDAY, APRIL 22

A Loyal Friend—John 6:60-69

60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

66 ¶ From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

The darkest of sins is disloyalty, the blackest of crimes is treason, for the moral quality of the act is basest. Many have sought to explain away the wickedness of Judas by saying he was impatient and that in his mistaken idea of the kingdom he believed that by his overt act he could hasten the coming of the kingdom. But the explanation does not agree with the judgment of Jesus.

"Jesus knew from the first . . . who was going to betray him" (Goodspeed). The Authorized Version retains the sinister character by using the word "devil."

Yet the passage before us clearly shows that Judas was not the only one disloyal. "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." Some deserted because of intellectual difficulty, turned back because of Jesus' hard sayings. Others shrank from suffering. There is much to one writer's declaration that at the bottom of every objection to religion there is moral delinquency.

How heartening is the fact that despite the falling away from Jesus, there were those who remained steadfast and loyal. Peter's great word rings down the ages to inspire the faltering and rally the backsliding.

Lord, once again we ask, to whom else can we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. We stay by thee. Amen.

## TUESDAY, APRIL 23

"Thou Art the Christ"—Mark 8:27-37

27 ¶ And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

28 And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

30 And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

33 But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for

thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 ¶ And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Professor F. C. Burkitt of Cambridge University says: "To make a portrait of Christ, each man for himself, is the duty of every Christian. It really cannot be done second hand, by others, if the Figure of Jesus Christ is to have any vital force, or compelling influence."

The popular portrait is very inadequate, as imperfect as the opinion that he was John the Baptist; or even one somewhat better, that he was Jeremiah. Peter reached the apex of discernment when he made his incomparable declaration in Caesarea Philippi.

It should be emphasized, however, that Professor Burkitt was right in what he said. Each of us must conceive Jesus for himself. Paul spoke of "my gospel" (2 Tim. 2:8), not some fantastic speculation but an authentic, intensely experiential version which derived from his contacts with the Christ.

Is Christ personal to you? Have you a firsthand acquaintance with him?

Lord Jesus, we would know thee for ourselves and not as others tell us of thee. We would come directly to thee. Amen.

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24

The Choice of Greatness—Luke 22:24-34

24 ¶ And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

Even a casual conversation can reveal much about one's nature, and a crucial conversation can show the essential character.

When the quarrel arose among the disciples as to who should be greatest, we have the feeling that Peter was the chief contender. Was he not always the major speaker and the first to express himself? The very tone of Jesus confirms what we suggest: "O Simon, Simon! Satan has obtained permission to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed that your own faith may not fail. And afterward you yourself must turn and strengthen your brothers" (Goodspeed).

It was as if he had said, "Peter, you are on dangerous ground. You are already sinking and are in for the test of your life; but I have prayed for you and when you have altered your course, it will be none other than you who will be the saving force for those whom you are now leading in a wrong course."

To choose the right kind of greatness—the greatness of service rather than of possession and power—requires a spiritual capacity that many of us do not now have. That capacity does not come quickly.

O great Teacher, lead us to graduation with true distinction, that we may learn the true greatness. Amen.

# THURSDAY, APRIL 25

Peter Fails Jesus—Luke 22:54-62

54 ¶ Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: he is a Galilaean.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

Peter's lamentable failure was not altogether sudden. He followed Jesus—afar off. It is true, but followed him—when others forsok him.

Alas, when a third time he had resorted to the sorry expedient of denial and saw that look of Jesus, he realized how all un-awares he had fallen into the very pitfall which Jesus had predicted.

The bitterness of his tears mutely testified to his shame and sense of humiliation. Does it not teach us the hazard to which we subject ourselves when we make worldly success and preferment a controlling influence in our thinking?

¶ O thou who didst thyself teach us that true greatness must always come through service at whatever cost, teach us all the willingness to pay the price. Amen.

# FRIDAY, APRIL 26

New Courage—Acts 5:25-29

25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, Did not ye straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

29 ¶ Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Peter the faltering and flickering follower at the cross of Jesus had learned his costly lesson. His faith had been strengthened and now he was able to face the authorities and the mob with brave words. "We must obey God rather than men" (ASV). He himself explained the great change. "The God of our forefathers raised Jesus to life when you had hung him on a cross and killed him" (Goodspeed).

The proof of the resurrection of Jesus is the existence of the Christian church. The transformation of unconvinced disciples into convinced believers alone accounts for the church. And what a transformation that was!

No wonder that Paul declared that he would give his all to know the full power of that peerless event in the history of our world—its power over Jesus' enemies and its power over his friends.

¶ O thou risen Christ, may we have the excellency of that knowledge of thy resurrection power. For thy name's sake. Amen.

# SATURDAY, APRIL 27

Unshakable Assurance—2 Peter 1:17-21

17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy: whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in

a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts;

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

"We were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (ASV). What Peter saw, John saw, for he said, "We have heard, . . . we have seen with our own eyes, . . . touched with our hands" (1 John 1:1 Goodspeed). These men did not recognize the Christ on hearsay or by mere assent; each was personally assured that he was God. Such assurance comes always from firsthand knowledge.

We say that we believe in him, but do we? A mental assent to his deity, his atonement, his resurrection is not real belief. The faith that is dynamic is, as Leslie D. Weatherhead declares, not a viewpoint but a commitment. It is a real transaction by which the soul rests on and risks all to Christ the Lord. The disciples did not at first have this sort of faith and so they had very little assurance. They became unshakable when they became ready to make the complete commitment.

¶ Here we are, Lord, yearning for absolute assurance. Help us to make the leap of faith to get it. Amen.

# SUNDAY, APRIL 28

A Prayer of Forgiveness—Psalm 25:1-14

1 Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.  
2 O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.

3 Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.

4 Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths.

5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

6 Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.

7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord.

8 Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

10 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

11 For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.

12 What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.

13 His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.

14 The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

David mentions the sins of his youth. The disciples, especially Peter, must have often dwelt upon their early derelictions. Paul had to turn resolutely away from them.

A morbid introspection can be very hurtful—even God remembers our sins no more forever, when we confess them. The disposition to drag them forth and to dwell upon them is like opening the tomb and the casket to behold the gruesome corpse. It is like an old soldier uncovering the sore to exhibit it with a certain satisfaction. Yet we can never forget the pit from which we have been lifted, the forgiveness which was bestowed in our salvation.

John doubtless had Christians in mind when he wrote, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). We must confess our sins as we commit them, earnestly seek deliverance from them, and then believe that God does forgive them and release us for the greater freedom of service which comes with a consciousness of his forgiveness.

¶ Hear our prayer, O Lord, for thy cleansing and forgiveness for this day as well as for yesterday. Amen.

# BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Vanity of Times and Seasons. Eccl. 3:1-15  
T.—Vanity of Riches. Eccl. 5:1-15  
W.—Vanity of Avarice. Eccl. 5:15 to 6:9  
Th.—What is the Chief Good? Eccl. 7:1-15  
F.—Uncertainty of Life. Eccl. 8:10-18  
S.—The Development of a Rocklike Character. John 1:42; Mark 8:27-29; Luke 22:54-57, 61-62; John 21:15-17; Acts 5:29  
S.—Value of Wisdom. Eccl. 10:8-20



# Learning Good Will from Jesus

Mark 3:14-17; Luke 9:49-56; 1 John 4:7-8

Explained in Daily Readings for Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday

**Memory Selection:** This commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. 1 John 4:21.

## MONDAY, APRIL 29

James and John Follow Jesus—Matthew 4:18-22

18 ¶ And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.

21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

Was it Jesus' hunger for human friendship that impelled him to seek comrades, "that they should be with him" (Mark 3:14)? For all of us there is a deep sense of security in the presence of those who understand us.

Leslie D. Weatherhead reminds us that there is a spiritual as well as a physical biography of Jesus. In his unfolding on the spiritual side there was doubtless this perfectly human desire for security to be found in the protecting presence of others. We behold it in the supreme crises of his life when he called for his closest friends to be with him.

But we must believe that there were other purposes which stretched far beyond the human—his plan made necessary this nucleus of convinced men in order to found his church, to implant with careful sowing and tending the truth which should finally make men free.

We are struck with the readiness, even the eagerness, of these called disciples to fit into that plan. What if they did not comprehend much of it? They glimpsed

enough to make answer to his invitation with bounding hearts.

¶ O thou captain of our souls, we have heard thy call, and we will answer without delay. Call now, Lord. Amen.

## TUESDAY, APRIL 30

Among the Twelve—Mark 3:13-19

13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

16 And Simon he surnamed Peter;

17 And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.

We shall probably never know the guiding principles which Jesus employed in selecting the twelve. Indeed, we ask why he chose twelve, why family ties were so regarded, and to what extent he kept in mind their variety of gifts and temperament.

We may gain some insights into his reasons as we follow the developing careers of the twelve. It is enough for us to know that they were "those whom he wanted" (Goodspeed).

There was the gifted group, Simon Peter, James, John, and Andrew. Then there was the practical group, Philip and Bartholomew and Matthew and Thomas. Next there were the men of action—James the son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot,

Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot who later became the traitor.

The first four were the great creative leaders; the second were plain businessmen; and the last were passionate men of energy. For all such Jesus had need.

¶ Lord Jesus, accept our humble gifts for whatever place we may be needed, however lowly. Gladly will we take our places. Amen.

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 1

A Lesson in Tolerance—John 4:4-15

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, asketh drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

Jesus himself was the good Samaritan, the utmost fulfillment of the character depicted by him in the pearl of all the parables concerning the ideal neighbor. He was bigger than race or class or creed. His love could bridge all the chasms which separate between different races such as the Jews and Samaritans, between radically different conditions prevailing between social groups, between highly prejudiced parties in religious sects. And most significant, his religion is a universal religion based on love.

The crudest thing the world has ever known is religion without love in it. Therefore Jesus demonstrated true religion which knows no intolerance when he, the Jew, went through Samaria of the mongrel race. He, a man, held public converse with a woman, which outraged the social customs of the day. He, a minister of righteousness, was courteous to a bedraggled woman of tainted reputation. He, the orthodox Jew, worshiped with the heretic Samaritan.

How disconcerting to the prejudiced partisan! How true to God!

¶ O thou whose love reaches out to every soul, help me see all men as thou seest them. Amen.

## THURSDAY, MAY 2

Sympathy with the Underprivileged—John 9:35-41

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

39 ¶ And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

40 And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

India is perhaps the worst example of the caste system, whereby large numbers of

its people are excluded from social intercourse and are called "untouchables." But we shall have to admit that in many other countries of the world great numbers of people are still excluded from the more privileged ranks.

We have not seen the religion of brotherhood extend its influence widely enough to overcome this exclusiveness which operated so maliciously in the case of the man born blind. We know the rank discrimination on the part of those on the boulevards against those in the slums; we know the superciliousness in the attitudes of those who live distant from those "across the tracks."

The healing of the blind man, with the subsequent episodes, may be construed as one of the most meaningful of all the deeds or discourses of Jesus, because it not only disclosed Jesus' concern for human trouble and suffering, but it also set up a new spirit toward the underprivileged. It was a sort of Magna Charta for vast domains of submerged humanity.

☞ O thou who didst come into the world to set men free, come quickly into our broken human world today. Amen.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 3

James and John Learn Tolerance—Luke 9:49-56

49 ¶ And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.

51 ¶ And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56 For the Son of man is not come to

destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

How slowly did the sons of thunder learn broad charity from the Son of God! Here at the last the old spirit of resentment and intolerance broke out again. It must have been most disappointing to Jesus who had taught so diligently and acted so compassionately toward aliens. "But," protested this narrow spirit of bigotry in the sons of thunder, "he does not go with us."

The confines of our crowd! We cannot censure the erection of correct standards for believers; we cannot abrogate the proper conditions of membership in the church; we cannot consent to the abolition of separateness of believers from the practices of worldlings; but all these afford no warrant for ugly temper.

Yet it is a mood we must constantly guard against, a mood which becomes a fixed attitude sometimes in men and women who should know better. In men and women who have had abundant opportunities to learn the true Christian attitudes. Its recurrence in James and John should solemnly warn us lest we be overtaken with the same fault.

☞ Let us, Lord, watch and pray, lest we fall into grievous intolerance and censoriousness. Amen.

#### SATURDAY, MAY 4

"God Is Love"—I John 4:7-21

7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have seen and do testify that

the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 We love him, because he first loved us.

20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Nothing is more striking about the revelation of God's self to men than the fact that it comes through our knowledge of human beings. Jesus himself constantly appealed to whatever knowledge we have of human parenthood to teach us the fatherhood of God. Leslie D. Weatherhead says: "The first two words of the Lord's Prayer are Joseph's everlasting memorial. No one for whom the word 'father' was spoilt in childhood could have taught the fatherhood of God as Jesus did."

Thus John also makes his mighty arguments for the proper understanding of God on the basis of our apprehensions of human love. "God's love for us," he says, according to Goodspeed, "has been revealed in this way—that God has sent his only Son into the world."

A little further on he says again, "If anyone says 'I love God,' and yet hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen." Thus, God's eternal power and divine character are clearly perceptible through what he has made, even human love.

☞ O Lord, if it is true that thou art made known to others by means of human love, help us ever to let others see Jesus in our living. Amen.

#### SUNDAY, MAY 5

Saved by Grace—Philippians 2:1-11

1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Leslie D. Weatherhead tells of a young man who went to his minister and asked, "What can I do to get peace?"

"Young man," answered the minister, "you are too late."

"What!" cried the youth, "do you mean I am too late to be saved?"

"Oh, no, not that," came the reply, "but you are too late to do anything. Jesus did everything that needed to be done centuries ago."

A better title than "Saved by Grace" for this particular meditation would be "Christ-Mindedness." For here we see "this mind, . . . which was also in Christ Jesus," indicated as an incentive to us—his self-denial as opposed to self-interest; his acceptance of his Father's will instead of his own; his love which was to the uttermost. If we fill in the portrait with the biographies from the Gospels, we are the more thrilled with

the great incentive which comes from his glorious example.

☞ O thou who wast equal with the Father on the throne of the universe and who didst stoop to the lowliness of a servant on earth, to become exalted through self-sacrifice forever, teach us thy victorious way, that we may not fail of Christlikeness. Amen.

#### BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Value of Charity. Eccl. 11  
T.—Value of Religion. Eccl. 12  
W.—Vision and Call. Isa. 6  
T.—Cleansing from Sin Promised. Isa. 1:1-20  
F.—The Sinful Nation. Isa. 2:1-8; 3:16-26  
S.—Learning Good Will from Jesus. Mark 3:14-17;  
Luke 9:49-54; 1 John 4:7-8  
S.—The Song of the Vineyard. Isa. 5:1-12

LESSON FOR MAY 12, 1946

## Learning to Live Together

Matthew 18:15-17, 21-22; Mark 10:35-37, 41-45

Explained in Daily Readings for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday

**Memory Selection:** By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13:35.

### MONDAY, MAY 6

Love for Others—Matthew 18:15-20

15 ¶ Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Each of us should keep his friendships in good repair. The best friendship known in the world exists between Christians. No club, no lodge, no corporation can possibly supply as much to be cherished in common as Christians find in the church. If, therefore, there is a breach of fellowship between Christians, it is a serious matter demanding prompt attention.

The first step is a direct approach which, if made in the right spirit, seldom fails. Most troubles between friends, after all, are the result of misunderstanding; and just as soon as the false impressions have been cleared up, the ill feeling disappears. If, however, there is a persistent disagreement, judicious friends can help the estranged by presenting a purely objective view of the case. If the spirit of the offending brother is still stubborn, the matter should be carried to the congregation.

☞ O thou Head of the church, let all members of thy body work together in harmony and union for thy name's sake. Amen.

### TUESDAY, MAY 7

Forgiving Others—Matthew 18:21-33

21 ¶ Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

23 ¶ Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

The hardest thing for anyone of us to do is to forgive once, let alone seven times or seventy! What Jesus actually says is that the Christian must be in a continuing state of forgiveness. While forgiveness may not really become effective in the aggressor, the aggrieved must nevertheless be ready to forgive. The fixed attitude of the Christian must be an instant willingness to forgive.

When we pray after the manner in which our Saviour taught us, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12), we are the ones who have been forgiven the staggering millions of obligations to God, while those whom we are to forgive owe us by comparison no more than twenty.

☞ Lord Jesus, so fill us with thy Spirit that it will be easier to forgive. Amen.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 8

Contending for First Place—Mark 10:35-45

35 ¶ And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.

41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them; Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

The dignity to be conferred on Christ's servants is not on the principle of arbitrary selection as these sons of Zebedee seemed to think. Jesus was not guilty of favoritism, gross partisanship; nor would honors, rewards, and powers be conferred on those who were fortunate by reason of birth, position, wealth, or accidental distinction. The degree in glory was to be conditioned on service—sacrificial service.

They who had borne the sharpest cross would wear the brightest crown. They who ask for honor must pay the price of honor.

☞ Lord Jesus, whose throne is the highest, teach us the secret of all honor. Amen.

### THURSDAY, MAY 9

Jesus Teaches Humility—John 13:16

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

If the waiter at the table is greater than the guest of honor in so far as the dinner itself is concerned, according to the estimate of Jesus, then the servant at the door with the basin and the towel is greater in that moment than the guest of honor whose feet are washed by the bending benefactor.

What Jesus taught, he did; what he preached, he practiced. And he chose the most timely, even the most dramatic occasions, for enforcing his lessons. Now when his best friends were still in a state of immaturity as to a grasp of his teachings, and when under the shadow of the cross they were still engaged in the most unseemly

contentions for places of honor, he would give them a new and more impressive lesson in humility.

How often he had tried to have them see that anyone who hopes to sit on a throne of power must first pass through the gate of humility! His washing of the feet of his friends was intended definitely as an example of humility, a symbol of humility to be fully understood in the spirit!

Now, Lord Saviour, let us bow down to serve others without thought of reward or honor. Amen.

## FRIDAY, MAY 10

A Principle to Follow—Philemon 4-21

4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient.

9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:

11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me;

12 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:

13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:

14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;

16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?

17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.

18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;

19 I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: ~~Albeit~~ I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord

21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

In this tender, exquisitely beautiful letter of Paul to layman Philemon in behalf of a converted runaway slave, we see the principle of love expressed in prevailing terms. Paul waived apostolic authority, obligations to himself incurred by Philemon—in fact all considerations except Christian love. The compassion which Paul showed this worthless, guilty servant overflowed toward the owner, pleading in such terms that it caused the owner to relent.

Love is a more powerful weapon than force. It is more effective than logic, though it is not unreasonable but rather the expression of utmost wisdom. It is the way of the church, the key to its strategy, the assurance of its victory.

God is love, and those who would work with God will choose his principle. Love in action shifts us from reliance on mere organization and methods. Arbitrary and artificial means are discarded in an all-out acceptance of the supreme instrument for the kingdom's conquest of the world.

Lord Jesus, we would live the life of love. Saturate us with love, we pray. Amen.

## SATURDAY, MAY 11

The New Life—John 3:1-15

1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter

the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

A new life, a new vision, a new motive, a new principle of life—all this Jesus offers. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). All must have this new beginning; it is not optional, except in the sense that each is free to choose it or to reject it. But without it one cannot enter the kingdom of God; he can never see the kingdom of heaven.

It may seem a hard requirement for men of high office, large authority, and notable culture in the arts and sciences. Yet no human attainment can either fit or equip us for the kingdom of God. Such qualifications are beyond our natural ability or any development of it. They are the work of God, his gift; nevertheless, they are conditioned upon terms which open the boon



to all who realize their need of it and the infinite value of it.

By simple faith, which is a commitment rather than a viewpoint, one may have this illimitable blessing. That faith comes by a look—one comprehending vision of the uplifted Christ on the cross of redemption. So great a man as Charles Hadden Spurgeon found it so on a snowy day when he was a lad. So may all.

☞ O Lord, the sweetest gift that ever came from God is life. Thy gift is life more abundant, life everlasting. Would that all of earth might know it! Amen.

### SUNDAY, MAY 12

How to Live—Romans 12:3-20

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Conformity to the world is death—"to be carnally minded is death"—(Rom. 8:9)—but a renewal of the mind through Jesus Christ means transformation. A changed life! With the new vision, the new motive, the new principle comes the need of new plans and procedures. Here is what one who experienced the great renewal in an unsurpassed manner glimpsed and recommended as an approach to living. Some have thought that his findings deserve to be read at least once a week on one's knees.

They are the findings of a man who believed in applied Christianity. They have to do with attitudes, with activities, with attainments to be regarded by the possessors of the new life. They are not beyond our reach with God's help; they pertain to everyday Christianity and are pre-eminently practical.

They might be called a blueprint for a genuine Christian life, for by them each will exercise his peculiar, individual talent in the spirit of love. Every Christian will exhibit the attitude of Christ in active service, without vainglory or conceit, with never any retaliation for wrongs real or fancied.

☞ Lord Jesus, let me live this way—thy way. Amen.

### BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Immanuel Will Come. Isa. 9:1-7  
T.—Return of the Remnant. Isa. 10:20-27  
W.—Messiah's Reign. Isa. 11:1-9  
Th.—Psalm of Thanksgiving. Isa. 12:1-6  
F.—Jehovah's Triumph. Isa. 25:1-8; 26:1-7  
S.—Learning to Live Together. Matt. 18:15-17; 21-22; Mark 10:35-37, 41-45  
S.—Woe unto Ephraim. Isa. 28:1-13

LESSON FOR MAY 19, 1946

## Learning in the School of Faith

John 11:7-8, 16; 20:24-29

Explored in Daily Readings for Thursday and Friday

Memory Selection: Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. John 20:29.

### MONDAY, MAY 13

Watch and Pray—Matthew 25:1-13

1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

The parable of the ten virgins is usually interpreted to show the necessity of watchfulness for the second coming of Christ.

The foolish virgins are taken to represent the hypocritical followers of Jesus, while the

wise are thought to signify the genuine disciples. The former were not constant, the latter were vigilant; the one went a little way, the others went all the way.

A crisis reveals the true character of every Christian. Andrew Fuller declared that a man has only as much religion as he can command in trial. Alas, failure in the supreme crisis can never be repaired!

☞ Lord Jesus, whether thy coming be soon or late, help us to be watching and praying, ready to meet thee. Amen.

### TUESDAY, MAY 14

A Confession—Job 42:1-6

1 Then Job answered the Lord, and said, 2 I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.

6 Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Job's would-be comforters were not the only glib talkers; he did a good deal of free talking himself. It was the anguished outpouring of one who had to have an escape valve. He was too pent-up, too overwrought, to keep silent.

Naturally in his groping he stumbled; he struck out recklessly, uttered extreme words, as when he cursed the day he was born and accused the Almighty unreservedly. Then at long last the light began to break, he saw the situation with some clarity, and he became penitent.

We read in this connection that "The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends." Many of our sorrows and sufferings are too difficult for us until we submit all to God in prayer, even pray for those who have despitely used us.

☞ O God, look upon me in my plight of confusion and send the light to enable me to see myself as I am. Amen.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

Trust in God—Psalm 27:1-6

1 *The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*

2 *When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.*

3 *Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this, will I be confident.*

4 *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple.*

5 *For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.*

6 *And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.*

"Whom shall I fear?" asks David. The powers of darkness are not to be dreaded when we have the Lord for our light and our salvation, for he will be the strength of our life. Fear itself is our greatest foe, and faith which is an active commitment can vanquish fear.

Spurgeon's *Expositions of the Psalms* includes the story of one of the martyrs, Alice Driver, who during her trial put all the doctors to silence. According to Charles Bradbury she said, "I was an honest poor man's daughter, never brought up at the University as you have been; but I have driven the plough before my father. Yet, notwithstanding this, I will stand against all of you in the maintenance and defense

of the truth. If I had a thousand lives they should go for payment thereof."

☞ Lord, fill us with that perfect love which casteth out all fear, even the great fear of death which keeps us in perpetual bondage. Amen.

### THURSDAY, MAY 16

A Lesson in Faith—John 11:7-16

7 *Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.*

8 *His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?*

9 *Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.*

10 *But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.*

11 *These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth: but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.*

12 *Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.*

13 *Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.*

14 *Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.*

15 *And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.*

16 *Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.*

Divine delay furnishes one of the severest tests of faith. When news of the illness of Lazarus came and when the disciples heard of the urgent request of his sisters for the instant help of Jesus, they could not understand the fact that Jesus tarried two whole days in the Trans-Jordan.

True, they knew the extreme hostility of the Jewish authorities, and they might have concluded he lingered because of prudence. But they could not think this when afterward he said to them, "Let us go back to Judea."

In this episode we are convinced that God's clock is never slow! The outcome

showed how fully he knew what he was about and how wonderfully events lent themselves to the manifestation of his wisdom, his love, and his power—how instead of destroying their faith, the experience would confirm their faith forever.

☞ Lord, wilt thou who hast power over life, death, and the grave lift up our faltering faith that we may accept all thy ways. Amen.

### FRIDAY, MAY 17

Growing Faith in God—John 20:19-29

19 *¶ Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*

20 *And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.*

21 *Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*

22 *And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:*

23 *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

24 *¶ But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.*

25 *The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.*

26 *¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.*

27 *Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

28 *And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.*

29 *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

Thomas missed the meeting! His usual gloomy, doubting temperament received no aid from the fact. Nevertheless, when a week later he met with the disciples and met Jesus in their midst he was no longer unbelieving. His declaration concerning the person and nature of Jesus became the most satisfactory of all!

What were the stages in the growth of Thomas' faith? First, a willingness to go with Jesus, as we have seen before, into any trial. Second, the hearing of testimony which at first did not seem credible. Third, spiritual communion in worship.

☞ O Lord Christ, thou knowest my moroseness, my slowness to apprehend. Help me to grow a sunny faith. Amen.

### SATURDAY, MAY 18

The Promise of Eternal Life—I Corinthians 15:35-49

35 *But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come!*

36 *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:*

37 *And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:*

38 *But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.*

39 *All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.*

40 *There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.*

41 *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.*

42 *So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:*

43 *It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power;*

44 *It is sown a natural body; it is raised*

a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Analogies in nature afford us excellent means for understanding spiritual mysteries. Paul was particularly happy in using familiar facts in the realm of nature to clear up the mystery of the resurrection body.

If we accept the fact of God, however, there should be no intellectual difficulty about the resurrection. Christ is the demonstration of the power of God. Because he lives, we shall live also.

Since we are assured of this victory over destruction and are destined to be perfected in the image of his glory, let us even now conform our lives to his likeness—we who are to be like him eternally!

¶ For that glorious day when we shall all come into thy likeness forever, Lord, we thank thee. May we strive now to be like thee. Amen.

## SUNDAY, MAY 19

Faithful unto Death—Matthew 25:19-30

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not straved:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid my talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not straved:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Jesus' story of the entrusted money, which glorifies the faithful and denounces the unfaithful, clearly points out the fact that infidelity in the large commences in the little. The man with one talent could never have been a steward of five talents, because he showed himself independable in handling the little that he had.

Initial unfaithfulness cannot be atoned for later. Faithfulness is something which is intensified to the point of death, both in duration and in endurance. The friends of Jesus are unfaithful unto the end and to whatever demand there may be in the end.

¶ Lord, I would ever be faithful. Amen.

## BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Trust Jehovah, not Egypt. Isa. 31  
T.—Assyria's Army Slain. Isa. 37:14-20, 36ff.  
W.—Hezekiah's Recovery. Isa. 38:1-15  
T.—Jehovah's Comforts. Isa. 40:1-11  
F.—Jehovah's Servant. Isa. 42:1-18  
S.—Learning in the School of Faith. John 11:7-44  
16: 20:24-29  
S.—Jehovah Our Saviour. Isa. 43:1-13

LESSON FOR MAY 26, 1946

# Finding a New Sense of Values

Luke 18:24-27; 19:1-10; Romans 14:16-17

Explained in Daily Reading for Wednesday

Memory Selection: The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Romans 14:17.

## MONDAY, MAY 20

A Foolish Rich Man—Luke 12:16-21

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

In the days of Jesus our modern word "security" had not come into use. Perhaps the rich man was, in fact, thinking of the protection which we seek in old-age security, ill-health insurance, or unemployment provision. In any event he was not thinking of soul security, for despite his plentiful crops and bursting barns, he had no provision for his soul.

E. Stanley Jones tells of an elderly man who faced a serious operation. The night before, the mother and son, neither of whom was a Christian, sent word to a friend: "Will you not come and stay with us? We have nothing to hold on to in the dark." The friend responded and persuaded both to surrender themselves to Christ.

On the next day, before the father underwent the ordeal of operation, the son was able to tell his father how to yield himself to God. The man was converted and all three found life changed from uncertainty

to assurance. How foolish to try to live without God; how wise to live in God's will and care!

¶ Lord Jesus, may we be able to tell unheeding men and women of the way to spiritual security. Amen.

## TUESDAY, MAY 21

Give and Receive—Luke 12:31-34

31 ¶ But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that falleth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

"All these things shall become your allies" is the translation a brother minister gives to the words "all these things shall be added unto you." The saving secret is in making the kingdom of God first. When you miss that secret, the material things of life may actually become your enemies.

Science today furnishes the world with its greatest friend or its greatest enemy. In the hands of righteous men whose first purpose is to en throne the good, science is a priceless blessing. In the hands of the wicked aggressor whose intention is to destroy others, science is humanity's greatest curse.

If we receive the benefits of the heavenly kingdom, we must first give ourselves to en throning God and his standard of goodness in all that pertains to life and its relationships.

¶ Lord, let us live to give, to save for eternity, to make every gift an ally. Amen.

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

The Rich and the Kingdom—Luke 18:24-30

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

These words of Jesus show us how much of a realist he was. Theories aside, the stubborn fact will not budge—love of money is what Paul later said it was, the root of all evil. The selfishness, hardness, self-sufficiency, arrogance, pride, and self-indulgence which too often characterize the rich are certainly incongruous with the self-sacrifice, humility, compassion, and sense of higher values which belong to the kingdom of God.

But what appears impossible to man is not beyond the power of God. It is likely that Jesus numbered several rich people among his disciples. What of Levi the publican, Zaccheus, and Nicodemus?

Consecrated wealth may become a mighty means of advancing the kingdom of God. Many rich people today are friends of Jesus, and their money is held in true Christian stewardship.

O Christ, the friend of every man despite the accidents of fortune, we thank thee for saving grace shown to many rich people. Amen.

## THURSDAY, MAY 23

The Worth of the Kingdom—Matthew 13:44-46

44 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

45 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

The sense of values is not always well defined in individuals. Now religion has to do essentially with values. The parable of the pearl of great price is our Saviour's way of expressing the esteem which one with a keen sense of values will place upon that which is of supreme worth.

This "chief good," this "one thing needful" can only be identified as eternal salvation.

One who gives up all for this highest of values finds infinite satisfaction in so doing. He wants no pity from others, for he exults in unspeakable joy that the treasure of all who are in the kingdom is an eternal, imperishable, indescribable fellowship with God.

Lord of lords, King of kings, whose saving gospel and way of life are worth more than the whole earth can buy, bestow these values upon those who offer them all to thee. Amen.

## FRIDAY, MAY 24

A Temple of the Living God—2 Corinthians 6:14-18

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

The true temple of God is in the hearts of his people. Jesus referred to his body as God's temple. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" (1 Cor. 3:16). For

God to accept this temple as his dwelling place, it must be clean.

It is related that it was this text in Corinthians which brought the great Augustus H. Strong, perhaps our most renowned theologian-educator, to Christian decision. As a boy he had been to church one night and the minister had preached from these words. Arriving back home he unsaddled his horse, but before returning to the house he sat down on the grass and gazed into the starry heavens. He had not been free from wrong; evil had stained his life, and bad companions had been one of the chief causes.

"What are you going to do about it?" came the challenge from his aroused conscience. He prayed and promised God that he would "come . . . out from among them . . . touch not the unclean thing." Rising from his knees he said he looked up again into the firmament and felt that when the stars had turned to ashes he would be a child of God, for he had been received as a son.

Lord Jesus, come thou into my heart forevermore to dwell. I would cast out all sin so hateful to thee. Amen.

## SATURDAY, MAY 25

The Bad Associations of Drink—1 Peter 4:1-6

1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

6 For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

The Christian must come out from among evil companions and no longer touch unclean things. Convivialists find it hard to

break old habits and still harder to break with comrades in revels. Lapses among adults converted in maturity, whose former associations were among the intemperate, are frequent.

The argument for childhood conversion is well sustained at this point. It is most logical and scriptural for the child upon arriving at the years of accountability to make a commitment of himself to the Saviour, henceforth to be nurtured and trained in Christian living. There are no binding evil habits of the former wicked life to be corrected in that case, so that Christian progress is steadily registered.

The child is also more willing to learn, more ready to accept the guidance of experienced Christians, and more responsive to definite undertakings which produce growth.

O my Saviour, may those who follow thee remain steadfast and immovable and may they abound in good works. Amen.

## SUNDAY, MAY 26

Indestructible Treasure—Matthew 6:19-24

19 ¶ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

24 ¶ No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

All of us feel that life should have something to show for it, an accumulation of values. The contemplation of emptiness, nothingness as the outcome of life's efforts is appalling. We shudder, too, at the thought of loss through any of the recognized destructive forces, like fire and flood, which



descend upon what we so cherishingly store up. What can we lay up in the way of treasure that will abide?

The method is not too difficult. We simply invest in the right kind of values—such as the building of character, the house of service, the areas of good deeds, the territories of charity and benevolence. If we invest in these, our interests tend more and more to be centered in them. We shall set our affections upon things above and the eternal values will become our chief concern. We shall pine no more for the perishing.

LESSON FOR JUNE 2, 1946

## Expressing Our Friendship for Christ

Mark 14:3-9; Luke 10:38-42

**Memory Selection:** Let us love one another: for love is of God. I John 4:7.

### MONDAY, MAY 27

Thoughtful Service—John 12:1-3

1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

Mary in her beautiful deed of pouring out the sweet perfume to anoint the Saviour gave her best, and the sweet fragrance of her loving deed is caught by the millions who loved him through all the passing centuries. The whining critic was present with his hypocritical protest but Jesus' gracious word was offered as the highest praise ever accorded a woman. "She hath done what she could" (Mark 14:8), and in so doing, her deed became immortal.

Mary did what she could with her time when she sat at the Master's feet and learned of him. She did what she could with her gift by pouring all the sweet perfume in tribute to him, and she did what she could with her influence when his enemies

Lord, I turn toward that which lasts, even those first things of the kingdom which shall not be taken away. Amen.

### BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Jehovah Forgives Sins. Isa. 44:21-28  
T.—Salvation for All. Isa. 49:1-13  
W.—The Servant Suffers Shame. Isa. 53  
T.—Mercy for All. Isa. 55  
F.—The Glory of Zion. Isa. 60:1-3; 61:1-11  
S.—Finding a New Sense of Value. Luke 10:24-27; 19:1-10; Rom. 14:16-17  
S.—Call and Visions. Jer. 1:4-19

were crying out for his blood. She did what she could while she could come before his crucifixion when her loving gift meant most to her Master.

Lord Jesus, let us do what we can while we can for thee. Amen.

### TUESDAY, MAY 28

Practice Good Will—3 John 2-8

2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

5 Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;

6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:

7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

Paul's personal letters are exquisite models of Old World correspondence, yet

they possess a vitality which makes them forever contemporary.

The man to whom he addressed this little letter, Galus by name, appears to have been a layman succeeding in business, for the writer urged him ever to let his soul prosper in proportion to his general prosperity.

That Galus was growing a great soul was evident from good reports of him traveling afar, particularly in reference to his hospitable treatment of the missionaries. In those days it was necessary to forbid hospitality to propagators of error, but it was most desirable to encourage hospitality toward promulgators of the truth. "For the sake of the Name" (v. 7 ASV), God's children must stand together for the family honor. Hospitality of this sort makes one a fellow helper to the truth.

The good will toward God's servants shown by Galus is in sharp contrast with the malicious attitude of Diotrophes who was condemned by Paul and whose bad example he threatened to expose and punish. Fortunately, Galus did not stand alone in the church, for Demetrius was a kindred spirit.

O thou great Shepherd of the sheep, may all thy flock be kindly and walk together. Amen.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

Serve the Needy—Matthew 25:34-40

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

In the quiet of the Olivet retreat on Tuesday evening of Passion Week Jesus was speaking to his little group of disciples. His words had a solemn portent as he drew the curtain that they might look into the future. The scene was the last judgment. We may see in the magnificent and awful picture here drawn only the vision of universal judgment. But the fact that each of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ is clear.

Jesus' discourse relative to final things, with all its vast infinities, contrasts strangely with humble infinitesimal acts such as feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, ministering to the sick, visiting the prisoner. Such simple deeds of love and kindness are the outflow of truly redeemed hearts. They reveal the true salvation which is based on a faith which is dead without works.

Jesus so identifies himself with his brethren that when we have performed these modest services to even the least in his kingdom we have been privileged to do it unto him. What a dignity it lends to all of life, for even the humblest of his disciples may meet this final test in the judgment.

O thou Judge of all, how shall we meet that ultimate test? Give us understanding and the will to do. Amen.

### THURSDAY, MAY 30

Serve Through Love—Galatians 5:13-15

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

These words were often quoted by the beloved George W. Truett. In all his mighty address on religious liberty he was careful to discriminate between liberty and license. Liberty is not censoriousness, it is not cruel selfishness, it is not the expression of vicious, malicious qualities of carnal nature.

It is not, as Paul makes plain, an excuse for venting all the unregenerate impulses that surge up toward those whom we dis-

like. True liberty is imbued with a full sense of responsibility; it is aware of accountability before the bar of law, in the court of justice, in the tribunal of reason; and it is always amenable to love. Liberty is not for the destruction of others, but for the service of humanity.

Liberty implies freedom to choose the right, to walk in the truth, and to advance every good cause. It is tolerant of others but not lacking in convictions. It cares deeply for truth and right but it ever speaks the truth in love and wages its fight according to the principles of righteousness. It never forgets the two first commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets—love of God and love of one's neighbor.

Lord make me a slave of love. Amen.

### FRIDAY, MAY 31

Love is of God—I John 5:1-12

1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that

believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

How may we know that we are saved, that we are the children of God? Assurance is something greatly to be desired, yet we do not always have it. Here is the way to have it. It is not by the memory of rapturous experience; it is not by the record of our profession and baptism; it is not by religious observances, standing alone. We have assurance only by faith in Jesus the Saviour proved by loving obedience to him.

Do we know we are saved because we love the brethren? "This is how we can be sure that we love the children of God: it is by loving God and obeying his commands" (Goodspeed).

John, the son of thunder, puts great stress upon love as the one quality which makes men Godlike, for God is love. He had once tasted the bitterness of ill will and had afterward come into the experience of love of Jesus to such a degree as to be known as the one whom Jesus loved. The disciple who leaned on the Saviour's bosom and who is called by us the loving apostle is best able to testify of the assurance which loving faith and obedience can bring to the human heart. We accept his testimony because it seems altogether reasonable on its face and because we can verify it beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Teach us, O Saviour divine, the meaning of love to thee, so great that we may know this assurance. Amen.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 1

Security in God—Psalm 91:1-9

1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.

4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.

8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

9 Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

To believe in God results in a sense of fundamental security. No bomb, no rocket can shake that sense of safety. The psalmist invokes the noblest symbols with which to picture it—an impregnable fortress, strong wings under which we may take refuge, and indestructible dwelling place that shall outlast the generations.

Yet John the Baptist was beheaded; John Huss, even while he called upon God, was burned at the stake. Multitudes of good men and women endure sickness, bereavement, trial, humiliation, losses of all kinds. What then? Why, God, not external, accidental things takes care of us. Yes, "the Lord is thy keeper: . . . he shall preserve thy soul" (Psalm 121:5, 7). He did in fact take care of John the Baptist, John Huss, and all the rest of his followers who have committed themselves to him. He has taken care of their souls forever, and he has taken care of their honor and their influence, so that by his care they live more powerfully than ever.

Pray, therefore, not merely for physical safety in battle, but for fidelity to the utmost, for God will thus take care of you in deathless living.

Lord, thou knowest what we should pray for better than we know. Let us find thy will. Amen.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 2

God's Goodness—Psalm 121

1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

2 My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

7 The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Once I conducted the funeral of a noted geologist, a fine Christian and deacon in the church. When I asked the family concerning his favorite Scripture passage, I was told that it was the one hundred and twenty-first Psalm. Of course, he had full understanding of the fact that the punctuation is wrong in the Authorized Version, for there should be a period after the word "hills," and there should be an interrogation point after the word "help." But to the devout geologist, a lover of nature, the hills were a reminder of God. In their loftiness, stability, sublimity they helped him to think of the Eternal One.

To the hills I lift mine eyes,  
The everlasting hills;  
Streaming thence in fresh supplies,  
My soul the Spirit fills.

Will he not his help afford?  
Help, while yet I ask, is given:  
God comes down; the God and Lord  
That made both earth and heaven.  
—EDWARD JEWITT ROBINSON

O thou lofty One who dost inhabit eternity, thou Rock of ages, thou fortress of all men's souls, we look to thee for our help—strength in our weakness, vision in our lowliness, steadfastness in our wavering. For thy name's sake. Amen.

### BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Backsliding Judah. Jer. 2:1-13  
T.—Israel Entreated to Return. Jer. 3:11-18  
W.—Captivity Foretold. Jer. 4:1-3, 14-19  
T.—False Worship. Jer. 7:1-11  
F.—No Peace. Jer. 8:11-22  
S.—Expressing Our Friendship for Christ. Mark 14:3-9; Luke 10:38-42  
S.—The Girdle and the Bottle. Jer. 18:1-14

# Working with Christ

Mark 6:7-13; Luke 10:1-2; 14:25-27

Explained in Daily Reading for Wednesday

**Memory Selection:** He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. Matthew 10:38.

## MONDAY, JUNE 3

Work to Do—John 4:34-38

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

God the worker invites us to be workers together with him. All things work in his universe and they work together for good to them that love him. Watch the beehive. Although the birds and flowers do not toll with anxiety, there is no lack of activity on their part.

Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17). On this occasion he declared that work was his delight, his meat and drink. Thus in wisdom he gives work to each of us.

The kingdom calls for doing the King's will. That will is clearly marked for the winning of souls. In that field the harvest is ripe and the achieved reaping should be plentiful. One does not always have to plant or till the crop himself. Others may have done that. The ripened grain is bending low, ready for the reaper. And what satisfaction in the reaping!

☞ Fill us with compassion, Lord Jesus, and give us eyes to see the worth of the human harvest. Amen.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 4

Fellowship with the Teacher—Philippians 1:3-11

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Fellowship is distinctly a New Testament word, for sharing is a fundamental in Christianity. We are fellow believers, fellow workers, fellow inheritors.

This church at Philippi was, according to Paul, the founder, "a colony of heaven." The city of Philippi was a colony of Rome, whose citizens maintained the ideals and the objectives of Rome in the midst of alien peoples. Even so the church in Philippi, being a colony of heaven, maintained on the earth the behavior and the program of the kingdom of God among people who were alien to the rule of God.

This church was continuously co-operative in the good news from the first day

they received the gospel. The members were faithful to their local obligations concerning the gospel and never ceased to provide Paul with all aid possible.

No wonder that he loved them so and that he prayed so ardently for them! Let us be sharers in a great cause—especially sacrificial sharers—and let us love each other and pray for each other.

☞ Lord Saviour, thou hast made us fellow partakers of a life, a task, and a reward. How great is our privilege! We thank thee. Amen.

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5

Working Under Supervision—Mark 6:7-13

7 ¶ And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse;

9 But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

13 And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

In sending forth the twelve, the Master gave specific directions. Nothing less than divine power could have sustained them, and they were clothed with sufficient power.

We approximate the quality of the apostolic service today in the missionary personnel. And it is also evident that our missionaries are more given to ascertaining divine directions. As they search out God's will they feel that they find it and they are well content with it. They endeavor to carry out his directions in every detail, and God blesses them with achievement that often seems impossible. With

man it is impossible but with God all things are possible.

Today, among all Christians, there is need for the two marks of early discipleship: first, a faithful seeking of divine direction in our efforts; second, a willingness to undertake the self-denying heroic task with no other equipment than faith in the Master.

The apostles went forth in this manner, and they did not fail. Neither will we fail. We can write a continuing book of Acts.

☞ For thy guidance, O God, and for thy power we thank thee. Amen.

## THURSDAY, JUNE 6

Learning Through Failure—Matthew 17:14-20

14 ¶ And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying,

15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Complacency is one of the most frequent causes of failure in Christian effort. We take too much for granted. We presume that all will be well without meeting the conditions. The disciples, in the face of stark need, found themselves perfectly helpless. It was grievously disappointing to the troubled father; it was humilatingly embarrassing to the disciples.

The Master pointed out the unmistakable cause: it was unbelief. The poor harassed father confessed his lack of proper faith and prayed for its supply. The chagrined disciples begged for an explanation of their

helplessness and were plainly told by the Master that it was their lack of faith.

Years afterward this teaching would stand them in stead. In the Christianization of the Roman Empire these men required faith, and the exercise of it removed barriers or else surmounted barriers in literal fulfilment of Jesus' promise. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Lord, I too would pray, help thou my unbelief. Increase my faith. Amen.

#### FRIDAY, JUNE 7

Braving Dangers—Matthew 26:47-55

47 ¶ And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear.

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

The calm self-possession of Jesus under circumstances of betrayal and arrest and following upon his agony in the garden of Gethsemane is an amazing spectacle. Does it not reveal to us the unshaken purpose, expressed beforehand in setting his face to go to Jerusalem, spoken in the upper room, and accepted in his prayer of surrender to the will of God?

He was not terrified by armies of police. If it were a question of physical force, he could provide forces in excess of any mustered by the Temple guard or the Imperial Government of Rome. "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Jesus' confidence in the ultimate power of right and truth nerved him with a force mightier than any ever put forth by reliance on military numbers and munitions. How strong is our faith in spiritual forces? How much does that faith give us courage?

Lord Jesus, thou hast shown us the true way. Let us walk in it for thy glory. Amen.

#### SATURDAY, JUNE 8

Recounting Experiences—Luke 10:17-20

17 ¶ And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

The works which accompany the major mission of Christian evangels are stupendous. But none of these accomplishments can compare with the salvation of a life. Reform can never equal regeneration. To bring a life into touch with God through the saving power of Jesus Christ is a greater feat than uniting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans by means of the Panama Canal. Our estimate of Christian effort must always be in terms of saved life.

Lord, wherein is the source of our joy? Is it in spectacular deeds? Teach us thy values. Amen.

#### SUNDAY, JUNE 9

Greater Work to Be Done—John 14:12-17

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

15 ¶ If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

When the famous D. Lorenzo of Vienna visited this country he was besought by hundreds of parents with afflicted children; but alas, only a handful could ever reach him. Sorrowful stories are told about disappointment and unspeakable heartache which came to those who were unable to

break through the throng to gain consultation with him.

Now that Jesus is omnipresent, none can fail to obtain audience with him. Through the spiritual presence and power of Jesus every sick soul in all the world may get healing, and these benefits may become available through the agency of Jesus' friends.

Lord Jesus, we know that all may come directly to thee and that thou wilt in no wise cast out. How we thank thee! Amen.

#### BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Potter and Clay. Jer. 18:1-12  
T.—The Broken Bottle. Jer. 19  
W.—Jeremiah in Stocks. Jer. 20:1-19  
T.—Prophecy to Zedekiah. Jer. 21:3-14  
F.—Good and Bad Figs. Jer. 24  
S.—Working with Christ. Mark 6:7-13; Luke 10:1-2; 17:26-27  
S.—The Yoke. Jer. 27:1-11

LESSON FOR JUNE 16, 1946

## Sharing Jesus' Kingdom Purpose

Luke 9:23-24, 46-48, 57-62; 11:1-4; 17:20-21

Explained in Daily Reading for Tuesday

Memory Selection: Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.  
Matthew 6:10

#### MONDAY, JUNE 10

The Character of a Disciple—Matthew 5:43-48

43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

The Distinguished Service Cross is awarded for "service beyond the line of duty." The distinguishing mark of a Christian is likewise to do more than is required of him.

Old William Secker, in his famous book, *The Nonsuch Professor, or the Singular Actions of Sanctified Christians*, points out eight reasons why a Christian should do more than others, twenty things a Christian may do more than others, then elaborates twenty ways in which a Christian may succeed in establishing principles for achieving a record of doing more than others, and closes with seven suggestions of direction for those who wish to do more than others.



This treatment followed the plan of Becker for constructing a sermon: "Firstly, the explanation of that which is doctrinal; secondly, the application of that which is practical."

Whatever one may think of Secker's book, the fact stands that a Christian is expected to live a plus life. More is done for a Christian than for others; he sustains a closer relation to God. If he is to be more and do more than others, he must pray more than others, resolve more and love more than others.

Lord, thou didst love us and give thyself for us; thou hast kept us through gracious providence, and thou dost plan a priceless inheritance for us. Let us offer our best because of thee. Amen.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 11

Look Not Backward—Luke 9:57-62

57 ¶ And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Here are three men who were not only contemporary with Jesus but who are easily recognizable today. The first may be called Mr. Hasty. He was too precipitate in his decision. Many like him are a chief cause of the religious instability which afflicts our churches.

The second man meeting the Saviour may be called Mr. Dilatory. He was a procrastinator. We remember what Chrysostom said of him: "He might need, if he went to his father's funeral, to proceed after the burial to make inquiry about the will and then

about the distribution of the inheritance and all the other things that followed thereupon, and thus wave after wave of things coming upon him might bear him away from the harbor of truth."

The third man who had a temporary impulse to follow Jesus might well be called Mr. Servile. He was too subservient to the opinion of friends, too readily swerved by associates.

A man must be willing to stand alone if he would be a Christian. All three of these men made a start but turned back. That backward look meant to take the back track. It is fatal to Christian decision and to Christian continuity or perseverance.

Hear our prayer, Lord, for the wavering and confused, for we long to see them forthright. For thy sake. Amen.

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12

Work for the Kingdom—Matthew 7:24-27

24 ¶ Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

The climax to the Sermon on the Mount is in language which employs Jesus' favorite figure of speech. He appears to have liked the symbol of a building. He regarded himself as a builder—"I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). He occupied himself with building the new temple of humanity.

He first stated that the foundation must be secure. Then the materials must be enduring, for the tests will be severe.

This is the teaching of Jesus. Not only the unbeliever but also the believer is subjected to tests, and identical fortunes or ill fortunes may come to both alike, and from

all directions—rains from above, floods from below, and winds from every side.

The builder himself must be built. This shows the importance of the individual. To one who said she was not interested in individuals any more, a philosopher replied that God had not got that far along, for he is pre-eminently interested in the individual.

Hear, O mighty God, and strengthen us for sincere obedience to thy teaching, that life may be stable and secure. Amen.

## THURSDAY, JUNE 13

Be Watchful—Matthew 13:24-30

24 ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

This controversial feature of this particular parable have obscured its practical value for most people. Many never get beyond the question of church discipline—whether we shall exclude people guilty of unchristian conduct or continue to retain them in church on the principle that exclusion of the false is perilous to the true.

Plainly the teaching on that point has to do with continued life in the world for the wicked rather than continued membership in the church.

But Jesus here emphasized something else. The beginning of the parable tells of the enemy's sowing of weeds while the owner slept. Was there some carelessness on the part of the owner? Could he have prevented what subsequently got beyond his control? Our life estate requires close guarding.

Society is cursed today with iniquities which have sprung up while the people slept. "Awake thou that sleepest, . . . and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph. 5:14).

Forgive, O Watcher of souls, that we have too often not watched with thee. Amen.

## FRIDAY, JUNE 14

The Disciples Bear a Cross—Matthew 10:34-39

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Militarists who rely upon force alone for national security often quote verse 34 in support of their theory. Frequently they mistakenly quote that other passage about Christ and the whip used in cleansing the Temple in Jerusalem.

But to whom did Jesus speak the words of verse 34? To his twelve. When did he speak to them? When he sent them forth on their evangelistic mission. He did not send them forth like Mohammed on a military crusade. The sword he mentioned could not possibly have meant a material sword. It was the sword of truth, of right, of the Spirit. The sword he meant is mightier than a sword of steel.

When he said he came not to "send forth peace," he used a Greek word which may be translated "hurl" or "impose." He will not impose peace, but plant it, create the conditions for peace through righteousness and the reign of truth and righteousness. To bring that about requires that each of us shall take up his cross.

☞ O Lord, who would not a hero be in this the noblest chivalry? For thy dear sake. Amen.

## SATURDAY, JUNE 15

The Disciples' Reward—Matthew 19:27-30

27 ¶ Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

"What shall we have therefore?" A question of much anxiety. We have suffered loss; what is the profit? Does religion pay? Yes, religion is profitable in the life that now is and in that which is to come. It pays big dividends in character, in happiness, in good influence, in benefits to others, and in life everlasting.

The government has succeeded in impressing the statement, "crime never pays." The Bible has written in letters which none can fail to understand that sin never pays. But Christianity pays in terms of true success, its rewards are ample, and they are permanent. "The pleasures of the world pass away, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

The words carved on the tomb of Dwight Lyman Moody could properly be carved on the tomb of every genuine Christian. "Al-ways abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

☞ Establish thou the work of our hands, yea, establish thou it. Amen.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 16

Pray for the Kingdom—Matthew 6:9-15

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Dr. W. F. Powell, the pastor of the First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, and president of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, has a sermon on "Living the Lord's Prayer." He begins by showing how meaningful is the word "our" and how very difficult it is to learn how to say it. Next he explains how the word "Father" is the key to the situation, the true fatherhood of God.

The third step is the hallowing of God's name. And the fourth the acceptance of God's will. Having learned to say "our," having found God as Father, having hallowed him, and having accepted his will, we can then pray the prayer through Prayer is not apathy, it is not the absence of intelligence, it is not magic. It is co-operation with God. It is the plus mark of man, wherein God is added to his life.

☞ Lord, teach us to pray. Amen.

## BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Advised to Be Content. Jer. 29:1-14  
T.—The New Covenant. Jer. 31:27-34  
W.—Covenant with David. Jer. 33:14-22  
T.—Roll Burned and Rewritten. Jer. 36:21-32  
F.—Jeremiah in Prison. Jer. 37:11-21  
S.—Sharing Jesus' Kingdom Purpose. Luke 9:23-24, 46-48, 57-62; 11:1-4; 17:20-21  
S.—In the Dungeon. Jer. 38:7-13

LESSON FOR JUNE 23, 1946

# The Bonds of Christian Fellowship

Luke 22:14-20; John 17:6-8, 20-21

Memory Selection: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. John 13:34.

## MONDAY, JUNE 17

Fellowship with Christ—I John 1

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

The aged apostle lived in the memory of the days of his intimacy with Jesus. How could he ever forget that voice, that personality, the very body in which deity once tabernacled? To him Jesus was no mere tradition, no abstract doctrine, but a living reality.

This firsthand touch with Christ was perhaps John's peculiar privilege and yet it is possible for all of us to know the living Christ in a direct way. Each of us may enter into comradeship, partnership with the Father and Son. The conditions are purity and sincerity. We must walk in the light, as he is in the light, for in him is no darkness at all.

The key word to John's message is "fellowship." The word comes from a Greek word which means "having things in common." In respect to light it is possible for us to enter into the truth, purity, knowledge, and joy which light stands for. The believer must have no fellowship with anything which is alien to the character of Christ—none with a lie, none with anything evil and vile. He will confess his sin, receive cleansing for it, and be kept by the advocacy of Christ, who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

☞ Lord Jesus, come thou with us. Let us walk with thee always. Amen.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 18

A Fellowship of Love—John 13:31-35

31 ¶ Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

The badge of a Christian is love. Jesus gave a new command—one which surpassed the original ten—that we love. Love is the

fulfilment of the law—of all the laws in regard to God, of all the laws in regard to man. Love, then, is the one thing that Christians must hold in common.

Jesus, with whom we have our prime fellowship, told us of God's love; we are to interpret God's gift of love to us in ways which the observing world can never mistake. Jesus' example shows us how we may do this. To live the life of love we need only to enter into comradeship with Jesus, whose ministry and methods of love will furnish us with all needed guidance and beget within us the adequate motive and impulse.

Following him through the pages of the Gospels, we see the many different kinds of people and the varied circumstances under which he manifested a love that never failed. In our efforts we shall meet tests but none equal to those he met. Our safety will be in drawing close to Jesus and seeking to exhibit his spirit. Inspiration may come from living much in the biographies of the great lovers of mankind, but none of them can approach the story of Jesus.

Lord Jesus, we would walk and work and love with thee. Be our Comrade ever. Amen.

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19

Fellowship of Mutual Helpfulness—Romans 1:8-13

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

Paul's gratitude for favors was marked. His gracious acknowledgments in all his

letters to individuals and churches will remain as a pattern for all who have experienced the fellowship of Christians in good works.

Perhaps we see this technique of Paul displayed to the best advantage in his letter to his friends in Philippi, or in his communications to Timothy and Philemon, but today's passage out of his letter to the Romans cannot be overlooked. In it we see the sense of sharing, the warmth of feeling, the consciousness of individuals, the remembrance of specific acts which he held toward these Roman Christians.

We are glad that we have in these immortal phrases Paul's record of his indebtedness to the Roman Christians. It enables us to see just what happened in the beginning days of Christianity. No doubt there are Christians today who feel toward fellow Christians in noble endeavor as Paul did toward these.

Lord, we thank thee more than words can tell for those who love the same things we do and who are undertaking great tasks for thee. Amen.

### THURSDAY, JUNE 20

Fellowship of the First Christians—Acts 2:42-47

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common:

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meal with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Togetherness of the Jerusalem church preceded Pentecost when the members were all together with one accord in one place. Afterward these Christians shared everything—worship, soul-winning, ministries to the needy, study of the teaching, hopes of the future, meals, property.

Radiance, deep abounding joy, and constant praise characterized them. It was like a contagion, irresistible. Every day the Lord added to their number the people who were saved. The church grew by leaps and bounds.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1). It is said that one of the surest signs of sanity is the disposition on the part of individuals to get together, and one of the infallible tokens of craziness is the inability of people to get together.

The warmest, truest fellowship to be found anywhere should be in a church. Christians have more in common than do other people. Their love for one another is one of Christianity's best credentials.

Lord Jesus, bind thy people together more and more by ties which no power on earth can break. Amen.

### FRIDAY, JUNE 21

Fellowship in Danger—Acts 12:11-17

11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.

16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

One was in prison; the others were in a prayer meeting in his behalf. During the hour of danger they were together in heart. "One for all, all for each." If one were arrested for worship in the name of Jesus, the others proceeded to engage in public worship in his name. It could not fail to make outsiders marvel at their togetherness and remark, "Behold, how they love one another!"

Even though they had forsaken their Master at the cross, they would not forsake one another now. The risen Christ exerted a greater power over them than Christ in the flesh. Their conviction about Christ's resurrection was effective in overcoming the last barrier to a complete abandon to any fate so that the cause might live. And Christians must show the same heroism in standing by each other in the present phases of hostility to Christ's cause.

Thou art all worthy, Lord Jesus, of utmost devotion. May none of us ever desert his brothers. Amen.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Fellowship Through Prayer—2 Thessalonians 2:13 to 3:5

13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have no faith.

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord

touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

Helping together by prayer was early recognized as a gospel technique. The presentation of Christianity was a joint effort of preacher and congregation. Paul's sermons and the prayers of the Thessalonians shared equally in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ beheld by the hearers. He was so conscious of this, so profoundly convinced that it was so, that he begged of his brother Christians that they would continue to pray unceasingly for him "that the Lord's message may spread rapidly and gloriously as it did among you" (Good-speed).

This recognition of the place of prayer in the spread of Christianity should encourage us to believe that every Christian may share in its extension. It is not a matter of everyone being able to preach like Paul; it is not necessary that everyone have money to give like Barnabas. Everyone can pray. Intercessory prayer is a force as real as gifts of speech and money.

Thus one of the major forces of Christianizing the world may be exerted in the secret places, among the humblest of believers.

Lord, forgive us if ever we should relax our prayers. May we too help as did the Christians of old in the spread of the gospel by means of prayer. Amen.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 23

Abide in Christ—John 15:1-12

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Christ is the indispensable one. I was addressing the students of the University of Texas on this subject some time ago. The women's gymnasium was filled at ten o'clock with hundreds of girls who had requested that the minister address them in a candid presentation of what Christianity offered to them. I spoke a second time at eleven o'clock, emphasizing that, according to the Bible, none of us can do anything apart from him.

Each time scores of the young women came by to confess, many of them in tears, how life without Jesus had broken down or met with failure apart from him. Others joyfully testified of some recent victory through him.

One of the main ends being sought by intelligent men and women today is a real meaning to life. Apart from Jesus Christ no satisfactory meaning to life can be discovered. It is he alone who can bring life and immortality to light. To abide in him is to find meaning and motive for life.

O Christ, thou hast the secret. Without thee we grope and fail. May we abide in thee always. Amen.

## BAPTIST TRAINING UNION READINGS

For Individual Devotions

M.—Jerusalem Captured. Jer. 39:4-18

T.—Jeremiah in Egypt. Jer. 43:1-7

W.—Thanksgiving. 1 Thess. 1

T.—Paul's Labors. 1 Thess. 2:1-15

F.—The Dead in Christ. 1 Thess. 4

S.—The Bonds of Christian Fellowship. Luke

22:14-20; John 17:6-8, 20-21

S.—Christ's Second Coming. 1 Thess. 5:1-11

LESSON FOR JUNE 30, 1946

# Working for a Christian World

Mark 16:15-16, 19-20; Luke 24:45-49; Acts 2:46-47; 5:42

Explained in Daily Reading for Monday

Memory Selection: Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15.

## MONDAY, JUNE 24

Christ Commissions His Friends—Luke 24:44-49

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

49 And, behold, I send the promise of the Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

The disciples were transformed by a presence, the presence of Jesus. As two of them, very disconsolate, walked across the Judean hills toward sunset, they became aware of the presence and their hearts burned within them.

As the eleven assembled in a room, the doors being shut, suddenly they were aware of the presence in their midst, one whom they could not deny nor doubt. As they were engaged by the sea, all at once they were startled by the presence whose identity they recognized by indubitable signs.

Thus Jesus recalled and recommissioned the disciples. They were to go forth now with unshaken confidence and with a clear message to be witnesses of him everywhere. We, too, must become aware of the Great Companion and Interpreter if we are to give our witness. Our hearts must burn within us in awareness of his presence, in the sense of the preciousness of his companionship and the light of his interpreta-

tion of life. With this awareness we also may prevail.

Oh, come to us in our lonely ways, in our darkened understanding, and open to us the meaning of life, O Christ. Amen.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 25

Peter Preaches the Gospel—Acts 2:32-36

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Peter's sermon in Jerusalem and Paul's sermon in Athens have often been compared, and not a few times to the disadvantage of Peter's effort. Whatever the comparative merits, it probably will be agreed that, rhetorically speaking, Paul's was the more artistically constructed.

Why was it, then, that Peter had such statistical success while Paul met with such little success according to numbers?

It has been suggested that Peter was surrounded by a praying church, while Paul stood alone, unsupported by co-operating believers. We know how that is in our Christian efforts today. It has also been argued that Peter preached to a company which had previous preparation, a certain spiritual background, whereas Paul spoke to those to whom his doctrine was a novelty, men with a pagan background. If these



are right, it serves to enforce the influence of fellowship in Christian effort.

¶ We pray thee, Father, to give to all thy people the understanding of how they may undergird the preacher with their prayers. Amen.

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26

Peter and John Heal a Lame Man—Acts 3:1-10

1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

10 And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

This incident became a general favorite with the preachers during the great depression of the 1930's, especially that verse, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee." Perhaps it took a depression to teach us that there are values which far surpass money. It required a depression to enable us to evaluate a lame beggar for his true worth in the sight of God and his potential value to the world.

A large church which, because of changes in residential quarters, found itself in a slum section of a city dismissed its evening worship under fear of danger from the surrounding inhabitants. The members were not ready to forsake their site, for

their beautiful building had been designed by Sir Christopher Wren; but they made little effort to change the environment of their church.

What if they had earnestly sought to win these neighbors to Christ, sympathetically, compassionately evaluated these denizens of the slums; what if they had organized to supply better housing? They could have evangelized and not fossilized.

¶ O Christ the healer, heal us of our shortened vision. Amen.

### THURSDAY, JUNE 27

Philip Instructs an Ethiopian—Acts 8:26-35

26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

Was Philip a layman soul-winner? In this incident behold how competent he was for

the task. First, he was obedient to the Holy Spirit's guidance. It required great abandon to that guidance to leave a successful revival in Samaria and go into the desert, to deal with a single individual instead of with admiring crowds.

Moreover, he was adaptable. By climbing into the chariot and sitting down with a man of different race and color, he put himself on the same level with the man whom he would win.

Furthermore, he was Bible-read. He knew how to explain the Scriptures.

Last of all, he "preached unto him Jesus," the only Saviour. How many laymen really know how to lead a soul to Christ?

A man met with violence and was about to die in the street. Realizing his condition, he begged for someone to tell him how to be saved. All in the dense crowd about him stood silent and helpless until a businessman knelt down beside the prostrate man and told him simply and clearly how to look to Jesus and be saved. Could you have told him?

¶ Holy Spirit, be our Guide; show us the meaning of the Scriptures and let us be ready to help the lost. Amen.

### FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Samaritans Hear and Accept—Acts 8:5-17

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was great joy in that city.

9 But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

11 And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of

God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

By this time the Christian leaders of the early church had accepted the universal character of their religion. They no longer held themselves superior to other races. They were willing to accept the mongrel Samaritans, once so cordially despised by the Jewish people.

Perhaps Philip's Grecian connections aided the widening of his Christian sympathy. Anyway, he preached the gospel in Samaria like his Master, only with greater apparent success than did his Lord before him. The revival movement grew to large proportions. Marked social reform accompanied the spiritual experience.

There was another accompaniment usually noted among the results of such spiritual movements: that was the joy which pulsed in many hearts and homes. Routed evils gave place to virtues which gladden human abodes. Nothing is as sad and sorrowful as sin; nothing is as bright and joyous as right living, when human relations are true and normal. Oh, for such a revival to sweep America!

¶ Lord, send a revival to our city and let it begin in us. Amen.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Peter Preaches to a Roman Household—Acts 10:34-48

34 ¶ Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all.)

37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

44 ¶ While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

It would seem that after a glorious demonstration of divine favor, such as occurred in the household of Cornelius, the apostle would have been encouraged to hasten with the gospel to the ends of the earth. He had not stammered there in proclaiming the free, universal gospel in that Roman home. "God shows no partiality" (Godspeed), he declared.

Page Sixty-four

Why then, should he ever dissimulate? There is strong evidence, however, that Peter lived to carry the message to the imperial city of Rome itself, there to die on a cross as did his Saviour. So the vision and the experience were not in vain after all.

¶ O Saviour, make all thy followers to see that there are no social barriers in the brotherhood of man. Amen.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 30

To the Gentiles—Acts 13:46-49

46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

These narrow, bigoted folk of the synagogue to whom the missionaries came could not encompass the purpose of their religion.

Henceforth no favor would be shown the Chosen People whom God had selected out of all the earth to become a blessing to all nations. They had blindly forfeited their high honor and privilege.

The fact teaches us that none may presume. God will remove the candlestick of the most noted church in Christendom if it ceases to function for the accomplishment of the divine will. He will reject you and me if we are not concerned with doing his will!

¶ Lord, save us from becoming castaways. Let us seek, find, and do thy will. Amen.

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T.—Indorsed in Jerusalem. Gal. 2:1-10  
F.—Faith, Not the Law, Saves. Gal. 3:1-14  
S.—Working for a Christian World. Mark 16:15-16.  
19-20; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 2:46-47; 5:42  
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