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# Home Department Magazine

**SOUTHERN BAPTIST  
CONVENTION SERIES**

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# LIST OF LESSONS

FOR

## Second Quarter, 1916

### April 2—CONVERSION OF SAUL.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 9: 1-31 (cf. also Gal. 1: 11-17; 1 Tim. 1: 12-17).

MOTTO TEXT—"Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. 1: 15.)

### April 9—JENEAH AND DOBICAH.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 9: 32-43 (cf. also Prov. 31: 10-31).

MOTTO TEXT—"In all things showing thyself an ensample of good works." (Titus 2: 7.)

### April 16—PETER AND CORNELIUS.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 10: 1-23.

MOTTO TEXT—"There is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him." (Rom. 10: 12.)

### April 23—THE GOSPEL FOR THE GENTILES.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 10: 24-48.

MOTTO TEXT—"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10: 34, 35.)

### April 30—PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 12: 1-19.

MOTTO TEXT—

"The angel of Jehovah encompasseth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Psalm 34: 7.)

### May 7—THE MISSIONARIES OF ANTIOCH.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 11: 19-30; 12: 25-13-12.

MOTTO TEXT—"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." (Matt. 28: 19.)

### May 14—"LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES."

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 13: 13-52.

MOTTO TEXT—

"I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 13: 47.)

### May 21—THE CRIPPLE OF LYSTRA.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 14.

MOTTO TEXT—"He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength." (Isaiah 40: 29.)

### May 28—THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 15: 1-35.

MOTTO TEXT—"For freedom did Christ set us free." (Gal. 5: 1a.)

### June 4—THE CALL OF THE WEST.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 15: 36-16: 15.

MOTTO TEXT—"Come over into Macedonia, and help us." (Acts 16: 9.)

### June 11—SOWING AND REAPING (Temperance Lesson).

LESSON PASSAGE, Galatians 6.

MOTTO TEXT—"God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6: 7.)

### June 18—THE PHILIPPIAN JAILOR.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 16: 6-40.

MOTTO TEXT—"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." (Acts 16: 31.)

### June 25—REVIEW.—THE PHILIPPIAN CHRISTIANS.

MOTTO TEXT—"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Phil. 4: 8.)

# Home Department Magazine

VOLUME VII.

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## Help From the Home Department.

MARSHALL LOUIS MERTINS.

CAN the Home Department pupil help the main school? To suggest such a thing seems strange to some folks. Of course they understand that the weekly offering from the Home Department helps to buy literature, and that the occasional missionary offering helps the mission budget; and they understand how that the total enrollment is helped by their being members; but that there is any other way in which they can be a real help has not occurred to them. There is no part of a church that ought not to be utilized to help every other department. The church ought to be coöperative. And so in this way, the Home Department ought to be made to add its share to the general uplift of the church at large, and the Sunday school in particular.

The members of the Home Department can help materially with their prayers. If our Sunday school is to be a power in evangelism, then the prayers of those at home will count for much. Some of our best folks, oftentimes, are kept at home on account of ill-health. But ill-health is no barrier between that soul and the throne of grace. It was through two good, bed-ridden women that the Lord sent Moody to England, and brought that great revival that swept the islands through his preaching. These women could not attend church, but they prayed that God would send a revival, and the result was the mighty work of Moody and Sankey. Suppose these two had been satisfied to remain in idleness. Suppose they had said: "We cannot go, therefore, we will remain idle." Doubtless the revival would not have come at that time. God used his work of grace. He can use every member of the Home Department in the same way.

And the Home Department member can be a booster, too. I do not feel it at all out of place to put boasting alongside of praying. One of the greatest churches in America owes much of its life and success in reaching men, to the fact that its 3,000 members are boosters. They think their church the greatest, and their Sunday school the greatest, and their pastor the greatest of any church and Sunday school and pastor in the

whole country. In such a spirit the members of the Home Department can boost the Sunday school to all comers. Even though shut in, the Home Department folks see people, and to these they can take the message of what the church is doing.

And because of the fact that they are shut in and have much more time for meditation and study, the members of this department can plan and advise. There must be great care exercised right here, lest the plans they evolve be too theoretical. But theory is necessary, and the practical superintendent can add practical ideas to those advanced, and thus avoid that trouble. There are many good ideas in Sunday school work that never come to light because those thinking them out are out of touch with the officers. The Home Department ought, thus, to be brought into closer touch with the main school, and especially with the superintendent, and the plans of its members conserved. The members of this department can also advise in many instances. Many things are not seen by those who are near at hand, while those who are in a measure out of touch see them, or hear of them and can give most wholesome advice concerning them.

But one of the great works possible for the members of the Home Department is that of personal evangelism. This is a work that can never cease. When it stops the wheels of progress in the kingdom of God will stop turning. It may be that there will drop into the home a Sunday school boy or girl who are almost persuaded to do that their better nature calls them to do. A word in the quietness of the home to them, and a prayer with them, will set them on that way that is right. Or a woman untouched by the Sunday school may come in. What an opportunity for the shut-in to do effective work for the kingdom! God's plan has always been to save men by individuals. There can never come to pass what we sometimes sing, the saving of a nation in a day, unless it would be by saving each member thereof individually. We cannot save as a whole. And the work of the members of the Home Department is to "win one." There can be no greater work vouchsafed to any man or woman.

## Finding Things to Enjoy.

ANNE GUILBERT MAHON.

"WHAT a change there is in Mrs. Arnold," said one friend to another at a large reception. "She used to be so sad, so depressed—and, of course, she had troubles and worries enough to depress her; but now she is so different. She looks so happy and well. Have her circumstances changed?"

"No," replied the other woman, "I believe she has just as many trials and worries as she used to have. It is her attitude that has changed. She told me she had learned the wisdom of *finding* things to enjoy in life, not waiting for them to come to her, but looking for them, going out of her way to find them—even among the trials and troubles—and she has found that true happiness comes that way."

How many of us really go out of our way to find things to enjoy? Do we not rather wait and expect things to come to us which will make us happy and then complain or fret if they do not come or if we meet with disappointment and adversity?

We are keen enough when it comes to finding the disappointments, the hardships, the trials, the sorrows. Are we equally alert to find our blessings, to find things to enjoy?

"Just my luck!" How often do we hear this expression when misfortunes come? Do we hear it as often when the really good things happen?

If we were as quick to discern the pleasant things, the "lucky" things, as we are to detect the unpleasant, would not our lives be far richer, fuller, happier? Would not everyone around us be happier because of us?

It depends all on the way we look at life, its problems, its disappointments, and its blessings as to whether we shall be happy or not, and as to whether we shall make others happy. One who persistently looks on the bright side, who meets and conquers obstacles bravely, who bears trials and sorrows with fortitude is usually the one who says he has had "a happy life." Such a person ignores the unpleasant things, the trials, the hardships, even the sorrows, and persistently clings to the happy memories and the bright spots in life. He has learned the wisdom of cultivating resources which will make him happy in spite of adverse circumstances, losses and disappointments. He has determinedly gone out of his way to *find* things to enjoy—homely, trivial, everyday things they may have been, but he has set himself to find them and enjoy them, and he is happier in consequence and lives a sunny, helpful life.

Certain things there are in this life which can always be depended upon to make us happy, to cause pleasure, in spite of the troubles and vicissitudes which may come. Wise is the person who cultivates these general pleasures, who makes the most of them, and who finds his enjoyment in them, for he has resources which solitude, bereavement, disappointment, loss, trouble cannot touch. Earthly possessions, human companionships, congenial environment, all are subject to loss and change. Wise is the person who cultivates pleasures which will stand by him when other things fail, of which he can be sure no matter where he may be situated, no matter how many changes may come into his life.

One of the never-falling sources of pleasure is a love of nature. Wherever one's lot may be cast this is an unfailing source of joy and entertainment. He who takes genuine pleasure in a beautiful sunset, a bit of scenery, the beauties of the changing seasons, the appreciation of even small glimpses of woodland, field, highway, who enters with interest into the absorbing study and joy of contact with wild flowers, bird and animal life, has a source of pleasure which will last through earthly life. Wise is he who cultivates a love of nature, who seeks her companionship, who experiences her largeness, her comfort, her joy.

Another source of happiness is found in reading. There are books to suit our every mood. There are books which will take us out of ourselves and make us forget trouble and vexation. There are books which will furnish pleasant companionship for us, which will make us think, which will stimulate us to do the best that is in us. Always are books ready to minister to our various needs and moods and add to our happiness.

Making the most of our talents is another source of happiness. No one is utterly devoid of talent, with one it may be music, with another art, another may have mechanical prowess. As we develop along the lines we are best fitted for and pursue the avocation which to us is most attractive, do we find advancement, self-expression, happiness?

Work for others is perhaps the most satisfying of all personal resources which are given us in this world. To lose oneself in philanthropic work, in large or small movements for the advancement and betterment of mankind, forgetting one's sorrows and losses in ministering to others, is the source of the

deepest, most satisfying joy. Work for others is a remedy which has healed more broken hearts, put more life and interest and enthusiasm into listless, heartick men and women, than any other thing in the world. It is a resource which is all-absorbing, which never fails, and which is rich in twofold

blessing—the happiness of the individual and the enrichment and happiness of mankind.

These resources, these things to enjoy, are wholly independent of life's changes, of vicissitudes, of bereavements even. Wise is the person who cultivates his resources, who *finds* things to enjoy.

## Our Mistakes as Parents.

WM. LUNSFORD, D.D.

We are never so sensible of our own mistakes as when about to call attention to the mistakes of others. For that reason we should approach such a task with no affected timidity.

LIFE IS MADE UP OF A VARIETY OF RELATIONS.

And as long as we are tenants of the body, we shall make mistakes in them all. The object of this message is not to hold up an ideal or an impossible standard in the matter of governing our children, but to call attention to some mistakes that are so common, and at the same time so ruinous, as to make reformation an indispensable thing.

One of the greatest thinkers of our country said some time ago that civilization was face to face with a danger of the most alarming kind; the decay of family life.

He discoursed on the subject with marked ability, bestowing his disapprobation on the modern woman, saying among other things: "The chances are against a woman P. H. D. ever entering wifehood or motherhood." He attributed this not so much to her education as to her prearranged plan of life.

It is true that the statisticians of repute in America, England, France, and Germany have been calling attention to the decay of the large family.

A modern American writer has said that the large family in America is doomed, and we might as well make the most of it.

I. *We have made a mistake in allowing family government to break down.*

There is hardly any such thing as family government any more. Children in this day know but little of discipline, or of living by any rule in the home. Children now are looked upon as objects to be petted, coddled, entreated, begged, persuaded, hired, and are never really commanded except in fits of irritation and anger. The Scripture was to command and enforce.

II. *We make a mistake in not realizing that we are responsible (and will be so held) for the character of our children.*

We shall soon be gone. Not many parents here today will be here twenty-five years from

now. Many will be gone in ten years; some in five, and doubtless some in one. Twenty years from now the minister who stands in your pulpit will look into new faces. Not many adults here now will be here then. If not dead, old age will have driven you in doors, from which place you will look out upon a world, in which you have lost your place of activity.

We are being pursued by a great army of children who will capture everything. They will be running your banks, and stores, and courts, and railroads, and schools, and government.

What will be their character? The responsibility is on us as parents; God has put it there, the children have put it there; society has put it there. The child is everything. With respect to its training, everything dwindles by comparison.

III. *We make a mistake in the kind of culture we give our children.*

There are three things here to be considered, the physical, moral, and intellectual. Neither should be neglected. There is nothing more important to the child than physical culture.

Physical culture has become a modern science. Physicians of all schools have found that there is nothing that so contributes to the making of a sound body as the physical culture of the child. It is amazing how readily the body responds to that sort of thing. A boy or girl with poor development, with a narrow and sunken chest, can be made strong and rugged in an amazingly short time by careful attention to this side of the child's training. Deep breathing, dumb bells, tennis courts, long walks and open windows at night are the very best of modern physicaans.

It is a lamentable mistake not to watch the physical side of my child's development.

There is, too, the intellectual. Our mistake here is carrying the emphasis too far. It is books, books, books. By and by weak eyes develop, and stooped shoulders appear, and the health cracks, and then we go back and try to bring up the physical. Often it is too late, and we send out upon the world a boy

or girl not physically able to cope with the problems and tasks of life.

If, on the other hand, the body should keep strong, and our children close their school days as intellectual prodigies, if the spiritual has been neglected, we have given them only a one-sided culture. Seek first the kingdom of God is the divine plan for a long and useful life.

So many are seeking first for their children all other things, and leaving off the one indispensable thing. The time will soon come to that child of yours when nothing but religion will answer its needs. There are thousands of questions that can never be settled outside of it. Sorrows on top of sorrows, financial troubles that bow the head and bow the heart, loved ones will die, mother will be taken. What will you do then?

You will need nothing so much then as your Bibles. A young mother sat reading her Bible to her children gathered around her. She cried: "Mother, what makes you cry?" "I was just thinking that this is mother's old Bible, and how she read it. She read it in trouble; she read it when little Johnnie died; she read it that day the sheriff came and nailed the writ on the door; she read it when the old home went for debt; she read it when father went away to live with God; when stooped with the burdens of life she read it, and when sitting at home too old to go out any more, she still clung to her old Bible, and when at last ripe for the glory land, and the light of heaven struck through the golden locks folded back over the wrinkled temples, she had us read it to her, until the gates of life lifted and let her in to eternal spring-time and morning."

IV. *We make a mistake in postponing the spiritual culture of our children.*

1. *A child cannot be spiritually developed if public worship is left out.* One of the first things that God did for ancient Israel was to provide a place for public worship. Jesus as a boy, found every Sunday morning the path that led straight to the synagogue. He continued that habit as a man. The same thing was true of his disciples. We hear a good bit of talk about male absenteeism. That is not nearly so bad as child absenteeism. "The manless pew is the outcome of the childless church."

Before the existence of the Sunday school, children went to church with their parents. Since the Sunday school has flourished, parents have concluded that Sabbath school does for their children what the church formerly did. There was never a greater mistake. But as a result of that sort of thinking, Sabbath after Sabbath crowds of children, young girls and youths, file out of the Sunday school

with no thought of public worship. It has been well said that to make a church-goer out of a man—

2. *You have to catch him when he is young.* A boy's habit grows on him just as his flesh does. Good habits will make a strong man. A church-going boy will in almost every instance become a church-going man. The young men and women who attend our Sunday morning services, have been attending church in nine instances out of ten, ever since they were old enough to go to church. Those who go away have been doing that all the time.

I believe with all my heart in the Sunday school. But if parents and teachers have concluded that the Sabbath school can be substituted for attendance upon the preaching service, then the Sabbath school has become the enemy of the church.

Instead of becoming a helper to build up the church, it has become an enemy to break it down.

You can't begin spiritual training too early. The first few years of a child's life will determine what he is to be in most instances. Children should be brought to Christ early in life, and from that hour should become church-goers.

V. *We make a mistake in not becoming the spiritual leaders of our children.*

The father must lead the child. A minister says that his first recollection of his father was standing at the bottom of some stone steps. His father led him up. He could not have climbed without his father. The father must lead the child. You can't stand off and say to your child, you go ahead into the Christian life, by and by, maybe I will follow on. The same thing is true as to church attendance. You can't stay at home and expect your child to go. You must go yourself. The only precious heritage you can leave your child is what you have been. Neither your good advice nor gold can take the place of that.

Said a father: "I rode along a country road with my little boy some time ago. I found that he was speaking to my friends just as I spoke to them. One man called my attention to it, and said, 'It is amusing, isn't it?' To me it was anything but amusing. If my boy is to speak as I speak, and walk as I walk, then God help me to walk as a Christian." As parents, we should train our children by leading them in religious matters. We should make that first, but, alas, so many have put education and business above spiritual development; we have placed these things first, and not character, and one of these days we shall find that we have been weighed in the balances and found wanting.

## "Why Doesn't Dad Go?"

ELLIS EVANS.

A SUNDAY school visitor told me that she was once calling in the home of a boy of sixteen years who had gone through the process of "dropping out" of the Sunday school. To the regular Sunday school visitor had been relegated the task of trying to discover just why the boy had "dropped out." She found the lad to be an alert-looking young fellow, manly in his appearance, and unusually attractive. He gave several vague reasons for having discontinued his attendance at Sunday school, and when his mother began to urge him to say that he would go again, he turned upon her and said: "Well, if Sunday school is such a fine place for a fellow to be in, why doesn't dad go?"

Those words, "Why doesn't dad go?" gave the teacher the key to the whole situation. This boy was beginning to feel his budding manhood. He had just entered into the estate of "long pants," and felt it more and more incumbent upon him to do the things that men did. His "dad" did not go to Sunday school. Why should he go? If it was fine and manly for him to go, as his mother had said, why did not his father go? It was a pertinent question. The boy had a right to ask it. No doubt other boys have asked it mentally, if not orally.

Now, it is certain that the real reason why many boys want to drop out of the Sunday school at the "long pants" age is because they now want to do the things that "dad" does. Why does he not go to Sunday school? There are thousands of "dads" in our land, many of them Christian men and members of

churches, who must answer this question to the satisfaction of their sons if they want those sons to remain in the Sunday school. This is certain: The more men there are in the Sunday school the more attractive will the Sunday school be to the boys. The boy is a great imitator. And there is nothing he likes to imitate better than a man. I believe that many a boy smokes, not because he cares a great deal for tobacco, but because "dad" or some other man smokes, and he thinks that it will be manly for him to do as they do. To smoke is to imitate "dad," therefore the boy will smoke.

It would be a good thing if "dad" asked himself the question the boy asks—"why doesn't dad go?" If the father is a Christian man, he surely should feel it to be his duty to set a good example before his children. If it will be helpful to the boy for the father to go to Sunday school, then why should not the father go? Again, the Sunday school has as much to offer the father as it has the son, and what father knows as much about the Bible as he should know? I believe that it would give all men new views of life and higher ideals if they spent an hour a week in the study of the Bible.

The organized class for men has created a new interest in the Sunday school, and has opened the door of opportunity to thousands of men. It makes it still more difficult for "dad" to offer any good reason for not going to Sunday school. The man who is the father of sons cannot set them a better example than by going to Sunday school with them. What "dad" can gainsay this?

## One Row at a Time.

JAMES ELMER RUSSELL.

THE other day I watched two men hoeing a large field of cabbage. There must have been ten acres altogether to hoe and any man who has ever been a "man with a hoe" knows that they had quite a job before them.

How did they go to work? Well, each man took a row, and they followed their separate rows for the whole length of forty rods or so across the field. They did not do any rambolling, hit or miss hoeing. And when one row was finished another was begun. So by taking one row at a time the whole big task was completed.

"One row at a time," I said to myself, "that is the way to accomplish any task, however great." Work before us often seems

impossible of performance because we see the whole field of cabbages instead of the row just at hand.

Members of the Home Department who think they have no time for Bible study will be surprised at the length of the lesson which they can complete in a week if they will take one verse at a time. One verse considered while washing the dishes, one verse brooded over while sweeping the floor, one verse as the overtone of the melody which puts the baby to sleep, one verse memorized while mending the stockings, one verse applied to develop patience under trying circumstances, that is a kind of preparation of the Sunday school lesson which brings large and lasting results.

## The Larger Home.

ELIZABETH FRY PAGE.

This world insists that woman's sphere is the home, and admits that the home is the world's most potent center, a fact concession, as you will readily see, that the ruler of this sphere is rather an imperial personage. The value of a true home and its influences cannot be too highly estimated, and most women, I am glad to observe, are natural home-makers.

The time was when most of the activities of women were confined to their own homes, but modern progress and invention have so lightened the labors of the housekeeper that she has more leisure. She can now look about her and take a more detailed account of the needs of the world, especially the homeless world. Having made her own comfortable and happy and secure, she has time, and happily, inclination, to look after the comfort, safety and happiness of the unmothered.

Economic conditions have forced many women out into the busy world, in the ranks of the wage earner and bread winner. Few women have the time or the physical strength to do domestic work and hold positions in the business world at the same time, and often there is neither mother nor sister, nor any other female relative upon whom they can depend for such cooperation. Many have to leave their homes and go to other places to engage in this bread-and-butter quest, and have there neither friends nor influence.

Many fine young men, to whom home meant all that was really worth while in this life, also find themselves thus adrift, just at the crucial, formative period of their lives. The safety, affection and refinement of home afford the natural bulwark and defense demanded by the exigencies of this critical time. Many mothers of sons and daughters so situated are on their knees continually in behalf of their absent children, and those who are with out this parental interest are hoping and longing and craving in their own hearts for something to supply the lack.

Now, here is the point of my plea. I sing the hymns of a body of women, many of whom little realize their opportunities or their privileges, and who, so far as I am informed up to this date, have been "unwept, unhonored and unsung," so far as public appreciation and recognition is concerned. The paragraphers have had their fling at them, the cartoonists have satirized them, but it becomes my privilege to do them into a prose epic, and I glory in my opportunity.

Stop a moment, men and women, in the midst of your pleasures and your activities,

and take off your hats, while I offer a reverent toast to the Boarding-house Keepers of the World! These are the women who are conducting the Larger Home, these are they who are ministering to your dear ones and mine, providing them with the necessities and comforts which it is beyond us to contribute. True, they do it for a consideration, and many of them from personal necessity, and not from any high philanthropic notion of throwing a home defense around homeless people; but most of them maintain a high standard, and their guests soon instinctively adopt the pace set by the hostess and her family.

Being responsible for the bodily nourishment of a large household three times each day is no small affair. It takes a certain very definite kind of genius to market for a dozen or more boarders, to say nothing of preparing and serving the food in a dainty, appetizing manner after it has been purchased. A book has been written called "The Five Talents of Woman", the five being "To please people, to feed them in dainty ways, to clothe them, to keep them orderly, and to teach them". The first is inseparably bound up in the second, for one of the surest ways to please people is to serve them with dainty food; another is to maintain order and cleanliness in their surroundings.

Many women, when suddenly thrown upon their own resources, find that they have only one talent in the world, and that is for domestic life. Wise are they if they look upon it as God-given, and just as worthy of cultivation as music, art or literary gifts. Fortunately for all parties, women are coming more and more to take this view of a faculty for the domestic arts; and now many realize that it is far better to be a good cook, in love with her work, than an indifferent teacher who dislikes children, or a mediocre musician with a longing after grand opera.

For ten years I have had the good fortune to be a weekly guest at a large boarding-house, kept by a woman who has a perfect genius for home-making in all its details. One feels the home atmosphere as soon as one's foot has crossed over the threshold. The head of the house is a gentlewoman of rare personality, which pervades the entire establishment. The servants speak in low tones, the guests soon adapt themselves to the spirit of the place, and one feels as might a member of a carefully chosen house party. This wonderful woman is never hurried or

hurried, never out of humor, and contact with her will soon restore one who is out of sorts to a normal and healthy state of mind.

Old and young find in her a charming companion, and she is daily making sunshine for many who would otherwise live in a sort of soggy twilight. She is very appreciative of the achievements of others, but seems to have little or no conception of the great work she is quietly accomplishing, day after day. One never hears her speak of her household as if it were a care and burden; in fact, one lives there; one does not merely board. It is, in very fact, a larger home, and its inmates instinctively acquire a sort of family interest in each other; while love for the woman at the helm is warm and unfeeling.

My experiences of boarding have been few, being one of those domestic persons who enjoy the making of home, on however small a scale, but they have been rarely satisfying. On one occasion, when a paying guest for

three months in a very charming home, my hostess and I had such good times, reading, sewing, walking, talking together, that a little boy in the neighborhood, who was rather a close observer for his years, called me aside one day and asked very confidentially: "Say, tell me, are you a boarder?" His past experience had not perhaps revealed to him many relationships such as the one existing between me and my hostess, and I was glad that I failed to exhibit any of the ear-marks of the regulation boarder, even as my hostess failed to reveal the landlady characteristics portrayed in the funny papers.

All honor to these home-makers on the larger scale! May they realize more and more their opportunities, and look with increasing favor upon their calling, until they raise it to the level of a fine art, and know that their influence is second only to that of a mother, the beloved head of the more restricted home circle.

## Unconscious Influences in Training Children.

LUCY G. WHITWELL.

"God gives life to parents and teachers to fashion."—*Lamortaux*.

"The purpose of education is to train the child to live completely."—*Brumbaugh*.

If these statements of two well-known students of child nature are true (and they undoubtedly are), the question arises, "Oh! parents and teachers, how are you fashioning the lives entrusted to your care? What are you doing to help these children to live completely?" Life must be nourished, the soul fed, and there are two ways of doing it—consciously and unconsciously—and the unconscious nourishment—that given and received unconsciously—is the greater power. There are three elements which enter into this unconscious nourishment—personality, environment, and super-human power.

Let us consider personality first. It is not so much the printed page that forms the ideals, opinions, and standards of living of the growing child as it is the daily lives of parents and teachers. Your life is so much more important than your mere words. Emerson expresses that thought both beautifully and forcefully, "What you are thunders so loudly in my ears that I cannot hear what you say you are." Are your "being" and your "saying" identical? Do your acts and your words agree? To adapt Emerson again, "A good life is a silent argument to strengthen your children's good principles."

Many a parent and teacher is all too prone to say to the child—by act, if not by speech, "Do as I say, and not as I do," but human nature doesn't work that way. Children are born imitators, and it is the example, rather than the precept, which they follow. Then, oh, parent! oh, teacher!

"For thyself in all thy work take care,  
That every act the highest meaning bear;  
Wouldst thou unite the child for aye with thee,  
Then let him with the Holy One thy union see.

"By every noble thought with which thy soul is fired,  
The child's young soul will surely be inspired;  
And canst thou any better gift bestow  
Than union with the Eternal One to know?"

If you are to be the truest help to growing souls under your care, "your own pasturage must be, not things, but in reality the living Christ."

Environment "with its subtle atmosphere" is the second element to be considered. The conditions which surround a life have great influence upon that life, for life has a tendency to become like that which surrounds it. It is easy to follow the line of least resistance and be like other people.

I recall reading of a family of boys who, one after another, ran away to sea. The mother of these boys was bewailing the fact to a visitor, and said she could not understand the boys' interest in the sea. None of their relatives had been sailors, so she was sure the taste had not been inherited. The visitor noticed the many beautiful marine views hung upon the walls of the living room. She spoke of them, and the mother admitted that she was a great admirer of ocean scenes. The visitor was taken to the rooms occupied by the boys when they were at home, and found what she expected—fine marine views. All over that home were similar pictures, ocean views from near and far; the ocean quiet and peaceful, the ocean lashed by the fury of the storms. On all sides during their boyhood those sons had been surrounded by the influence of the sea, and yet the mother wondered why the sea called to them. How little she realized the important part that environment plays in unconscious nourishment.

One of our city papers recently printed an incident which shows plainly how a changed environment will often mean a changed life. "In one of our schools there was a landscape view which hung upon the wall in an upper hall. It was merely a scene wherein is depicted a field of waving grasses and deep red, filmy-leaved poppies. Through the center of the field a wagon road leads away over the hill, and on the road are a woman and a child. The picture is not sensational in the least. On the contrary, it only suggests rest and quiet and immunity from the cares which are part and parcel of city life.

"A boy of ten years was a pupil in this school. He was the product of a wretched environment. He was not merely a mischievous boy—he was bad. He knew everything he ought not to know, and he was always putting his knowledge to the worst possible use. He was not only bad, he was sly; and the teachers, while they knew instinctively when he was the culprit, usually had a difficult time in producing evidence to that effect. Every method of control was tried on him. He had been beaten, he had been pleaded with. He had been imprisoned, and he had been put upon his honor, and each time he had proved the method unfitted to cope with the demands of that particular case.

"One day the principal of the school came upon him standing alone before the picture mentioned. 'Like the picture, my boy?' she said, interestedly. The boy turned to her, his eyes haggard with longing. 'What's it mean?' he asked, huskily. The principal, controlling her surprise at the unusual conduct of the 'worst boy in the school,' told

him kindly about the field and the poppies, and gave an elaborate description of the country. When she had finished he pulled a grubby brown hand across his eyes and stammered, 'A—a—feller couldn't help hein' good in a place like dat.'

"The principal told this story to folks interested in walfs, and as a result this boy is now at work in the fields where he is as happy as a prince, and talks largely of the time when he will possess a farm of his own."

A well-known writer says, "The home does not need to be in the slums to injure a growing life. It needs only to be *Christless*. This may seem like a very radical statement, but it is nevertheless true." How important, then, that the parents be Christians and surround their children with Christian influences. Life's struggle is hard enough at the best, so let us give every uplift possible. You have a choice plant. What care you give it. All its surroundings are carefully regulated: air, light, soil, moisture, that it may develop to the highest degree. Are you as thoughtful of your child? Are his surroundings as favorable as you can make them? Is home the center of your child's social life? What about the games he is playing; the stories he is told; the books he is reading; the conversation he is holding? Are you carefully over-seeing and planning all these in your home? "The true home is a bulwark of the nation, and the ante-chamber to one of God's many mansions. May God have pity on the thousands of children who live in houses, but are homeless."

The only power which can successfully combat a bad environment is the super-human power. "It is not an easy thing in the stress of the visible to remember the greater power of the Invisible." We are so taken up with the perfecting of systems and methods that we are prone to forget that God does not always use men and methods in approaching a life. The brooding of the Spirit upon the face of the deep (Gen. 1: 2) is illustrative of his brooding upon a soul. A parent or teacher can do no greater service for those under his care than to pray fervently that the "power of the highest may overshadow" them. If a soul is to "live completely" it needs the complete Christ for itself, and the Good Book assures us, "Ye are complete in him."

In looking back over my school life and picking out the teachers whose influence over me for good was the greatest, I find that, without exception, they were followers of God. In training our children, let us not forget the great power of personality, of environment, and of the super-human power—"these three, but the greatest of these is" the last.

## Intolerance or Mercy?

MAUDE LAWRENCE WESTCOTT.

I HAVE often pondered over the following remark which I overheard from the lips of an intelligent woman: "We are, as a nation, too tolerant of evil," she said, "too ready to overlook lawlessness and crime. We forgive and forget too easily. This removing the ban of our disapproval so readily from the wrongdoer is little less than an encouragement of sin." At first glance it would seem that there is some truth in the arraignment. The path made easy for the feet is the one oft trodden. Sterner measures in dealing with the culprit might wisely be employed in the putting down of evil. But would this be the result—the only effect—of such methods, we must stop and ask ourselves. Looking back through history, has it always worked thus? Rather, has not intolerance, in the past, led to the guillotine, the inquisition and the martyr's fire? There is much more to this subject than the speaker grasped when she denounced this wonderful spirit of brotherhood. May it not be that the greater soul, recognizing its own kinship with the dust, has in all times refused to sit in judgment upon the erring one? And again, do we condone the crime itself by excusing the sinner? There is, of course, a "winking at evil" which comes from the sharing of the fruits and triumphs of sin, but this has nothing to do with that beautiful "quality of mercy, that droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven"—the mercy which we would accord the unfortunate wrongdoer whose sin is left behind him, and for whom the road must be smoothed by the hands of love and gentleness ere he can regain the narrow path again.

No, the fear of too great tolerance is utterly groundless. "Forgive until seventy times seven" is the message from a Higher Source. The advocates of this harsher policy would have us, like the priest and the Levite, "pass by on the other side," but we must remember it was the Samaritan who was commended by our Lord,—he who stepped aside from the beaten path to bind up the wounds of the

fallen and help him to regain the life of health and usefulness once more. Whether the "thieves" be those of soul or body, the need of the unfortunate who fall among them is equally great, and the "charity that covereth a multitude of sins" is today, as it ever will be, the greatest thing in the world.

It must be remembered, too, that the great and glaring misdemeanors which we would be slow to forget, may not, in the last analysis, measure up to the meanness of the little hidden faults, the "secret sins" from which the psalmist prayed to be delivered. The man who enters the world again from a convict's cell, the woman who would rise from the depths of a misstep, have suffered the penalties for their crimes; that of which they have been guilty was, in each case, perhaps, a sin against self. Compare these with the minor (?) faults of slandering, evil speaking, unkindness, ill temper and their ilk, and what, in all fairness, is the verdict? Are not the latter wrongs, directed, as they are against others, quite as culpable in the eyes of the God of justice as the other great evils at which society stands agape? frail creatures of earth, the only claim, after all, that one may make to superiority, lies in the possession of the kindlier spirit, the more loving heart and helpful hand. Not in the I-am-better-than-thou attitude is supremacy found one above another; the "glass house" of the soul is not sufficiently proof against a counter attack to warrant exercises in stone throwing.

The benefits of the loving heart and forgiving spirit are not all to the recipient of mercy. Of a truth "it blesseth him who gives and him who takes." The life that spreads its mantle of charity over other lives, less fortunate, is in accordance with the divine plan of universal brotherhood, and daily gains in strength and enriching experiences, while the intolerant soul, wrapping itself in its own self-righteousness, is doomed a victim to the withering, blighting effects of narrowness and self-centeredness.

## Crooked Tempers.

CHRISTINA ROSS FRAME.

"You say that Jane Ann's temper is as crooked and crabbed as a pole fence. Well, why shouldn't it be?"

I was dumb with surprise at Aunt Ellen's sudden change of base. She had been listening to my strictures upon Jane Ann's peculi-

arities of temperament for the last five minutes, and apparently had agreed with every statement I had made.

"Well, why shouldn't it be?" she repeated the question, and then went on briskly to answer it.

"Why shouldn't Jane Ann be short-tempered? It would be a marvel if she wasn't when one considers the monotonous life she leads. You mark my words. It is the monotony in life that breeds crankiness in a mighty lot of dispositions. To feel that you've gone on day after day, for years, doing exactly the same things, pinching and scraping and trying to make ends meet, sacrificing yourself for your family, and then to realize that you're not getting ahead, maybe slipping behind, and wrinkles and gray hairs are coming, and the joy of youth is so dim and far away that it's like a dream; but the monotonous round of house work has to go on, and the grumbling and fault finding has to be borne. Oh, well, is it any wonder that when a spick-and-span white-linen arrayed young cousin comes with an invitation to join

a Home Culture Club, Jane Ann should be snippy. The poor thing has plenty of brains, but in the round of her busy days there is no pause for club meetings.

The next time you go to call upon her, suppose that instead of talking loftily about "culture" and "books with a psychological trend," that you take her one of the bright, illustrated magazines. She might pinch time to read a short article or a story while she watched the dinner cooking. And when you come away, just go to the sewing machine and bundle up that big pile of work (it's always there) and bring it home with you. Your fingers are nimble, and you've plenty of time in which to finish it. Then you can note what the effect of the little personal thoughtfulness in regard to her monotonous round will have upon Jane's pole-fence temper.

## The Empty Chair.

SUSAN HUBBARD MARTIN.

She had been in falling health for many weeks. Day by day her sweet face grew thinner, her step more languid. The old doctor upon passing her a visit one day had taken off his glasses and wiped the moisture from them.

"Nellie," he said, for he had known her from a child, "You'll have to give up; you must take a long rest. Try another climate. Go south, or west, but go somewhere, clear away from things. You must. If you stay here you will not stay anywhere long. There child, I don't mean to alarm you; but you're in a bad state. We want to save you if we can. You are much needed."

Young Mrs. Dalton had looked at him with quivering lips.

"But—my work," she cried. "My place in the Mission Circle, my Sunday school class, Dr. Gray I can't leave my little girls."

"You must leave everything," said the doctor, gravely, and with finality.

Young Mrs. Gardiner cried when the news came to her. Without a moment's delay she put on her hat and coat and hurried over to her friend's.

"You're not going away?" she said. "Why, Nellie, what am I—to do? You're my best counselor, my anchor, the one I fly to when I'm sick of everything. The friend of my life—I might say. No one can help me as you do, or ever can. Oh, Nellie, must you go?"

But even as she spoke, noting the hollow cheeks, she knew for a time at least she must give her up. The two friends represented

two types. The worldly and the spiritual—and yet, with it all each loved the other dearly. Young Mrs. Dalton was interested in nothing so much as the work of the kingdom. Young Mrs. Gardiner was not interested in that at all. Society claimed her time and attention—society was what she lived for. She went about in a continuous round of luncheons, receptions, and teas. She dressed in the latest style, and yet, in spite of her gay worldliness, there was no one she loved as she did sweet, spiritual Nellie Dalton.

But when the parting came, all she could say was, "I'll try to bear it, Nellie; but please tell me what I am going to do."

"Go to Sunday school," whispered young Mrs. Dalton, as she put her arms about her. The next moment she was helped to the waiting train.

"For my sake, Lydia," she whispered, weakly, as she lifted her pale face to be kissed. And with a sob in her throat young Mrs. Gardiner gave the required promise.

True to her word, she went into the Sunday school room the next Sunday. She looked at the circle of girls that had comprised young Mrs. Dalton's class. There they sat, in a somewhat subdued little group, and, facing them was an empty chair. The chair their beloved teacher had been wont to sit in. She looked closer and saw one little girl brush the tears from her eyes. Young Mrs. Gardiner seeing it, forced back her own. It seemed to her that the beloved friend must be sitting there among her little girls. The girls she had loved so dearly, and had taught so prayerfully. The superintendent seeing her,

came over to where she stood. He was a tall, broad-shouldered man with iron gray hair. He saw her tears. "You must excuse me," she said; "but that vacant chair touches me so. Who is going to lead those little girls? She loved them every one. Why could she not have stayed? No one can teach that class as she did." The superintendent nodded understandingly.

"She was a wonderful teacher," he said, gently. And then he looked at young Mrs. Gardiner.

"There is no one to teach them, if you will not," he added, gravely.

"Me?" she cried, as if she did not rightly understand. He nodded.

"I have looked my resources over; I have no one for that particular class," he paused. "In what better way could you serve this dear friend of yours than by taking up her work?" he asked.

"But—I am so inexperienced," gasped young Mrs. Gardiner.

"Get experience then," was the brisk reply.

"And I haven't the knowledge of the Bible I should have," she added.

"You can obtain it."

"Neither have I the spirituality she was blessed with."

"God will give you that," was the solemn reply.

There was a pause. Young Mrs. Gardiner

stood there in silence. She looked at the circle of little girls, at the empty chair that spoke so eloquently of its absent occupant, and then in that moment it seemed to cry out to her as things inanimate had never done before. Something else took hold of her. A force she had hitherto not reckoned with. Into her careless, pleasure-loving soul God laid the finger of his love. She felt as if she must get right down where she stood and pray for forgiveness. In the sight of the empty chair she came to herself. She started to walk away. The superintendent looked at her.

"You're not going, Mrs. Gardiner?" he said. She shook her head.

"No; I'm never going away from Sunday school again. I'm going to take that empty chair."

The superintendent followed her up to where the circle of little girls sat, quiet, sorrowful, and subdued.

"Girls," he explained quietly, "this is your new teacher."

Young Mrs. Gardiner looked at them. Her own eyes, misty with tears, seemed to ask this question: "Can you love me, not as you loved her, but *only* a little?"

But it was the little girl who had been crying herself, who understood. "I'm so glad it's going to be *you*," she said, as she pushed forward the empty chair.

## Until He Was Sunshiny.

EDGAR L. VINCENT.

A wee laddie I know is quite like the rest of us in one way. At times he loses his patience and storms about for a moment in a way that brings the clouds to his otherwise sweet face and leads him to hurl his playthings right and left.

But our little man has another thing I wish more of us had. After the bluster of the first moment of impatience is over, all of his own accord, away he runs to be all by himself in mamma's room. What he does there alone, we do not just know, although we have often wondered. Surely a battle royal goes on for a time.

And then, out he comes again, his face all sunlit, the clouds far gone, and a glad ring in his voice.

"Now I'm sunshiny! Now I'm sunshiny!" he shouts; and how can we keep from being happy, too?

What if we were all to follow the wee boy's plan, and when things come to annoy us, as they surely do every day, just go away somewhere all by ourselves, and wrestle with

the spirit of evil until we have gained the mastery? Then we, too, might come back with the jubilant cry, "Now I am sunshiny again!"

Now, I said a moment ago that nobody knows just what takes place in the room where the baby boy goes to wait until he is sunshiny once more; and yet, may we not be very sure of one thing? There in the sunlit room he is not alone. If we could but see as some day we will see, we might look into the face of a spirit that meets the little boy and gently leads him on through the shadows of his trouble, until he is safely out on the other side of the cloud, where all is bright and sunny.

And may we not be just as sure that if, when trying things come to us, we just shut the door, as we may shut it anywhere and everywhere, against the world, so that we may be with our own guardian spirits, it will be only a little while before we will have gained the mastery, and may go back radiant and happy to meet the work of the day?

## My Best and Your Worst.

FRANK C. WARD.

THE discussion was carried on in a friendly spirit, but the conclusion was reached, on the part of Miss Critic, with prin self-satisfaction. She imagined she had won the day, and did not once realize the way she did it. This is the way the conversation ran:

"I would never think of doing such a thing," Miss Critic declared. "It is against all my training, and opposed to the practices of a lifetime. No, I'd not do it on any day, let alone Sunday. Do you know that I read only the best books, and unfailingly go to church on Sunday? But she doesn't. And her children! Why, just look at them! They are into everything, and she knows little of where they are half the time, and less of what they are doing. If I had children, you may be sure they'd mind me better than that."

The neighbor who listened to these complaints with patience, now mustered up courage enough to remonstrate. "She is busy, and cannot see every little thing the children do, but I am convinced that she teaches them the same high principles of conduct we both have known her to possess all these years of our acquaintance with her."

"You are right in saying that she does not see all they do. If you lived as near her as I do, you would say that she sees very little they do. Didn't that Jimmie shoot a stone through a window of that vacant house over there with his slingshot? Is there any excuse for that? Do you suppose there really

is? And Sally is quite as rowdyish and destructive as her brother is. Now when my niece, Rosy, comes to spend the day with me, let me assure you that there is no such carrying on here. She's a perfect little lady, or I'd send her home to her mother in short order. And if those children across the street were half as good as she is, I could stand them; but they're not, and never will be."

She snapped out the edict in sharply cut words, and there was no mistaking her attitude in the matter. All her friend could say was of no avail in changing her opinion; she stuck to it to the end. And when the caller left she consoled herself over the victory.

But the caller smothered a skeptical little smile, and when she got home she let the pent-up feelings escape in words.

"Why didn't I think of it sooner? But my thoughts are usually too slow for expression. She was comparing her best with the neighbor's worst. Of course she had the advantage. And she appeared well in the showing she made. I should have told her that."

She was so overcome that she did not speak for a while. But during the silence, she was also thinking. "Well, I suppose we're all guilty of the same thing more than we suppose. When we want to make out a bad case for the other person, we compare our best with their worst. If we'd only do the reverse, and compare our worst with their best, I suspect the tables would be turned."

### Playing Fair.

A GREAT, awkward, double-fisted man and his timid little wife were in a store, pricing furniture. She found what she was looking for, and her big husband heard her say to the clerk: "Yes, this is just what I want, but I'm afraid we cannot afford it."

"Yes, we can!" broke in the big husband, leaning toward her tenderly. "Anything you want we can afford. You certainly did your part making this money, and you are going to enjoy it as long as it lasts."

The smile on that woman's face would have made an artist's hand tingle for the brush and canvas. It was a smile with a happy heart back of it.

The husband's reply might have been a great surprise to some wives, but our timid little woman was not startled at all. She just looked up adoringly into the sun-browned

face as though she expected exactly that kind of an answer.

The man really meant what he said, for the wife bought what she wanted. Not another syllable was needed; those few words furnished a complete picture of the home life of that happily-mated pair.

One does not need to cross the threshold of that home to know that the husband always tries to play fair with the other members of the family. The love-light glows clearly and steadily, and the good man of the house does not demand or expect that his wife shall carry all the fuel to keep the sacred fire burning brightly, neither does the wife ask her husband to furnish all the fuel. It is a mutual affair.

Their home has one pocketbook, and it lies handy in the top bureau-drawer. The

money earned by both husband and wife is not all of it in the bank, tied down hard and fast under the name either of one or the other. It is used by both for the good of the home, and with a perfectly harmonious understanding.

It is a fine thing to carry throughout the years of a wedded life just a principle like that. "You helped earn the money, and it is just as much yours as mine."

It is quite safe to say that in this home the idea of fair play is applied in other ways.

"There's a tired look in your eyes, Mary. I don't like it. Get somebody to do the work, and you take a good rest this summer," says the big, tender man.

"You've fussed with this baby all day, wife; and I'll take my turn tonight and let you sleep."

We do not know what business this man follows. Perhaps he may not be a great financial success. One would be safe in calling him just a plain, everyday sort of man, but he is fortunate in that he has learned one of life's best lessons.

And it is pleasant to remember the smile on his wife's face. It was like a ray of God's own sunshine.—*People's Home Journal.*

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### A Mother's Light.

A VERY beautiful story is related of a boat out at sea carrying in it a father and his little daughter. As they were steering for the shore they were overtaken by a violent storm which threatened to destroy them. The coast was dangerous. The mother lighted a lamp and started up the worn stairway to the attic window.

"It won't do any good, mother," the son called after.

But the mother went up, put the light in the window, knelt beside it, and prayed. Out in the storm the daughter saw a glimmer of gold on the water's edge.

"Steer for that," the father said. Slowly but steadily they came toward the light, and at last were anchored in the little sheltered harbor by the cottage.

"Thank God!" cried the mother, as she heard their glad voices and came down the stairway with a lamp in her hand. "How did you get here?" she asked.

"We steered by mother's light," answered the daughter, "although we did not know what it was out there."

"Ah!" thought the boy, a wayward boy, "It is time I was steering by mother's light."

And ere he slept he surrendered himself to God and asked him to guide him over life's

rough sea. Mouths went by, and disease smote him.

"He can't live long," was the verdict of the doctor; and one stormy night he lay dying.

"Do not be afraid for me," he said, as they wept. "I shall make the harbor, for I am steering by mother's light."—*Selected.*

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### Her Way.

A LITTLE tender way she had  
Of soothing weary cares,  
By putting all the ways of life  
In silent, wistful prayers.

She folded all the kindly words  
Of anyone she knew  
In little packages of love,  
And straight with them flew.

No tale of hate was told to her,  
Because she gave poor heed;  
No other life was hurt by her  
In thought, or word, or deed.

It was by what she left unsaid,  
By love and help she gave,  
This golden-hearted woman strove  
Her little world to save.

—*Amy E. Campbell.*

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### The Answer.

MANY believe that the answer to a prayer should come at once, and be exactly the thing asked for. They do not realize that such an attitude on their part means, literally, a desire to dictate to God, the placing of the human will above the divine, the presumptuous assurance that their finite intelligence is equal to the Infinite.

To those who are stumbling blindly along this down-hill path, an illuminating thought can be found in the story of a little girl, as told in the *Sunday at Home Magazine*. She was a very tiny maiden indeed, and in one month she was going to have a birthday, the very first one that her young mind could remember. She was a little maid, who possessed a singularly pure and beautiful faith, both in God and in prayer, so each evening during that month of waiting, when she knelt to pray, she asked her Father in heaven to "please remember her birthday, and make the sunshine on it."

The great day came at last, and with it a heavy downpour of rain. But there was never a hint of cloud on the radiant little face that appeared at the breakfast table.

Mouth and eyes were smiling their brightest, and they kept right on when her father said: "Ah, you see! God does not hear prayer. He did not answer yours."

"Oh, yes he does hear!" came the little chirp that voiced a very great faith; "but you see, he said 'No' this time."—*Exchange.*

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### The Great Guardian.

WHATE'ER my God ordains is right  
His will is ever just;  
Howe'er He orders now my cause,  
I will be still and trust.  
He is my God;  
Though dark my road,  
He holds me that I shall not fall,  
Therefore to Him I leave it all.

Whate'er my God ordains is right;  
My Light, my Life is He,  
Who cannot will me aught but good;  
I trust Him utterly;  
For well I know,  
In joy or woe,  
We soon shall see, as sunlight clear,  
How faithful was our Guardian here.  
—*Exchange.*

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### The Cure.

As Mrs. RIVERS finished her story, she lifted her tired eyes to meet the doctor's. The eyes were hard and defiant as well as tired, and a hot color burned in her thin cheeks.

"Now, don't tell me that it's all my own fault," she said, "for I can't stand that. It isn't my fault. It isn't an empty mind, or selfishness, or laziness that has broken me down; it is real trouble, and trouble that I was not to blame for. It's no use to prescribe rest. I can't rest. Yet somehow I've got to rest. I'll obey orders if you give me orders I can obey. I am prepared to have it take time—even a long time. On those terms, can you cure me?"

"No." The doctor's answer was instant, unhesitating.

Mrs. Rivers stared at him blankly. The word was like a blow in the face.

The physician, holding her eyes with his keen, steady glance, went on:

"I cannot cure you. No physician on earth can. But you can cure yourself if you have the grit. It makes no difference that the trouble was 'real trouble'; all trouble is real, and imaginary trouble is the worst. Be thankful that yours is not imaginary.

"Now, here's the beginning of the cure if you have grit enough for it. I tell you

frankly that not one in a hundred has. It is for one whole week not to permit yourself to think about yourself in any way whatever. I don't care what you do—whether you take up dressmaking or Sanskrit, or go out scrubbing. I don't care how tired you get physically for this one week—I can attend to that afterward. Just the one thing. What do you say? Are you good for it?"

For a long moment Mrs. Rivers was silent. The physician, as he waited and watched her, saw her pride hardening. Then, "I'll do it!" she said.

"Good!" he answered. "Come and report a week from today."

Out in the street Mrs. Rivers' pride blazed into anger. He had not believed her. He had treated her like a hypochondriac. She would show him! Why people had gone insane under less sorrow than hers. She—a sudden thought halted her abruptly. She had left the doctor not five minutes ago, and she was thinking of herself!

The next Wednesday came, but Mrs. Rivers was not among the patients in the waiting room. Instead, she sent a note:

"DEAR DOCTOR GORDON—I've failed. I haven't kept out of myself a single day yet. I've tried books and music and cooking and housecleaning and shopping and staking birds. Yesterday afternoon I took a dozen children from the orphan asylum out for a picnic. For three hours, I assure you, I had no chance for a thought of myself. I'm not going to give up if I have to adopt the whole dozen. Thank you for showing me myself. If I ever succeed, I'll come and tell you. I won't until I do.

"Very sincerely yours,

"MADELEINE RIVERS"

The doctor's answer was brief:

"I am proud of you. Come tomorrow."  
—*Youth's Companion.*

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### If We Could See.

SO MANY covered griefs and hidden sorrows are all about us that much of our envy would turn to pity, our bitterness at our own lot to thankfulness, if only we saw with clearer eyes. When a king of Judah, in time of sore famine, was begged for help by one of his subjects, the sudden rending of his royal garment revealed that he was wearing sackcloth beneath it. No doubt the petitioner had fancied him as living above the common trouble, but he, too, was wearing the badge of mourning. Life's benefits and burdens are shared more evenly than we think, and many a fair robe of seeming prosperity only hides the sackcloth beneath it.—*Selected.*

### The Hindered Christ.

THE Lord Christ wanted a tongue one day  
To speak a message of cheer  
To a heart that was weary, and worn, and  
And sad,  
And weighed with mighty fear.  
He asked me for mine, but 'twas busy quite  
With my own affairs from morn till night.

The Lord Jesus wanted a hand one day  
To do a loving deed;  
He wanted two feet, on an errand for him  
To run with gladsome speed.  
But I had need of my own that day;  
To his gentle beseeching I answered "Nay!"

So all that day I used my tongue,  
My hands and my feet as I chose;  
I said some hasty, bitter words  
That hurt one heart, God knows.  
I bruised my hands with a worthless play,  
And my feet went on a crooked way.

And the dear Lord Christ—was his work un-  
done

For lack of a willing heart?  
Only through men does he speak to men?  
Dumb must he stand apart?  
I do not know, but I wish today  
I had let the Lord Christ have his way.  
—*Selected.*

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### The Mid Room.

ONE of the vivid recollections of John G. Paton's boyhood was his humble home in the south of Scotland, with its "hut" and its "ben" and the "mid-room" between. One side of the cottage served the purpose of kitchen, parlor and sleeping rooms; the other was the father's workshop, where stockings were woven. The "mid-room" was small, with a single window, and scant furnishings, but it was a kind of Holy Place to the children of that Scotch household, and dear to the father retired often for secret prayer, and from thence he always came out with a calm, shining face.

How much we all need a "mid-room"—between the rest and quiet of our home life and the rush and fret and strain of our daily work! Even our school days are so busy, and so many outside matters come up to claim our attention, that we often fancy that we have no time for moments of secret communion with our Heavenly Father. And yet how vastly we would be the gainers by giving the "quiet hour" a larger place in our lives!

It would help us to keep our high ideals, and it would give us the encouragement

and strength we need to work these ideals out into real achievements. It would exalt the plane of our living, too, for mean and sordid views of life cannot bear the light of God's presence. And, best of all, it brings the consoling thought that our Friend—the Friend we talked with an hour ago—is always near at hand, to solve our difficulties, to renew our courage, and to make even a crooked path, and a rough one, plain before our eyes.—*Exchange.*

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### Quiet Influences.

ONE who mourned being laid aside from active life because she had so longed to be of use in the world—to be, as she said, "among the reapers in God's harvest field"—found her attention drawn one day to a grainfield where a reaping machine was in use. The man who guided it was sitting still, and yet he was doing much more and better work than the old-time reapers with their sickles. Others may find as she did a thought of comfort in the little scene, and remember that it is not alone the eager foot and strong hand that render service, but that one whose place is to sit still may have a share in the harvesting of lives and souls for the kingdom. From many a quiet corner, from many a life forced aside from the busy throng, goes forth an influence whose results can never be counted here.—*Selected.*

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### The Harder Place.

SHE was a medical missionary in Persia. The eager desire of her heart for service had been strong enough to carry her through the hard years of study and preparation, and all the sacrifice required, and bear her at last to her chosen field. Mastering the foreign language, preparing the trying work of the hospital, having daily contact with terrible suffering and disease, taxed heart, brain and physical strength, but she was happy and increasingly successful.

Then, when heart and hands were full, and years and experience were adding steadily to her usefulness, there came a summons from the home land. The mother who had spared her so long was widowed now and stricken with illness, and sorely needed the ministry of her only daughter. Circumstances made the call imperative, so the doctor, in the prime of her womanhood and usefulness, came home. It was thought at first that the return might be only temporary, but recovery did not come to the mother, and her weakness and

helplessness slowly increased through the months and years. The hardly won medical education, the knowledge of a foreign tongue, the successful hospital practice, the companionship with other workers all has ended in this—the lonely shut-in life of an old farmhouse, raising chickens and a few vegetables, a round of common household duties, and the constant care of an invalid. Sometimes there are letters from abroad, but these naturally grow fewer as time passes, for workers change and the absent one drops out of mind. Sometimes she has been able to make brief visits to near-by cities and awaken the interest of missionary societies by what she can tell of conditions in distant lands, but these opportunities have decreased as passing years make her own knowledge less fresh and home duties more pressing. Usually there is only the daily round, so different from all she had hoped to do.

Does life therefore seem a bitter disappointment? No one has ever heard her say so. Bravely, lovingly, patiently as she toiled abroad, so she now toils at home. She offered her service in a hard field, but the Master has called her to a harder field. Hers is an obscure service and a lonely service; she is denied by the waning powers of her charge the recognition and companionship that often make attendance in a sickroom so dear and comforting, yet she is a missionary with a high mission. Her years abroad have so broadened her life that four walls can never shut her in, and the help she was able to give to souls and bodies has made her heart too strong and tender ever to wear

itself out in self-pity. And it may be that no success in ways she had chosen could have equaled in value her dutiful, courageous renunciation.—*Exchange.*

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### Shine Just Where You Are.

Don't waste your time in longing  
For bright, impossible things;  
Don't sit supinely yearning  
For the swiftness of angels' wings.  
Don't spurn to be a rushlight  
Because you are not a star,  
But brighten some bit of darkness  
By shining just where you are.  
There is need of the tiniest candle  
As well as the garish sun;  
The humblest deed is ennobled  
When it is worthily done;  
You may never be called to brighten  
The darkened regions afar;  
So fill, for the day, your mission  
By shining just where you are.

—John Hay

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### Our Worries.

It is not our work, but our worries, that hinder the Master's presence with us. The former is duty, wherein he stands ready to aid and strengthen us, the latter abide all ways in an atmosphere of distrust, that bars his presence as a fog shuts out the sun. The Lord will enter into partnership with our labors, but not with our doubts.—*Selected.*



## International Sunday School Lessons.

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

LESSON I.

APRIL 2, 1916.

### Conversion of Saul.

**MOTTO TEXT.**—"Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. 1: 15.)

**LESSON PASSAGE,** Acts 9: 1-31 (cf. also Gal. 1: 11-17; 1 Tim. 1: 12-17).

**MEMORY VERSES,** 17, 18.

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#### Lesson Text.

1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

2 And desired of him letters to Dā-mās-cus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jē-rō-sā-lēm.

3 And as he journeyed, he came near Dā-mās-cus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jē-sūs whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

8 And Saul arose from the earth, and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Dā-mās-cus.

9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

10 ¶ And there was a certain disciple at Dā-mās-cus, named An-a-n'as: and to him said the Lord in a vision, An-a-n'as. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Jū'das for one called Saul, of Tār'sus: for, behold, he prayeth.

17 And An-a-n'as went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jē-sūs, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Dā-mās-cus.

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#### Saul, the Terror.

He sets himself to conquer the Nazarene. This Galilean movement shall be stamped out. Saul had a keen intellect, and was well educated; he had an iron will, and a burning devotion to old Judaism. He was not temperamentally cruel, but his nature was intense. His religion was Pharisaism, a series of external forms, ceremonies and duties. The orthodoxy of Pharisaism hates new truth. Fact is, it denies that there can be any, and yet this new religion claims to be full of it. It is bold and aggressive. These friends of the dead Jesus are filling Jerusalem with it, and winning the common people far and near. Unable to crush it by argument, Pharisaism makes the cowardly appeal to force. A Jewish inquisition is set in operation, and Saul is its chief agent. Yes, he is sincere, and that is the pity of it. This is what Jesus foretold. They have hated me, and they will hate you. When they hale you to prison and put you to death, they will think that it is pious service to God. Saul felt it his duty to blot out the dangerous heresy and exterminate the church. Relentlessly and conscientiously he pressed the work.

## Saul, the Convert.

That he would conquer the Nazarene, he had no doubt. That the Nazarene would conquer him was the utterly improbable and impossible thing to all expectation. And yet the impossible was the thing that came to pass. No weapon formed against thee shall prosper. The very gates of hell shall not prevail against him. Didn't Luke say in the beginning of Acts, "I have told you what Jesus began to do, in my former treatise, and now I tell you in this what he continued to do"? He is acting, and energizing his servants from his throne. He is after the fiery persecutor. At the gates of Damascus he overwhelms the opposer, and yokes a mighty brain and heart to the gospel chariot. Paul saw Jesus and fell at his feet. Pharisaism lost its champion, and Christianity won its greatest advocate. Some think the victory was won by immediate, direct action of the divine spirit. That it was the instant working of Jesus on the mind and heart of Saul. There is another explanation that takes account of the witnessing power of Christ's servants. This accords with his sayings: "Ye are the light of the world, the salt of the earth. Ye are my witnesses." Fiery Saul saw that heavenly light on the face of the dying Stephen, and heard the touching prayer. He had noticed the lamb-like patience and meekness of his suffering Christian prisoners. Had not all these tokens impressed him with the thought of a strange power in their faith? Did he not see signs of inward peace and satisfaction that his Pharisaism never gave him? He was a thinker, and may not these things have shot doubts into his mind? If these influences gradually wrought on Saul, the victory was none the less our Lord's.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Vision of Jesus. Acts 9: 1-9.

MONDAY'S VERSE—"What wilt thou have me to do?"

That is the real sign of a converted soul. My own will I resign. I recognize and accept Jesus as Master and Lord. You did that when you surrendered mind and heart. What does he want you to be and do? He wants you to be lovable and kind, truthful and humble, upright and just, a living Bible in your community. Are you working at it? Do people read Christ in you? He wants you to be a faithful church member, liberal and regular in contribution, punctual in worship. Alas, the worthless members in our churches! What kind of Christian are they?

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Conversion of Saul. Acts 9: 10-19.

TUESDAY'S VERSE—"And he filled with the Holy Spirit."

In a Christian home Saul sits blind and helpless. A preacher he came to arrest appears before him and calls him brother. The blind convert sees, and the Spirit of Jesus takes full possession of him. Then he is baptized, and becomes a member of the hated and persecuted sect. That was a great hour for Christianity. The conquest of the mightiest intellect in Palestine was a masterful argument for the truth of it. No one, that day, dreamed of the meanings of the victory. It signified the triumphant spread of the gospel.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Effective Preaching. Acts 9: 20-31.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE—"He proclaimed Jesus."

Saul does not hesitate. A new world opens before him, and he enters it with courageous enthusiasm. He preaches that Jesus is the Christ. The people are amazed at the change. The Jews are infuriated because he confounded them. Now his troubles begin. Persecution turns on him, and he escapes from Damascus. He goes to Jerusalem, but the brethren are afraid of him. They cannot believe that the enemy has been converted. Barnabas speaks for him, the leaders accept him, and he preaches with power. Again the angry Jews are after him, and he goes to his old home in Tarsus.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Called to be an Apostle. 1 Tim. 1: 12-17.

THURSDAY'S VERSE—"I did it ignorantly in unbelief."

In old age, and in prison, Paul recalls his early sin against Jesus. I was a blasphemer and a persecutor. But God gave me mercy, because I did it ignorantly and in unbelief. I thank God that he counted me faithful, putting me into this ministry. The glory of his gospel is that it saves sinners, of whom I am chief. He gets this comfort out of his early wickedness; that no sinner may now despair, since the worst has been saved. He employs Timothy, his child in the faith, to be steadfast in preaching the unsearchable riches.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Source of Paul's Gospel. Gal. 1: 11-17.

FRIDAY'S VERSE—"Neither did I receive it from man."

Paul's authority as an apostle was denied by narrow Christian brethren from Jerusalem. They denounced him as a false teacher of Christianity, and gave him no end of trouble. They unsettled the confidence of his converts in himself and his message. They said he had never been a companion of Jesus, and had no favor in the Jerusalem church. Paul affirms his knowledge of Jesus, and boldly declares that he got his gospel from him. He is debtor to no man for his views. They came direct from the Master himself.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Agent of Conversion. John 3: 1-13.

SATURDAY'S VERSE—"So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The Pharisee, satisfied with conformity to external form and ceremony, found it hard to understand words insisting on a new birth of the Spirit. The religion of the Spirit confronts the religion of the letter. Do the prescribed duties and live, says the one; humble

mind and heart before God and live, says the former. Jesus kept many of the forms; but behind that was a meek and lowly spirit, hungry for the righteousness of God. That is basal to true religion. Without it all forms are vanity. Ye must be born again. God's life must be in the soul.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A New Creature. 2 Cor. 5: 14-21.

SUNDAY'S VERSE—"Old things are passed away."

Not by works, but by grace are we saved, through faith. Paul fights works as a dependence for salvation; he stresses works as the necessary expression of a saved life. We must be in Christ. That is, Christ must live in us. His thoughts in our minds, his resolute purpose in our wills, his love and gentleness and moral beauty in our hearts. The old life of jealousy, selfishness and hate must give way to the new life which Jesus lived among men. This is the heart of religion. Old things must pass away. Are you a new creation in Christ?

## LESSON 2.

## Æneas and Dorcas.

APRIL 9, 1916.

MOTTO TEXT—"In all things showing thyself an ensample of good works." (Titus 2: 7.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 9: 32-43 (cf. also Prov. 31: 10-31).

MEMORY VERSES, 39, 40.

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## Lesson Text.

32 ¶ And it came to pass, as Pë'tër passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwell at Ly'd'a.

33 And there he found a certain man named Æ'ne-às, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy.

34 And Pë'tër said unto him, Æ'ne-às, Jê'sus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately.

35 And all that dwell at Ly'd'a and Sa'ron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

36 ¶ Now there was at Jôp'pa a certain disciple named Tãb'i'tha, which by interpretation is called Dô'r'cas; this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Ly'd'a was nigh to Jôp'pa, and the disciples had heard that Pë'tër was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

39 Then Pë'tër arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dô'r'cas made, while she was with them.

40 But Pë'tër put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tãb'i'tha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Pë'tër, she sat up.

41 And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

42 And it was known throughout all Jôp'pa; and many believed in the Lord.

43 And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Jôp'pa with one Si'mon a tanner.

### Peace in the Churches.

It is here recorded that the churches enjoyed peace all over Judea, Galilee and Samaria. Persecution stopped. There was none to molest or make afraid. This is a new note in the story, as gratifying as it is surprising. Where are the foes of Jesus and the apostles? Have they given up the battle and withdrawn from the field? Certainly their active opposition has ceased. How do you account for it? Wonder if the loss of their ring-leader has worked discouragement? No doubt the shock of it has had something to do with the enemy's present inactivity. One thing is sure, the old hostility is not dead. But thanks for the peace of Zion.

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### Christianity Spreads.

The conversion of Saul worked two ways. It discouraged the Pharisees and put a new spirit of enthusiasm in the disciples. North and South the message flew; in towns and villages the converts multiplied. Now, for the last three chapters Peter has virtually dropped out of view. The story turned on the two deacons, Stephen and Phillip, and the conversion of Saul. It shows the widening of missions from Jerusalem, and the beginning of deeper interpretation of Christ. The author is paving the way for the thrilling story of Paul. Jesus is enlarging and deepening his work. Don't forget that the Acts is a record of what he continued to do. Peter steps forth again. He is moved to a missionary journey to the southwest. The cause grows, and his heart is glad.

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### Aeneas.

Peter going here and there, strengthening the brethren, called on the saints who dwelt in Lydda. He found them in distress over a sick friend, who was perhaps also a believer. It was a hopeless case of paralysis, of eight years' standing. The kindly visit and prayer of Peter resulted in a complete restoration. The people saw the healed man, and were religiously impressed. Many of them gave themselves to the new faith.

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### Dorcas.

In the city of Joppa, not far from Lydda, lived a good woman whose name was Dorcas. She was a most charitable woman, full of good deeds. The widows and orphans round about loved her. Just at this time she took ill and died. When they had laid her out for

burial, the disciples in the city heard that Peter was near at hand, so they sent two men to Lydda for him, entreating, "Come to us without delay." Likely enough they had heard of the case of Aeneas, and built vague hopes upon it. He went. He knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, said: "Tabitha, arise." She opened her eyes and sat up. Peter gave her his hand and presented her to the overjoyed widows and friends. All the city heard of it, and again many were added to the Lord.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—AENEAS AND DORCAS. Acts 9: 32-43.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Jesus Christ maketh thee whole."

Peter claimed none of the glory. He wanted no praise or honor. It was enough for him to be the humble medium of blessing to the sick. Jesus only is great and worthy to be praised. This is his mighty working. You see how his conception agrees with Luke's, that the Acts is simply the story of what the Risen Lord is continuing to do. He is building his churches and sending out his gospel through his agents. We are his servants and his witnesses. Glory to his name.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Worthy Woman. Prov. 31: 10-20.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"She spreadeth out her hands to the poor."

"The poor ye have with you always, and when ye will ye may do them good." The writer of Proverbs seemed doubtful of finding the wonderful woman whose picture he proceeds to draw. She is not a multitude, and yet, I think in nearly every community you will find her. She is a neat housekeeper, a diligent toiler, a joy to her husband, and a friend to the needy. One thing is certain, mighty few men are worthy to be the husband of such a woman.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A CRIBBLE WOMAN. Prov. 31: 21-31.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Strength and dignity are her clothing."

There ought to be a companion piece to this chapter setting forth the qualities of a man who is fit to be the husband of this woman. The writer practically makes her the ruler of and provider for the household. Too many good women have an unequal burden to bear. I note that her children shall praise her. But

do they? Mothers and wives are the hungry hearted people of the world. They work unselfishly, and it is taken for granted. How many husbands ever really praise their wives?

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Cure at Bethesda. John 5: 2-9.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Wouldest thou be made whole?"

Here is an invalid diseased for thirty-eight years. Jesus comes his way. Trouble always attracts him. The question is designed only to draw attention. The man tells his story of fruitless effort, but makes no prayer. He does not know the speaker. The plying Lord says, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." Straightway the man is made whole, and takes up his bed and walks. Christ still walks in the sick wards of the world, healing and uplifting the souls of men.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Great Healer. Matt. 15: 21-31.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Have mercy on me, O Lord."

A sick child lay at home, but it was the mother's heart that suffered. Mental pain is worse than physical. The case was her own. Have mercy on me. The Master could not hide from the searching eyes of sorrow. His seeming coldness and roughness could not offend or drive her away. Importunate grief had its way. Her faith held true, and Jesus

### LESSON 3.

## Peter and Cornelius.

APRIL 16, 1916.

MOTTO TEXT.—"There is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him." (Rom. 10: 12.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 10: 1-23.

MEMORY VERSES, 13-15.

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### Lesson Text.

1 There was a certain man in Cæs-a-rë'a called Còr-nè'l'ius, a centurion of the band called the I-tà'l'ian band.

2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

sent her away with a divine compliment and the assurance of healing for her child.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Generosity Rewarded. 1 Kings 17: 8-16.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"I have but a handful of meal."

The great drouth brought hunger and starvation in and round about Israel. Elijah was famishing, the widow was preparing her last morsel before death. The prophet asks that for himself, saying, "Trust in God and the barrel and the cruse of oil shall not fail." Nobly and self-sacrificingly she gave the prophet the only cake. His word came true. The meal failed not; the oil failed not. He, she and her son lived. It was a trial of faith, and the reward was sure.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Doctrine and Life. Titus 2: 1-14.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"We should live soberly and righteously."

Here is practical religion. Some people are strong for sound doctrine. That is good, provided it is followed up with good living. I will risk the doctrine of the man who acts justly and unselfishly; who is considerate and kind-hearted, and whose words are generous and true. Good Lord deliver us from the narrow, fault-finding, inconsistent, stingy man or woman. In the name of decency let us quit calling ourselves Christians if we are making no effort to live the Christ life.

3 He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming to him, and saying unto him Còr-nè'l'ius.

4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

5 And now send men to Jòp'pa, and call for one SÌ'mon, whose surname is Pè'tèr:

6 He lodgeth with one SÌ'mon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

7 And when the angel which spake unto Còr-nè'l'ius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;

8 And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

16 Thus was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

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#### Expansion.

THE kingdom of God is like leaven hid in a measure of meal. It works until the whole is leavened. So the gospel planted in Palestine begins to break over the borders of the Jewish race. Native land being evangelized, shall not the apostles look to the heathen people beyond? But the plain command of the Master meets a long-time racial barrier of contempt and hate in the Jewish heart. Does the gospel of Jesus put the Gentile on the same plane of privilege with the Jew? The prejudices and traditions of thousand years said, No. But Christ died for them, and broke down all partition walls. The gospel sets all men on the same level of divine favor. It was a hard lesson for the apostles to learn. Paul got hold of it at once, and had to drag the others to reluctant admission. Social and religious conceit and exclusiveness always die hard. The Jewish brand of it was intense. But the kingdom grows and bursts the bands. Expansion to the limits of the world is its life and destiny. Foreign missions was not popular among the early Jewish Christians, just as it is not in many Baptist churches today.

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#### Cornelius' Vision.

Strange to say, the Gentile was first to act. The church went not to him, but he came a suppliant, knocking at her door. He was a

good man. There are many good people out of the church. The light of God has shined upon them dimly perhaps; they have felt the contagion of good souls, and spiritual hunger has been awakened. In the most unexpected place you find an instance. Here is an army captain, in the twilight of religion, reaching out for the living God. Human sympathy, practical benevolence and prayer are the marks of his character. God's angel appears to the hungry soul and tells him what to do. Send for Peter. This is the first move for an open door to the Gentiles. God reduces the strain on Jewish feeling by presenting one of the best specimens of Gentile piety.

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#### Peter's Vision.

Peter's mind had to be prepared for expansion. He was in sympathy with Jesus' scheme of world-wide redemption, but was still a thrall to Jewish prejudice. He was on a housetop in Joppa studying the problem of evangelization, grappling with the difficulties of extending the gospel to the heathen. He was hungry, and fell into a trance. A vision came. A great sheet was let down from heaven containing all manner beasts. Arise, slay and eat, was the command. Peter refused the unclean meat. "What God has cleansed, call not common," said the voice. This happened three times. Peter was utterly puzzled when he awoke. What can it mean? The arrival of Cornelius' messengers answered it. He went down to greet the strangers, who told their mission. A great light burst on Peter's soul. The Spirit said to him, "Make no hesitation in going with them, for it is I who have sent them." A wonderful forward movement of the gospel was at hand.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Visions of Peter and Cornelius. ACTS 10: 1-16.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"One that feared God."

Religious narrowness and prejudice are foreign to the mind of Christ. Too often they cripple the life of his people. Years ago there were many who really felt that salvation was confined to those of their own opinion and denomination. The Catholic priesthood spread that poison. If you don't accept our doctrine, rites and ceremonies, you can't be saved. God looks under and behind all these at the life. Is a man good? Does he hunger for righteousness? Is he a follower of Jesus Christ? That is the supreme test. The other things are needful, but the gist of the matter is love of God in the heart.

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Peter Summoned. ACTS 10: 17-23.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Go with them, nothing doubting."

How beautiful and simple are God's ways of extending his kingdom. He puts a longing for better things in a human heart, and in another heart he puts a longing to supply those needs. That brings the two together. You have seen that in your own experience. Timidly and hesitatingly you have approached someone on the subject of personal religion. You were surprised how kindly you were received. God got to him first and prepared him. Your impulse to go was God's preparation of you. It is his good way.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Clean and Unclean Meats. LEV. 11: 1-12.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"They are unclean to you."

In that early day the world was gross, ignorant and full of idolatry. God would keep his people separate, and one method was by prohibition of foods. Not to put a stigma on any of God's creatures, but to strengthen the barriers between Israel and the heathen nations. Eating together at the same table makes a strong social bond. Food laws tended mightily to keep Israel separate. This had its use in its day. The gospel came, with its light and spirituality, and all these regulations were done away with. That is why the Pharisees hated Jesus so blindly.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Vision of the Kingdom. DAN. 7: 9-14.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"One like unto a son of man."

In his vision Daniel saw wild beasts, the symbols of great nations, each struggling for supremacy. Last he saw one like unto a son of man. He was fair and noble, and God gave dominion of the world into his hands. It was to be an everlasting kingdom, and all peoples should serve him. The other thrones crumbled to dust, but his throne shall endure forever, for it is founded on righteousness and peace. The anticipation was full of comfort then. The stages of its realization are full of glory now. Thy kingdom come.

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—All-Inclusive Kingdom. MICAH 4: 1-5.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"And peoples shall flow into it."

Here is one of the noblest prophecies of the kingdom of Jesus. He saw a golden age in the latter days. Blessed religious hope to a good man grieved over the moral confusion, violence and savagery of his own time. All this will cease in the good time coming. In the monstrous wreck and misery of the world today our sweet hope still centers on the kingdom of God. This is his world, though red with carnage and slaughter. His will must be done. Jesus must reign. Human madness shall not defeat him.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Salvation for All. ROM. 10: 11-21.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"No distinction between Jew and Greek."

For the same Lord is Lord over all, and is rich unto all that call on him. Here is the great Paul's interpretation of Jesus. He proclaimed the glory of the gospel, and its unlimited sweep. It is universal unpurchased love; its call is to the universal human heart. It meets universal human need, and more, there is a universal susceptibility to its claims in the souls of men. What more can be said? Where are partition walls? Where are distinctions between Jew and Gentile, bond and free, rich and poor? Abolished all.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The New Heaven and the New Earth. REV. 21: 1-7.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"The tabernacle of God is with men."

In rapturous vision, on Patmos, John saw the glorious consummation. This world redeemed by the Son of God. The world filled with his righteousness. God's kingdom come, and earth purified, transfigured into heaven. Work for a heaven here and now, as well as the heaven that comes after death. You don't have to make a transfer beyond the sky to get to heaven. Strive to get into the mind, the heart, and the life of Christ. Do it now. There is your real heaven.

## LESSON 4.

APRIL 23, 1916.

## The Gospel for the Gentiles.

**MOTTO TEXT.**—"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10: 34, 35.)

**LESSON PASSAGE.** Acts 10: 24-48.

**MEMORY VERSES.** 44, 45.

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## Lesson Text.

24 And the morrow after they entered into Cæsarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.

26 But Peter took him up saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side; who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee, and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

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.

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## Peter's Caution.

NEXT day Peter was off on his journey due north along the bank of the sea. It was some forty to fifty miles to Caesarea, where Cornelius lived. Now he knew that he was on a peculiarly delicate mission. Duty clearly pointed that way, but what will the outcome be? This coming in touch with the Gentiles may involve me in disturbed relations with the church in Jerusalem. I must take witness along from the brethren in Joppa, who shall see and note all that occurs. He chose six, and they went. It was a wise thing to do, for he needed those same brethren in Jerusalem later. The church was stirred up, and their testimony helped Peter out of difficulty. Opening the door to the Gentiles had its perils. The beginning of any important new movement demands practical wisdom.

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## Peter's Reception.

The group of ten men arrived on the second day. The three messengers of Cornelius were in the company. The good captain was far out on his front, expecting Peter. The welcome was cordial, and the Roman officer fell at the fisherman's feet. Peter refused such homage with becoming humility. He then explained his coming on the ground of a sense of duty to God. The impression came to me at the moment when your servant called. What is your wish? Then Cornelius explained his own vision, and said, "My household is now assembled, ready to hear your message." We want to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. Many were gathered together. The devout Gentile had interested all about him in spiritual religion.

## Peter's Sermon.

It was an inspiring audience, and Peter was mightily moved. It was easy to preach to a congregation eager for the Word. His first remark is striking. I now see that God has no favorites; but that he who reverences him and lives a good life in any nation is accepted by him. The preacher's old obsolete notions fall from him. He is getting fit to preach. He tells how Jesus went about doing good, was raised from the dead, and that whosoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins. Right here the Holy Spirit broke off the sermon. The Spirit fell on all the company. Without waiting for the sermon's close, they gave themselves to Jesus in open profession of faith. The scene was indescribable. The power of God was upon all. It was Peter's second Pentecost.

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## Peter's Action.

He was amazed at what he saw. What is to be done? Shall we organize a Gentile church here and now? These people have received the Holy Spirit the same as ourselves; shall they be baptized? The question is directed to those six brethren from Joppa. Now he needs them. He will not take this important step without their approval. They could not forbid baptism. The seven Christian Jews were of one mind. In the glow of a heavenly joy, Peter and his six brethren baptized the Lord's Gentile converts. On their urgency, Peter stayed several days, and Jew and Gentile mingled in Christian fellowship and love.

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**MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—The Responsive Heart. Acts 10: 24-33.

**MONDAY'S VERSE.**—"We are all here before God."

Such was the greeting to Peter. Did a preacher ever have a more encouraging situation? Foreign Missions were easy on a scale like this. God's providence has gathered the spoil; all that remains for the missionary in this instance is to reach forth and take it. The ground was all cleared and broken up, with nothing to do but sow the seed. Adoniram Judson toiled and taught seven years in Burmah before he baptized one convert. He had no Cornelius to work the field before him. Dense ignorance and superstition make a hard mission field.

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**TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Gentiles Received. Acts 10: 34-48.

**TUESDAY'S VERSE.**—"For they heard them speak with tongues and glorify God."

If they are not converted, who then is? If they are unfit for baptism, who is fit? A whole Gentile congregation has believed on Christ and turned to God. Note that they were baptized after conversion. This is the plain teaching and example in the New Testament. Then they were not baptized to be saved. Baptism did not wash away their sins. Why? Because the Lord had already done that. Why baptize at all? Because Jesus requires it as a public confession of our faith and love. It is important only as an act of Christian obedience.

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**WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Peter's Report. Acts 11: 1-18.

**WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.**—"They of the circumcision contended with him."

Just as he expected. The narrow, orthodox brethren in Jerusalem were offended. You did not with them. Nothing to say against their conversion and baptism, but you did eat with them. Peter must explain. He recounts the story of his vision in Joppa, Cornelius' vision, the sermon, the baptism of the Spirit. Pointing to them, he added: "These six brethren were with me and endorsed all I did." We reasoned thus, brethren, if these Gentiles are acceptable to God, they ought to be acceptable to us. That was a knock-down argument. On hearing it, the matter ended, and all glorified God.

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**THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—The Universal Kingdom. Psa. 72: 1-10.

**THURSDAY'S VERSE.**—"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea."

The great souls of the Old Testament believed in the unity of God, and the final prevalence of his will on earth. That confident hope rests in the ancient covenant made with faithful Abraham. In thy seed shall all the nations of the world be blessed. God will unite all peoples in his kingdom of righteousness. His spiritual empire will uproot all iniquity, and establish universal peace and happiness among men. This triumphant optimism rests on God's immutability, his oath, and his promise.

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**FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—The Righteous King. Psa. 72: 11-19.

**FRIDAY'S VERSE.**—"Let the whole earth be filled with his glory."

The eloquent poet had his magnificent vision. He contemplated God from a lofty summit in the divine landscape. God lifted him up to his own viewpoint, and filled him with a sublime confidence. The eternal good is on the throne. This is a comfort that we Christian people tolling in narrow spheres need to seek. In the littleness of life, and its seemingly useless efforts, let us bide in God. Glet on the heights, and see that good is the final goal of ill. God's glory must fill the earth. Let us work with him to that end.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Flocking to Jehovah. Zech. 8: 18-23.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"We will go with you."

This is the fancied voice of the nations speaking to the Jew, the first messenger of God's truth to the world. Not the triumph of a Jewish nation does he celebrate, but the glorious victory of that spiritual kingdom, first revealed to the Jewish people. Here is

## LESSON 5.

## Peter Delivered from Prison.

## MOTTO TEXT—

"The angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear him, And delivereth them." (Psalm 34: 7)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 12: 1-19

MEMORY VERSE, 11

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## Lesson Text.

1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.

2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

4 And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

5 Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

another brave utterance of that faith that came down from faithful Abraham. It is inspiring to see how it maintained itself in all the dreadful fortunes of the race. Jesus took it up and confirmed it to all the children of men.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Universal-ity of Divine Love. Jonah 4: 1-11.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Should not I have pity on Nineveh?"

The book of Jonah is a great book. It is the great missionary document of the Old Testament. Its three great ideas are, God's universal love, man's universal need, and man's universal capacity for spiritual life. That is the heart of the book, which too few people know. The author tries to remind the Jewish people of their real mission in the world. He believes that obedience is the only preservation of the nation. The self-centered nation, church, or individual shall wither. God cannot use it or him.

APRIL 30, 1915.

## A New Foe.

The enthroned Lord has given his servants many victories since his ascension. Remember that they regard themselves literally under his invisible leadership, and the instruments of his will. He has saved his church from perils, and widened the sphere of its labors. 1. He cast out the deadly leaven of Ananias' hypocrisy. 2 He healed the dangerous disension arising over the distribution of bread. 3. He triumphed over the persecution by the council. 4. He has overcome the Pharisaic legalism of his followers in the constitution of a Gentile church. 5. And now he rebukes and thwarts a new adversary, the state. Herod, the arrogant brute, grandson of Herod who slaughtered the infants, is king. Doubtless instigated by the council, he wantonly puts James, the apostle, to death. Seeing that it pleased the Jews, he decides to kill Peter. He reverses the method of the council. They persecuted the humble members of the church, leaving the apostles unmolested. Herod attacks the leaders. "Destroy the apostles, and the noxious movement will die," says he. The state's hostility is the most dangerous peril the church has met.

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## Peter Delivered.

The only thing that saved him from immediate death was the fact that the passover was on hand. During that week it was not lawful to execute a prisoner. But he was securely chained and under guard of sixteen soldiers in the prison. Herod would kill him when the passover ended. Meantime the whole church was in earnest prayer to God. Will the Lord deliver his people from the cruelty of the state, as he did from the malice of the council? It is a time of thick darkness. The last night before the fatal day has come. An angel goes to the prison. Peter is asleep between two soldiers. Something touches him, a voice says, "Quick, get up." The fetters drop from his hand. "Put on your sandals and your coat and follow me." He obeyed, but thought it was all a vision, and not real. Arrived in the street, the angel left him, and coming to his senses, he knew that the Lord had rescued him.

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## Sudden Joy.

Peter went to the house of Mary, mother of John Mark. A prayer-meeting was going on within. He knocked. The maid recognizing his voice left the door unopened, rushing back to tell the news. The people thought her crazy. "It is his angel," they said. The

knocking continued. Peter was ushered in, and intense excitement ensued. He motioned to them to keep quiet, and told them of the Lord's doing. "Tell the brethren," said he, and off he went, no one knows where. The Lord is mightier than the State.

The morning brought terror to the guards. They had lost their prisoner, and Herod executed them all. The king went home to Caesarea, made a pompous speech, and was saluted by the fawning people as a god. An angel of the Lord struck him, and he died in great agony. God withered the hand that smote his flock. The gospel rides on. The word of God spread and multiplied.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Peter Delivered from Prison. Acts 12: 1-10.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"His chains fell off."

The Lord is our deliverer. How often we, too, are imprisoned in hard circumstance. Trouble and loss shut out the light from our souls. We feel lonely, discouraged and helpless. We are tempted to lose all interest in life. Like Jacob we feel that all things are against us. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Hope thou in God. Time softens our griefs. Conditions change, the sunshine breaks through the clouds, and the old smiles come back again. Yes, God is always delivering his people. He will take care of you.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Prayer and Deliverance. Acts 12: 11-19.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Tell these things unto James and the brethren."

This James is not an apostle, but the Lord's brother, who has come to a position of influence in the church. If Peter is killed, James and the other leaders will follow him soon. All the apostles know there is just a step between them and death. Go tell them what the Lord has done. It will bring relief to their souls, and joy to their hearts. Our cause is not to perish. The Lord is with us. Be of good courage, little flock, for the Lord will give you the kingdom. No weapon formed against it shall prosper.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—God Our Refuge. Psa. 46.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"A very present help in trouble."

Thou worm Jacob, I will keep thee. I will help thee. His people are dear unto him as

the apple of his eye. The fire shall not hurt thee; the water shall not overflow thee. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people forever. Your lives are hid with Christ in God. We are kept by the power of God unto salvation. All things work together for good to them that love God. Let not your hearts be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Safety of the Godly. Psa. 121.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"The Lord is thy keeper."

He will direct thy steps and keep thee in all thy ways. \*He that keepeth thee shall neither slumber nor sleep. He is thy shade on thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night. He shall keep thee from all evil; he shall keep thy soul. To Abraham he said, "I am thy sun and shield, and thy exceeding great reward." When thou walkest through the valley of the shadow, my rod and my staff shall be thy comfort and stay. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—God Delivers His Own. Psa. 97.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"He preserveth the souls of his saints."

He takes away the frets and worries of the soul, and the burdens of care. He makes Peter sleep like a babe, chained between two soldiers, and his head to fall off in the morning. He gives serenity of mind to Daniel in the lions' den. He makes calm the soul of Paul in the storm and wreck of the sea. He clothes Jesus with deep peace in the mockeries

and brutalities of Pilate's hall. He preserveth the meekness of Moses amid the provocations of a stupid and ungrateful people.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Elisha Delivered. 2 Kings 6: 8-18.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"The mountain was full of horses and chariots."

Elisha was his country's defense. He was an army himself against the king of Syria. Against him alone the king sent an army. Elisha's servant saw the host in the early morning, and lost all hope. The prophet prayed that the youth's eyes might be opened to his own safety. The answer came. Round the hill he saw the forces of the heavenly protector, horses and chariots of fire. Blindness came on his foes in answer to prayer, and he led the host captive to his king. He will hide me in his pavilion.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Divine Care. 1 Kings 17: 1-7.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"The ravens brought him bread."

Elijah prayed for drouth, and suffered its painful results. He was hungry. The Lord made the ravens provide food for his servant. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness. I have been young, and now am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He opens his hands and supplies the wants of all his creatures. The meek shall inherit the earth. Let us make it the prime end of life to serve God and keep his commandments, and verily we shall be fed.

## LESSON 6.

MAY 7 1916.

## The Missionaries of Antioch.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." (Matt. 28: 19.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 11: 10-30; 12: 25-13: 12.

MEMORY VERSES, 18: 2, 3.

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## Lesson Text.

19 ¶ Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Ste-

phen travelled as far as Phœnicæ, and Cyprus, and An'ti-ôch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cy-rô-nê, which, when they were come to An'ti-ôch, spake unto the Grœcians, preaching the Lord Jê-sûs.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

22 ¶ Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jê-rô-sô-

lêm; and they sent forth Bêr'na-bâs, that he should go as far as An'ti-ôch.

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Hô'ly Ghôst and of faith; and much people was added unto the Lord.

25 Then departed Bêr'na-bâs to Târ'sus, for to seek Saul:

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto An'ti-ôch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in An'ti-ôch.

1 Now there were in the church that was at An'ti-ôch certain prophets and teachers; as Bêr'na-bâs, and Sim'e-on that was called N'iger, and Lu'cius of Cy-rê-nê, and Mân'a-ên, which had been brought up with Hêr'od the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Hô'ly Ghôst said, Separate me Bêr'na-bâs and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

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## Progress.

IN spite of all the trials within and without, during the past ten or fifteen years, the work of expansion was going steadily on. Devotion to Jesus had never waned; zeal of apostles and the membership had never cooled. At last the council seems to have lost its power. The Jewish state will never again oppose. Jewish legalism in the church is rebuffed and silent for a season, at least. Some years ago, when persecution broke out with the death of Stephen, there was a wide scattering of the disciples. They went preaching the Word. The good news went into Phœnicia, the island of Cyprus, and to the city of Antioch, far up in the North. Evangelization is getting under a fine headway. The cause prospered, specially at Antioch, and the good news came to Jerusalem. The church sent Barnabas up to review the work. He was delighted with what he found, and his preaching greatly encouraged the new brethren. A revival spirit prevailed. Barnabas goes up to Tarsus, and brings Saul, and together they labor for a year in the fruitful field of Antioch. The city is going to become a new center of Christian power and evangelization. This church is going to outshine the mother church in Jerusalem. Expansion is

her slogan; the gospel for all the world is her watchword.

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## Missionaries Chosen.

Barnabas and Saul were sent by this noble church to Jerusalem, bearing a contribution to their poor brethren. They returned, bringing with them Barnabas' nephew, John Mark. The leaders were pondering the Great Commission, and became deeply impressed with the duty of sending the gospel to the people beyond. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they determined to select Barnabas and Saul for the work. A solemn service was held, and the two were ordained. This was the hour when Christian missions were first and formally launched.

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## The Journey.

Taking Mark, they proceed to Cyprus, and preach in the synagogues there. On to Paphos, the capital, where Saul wins a great victory in the conversion of the governor, and in the humiliation of Elymas, a base and corrupt Jewish sorcerer. The mission goes well, and just here Saul becomes Paul, and from this date on the order of names is Paul and Barnabas. The church at Antioch made no program of the journey. The missionaries were left to their own judgment as to where they should go, and how long they should stay in any place. Having gone to the western end of Cyprus, and glowing with thankful hope and confidence over the success in Paphos, they might have concluded to return and report. Not so. Let us cross over to Asia Minor and see what we may do for the rude half-civilized people in the mountains. It is discussed, and so decided. To the present no particular hardship has been endured; no special peril has been met. They hardly expect as comfortable a time in Asia Minor.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Missionaries of Antioch. Acts 11: 10-30.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Full of the Holy Spirit and faith."

How naturally the selection fell on Barnabas and Saul. There was nothing arbitrary or haphazard. Each man was gifted with mental power. Each was a devout lover of Jesus, and in his heart the missionary fire was burning. They helped to fill the church with the same spirit. Another fact pointed to their eligibility. They came from the very countries it was designed to visit. Barnabas

from Cyprus; Saul from Tarsus. Love of the old home country and its people was a factor in deciding their missionary route.

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**TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Mission in Cyprus. Acts 12: 25—13: 12.

**TUESDAY'S VERSE.**—"Sent forth by the Holy Spirit."

This sending forth, according to Luke's view of the Acts, was the act of Jesus Christ. That is fundamentally true. Yet we have the statement that the Holy Spirit sent them forth. That, too, is profoundly true. It is also certainly a fact that the Antioch church sent out Barnabas and Saul. Is there any contradiction in all this? Not at all. Christ sends the Spirit, the Spirit animates and guides the disciples; the disciples select and do the work. It is one wisdom, one light, one power, one purpose. Results may be credited to each and all.

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**WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Apostolic Commission. Matt. 28: 16-20.

**WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.**—"Make disciples of all the nations."

Not one of the apostles ever forgot that solemn charge. They could not preach Jesus and leave out his last great command. And yet, when the first move was made to carry out his will, not an apostle was a sharer in it. It was done by a new class of believers, everyone of whom, possibly Barnabas excepted, had been converted after the Lord's ascension. They were untrammelled by Jewish prejudice and legalism. The Antioch church, too, lay nearer the mission fields. She took the lead in obeying the Great Commission.

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**THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—A Prophet's Commission. Isa. 6: 1-8.

**THURSDAY'S VERSE.**—"Here am I, send me."

Isaiah was in the temple, and saw a vision of God. The awful holiness of God overcame him with a sense of his sin and the sin of his people. The nation was corrupt with all iniquity. The Lord called for volunteers to go out and declare the indignation felt toward his sinning people. It was a bitter, dangerous task, but the self-sacrificing, humble Isaiah responded, "Here am I, send me."

His work was brave, but unavailing. He did his duty, but failure broke his heart.

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**FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Mission to Samaria. 2 Kings 17: 24-28.

**FRIDAY'S VERSE.**—"One of the priests came and taught them how they should fear the Lord."

Here is a strange story. The Assyrians brought people from the East and planted them in Samaria, whose people they had taken away. Lions destroyed these strangers in Samaria, and they reported that it was due to the fact that they did not understand the way of the Lord of the land. They asked the Assyrian government to send someone to teach them the right way. The king granted the request, and chose a priest whom he had carried away. He came back and taught the strangers how to fear the Lord.

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**SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Mission to Nineveh. Jonah 3: 1-10.

**SATURDAY'S VERSE.**—"Preach the preaching that I bid thee."

It never would have entered the minds of the Ninevites to invite a Jew to tell them of his religion. But it was in God's mind to send a man to tell the city of its sins and the coming doom. The preacher selected did not want to go. He had a terrible experience in an effort to get away from God and duty. On the second call he went and preached so faithfully that the city repented and the Lord forgave. Israel was designed to be a missionary nation to the world. Like all human performance, it has been imperfectly done.

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**SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—The Gospel Message. Rom. 10: 1-10.

**SUNDAY'S VERSE.**—"Confess with thy mouth Jesus is Lord."

The gospel is not the denunciation of sin, but the proclamation of forgiveness. It is based in the love of God, and is directed to calling sinners to repentance and faith. It publishes God's remedy for the foul and deadly disease of human hearts. It comes without price. It asks that we turn from our evil way and follow the steps of Jesus Christ. Believe with thy heart and confess with thy mouth. The gospel is good news: It is the power of God unto salvation.

## LESSON 7.

MAY 14, 1916.

## "Lo, We Turn to the Gentiles."

## MOTTO TEXT—

"I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 13: 47.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 13: 13-52

MEMORY VERSES, 45, 46.

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## Lesson Text.

13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Pá'phos, they came to Pêr'ga in Pamphyl'ia; and John departing from them returned to Jê-rú-sá-lêm.

14 ¶ But when they departed from Pêr'ga, they came to An'ti-och in Pi-sid'ia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down.

15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

42 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gê'n'tiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.

43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Bâr'na-bás: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

44 ¶ And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

46 Then Paul and Bâr'na-bás 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 Gê'n'tiles.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gê'n'tiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

48 And when the Gê'n'tiles 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.

50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Bâr'na-bás, and expelled them out of their coasts.

51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto I-cô'nium.

52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Hô'ly Ghô'st.

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## A Desertion.

JOHN MARK deserts, shames his uncle, and dishonors himself. Why does he quit? He wanted to go into this work, why does he give it up? For one thing, the work has suddenly become hard and dangerous. The missionaries now enter a mountainous country, inhabited by a rude, half-civilized people. There is a wide contrast between the comforts of the governor's home in Páphos and the crude, harsh conditions in Asia Minor. And again, John Mark is a raw youth, who has not considered the possible privations of missionary life. Like many another, he is deluded by the romantic glamour of missions, and goes in without counting the cost. Imagine his confusion and shame on his return to Jerusalem. How can he explain his return? It was a bad start for a young man, and evil came out of it that he dreamed not of. But he redeemed his good name, and became a noble missionary yet. Don't cast a young fellow out for one bad break.

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## A Great Sermon.

Paul and Barnabas do not tarry at Perga, on the coast, but press right on through the mountains into the heart of Asia Minor, northward. They come to the city, Antioch, in the province of Pisidia. Instantly they find their Jewish brethren, and engage to speak in the synagogue. Paul stands up to preach, and follows the line of argument pursued by Stephen long years ago in Jerusalem. Then he helped those who murdered the noble deacon; now he takes Stephen's method of preaching. Stephen's way of interpreting Christ and his gospel become Paul's way. It is a fine tribute to the intellect of the first martyr. Jesus and him crucified is Paul's

theme. First, he proves that Jesus sprang from God's elect people, whom he delivered from Egypt. He came from the line of David, the illustrious king of Israel. Second, he proves that Jesus is the spiritual deliverer of all men, by reference to the predictions of the prophets and the facts of his crucifixion and resurrection. Third, he appeals for faith in him as the only condition of the remission of sins. Here he makes his first recorded contrast between the insufficiency of the law of Moses and the all-sufficiency of the gospel of Christ. He closes with encouragement and warning.

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#### Turn to the Gentiles.

The sermon so pleased the audience that they requested its repetition the next Sabbath: Interest spread, and the synagogue was packed. Meantime the Jews became jealous, and began to oppose the teaching of Paul. The idea that anything could be superior to the old-time religion of Moses and the fathers stirred them to anger. This new doctrine is dangerous heresy; away with it and its advocates. Paul and Barnabas saw and felt the changed attitude, and said boldly: "The word of God has been spoken to you, but as you reject it, we turn with it to the Gentiles. Such are the Lord's orders to us, for he will bring salvation to the end of the earth." The Gentiles heard this gladly, and many of them believed. This made the Jews furious, and they drove the missionaries out of their city.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Turning to the Gentiles. Acts 13: 13-24.

MONDAY'S VERSE—"John departing from them."

So many young Christians do the same thing. Truly converted and sincerely eager to follow Christ, they run well for a season, and then zeal dies out. They become half-hearted, and gradually drift from the church, deserting religious work. It is so discouraging to pastors and superintendents. Be sure they are not proud of it; they are not satisfied or happy. Don't threaten exclusion. Be patient. Life will sober them, and some day they will repent and come back. Many such have grown into lovely and useful members. John Mark will come back and win a crown.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Good Tidings. Acts 13: 25-30.

TUESDAY'S VERSE—"God hath brought unto Israel a Saviour."

Paul had tried Moses' law to the full, as a means of salvation, and yet never found satisfaction to his soul. By the works of the law no man can be justified before God. This was Paul's personal experience, and so it was one of the deepest convictions of his soul. At last he had found peace by accepting truth and grace in Jesus. Here is the way, the truth, and the life. Not by works, but by grace through faith. Here is remission of sins; here is righteousness; here is the only salvation. This good news is for all men alike.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Reception of Tidings. Acts 13: 40-52.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE—"Contradicting and blaspheming."

No need of surprise that the Jews should revolt at the new doctrine of salvation. To them it seemed the abrogation of the sacred old faith of Israel. It horrified them by putting the Jew on the same religious level with the Gentile dogs. They felt exactly as Paul used to feel. Their eyes were blind; they simply could not see that Moses only prepared the way for Christ. They could not see that Christ was the ripe fruit of Israel's old religion. They were not spiritual. Pharisaism was their creed. Paul hoped that Gentile Christianity would help to win the Jews.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Universal Call. Isa. 55: 1-7.

THURSDAY'S VERSE—"The sure mercies of David."

This refers to God's covenant with David. "I will make thy kingdom an everlasting kingdom, and thy throne shall be established forever. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples. Thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee." These are the sure mercies promised to David. Here is the universal divine call, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him."

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—God's Doings. Isa. 12: 1-6.

FRIDAY'S VERSE—"Jehovah is my strength and song."

Isaiah saw the golden age that was to come. He knew that conformity to the laws of Moses in religious worship was not redeem-

ing his people. Iniquity ran riot, though the altars of religion were thronged with worshippers. Jehovah is become my salvation. With joy shall ye draw waters out of the wells of salvation. In that day ye shall say, "Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name. Sing unto the Lord, for he hath done excellent things." Paul knew Isaiah's great anticipations, and it was his glory to proclaim their fulfillment.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Prayer for Unity. John 17: 18-26.

SATURDAY'S VERSE—"That they may all be one."

Jesus was conscious of the unity of the Father and the Spirit with himself. The kingdom of God is one. He demanded the unity of his disciples. Divisions and strifes among them would misrepresent his gospel, and neutralize its triumphs. One faith, one love, one obedience, one mind, and one spirit. Sectarian bitterness is not of God. It is not

#### LESSON 8.

### The Cripple of Lystra.

MAY 21, 1916.

MOTTO TEXT—"He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength." (Isa. 40: 29.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 14.

MEMORY VERSES, 8-10.

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#### Lesson Text.

8 ¶ And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:

9 The same heard Paul speak: who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,

10 Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lyc-a-o-ni-a. The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

12 And they called Bar-na-bas, Jö'p'i-tër; and Paul, Mër-cö'ri-us, because he was the chief speaker.

13 Then the priest of Jö'p'i-tër, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands

loyalty to Christ; it is not the leading of the Spirit. Baptists believe in the great doctrine of religious liberty, every Christian's right to interpret Christian duty for himself, without loss of fellowship.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Lost and Found. Luke 15: 11-24.

SUNDAY'S VERSE—"I will arise and go to my father."

This is the greatest parable of Jesus. It states the moral insanity of the sinner, the need of repentance, and the certain welcome of love. Sin ruins the soul, and brings misery to the life. It pains the heart of God. So close is his kinship to the children of men. Conversion is at the point of decision to turn and go home. I will arise and go, marks the end of disobedience, and the birth of a new life. God folds the returning prodigal to his bosom. The bells of heaven ring. The lost is found. This is the salvation of God. It is free to all.

unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.

14 Which when the apostles, Bar-na-bas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

17 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

19 ¶ And there came thither certain Jews from An'ti-och and I-co'ni-um, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Bar-na-bas to Ico'ni-a.

## Persecution.

DRIVEN out of Antioch, Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium, where the same things happened again. They were welcomed into the synagogue, and a number of Jews and Gentiles were converted. The work opened most encouragingly. But the storm soon broke. The Jews took alarm, and stirred up the Gentiles against the missionaries, but not all, for some of them sided with the apostles. However, the hostile party proved the strongest, and when they resorted to insults, and threatened to stone Paul and Barnabas, they made escape, and went to other towns, Lystra and Derbe. It is a rough experience, quite different from that of the island of Cyprus. But our heroes think not of giving up. At his conversion, Jesus said: "I will shew him how great things he shall suffer for my name." This was only the beginning of his tribulations.

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## A New Difficulty.

At Lystra, by the power of God, Paul healed a man who had been a cripple from his birth. When the crowds saw the man walking, their enthusiasm burst all bounds. The ignorant Jews wanted to put a crown on Jesus' head when he fed the five thousand, you remember. The conduct of these heathen was not much more stupid, if any. "The gods have come among us in human form," they shouted. The priest of the heathen temple made preparation to offer sacrifices to them. Scorned by Jews as enemies of God and man, worshiped by Gentiles as gods! What a contrast. And each equally stupid. The apostles were shocked, and sprang in to suppress the absurd demonstration. Spurning divine honors, Paul made a speech to the pagans, declaring himself a human being of the same nature as themselves. We are simply preachers sent forth by God to turn you and all people from idols to the true religion. We are servants of the one living God, who has given you so many tokens of his favor and love. This speech is the germ of the one he made four years later on Mars Hill in Athens, before the most cultivated Greeks. It was with difficulty that the sacrifices were defeated.

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## Stoning.

From divine honors to brutal stoning the passage is short and swift, reminding us of the cries, "Hosanna to the Son of David," and "Crucify him." The Jews now behave worse than ever. They follow from Antioch and Iconium full of hate. Paul has withstood idolatry, and now the Jews, who profess ab-

horrence of it, come and join these idolaters, inciting them to stone the man who would turn them from idols. Surely they have judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, and the gospel is vindicated in going to the heathen. The mob that would have worshipped, led by the Jews, assaulted Paul, and dragged him out of the city, thinking him dead. They dispersed, and to the surprise of mourning friends, Paul arose and went with them into Lystra. Next day Paul and Barnabas went to Derbe and preached, making disciples there. Then they retraced their steps through the same towns to strengthen their converts. How brave it was! They went back to Perga, where they landed from Cyprus. There the mission ended, and they sailed for Antioch to report how God had been with them.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Persecution for the Gospel's Sake. Acts 14: 1-7.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Speaking boldly in the Lord."

The hopelessness in the case of persecutors is in the fact that they do not know themselves as persecutors. They think they are doing the right thing, discharging a religious duty. Creeds and forms become dear as life to men, and all new ideas meet instant hostility. There has never been a new view of God and duty that was not misunderstood, hated and outraged. It is hard even now for us to grant that what is not misunderstood, hated and outraged. It is hard even now for us seriously in religious opinion, can be a really good man. And it is no easy matter to refrain from persecution by assailing his character.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Cripple at Lystra. Acts 14: 8-20.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"He had faith to be healed."

The people said the recovery was from divine power. That was right. They were wrong when they said the large man, Barnabas, was Jupiter, chief of the gods, come in their city. Wrong when they said the small man, Paul, was Mercury, the messenger and speaker for Jupiter. With their views it was an act of piety to make a sacrifice in honor of the visiting gods. The healed man knew better. He heard the gospel, and believed it. He honored and loved his benefactors, but gave praise to the invisible holy God.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Perseverance in the Gospel. Acts 14: 21-28.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"How God had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles."

What a home-coming that was. The first great missionary journey was an accomplished fact. Was the enterprise worth while? Was there encouragement enough in its results to justify its continuance? Can the gospel of Jesus be applied to Gentile people? Is it really a world religion? It was a mighty experiment of faith in which the Antioch church had ventured. Gladly they welcomed the worn and scarred missionaries. Their fondest hopes were realized. Verily, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation of Jew and Gentile.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Paralyzed Man. Mark 2: 1-12.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"All were amazed and glorified God."

Paul's deed at Lystra recalls Jesus and the healing of the paralytic. Seeing the faith of the sick man's friends and himself, the Lord said: "Thy sins be forgiven thee." The Pharisees said that speech was blasphemy. They said it in their hearts, and Jesus could read their thoughts in their faces. He asked which was easier to say, thy sins be forgiven, or to say arise and walk? They would not risk an answer. Then he commanded the man to arise, take thy bed and walk. The man obeyed, and the crowd praised God.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Mistaken Identity. Mark 3: 20-30.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"He hath Beelzebub."

Here is a deliberate, malicious slander. It is as illogical as it is infamous. The envious scribes and Pharisees will resort to any absurd explanation of Jesus' mighty works to rob him of credit in the eyes of the

multitude. He is in league with the devil, and that explains his casting out demons. Jesus exposed their logic by saying that Satan would not destroy his own works. He then denounces on them the woes of an unpardonable sin. It was their crowning insult to ascribe the acts of the Spirit of God to the agency of Satan. Audacious sin reached its limit.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Needless Sacrifice. Psa. 50: 7-15.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"If I were hungry, I would not tell thee."

The Jews were punctilious about sacrifices of bullocks, rams, and goats and birds. Jehovah's altars were always smoking. But he grew weary of it when the worshipers brought no inward piety with the offerings. These things became an offense to him. Forms and ceremonies, where no faith is, where no loving obedience is, are a solemn mockery to God. Above all, he wants the sacrifices of a broken spirit and a contrite heart. He craves the honest thanksgiving of his people.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—God's Witness of Himself. Rom. 1: 18-25.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"They became fools."

Paul was speaking of the inexcusable corruptions of the heathen world. They may not plead ignorance of God. He has revealed himself in his creation, his power and divinity. They saw that, and knew it; yet they deliberately surrendered themselves to their own lusts. They changed the fashion of God into the forms of beasts and creeping things. Notice the gradual debasement of their imagery of God, from the form of man to that of unclean reptiles. Their senseless heart was darkened, and God turned them over to their own lusts.



## LESSON 9.

## The Council at Jerusalem.

MOTTO TEXT.—"For freedom did Christ set us free." (Gal. 5: 1a.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 15: 1-35.

MEMORY VERSES, 32, 33.

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## Lesson Text.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to An'ti-och with Paul and Bār'na-bās; namely, Jō'das surnamed Bār'na-bās, and Sī'las, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gēn'tiles in An'ti-och and Syr'ia and Ci'l'cia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law; to whom we gave no such commandment:

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Bār'na-bās and Paul.

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jē'sūs Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Jū'das and Sī'las, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Hō'ly Ghōst, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

30 So when they were dismissed, they came to An'ti-och; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle;

31 Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.

32 And Jū'das and Sī'las, being prophets also, themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

33 And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles.

MAY 28, 1916.

## The Issue.

THE missionary journey began in the spring of 47 A.D. and lasted to the summer of 49 A.D. Soon after the return of Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, certain individuals from the church in Jerusalem came and began to teach the circumcision of Gentile converts as a necessity for salvation. That brought the sharpest controversy. Peter's experience with Cornelius fifteen years before this date had not settled the standing of the Gentiles in the church. It established the fact of the open door to them, but to many brethren of narrow view, it did not define the conditions on which the Gentiles can enter into eternal life. This is the question. The brethren from Jerusalem said flatly they could not be saved without circumcision. Paul and Barnabas could not silence them by argument. Truth is, these men had the Scripture on their side. They admitted that salvation is promised to the Gentiles, but on what conditions? Circumcision was divinely imposed, said they, and the man-child without it, shall be cut off from his people. The parties to the debate were equally sincere. The issue presents a clash between the liberty of the gospel and the authority of the Scripture. Only God's Spirit can harmonize the two.

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## The Appeal.

There is nothing to do but to carry the matter to the mother church in Jerusalem. It is the most momentous doctrinal question that has arisen in early Christianity. Paul and Barnabas and other brethren are sent to the council, not that the apostles and elders may settle the dispute, but that all together may discover the mind of the Lord. Peter makes a great speech. He is not a pope; he does not settle it by his own authority. He argues the case. He appeals to his experience. God did convert Cornelius and his house, and gave them the Holy Spirit. God did blot out the distinctive mark between Jew and Gentile, so that there is no difference. He makes two points more. Why ask the Gentiles to submit to a system that the Jew has never been able to bear? Again, the Jew has to abandon it, and believe on Christ in order to be saved. The Jew must trust to the grace of God, just as the Gentile does.

His position is this: What God's Word says must be learned in the light of what God does. The divine act is a higher court than the divine record. That was great, it was unanswerable. It was the triumph of sanctified common sense. Jewish legalism got its death blow. Paul and Barnabas are happy. The Holy Spirit has declared the mind of Christ. The liberty of the gospel is secure, and the gospel outranks the law of Moses. The gospel is freed from the shackles of Judaism forever, and the way is clear to the evangelization of the world. So the council declares.

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## The Message.

James was president. He made a speech, rounding up the debate. He cordially endorsed the victorious views of Peter, but he felt it wise to soothe the legalistic brethren who had lost. Yes, it is clear that God has put the Gentile on the same religious level with the Jew. Now, brethren, says he, let us pass this resolution; our Gentile brethren are instructed to abstain from meat offered to idols, from blood and from fornication. It was adopted. The whole church acted in the matter, and in the written communication to Antioch, it was stated in plain words; the troublers of Antioch were not sent by this church. The council sent two members, Judas and Silas, to attest the letter and to confirm its sentiments.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Council at Jerusalem. Acts 15: 1-11.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"The apostles and elders."

It was a wise resolution to refer this vital question to the mother church. She held naturally the place of preëminence, holding in her membership the men who were the companions of Jesus. On the far-off border of evangelization this crucial interpretation of the gospel arose, and to settle it by vote in the Antioch church might not have settled it at all. Go to headquarters, was the decision of good judgment. Here is a lesson for small, weak churches in trouble. Get the counsel of older churches. Allow the Holy Spirit to quiet disputes through the advice of thoughtful, peace-loving brethren.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Decision of the council. Acts 15: 12-21.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"That we trouble not the Gentiles which turn to God."

It was a time of transition from the old religion of Judaism to the universal religion of Jesus. Conservative men always think the old is best. That they have reached perfection in views and customs. New ideas have always been hateful. You propose some change in church usage, really wise and needful, and see the opposition. Adoniram Judson begged his brethren in America not to send as his helper in missions, a conscientiously obstinate man. He is a troubler when advance is proposed. The honest narrow men from Jerusalem made no end of trouble at Antioch. Nobody sent them. They were self-appointed objectors. They must not rule.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Decrees of the Council. Acts 15: 22-35.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Abstain from meats and from blood."

This was really not necessary, but was agreed to as a sort of concession to the Judaizing brethren. The gospel deals in principles, not in rules. But some men dote on rules. They want a number of rules spread on the church book. This is the Judaizing spirit, and is pretty sure to keep a church in trouble. The great-hearted Paul accepted the decrees, but did not need them for himself. His gospel of Christ was all he needed to keep him from evil, and to guide him to obedience. Submit mind and heart to the Holy Spirit. Live the Christ life, and you will not need rules.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Freedom from Bondage. Gal. 5: 1-6.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Be not entangled in a yoke of bondage."

These Judizers did not die. The decision of the council gave them a temporary check, but they rose again and gave Paul no end of trouble. They came into his churches in Asia Minor, casting slurs on his orthodoxy, and insisting on submission to Moses' law of circumcision. You can't be saved without it. This was abhorrent to Paul. It was an impeachment of the gospel. It dishonored Christ by teaching that he was unable to save a soul without rites and ceremonies. This was the bitterest battle he ever fought. But he won. It was a masterful struggle for spiritual freedom, for salvation by grace unmixt with works.

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Source of Uncleanness. Mark 7: 1-8.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"But their heart is far from me."

Pharisaism is a religion of rules and externals. Keep the rules and you are good. They had drawn up six hundred and thirteen rules for the guidance of the religious life. It was a suffocation of the soul of a good man. Jesus swept them all away, and for that they hated him. Because he discarded their absurd system they denounced him as an enemy of religion, of God and man. They did not try to keep their own rules, twisting them to meet their own selfish wishes. This display of pety was a deep offense to Jesus. There was no real heart purity or pety. It was merely a whitewashed hypocrisy. Keep the heart pure.

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Gospel of Faith. Gal. 3: 1-9.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"In thee shall all the nations be blessed."

Paul makes the point that Abraham was saved by faith alone. It was over four hundred years later when Moses' laws were written. So, then, his salvation could not be de-

pendent on the keeping of those laws. What is salvation? It is the lifting up of the soul of man into moral likeness to God. Jesus is God's eternal model of a saved life. God in the mind and heart, inspiring and guiding the thoughts and deeds—that is salvation. How utterly shallow and ridiculous to fancy that this result is effected by circumcision, baptism or any outward act. Faith in God is the power that saves.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Righteousness by Faith. Rom. 3: 21-31.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"For all have sinned."

Faith is the right attitude of a soul to God. It is the trust reposed by one person in another. It is the absolute persuasion of God's goodness, purity and love; God's patience, pity and faithfulness. That God has the right to rule in and over men, and that all his commands are wise and just, and in keeping them there is great reward. Confidence in and submission to a God like this must result in good living, in works of righteousness. The works do not produce the faith, but contrariwise, this faith produces the works. Jesus had this faith and his wonderful life was the result. Paul had it. John and Peter had it. You and I have it, I hope. Then we must live by it, and become Godlike.

#### LESSON 10.

### The Call of the West.

JUNE 4, 1916.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Come over into Macedonia, and help us." (Acts 16: 9.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 15: 36; 16: 15.

MEMORY VERSES, 9, 10.

#### Lesson Text.

6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,

7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.

8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night, There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;

12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony; and we were in that city abiding certain days.

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.

14 ¶ And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

#### The Parting.

THE decision of the council gave immense satisfaction to the church in Antioch. There is a fresh impetus of hope and courage in her work, and as a center of world evangelization she will, from this time on, hold the preëminence over the mother church. Luke's narrative is no longer concerned with Jerusalem and Peter and the other apostles. They fade away, and the light focalizes on Paul and Antioch. Paul and Barnabas busy themselves in teaching and preaching for a season. One day Paul proposes to his companion to revisit their churches in the mission field. It is agreed, and Barnabas says, "We will take Mark with us; he wants another trial." "No," says Paul, "I will have none of him. He forsook us three years ago. I cannot consent." "But he must go," says the uncle. They have right sharp words, but the old friendship is not broken. Two missions result. The old friends parted. Barnabas and Mark go one way; Paul and Silas go another. Of Barnabas and Mark, Luke has nothing further to say; but a great deal of Paul and Silas.

#### Timothy.

Paul's route lies straight through the mountains, northwest, into the heart of Asia Minor. He visits churches and strengthens them in faith and work. At last he comes to Derbe and Lystra. He remembers the experience at Lystra of three years ago: The lame man healed, the divine honors offered him, and the cruel stoning that followed. Let all that pass. He fears no repetition of danger now. His heart is warmed at sight of one of his young converts, and is delighted to see how he has grown in grace. In Lystra and Iconium this youth has a good reputation among all the brethren. His mother is a Jewess and his father a Greek. Paul wants to take Timothy with him. He is willing, and the sweet mother gives up her boy to be a foreign missionary. Paul feels it his duty to tell the churches about the Jerusalem decrees, but evidently attaching little importance to them. His gospel embodies all they need in morals and religion. He does one strange thing. He circumcises Timothy. Why? Not to help the boy's soul, but for expediency's sake. It may increase his usefulness among the Jews, making him ceremonially accept-

able. It is far from being a concession to the Judaizers. It is done, not for salvation, but to remove prejudice.

#### Call of the West.

From Lystra, Paul and his two young companions, Silas and Timothy, continued their progress, calling on other churches and confirming them in the faith. They had not dwindled, but were devotedly loyal, and increasing in membership. Paul's visit refreshed and strengthened the work mightily. Next he proposed to venture into regions where the gospel had never been preached. He made two efforts to penetrate the outlying provinces, but was hindered by the Holy Spirit. Whether the Spirit used internal doubts, or external hindrances, we are not informed. At any rate, Paul felt impelled to go westerly towards the Ægean sea. He came to Troas, a seaport town. There a vision came to Paul. He saw a man from Macedonia standing and appealing to him, with the words, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." Instantly he felt that the Spirit of God was guiding him into a new mission field. Jesus, through the Spirit, was going to invade Europe with his gospel. The good news was to spread to another continent. "Go ye into all the world." It was not Paul, but the Holy Spirit that guided in spiritual conquest. He was glad the decision was ended, and made immediate preparation to go.

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Call of the West. Acts 15: 36-16: 5.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Come over and help us."

It is a striking fact that Luke became known to Paul for the first time in Troas. There Luke was joined to the apostle's company. From this point in the narrative Luke begins to use the pronouns "we" and "us." "When he saw the vision, straightway we sought to go." The English scholar, Dr. W. M. Ramsay, who has made a long study of Paul, ventures the theory that Luke was the real man from Macedonia. He finds evidences that Luke was a Macedonian. Paul was subject to infirmity, and Luke was a physician. Luke was won to Christ, and his gifts made him a desirable companion of the apostle. Luke became a great historian.

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Obeying the Call. Acts 16: 6-15.

**TUESDAY'S VERSE.**—"Immediately we endeavored to go."

That reminds us of Paul's statement to King Agrippa, when telling the story of his conversion. "I was obedient to the heavenly vision." Christ's will from that moment was the law of Paul's life. He trusted the Spirit of God to point out the path of duty, and seeing it, he was all alacrity in the performance. Duty points across an unknown sea, to an unknown land. There is no delay to study the geography of it, or the nature of its inhabitants and civilization. Away to Macedonia is the slogan and soon the prow of the vessel strikes on the shore of Europe. At once the gospel is preached in Philippi and converts are won for Christ.

**WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Nehemiah's Call. Neh. 2: 1-8.

**WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.**—"Send me unto Judah."

Nehemiah was a bright and noble Jew in captivity. He was in favor in the king's house. He had a delightfully easy and comfortable office. But he became unhappy when he heard the bad reports from Judah. The returned exiles were disheartened in their efforts at rebuilding Jerusalem. "What can I do for you?" asked the king. Nehemiah was glad, and praying to God for success, he told the king the cause of his sorrow, and asked permission to go to the help of his brethren. The king was kind and granted the request, giving him all needed aid and encouragement. Now this impression of duty was of the Lord. That is the way the Lord calls you and me to good works.

**THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Call of Cyrus. Isaiah 45: 1-7.

**THURSDAY'S VERSE.**—"I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me."

This is a remarkable passage of Scripture. He will turn the hearts of kings whithersoever he will. God wants the prison doors of bondage broken down. He will make King Cyrus the instrument of his will. He shall release the Babylonian captives and set them on their homeward way. The political conditions of Cyrus' kingdom made the return of the Jews a wise expedient. It fell in exactly with the needs of the times, and while Cyrus was pursuing his own interests, he was unconsciously working out the plan of God. In furthering the humane plan of restoring the Jews to their native land, he was the servant of God.

**FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Call of Apostles. Matt. 10: 1-15.

**FRIDAY'S VERSE.**—"These twelve Jesus sent forth."

The call of God is away from idleness to activity, from evil to good, from one class of work to another. From the work of fishermen and tax-gatherers and other kinds of toll, Jesus called the twelve to be preachers of the gospel. It was a high honor to be associated in work with God. We are all co-workers with God if we are willing to accept the distinction. But the Holy Spirit had prepared the minds and hearts of these men. Their sympathies with the people had been moved. An honest longing to lift them up to better living had entered their hearts. That was the call of God.

**SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Avoiding Contention. 2 Tim. 2: 20-26.

**SATURDAY'S VERSE.**—"Follow after right-courtness, faith, love, peace."

I suppose some of Paul's adversaries did not regard him as a mild, gentle, peaceable soul. His arguments were hard and unanswerable. When convinced that his enemies were obstinately ignorant, malicious, and slanderous, he could hurl at them terrible epithets. But the contention was of their own making. Paul was not fighting for his own sake, but for the honor of Christ and the freedom and purity of his gospel. He did not quarrel with Barnabas. He had his convictions about Mark, and sternly refused him as a comrade in the second missionary campaign. He took Mark to his bosom later.

**SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—"Seeing Things Eternal. 2 Cor. 4: 7-18.

**SUNDAY'S VERSE.**—"We look not at the things that are seen."

Paul's idea of the Christian is high and spiritual. He is one in whom Christ lives. His body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. So identified is he with Jesus that the Master thinks with his brain, feels with his heart-strings, and resolves with his will. It is no longer I that live, but Christ that lives within me. That is the supreme, glorious conception of the mystical union between Christ and his servant. It was born in the brain of the immortal Paul. He saw with the eyes of Jesus. He felt that he saw too dimly, but he had confidence that he should see clearly, some sweet day.

## LESSON II.

JUNE 11, 1916.

## Sowing and Reaping.

Temperance Lesson.

**MOTTO TEXT.**—"God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6: 7.)

**LESSON PASSAGE,** Galatians 6.

**MEMORY VERSES,** 1, 2.

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## Lesson Text.

1 Brethren if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

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## Another's Burden.

IN times of great danger the cry has sometimes been, Every man for himself, and God for us all. That cannot be, for if every man is for himself, God will not be for any one of us. He has made us to lean on each other. The weakest helps the strongest, and the strongest helps the weakest. We must not be too proud to be helped, nor too selfish to help. Here is the true word, every man for his neighbor, and God for us all. Your neigh-

bor has hurt his conscience and his standing by some kind of wrongdoing. He is in trouble and needs sympathy, and not reproach. Don't tattle it all over the community; don't despise him. If you are a Christian, try to help him rise. Jesus did that for you. With that man's antecedents you would have done the same thing, probably. Don't be too confident of yourself. You, too, have your moral dangers. Then there are burdens of misfortune from loss of property, sickness, death. Here, too, are chances to show that you have the Spirit of Christ. Did he go to the homes of sorrow and want? Did he say, "Follow me"? How often have you visited the sick? How many burdens of trouble have you lightened?

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## Responsibility.

A different thing is meant when the text says, each man must bear his own burden. In this place "burden" means personal responsibility to God. No man can bear that with us. We cannot shirk it. Men try to do so on the ground of fate or necessity. I was made that way. I couldn't help myself. This is a lie. He is responsible to God. Men would shift their salvation to a church, and when a church assumes that task, it insults God and injures the soul. Citizens often want to put more responsibility on the State, thus making the multitude responsible for the individual. The State is our burden, and it is cowardly to try to load it with our responsibilities. Here is where men lie about taxes. A true Christian will bear his own responsibilities to God.

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## Sowing and Reaping.

Here is the great law of human life. First, there is the fact, that underlies the law. This is it: Human life is a sowing and reaping. It is not a succession of separate disconnected experiences. It is a closely knit compacted whole. In the natural harvests the sowing and the reaping are separated from each other in time, but not so in the life of the soul. Every day of our life we are sowing something for the future, and reaping something from the past. Thus our sowing and reaping are going on continuously and at the

same time. This is the solemn inescapable fact.

Second, the law. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. It is grounded in the very nature of things, necessary and inevitable. Yet men live on, sow on, hoping to find it otherwise in their case. We reap what we sow, in kind; we reap in quantities largely increased. Sow one sin and we reap a horrible harvest of ten or more. Sow drunkenness and reap poverty and rags. Sow injustice and reap dishonor. Sow selfishness and reap a withered soul. Sow envy and reap a soured spirit. Sow pride and exclusiveness and reap the contempt of your neighbors along with social loneliness. All this is sowing to the flesh, and the harvest is destruction. On the other hand sow obedience to God, sow kindness, self denial, sobriety, justice, humility and love to your neighbor, and reap the favor of God; with the hearty respect and admiration of men. This is sowing to the Spirit, and the blessed harvest is everlasting life. What we sow, that shall we also reap.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Sowing and Reaping. Gal. 6: 1-18.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"And so fulfill the law of Christ."

The art of living together in peace and concord, in mutual forbearance and helpfulness, is the supreme and difficult art. We are all scholars in the school of Christ, and not one of us is apt at learning the lessons of goodness and righteousness. Not one of us can afford to scoff at and scorn his brother. The more we have advanced in godliness, the more capable are we for bearing the burdens of the erring, the sinning, and the broken-hearted. Censure and rebuke have no power as a rule. The hopeful word of cheer, the brotherly hand grasp, mightily helps the fallen brother. That is Christ's way.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Sowing True. Matt. 13: 24-30.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Whit thou then that we go and gather them up?"

Here is a plain check on harsh and violent methods in dealing with men, openly and shamelessly wicked. John the Baptist thought the kingdom would be inaugurated with axe and fire; that the wicked would be ruthlessly destroyed. Not so. That is not the Master's way. He put emphasis on letting your light shine on the world's evil-

doers. Show them the better life. Wave not axe nor torch of judgment. The kingdom is peace and righteousness. At the last day will the separation come. The bad will go to their own place, and the good will be gathered home.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Sowing on Waters. Eccl. 11: 1-8.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Thou shalt find it after many days."

Here is the lesson of pity and charity. It is based on the old custom of sowing grain on the level lowlands, while covered with water from the swollen streams. It may have looked like wasting the grain, but not so. The waters subside, the grain sinks into the soft soil, and a little later an abundant harvest waves. So be a generous soul. Do good and faint not. Scatter seeds of kindness on every hand. Go through the world with smiles and kind words. They will come back to you. Your labor will not be in vain in the Lord.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Joy of Harvest. Psa. 126.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"He shall come again with joy."

The sowing time is indicated as one of discomfort and pain. The farmer scatters his grain and ploughs it in when the frost is on the ground, and the cold wind chills him to the bone. That is what is meant by sowing in tears. It is needful, for only thus can the harvest come and his family be fed. Living a genuinely religious life is not easy. Jesus enforces it because it is right, and its reward is sure. Many a time you have a terrible fight with the flesh to be amiable and brave in doing good. Fight the good fight. The joy and the crown await. Be of good cheer and faint not.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Sowing Good Seed. 1 Thil. 4: 6-16.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

Paul sets much store by Timothy. The boy has grown into a lovable minister of the gospel under the training of the great apostle. Paul's work is about ended. How splendidly he has sowed, and now he rejoices in the nearness of the crown and the glory. He thinks of the world's needs. He knows that they must be met by men of like spirit with himself. His dying exhortations bear on

Timothy's increasing piety, wisdom, and devotion. Sow the good seed of noble example, and the pure Word of God. Take care of health, avoid vain babblings, be faithful unto death, and thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Social Responsibility. Rom. 14: 13-23.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"That no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way."

We are set to help others onward in good living, not to hinder and discourage. Blessed is the man in the church who has the confidence and love of the members. He is doing more good than he knows. We put a stumblingblock in a brother's way by being stingy and refusing to bear our part of church expenses. We do it by being a grumbler and a faultfinder. We do it by neglecting the services of the church. It is heartrending the number of church members who are simply dead to all good works. No aspiration, no

energy. What shall be done with them? Turn them out? What good will that do them? Let us patiently hope.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Life's Harvest. Rom. 2: 1-11.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"There is no respect of persons with God."

The Jews thought themselves the favorites of heaven, and yet they crucified the Son of God. They asserted their superiority to the Gentiles. Jesus rebuked the ignorant folly. Paul established the equality of all men before God, showing how Christ had leveled all dividing walls. God has no favorites, but every man who reverences him, and does good to men is acceptable to him. This great truth is one of the grand achievements of the gospel. All have sinned; all are under condemnation; all have the offer of salvation on the very same terms. All who serve him shall have everlasting life.

## LESSON 12.

JUNE 18, 1916.

## The Philippian Jailer.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." (Acts 16: 31.)

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 16: 6-40.

MEMORY VERSES, 33, 34.

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## Lesson Text.

19 ¶ And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers.

20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city.

21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 ¶ And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang psalms unto God and the prisoners heard them.

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

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## Lydia.

SHE enjoys the distinction of being the first convert in Europe. She is a capable, energetic woman, who has brought her beautifully dyed goods from Asia to the market in Philippi. Her life has been touched by the Jewish religion, and improved thereby. In the synagogue at her home in Thyatira she had learned the truth of a holy God. Remember that Judaism was far and away the best religion on the earth when Jesus came. Paul met her at the prayer service by the river's bank. There was no synagogue in Philippi, so his first services were held with a little group of devout people by the river. Lydia received the word, and was a great comfort to Paul and his three companions, Silas, Timothy, and Luke.

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## The Soothsayer.

A company of men in the city owned a young woman of peculiar gifts. She was a ventriloquist and a fortune teller, and brought much money to her owners. Evidently she had heard Paul preach, and to Paul's great annoyance she went through the streets saying, These men are servants of the Most High God. With this testimony she followed Paul several days. He refused testimony from such a source, and commanded the spirit to come out of her, in the name of Jesus. Then his trouble began. He had interfered with business. Seeing the hope of profit gone, the owners arrested Paul and Silas. They trumped all manner of false charges before the magistrates. They are agitators, disturbing our city with customs which Romans may not accept. The rulers ordered them stripped and publicly whipped, and then sent them to prison. The jailor was strictly charged to keep them safe. Faithful to instructions, he put them in the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. Business was offended at the gospel. That is the way the infernal liquor traffic feels, and gladly would they now deal in the same way with the champions of temperance. So every degrading business of our day feels toward the patrons and friends of righteousness.

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## The Jailor.

He was going to be the second distinguished convert in Philippi, but he had no dream of

it. Midnight silence is on the still and darkened city. Paul and Silas could not sleep. They talked of the honor of suffering for Jesus. Let us sing, and they broke into a hymn of praise. Other prisoners listened and wondered. Suddenly an earthquake shook the foundations of the prison, the doors flew open, and the fetters fell off the prisoners. The jailor, startled out of sleep, and seeing the situation, drew his sword and would have killed himself. He preferred that to being executed in the morning for letting the prisoners escape. Paul saved him by telling him the facts. A great change came on him in an instant. His soul was disturbed. Securing the other prisoners, he brought out Paul and Silas, and falling at their feet, exclaimed, "Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?" A good question that, and music to Paul's ears. Paul preached Christ, the man believed with all his house, and was baptized there and then. How lovingly he washed the wounds, and set food before the men whom he had put into the inner prison. At daybreak the rulers sent word, "Release these men." "No," said Paul, "they have whipped us Roman citizens without trial, and now they will be rid of us secretly. No, let them come and take us out." They did it. They came and led them out, and begged them to leave town. They left, after a call at Lydia's home.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Philippian Jailor. Acts 16: 16-24.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Some have suggested that the jailor meant salvation of life from the trembling, rattling walls of the prison. That is a poor compliment to the intelligence of Paul. The apostle understood it to be the cry of a convicted soul, and so pointed the way to spiritual salvation. All the after-story shows the absurdity of the suggestion. See how instantaneous conversion came. The man heard the truth and believed it on the spot. Now is the day, the hour, the moment to decide for Christ. Decision is what people need. They know enough to be saved. Act, decide, settle the matter. Stand up for Jesus. That is conversion.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Jailor Converted. Acts 16: 25-40.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"And was baptized, he and all his, straightway."

Of all the unlikely trophies of Paul's ministry in Philippi, this man was easily among the most improbable. He was rude and crude,

but there was in him a germ of kindness and a susceptibility to things noble. The exceptional calm and courageous cheerfulness of Paul and Silas impressed him. Their heroic Christian bearing was the first sermon to reach him. That led to the homage and the earnest question. The way we behave greatly affects the weight of our words. It was the conduct of the prisoners that worked conviction of sin in the jailor's mind. Are you calm, humble, and brave?

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Suffering Ambassador. 2 Cor. 5: 20-4: 10.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"In everything commending ourselves as ministers of God."

Preaching was Paul's easiest way of showing his devotion to Christ. His greatest sermons, that touch the heart of the world today, were expressed in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings. Note his pathetic characterization of his labors. As dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things. The grand soul is not making appeal for pity. He wishes to bear witness to the sustaining power of Christ.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Prisoner Remembered. Gen. 41: 1-13.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"There was with us a young man, a Hebrew."

Pharaoh dreamed a strange dream about seven fat kine coming up out of the Nile. Then seven lean kine came up and devoured the fat ones. Not one of his wise men could interpret the dream. Pharaoh's butler remembered his own dream in prison, and the Hebrew prisoner who told its meaning. He told the king, and instantly Joseph was sent for. They brought him out, and he shaved and put on new raiment before presenting himself. Joseph was modest and humble, saying, It is not in me. God shall give Pharaoh an answer in peace.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Joseph and Pharaoh. Gen. 41: 25-40.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Thou shalt be over my house."

Pharaoh told his dream to Joseph, the fat and lean kine, the good and withered ears of corn. Joseph said, The dream is one. God is telling you what he is about to do. Seven good years of abundant crops are coming; after them will be seven years of drouth. Famine will consume the land. He then told Pharaoh to store up corn during the years of plenty, making ready against the years of famine. Pharaoh was delighted with the modesty and practical wisdom of the young man, so he said, You are the man to have charge of this business, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Humility and Exaltation. Phil. 2: 1-11.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"And gave him a name which is above every name."

Paul glories in the condescension of Jesus, who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God. He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant; he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Paul glories in the eternal honors that followed. Wherefore God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father. It is yours and mine to follow in his steps.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Working Out Salvation. Phil. 2: 12-18.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"For it is God which worketh in you."

Salvation is the joint work of God and man. Some people want to put the whole on God, and escape all effort themselves. That is a comfortable view, but very ignorant. God offers all the facilities and opportunities. His presence and grace are given freely, but he cannot make us good if we don't want to be good. You can't make a boy take an education. You can't add it to him like a bank account. We have to work out the salvation that God has begun. We have to be co-workers with him. Salvation is Christ-likeness, and that is won by growth in grace and knowledge. We are saved in the degree that we are like him.

## LESSON 13.

JUNE 25, 1916.

## Review.—The Philippian Christians.

**MOTTO TEXT.**—"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Phil. 4: 8.)

READING LESSON, Phil. 1: 1-11; 4: 1-9.

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## Progress.

THE twelve lessons, just studied, cover the space of seventeen years. The period begins with the conversion of Paul in 34 A.D. and closes with his work in Philippi in 51 A.D. We must not forget Luke's theory of this story. In his view, he is giving account of what Jesus, through the Spirit, is continuing to do in the world. We ought to thank God for Luke and his painstaking history. Dr. W. M. Ramsay, the distinguished English scholar and historian, frankly puts Luke in the front rank of historical writers. No doubt it is a deserved compliment, and it is likely to strike us with a gratified surprise. Luke is engaged in telling of the expansion of the gospel, and the successful labors of Peter and Paul. He puts great honor on Peter, but Paul is his hero. For Paul, he feels intense admiration and a fervent personal affection. Yet he refrains from eulogism, contenting himself with the simple story of his hero's mighty deeds, aggressive ministry and terrible sufferings. Peter occupies the center of the stage through the first twelve chapters of Acts, then, for the rest of the book, gives way to the supreme champion of early Christianity.

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## The Open Door.

Luke's first work is to tell of the growth of the church in Jerusalem, the persecutions and the scattering of the saints that followed. Then comes the story of Cornelius. With that experience, Peter discovers that God has no favorites and that Jews and Gentiles have the same access to the privileges of the gospel. There is no difference. The Gentiles may come into the church, without submission to the ritual law of Moses. The new dispensation of Christ's religion is free to all men, without distinction of race. That marks a vast enlargement of theological thought

But many of the Jerusalem Christians were slow to move into the large and generous conception. Moses' law was a divine gift, and they could not see how any part of it had been abrogated by the gospel of Christ.

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## The Gospel Freed.

Peter welcomed the Gentiles, but it was Paul who vindicated their absolute freedom from Jewish legalism. This was the great battle of his life. It cost him pangs of slanderous misrepresentation at the hands of his narrow Judaizing brethren. He got the Antioch church to appeal to the decision of the Jerusalem council and came out victorious. The gospel is free and wide as the benevolence of God. It is the gift of God to all men, and its one and sole condition is faith in Christ and unconditional submission to his will. Paul carried the good news to Paphos in Cyprus; to Perga, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, in Asia Minor. This was done in his first missionary journey, 47-49 A.D. In the fall of 49 A.D. the great council was held in Jerusalem. His second missionary journey began in 50 A.D., and now in 51 A.D. we find him preaching in Philippi, in Europe, and winning converts to Jesus. Seventeen years ago he was converted at the gate of Damascus. What wonders he has wrought; how brave the battles he has fought. Under guidance of the Spirit his imperial intellect has made the final interpretation of Christ, and has made him known among the far Gentile peoples, sitting in the regions of heathen darkness. That great brain and heart make an engine of tremendous power. He is just in mid career. New conquests await him, and we shall see his heavenly light streaming on the high points of pagan civilization.

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**MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—The Philippian Christians. Phil. 1: 1-11; 4: 1-9.

**MONDAY'S VERSE.**—"I have you in my heart."

Eleven years have passed since he first preached and suffered in Philippi. He is now a prisoner in Rome. It is the year 62 A.D. The great man's work is nearly over. The Philippian brethren send a messenger with

gifts to visit him. It moves his heart. This letter is without correction or rebuke. Its whole tone is gladness and joy. "My brethren, rejoice in the Lord," is a phrase that constantly recurs. How affectionate is the precious old hero. Hear him say, "My brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown." His human affection, his invincible courage, his triumphant faith are morally sublime. Thank God for Paul.

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**TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Conversion of Saul. Acts 9: 1-11, 17-19.

**TUESDAY'S VERSE.**—"And he arose and was baptized."

The most intense Pharisee of his day, and the most relentless persecutor of Jesus, neared the city of Damascus. The disciples trembled at his approach, but the invisible Christ would protect. He met the enemy, spoke to him, and Saul fell at his feet. The truth of God burst on his soul, and instantly he became a slave of the Nazarene. He saw Christ, and all his Pharisaic righteousness fell from him like an out-worn garment. He is a new creation. All that tremendous fiery zeal consecrated itself to a new life mission. The finest intellect in Palestine was subdued to the cross.

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**WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Peter and Cornelius. Acts 10: 1-16.

**WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.**—"What God hath cleansed, make not thou common."

Note the easy gradation by which God brings the Jewish Christians to the task of foreign missions. Years have past since Pentecost. Persecution has done more to spread the gospel than the initiative of the Jerusalem church. Yet that church knew the Great Commission, but it seems to be hampered by legalism and race prejudice. God makes advance easy by introducing Peter to a very noble specimen of Gentile piety. Cornelius is a good man, needing, and hungry for, the light of the gospel. Peter opens the door to the Gentiles, and legalism and prejudice can never close it again.

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**THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—Peter Delivered from Prison. Acts 12: 1-11.

**THURSDAY'S VERSE.**—"Prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him."

This was in the year 44 A.D., some fourteen or fifteen years after Pentecost. The state, represented by King Herod, had killed the

Apostle James. Seeing it pleased the Jews, he decided to kill Peter. That would have been disaster to the cause in Jerusalem, but it could not have thwarted Christianity. The mighty Paul had been in the work for ten years, and the cause was safe in his hands. It was the night before Peter's execution, and he was sleeping between his guards in prison. The prayer-meeting was awake and pleading with God. God's angel smote the fetters off, and Peter was free.

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**FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—The Cripple at Lystra. Acts 14: 8-20.

**FRIDAY'S VERSE.**—"The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men."

The healing Christ was with Paul in the heathen city. This poor wretch was as welcome to his curative touch as was any unfortunate in Palestine. The saving might of Jesus is for all. Paul, seeing the man's faith, commanded him to stand. The pagan multitude fell into a frenzy of excitement, and the priests would have made sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas. The misconception was perfectly natural, and occasion was furnished Paul to make explanation of the nature of God, and to commend anew the gospel of Christ.

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**SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—The Council at Jerusalem. Acts 15: 22-33.

**SATURDAY'S VERSE.**—"They rejoiced for the consolation."

The Antioch brethren had won, and for a season, at least, the freedom of the gospel to the Gentiles was admitted and accepted. They were happy at the close of the irritating discussion. That was the most important council in the history of Christianity. Its decision settled the question of an unshackled gospel. It set Christ's religion free from the sheath of Judaism. It affirmed once for all that the gospel of grace is sufficient unto salvation of men, without the laws of Moses. Reaction was attempted later, but Paul vanquished the movement. Thank God for Paul.

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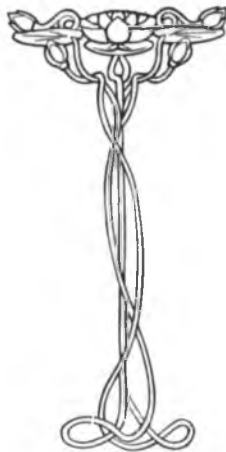
**SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.**—The Philippian Jailor. Acts 16: 10-34.

**SUNDAY'S VERSE.**—"He rejoiced greatly with all his house."

Simeon said of the holy babe: "This child is set for the falling and rising up of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against." He also said: "This is a light for

revelation to the Gentiles." The words came true. That light shines in an old jail in the far-off heathen city. It melts the heart of the jailor. It wins his whole family. After midnight they are all baptized into the name

of Jesus. A heavenly joy reigns in the household. Wouldn't you have liked to see Lydia and the rest giving the hand of fellowship to these new converts? Again let us thank God for Paul.



Calendar

APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
...	...	...	...	...	...	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<sup>23</sup> <sub>30</sub>	24	25	26	27	28	29

MAY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
...	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	...	...	...

JUNE

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
...	...	...	...	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	...

1916

## The House I Live In.

The house I live in has grown old;  
Some parts of it are in decay;  
The thatch upon the roof, once brown,  
Is now all turned to very gray.  
Light through the window panes is dim,  
So that I cannot clearly see;  
The new ones I have now outside  
Have been a wondrous help to me.  
The grinders from the kitchen gone,  
I miss their presence every day;  
Some others that I once put in  
Are of no service anyway.  
The unseen, noiseless engine's beat,  
That has not ceased for eighty years,  
Is still at work, but slower now  
Its action to my senses appears.  
And the warm liquid that it sends  
Through the old house to heat its wall  
Grows cold as round about the place  
Bleak winter's withering snowflakes fall.  
Though I have had the house repaired  
Sometimes outside and oft within  
Yet as the silent years roll on,  
I feel the walls are growing thin.  
"Twill grieve me much to leave the place,  
Each nook and corner I revere;  
Sweet, joyous days I've spent therein,  
Through many a bright, glad, golden year.  
To me its walls are sacred, too;  
Within them I have suffered long;  
But God has been "my strength and song."  
In weakness He has made me strong.  
And He has come and "supped with me,"  
And soothed my sorrows, eased my pain,  
And made the place like "Bethany's home,"  
Bright with restored life again.  
Soon the old house will be dissolved;  
Not lost, but only laid away;  
And I shall then be taken home  
In Father's inner rooms to stay  
Till the whole family shall meet  
From every land beneath the sky,  
And this frail house be built anew  
For me once more to occupy;  
A tenant in a changelike home,  
No windows dim, and no decay,  
No sorrow, sickness, and no death,  
"For former things have passed away."

—Author unknown.