

Vol. VII.

THIRD QUARTER, 1916

Number 2

PRICE, FIVE CENTS PER COPY PER QUARTER

Home Department Magazine

**SOUTHERN BAPTIST
CONVENTION SERIES**



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION, 161 EIGHTH AVENUE, NORTH, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
J. M. FROST, D.D., CORRESPONDING SECRETARY; I. J. VAN NESS, D.D., EDITORIAL SECRETARY

ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER MARCH 18, 1910, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879

LIST OF LESSONS

FOR

Third Quarter, 1916

July 2—PAUL AT THESSALONICA AND BEROEÆ.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 17: 1-15 (cf. 1 Thessalonians 2: 1-12).

MOTTO TEXT—"Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour." (Acts 5: 31.)

July 9—THE THESSALONIAN CHRISTIANS.

LESSON PASSAGE, 1 Thess. 1: 2; 17-20; 4: 13-16.

MOTTO TEXT—"If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. 4: 14.)

July 16—PAUL AT ATHENS.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 17: 16-34.

MOTTO TEXT—"In him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17: 28.)

July 23—PAUL AT CORINTH.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 18: 1-21.

MOTTO TEXT—"Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace." (Acts 18: 9.)

July 30—THE CROSS OF THE CROSS.

LESSON PASSAGE, 1 Cor. 1: 1-2; 5.

MOTTO TEXT—"Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. 6: 14.)

August 6—THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD (Temperance Lesson).

LESSON PASSAGE, 1 Cor. 13.

MOTTO TEXT—"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13: 13.)

August 13—THE GRACE OF GIVING.

LESSON PASSAGE, 2 Cor. 9.

MOTTO TEXT—"In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the

words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20: 35.)

August 20—THE RIOT AT EPHESUS.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 19: 23-41.

MOTTO TEXT—"The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." (1 Tim. 6: 10.)

August 27—JOURNEYING TO JERUSALEM.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 20: 16-38.

MOTTO TEXT—"I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace." (Acts 20: 32.)

September 3—PAUL'S BARRICADES AND COMFORTS.

LESSON PASSAGE, 2 Cor. 11: 21-12: 10.

MOTTO TEXT—"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12: 9.)

September 10—THE ARREST OF PAUL.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 21: 17-40.

MOTTO TEXT—"Thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." (Acts 22: 15.)

September 17—A PRISONER IN THE CASTLE.

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 23.

MOTTO TEXT—"He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in whom I trust." (Psalm 91: 2.)

September 24—STATE-WIDE BAPTIST GO-TO-SUNDAY-SCHOOL DAY (With a Lesson on State Missions).

LESSON PASSAGE, Mark 1: 14-20, 25-28; Matt. 4: 23-25.

MOTTO TEXT—"Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also." (Mark 1: 38.)

Home Department Magazine

VOLUME VII.

THIRD QUARTER, 1916.

NUMBER 2.

The Upward Look.

MRS. NATHAN MAYNARD.

"The Interpreter led them first into a room where was a man that could look no way but downwards, with a muck-rake in his hands. There stood also one over his head with a celestial crown in his hand, and proffered him that crown for his muck-rake; but the man did neither look up nor regard, but raked to himself the stones, the small sticks and the dust of the floor."—*Pilgrim's Progress*.

WHAT a picture of life! It may be of our life. We certainly see the *downward lookers* every day. We say that we pity them, and in our hearts condemn them for their wasteful use of life's precious moments. Are we sure, that we, too, are not raking among the rubbish? Unconsciously it may be, in the absorption of every-day duties, and yet we, too, may need to assure ourselves that we are really more eager for the crown than for the things of today. Again and again should we take time for the upward look—lest we lose sight of the crown, or as some saintly writer puts it, "fall to cultivate familiarity with heaven." Is it to us simply "sweet fields beyond the swelling flood"? Or is it *home*, Saviour, loved ones?

But some of the glow of that sunset glimpse of the beyond stays with us. We may again take up our rake, but this time with the dust and stones and sticks, we find pearls; for again and again are our eyes lifted to the crown of our hope—the reward of our inheritance, our *home*.

"Life changes all our thoughts of heaven; At first we think of streets of gold,

Of gates of pearl and dazzling light,
Of shining wings and robes of white,
And things all strange to mortal sight

But in the afterward of years

It is a more familiar place,

A home unburied by sighs or tears,

Where walketh many a well-known face.

With passing months it comes more near

It grows more real day by day;

Not strange or cold, but very dear

The glad homeland not far away.

Where none are sick, or poor or lone.

The place where we shall find our own."

—Robert Browning.

"And after that they shut the gates; which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them."—*Pilgrim's Progress*.

One of the blessings of having our dear ones taken from us is that our hearts must follow them, and our thoughts gather around the place to which they have gone. How often do we hear the expression: "Heaven is a new place to me since my child, my mother, my father is there." Only recently a deeply-bereaved wife spoke of her husband's death as his gathering with his family circle at the close of the day. "Mine, the work of caring for those who are left until we shall go to join him and the dear household *there*, which is just as real to me as the one *here*."

No, nothing can make it so real to us as the passing beyond its pearly gates of some loved one with whom we have walked hand in hand here. It is when His goodness takes a human life, lived in our midst, and clothes it with his beauty; when he sets the radiance of his peace on some beloved face; when we hear the voice grow tenderer and see the fading love-light in the eye. "Till sudden, at the parting of the way, his chariot meets them and they smile—and go." Then it is that we know the meaning of: "Heaven is my fatherland, heaven is *my home*!"

"Dear, human presence! lifted from our view
To that bright heaven, the homeland of
thy heart,

Whose tranquil skies thy happy spirit
knew—

Death cannot shut thee from our lives
apart."

In olden days the crews of outgoing vessels used to toast the "*friends behind*" until the line was passed; after that it was the "*friends before*." Is there anything in life more precious than the looking forward to a reunion after a long separation? The end of the voyage is nearing. Port is in sight, and beyond that—home and loved ones. Is it strange that sleep flees from our eyelids and that the moments seem hours?

Out on the hillside there is a new grave—too new for the flowers planted by loving hands to have yet taken root. It is a precious place, and it is right that we should cherish it, the earthly resting place of one so dearly loved. But even there we must not let our gaze linger too long. Tears are blinding our eyes, and a despairing pain is tugging at our heart-strings. We lift our eyes to the glorious sunset, flooding the western skies with its golden beauty, and memory

brings back the words of a Sunday school song learned in childhood days:

"Beyond the sunset's golden glow
There is a brighter world, I know."

Yes, *know!* and oh, the blessedness of the knowledge! For a few moments we stand gazing at the fast-fading beauty and thinking, thinking prayerful thoughts, thankful thoughts, hopeful thoughts, and then we turn away.

The Art of Visiting the Sick.

ANNE GUILBERT MAHON.

"You would be surprised," said a woman who had been an invalid for many years, "to see how really few people know how to visit the sick. Their intentions are good, but so few seem to know how to make their visits bring the cheer and benefit which they should to a sick room."

A brief, bright, cheery visit to a convalescent or one who is habitually "shut in" is a source of pleasure and real benefit such as is seldom understood and appreciated by one who is always well and active. A tiresome, long-drawn-out call from an untaught or gloomy person is, on the other hand, often the cause of real detriment and discomfort to the patient.

Sick people are acutely sensitive. They are easily depressed. A fit of despondency may lead to a serious relapse, or it may occasion hours of consequent weakness and suffering.

A young girl convalescing from an attack of nervous prostration was one afternoon visited by a kindly-intentioned but absolutely untaught friend. The visitor had come direct from the funeral of a little child whom both knew, and she was full of it. She was garbed in deepest black—which she had worn to the services—depressing one even by a sight of her. Every sad detail of the funeral was rehearsed for the entertainment (?) of her listener. So interested was the visitor in her subject that she never noticed the effect of her conversation on the convalescent. The latter managed to control her feelings until the guest departed, then she broke into passionate sobbing, which could not be restrained. The physician was summoned, restoratives given, but for several days the girl was nervously unstrung and could do nothing but cry. Her recovery was retarded several weeks, and the result was a mandate from her physician forbidding all visitors until the girl should be stronger.

All this unnecessary but detrimental result was caused by a thoughtless, though kindly-intentioned, visitor.

An invalid who was very sick and who had been confined to her bed for some time, but who dearly loved to receive callers, was visited by a well-meaning young woman who had just graduated from a school of elocution. In the kindness of the girl's heart she spent the whole afternoon reading and reciting for the invalid in an endeavor to entertain her. Unfortunately, however, the young woman's selections were all of the most harrowing character. To her they were "works of art," permitting her to "express herself" and to show the extent of her powers. She did not fully estimate the effect of their pathos and of her realistic rendition of them on the sensitive, suffering invalid. There was not one bright, cheerful selection among them all. The invalid listened eagerly, grateful for the girl's kind intentions, but each piece depressed her more, so that by the time the girl had finished and made her adieux, her poor hostess was in such a state of depression and collapse that all the courage she had summoned to bear her pain and keep cheerful deserted her. She broke down completely, distressing the members of her family, rendering the physician's services necessary, and was considerably worse for several days after her visitor's kindly-meant but unfortunate entertainment. She could not forget the sad selections—so realistically rendered—for many a day. Had the girl only stopped to think, had she only realized what an opportunity was afforded her for cheering, brightening and strengthening that poor, bedridden invalid, she would not have made such a mistake. Had she recited bright pieces, no matter how trivial they might have been, but which would have brought a smile to the pain-lined face of her hostess, had she given some pleasing picture

to brighten the hours spent in the seclusion and monotony of the sick room, she would have left the invalid cheered, diverted and strengthened, with something happy to think of during the ensuing days and weeks of pain and weariness. The girl meant well. She was only thoughtless. She did not realize.

A talented young singer very kindly offered to sing for the patients in one of the hospitals near her. She had a sweet, sympathetic voice and her selections were in accord with it. They were sweet, but they were sentimental and sad. Nervously weak and easily affected, some of the patients actually sobbed during the recital, and after the singer had gone, there was a noticeable depression in the condition of most of them. Such a chance as the young musician had, but, like the elocutionist, she did not realize it. She did not think of the effect her singing would have on her audience of weak, suffering ones who needed especially cheer and brightness.

"I dread Aunt Lucy's visits," said a sick girl, speaking of an elderly relative. "She is good and kind and means well, but she has the most dreadful way of tiptoeing into the room, whispering in a sepulchral way—as if she were at a funeral. She looks at me all the time with eyes as big as saucers and I know she is saying to herself, 'Poor Edith, I'm afraid she will never get well.' I can feel it just by the way she looks at me. She evidently has an idea that she must not talk, for she makes me do it all, and I am completely exhausted when she leaves. All she does is to sit and gaze plyingly at me and shake her head and answer in whispers. It's a real strain to entertain her, and I am always in the depths when she leaves."

Many women, however, are adepts in this art of visiting the sick. Constantly they are bringing into the lives of sorrowing, suffering, lonely ones brightness, cheer, comfort and strength, which means untold happiness and benefit to them. It is not a difficult art to learn—this art of visiting the sick. Any woman may become proficient if she gives to the matter thought and understanding and effort.

The woman who would be successful in this must possess, first of all, sympathy and a real desire to help. She must realize that true sympathy means encouragement, strength, cheer, as well as "feeling with" a person. The sympathy which does not strengthen and uplift is of very little value.

Possessed of this sympathy and real desire to be of service, which is the foundation of successful ministering, there are a number of minor details to be considered by the

woman who would make her visits a source of pleasure and benefit to the sick.

Appearance counts much in a sick room. Invalids are often unreasonable as children, and they are extremely sensitive to appearance and manner. Black or somber garments affect them unpleasantly, while a pretty, becoming costume has sometimes a surprising effect in cheering and pleasing the patient.

"It does me good just to look at Mrs. Warner," said a wheel-chair invalid. "She always wears such pretty, becoming dresses and hats, and whenever she has anything particularly new and pretty she wears it to show me. She knows I can't get out to see anything, and she isn't one of those who wear old, plain clothes when they visit the sick."

Even more than appearance, however, does the visitor's manner affect an invalid. The caller should strive always to be quietly cheerful, not boisterous in her effort to be bright, but gentle, hopeful, cheery. Her voice should be well modulated and distinct, so that her listener need make no effort to hear all that is said. An agreeable voice has a wonderful effect on sick and well folks alike. As far as possible the visitor should do the most of the talking, so as not to tire the invalid. Many ill persons soon exhaust all the little strength they have trying to talk. The tactful visitor will know how to avoid this. Ceaseless chatter on the part of the caller is almost equally fatiguing to the sick one. The woman with understanding will soon discern how to strike the proper balance in conversation so as to brighten and entertain but not weary her hostess. Quiet, pleasant recounting of cheerful bits of news of the outside world, which will specially interest the invalid and make her feel she is not shut out from everything, will be welcome and beneficial, while any humorous little anecdotes which will brighten and cheer the sick one will be as good as medicine.

One woman who visits much among the shut-ins always makes it a point to do four things: leave with the patient some interesting bit of news to ponder, some good, funny story to laugh over; some pleasant description of a painting or a bit of beautiful country, which the invalid can enjoy mentally, and some little thought of peculiar strength and cheer.

"Sick people think over what you have told them for hours and days sometimes, you know, and I always like to feel that I leave with them these four things to meditate on in their moments of pain and weariness," she explained.

"Sick people are like children when it comes to bringing them something," said another woman whose life has been spent much among the sick. "A flower or a book, some fruit, a glass of jelly, a dainty dessert—there are lots of trifles one can take—never fail to please, and do real good. It is more the fact that they have been remembered, and that the remembrance is a little surprise, that pleases them. What the little gift really is becomes a secondary consideration. Almost any trifling token or delicacy will please a sick person if it is attractively wrapped and presented or daintily served."

The woman, therefore, who would make a success of this art of visiting the sick, who would make herself welcome and of real

benefit to those suffering from pain, weakness or the monotony of the sick room, will strive for these things: A ready tact and understanding, a sympathy which comforts, strengthens and uplifts; a neat, pleasing appearance; a gentle, cheery, hopeful manner. She will bring with her some little token of love and thought for the sufferer, she will be careful that she does not tire the sick one or stay too long, and she will leave behind her pleasant memories which will divert, cheer and strengthen the invalid for many a weary day and hour. The visitor who achieves this becomes a real tonic—physical, mental and spiritual—to the sick one, and her presence is welcome as the sunshine in the chamber of darkness and suffering.

Following "Dad".

W. H. HORNE.

ONE of the very best results of parental adherence to the Sunday school is the parental influence it exerts upon young members of the household. This factor within itself, if properly brought to bear upon the minds of the parents who go to church, but not to Sunday school, should with them be the deciding factor in favor of attendance upon the Sunday school also. Then when attendance has become a habit with them, many other reasons will become evident to the parental mind why it is good to be there. The argument in favor of influence, however, is a good starter, in nine cases out of ten, with the parent who has neglected this institution of the church.

There was a bright lad, fourteen years of age, in a western city, and he was without the influence of church or Sunday school. Various efforts had been made by a certain teacher and also by the boys who belonged to a certain class to interest this young man in the class. He went a time or two and dropped out. Efforts were made on several different occasions after that to induce him to return, but all in vain. Then extraordinary efforts were put forth in the hope that the boy might be brought in at just that age when boys most need the guiding influence of correct, spiritual training. These efforts met with defeat, and it was reported to the class that the youth had said that he never intended to attend another Sunday school as long as he lived.

The teacher, while hopeful that some plan might be devised to interest the boy, felt that she had exhausted all reasonable effort, for the time being, and said no more about the boy. On a Sunday, not long after that, the young man unexpectedly appeared in the class. The teacher shook hands with him. He was, after all, an open-faced, frank and manly young fellow, else he would never have so sturdily averred that he would never enter another Sunday school. He was simply brave from his point of view.

"Why, William," she said, "I'm delighted to see you back with us. Some one told me," she added, smiling, "that you said you were not coming any more."

"Well I did say that," he answered, "but last Sunday dad joined the Men's Bible Class, and he says he is coming right along and I thought I might as well come along, too. I'm going to stay this time; at least I'll stay as long as dad does."

Of course there is nothing more elemental than the truth that the average young fellow will follow in dad's tracks. It is strange, therefore, in the light of the further elemental fact that nothing so shapes character as a Sunday school class even approximately ideal, that professedly Christian fathers remain away from Sunday school. Dad's influence is very often the only influence that counts.

"The Peace of Accepted Sorrow."

FRANK C. WARD.

THIS is an expression from the writings of Madam Guyon. It arrests our attention, and acts like the sun upon a darkened house whose door has been thrown open toward it, and is consequently flooded with light. But the occupant needs a little time until the eyes become accustomed to the light.

Accepted sorrow? Why, that is a contradiction, the first thought objects. Have we not been spending our days in seeking some way that would lead us away from sorrow? Have we not chosen, rather, the road on the mountain top, where the sun always shines? And has not the lowly valley, with its shadows, repulsed us? Verily, when compelled to go into the valley, do we not hurry, through as rapidly as we can? And have we not been dreaming all the days of our life of the time we anticipate when all the sorrows of life will be conquered?

Peace, we know. But how connected with sorrow? How much more pleasant to lock the door upon such and sing ourselves into transports of peaceful joy. "Let us alone," we cry to sorrows.

No, sorrows must come. No life but suffers them; if not today, then tomorrow. The life that is moving along happily now is roughly plunged into reverses. The cherished plan, upon which everything was built, when realized, it would bring the unfading blue of heaven into the life. But now it is gone. This possession, dearly bought, and which held such possibilities, has rudely been snatched away. That precious life, vibrant with joy, had come to mean everything worth while; but it, too, has faded, and now the brightest light of life has turned to darkness. Sorrows, not of choice, nor carelessness nor guilt. From some unknown source they come. So it seems to us.

Oh, my heart, listen! Sorrows come not from an unfriendly power that delights to plunge you into bitter woe. Rather, the Heavenly Father, who would clasp you closer to himself, has permitted these sorrows. If you and I will accept them as his divine will, and commit ourselves to him, it will enable us to accept the sorrows as divine messengers. With that will come the refined peace of resignation to the Heavenly Father.

A Mission at the Door.

SUSAN M. GRIFFITH.

"MOTHER, what do you think?" exclaimed Lena Brooks, rushing into the room where her mother was writing letters. "The most ridiculous thing you ever heard! I'm so mad over it I don't know what to do, and yet I can't help laughing. The Nettletons have rented the old Wilson place, and are moving in."

"What!" said Mrs. Brooks, laying down her pen. "You don't tell me—"

"Yes, I do tell you, too; they are moving in this very day."

"And we thought we were rid of them!" Mrs. Brooks face, as well as the tone of her voice, was so despairing that Lena, who had a keen sense of the ludicrous, fairly shouted with laughter. "Don't laugh," entreated her mother; "it is really too serious a matter to be funny about."

"I can't help it," said Lena, going off into another burst of merriment. "To think we took the trouble and expense to move from one end of town to the other, just to get rid of the Nettletons, and thought we had done

it; and, here they come right after us. Oh, it is too funny."

"Are you sure about it, daughter? You know you are quite apt to be mistaken."

"No mistake about this, mother. I saw the drag going with a load of their old furniture; I'd know it if I saw it at the land's end. And there was Huldah, perched on top of a pile of bedding, singing out to me as gay as you please: 'Hello, Lena! We're moving into this house, and we're going to be neighbors again. I'm awful glad to see you.'"

"Did you answer her?"

"No, I didn't; I pretended not to hear. I was so mad I couldn't speak pleasantly any way."

"Strange that you couldn't have mustered up a laugh," said Mrs. Brooks, rather sarcastically.

"The laugh didn't come until afterward. I got to thinking how we'd run away from them, comforting ourselves with the idea that

we'd probably never so much as set eyes on them again; and, then, it got funny."

"Well, the fun will begin in earnest before tomorrow morning," said her mother, dubiously, taking up her pen again. "And, I presume, we shall just have to make the best of it."

"The best of it!" repeated Lena, "Where is the best of the Nettleton affair? Is there any best, mother?"

"Oh, I suppose there must be, daughter, if only we have the patience and charity to find it. Perhaps," Mrs. Brooks grew thoughtful, "we have been something like Jonah—running away from an unpleasant duty God gave us to do. I never thought of it in that light before. Well, run away, dearie, and let me finish my letters to the different missionary societies; I have five yet to write."

"Oh, yes, I forgot that you are associational secretary. What is this? An appeal for missions, of course, but for what field?"

"The foreign field, dear. It is very important that we make up the deficit among the societies."

"Well," said Lena, with a little sigh, and a little laugh, "I'm so glad it's the foreign field, mother. I like foreign missions a lot better than home, because they're so far away, and somebody else tends to them. But isn't it funny that here is a mission 'at our very door?' The Nettleton mission, we might call it, for they're only a little removed from the hearth. I wonder if they have a Bible in the house. Oh, please do excuse me, mother; I will go now, and leave you in peace."

But Mrs. Brooks was far from being in a state of peace. The thought which had come to her grew and grew and became intense. She found it hard to finish her letters; and when at last the task was accomplished, she sat and looked at the subject, mentally, with firm, unwavering gaze, resolved to settle it then and there. Here was, as Lena had lightly said, "A mission at the door"—her door—had been at her door before; had followed her across the town when she had fled from it; had been shunned and totally unrecognized. And here was she, a mission worker of some note in the association, traveling through village and rural districts, talking up the missionary spirit, the need of self-denial, and the necessity of "stooping to conquer," and stepping calmly over the duty near her own door. Yes, she was a Jonah, surely. She had a "quiet hour" of communion with Jesus, and came out of her room another woman. Calling Lena she put her arms about her and drew her close. "Mother has just said to Jesus that she will

accept the Nettleton mission. Will her daughter help her?" And Lena, touched beyond expression, returned the embrace heartily.

"Of course, mother dear; of course I will," she said. "I've always been dreadfully sorry for Huldah and the rest of them, too."

"Then let's sit down and plan the campaign," said Mrs. Brooks.

The result was that, laden with a large loaf of fresh bread, a big pitcher of sweet milk, and a dish of berries from their own bushes, they went straight over to the old Wilson house to greet their new neighbors.

The Nettletons were a shiftless, good-natured set, unnecessarily ragged and dirty, for Mr. Nettleton and the two oldest boys were all good bricklayers and made excellent wages; but the mother was no homemaker, and the younger children were as lazy and good-for-nothing as little children of a trifling mother are apt to be. They were all delighted to see Mrs. Brooks and Lena, though, for both of whom they had always had an adoring admiration.

"I thought, perhaps, just moving in, you would appreciate a little lunch that you wouldn't have to stop your work to get," said Mrs. Brooks, brightly. "This is certainly a fine old place here. Once cleaned up nicely, it will be as pretty as any on the street; and, of course, you will want it to be as pretty. Folks take a great pride in their residences on this street, and you'll want to keep up with them. With all these little girls to help, you ought to make quick work of it. If I were you, Mrs. Nettleton, I'd get the boys at the yard, too. There's a fine garden spot at the back, and lots of old rose bushes here in front that just need trimming up and the grass pulled away from the roots, to fill the whole place with bloom. And, see here, Huldah! You can have a glorious wealth of sweet peas and nasturtiums running all over that side fence, if you like. I'll give you the seeds and show you how to plant them, if you'll get the boys to dig up the ground."

In this way did Mrs. Brooks and her daughter begin the "Nettleton Mission," as Lena continued to call it; and though the family, as a whole, was very responsive, they were extremely ignorant, and the two workers often found their self-imposed task a hard one. Old habits and slack ways are not overcome in a day, but patience and perseverance accomplish wonders, and, after a while, the mother began to take pride in having her surroundings as neat and nice as those of her neighbors, and the children grew to love the work among the flowers and vegetables; and

as Mrs. Brooks and Lena were always willing to lend a hand and encourage and praise, they soon became enthused. Mr. Nettleton, too, caught the infection and began to add pieces of furniture, put on paint, and even papered two or three of the rooms. Having accomplished this material good, Mrs. Brooks began upon their spiritual welfare. It was easy enough to get the children's consent to go to Sunday school, for children are always ready to go anywhere; but the great trouble was getting them clothed up. The father was willing to buy the material, but the mother was the poorest of needlewomen and knew next to nothing of cutting and fitting. However, Mrs. Brooks arranged to have the boys do work for her in return for making little dresses and waists, and she was a proud woman the morning she marshaled nine boys and girls into the Sunday school of her

church. More gratifying still was the Sabbath she witnessed, through fast-falling tears, Mr. Nettleton, his wife, and five of his older children unite with the church. As she and Lena walked home together, the young girl whispered: "The mission at our door has paid big, hasn't it, mother? Do you know Mr. Nettleton told me that nobody had ever asked him to go to church or cared to get him to be a Christian until we did?"

"Yes, dear, but I tremble to think that we waited so long to do it. Here was a whole big family just waiting to come into the kingdom, and we, the servants of the King, never opened the door and asked them to enter until now. I cannot thank God enough that he gave me another opportunity; and it has taught me a lesson never to run away from a duty. Next time it may be too late."

The Treadmill of the Trivial.

JENNIE CAMPBELL DOUGLASS.

The eyes of the soul are often injured by a careless use of lenses. A magnifying glass is applied to things of small importance; near-sighted glasses are used too constantly and thus distant views are lost; remote views are taken until the gaze will not focus upon near-by objects, or, perchance, the spy-glass is inverted. The continual application of only one lens gives a distorted view of life. The soul's vision should adjust itself to any focus.

A woman's life is as large as her vision, though she may think of it as controlled by circumstances. Blessed are they who are trained in youth to broad outlooks. The girl in the small town or in the quiet walks of life often envies her sister in the social whirl, though her own sphere has possibilities richer and nobler. She would be surprised if she could take a peep into the dissatisfied hearts of many of those she envies. Debutantes, the envy of obscure girls, often lead a most wearisome existence. Hardly a young girl lives who has not a wish to be and do something worth while. Worldly mothers forget the days when they, too, aspired, when they prized character above social position, when true love dazzled them more than magnificence. Yet daughters are foreordained to fulfill the divided ideals of mother's womanhood, and frequently they are restive and wretched under the ordeal of social rounds which are repulsive because of their triviality.

"Oh, I am so tired of it all!" said one debutante. "Up to the highest bidder is the fundamental idea in it all. I want to choose my life. I want to do something with individuality in it, instead of being moulded into the impersonal type of an ordinary society woman. If I follow my natural impulses, I'll break mother's heart, for I shall next year be branded among her associates as one of last year's failures."

Social life as a diversion, not an ambition, is a great advantage because of the culture and noise which it brings. But the modern woman cannot find in it the satisfaction which it gave her great-grandmother, for she feels the call to service. Many great souls born to social shackles have freed themselves, giving their large means and larger selves to free others of every station from any bonds that their peculiar phase of life may have cast about them. To such in actual intercourse there are no purely social distinctions. They feel themselves privileged because they may bestow their means and their influence to better conditions among those less fortunate. Thus have they risen above the treadmill in which they were born.

What a wasting treadmill is the life of the social climber. In each individual's own sphere are great possibilities, and it is a surprise that any one would wish to steal a place on alien soil. Tolling incessantly to turn the wheel of social frivolities among those inheriting them and weary of them,

they sink into fawning social strugglers, belunging nowhere, desired nowhere, respected nowhere, and bound ultimately for the haven of nowhere.

On all sides may be seen the ravages of enslavement to the trivial. There are women growing hideously old in their struggles to keep young, never realizing that if they entered into the heart of youth, to mother, direct, inspire, their own hearts would grow from the contact eternally youthful. Some are growing unpopular and even feared by using their leisure in gossiping at their neighbor's fireside, concerning the evils of life, instead of plunging into effort to remedy those ills.

Women whose lives are dreary with the round of little things could brighten them if they carefully consider how many of those trivialities are worth the nerve force put into them. It is better that a little dust collect on furniture than that cobwebs accumulate on the housewife's brain. Children need a self-controlled, sweet-tempered mother much more than elaborate clothes. It was the wisest of all men who said, "Better a dinner

of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." Acting upon his suggestive thought many housekeepers, might find it in their hearts to let a little plainer catering supply the physical needs of their families, in order that more time and vim may be devoted to their spiritual well being. A husband's digestion is twice impaired if the too elaborate dinner be accompanied by the fretful conversation of a weary wife.

The habitual giving up of force to the pursuit of worthless trivialities incapacitates anyone for actual service. Mothers who are setting the example of inane existence are laying in their daughters the foundation of disappointment and discontent. High purpose is necessary to keep alive the fine zest and enthusiasm which secures for them love and admiration. The aspiring daughter of a trivial mother is often driven to a revolt which weans her quite away from parental influences. It is usually the capable, alert, wide-visioned woman who can point with pride to the accomplishments of her daughters. Not less appreciative are daughters of mothers who tread broad paths of great achievements.

A Model Housekeeper.

CHRISTINA ROSS FRAME.

"EVERYONE says that Mrs. Gregory is a model housekeeper," observed our visitor. "I don't believe you could find a spoonful of dust if you searched her house from garret to cellar."

"Yes," agreed Aunt Ellen, "and while you were thinking that, you would catch her furtively eyeing your shoes, and fussing uneasily for fear you would lean back against the immaculate soft cushion, and maybe have her jump up in the midst of your remark to chase a fly or pick up the crumbs that dropped from the cake you were eating. Oh, I know that kind of model housekeeper. The kind 'that just couldn't rest' if the beds were unmade and the daily routine disturbed, that she might spend a long, sunny day out of doors with her children. The kind that worries her husband into using the back door into his home, and is forever pursuing her children with white and dustpan. What difference does it make to Dolly and Jenn whether their clothes are handstitched or machined? But they would appreciate fully a mother who wasn't too much of a model

housekeeper to come into the yard, jog the swing and look at their playhouse.

"Everything must be done just so and at the proper time if it half kills her to accomplish it. You would think some dire catastrophe might follow if her wash wasn't out on Monday, and ironing, baking, sweeping, silver-polishing, weren't done on the exact days marked in her housekeeping calendar.

"She was here last evening, irritable, worn to a frazzle, and complaining about her nerves. However, she could exult in the fact that her house-cleaning was all done before that of anyone else in the village. I judged that her hoarseness was due to the fact that all fires, except the kitchen one, were out in her starched and frilled house. Any other kind of a housekeeper would have a considerable remembrance for the cold snave we always have about the first of May.

"Yes, Mrs. Gregory," I agreed, "you have your cleaning done fine and early—and have you ever thought what a long time there is for you to be dead?"

"I wish you could have seen her face," finished Aunt Ellen as she rose to pour the tea.

All the Mothers.

JANE TAYLOR DUKE.

THE room was lighted only by the glow of a bright fire on the hearth; the flames flickered upward, revealing a pretty picture. It was a dainty, cosy apartment, with rose-tinted walls; flowered chintzes decorated the chairs and windows, and beside the old-fashioned four-poster bed was a white hassinet bedecked with ruffled muslin curtains.

The clock struck three. There was a fretful cry, and Abigail Livermore, seated in a low wicker chair by the fire, soothed the sleeping baby in her arms. Little Charlie was cutting his two upper front teeth; for a week he had been restless and wakeful, and tonight he had cried incessantly. Five times the weary mother had laid him in his soft basket, or tried to put him on the pillow beside her on the big bed, but nowhere would he remain quiet but in her arms. She was exhausted after hours of nursing, but the doctor had told her there was nothing to do but have patience. "I will have to lance them if they are not through in a day or two," the old man said, and Abigail resigned herself to waiting.

"Mother knows those teeth are hurting baby." She pressed the little form closer and gazed down at the flower-like face against her arm. The rounded, satiny cheek and soft curves of the downy head suggested one of Sir Joshua Reynolds' cherubs, but to the mother's eyes was far lovelier. Her back ached and her eyes were heavy with sleep. She dared not think of the morrow; the cook was talking of going home for a rest; the other children needed shoes, and her work basket was piled with mending. If she could only get a few hours' sleep. The clock struck four.

Suddenly there came to Abigail's mind a kind of vision. She seemed to see a long procession of women of all ages, bearing babies in their arms, and little children clinging to their skirts. There was a host of them—the mothers of many generations. The mothers of John Knox and Martin Luther and of the great Wesley family; of Judson and Luther Rice; of Robert Raikes and Matthew Yates; the mothers of Washington and of Lee; the mothers of kings, queens, poets, statesmen, discoverers, inventors; of teachers and preachers. Then there were the mothers of the Bible—Sarah and Rebekah and Hannah and Ruth, and the mothers of the apostles. Then Abigail glanced up to the picture over the mantel, lighted up with the rosy glow of the fire, and saw the face of the Sistine Madonna, that face of surpassing purity and loveliness, and there arose in her heart a song of exaltation and praise to God. It was a wonderful thing to be a mother! She looked down at her sleeping child. What untold possibilities lay in that little mind, and who could better lead and direct him in the paths of knowledge and right than his mother; with God's guidance? She breathed a silent prayer.

Little Charlie was sleeping more quietly, his fretful moanings had ceased. Abigail slipped a bit of moistened gauze between his lips to bathe the swollen gums. She felt a tiny prick on her finger. The miracle had happened; both teeth were through. With a sigh of satisfaction she tucked the wee form in his basket, and soon mother and child were sleeping the sweet, dreamless sleep that comes before the breaking of the day.

Why?

J. W.

WE are so apt to look for special providence to save us from the consequences of our mistakes or accidents. We so often read stories of such instances that we feel that it is our right, and we may confidently expect our Heavenly Father, who sees all things, to interpose with some special providence in our behalf.

But think of Joseph and Mary. We do not know why they were so late in reaching Bethlehem, whether they did not start in

time, whether their beast of burden failed them, or perhaps they were so poor they had to walk all the way, and did not allow sufficiently for Mary's weakness; however it was, they were late, the crowd had reached Bethlehem before them. Here, surely, was need of a special interposition of providence.

How easy it would have been for some rich woman to take pity on the pretty young girl and take her to her own home, or some fatherly, kind-hearted man, sympathizing

with the difficulty Joseph was in, might say, "Bring her right over to my house; we have room for her; or even the kindly wife of the keeper of the inn might give up her own room to the young woman so sorely in need of comfort and seclusion; but nothing of the kind occurred. There was no room for them in the inn, and they were thankful for the shelter of the stall and the soft hay in the manger, where she laid her firstborn Son.

The Son of God "took upon him the form of a servant"—not a prosperous, well-to-do servant, but a homeless walf, that none might feel that they had worse trials than he could know. If our Heavenly Father would leave his only-begotten Son to suffer the burdens and privations that he endured in the days of his flesh, why should we complain if we have to bear the trials we bring on ourselves by our mistakes and shortsightedness?

Thy Allotment.

JAMES ELMER RUSSELL.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH has a sonnet which is so full of cheer for those who are shut in or who are handicapped in other ways that it seems as if it might almost be named "A Poem for Shut-Ins."

Here are the splendid lines:

"Thou earnest not to thy place by accident,
It is the very place God meant for thee;
And shouldst thou there small scope for
action see
Do not for this give room to discontent,
Nor let the time thou owest God be spent
In idle dreaming how thou mightest be,
In what concerns thy spiritual life more
free
From outward hindrance or impediment.
For presently this hindrance thou shalt
find
That without which all goodness were a
task
So slight that virtue never could grow
strong;

And wouldst thou do one duty to His mind
The Imposer's—overburdened thou shalt
ask,
And own thy need of grace to help etc
long."

What we all need to realize is that God has a plan for our lives and that accident has no place in their shaping. Nothing comes into our lives save by his permission. The place where we now live, the position we now occupy, the circumstances which environ us—these have come to us by the permission or ordering of a loving Heavenly Father.

We are not to complain over our handicap, and to fancy how much better we could be and how much more we could do if things were different. We are to take things as they are and do the best we can under all the circumstances. Our very difficulties are the way God is guiding us to do for him what he especially wishes us to do.

Your Neighbor and Mine.

A. L. W.

"Who's your next door neighbor?" a visitor of mine asked me one day.

"Her name is Hall, I think," I answered. "I really don't know her; she's been living there for a good while, too," I explained, "but I've been busy and haven't been over yet."

"Well, you should go," my friend answered, "She's a stranger out here and probably lonely, and you may be missing something yourself by not knowing her."

I promised to go sometime, but soon forgot it.

About three months afterward I was invited to attend a W. C. T. U. club meeting at the home of one of our leaders, and I

made every effort in the world to get through my work in time to go early. Just when I was busiest, Mrs. Hall came in and asked to use the phone. I told her to help herself, and went on about my business. I came downstairs as she hung up the receiver, but I heard her say: "I only hope I won't be a disappointment for I shall do my best." I wondered what she was talking about, but didn't ask any questions.

"Are you going to the W. C. T. U. this afternoon?" she asked as she started home.

"Yes," I answered.

"I'm so glad," she replied; "we can go together."

I really wasn't so pleased over the prospect myself, for I had planned to study over my little speech as I went, but I called for Mrs. Hall as I started, and on the way to the car line I explained to her that I wanted to look over a little speech I was to deliver that afternoon, and she very kindly left me to myself. I hadn't attended the W. C. T. U. in months, but we were to have the new president with us that afternoon and I wanted to make a good impression.

The meeting was called to order, various speeches made, and finally the retiring president rose and said:

"Ladies, it is with the greatest of pleasure I introduce the new president, Mrs. Warren K. Hall."

Fear As a Handicap.

CARRIE ASHTON JOHNSON.

ALAS, that so many people go through life with fear as their controlling influence, or watchword—fear of what is going to happen to themselves or their family; fear of what some one will think or say if they do not keep up with the procession; fear of not dressing as well as their neighbors or friends; fear of criticism, if they do not array themselves in the somber garments of mourning; fear of accident on land or water; fear of burglars, of the dark, of snakes, or wild animals, or even innocent cows and horses.

Fear has always been a detriment and hindrance to all growth and progress.

Faith and courage and hope help to build those self-same qualities in others. Suspicion breeds suspicion.

People who are always fearing trouble usually attract it. On the other hand, people who trust and have faith are more likely to receive in return the same equivalent.

There is an instinctive feeling that manifests itself in man and beast when people are afraid.

Her Daughter's Bible.

"There's only one thing more," said Mrs. Allen, as she consulted her shopping list. "Dorothy wants a Bible for a birthday present. An inexpensive Bible will do just as well, of course, until she is older."

"May I tell you a story?" asked Mrs. Foster. "When my daughter Gladys was ten years old her grandmother gave her a Bible

I looked up just in time to see my next-door neighbor rise; then I seemingly, searched for a hole in the door to slip into when I thought how long I had lived beside a woman who was big and brainy enough to be president of a W. C. T. U. club and hadn't made a neighbor of her. I felt that I didn't have any right to try to cultivate her acquaintance now. But she was a grand little woman and gladly forgave me—but I had learned a lesson.

Many times have I moved since then, but never have I made the mistake again of not knowing my next-door neighbor. And now I ask you what my friend asked me:

"Who is your next-door neighbor?" It's worth while for us to know them—your neighbor and mine.

Real, genuine courage and bravery are their own best protection.

The mother who taught her child that "God is everywhere" did more for that child than she realized.

A mother who taught her children to go everywhere in the house in the dark as freely as in the light, did them the greatest possible benefit.

She told them to go cautiously and slowly, with their hands in front of their faces, and feel their way.

One might almost say that fear is the greatest bug-a-boo with which we have to contend from the cradle to the grave. Many a life has been lost either directly or indirectly through fear.

My plea is to parents, teachers and the world at large for strength and courage and love and trust with which to dispel worrying doubts and fears.

for a Christmas present. The gift was so attractively bound that I thought of asking Gladys to lay it aside for a year or two, and carry a cheaper Bible to Sunday school; but somehow I neglected to do so. One Sunday afternoon several months later Gladys came to me in great distress. "Oh, mother," she cried, "I've lost my precious, precious Bible!"

I put the baby in his crib and joined in the search. When at last we found the lost treasure, my daughter gathered it to her breast.

"Now I can mark another love verse," she said, rapturously, as she opened a box of crayons. 'Mr. Rollins explained it to us in church. I have thirty already.' And she turned to the fifteenth chapter of John and placed a red dot beside the 'love verse'—the text of the morning's sermon.

"What are the blue dots for?" I asked as she turned several leaves.

"Oh, those are prayer verses," was the quick reply, "and the bright orange dots are the faith verses, and, oh, mother, there's your favorite verse marked with a yellow star." I took the Bible and read, "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee," and well remembered the hour when I repeated those words to Gladys. My mother was seriously ill at the time. "And there's Mr. Rollins' favorite verse," the child went on, "and my Sunday school teacher's, and Aunt Ellen's, and grandmother's—and here is mine!" she finished triumphantly as she turned to the beautiful words, "Suffer little children."

"As I felt the touch of the soft leather and noticed the quality of the paper, I was grateful to the wise grandmother who chose a Bible that would stand many years of constant usage. No other Bible would ever mean so much to my daughter as the Bible with which she was growing up."

"How many things there are for mothers to learn!" said Mrs. Allen, softly. "We will select Dorothy's birthday present together."—*The Youth's Companion.*

+++

Complaint.

Do you know many people who hug all their sorrows and burdens to their hearts and pet them, and enlarge upon them until the world is one vast shadow? When you ask them how they are, they tell you every ache and pain, not only of their own, but of the whole household?

An old lady whom everyone likes was talking not long ago along this subject. She said she was seventy-eight. She didn't look it and she didn't feel it. When asked how she managed to appear so youthful, she said she didn't let any dead yesterday reach back and slap her in the face. That her troubles she let slip from her shoulders as she would a cloak, and that while she couldn't help them, she wasn't going to treat them better than she did the joys of this earth.—*Exchange.*

The Unfinished Prayer.

"Now I lay me—say it, darling."

"Lay me," hisped the tiny lips
Of my daughter, kneeling, bending,
O'er her folded finger-tips.

"Down to sleep," "to sleep," she murmured;

And the curly head bent low.
"I pray the Lord," I gently added—
"You can say it all, I know."

"I say de Lord," the words came faintly
Fainter still, "my soul to teep."
Then the tired head fairly nodded,
And my child was fast asleep.

But the dewy eyes half opened
When I clasped her to my breast,
And the dear voice gently whispered—
"Mamma, Dod knows all de yest."

Oh, the trusting, sweet confiding
Of the child-heart! Would that I
Thus might trust my Heavenly Father,
He who hears my feeblest cry!

—Selected.

+++

The Level of Expense.

"THERE'S an undoubted bargain, but I can't afford it," said a sensible young matron recently, looking longingly at some silk stockings offered at a tremendous reduction. "They are not on my level of expense, you see."

"But I don't see," said her friend. "You have more to spend than I, and even I can afford these, at such a price. They are down to my level, why not to yours?"

"My level isn't up to them," returned the first speaker, smiling. "Expenses, like water, seek a level. My dress is not up to the silk stocking level. My shoes and slippers are not up to it. My furniture and table are not up to it. These stockings happen to fall below their regular level in price. I can buy them, for that reason. But they remain unsuitable to my other belongings, just the same. If I were to get them, I should want a bargain in dainty slippers, and watch for it, and waste my time doing so. If I secured it, I would want either a reduction in handsome silk petticoats, or else I would buy one that I couldn't afford, on the plea that I had saved money on the slippers and stockings getting them so cheap. Then my gowns and hats would seem not good enough—and so on. My whole level of expenses would be lifted. And it is quite high enough now."

Dick says most people that live beyond their means begin by ignorance of the law of proportion, and I am more sure he is right every day. Learn the suitable level and keep to it, and the economical problem is solved. Did you notice that girl who bought two pairs of silk stockings? She works in a factory. She wears cheap jewelry and reads trashy novels, and all that. Why should I put myself on her foolish level by buying unsuitable bargains? Don't look horrified. Think about it." Was she not right?—*Harper's Bazar.*

+++

No Necessity for Grudges.

"STOOP she really did do it. Is that any reason why you should grow a grudge?" So a sensible woman asked herself when she began to see how far she was letting a vindictive spirit assert itself because of another's unkindness. "I will permit no enemy to degrade my soul to the level of hatred," said an earnest Christian man.

It is not unusual to think or say, when one "grows a grudge," that another makes him do it. It is, however, in the last analysis nothing but letting one's self be degraded; for though one may have to endure hatred, spite, unkindness in one phase of life, he is by God's love plan forever free to choose for himself whether he will have love or hatred as the ruling passion within. Moreover, the hard, bitter phase of association with others is never the only one from which one may learn how to feel and act.

One may turn his thoughts to loving relatives and friends, to kindness received, to God's good will, his generous provision and never-ceasing care. There are, too, plenty of opportunities to heap love's glowing coals on the offender's head and so annihilate his enmity and at the same time convert him into a friend, thus doing away with all possible use for vindictive action.—*Wellspring.*

+++

Preventing Collisions.

"THE best conversationalist I ever knew," laughed the grandmother, "never made any deep or memorable speeches herself that I can recall, but she had a perfect genius for switching other people's trains of conversation on to safe tracks."

The well-meaning blunderer who is sure to stumble upon unfortunate topics is always with us, and so also are the souls with memories and associations which shrink at a touch. One gracious way of bearing the burdens of others and smoothing life's rough places,

lies just in cultivating the kindly thoughtfulness and ready tact that prevents jars and hurts. It is a quiet grace that never will bring its possessor fame, and may win but scant recognition even from those it helps, but nevertheless, it wears the badge of the royal service, and will be owned by the King.—*Exchange.*

+++

The Limits of Love.

HE might have reared a palace at a word
Who sometimes had not where to lay his head.

Time was when he who nourished crowds
With bread
Would not one meal unto himself afford.
He healed another's scratch; his own side bled,
Side, feet and hands with cruel piercings gored.

Twelve legions girded with angelic sword
Stood at his beck, the scorned and buffeted.

Oh, wonderful the wonders left undone,
And scarce less wonderful than those he wrought!

Oh, self-restraint, surpassing human thought,

To have all power, yet be as having none!
Oh, self-denying love that thought alone
For needs of others, never for its own!

—Exchange.

+++

Flowers From a Friend.

THE woman lay and looked with sombre eyes about her. It was the visitor's hour in the hospital, and every patient in the ward except herself had a visitor. She closed her sad eyes bitterly. There was no one in this great town to come to see her; even in her own little Western village, what did they remember of her who had been away so long? She had been down to the gates of death. The doctors and nurses, with their bright, professional kindness, were always congratulating her on her wonderful recovery; but at times she thought that it would have been better to pass through those grim gates than to come back to a world of utter loneliness. Suddenly a gentle hand touched her shoulder and a soft voice spoke.

"I have brought you some flowers," the voice said, "from a friend of yours."

The woman's eyes flew open in surprise. "I have no friend who would send me flowers," she said.

Nevertheless, your friend has sent you these," the stranger answered with a smile.

"He thought you would like forget-me-nots best," she added, holding out the exquisite blue flowers. You are tired now, so I will not stay, but I shall see you again. This card will tell you who sent the flowers," and with another smile the stranger was gone.

Eagerly the woman read the card: "A great poet says that flowers are messengers to us from God. 'From our great Lover,' the poet says, 'the flower comes with a message from the other shore, and whispers in our ears, "I am come. He has sent me. He has not forgotten thee, and will rescue thee even now. He will draw thee unto him and make thee his own."'"

The woman looked at the flowers. Forget-me-nots! Had she indeed forgotten that wonderful friend through all these weeks of bitterness? Tears rushed to her eyes, and with them came the remembrance of Browning's words:

"All I could never be,
All men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God."

The next day the nurse said to her, "You look like a different person this morning, you seem so well and bright!"

"Yes," the woman answered, simply, "a friend I had forgotten sent me some flowers yesterday, and his remembrance has made all the world seem different."—*The Youth's Companion.*

+++

A Homely Sermon.

I WAS a small girl, and exceedingly loyal to my own people, but I had a child's love of trying information of any sort, so when I overheard a certain remark concerning the relative with whom I was spending the summer, I lost no time in speeding into my aunt's presence to repeat it. I found her busily sorting over outgrown garments and laying aside those that she thought would be useful in the family of her poorer and rather thriftless neighbor.

"But, auntie," I protested as I discovered her occupation, "Mrs. Blinn doesn't like you very well; I heard her tell somebody she didn't! She said you had 'ways' she couldn't abide."

Aunt Hannah paused reflectively for a moment, a glint of natural resentment in her glance. Then she laughed.

"Well, child, there are times when I don't like myself, either," she said, with twinkling eyes, "so I suppose we shall have to forgive her. I often wonder how the Lord can abide some of my ways and some of

Mrs. Blinn's, too, but as long as he is patient with us I think we shall have to try to worry along with each other. Anyway, her children need these clothes." And she went calmly on with her sorting.

It was a homely little sermon and has come back to me many, many times. All our dealings are with imperfect people—most of them persons whom we think might be improved in many ways, and who probably rate us not much more highly than we do them. The queer thing about faults is that they show so much more clearly at a little distance, and in a neighbor's life more plainly than in your own. But we cannot remake the world or remodel the people about us, and what helpful intercourse we have and deeds of kindness we do, must be under existing conditions. There are some who stand off and wait to have matters to their liking before they start. They would be glad to help the poor if only the latter were more grateful, or more ready to learn, or more something that they are not. There are some who never unite with any church or help in its work because many of its members are far from perfect, and not all of its methods satisfactory.

It is the upward look that stills criticism and sets us to work. If the Lord can be patient with his faulty servants and their blundering efforts, if he can tenderly minister to the needs of those who forget to be grateful, why should we demand such swift response and reward of appreciation from those whom we serve? It is the upward look that makes us at once humble and kind—gives us the clearer view of our selves and the more charitable view of others. It is not for the sake of the worthiness of those who need our help, nor for the gratitude our ministry will bring back to us, but for Christ's sake that we are always and unflinchingly to be kind.—*Exchange.*

+++

The Comforting Scapegoat.

"Why are you taking him along?" playfully demanded a friend of the mother who brought her small son with her on a morning excursion. The mother responded in the same vein. "Oh, so that we can have some one to blame for whatever goes wrong. A scapegoat is such a comfort!"

Under the pleasantry lurked a truth seldom acknowledged. Why is it so difficult for the ordinary individual to accept responsibility for his own mistakes? The first impulse of human nature appears to be a search for someone else to bear the blame

when anything goes wrong. It began in Eden, when Adam framed the first excuse, and the youngest child practices it without being taught. We make an unwise decision, but immediately we hold another responsible for results. It is natural, but it is also weak. Each one should be willing to go on his own bond.—*Exchange.*

+++

If the Lord Should Come.

If the Lord should come in the morning

As I went about my work,
The little things and the quiet things

That a servant cannot shirk,
Though nobody ever sees them,
And only the dear Lord cares
That they always are done in the light of the sun,

Would he take me unawares?

If my Lord should come at noonday,

The time of the dust and heat,
When the glare is white, and the air is still,
And the hoof-beats sound in the street—

If my dear Lord came at noonday,
And smiled in my tired eyes,
Would it not be sweet his look to meet?
Would he take me by surprise?

If my Lord came hither at evening,

In the fragrant dew and dusk,
When the world drops off its mantle
Of daylight like a husk

And flowers in wonderful beauty,
And we fold our hands and rest,
Would his touch of my hand, his low command,
Bring me unhopd-for zest?

Why do I ask and question?

He is ever coming to me,
Morning and noon and evening,
If I have but eyes to see.

And the daily land grows lighter,
The daily cares grow sweet;
For the Master is near, the Master is here;
I have only to sit at his feet.

—*Exchange.*

+++

Trifling Troubles.

A touching and instructive "war incident" appeared in a recent issue of the *Congregationalist*. An American lady was making the best of her way on a poorly equipped train out of the "war zone." Like many others, she had suffered hardships, and finally her self-pity burst out in petulant complaint.

"Just to think of it," she said; "I haven't been able to wash my face for thirty hours. I haven't had a decent meal for a week, and I never expect to see two of my trunks again."

After a moment's silence a French officer in the same compartment spoke, with quiet courtesy. "I am indeed sorry for you, madam," he said. "We are all having our troubles during these days of war. I myself have just lost two sons, who were killed in Alsace, fighting for France."

In spite of her momentary outburst of impatience, the heart of the American lady was in the right place, and with tear-filled eyes she begged pardon from the bereaved father, realizing how trifling her troubles were compared with his.

"If your own troubles trouble you, trouble yourself with the greater troubles of your next-door neighbor." If we would only open our eyes and look abroad at the hard lot of the less fortunate, complaints would die upon our lips and our hearts would swell with gratitude to God for the numberless blessings still in our possession. We would throw ourselves more enthusiastically into making the best of our task.—*Exchange.*

+++

Why He Waited.

OLIVE was a very small girl, but not too small to be keenly disappointed when her birthday came and passed without a gift of any sort from the dearly loved big brother away at school. The next day, however, disappointment gave way to joy. The gift came, and with it a letter of explanation that took all the sting from the delay.

"I could have sent you a locket on time," he wrote. "But none in stock were pretty enough for dear little sister. So I ordered this one, and hope you enjoy it all the more when you get it."

Often we feel that some good thing that the Lord might give us is held back unreasonably. The explanation is in that verse which says: "Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you." It is never that he does not care, that he has forgotten, that he is chary of his good gifts. He wants us to have the best; and if our own shortsighted desire fails of that, he sometimes delays for our own good. As Mark Guy Pearse put it: "It is only his staying to lift us up into a greater faith, that we may have a richer, greater, fuller blessing than we ever should have dared to ask."

Believing this, we should find it easy to wait for the blessings that seem delayed.

Trusting the Lord's love and care, we should let him know our needs and then rest content and assured that in his good time, the best and right time, the answer will come; full and beautiful and gracious, such as he alone can give.—*Selected.*

+++

"China Fired Daily."

We had often noticed the sign in the window of the little fancy goods store—"CHINA FIRED DAILY." One day we inquired as to the process, and learned that the coloring and design of the painted china did not show in the fullness of its beauty till the work of the artist had been through the kiln.

"The oftener it is put through the fires, the brighter are the colors," explained the gentle little woman in the store. "Take that vase," she added, pointing to an especially beautiful piece of work; "it has been through the fire three times."

The same truth holds good in life. We may try to make our lives beautiful in sympathy and loving helpfulness and other good fruitage. We may work out a very lovely design. But it takes the hot breath of the flames of sorrow, and struggle and self-denial to bring out the real beauty of our planning. Nothing but the fire can give the divine radiance to the coloring. Nothing but the flame can perfect the work of our hands.—*Exchange.*

+++

Hope On.

THERE was never a day so misty and gray
That the blue was not somewhere above it;
There is never a mountain ever so bleak
That some little flower does not love it.

There was never a night so dreary and dark
That the stars were not somewhere shining;
There is never a cloud so heavy and black
That it has not a silver lining.

There's never a waiting-time weary and long,
That will not some time have an ending;
The most beautiful part of the landscape is
where

The sunshine and shadows are blending.

Then let us hope on, though the way be long,
And the darkness be gathering fast,
For the turn in the road is a little way on,
Where the home-lights will greet us at last.

—*Selected.*

God's Love.

I HEAR a voice so sweet and low
Speak from each budding flower and tree;
In softest cadence comes the word,
Which gently says, "My love to thee."

I hear that wooing, winsome voice,
As softly murmuring breezes go;
I hear the same sweet tones again
Where dimpling, rippling waters flow.

I hear it in the song birds' notes,
I hear it in the rustling leaves;
So speak the waving fields of grain,
And so again the golden sheaves.

The starry heavens proclaim his love,
Boundless as space, and full and free;
The clouds, the sunbeams, speak his word,
"Beloved child, come unto me."—*Exchange.*

+++

The Buried Sorrow.

THERE are sorrows about which we can do nothing whatever but ask God's help, and then cover them out of sight. But it often happens that these buried griefs are like seeds. Buried and left alone, by and by they find resurrection in some beautiful flower that enriches the life.

Looking back over our lives, most of us can see that many a blessing which brightens the present, sprang from some trouble in the past over which our hearts mourned. The crushed hope, the disappointment that tempted us to bitterness, the loss that seemed to hold no shred of compensation—out of these have germinated new strength, new alliance with other lives, new endeavor. We look back to the old sorrow with hearts that still ache at the remembrance, but we would not like to be quite what we were before its touch came.—*Exchange.*

+++

Patience.

PATIENCE is one of the purest and most precious of all the Christian graces. Patience puts aside our own preferences. Patience places the interests and affairs of others above our own concerns. Patience surrenders selfish interests for the good of others. Patience waives its own rights and permits the good of others to hold a higher place than our own wishes. But in doing this, patience brings to the soul a blessing unthought and undreamed. In short, "Patience is love at its best."—*The Lutheran Observer.*

International Sunday School Lessons.

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

LESSON I.

JULY 2, 1916.

Paul at Thessalonica and Berea.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour." (Acts 5: 31.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 17: 1-15 (cf. 1 Thessalonians 2: 1-12).

MEMORY VERSES, 11, 12.

+++

Lesson Text.

1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2 And Paul as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you is Christ.

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

5 ¶ But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also:

7 Whom Jason hath received, and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.

8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

10 ¶ And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea:

who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.

14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.

15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

+++

Success.

AFTER due apologies from the rulers of Philippi for outrage and false imprisonment, Paul goes west, one hundred miles, and begins a work in Thessalonica. Around that city great armies of Europe glare at each other today. The synagogue was the open door to Paul's evangelism. To the Jew first was his motto. There was no social aversion, so the Gentiles mingled freely in the services of the Jewish neighbors. Paul, the passionate orator and logician, reasoned with his congregation. A little more appeal to reason and a little less to emotion would help many pulpits. Paul dealt with three propositions: first, the Scriptures show that the Messiah must be a sufferer; second, the Messiah must rise from the dead; third, the historic Jesus did suffer and rise from the dead, and therefore he is the predicted Messiah. So convincingly were these points pressed that some of the Jews were converted

and a large number of earnest-minded Greeks, especially of their leading women. The converts were the intelligent and influential people of the city. That makes a strong church in any community. Feeble preaching does not win this class.

+++

Persecution.

The Jews grew jealous. It is the same old story, familiar to Paul, from the beginning of his missionary labors. Lo, we turn to the Gentiles. The angry Jews gather up a mob out of the city's rabble and go to Jason's house to catch Paul and Silas. Finding in that they seize Jason, the kind host, along with some other converts, and drag them before the city authorities. "These upsetters of the whole world," say they, "have come to our city, and this man Jason has welcomed them. They all violate the decree of Cæsar by declaring that Jesus is King." Imitating the murderers of Jesus, they tacitly profess allegiance to Cæsar and accuse the missionaries of treason to the Roman empire. They are cunning enough to turn Paul's preaching of the spiritual lordship of Jesus into a specious lie and thus to poison the popular mind. The rulers of the city are troubled, but they satisfy themselves with blinding over Jason and the others to keep the peace.

+++

Flight to Berea.

Paul and Silas fled by night, and going forty-five miles west, came to Berea. Here Paul met with exceptional Jews, whom he calls more noble than those of Thessalonica. At once he entered the synagogue. In candor they heard the gospel and searched the Scriptures to see if Paul's teaching harmonized therewith. Many of them believed, along with a large number of prominent Greeks, both men and women. It was joy and balm to the great-hearted apostle. But the uncommon experience was not for long. The envious Jews of Thessalonica, hearing the news, came to stir up a riot. The brethren sent Paul away, to Athens, three hundred miles to the south. The worker was driven off, but the work remained.

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul at Thessalonica and Berea. Acts 17: 1-15.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Christ must needs have suffered."

That was the stumbling-block of the Jews. By long tradition and culture they stubbornly held to the view that their Messiah was to be a political prince and conqueror. A meek and patient sufferer was subversive of all their system of theology. Of spiritual poverty and need they were fatally ignorant. Repentance toward God and faith in a suffering Saviour were utterly foreign to all their thoughts. That was a deadly heresy to be repelled and exterminated. Here was Paul's original blunder.

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Sincerity of Paul's Preaching. 1 Thess. 2: 1-12.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Our exhortation is not of error, nor of guile."

The excellent material in the church gave Paul great hope of a strong and influential organization. He knew that enemies were diligent in misrepresentation and slander of himself, hoping to undermine his work. So he assured the brethren of his disinterested love. "I did my work among you not as seeking glory of men. I flattered no man, I sought to please no man, as a cloak of covetousness. Working with my own hands I refused to be a burden to you. Being affectionately desirous of you, I was willing to impart my soul to you."

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Timothy's Report. 1 Thess. 3: 1-10.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord."

Arriving in Athens, Paul has great anxiety about the church in Thessalonica. So he sends Timothy back to comfort and encourage. To his happiness, Timothy brings back tidings of their faith and love, also of their tender remembrance of Paul and desire to see him again. This is divine consolation to the apostle and leads him to fresh thanksgiving to God. Though in affliction and sorrow over his interrupted work, he says, "Now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord." Was there ever a nobler, purer, whiter soul?

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Testimony of Christ. John 5: 30-40.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"These are they that bear witness of me."

"If I bear witness to myself, unsupported and alone, it is not true. John bore witness of me, and it is true. Greater witness

than that are the works which the Father has given me to accomplish. And greater still, the Father which sent me. He hath borne witness of me. The Scriptures bear witness of me." Christ is true, Christianity is true. Our best and highest life rests in accepting and living this truth. We get this assured and saving knowledge by experience. Do the truth and know it.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Reading the Law. Neh. 8: 5-12.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"The joy of the Lord is your strength."

It was a wonderful day of expository preaching. Ezra read the Word of God to the people, and then with others, proceeded to make the meaning plain. The people were much moved and broke into weeping. God's Word had entered their hearts and awakened penitence and sorrow. Then the preachers said, "Cease your weeping. Let us be glad in the Lord, who forgives our sin. Show your gladness by doing good to others." That is a healthy religion which cultivates joy and does good to one's neighbor.

+

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Jehovah's Testimonies. Psalm 119: 33-48.

LESSON 2.

The Thessalonian Christians.

JULY 9, 1916.

MOTTO TEXT.—"If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. 4: 14.)

LESSON PASSAGE. 1 Thess. 1: 2; 17-20; 4: 13-18.

MEMORY VERSES. 4: 16, 17.

+++

Lesson Text.

1 Paul, and Sil-vanus, and Ti-mo-the-us, unto the church of the Thes-sa-ló-ni-ans which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jé-sus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jé-sus Christ.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"I will meditate in thy statutes."

This long and remarkable psalm is a full-hearted and eloquent tribute to the grace, beauty and power of God's Word. Note how many names are applied to it in the fullness and variety of literary presentation. Law, statutes, precepts, commandments, testimonies, judgments. These descriptions are like so many facets to a diamond. In one long prayer the psalmist longs to know, to prize, to love, to follow, to obey God's holy Word. "In keeping thy word there is great reward."

+

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Profitableness of Scripture. 2 Tim. 3: 10-17.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"The holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation."

Paul urges Timothy, the young preacher, not to neglect his Bible. No Christian can afford to do it, least of all a preacher. How shall he come before his congregation with things ever new and old? The man of God imperatively needs to be furnished out of the storehouse of divine wisdom. His own views, notions, ideas and speculations are not the food the people need. God's reproofs and encouragements, God's high thoughts and purposes, are the true spiritual food.

hope in our Lord Jé-sus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Hóly Ghóst, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Hóly Ghóst:

7 So that ye were examples to all that believe in Mác-e-dó-ni-a and Á-chá'ia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Mác-e-dó-ni-a and Á-chá'ia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and

how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

+++

Important Church.

PAUL chose the chief cities as centers of evangelization. In the populous places, where business thrives and the throngs of men come and go, there he will publish the good tidings and organize churches. From those high points of civilization the light of the gospel will stream to all the near-lying communities. Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth and Ephesus are just such commanding cities. They were situated on the great trade route from Italy to Asia. Thessalonica was full of wealth and commercial activity, and naturally many Jews were gathered there. Some of them Paul won to Christ and the church, along with a host of devout Greeks and a large number of the leading women. Here was the prospect of a great and influential church. Paul has high hopes concerning it. Driven out by Jewish hostility, he continues to cherish it, and he seeks to comfort and root it in the gospel by means of letters. This letter is the first we have from his pen and probably it is the earliest written message of the New Testament.

+++

Paul's Thankfulness.

Shortly after his expulsion from Thessalonica and Berea, by the Jews, he is preaching in Corinth. Timothy arrives, bringing

good news from the Thessalonian church. Though persecuted by the Jews, they remain constant and steadfast, their faith and love are still fruitful, their influence is holy and their remembrance of the apostle is affectionate and true. Their distresses and trials at the hands of unbelieving Jews have not shaken confidence in the gospel nor cooled the ardors of devotion to Christ. Such tidings were music to the soul of the great missionary, and instantly he obeys the impulse to write. Those dear brethren and sisters must know of the joy in his heart. It was good to be at the meeting and hear that letter read. How they were thrilled at the words! "We always thank God for you, brethren; we mention you constantly in our prayers. You are a pattern to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia, all of whom have heard of your faith in God. He has chosen you for a great work in this world." Such was the holy compliment from the man who had led them to Christ. Such praise heartens a church. Paul was a master in the fine art of saying kind things and spreading good cheer. All of us ought to learn it.

+++

Admonitions.

They needed further instructions. Some of them were expecting the Lord's immediate coming and were distressed with the fear that those who died before that event would lose their share in the glory of it. Some had quit daily work, trusting in the richer members for support. To the first he says: "You must not grieve as men who have no hope, for when the Lord comes, those who survive will not take precedence over those who are asleep. The dead in Christ will rise first." To the second he says: "You must not be idle; work with your own hands and be self-supporting, so that your life may be correct in the eyes of the outside world. Encourage one another, and let each edify the other."

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Thessalonian Christians. 1 Thess. 1: 1-10.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"We give thanks unto God always for you."

Have you noticed Paul's way of distributing praise and blame? He gives both quite frequently. He always puts praise first. It is a big mistake to put blame first. You miss your aim when you do it, and the praise is not half so effective. Ministers, superintendents and teachers should lay Paul's method

to heart. We can find good things to say if we are generous enough to look for them. They warm the heart and prepare the mind to accept and improve just rebuke. In the home and everywhere be as sparing of blame as you can.

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Accepting and Rejecting the Word. 1 Thess. 2: 13-20.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Ye are our glory and our joy."

What a great heart was Paul's. He was an intellectual giant, but his heart power was just as great. He loved his people. A rapture was in his soul when he thought of being able to present these dear brethren to the precious Saviour at his coming. "Brethren, you are my hope, my joy, my crown of glorying. Why? Because you accepted my message, not as the word of men, but as the Word of God. The rejecters of that Word have caused you suffering, just as they have your brethren in Judea. They killed Jesus and the prophets, and have driven me from your city. They fill up their sins, and wrath is coming upon them."

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Love and Hope. 1 Thess. 4: 9-18.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Ye are taught of God to love one another."

Two things kill a church: doing nothing and the spirit of strife. The first often opens the door to the second. Outward foes are less dangerous than those that are internal. Again Paul compliments these brethren over the fact that they love one another. In his grace he urges them to abound more and more. This is the very life of God. Out of this element the life of a church withers like an uprooted tree. Do the members of your church live in mutual goodwill, peace and sweet fellowship? Are you that kind of a member? Then Paul praises you, and God loves you.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Attending the Resurrection. Phil. 3: 1-12.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"The fellowship of his sufferings."

At the beginning of Paul's Christian life the Lord said to him: "I will show him how great things he shall suffer for my name." Paul writes the pathetic catalogue of his tribulations, and then astonishes the world

by saying, "I glory in them. Thus it is that I enter into closest fellowship with my suffering Saviour. I suffer with him for the same cause of righteousness, and so shall I share in the glories of his resurrection. I endure for his sake, and I know that I shall share with him the blessedness of the eternal life." He has joined the fellowship of suffering and glory.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Directions for the Disorderly. 2 Thess. 3: 6-15.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"You know how you ought to imitate us."

While he preached in Thessalonica, he supported himself with his own work. He had the right to ask support, but he refused to use it. Now some in the church have quit work and become busybodies. Exactly so. It is your idle man or woman who fills the neighborhood with senseless or injurious gossip. Let such go to work. If not, let the church express its censure by leaving them alone. He hardly means exclusion from the church, but social separation. Show severe disapproval, yet treat him not as an enemy. Father admonish him as a brother. Win him back to work and Christian proprieties.

+

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—End Not Immediate. 2 Thess. 2: 1-12.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"Let no man beguile you in anywise."

Some of the brethren had misunderstood Paul's words about the second coming of the Lord. They concluded that the day was right at hand, and hence had lost interest in the concerns of daily life. "What's the use of working when the whole earthly condition may be ended tomorrow?" Paul declares that his teaching gave no warrant to such folly. No man can tell when that time comes. The certainty of its coming should stimulate to diligence in all work and duty, and not to the cessation of labor. Listen to no man who tells you when the end of the world shall be.

+

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Working While Waiting. Luke 10: 11-20.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Unto every one that shall be given."

Jesus anticipated Paul's teaching in the parable of the nobleman. His return was indefinite, and all that he required was fidelity in the use of his goods. Those who make

gain by unceasing industry are fit to have more. They are worthy of trust and honor. Those who make no gains on account of laziness and idleness are not fit to have more. Their habits and character unfit them to

keep even what they have. The lesson is, that faithful, honest toil expands and qualifies for large rewards. Indolence unattains the soul, so that a man cannot keep what he has.

LESSON 3.

JULY 16, 1916.

Paul at Athens.

MOTTO TEXT.—"In him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17: 28.)

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 17: 16-34.

MEMORY VERSES, 22, 23.

+++

Lesson Text.

22 ¶ Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

32 ¶ And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Diogenes the Areopagite, and a woman named Dymnares, and others with them.

+++

Paul's Disgust.

HAVING been driven out of Berea by persecuting Jews, he went south to Athens, three hundred miles distant. Here he is waiting for Silas and Timothy to rejoin him, they, for some reason, having been left behind. He is not resting, not idle, in this highest seat of the world's learning and philosophy. The gospel is a fire shut up in his bones, and he cannot keep silence anywhere. Into the synagogue he goes with his message. He talks it in the marketplace, but with no special results. The idols of the city pained and disgusted his soul. Along every street the emblems of idolatry insulted his sense of spiritual religion. The people he talked with were impressed with his remarkable intelligence and ability. News of him got to the ears of the philosophers, and they asked him to make them a speech at their clubhouse on Mars' Hill. It was a daring thing to do, but he hesitated not a moment. Christ and him crucified was needed among the scholars of Athens as much as among the ignorant people of the mountains.

+++

The Sermon.

It was a learned audience, and they must have been surprised at the calm demeanor of the unimposing Jewish stranger. Never did a man begin his address more audaciously. He did not say, "You are very superstitious." Good breeding and oratorical tact permitted no such blunder. "You are very religious"

was his conciliating introductory remark. "Your city is full of altars to the gods, and I have noted one altar devoted to an unknown god. Now, it is of that UNKNOWN God that I wish to speak." He discusses three points. First, the unity and benevolence of this God. He is supreme over all, the Maker of all things, and dwells not in the shrines made by the hands of men. He alone is worthy of your worship. Second, the unity and brotherhood of men; one in nature and spiritual need. All men need God alike, and he desires that we should seek after him. He is near to men, so that they verily live and move and have their being in him. Third, the unity of God's method of salvation. He can be found through Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, approved unto God and men by death and resurrection. By this man God will judge the world. He commands all to repent and turn to life in Christ. The philosophers were fond of hearing something new, and they heard it.

+++

Results.

When Paul touched on the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, and others, with more politeness, said, "We will hear you again on that subject," and so the occasion closed. Those great thinkers had heard all they wanted. "Yes, he is an uncommonly able man, but we are not interested in his curious religious views." The sermon was not a total failure. One of his prominent hearers was convinced, also a prominent woman and some others. But learned and idolatrous Athens did not seem a promising field to Paul, so he went west to the commercial city of Corinth.

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul at Athens. Acts 17: 22-34.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill."

Did you ever think of the intellectual versatility of Paul? Some able men cannot interest a plain and uneducated audience. The uneducated speaker cannot interest an audience of scholars. But here is a great man who has power to adapt himself to every kind of audience. He held the attention of the rude, half-civilized people of Asia Minor; he commanded the respect of the cultured intellects of Athens. That is genius. Moses, Isaiah and Paul are the high mountain peaks in Hebrew history.

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul's Speech. Acts 17: 22-34.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"TO AN UNKNOWN GOD."

You note that Paul does not try to prove the existence of God. Jesus never did. The human mind recognizes a divine power in the universe without the process of argument. Fact is, logic cannot prove the existence of God. Man knows that God is. What is this character? is the main question. God is one, not many; he is Spirit, not material; he is a universal giver. Men are his offspring, one common brotherhood. One of your poets said this same thing. Now God wants his children to be like himself. He has made this possible through Jesus Christ, the only Saviour.

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—God's Name Declared. Ex. 3: 11-15.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"This is my name forever."

Moses knew the children of Israel in Egypt would want to know the name of the God who sent him. "What shall I answer?" "Tell them 'I AM THAT I AM' hath sent thee." The "self-existent, faithful, unchangeable God" is his name. But the compassionate God added another name for himself, which was simpler and more appealing to the heart of Israel. "Tell them my name forever is this: the God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Hence you can trust him and follow his servant, Moses.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Folly of Idolatry. Isa. 44: 6-20.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

Isaiah describes the making of an idol. The workers grow tired and hungry. How can the idol made by men who suffer from hunger and thirst be compared to the self-existent God? This is one absurdity. Another one is this: When the idol is finished by smiths and carpenters, it can be burned, like any ordinary piece of wood in the fireplace. How compare this with the self-existent God? The idol cannot protect you. It sees not, it hears not, it loves not. Well may the workmen and the idolaters ask, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—God Revealed in His Son. Heb. 1: 1-8.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"God hath spoken unto us by his Son."

He spoke to us in divers ways through the prophets. In these latter days he has spoken through his Son, who is Lord, Creator, Upholder and Redeemer. In office as well as in nature he is far superior to angels. He is the Son of the Universal Sovereign, administering the government with his Father. It is he who manifests the glory of God. Let all the angels worship him, and with stronger reason let all men bow down before him. If we ignore and neglect him we shall all perish.

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—All Races Made One. Col. 3: 1-11.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"But Christ is all and in all."

He breaks down middle walls of partition among the races of men. He unites in one great brotherhood men and women of every kindred and tongue. For every man he tasted death. "I will draw all men unto me.

LESSON 4.

Paul at Corinth.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace." (Acts 18: 9.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 18: 1-22.

MEMORY VERSES, 9, 10.

Lesson Text.

1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;

2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome;) and came unto them.

3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

5 And when Silas and Timothy were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said

I will cleanse away their sins, give them a new heart, and will be with and indwell them forever." Made one in Christ, children of God and joint heirs with himself. They shall be neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but all one in Christ.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Dispensation of Grace. Eph. 3: 1-13.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"The eternal purpose which is in Christ Jesus."

Paul calls his Gentile brethren "fellow heirs," as fully sharing with the believing Jews in the spiritual inheritance, equal members of the true Israel. To each and all of us belong the unsearchable riches of Christ, in whom are the treasures of grace, not only abundant for all our needs, but surpassing all our conception. He is the manifold wisdom of God for achieving the purpose of the ages. It is all of grace through faith. Not unto us, but unto his name, be the glory forever.

JULY 23, 1916.

unto them. Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Titus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

9 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Pleasing Prospects.

PAUL was not afraid to try his hand in the cultured heathenism of Athens, but his judgment was evidently in favor of Corinth as a better base of missionary operations in

Greece. Aquila and his wife, Priscilla, driven out of Rome, also came to Corinth and became Paul's coworkers. He and Paul were of the same trade, tentmakers, and so they labored together for their own support. Silas and Timothy were also with him, and so Paul went to preaching with his usual zeal and hopefulness. Every sabbath he argued in the synagogue, persuading both Jews and Greeks. The president of the synagogue was converted, with all his house, and many of the Corinthians also confessed faith in Christ.

Opposition.

The usual thing happened. The Jews set themselves against him and abused him. Again he shook his garment in protest, saying, "Your blood be on your own heads. After this I will go to the Gentiles." And so he did, and began to preach in the house of one of his converts, adjoining the synagogue. This nearness to the synagogue was naturally irritating to the Jews and intensified their hostility. Difficulties multiplied and Paul became exceedingly depressed. To cheer his soul, the Lord appeared unto him in a vision, saying, "Have no fear, speak on and never stop, for I am with you, and no one shall attack and injure you; I have many people in this city." Comforted and encouraged, he settled there for a year and six months, teaching them the Word of God. Paul's work went successfully on, despite the incessant activities of the Jews to defeat it.

Jews Defeated.

The unbelieving Jews finally resolved to crush Paul by appeal to the Roman governor, Gallio, residing in Corinth. They rose in mass as one man, laid hold of Paul and brought him before Gallio. It was virtually a mob, but they refrained wisely from acts of violence. "This fellow incites men to worship God contrary to the law," was the indictment before the governor. He knew the charge was false. Paul was on the point of making reply when the governor broke in with a sharp rebuking speech. "If there was a crime against Roman law involved, there would be some reason in my listening to you. But as it is merely a question of words and persons and your own law, you can attend to it for yourselves." Then he drove them out of his court. There was a slap in the face for the Jews and a vindication of Paul. Then some Greek citizens

caught Sosthenes, the president of the synagogue, and doubtless the leader of the mob, and beat him right in front of the courtroom. But Gallio paid no attention to it, had nobody arrested for the disorder. That shows his personal contempt for and impatience with the Jews. Roman law often saved Paul from trouble.

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul at Corinth. Acts 18: 1-11.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"By their occupation they were tentmakers."

We do not expect our missionaries to go to Mexico or China and maintain themselves. We make it a point of honor and Christian duty to support them, that they may have no care in the way of preaching. Paul had the right to ask support, but he waived it for the gospel's sake. If he had received anything, his enemies would have charged him with selfish motives. He resolved to live above every ground of mean suspicion, that his influence might not be harmed.

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul Vindicated. Acts 18: 12-22.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"He tarried after this yet many days."

Gallio sternly rebuffed the insolent persecutors, and the Greeks beat the president of the synagogue, for interfering with Paul. From that time his work was less hindered and he pressed it for many days. At last he decided to leave it in good hands and go back to the old home church at Antioch. This was the close of the second missionary journey. It had led him into Europe, and a number of churches in strong cities was the result. He will go by Jerusalem to tell the apostles of his success.

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Factions in Corinth. 1 Cor. 1: 10-17.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"That there be no divisions among you."

Paul is hard at work in Ephesus, on his third missionary journey, when he hears distressing news from his church at Corinth. Like children the brethren are debating and disputing about their favorite preachers. Some say Apollos is their man, others say nobody can preach like Paul. Peter has

partisans also, and even the dear Lord Jesus. The absurd situation troubles the apostle. He hastens to rebuke the stupid contention. He tells them, "Christ is all, and the rest of us are your servants in the gospel."

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Foundations and Building. 1 Cor. 3: 1-14.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"As a wise master-builder I laid a foundation."

Paul took a worthy and honest pride in doing original work in heathen lands. He wanted to build on no other man's foundations. "I planted, Apollos watered," says he, but God gave the increase. No claim of credit for his success, that is due to the grace of God. Christ is the real foundation of all the work. He was proud to be a pioneer of the gospel, but to Christ belongs all the glory. Each Christian is a builder of character. Let him be careful to build of gold, silver and precious stones, for the work is to be tried by fire.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Lawsuits Condemned. 1 Cor. 6: 1-8.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Why not rather take wrong?"

Christian brethren carrying their disputes to heathen courts for settlement. This is another evil in the church at Corinth. It shocks the apostle. How does that witness for Jesus in a heathen community? Go to law before idolaters when the saints are set to judge the world? Are there no wise men in the church? Differences will arise, but Christian arbitration is the method of settlement. That puts honor on Christ. Keep

out of the heathen law courts. Christians might well appeal to arbitration today.

+

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—All Things to All Men. 1 Cor. 9: 16-27.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"That I by all means may save some."

Paul was no stickler for small things. He would not strive over matters involving no principle. Here is a large common sense worthy of all imitation. "Free, I put myself under bondage; to the Jew I became a Jew; to them under the law, as under law; to them without law, as without law; to the weak I became weak." His own rights, preferences and immunities he surrendered freely if it helped to win a man to Christ. Would that we were all Christian enough to do that. Half our contentions are over little nothings. Let us try to be large like Paul.

+

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Happy Sequel. 2 Cor. 7: 2-12.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"He told me of your longing, your mourning and your zeal for me."

Paul gets his reward for faithfulness. His first letter to the Corinthians abounded in reproof. The evils in the church called for plain speech, though it hurt the apostle to the heart. He feared the result, but Titus return with good news of abuses corrected and abandoned gave comfort and joy. He had not lost influence with the brethren, he had not lost their love. They saw their mistakes and sins and have turned from them. They are devoted to Paul and long to see his face again.



LESSON 5.

The Word of the Cross.

JULY 30, 1916.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. 6: 14.)

LESSON PASSAGE. 1 Cor. 1: 1-2: 5.

MEMORY VERSES, 1: 22-24.

+++

Salvation.

CHRIST, and him crucified, is Paul's one exclusive, monopolizing theme. He is the power of God unto salvation. There is not a word today less understood than this word "salvation." It is threadbare from excessive use; it is like a smooth-worn coin. Everybody takes it for granted that he understands it. The too prevalent conception is that it means getting to heaven. It doesn't mean going somewhere, but being something where we are. A sick man is physically saved when the disease is broken and full strength is restored. A sick soul is saved when the disease of sin is removed and a life of active Christian goodness and usefulness ensues. Life clean of sin on the one hand and full of good deeds and righteousness on the other, that is salvation, and nothing else is. Salvation is Godlikeness, moral resemblance to Christ, and nothing else than that. Now Paul's gospel is the power of God to effect this salvation. "I myself have not attained, but I press on to this goal," said Paul. Your Christian life is a process of overcoming the bad in your nature, and achieving the spiritual good, that is the perfection of God. "I am converted, and therefore saved," is the shallow conception of a multitude. You are converted, but only entered into the struggle for a completed divine life. Christ, and him crucified, began that saving work in you, and he will carry it to a glorious end. This is Paul's view, and it is right.

+++

A Stumbling-Block.

The Jews rejected this salvation. A suffering Messiah, to them, was an offense. They wanted signs of power. They wanted demonstrations for the senses. They wanted a set of objective rules in religion. They wanted a priest with visible sacrifice, and a political Messiah. They refused to see the inwardness of religion and the need of spiritual regeneration, hence they were piling, progressively alienated from God, more and more. Such is the worldly, sinful

+++

Lesson Text.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty:

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

life. The Jews rejected Christ because he did not meet the demands of their blind and dead orthodoxy, their preconceived opinions of what he should be.

+++

Sheer Folly.

To the intellectual conceit of the Greeks, Christ, and him crucified, was utter foolishness. The Jew was devoted to outward show of power and formalism; the Greek was devoted to wisdom and philosophic speculation. Neither had he any sense of sin and spiritual need. His soul food was thought, syllogism and intellectual discovery. Loftily he scorned a salvation wrought by a crucified Jew. It sounded to them like ravings of a lunatic. It was the degradation of the intellect to consider seriously such a proposition. To ritualistic pride it is a stumbling-block; to pride of intellect, it is sheer folly. Such were the two states of mind that Paul had to meet. Undaunted in his sublime faith, he continued to preach Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Called to be Saints. 1 Cor. 1: 1-9.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Unreprovable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Here is Paul's plain conception of what salvation is. Perfected sainthood. That is the goal of the high calling of God in Christ. Who of us will dare to call himself a saint? We are in a process of being saved if so be that we are growing in grace and knowledge. We are not saints yet, but we are called of God to be saints in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Be ye imitators of me," said the apostle. "Forgetting the things that are past, I press to the goal of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ."

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Word of the Cross. 1 Cor. 1: 18-2: 2.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Where is the wise? where is the scribe?"

God has turned the wisdom of the Greeks into foolishness. They have never found God, who is the supreme good of the intellect. God has chosen the foolish things of the world that he may put to shame them that are wise. He has chosen the base, weak things of the world, that he may put to shame the things that are strong; that is,

Jew and Greek, who regard themselves mighty and wise and noble, have been left behind by the unlearned and simple-hearted poor who have entered into salvation through Christ Jesus.

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The suffering Servant. Isa. 53: 1-12.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"He was despised and rejected of men."

Here is the most tender and affecting chapter in the Old Testament. Who can ever forget this picture of a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? The cruelty of it was that he was so grievously misunderstood. We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, when, in fact, he was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. Misjudged and scorned, he bore it in uncomplaining meekness. As a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. Yet with his stripes we are healed. Wonderful grace of God.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Need of the Cross. John 12: 24-30.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"I will draw all men unto myself."

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride."

"If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." The crucified Christ puts a real glory on self-abnegation. To this he draws all men. We are to be cross-bearers before we enter the glory which is to be revealed. Drawn to him, we are drawn to our cross (set that in mind). A cross is at the heart of Christianity. The old man must needs go to Calvary. There is no other way.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Blessedness of Discipleship. Luke 10: 17-24.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Prophets and kings desired to see the things which you see."

They believed in a golden age to come, when God's promise to Abraham should be fulfilled. The desire of all nations shall appear, said they; but what manner of man will he be? He was the prophet's dream and hope, says Jesus, that great boon has come

to you. You are given to see his deeds and to hear his words. He has called you to companionship and discipleship. It is your peculiar blessing from God. These men of Galilee had no advantage over us. We, too, have seen and heard. Blessed are we, if we follow on to know, love and obey.

+

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Saved by Grace. Eph. 2: 1-10.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"Not of works, that do men should glory."

Paul accepted the contrast between the free grace of God and man's merit through works. He had tried both. Conscientiously and honestly he tried to keep the law. He realized the inward stroke of the law and despair of meeting its demands of a clean heart. In those depths he saw Christ and instantly accepted the gift of God. Sovereign grace offers a perfect righteousness in Christ. It is the gift of God. Take it

by faith and live the life. The sinner cannot achieve it for and of himself. Take Christ and do the works of faith, and so grow into sainthood.

+

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Reconciled by the Cross. Eph. 2: 11-22.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Ye are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

The death and resurrection of Christ revealed a new spiritual life and power in the world. Here is a divine life above the law of Moses and infinitely superior to man's life in the flesh. Here is the open door to alienated hearts, and perverted affections, to the peace and righteousness of God. The gospel makes appeal to all men alike, "Behold the Lamb of God." God was in Christ reconciling men unto himself. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "Come unto me. Him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out."

LESSON 6.

AUGUST 6, 1916.

The Greatest Thing in the World.

(Temperance Lesson.)

MOTTO TEXT.—"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13: 13.)

LESSON PASSAGE. 1 Cor. 13.

MEMORY VERSES. 4-7.

+++

Lesson Text.

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never falleth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Love.

THE great thinker, Paul, agrees with John as to the supremacy of love. With poetic passion he pays tribute to it in this wonderful chapter. How does he come to do it? In the chapter preceding he has been deploring the factions in the church of Corinth, growing out of rivalries in the exercise of various gifts. Pride in each one's peculiar gift, and undue estimate of its importance, had led to jealousies and heart-burnings. Paul patiently shows them the unity and harmony of the several gifts in the Holy Spirit, and how they should be used for the good of all. He then caps his argument by calling attention to one particular grace, needed by all, which is the greatest thing in the world. It outranks fine preaching; it excels the keenness of the intellect; it surpasses all beneficence and heroic devotion to conviction. Truth is, all these excellent gifts and qualities are useless and worthless without this preëminent grace. This is the thing, above all others, that you all ought to seek. What is it? Brotherly love. That is the divinest thing a church can have, and without it your other gifts and powers come to nothing.

+++

Love's Conduct.

In every specification Paul makes a home thrust at someone's folly in the church. Talk about direct personal preaching, here is a famous sample. How does love behave? Well, love is never impatient or unkind; it does not envy or boast; it is not conceited or ill-mannered; it is unselfish and meek; it never imputes bad motives nor takes pleasure in things wrong; it delights in the truth, and is always slow to expose the bad; it is eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. This is the more excellent way which Paul shows to the Corinthians. Put it into your church, and it will root out all the bad things that have disturbed you. That is the apostles' frank meaning, and the brethren saw it.

+++

Love's Constancy.

Love will never disappear, but preaching will pass away. Tongues will cease, and knowledge will be superseded. Preaching is imperfect, and knowledge is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will be done away. This is illustrated in the case of a child. Its language, thoughts, and reasonings pass away when the estate of manhood is reached. At present we see the facts of life, the thoughts, feelings, and motives of

people as in a dim mirror; but then it will be face to face, knowledge is partial now; but then we shall understand. Even so, all your gifts will cease when the perfect comes; but love will endure. The eternal years of God are hers. There are three things that last on forever—faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of all is love. The chapter is a logical argument clothed in the raiment of poetry. Love's supremacy. Proof: 1. All gifts worthless without it. 2. It does more for you than all gifts. 3. It endures forever. 4. It is the greatest thing that endures.

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Greatest Thing in the World. 1 Cor. 13: 1-13.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."

Are we high-tempered, sensitive, and easily angered? Some people, quick in resentment, think it shows spirit and pluck. It does not. It shows weakness, lack of dignity and self-command. Love is strength and beauty. You need it. Are we prone to think evil, to impute bad motives? This is low and mean. The heart is wrong, and the imagination is diseased when we are continually suspicious of our neighbor's motives. Love is the only remedy for the evil. God help us to live a life of love.

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING. Love the Burden Bearer. Rom. 13: 8-14.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Be tenderly affectioned one to another."

And this without hypocrisy. There are constant temptations to be effusive of compliment in our own selfish interest. You owe a debt of courtesy to everybody. Politeness is a form of love. People are rude because they are deficient in neighborly love. To our own brothers and sisters in Christ we ought to go further and give genuine affection. It is not always easy to do, but you are under bond to love. Do not have your own set in the church, and be careless of the others. That is unchristian. Take your religion seriously.

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Love & Social Obligation. Matt. 22: 34-40.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

That was the old commandment. Self-love was the measure of it. Jesus revised and ennobled this law. Seemingly he does not wish

to give approval to self-love. "A new commandment give I unto you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you." He abandons the human measure, and establishes the divine. How does Jesus love his own? With all his pure mind and soul, even to the laying down of his precious life. There is Christian duty as plain as language can express it. Lord increase our faith.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—For the Sake of Others. 1 Cor. 8: 1-13.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Knowledge puffeth up but love edifieth."

Nothing is truer than that knowledge tends to puff with self-importance. This is one of the sore temptations of the better informed. But love buildeth up. Love will surrender certain rights, approved by certain knowledge, lest an ignorant man be injured by their exercise. Wise brethren at Corinth knew they could eat meat offered to idols without any taint of idolatry. Weaker brethren did not see the point. Let the wise forbear to eat, lest the weak be emboldened to eat and sin against conscience. That is love in such a situation.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Commandment of Love. 1 John 2: 7-17.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light."

It is vain for a church member to say that he is a Christian when he hates his brother. Such a man is walking in darkness and not in the light. That is to say, hate is unchristian and devilish. It is in deadly enmity to Christ, who is the light of the world. Hypocrites in the church? Yes, and this is one of

the most offensive types. We can't hate people and be obedient to our Saviour. What does conversion mean, if not a turning to walk in truth and love before God?

+

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Love made Perfect. 1 John 4: 7-21.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"He that abideth in love abideth in God."

Here is the true habitation of our souls. We have heard a great deal about soundness in the faith. Great battles have been fought over the creeds, and love has been killed in the conflict. In bitter controversy love has been strangled, the only great thing in religion. All your orthodoxy is dead if the spirit of love be wanting. Sound in the faith? Yes, but you must love God and your brother man. I believe Christians are moving slowly to this view. Love's victory is coming. That is a chief article in a sound theology. So say Paul and John.

+

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Evil Affection Versus Love. 1 Peter 4: 1-11.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves."

Above all things. Peter takes his stand with John and Paul on the supremacy of the Christian grace of love. John says it is the very life of God; Paul says it is the one thing that gives value to all your gifts, deeds, and views; Peter puts it above all things; and Jesus declares it the crown and glory of Christian character. Do we believe it? Has it really this importance? Why then do we emphasize it so little in practical daily life? No, it is not easy to be a Christian. Lord increase our faith.



LESSON 7.

AUGUST 13, 1916.

The Grace of Giving.

MOTTO TEXT.—"In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20: 35.)

LESSON PASSAGE, 2 Cor. 9.

MEMORY VERSES, 10, 11.

+++

Lesson Text.

1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Mác-e-dó'n-ia, that A-chá'ia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

4 Lest haply if they of Mác-e-dó'n-ia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but

is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God:

13 While by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

+++

Charity Collection.

THERE were numerous poor in the church at Jerusalem. Ten years before this collection Paul and Barnabas had carried relief to them from the church at Antioch. Paul has a double motive in making the contribution large: first, tender sympathy for his own people; second, to win the full favor of the Jewish brethren for his Gentile work. Sacred diplomacy and Christian benevolence kissed each other. All his churches in the four provinces of Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia were urgently appealed to, and to their credit the response seems to have been generous. It was a strange, unheard-of thing in the earth, far-off strangers of one race interested in the welfare of strangers of another race. This is the new spirit of Christianity. This is true human brotherhood.

+++

Emulation.

Paul appeals to the spirit of generous rivalry. To stimulate the giving of the churches in Macedonia he tells them how nobly the churches in Achaia are going to respond, and specially the church at Corinth. It has the desired effect. Then he gets a little anxious about Corinth, lest the brethren embarrass him by falling short. The Macedonian churches will learn the facts, and the apostle may be shamed. So to make things sure he sends brethren with this second letter to stir up Corinth to liberality. It is a half-amusing situation. The third missionary journey has closed at Ephesus, and Paul now has the large purpose of making his fourth and greatest journey to Italy and Spain. First, he wants to go to Jerusalem.

bearing a large gift to the poor, hoping thus to thoroughly conciliate his brethren in Palestine, and so to unite in harmony both wings of the Christian brotherhood. Such a consummation will greatly encourage and embolden him in the vast enterprise now entertained in his soul. Will he take that contribution in his own hands? Far from it. He is too wise. It would give occasion to enemies to say that he had slyly gathered this sum for himself. He took seven men with him, representatives of the churches, to deliver it. Ministers do well to remember Paul's example.

+++

The Motive.

Paul says to the Corinthians: "Brethren, I do not want to wring this contribution out of you; but rather let it be forthcoming generously and spontaneously. I want no grudging or compulsion about it, for God loves the cheerful giver. Remember this, that he who sows sparingly will reap sparingly; and he who sows generously will reap a generous harvest. God will bless you for your kind acts to others. Men will give thanks to God for you, and God will enrich your souls. It is written in the Scripture, he that scatters his gift to the poor broadcast, his charity lasts forever." What you give to charity becomes an eternal treasure. But the crowning motive he reserves to the last. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift. God gave his best, the only begotten Son.

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Grace of Giving, 2 Cor. 9: 1-15.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"I know how willing you are."

It is curious to see the mission field sending back money to the mother church in Jerusalem. The church in the Holy City never distinguished itself in missionary work. It sent out neither men nor money. Antioch sent men, but not money. Glorious Paul supported himself, and then gave aid to the mother church. Things are changed now. We send men and money to the mission fields. That is as it should be. Is your church filled with the spirit of missions? That is the way to get in vital touch with the Spirit of God.

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Liberality of the Philippans, Phil. 4: 10-20.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"No church had fellowship with me in giving, but ye only."

Here is a tell-tale fact. This noble church was the only one that ever thought of the personal needs of Paul. With touching words he speaks of his unshared hardships and wants. No complaint does he make; he is too manly for that. Bravely he has learned to be content in hunger and want. But he is beautifully responsive to the kindness of these thoughtful brethren. Gratefully he speaks of the several times that they have lovingly ministered to his needs. I have not asked your gifts. They came out of your own generous hearts. My God shall fulfill every need of yours. Be kind to your pastor.

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Ministering to Jesus, Matt. 25: 31-40.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Ye did it unto me."

Christianity is a practical religion. It proclaims human brotherhood, and one of its great duties is to bear one another's burdens. Jesus has made the poor and needy his receivers. He is the great Exemplar of religion. He went about doing good, and he asks us to follow him. No honest soul can miss his meaning. His whole life, was love, service, and sacrifice. So many of us hope to get to heaven, and yet habitually neglect to do the things he said. Yes, we have professed faith in him, but what does it mean? Faith in One who gave his life in kindness to others. There is the heaven you need to get into. Ye did it unto me.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Respect of Persons, James 2: 1-9.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Sit thou here in a good place."

To fawn and crawl before the prominent and the rich is unchristian and contemptible. Yet James says some church people were guilty of it in his day. To the wealthy man they gave the best seat in the house. To the poor man they said, "Stand thou here, or sit under my footstool." In God's house the rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them all. They are his children, and all alike sharers in his love. "Be ye perfect as your Father is perfect." Have no favorites in God's house. Give the same respect to all.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Sons of the Most High, Luke 6: 27-38.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"He is kind to the unthankful and evil."

If we honestly wish to be sons of the Most High, we must desire to be one with him in spirit and conduct. Anybody can love them that love him; anybody can do good to them that do good to him. Nothing Godlike in that, for even sinners do the same. Be kind to the undeserving and the unfriendly, as well as to others. No sinner can do that; but you can, if you are really a son of the Most High. Being a Christian, indeed, is no easy thing. Jesus said it meant cross-bearing. We dare not make it otherwise.

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Loving by Giving. 1 John 3: 13-22.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"He that loveth not abideth in death."

We know that we have passed from death unto life. How do we know that great fact, John? Because we love the brethren. You want to know whether you have been soundly converted. Here is the divine test. We know that Jesus loved us, because he laid down his

LESSON 8.

The Riot at Ephesus.

MOTTO TEXT.—"The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." (1 Tim. 6: 10.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 19: 23-41.

MEMORY VERSES, 29, 30.

Lesson Text.

29 And the whole city was filled with confusion; and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

30 And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.

31 And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people.

life for us. Now listen to what follows. We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. John says the life of Christ, whom we trust and serve, commits us to exactly the same kind of conduct, service and sacrifice. Let no man try to explain it away.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Giving as God Gives. Matt. 7: 6-12.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Ask and it shall be given unto you."

Jesus refers to parental love for illustration. What father will give a stone or a serpent to his hungry son? Not one. How much better is your heavenly Father. If evil men give good things to their children, much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to them that ask him. The perfection of God is the standard that Jesus sets up for his disciples. We are children of God, partakers of his very nature. We must strive to think, feel, and act in accord with the divine. We must give love to all men.

AUGUST 20, 1916.

34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

35 And when the townclerk had appraised the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesians, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?

36 Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

37 For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

38 Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies; let them implead one another.

39 But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

40 For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

The Third Journey.

It began in the year 54 and was really less of a journey than the evangelization of one province, with Ephesus as the center. During most of three years Paul preached in this and neighboring cities with his usual power and success. The Jews of Ephesus soon shut their synagogue to him, when he at once rented a schoolhouse and, undaunted, pressed the work. A church was organized, converts increased, and the whole city felt the power of the gospel. Several facts indicate it.

The Exorcists.

Strolling faker Jews thought to capitalize Paul's powerful adjuration, "In the name of Jesus." This is striking testimony to the deep impressiveness of Paul's work. The man on whom the fakers tried to practice said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?" He rushed on them and beat them until they ran out of the house wounded and asked. The incident got abroad in the city, deepening the awe felt for the name of Jesus.

Burning Books.

The city was a sort of paradise for cheats, jugglers, magicians and sorcerers. The occult, black arts flourished. Wonderful to tell, many of this disreputable class confessed Jesus as Lord. Said they, "What shall we do with our black-art books? Sell them? We will burn them." So they did, and ten thousand dollars' worth of nefarious literature was piled in the street and reduced to smoke and ashes. There was a test of genuine conversion and a tremendous sign of the power of Paul's ministry. The moral sanitation of Ephesus goes on astonishingly. Similar scenes have been enacted in these modern days, when converted liquor dealers have poured their goods into the gutters.

The Mob.

Paul's work was undermining another business in Ephesus, and that is going to precipitate a battle. The great temple of Diana was there, and a big, strong corporation was making wealth by the manufacture of silver shrines of the goddess. Demetrius called a council of the stockholders. "We are losing money," and then, with a pious affectation,

he declared that Diana was losing homage. All he really cared for was dividends. Paul is the cause of it. Let us terrify and suppress him with a demonstration of wrath. They filled the amphitheater, yelling and screaming. They took two of Paul's friends, and Paul would have followed, but brethren restrained him. A Jew was set up to explain that the Jews had nothing to do with this Paul. The mob hooted him down, and shouted themselves hoarse for two hours. The town clerk had sense. He said: 1. Diana is in no danger. 2. Paul said no word against her, and has not despoiled her temple. 3. The courthouse is the place to try a case if you have any. 4. This riot is a breach of Roman law, and every one of you is in danger of arrest. He waved his hand, and the mob melted away. The wise clerk vindicated Paul and scored the multitude. One calm, brave man subdued the senseless horde.

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Holy Spirit Given. Acts 19: 1-7.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Paul found certain disciples."

This was a curious discovery of a group of John's disciples. It shows John's mighty personal power. They had early drifted out of Palestine and were still preaching John's doctrine of repentance. Evidently they had not known of the work of Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit. They received Paul's doctrine of the gospel and were re-baptized. It seemed to Paul the orderly thing to do. Then they received the gift of the Holy Spirit and probably became helpers of Paul.

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Effective Preaching. Acts 19: 8-20.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"So mightily grew the word of the Lord."

Absolute certitude of the facts, together with moral intensity and definiteness of purpose, makes an irresistible preacher. It is a compliment to the minister when people say he sincerely believes what he utters. Paul was conscious that in each city his time must be brief, and this thought naturally tended to quicken his energy. "What thou doest, do quickly," was his motto. "This one thing I do." He was a flaming evangelist always. The pastor's work is largely edification, and that is slower.

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Riot at Ephesus. Acts 19: 23-29.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Danger that this, our trade, come into disrepute."

That was the source of his opposition to Paul. His pocket nerve was touched. "He is hurting our religion" was a secondary matter. "This man is cutting down our business." What a compliment to Paul's preaching. That was the animus at Philippi. "The source of our gain is gone." They also tried to disguise their mean selfishness by alleging that Paul was teaching doctrines harmful to Roman citizenship. Degrading business has always hated men who preach the gospel.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Quelling the Riot. Acts 19: 30-41.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Nor yet blasphemers of your goddess."

Here you get a hint of Paul's mode of pulling down strongholds. It is not so much by denunciation of error as by the annunciation of truth. That takes more brains. Not so much by the destruction of the evil as by the construction of the good. That takes more brains. Elijah was taught that pure religion is not built up by earthquake, fire and storm, but by the power of the still, small voice. Positive preaching has always been stronger than negative preaching.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Gift of Godliness. 1 Tim. 6: 3-10.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Love of money is a root of all kinds of evil."

In Paul's day some men had a morbid passion for controversy and argument. He says they imagine religion is a paying concern;



and it is, provided it goes with a contented spirit. This love of money is a source of all mischief, cultivating many senseless and perilous dispositions that drag men down to ruin and destruction. It has led even good men astray from the faith, and pierced them through with many a pang of remorse.

+

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Message to Ephesians. Eph. 1: 1-14.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"According to the riches of his grace."

Paul sits on the circle of heaven and contemplates the universal love and grace of God. He sees the purpose of his will in choosing us before the foundation of the world that we might be his sons through Jesus Christ. Higher still, he sees another open secret of his will, that in the fullness of the ages all things in heaven and earth alike shall be gathered up in Christ. To that end we have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit, which is the pledge of our redemption in him.

+

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Spiritual Conflict. Eph. 6: 10-20.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Finally, be strong in the Lord."

God's amazing grace on one side and Christian obligation on the other. We must fight a good fight. Principalities and powers of evil dispute our march to saintliness. Salvation is the gift of God, and at the same time we have to work it out in our own experience. Coworkers with God. It is a divine and human partnership. Put on God's armor and hold your ground against every foe. Pray for all saints, and for me also, that I may be set free to preach the gospel.

LESSON 9.

AUGUST 27, 1916.

Journeying to Jerusalem.

The New Purpose.

A FOURTH missionary journey projects itself into Paul's mind as the triumphant labors in Ephesus close. Between Palestine and Italy he has planted the gospel in all the commanding cities and provinces, and now with thankfulness and soaring hope his thoughts of spiritual conquest turn to the central city of the Roman empire and all the regions beyond. It is a daring scheme born of past victories; it is morally sublime. Here is a world strategy of a new Alexander, aimed at winning Caesar's empire for Jesus. What a grand imperial genius! How I love him. Gladly would I stoop down and wash his feet.

+++

Preparation.

Immediately would he plunge into this vast campaign, but a wise discretion suggests that he leave behind him a unified and harmonized Christian brotherhood. He must carry with him the assured and heartening confidence that the Jewish and Gentile wings of Christianity have been cemented into steadfast union. This is why he will make the visit to Jerusalem. He has high hopes that the charity collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem, that he has been diligently gathering from his Gentile churches, will greatly promote his aims. It was the unprecedented thing in human history. He has gone from Ephesus, round through Macedonia, stimulating the collection, and is now with his church in Corinth. It is early in the year 57 A. D. and Paul is ready for the journey.

+++

Dangers and Protests.

By this time in his career the unbelieving Jews everywhere were bitterly aroused against him as a dangerous enemy to their religion. They falsely said that he hated the law of Moses and taught Jews that it was a sin for them to observe it. Paul's continuous missionary successes intensified their deadly hate.

Paul heard of a plot to murder him at the port in Greece, where he planned to take

MOTTO TEXT.—"I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace." (Acts 20: 32.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 20: 16-38.

MEMORY VERSE, 24.

+++

Lesson Text.

16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons.

19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,

21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

ship for Palestine, and that sent him far up north into Macedonia to seek another port. Descending the coast of Asia Minor, he made short stops at Troas and Miletus, bidding the brethren affectionate farewells. He felt it was the last time he would ever see them, for the fields of his work henceforth were to be in the far west, and again he might perish at the hands of his countrymen. At every step of his progress from Corinth the air grew thick with doom. The Spirit of God impelled him onward. "I set no value on my own life as compared with the joy of finishing my course according to the will of God."

He stopped at Tyre, and the disciples begged him not to go to Jerusalem. The peril of Paul was common knowledge. Judaism has outlawed him as the blackest criminal. Landed at Caesarea, the disciples redoubled protest and entreaty. It was a terrible strain on the strongest heart and will. Paul broke out in passionate remonstrance. "Why do you weep and break my heart? I am going, for I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the sake of the Lord Jesus."

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Revisiting Macedonia. Acts 20: 1-6.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"After the uproar ceased Paul sent for the disciples."

The Ephesian mob did no hurt to Paul's work, but he deemed it time to leave the city, having left the cause in good hands. He will go to Corinth by way of Macedonia, and a little later depart to Syria and Jerusalem. Of course the trip gave his heart and mind refreshment, for it meant the happiest greetings in all the churches. It was one continuous oration. What exaltation of spirit as the dear apostle recounted the incidents of his mighty work in Ephesus. The outlook was so bright and his hopes so high.

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Farewell Service at Troas. Acts 20: 7-15.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"We tarried seven days."

Here is where he first met Luke and saw the vision of the man calling him over into Macedonia, some six years ago, when on the second missionary journey. What mighty works the Lord has done since that time. He spends a week teaching, preaching and communing with the disciples. The last service went on until midnight, and then the brethren

were loth to have him cease, for they hardly expected to hear him again. So the meeting went on until the dawn broke. Then he went away.

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Journeying to Jerusalem. Acts 20: 16-27.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"He sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church."

Paul wishes to get to Jerusalem before Pentecost, so he hurries on past Ephesus. The ship stops at Miletus, not far below, and he sends for the brethren. It is about six months since he left them. We can imagine the common joy of that meeting. They, too, know of the growing menace against the life of Paul, but do not seem to have ventured on any warnings and appeals. He mentions the fact, showing his entire acquaintance with the dangers that impend. But he is calm and resolute.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Exhortation to Overseers. Acts 20: 28-38.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Take heed unto your selves and to all the flock."

He touchingly refers to the manner of his work while among them. His trials, his tears, his humility and unceasing devotion. "Your perils are not over. Grievous wolves will come into the flock, and ambitious men among you will try to divide it, and get a following unto themselves. Remember my example. I coveted no man's gold; with these hands I ministered to my own necessities." Then he prayed with them. They fell on his neck and kissed him, sorrowing that they should see him no more.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Prayer for Ephesians. Eph. 3: 14-21.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"That Christ may dwell in your hearts."

This letter was written from his jail in Rome about four years later. He has gotten to Rome, but, alas, not in the fashion he had hoped. Still undaunted, still jubilant in hope, he writes to the dear brethren in Ephesus. How they must have been moved by this great prayer, arising from the heart of the immortal prisoner. "That you may be filled with and strengthened by the Spirit, rooted and grounded in love, filled with all the fulness of God, and know the love of Christ which passeth understanding."

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Putting on the New Man. Eph. 4: 17-32.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."

Unity with Christ demands a stern battle with the un sanctified nature that remains in us. Put away falsehood and speak with truth; let not the sun go down on your wrath; steal no more, but work in honesty; let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but preserve clean lips; cease all bitterness and wrath, clamor and railing; put away all malice. Be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you. This is what he means by not grieving the Holy Spirit of God.

LESSON 10.

Paul's Sorrows and Comforts.

MOOTO TEXT.—"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12: 9.)

LESSON PASSAGE, 2 Cor. 11: 21-12: 10.

MEMORY VERSES, 25, 26.

+++

Lesson Text.

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit wheresoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul's Expectation. 2 Tim. 4: 6-8, 14-18.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"The Lord will save me unto his heavenly kingdom."

"The last drops of my own sacrifice are falling; my time to go has come. I have fought the good fight; I have run my course; I have kept the faith. Now the crown of a good life awaits me, with which the Lord, that just Judge, will reward me on the great day, and not only me, but all who have loved and longed for his appearance. To him be glory forever and ever."

"For thou' from out our bourne of time and place

The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."

SEPTEMBER 3, 1916.

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me dally, the care of all the churches.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascusenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

+++

The Sorrows.

"I will show thee how great things thou shalt suffer for my name." That was part of his call to the ministry. He was called to follow Jesus, which meant literally the laying down of his life for men. Like the gallant, modest soldier, Paul did not want to enumerate his sacrifices and tribulations, but the constant efforts of enemies to destroy his reputation seemed to him to require it. "Who of them," says he, "can compare with me in labors, lashes and prisons? Often I have

been at the point of death; five times I have received thirty-nine lashes at the hands of the Jews; three times beaten by the Romans; once pelted with stones; three times shipwrecked; often in travel I have been in danger from rivers and robbers, from Jews and Gentiles; starving many a time through hunger and thirst, cold and ill-clad. I have met scoffing and hate, as the obscuring of all things, and yet they say that I am seeking my own glory!" This account of his sorrows was written in the year 64. It is a most pathetic story. Would that this were the end. Not so. Perils, slanders, outrages, plots of assassination will crowd the next six or eight years of our supreme Christian hero. "I will show thee how great things thou shalt suffer for my name."

+++

The Comforts.

Christ has been my companion all the way. He has stood by me in the darkest nights of trouble. He has nerved my will and strengthened my soul. He has not allowed my ministry to fall, but has given me trophies in every mission field. He has given me the affection of many beloved brethren, and a precious confidence that my work shall stand. Allow me to go, father, and expose some of the deepest, holiest secrets of my soul. Jesus has granted me visions and revelations that I can never communicate. I was caught up into the third heaven, whether in the body, or out of the body, I do not know. God knows. I was caught up to paradise and heard sacred secrets which no human lips can repeat. Of still other things, if I cared to boast, I would be no fool, for I would have a true tale to tell. But I abstain from that, for I want no man to take me for more than he can see in me. My wealth of visions might have puffed me up, so I was given a thorn in the flesh to keep me humble. I prayed three times to have it removed, but the Lord said, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect in weakness." So I am proud to boast of all my weakness, and thus to have the power of Christ resting on my life. It makes me satisfied, for Christ's sake, with weakness, insults, trouble, persecution and calamity; for I am strong just when I am weak. This story makes us feel like babes in the presence of a spiritual giant. The greatness of his spirit towers above us like a mountain of glory.

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul's Sorrows and Comforts. 2 Cor. 11: 21-33.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Daily anxiety for all the churches."

Amid the storms of trouble he never once pitied himself or made appeal for sympathy. It did hurt him, however, that brethren in Corinth did not take his part more loyally against the traducers. But his soul was unscathed. Under all the burden of personal grief he loses no particle in interest in the Christian brotherhood. The care of all the churches was upon him. God never made a nobler man. He shall shine forever as the grandest missionary of Jesus Christ.

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—All-sufficient Grace. 2 Cor. 12: 1-10.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"My strength is made perfect in weakness."

Paul says he prayed three times for the removal of that mysterious thorn in the flesh. Of course that means more than three simple brief petitions. Earnest, importunate, long seasons of prayer are meant. The answer came in the Lord's way. You shall have the favor of God, your work shall succeed. Your infirmity shall not hinder the victory, but it will secure the honor for God. Your weakness gives the power of Christ room to act. So your very strength is in your weakness.

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Jehovah the Comforter. Psa. 34: 1-10.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"He delivered me from all my fears."

How does he do this? Not in an objective way so much as in a subjective way. God does help often by changes in the outward conditions of life. Better health, better business, better opportunities, remove many fears. He does it also by changes in mental mood and attitudes. This world is my Father's, and all things in it. His kingdom rules over all. He makes all things work for good to those who fear him. He is with me, he knows my needs, he pities like a father. That mood of mind puts fears to rout.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Jehovah the Deliverer. Psa. 34: 11-22.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"What man is he that desireth life?"

He means the true life of peace, righteousness and joy. God gives it through your cooperation in these particulars: Keep thy tongue from evil. That is frightfully hard

to do. Try it one day and see. Depart from evil and do good. Make war on your envy, impatience, and pride, and do some act of kindness every day. Seek peace, and pursue it. Practice thinking well of people; look not on their weak points, but on their good points. Trust God to help you in these things, for in them is life.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Abiding in Christ. John 15: 1-14.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"I am the vine, ye are the branches."

The very same life in both. Jesus could not express the intimate union of himself and his disciples in more emphatic words. We are living in his meekness, obedience, faith, patience, consecration, purity, love sacrifice and spirituality. This is the life of God; this is heaven; this is salvation. To live this life is a battle with our lower nature while life lasts. Our faith and love abide in Christ, so with our longings and hopes. We are in the way of life, we are on the way to life.

+

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Suffering with Christ. John 15: 15-27.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"A servant is not greater than his lord."

LESSON 11.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1916.

The Arrest of Paul.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." (Acts 22: 15.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 21: 17-40.

MEMORY VERSES, 31, 32.

+++

Lesson Text.

27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,

28 Crying out, Men of Isra-el, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.

"If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you. If the world hateth you, you know it hath hated me before it hated you. It hates me because I have testified that its works are evil. Your lives must bear the same testimony and reap the same consequences." This is the sword that Christ brought among men. Cutting open and revealing human hearts, it cannot escape malice and deadly antagonism. Paul and all the apostles verified Christ's prediction, and yet were faithful unto death.

+

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Final Reward. Rev. 2: 8-17.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"I will give thee the crown of life."

"To him that overcometh, to him will I give the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it." Beautiful hints these of our final triumph over evil and the achievement of the moral perfection of God. Reward will be registered in our completed characters, being made conformable to the spiritual image of his Son. A heavenly life suffused through your own being, that is the aim of our Saviour.

29 (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they accused that Paul had brought into the temple.)

30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

31 And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Isra-el was in an uproar.

32 Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.

33 Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done.

34 And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not

know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.

35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people:

36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.

37 And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek?

38 Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?

39 But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

40 And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

+++

Arrival.

PAUL, with his group of young brethren, was welcomed by the church at Jerusalem. Munson had the honor of entertaining the greatest man of this world. Apostles and brethren were delighted to hear of Paul's immense success in Ephesus and the growth of the Gentile churches; likewise with the evidences of generous Christian love in the large contribution sent by them to the Jerusalem poor. Then they grew anxious for Paul's safety. "Many of our brothers," said they, "are much excited against you, for your alleged opposition to the law of Moses, and the temple. The city is full of Jews from far and near, the feast of Pentecost being on. To prove it false, you go in the temple and pay the cost of certain ceremonies for four of our brethren." Paul assented. A more dangerous trap could not have been set, as it proved.

+++

Mobbed.

Paul went in, unmolested by the Christian Jews. It was the unbelieving Jews from Ephesus who saw him, raised a shout, and assaulted on the spot. "Here is the vile Jew who is preaching everywhere against the laws of Moses, and this temple."

They supposed he had taken Trophimus into the temple, a Greek convert from Ephesus, which was a gross violation of the law. False charge, but what does that matter?

Instant great excitement and a rush to the spot. They dragged him out and began to beat him, intending to kill. This was the peril that for months had weighed on the minds of Paul and his friends, the murderous hate of the unbelieving Jews.

+++

The Rescue.

Romans in the tower adjoining the temple, on the watch, saw the confusion and rushed in to suppress it. The Jews fell away at once on the coming of the soldiers, and the captain put chains on Paul, fancying that he was a criminal. He inquired as to the offense, but could find out nothing from the noisy crowd. Then he took Paul to the tower, the Jews thronging, crowding and shouting their wrath. Soldiers had to pick him up and carry him, so dense became the press of his foes. On the steps leading into the tower Paul asked to speak to the screaming mob. The captain was surprised to hear him speak Greek, taking him for a certain criminal Egyptian. "No," said the prisoner, "I am a Jew, a citizen of Tarsus; no mean city. Allow me to speak." The officer consented and Paul waved his chained hands, as he stood on the steps. Instantly the turbulent mass became silent and attentive.

+++

Wonderful Calm.

In the tumult of Pilate's hall there is one man absolutely serene, and his name is Jesus. In the same city another man in like circumstances, is gifted with the same repose of spirit. "Christ liveth in me. My life is identified with Christ's life." That is Paul's central faith. That blessed consciousness gave him the mastery of raging men. What! Is that beaten little man, that prisoner in chains, cool enough to make a speech? Ah, brothers, you thirst for the blood of the greatest Jew since Moses. One, only ever surpassed him in the qualities of magnificent manhood.

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Danger Foretold. Acts 21: 1-14.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles."

These are the solemn words of Agabus, the prophet at Caesarea. He bound his own hands and feet with Paul's girdle as a symbol of what the Jews would certainly do to its owner at Jerusalem. To the brethren

all it seemed utter rashness for Paul to insist on going hither. His mind is made up. Doubt and hesitation are dismissed. His great plans were fully defined. He intends, if God will, to preach in Rome and the regions beyond. This visit may secure ends that will greatly promote that mission. Bravely he enters the lion's den.

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Joyful Reception. Acts 21: 15-26.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"The brethren received us gladly."

That was auspicious and heartening. After all, the distressing apprehensions may have been needless. Paul rehearsed, one by one, the things which God had wrought through his ministry, and all glorified God. Seeing the thousands of believing Jews at Pentecost, they began to plan for Paul's peace and security. But the chief danger was not in these, but the unbelieving Jews. They planned wisely as they knew, and all unwittingly set a trap for his destruction. The fury of the outside Jews was underestimated by the apostles.

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Arrest of Paul. Acts 21: 27-40.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"They were seeking to kill him."

Unbelieving Jews from Asia—that is, the province in which Ephesus is the capital. They recognized him in the temple and raised the alarm. Here is the apostate who is trying everywhere to discredit the Jews, their religion and this temple. There was a sudden burst of rage, like an explosion of dynamite. Most likely the thousands knew of the presence of Paul in the city. The news flashed everywhere through Jerusalem. They had caught him defiling the temple. He brought Greeks into the holy place. It was not true.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Unjust Persecution. Jer. 26: 20-24.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"The king sought to put him to death."

Urinah was a prophet in Jerusalem who had views like Jeremiah's. He, knowing the wickedness of the throne and the court, had lifted up his brave protest in the name of God, and had predicted the overthrow of the city and nation. That was treason in the eyes of King Jehoiakim and his nobles. "Put

him to death. Kill the impious, unpatriotic servant of God!" Urinah fled to Egypt. They sent and brought him back and executed him with the sword. That did not ward off the death of the nation. Sin killed it.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Security in the Midst of Evil Doers. Psalm 37: 1-13.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Fret not thyself because of evil doers."

The wicked may flourish like the green bay tree, and the righteous be in anguish. The times may be out of joint, as they are in this world today. But let not good men lose heart, and ask What's the use? Evil men will perish and better conditions will come. God made this world and the men who inhabit it. His kingdom ruleth over all. Evil is transient, but good is eternal. Sin works death, but righteousness exalts individuals and nations up to the peace and joy of heaven.

+

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Jehovah's Protecting Care. Psalm 37: 14-28.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"The Lord upholdeth the righteous."

When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. God is the great reality of this world and the universe. He is the eternal health, strength and life of man. Sin is weakness, disease and death. Those who choose to live in it perish. There is no place for it in the universe. Let us identify ourselves with God in Christ as did Paul. The eternal condition of blessedness is Godlikeness. In him we live. The Lord upholdeth the righteous.

+

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Blessedness of Faith. Psalm 37: 29-40.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"None of his steps shall slide."

The very center and soul of Paul's faith was this: "Complete identification of my life with the life of Christ. No longer I, but Christ which liveth in me. I died with Christ, I have arisen with Christ. I am vitally united with him. This blessedness comes to me through faith." This is the profoundest view of faith in the New Testament. It was Jesus' view. It was not easy to rise to the sublime height. None of Paul's steps shall slide. With firm tread he pressed on to the end. He has laid hold of the prize.

LESSON 12.

SEPTEMBER 17, 1916.

A Prisoner in the Castle.

MOTTO TEXT.—

"He is my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in whom I trust." (Psalm 91:
2.)

LESSON PARABASE, ACTS 22.

MEMORY VERSES, 27-29.

+++

Lesson Text.

17 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jeru'sa-lem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance:

18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jeru'sa-lem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

19 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:

20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gen'tiles.

22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.

23 And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air.

24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Ro'man, and uncondemned?

26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Ro'man.

27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Ro'man? He said, Yea.

28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.

29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Ro'man, and because he had bound him.

+++

The Speech.

THIS noble orator has addressed all grades and classes of men and all moods of the human mind. I suppose there is nothing more desolating and disastrous to a speaker than the indolent, stupid mood. Athens was coldly critical, but Paul spoke with power, for the hearers were attentive. This mob of furious men became attentive when they heard him in the Hebrew tongue. Paul could speak to the critical and the vengeful, but stupid indifference would have put out his fires.

He never addressed this one type, because it could not live when he opened his lips. He tells this mass of silent hate his story. If Paul can conciliate the crowd, it will much relieve the captain of the guard. But he fails signally, for when he spoke of the Gentiles, their wrath exploded like a volcano, and the soldiers had to hurry him into the castle.

+++

Examination.

The officer is puzzled, wholly ignorant of the prisoner and the nature of his supposed crime. He will find out by extorting confession from Paul himself. So the soldiers proceeded, at his command, to bind him to a post, preparatory to scourging. Paul put a speedy end to it by asking: "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?" Again the officer is defeated, and more, he is alarmed. He came near to a dangerous insult to sacred Roman citizenship, which might have destroyed himself. He is finding out something important about the strange prisoner. "You a Roman citizen? Why, I paid a large sum for that honor." Paul replies, "I was born a Roman citizen." That ended examination by scourge, and the officer trembled at his own narrow escape. Paul was sent to his cell.

The Sanhedrin.

"How shall I find out about this man?" said the captain to himself. "I will send him under strong guard tomorrow before the Jewish Sanhedrin and have them examine him." He must know the facts or release the prisoner. Next day Paul faced the august body, of which he used to be a member. Their eyes glared upon him, but that marvelous man was unabashed. At his first utterance the president commanded to smite him on the mouth. Paul was angry and denounced the brutal act. In a moment he apologized, saying he did not recognize the man as the high priest. Disorder followed and the soldiers bore him away to the castle, nothing accomplished. The officer was defeated again.

+++

The Plot.

Forty Jews vowed to kill Paul before they ate or drank. The plan was to get him sent to the Sanhedrin once more, and they would murder him on the way. Paul's nephew found it out and told him. Paul sent the young man to the captain with the news. That night at nine o'clock Paul was sent out of Jerusalem to Caesarea, under guard of four hundred and seventy soldiers. Thus the Roman authority saved the apostle out of the hands of the Jews.

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul's Experience. Acts 22: 1-16.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day."

Paul complimented that fanatical horde with being zealous for God. Was he sincere? Certainly, just as he knew himself to be when he was a bitter persecutor. It was a winning thing to say. Why not frankly see and acknowledge the good in your opponent? But he went on to tell his Christian experience. He discovered that he was wrong in the direction his zeal took. He got from Jesus a new view of life and duty, and since that time, as an honest Jew, he had been trying to build up what he thought he ought to pull down. This is the soul of his career.

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Prisoner in the Castle. Acts 22: 17-29.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"It is not fit that he should live."

That was the view of the unbelieving Jews, but such was not the view of Paul's master. He stayed only two nights in that castle. On the night following his appearance before the Sanhedrin the Lord stood by Paul and said, "Courage! As you have testified to me at Jerusalem, so you must testify at Rome. I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Who could it be but Jesus? That was the dream, the longing of the great man's soul. "Yes, I shall yet preach in Rome. That was divine consolation. For me to live is Christ."

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Cowardly Denial. Matt. 26: 69-75.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"And again he denied him with an oath."

Never did Peter droop so low. Here is his best friend in trouble, and all that is ignoble in him breaks forth in speech and act. The man who six months before had confessed Jesus as the Son of God, and who the day before had protested his superior fidelity, makes the cowardly denial and renews it with an oath. It is the hour of darkness in his soul. He has stashed his honor to death, and the black night is the symbol of his desolation. Paul never failed. His step did not slide.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Bold Confession. Acts 4: 5-12.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"And in none other is there salvation."

Peter is redeemed. Christ has made a spiritual hero of him. What a maker of new men and women is our Lord. His baser elements are purged away and the fisherman is clothed with divine power. Once he trembled before the persecuting body, but that weakness is gone. At the risk of his life now he boldly announces that Jesus is his Master and Lord. "This stone which you builders rejected has become the head of the corner, and there is none other name given among men wherein we must be saved."

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Fidelity Amid Danger. Dan. 6: 4-10.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"He kneeled three times a day."

Men hated Daniel, and found occasion against him in his religion. They got the silly king to forbid all worship except unto himself, on pain of death. Here was the test

of Daniel's character. Testing of religious stability and courage comes to us all. Will you stand by honor, truth and justice under temptation? Daniel did. He acknowledged no king as his God. To no king would he bow in worship. "You may kill me, but you shall not corrupt my soul." There is a man.

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Reward of Fidelity. Dan. 6: 10-23.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"The king was exceedingly glad."

He was made a tool of envy, and put his best officer in the lion's den. God sealed the lions' mouths and his servant did not perish. The foolish, wicked king came to his senses and rejoiced that Daniel lived. His enemies were thrown into the same den, but Daniel was exalted, and his God was feared and honored. There is no testimony for pure re-

LESSON 11.

SEPTEMBER 24, 1916.

State-Wide Baptist Go-to-Sunday-School Day.

With a Lesson on State Missions.

MORNING TEXT.—"Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also." (Mark 1: 38.)

LESSON PASSAGE, MARK 1: 14-20, 35-39; Matt. 4: 23-25.

+++

Lesson Text.

14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jē'sūs came into Gāl'lee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

16 Now as he walked by the sea of Gāl'lee, he saw Sī'mon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

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

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

19 And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the son of Zēb'e-dee, and Jōhn his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

ligion like the living epistle. "Ye are my witnesses." Better than your words is your honest, consistent Christian living.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Encouragement in Persecution. Matt. 10: 24-33.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Be not afraid of them which kill the body."

Jesus never made discipleship attractive on the ground of its ease, comfort and safety. He stated plainly that it meant, for the most part, exactly the opposite. Evil men made his life one of sorrows. This world is in rebellion against the righteous rule of God. Those who stand for righteousness and truth will suffer persecution. "They have persecuted me, they will persecute you. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven." Stand for the right and fear not.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zēb'e-dee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Sī'mon and they that were with him followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Gāl'lee, and cast out devils.

23 ¶ And Jē'sūs went about all Gāl'lee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syr'ia: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick,

and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Gāl'lee, and from Dē-cāp'ō-lis, and from Jē-rū'mā-lēm, and from Jō-dā'n, and from beyond Jōr'dān.

+++

Your State.

You live in a truly great country. This is no empty, silly, patriotic gush. Ours is a land of individual freedom, where the government is of the people, by the people and for the people. The abominable doctrine of the divine right of kings has long been in disrepute in the world, but, sad to say, that political heresy is not yet dead. By the great blessing of God our people enjoy freedom and political liberty. We choose our own rulers and shape our own institutions. In all serious truth this is God's country and we are his people. He has trusted us with it, that we may keep it pure and clean. Its worst enemies are ignorance and sin. Public opinion is the powerful force that guides and controls in the various spheres of our wide social life. It is ours to exalt and ennoble public opinion to high spiritual altitudes. How shall we do it? The gospel of Jesus Christ is our instrument. With that power of God we must touch all the men, women and children of our state and country. Righteousness exalts a nation, and the only way to secure that end is to educate all the people in the doctrines of Jesus Christ, appealing to them to obey his will and follow his steps. Happy is the people whose God is the Lord. You love your state; you want to see her thriving, intelligent, religious and happy. The best thing ever done for a community is to touch it with the light of heaven and arouse it to aspirations for truth and goodness. That is our privilege, that is our duty. We are debtors to God and our state to evangelize, to fight its evils, and to encourage all that makes for good. Let us sow it down with good seed.

+++

State Missions.

Our population increases rapidly. Foreign peoples pour in over our borders, and most of them are very poor. The colored people is a multitude, and their spiritual needs call for our sympathy and help. Then there are many neighborhoods of our own white people too weak financially to maintain stated religious services. The poor you have with you always, and when you will you may do

them good. Will you not help to give them the bread of heaven? To evangelize your state is a patriotic duty; it is a duty to our Saviour. When we improve the spiritual quality of all our neighbors we make a finer atmosphere for ourselves and our children. A man said to me, "I believe in state missions, but I don't believe in foreign missions." It pains me to hear a Christian use such speech. Christian missions means giving the bread of life to the hungry. If there are starving souls beyond the state lines, there duty points as well. Our duty is wide as the love of God. He gave his Son to all this world, but this man would give the knowledge of him to his state alone. Missions is one. State missions is one geographical sphere. Fill it with good news and then go on to all this world.

+++

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Thessalonian Christians. 1 Thess. 1: 4: 13-18.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"From you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord."

This church at Thessalonica was missionary from the start. It was founded in the free missionary activity of Paul, and they caught his noble spirit of evangelization. Says he, "Ye became imitators of me and of the Lord. You have sounded forth the word of the Lord," which means that they had entered into state missions. Their zeal drove them into the regions of Macedonia, round about, that the whole province might rejoice in the hope of salvation through Jesus Christ.

+

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul at Corinth. Acts 18: 1-11.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"I have much people in this city."

Paul was in a season of gloom when this divine encouragement sounded in his heart. Since he struck the shores of Europe on this second missionary journey he had met with fearful opposition in every city. Now he finds himself at Corinth, and the Jews' opposition is violent. He is downcast, and tells the Lord. This is the heartening message received: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee. I have much people in this city."

+

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Greatest Thing in the World. 1 Cor. 13.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"If I have not love, I am become sounding brass."

Love is of God, for God is love. The heart of all his commandments is love. The gospel is the incarnation of his love in the brain and heart and life of Christ. Love is our vital atmosphere, the home of the soul. No matter what your gifts and qualities, if love be absent, you are nothing. The supreme ornament of our characters is love. What is it? It is that spiritual disposition in us that makes us want to be kind to people, to serve them and to make sacrifices for them. That is religion.

+

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Grace of Giving. 2 Cor. 9.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Your zeal hath stirred up very many of them."

Paul taught his churches that it was part of their life to give. A church, no more than an individual, must try to live to itself. The Christian life is a recognition of human brotherhood and its claims. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Paul takes deep pride in having his mission churches signalize this grace in favor of their poor, unknown fellow Christians in far away Jerusalem. If the preacher is filled with this spirit, he can lead his brethren into it.

+

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul's Sorrows and Comforts. 2 Cor. 11: 21-33.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"I will glory of the things that concern my weakness."

"I will show him how great things he shall suffer for my name." There is the pledge of sorrows. How great things! Yet this wonderful man said, "I glory in them." Not in themselves as an end, but for opportunity

for the power of Christ to exhibit itself. "My grace is sufficient for thee." There is the fountain of his comforts. "Christ liveth in me. I am able to do all things and endure all things, because Christ enableth me. His honor and glory are mine. I shall reign with him."

+

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Prisoner in the Castle. Acts 22: 17-20.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"The chief captain was also afraid."

Paul's Roman citizenship was a guardian angel amid the bitter experiences of his career. Officials dared not dishonor him; they had to protect him. Rome gave freedom of religious worship all over the empire. That was fortunate for the gospel. It could not escape painful collisions with the old cults and religions, but its legal rights were not denied. Luke brings this point out strongly in the Acts to show that there was nothing in this new Christianity that was deemed unfriendly to the Roman government.

+

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—State Mission Lesson. Mark 1: 14-20, 35-39; Matt. 4: 23-26.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Let us go elsewhere into the next towns."

It is perfectly correct to call John the Baptist and Jesus state missionaries. Israel was at a low ebb religiously. (Formalism was abundant, but spirituality and godliness were lacking. To lift up the state, by the regeneration of her citizens was the aim of these preachers. Jesus went all over the state preaching in all the towns and villages. He wants that done in your state, and he asks our help. Shall we give it? Thy kingdom come in our state, and in all this world.



Calendar

JULY

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					

AUGUST

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	...	...

SEPTEMBER

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

Pass on the Word!

As fiery cross from clan to clan
Passed swift and sure from man to man.
Pass on the Word!

The Word from ages past received,
The Word that ages past believed,
Pass on the Word!

The Word that tells of duty clear,
The Word that tells of death so near.
Pass on the Word!

In London slum, in opium den,
On mountain side, on sea, or fen
When fortune's wheel turns high, turns low,
In Sickness' ebb, in life's full flow,
Pass on the Word!

Take up the message, pass it on
To others as life's course is run,
Run straight, run sure, and never cast
The call aside, while life shall last.
Pass on the Word!

—E. L. C.