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Home Department Magazine

SOUTHERN BAPTIST
CONVENTION SERIES



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LIST OF LESSONS

FOR

Fourth Quarter, 1916

October 1—A PLOT THAT FAILED.

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 23.

MOTTO TEXT—"They shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee, saith Jehovah, to deliver thee." (Jer. 1: 19.)

October 8—PAUL BEFORE FELIX.

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 24.

MOTTO TEXT—"Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and men always." (Acts 24: 16.)

October 15—THE APPEAL TO CAESAR.

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 25.

MOTTO TEXT—"It is enough for the disciple that he be as his teacher, and the servant as his lord." (Matt. 10: 25.)

October 22—PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE AGRIPPA.

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 26.

MOTTO TEXT—"I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." (Acts 26: 19.)

October 29—THE VOYAGE.

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 27: 1-35.

MOTTO TEXT—"Commit thy way unto Jehovah; Trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass." (Psalm 37: 5.)

November 5—SHIPWRECKED ON MELITA (MALTA).

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 27: 38-28: 10.

MOTTO TEXT—"Jehovah redeemeth the soul of his servants; And none of them that take refuge in him shall be condemned." (Psalm 34: 22.)

November 12—WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY.

LESSON PASSAGE, ROMANS 14: 13-15: 3.

MOTTO TEXT—"It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth." (Rom. 14: 21.)

November 19—FROM MELITA TO HOME.

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 28: 11-31.

MOTTO TEXT—"I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. 1: 16.)

November 26—A LIVING SACRIFICE.

LESSON PASSAGE, ROMANS 12.

MOTTO TEXT—"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." (Romans 12: 1.)

December 3—JESUS CHRIST, THE FIRST AND THE LAST.

LESSON PASSAGE, REV. 1.

MOTTO TEXT—"Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore." (Rev. 1: 17, 18.)

December 10—FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

LESSON PASSAGE, REV. 2: 1-17.

MOTTO TEXT—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." (Rev. 2: 10.)

December 17—THE HOLY CITY.

LESSON PASSAGE, REV. 21: 1-4, 9-14, 22-27; 22: 1-5.

MOTTO TEXT—"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples." (Rev. 21: 3.)

December 24—FOR AND AGAINST HIM.

LESSON PASSAGE, LUKE 9: 49-52.

MOTTO TEXT—"He that is not against you is for you." (Luke 9: 50.)

December 31—REVIEW—CHRIST'S COMING AND COMING TO CHRIST.

LESSON PASSAGE, REV. 22: 6-14, 16-21.

MOTTO TEXT—"The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come; he that will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22: 17.)

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A Christian Home.

WM. WISTAR HAMILTON, D. D.

WHEN the Apostle John was about ninety years old, he was once a visitor in a Christian home where mother and children were so lovable in character and life, and so loyal to Christ and the truths of the gospel, that when he went away he wrote the mother a letter of congratulation. In this brief message of about three hundred words there is such a tribute to womanhood and wifehood and motherhood, there is such a lofty appeal to keep the doctrine of Christ, to avoid false teachers, to observe Christian love and loyalty, and there is such a description of a truly pious home, that God has preserved it and handed it down to us as "The Second Epistle of John."

"Home interprets heaven. Home is heaven for beginners." "A Christian home! What a power it is to the child when he is far away in the cold, tempting world, and voices of sin are filling his ears, and his feet stand on slippery places." "When none is ruled according to God's Word, angels might be asked to stay a night with us, and they would not find themselves out of their element." "The sweetest type of heaven is the home—nay, heaven is the home for whose acquisition we are to strive the most strongly." "Home is the lower story, and is located down here on the ground floor; heaven is above stairs, in the second and third stories; and, as one after another the family is called to come up higher that which seemed to be such a strange place begins to wear a familiar aspect; and, when at last not one is left below, the home is transferred to heaven, and heaven is home."

A Christian home is one in which the truth of the gospel is loved, says this charming letter to the violet lady. The loyalty of this family has caused all who prize the gospel to admire and love them for the sake of that truth which is in their hearts, and which remains as an eternal and priceless possession. The older one grows, the more grateful he becomes for the heritage bequeathed to him by the Christian home, and the more does he realize that those families which have been set for mere gain and ambition and place and worldliness have failed of life's great ideals and purposes. Grace and mercy and peace, however, come to those who know and love and live the truth. "The grace breaks into

mercy. The fountain gathers itself into a great river." "Truth and love are, as it were, the space within which the river flows, if I may so say, the banks of the stream." "And as is the fountain and the stream, so is the great lake into which it spreads itself when it is received into a human heart." Peace is the name of that lake, and built upon its shores and laved by its waters and cooled by its breezes is the Christian home.

This Christian home described by the apostle was one in which the members of that circle walked in the truth. John said, it was a great joy to me to find the lives of your children guided by the truth, and spent in obedience to the commands received from the Father. Parents and children were walking together in the light and power and blessings of the gospel! What a blessing godly and pious parents are to those who grow up under their training and influence, and what a joy dutiful and loyal and consecrated children are to their parents!

In one of our Southern states a strong and worthy man had been chosen to be its governor, and on the appointed day was duly inaugurated. The old mother was one of the number permitted to enjoy the honors of the occasion with her noble son. She was asked by some friend if this was not the happiest day of her life, and her reply was, "I was just as happy the day my son gave himself to Christ." Blessed is such a man who has such a mother, and blessed is the mother who has such a son!

This letter says, too, that a Christian home is one in which guard is kept against false teachers. There are many deceivers gone forth into the world, who confess not that Jesus as Christ is come in the flesh. Such a teacher is an impostor, and will rob the home of its true Christian fruit, and, if we receive them and welcome them into our homes, we become *particeps criminis* in all the evil which wrong teaching will eventually bring. Error in thinking will finally bring weakness in life and being a wrong foundation on which to build a character and a career is more to be dreaded than some inherited physical weakness in body and blood and vital organs, and against which one must struggle in order to live. Great thinking,

great truths, great doctrines give to the world great characters and great lives.

It does make a world of difference what one believes, and we should be careful lest by example or by precept we give our influence to the furtherance of that which is false. The poet Gray had a friend once who was going over to the continent, and there was a possibility that the traveler would seek out and visit Voltaire. The poet urged his friend not to go to see this man, who had so spoken against Christianity, when the friend replied, "What can a visit from a person like me signify?" The rejoinder came promptly and with earnestness, "Sir, every tribute to such a man signifies."

A body of American Baptist tourists who had been to the World's Congress in London in 1905, refused to consider a visit to the pope. They decided that humble Baptists though they were, a visit to the head of the Roman church would be a reflection on the work of the missionaries in Italy, and might be used to injure the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. How very, very careful every parent should be to guard the sacred portal of the home against all, who by teaching or example, detract from the power of saving truth.

The Christian home is *one also in which the truth brings joy*. It is not a place where transient and transient folly holds sway. It is not a home in which the sensual and sinful, the loud and worldly, the gay and giddy are regarded as essential to pleasure. It is rather a place where the truth and the real and the helpful produce a happiness and a joy as far beyond the other, as the real flower surpasses the one made of paper. Such a home is a joy to the pastor, is a blessing to the church and to the community, is a help to the nation and to the world, and brings satisfaction to our Saviour who saw of the travail of his soul for us.

Contrast with D. L. Moody's death, which

was such a joy and such a triumph, that of a famous skeptic of the same era. Review also the results in the two homes and of the two lives, and what of influences each has left behind him in the world. A press telegram at the time said: "Desolation describes the scene tonight at Watstein, within those walls lies the body of Robert G. Ingersoll, agnostic. About his bier cling three women—his widow and his two daughters. To them the form on the bier is all that is left of the father and husband. They have no hope for future union, no consolation in Christian faith, no solace in religion. The dreariness, the utter loneliness, has overpowered those whom the great infidel left to mourn him, and they have again refused to surrender to the incinerating urn the one tangible thing between them and eternity of separation. Therefore the cremation of the body will not take place until sometime Thursday—perhaps not then. This in spite of the fact that the funeral was held this afternoon. It was the most solemn surrender of the dead. Strong men declared that nothing had ever appealed to them so strongly before for religion and Christianity, as the utter desolation and hopelessness of that family of mourners. Not a note of consolation, not a soothing note of music, not a prayer for sympathy or help or mercy."

Hear Moody saying, "Is this death? Why, this is glorious! I see earth receding and heaven opening. This is my coronation day." And then at the funeral see his son arise with Christian peace and consolation in his heart, and listen to him tell joyously of his father's private life, and hear him give praise to God for a Christian father and a Christian home. The sunlight which fell across the casket in the church that day, was as the truth from the Son of Righteousness, which shined away the gloom of earth's darkest hour and lights the way to the Christian's eternal home.

When Your Children Surpass You.

FRANK C. WARD.

It happens quite frequently. It may be difficult to submit to. It is better, however, to recognize it as a fact, and make the best of it. Otherwise all are made unhappy.

Most of the children of this day have better school advantages than their parents enjoyed. Teachers, books, equipment, all have made advance over preceding years.

Your children seem to have more friends, and more opportunities of getting together socially. There are more clubs for the young

people, and they are composed of a wide variety of members. These social lines extend beyond the local community to remote places.

In business your children have a wider range of choice. There are more things to do. The sciences and inventions have added a large list of occupations. Promotions and rewards are more substantial.

There are simple explanations for these things. With the increased wealth of the country, naturally the schools have benefited

In many cases parents, who have missed this themselves, have sacrificed much that their children may have an education. Socially, the present modes of travel shorten distances materially. A more democratic spirit prevails, and all classes of young people mingle on the basis of character, rather than possessions or names. Technical training has come into being; this has prepared young people for situations unknown in the youth of their parents.

In things of this kind many parents witness their children surpass them. Bear it with good grace. Be glad of it for their sakes. When parents see their children in better positions, with better educations, with a larger circle of friends, and allow it to make

them sour and unhappy, they are making a fatal mistake. Rather, rejoice with them, and help push them up a little higher. You have given them to the world for its advancement, and should welcome every advantage that will make them more useful.

Spend no time in regretting that these things are not for you. It is not your fault; in your own day, if you did the best you could with the chance you had, there is no room for regret. But if you indulge it, you cannot prevent its rendering you miserable.

Try to keep up with your children. At least keep in sympathetic touch with their success. Both you and they will gain immeasurably thereby.

A Creator of Happiness.

A. L. W.

In a suburb of the city recently I stood on the corner waiting for a car. Car after car passed, but they were so terribly crowded that the motorman would not stop for even me, though anyone could see at a glance I could stand in a very small place.

It began to rain and I was just wondering what I would do, when another car came in sight. I saw before it reached me that it was crowded as the others had been, but I stepped off the curb and held up my hand, and the kind-hearted motorman saw me. He opened the front door of the car.

"Get on," he said. "It's against the rules to let anybody on through the front door, but they're room up here for one your size, and you're too little to be left standin' in the rain."

I clumbled on and very graciously thanked him.

The car started, and I glanced back at the crowd. If I live to be a hundred years old I shall never forget the group of sorrowful faces that greeted me. No one spoke a word as we rapidly moved along; I couldn't imagine what was the matter. I hadn't read of any great calamity happening in the city where a number of families had been involved, and I was curious to know what had caused the sorrow of these people.

At the next corner about half the people got off the car, each carrying in their hands a little red ticket, and I knew the red ticket was a transfer to one of the poorer sections of the city. After the crowd thinned out, I walked back and took a seat beside a woman whose eyes were red from weeping, and she nervously twisted her bony fingers.

"Have you lost a member of your family?" I asked gently.

For a moment the woman looked at me as if she were astonished that I was on the same car and yet wasn't in tears.

"No," she answered. "I haven't lost any of my family, but we've lost a friend," she finished, waving her hand toward the crowd that still filled the car. Then she gave me this story:

"A woman died in this city two days ago," she said, slowly. "She wasn't knowed very well by society, and she never wasted no money gittin' her name in the paper, but she's a saint on this old earth; she had money and she knowed how to spend it. She's saved more babies from starvin' than any charity institution in this whole place. She's sort of a guardian angel to us poor folks what live by the sweat of our brow in shops and factories, and I bet she's robbed the courts of more divorce fees than the preacher made marryin' the couples she reconciled to each other."

"What a wonderful woman!" I said, thoughtfully.

"That she was," my companion answered; "and her funeral was jest like her life. There wasn't no long piece in the paper tellin' what she'd done, fer they didn't know; they wasn't no long string of swell carriages a-followin' the hearse, fer her friends couldn't afford 'em, but I wished you could 'er seen the crowd that went out on the cars," she said, her face brightening up at the memory. "I wished you could 'er seen the crowd that passed around her coffin," she continued. In

steady tones. "I don't believe they's a one there but what she'd done a good turn fer. You see, she's a sort of a *Creator of Happiness*, I reckon. Her casket was a regular garden of jonquills and—"

The woman never finished the sentence, for we had reached the corner where I transferred to another car, and I was forced to hurry on. But her story lingered in my mind, and mentally I caught a vision of a jonquill-covered casket, and a crowd of sorrowing people who had followed the remains to the cemetery and had carried the flowers that the poor—even the very poor can sometimes

buy, and I wish that I might have known in my life this woman whose soul had gone back to its Maker, whose life had been spent in such a way that even her memory would be sacred to those whom she had served. And in my heart I felt that the woman had spoken a wonderful truth when she called such a character a Creator of Happiness.

This lesson came to me from the story: that while we live, we, too, can help those around us. The field is uncrowded and the title is worth working for. What pride, what pleasure it should afford us to be Creators of Happiness.

"Oh, Father!"

CLAUDE EAGER JOHNSON.

"I WANT to talk just a few moments on the wonderful ability of our Father to give far more than we ever dream of asking," little Mrs. Johns said, as she began the devotional exercises of a big woman's meeting. "I remember when I was thirteen I came home one night from May Gill's, where I'd spent the day. 'Father,' I said at the supper table, 'I wish you'd give me four or five dollars.' 'Why, what on earth would such a little girl do with so much money?' he inquired good-naturedly.

"I was so wrought up over my wish that I poured out my whole childish heart in my wild enthusiasm over May's pretty room. My room was upstairs, and it seemed to me then that everything ugly or broken or in the way through the rest of the house gravitated straight to me. Not one pretty thing was in my whole little room except a few cheap prints of lovely paintings. May's room with its neat matting, its sash-curtains at the windows, its comfortable rocker and good mirror loomed up in my child-mind as the most beautiful possession one could own.

"Of course," I ended, lamely, 'of course, I couldn't have a room like hers, for it must have cost a lot, but I do so want some neat curtains and a little mirror I can really see in. You will let me do that, won't you, father, please?"

"Father had a call right then, for he was a practicing physician, and all he said was: 'Well, we'll see about that.' Days passed, weeks came and went. Every morning I thought 'he'll surely give me the four or five dollars today.' Every night I went to sleep feeling he had failed me still again. At last I came to where I concluded he just simply had forgotten. It didn't mean anything to him and I felt very miserable to believe that

my father, even if he were a big, busy man, should think my childish troubles too small to notice. It would take such a little to make me happy! Why wouldn't he give me just the little that I asked? He wouldn't ever miss it, and it meant my whole small world to me!

"I was up in my homely little room the last night of the holidays, deep in my Christmas book, Little Women, right where Jo was making her noble sacrifice when father called and said Mrs. Gregg had asked for me to stay with her that night. Old Mrs. Gregg was the most irritable woman in town—so irritable that her husband, so their neighbors said, died just to keep from living with her—and she was so stingy that she had lived alone ever afterward to keep from wasting words. 'Oh, father!' I started to remonstrate, but remembering that Mrs. Gregg was sick, and thinking what Jo would do in my place, I got up and went—though not very joyously, for I knew Mrs. Gregg would not let the light burn for me to sit up and read at night. Next morning I came home early to try to finish my chapter before having to go to school. Running upstairs, I fairly flew into my room—and then even dear, sweet Jo was forgotten! A beautiful, new carpet cried, 'Come walk on me first, Meg!' Two lovely willow rockers cried, 'Come sit in me next, then!' A snow-white iron bed cried, 'Come feel my new soft springs!' A glorious oval mirror, in a dream of a dresser, cried, 'Come look in me, quick, Meg!' And the pink-flowered window curtains over brand-new white shades cried, 'Just push me aside and look at your new view!' For even the old out-house was torn down. And right in the midst of all these cries someone cried from the doorway, 'Happy New Year, little Meg!' 'Oh, father!' I cried, as he caught me in his

great, big, manly arms. 'And to think, father, I've been feeling you'd just forgotten to give me what I asked!'

"There, honey, don't you cry. I do my Father—my heavenly Father—that way day after day. And then all of a sudden he just pours out more than I ever dreamed of asking. I know how it is. I love him with my whole heart and you do me, but I just don't trust him when things get gloomy and dark and you just judged from appearances, too. Let us make a trade and start our New Year morning trusting Jesus all the way, and if

we trust him we'll always trust each other. How about it, father's partner?"

"Oh, father!" was all I could say, but my father understood. And ever since then when I go to my Father—my heavenly Father—and ask him for things I know that he has not forgotten, though days or weeks or months or even years come in between, and when after long seasons of waiting perchance the answer comes all I can say is, 'Oh, Father!' for he giveth far more than I was able to even dream of asking. But my Father understands."

How Much Are You Sorry?

JAMES ELMER RUSSELL.

THE story is told of Jacob Bright, the father of the great English reformer, John Bright, that one day as he was coming up the hill toward home from town he found a neighbor in trouble. A valuable beast of burden belonging to him had met with an accident and had to be killed.

As Mr. Bright came up a crowd of on-lookers had gathered about the poor man, and expressions of sorrow were heard on every side. To one of the men who was most loudly expressing his sorrow over the poor man's loss, Jacob Bright turned and said, "I am sorry five pounds. How much are you sorry?" And then and there he raised a subscription which went far toward meeting the loss which had been incurred.

Home Department visitors have abundant

opportunity to show their sympathy in a practical way. Not that they will often, perhaps, give money, although they will seek to see that needs which can be met with money are supplied. But the deepest needs cannot be met with money.

In the Home Department are the lonely, the shut-ins, and those whom nearly every one else forgets. When the visitor comes into homes, and sits down for a visit, when she gives an opportunity for the members to tell her their troubles, when she radiates good cheer and expresses her faith in God's loving care over our lives, she is showing how much she is sorry.

Not by mere words of sympathy do we show how much we are sorry, but by revealing a heart at leisure from itself to soothe and sympathize.

Cliffside Home Department, Organized March 28, 1909.

Six years ago Cliffside had no beautiful churches. The people of the community met in the school building, which was not as large as it is now, where they all studied the Sunday school lesson together.

It was there that the possibilities of a greater Sunday school, through a Home Department, was awakened. There were ten faithful, enthusiastic women appointed as canvassers. They visited from house to house: when one failed to get members on one street they changed canvassers, and during those weeks of work, the little school house on Sunday mornings would be crowded.

One Sunday afternoon, with Rev. S. E. Richardson, pastor of the M. E. people as chairman, assisted by Rev. W. T. Tate, J. F.

Weathers and L. R. Tate, a new Movement Home Department was duly organized. And we are grateful, in the fact, that Cliffside Home Department was the strongest and the most persistent in winning the publication of the *Exclusive Home Department Magazine* which we now study. There is a peculiar interest in this book which fascinates and appeals to all Christian workers. Its passages are chosen to feed the spiritual life. The definition to Home Department work is "Service," the building, evolution, or unfoldment of the soul by personal effort and it can be spelled with eight letters, H-U-M-I-L-I-T-Y, and its aim to bless and be a blessing.

In all our Home Work the will must be kept in constant training. The big things

don't come every day, but to do one's best under existing circumstances is the duty for each day, for every worker. There is joy in the accomplishment. In the finished task that approaches his or her ideal. The work of the world, the activities of the great circle of business transactions for most of us is that which must be done through the ordinary days, months and years. Inspirations are few, and the praise of spectators is fickle. We find the only safe rule is to put into each day the best and utmost we can give it and leave the matter with him who said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me."

The colors appropriate to our Home Class are purple and white, symbolizing sacrifice and purity.

Our motto, "The open Bible in every home." Will the congregation please repeat with me our motto: "The open Bible in every home?"

Thank you. May the Lord help you to open your Bible.

How a Missouri Town Got Playgrounds.

CATHA WELLS.

THE way to a man's heart may or may not be through his stomach, but there is small doubt that the way to his pocket is through his child. You remember when the welfare worker was asked if a million dollars was not too much to spend to save just one boy? and the answer, "Not if he's my boy!" Well, that is the feeling of the average man—and once you have convinced him that his child needs a playground, the battle is half won.

A small city in North Missouri, advanced in most ways, had no playground, and strange to say, few of the civic-proud citizens appreciated the lack. When a "get-together-spirit" pervaded the town and everyone was doing his share of boosting, three women decided that the progress and growth of the town justified a playground. They looked about and discovered that one of the ward schools, anticipating the future, had recently acquired an adjoining lot. "The very place for a start," said the women, "we will make the first one a ward affair."

They went to the principal of this school and found that he had been dreaming for years of just such a movement, for he believed it was the only peace movement possible in the eternal warfare at recess-hours. "Children," he explained, "who have nothing to do always do something—most generally fight. During recess-hours the teachers are

kept busy quelling riots and smoothing away quarrels. A remedy? Oh, just anything in the way of wholesome and amusing employment—and boxes, seesaws, slides, swings, with jumping boards and ball games for the older children. But this would take money. The school board does all it can, but, ladies," he spoke seriously, "if the school board were an individual, he would be in the poor house tonight—a county charge."

"Well, why ask the board to do it?" demanded one woman. "Let's make the playground a neighborhood affair and get the people whose children come here and those without children, who would rather have the boys play ball here than in front of their plate-glass windows, to support it."

Our aim: "Our homes for Christ," and our flower the violet, an emblem of modesty.

Our report for this year is not as good as we would like, but we have given to foreign missions, \$10; home town missions, \$3.50; contributed to funeral expenses, \$1.70; have given out \$1.77 scriptural tickets, 50 large reward cards, 10 certificates for faithfulness, remembered 13 birthdays, have a record of over 300 visits made in interest of Home Department, with an average of 60 per cent lesson study; have held 37 devotional meetings in which we have often been alone with him, sometimes in the garden of Gethsemane, and at other times he would anoint our heads with oil, and our cup ran over. There is joy and blessing in Home Department work, and although the work at times has been hard and difficult, we have been led to fully realize this beautiful passage of Scripture, "Cast thy bread upon the waters and thou shalt find it after many days." For any Home Department without Jesus Christ is a failure, but with him all things are possible.

So these women and the principal called a meeting at the school house of the mothers of the first ward and anyone else interested in getting a playground. The teachers of this school put their hearts into the movement. They wrote on the board a model invitation, which said the teachers and pupils would be "At Home" on a certain date. Each child was required to make a faultless copy of this and take it to his mother. Then the children set to work dressing up the school for their "party"—they hung pictures they had made or cut out of magazines, and their best spelling papers and copies of their carefully

worked sums. (The day of the "party" every child's desk was in order and every child sat very stiff and very straight in his seat and tried to look as though "At Home" days were frequent occurrences in his small world. But their faces beamed, for they all knew the women had come to give them what the board and the men voters had not tried to give—a way to have fun, a playground.)

The women with many "ohs" and "ahs," visited every room and inspected the building from top to basement (many seeing for the first time the place where their children spent from six to seven hours daily), then the children were sent home and the women and the teachers, together for the first time, began to discuss the needs of the school.

Once the needs were outlined, ways and means of raising money to supply them were decided upon; and when practical plans were made the meeting adjourned for a week. That week saw great activities. The newspapers were generous with their space and within two days the whole town knew what the women of the first ward were trying to do, and the whole town, apparently, was determined to help. A gigantic junk collection was conducted—everybody gathered old iron, rubbers, rags and papers. The children of the ward hauled the junk to the schoolhouse in their small wagons; but when it was all there it was too heavy for even the older children to take to the dealer, so the women interviewed the negro garbage man. "What will I charge?" he queried. "Don't I live in the first ward? I guess I want to help this playground—I'll haul the junk for nothing."

The newspaper's account of this man's generosity aroused civic pride in others. The manager of the leading picture show offered

to run a series of benefit matinees—the children to sell tickets. A newspaper donated the tickets. One man gave a merry-go-round swing which his children had outgrown; a tennis club gave nets for volley ball. The playground was treeless—one farmer offered trees if the women could get them hauled. "My boys would haul them if they had a team," said one woman.

"I have a wagon," said another, "but our horses are on pasture."

"Well, I can furnish two horses," said a third, "and my husband, who was a nurseryman before his health failed, will gladly oversee the planting."

The school board had put trees out innumerable times, but the children had carelessly wrought their destruction. It was different now, these trees were to beautify and add comfort to their playground, so they were allowed to thrive.

Money donations began coming in—not very much, sometimes a dime, sometimes a quarter, seldom more than a dollar, yet altogether there was enough to start the playground at the first peep of spring.

And after that there was no longer time for foolish quarrelling; the young children were busy building mountains and villages of sand, and the older ones perfecting their team work for championship games of volley, basket or baseball.

Six months later and every school in the town had its incipient playground. Now the citizens have begun to look upon these playgrounds as necessities and are more and more willing to share in their support—so the day may not be far distant when it will be possible to vote a special tax for playground maintenance.

Far from it; we should look upon it as one year wiser and with greater understanding, more tolerance and charity.

Birthdays, to be acceptable, need not be expensive or elaborate. It is the thought back of the gift that enhances its value.

In a very humble home, where there were seven children and limited means, no birthday was ever forgotten. It was more than likely that the gifts were selected from a ten-cent store, yet they were thoughtfully and wisely chosen.

Each birthday was a gala day and looked forward to with real interest and anticipation, and a birthday cake was always given the place of honor.

The fact that we are one year older has no reason to make us gloomy or pessimistic.

work. (The day of the "party" every child's desk was in order and every child sat very stiff and very straight in his seat and tried to look as though "At Home" days were frequent occurrences in his small world. But their faces beamed, for they all knew the women had come to give them what the board and the men voters had not tried to give—a way to have fun, a playground.)

The women with many "ohs" and "ahs," visited every room and inspected the building from top to basement (many seeing for the first time the place where their children spent from six to seven hours daily), then the children were sent home and the women and the teachers, together for the first time, began to discuss the needs of the school.

Once the needs were outlined, ways and means of raising money to supply them were decided upon; and when practical plans were made the meeting adjourned for a week. That week saw great activities. The newspapers were generous with their space and within two days the whole town knew what the women of the first ward were trying to do, and the whole town, apparently, was determined to help. A gigantic junk collection was conducted—everybody gathered old iron, rubbers, rags and papers. The children of the ward hauled the junk to the schoolhouse in their small wagons; but when it was all there it was too heavy for even the older children to take to the dealer, so the women interviewed the negro garbage man. "What will I charge?" he queried. "Don't I live in the first ward? I guess I want to help this playground—I'll haul the junk for nothing."

The newspaper's account of this man's generosity aroused civic pride in others. The manager of the leading picture show offered

to run a series of benefit matinees—the children to sell tickets. A newspaper donated the tickets. One man gave a merry-go-round swing which his children had outgrown; a tennis club gave nets for volley ball. The playground was treeless—one farmer offered trees if the women could get them hauled. "My boys would haul them if they had a team," said one woman.

"I have a wagon," said another, "but our horses are on pasture."

"Well, I can furnish two horses," said a third, "and my husband, who was a nurseryman before his health failed, will gladly oversee the planting."

The school board had put trees out innumerable times, but the children had carelessly wrought their destruction. It was different now, these trees were to beautify and add comfort to their playground, so they were allowed to thrive.

Money donations began coming in—not very much, sometimes a dime, sometimes a quarter, seldom more than a dollar, yet altogether there was enough to start the playground at the first peep of spring.

And after that there was no longer time for foolish quarrelling; the young children were busy building mountains and villages of sand, and the older ones perfecting their team work for championship games of volley, basket or baseball.

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Birthdays.

CARRIE ASHTON JOHNSON.

A BIRTHDAY is the one day in all the year which belongs to oneself, and that day should be honored and respected as such.

If it is to be celebrated in any way, it should be in accordance with the owner's wishes, and only the real friends invited. One dear soul for years made it a point to give other people gifts on her birthday—something she knew they needed or wanted.

I always feel like taking exception to the new theory advanced by one of our religious orders, that birthdays should be ignored or allowed to pass by without notice or recognition.

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Far from it; we should look upon it as one year wiser and with greater understanding, more tolerance and charity.

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In a very humble home, where there were seven children and limited means, no birthday was ever forgotten. It was more than likely that the gifts were selected from a ten-cent store, yet they were thoughtfully and wisely chosen.

Each birthday was a gala day and looked forward to with real interest and anticipation, and a birthday cake was always given the place of honor.

The mother in that home was only a hard-working, laboring woman, but she kept her cheer and courage and optimism to the end.

Elderly people, even more than children, should be religiously remembered upon their birthdays. They need the cheer and uplift and the kindly thoughtfulness more and more with each recurring year.

A bunch of fragrant flowers, a blooming plant, a new book, or a year's subscription to a magazine, a box of candy, or box of stationery, are all inexpensive, but timely, gifts. A piece of hand work is always valued the more.

A little basket of home-grown fruit, or fresh

vegetables; a jar of home-made jam or conserve; some fresh honey or cottage cheese; some new-laid eggs, a yellow-legged chicken or duck, or a piece of good, home-grown sweet pork, will afford no end of pleasure to city friends and relatives.

Perhaps if we only stopped to think, we would realize that it is seldom, and never with worth-while friends, the monetary value of a gift that makes it welcome or appreciated.

A little poem, coming from the heart of a childhood friend, delighted beyond words a woman on her eightieth birthday.

"The Awkward Age."

JOHN PRELE.

"WHONK-EE," said the donkey, as he went to lay.

"Whonk-ee, whonk-ee, whonk-ee, whonk-ee, whonk!" bellowed Frank, as he stumbled over a chair, scattered a pile of papers about the floor, finally discovered his hat and arrived upon the street with a double slam of the front door, which announced his departure for a few minutes.

"Dear me," groaned dainty little Mrs. Freeman. "How can I ever endure this boy. I don't think I could stand him even if he were my own brother. If we weren't so poor I would simply rebel and say that I won't have him here."

Tired out from many household duties about the little apartment, from helping with some of the office work and from caring for Little Tom all day, Mrs. Freeman sat down in the big chair and sobbed—once—before she could command herself and remember that she was no longer a foolish girl, but a grown-up woman with a little "weeny" son to train in the way that good men should go.

Frank had come to live with them two weeks ago because his father's health had failed utterly and his mother had been dead several years. He was only Mr. Freeman's distant cousin, but the Freeman kindness of heart and generosity knew no limits of relationship or purse-string, and when he had gone to see his childhood's playmate off to New Mexico, he saw nothing to do but to take Frank back home with him to care for as though he were a member of the immediate family.

Little Mrs. Freeman loved her big husband and her busy son with all her heart, and loved them unselfishly. But she had never lived with a large number of people in the

house, having been brought up carefully by her mother as the only child. She had looked forward to her little home with Just Big Tom and Little Tom—everything dainty and sweet and immaculate, breathing an atmosphere of gentleness and purity and love. There must be nothing to mar, nothing to contaminate, no matter how simple their living or how scarce their funds. Mr. Freeman, a big, quiet, gentle man, in deadly earnest about establishing a newspaper in the town that should stand for civic righteousness and cooperation, forgot the little home in the wave of pity which swept him at sight of the wan face of Frank's father, and even when he had gotten Frank safely installed, his own childhood experience of being one of an always crowded house, blurred his vision so that he was not fully awake to the state of affairs for which he was responsible.

Besides, Frank made a fairly good errand boy and by keeping him out of the office on errands, such as delivering packages of job printing and collecting subscription or advertising bills, he really was most useful and rarely annoying.

Frank was never bad for that matter. If he had been, little Mrs. Freeman would not have worried so. She could have talked to him about his sins or his intentional errors. She could have pitied or forgiven them—she hated to admit it to herself—if only he had not been so ugly, so awkward and unattractive. She couldn't sit down and say: "Frank, dear, you are so ugly, you must promise me to get better looking," as one would say: "You must promise to stop this habit or that." It would take eternal ages, she said to herself, and infinite patience to teach him to be gentle and polite at the table and careful

about hanging up his clothes and making a noise when someone wanted to sleep.

"I'll never do it," she said to herself, hopelessly that morning for the twentieth time. "And he will grow up to be just as horrid as he is now, and everybody will hate to come to see me even, the whole place will be so different."

"The disgusting thing about me is that I know why I can't do it. I simply do not love the boy. He repels me, and I shall get worse and worse until I almost hate him, if I don't do something soon. He is just like that horrid donkey song that he sings so much. I never see him without saying 'donkey, donkey,' under my breath. Oh, dear, how horrid I am! And it's myself I would be hating." Mrs. Freeman's outburst ended with the quaint little Irish turn that was a part of her inheritance and temperament.

And so when Mr. Freeman and Frank came home to dinner everything was happy and attractive in the little household, and no one knew about the little storm. Frank ate his vegetables with his dessert spoon, chewed noisily, dragged the bread plate half-way around the table in order to help himself, but he and Mr. Freeman enjoyed their meal and their home-coming, so the little lady said nothing and forgot her trials for the time.

"Frank is slow and irritating about many things," said Mr. Freeman, later in the evening when Frank had gone to bed, "but he is as quick as a flash in emergencies. He stopped a piece of machinery this morning with one hand and dragged the new boy who was learning to run it away with the other. The boy might not have been hurt much, but he might have lost his hand. It isn't the machinery he thinks about, though, it's the man. I've been watching him. A little fellow was hurt near the office yesterday. Frank was the

first person there, and did everything that was done until the doctor came. It is evidently a talent. I want to keep my eye on him and see what it means."

Mrs. Freeman went to sleep thinking quite seriously and her thoughts formed themselves into the resolution to learn to love Frank as she would if he were her own Little Tom.

A new spirit took possession of the little home. And as baby Tom grew this motherliness grew and extended throughout the little household.

Little Tom was two years old, so big now that people began to call him "Junior"—when they brought him in to the little home all limp and hurt his mother knew not how terribly; in fact, knew nothing of how it happened till next day, when they were sure that it was not so bad after all, and that he had been saved from disfigurement and perhaps death by a big automobile passing the corner, and saved by Frank, the clumsy fellow that she had wanted to call a donkey, and that she had almost hated for coming into their home and making it different from what she had planned.

But Frank was no longer clumsy, and he was already very lovable and becoming more attractive all the time. His awkward age was passing and love and sympathy were developing him into an unusually fine fellow.

And several years later, when Mr. and Mrs. Freeman welcomed the new inmate of the city hospital into their home and rejoiced that he was to join them again in their efforts at making their home town a good town, Mrs. Freeman said very gently to the young physician as he left at the close of the evening, "I'm so selfishly glad you are back just now. I want you to help my boy through the awkward age."

The Quest of the Mustard Seed.

ELIZABETH FRY PAGE.

THE Oriental people have a fable of their revered prophet, Buddha, which they are fond of relating to all who rebel against the afflictive hand of Providence. There was a young mother, it says, who lost a child, and her grief was inconsolable. She refused to allow it to be buried, hoping and believing that someone might be found who could work a miracle and restore it to life.

She had heard of Buddha, and went to him, imploring: "Oh, Prophet, I have heard that thou art a great miracle worker! My child; my own little boy, is dead! Oh, I pray

you give him back to my arms again. I cannot let him go!"

The sage looked at her very benignly and replied, in kind tones: "My daughter, I will do as thou wilt, if thou wilt only go forth and bring me a mustard seed from a house into which death has never entered."

Thanking him gratefully, the poor woman set out upon her strange quest, stopping at the first house on the highway. Here she was met by a dark-browed man, who opened the door without a word.

"I would speak with the woman of the house," she said, eagerly.

The man replied in a dull, monotonous voice: "There is no woman here. My children are motherless, alas! The days of our mourning are not yet over. Will come in?"

"No; oh, no!" the pilgrim made answer quickly. "I must go on."

As she hurried away, her heart ached for those little motherless ones, and she thought: "What if I had been taken and my little one left alone and helpless."

At the next house, a gaunt, grief-bowed woman sat at the gate. "Is this your home?" asked the pilgrim, kindly.

"It was, and such a happy home," sobbed the poor woman, "but my good man was taken away a brief while ago, and now there is nothing to pay the landlord, and my little ones and I must find other shelter. It is never the same when death once enters the door."

At the next house, there was a servant at the gate who told her that she must not enter. "And why?" queried the pilgrim, making as if to pass in anyway. "There is a plague there, a deadly disease, and four little children have fallen victim to it in a few hours. You must not enter. There may be a little child at your home. The peril must not be spread." A child, yes, but he was lying so calmly, so peacefully. There was no danger to anyone from looking upon his beautiful, quiet little body. How dreadful it must be to sit apart, alone with one's dead, and have no one to come with comfort and loving ministrations!

And then her softened heart saw the meaning of the prophet's strange behest. There was no heart without its sorrow, no home without its vacant chair. She would never be able to find that mustard seed; but she had found that in directing her thoughts from her personal grief, it had become less poignant. In looking upon the sorrows of the world, her own seemed almost a blessing; so she returned to her home in peace and laid her own little son to rest, almost with a smile.

Once a German nobleman had his servants stretch wires between two of the tall towers of his castle to make an Æolian harp. After it was finished, he waited and listened for the music, but the air was very still and he heard nothing. A gentle breeze blew, after a while, and there was a soft, harmonious response; but, by and by, came rough winter, and the stern winds, with their rush and roar, caused the wires to send forth wonderful, majestic music which men heard far and near. And so our lives give forth only faint murmurings in peaceful times of joy and prosperity, or when stirred only by the breezes of daily commonplace events; it takes the storms of sorrow and adversity to stir

us into vibrations of noble courage and victory.

It is related of Lord Nelson, that after one of his great sea fights, a French officer approached him and extended his hand. The great admiral drew back, saying: "Give me your sword first, then I will take your hand." We must surrender to these great trials before we can make friends and be at peace with them. As long as we fight them, we are exposing ourselves to wounds.

In a grief-darkened home, a brave woman recently said to a sympathizing visitor: "I have always been able to see the reason for the great trials that have come to me. I cannot yet see why this should have happened, but I know that I shall understand. I will get back to my work, and not abandon myself to sorrow, and I shall see and know and be reconciled."

Her Æolian harp was playing grandly in the storm, and the woman who came to sympathize received more strength and help and comfort than she gave, all of which she stored securely away in her heart against her own day of struggle and tempest.

"What a sweet face that old lady has," exclaimed a young girl, who had not yet learned to look beneath the surface of things. "I don't suppose she has ever had a care or a sorrow in her life!" It was a serene, remarkably youthful face, and the woman was over seventy. Her eyes had a wonderful light, her voice a gentle calm, her whole being a rare poise, speaking volumes to one whose eyes had been sharpened by experience. Through an almost apostolic faith and submission, she had risen superior to the many vicissitudes of her grief-ridden days, and her calm face was a benediction.

The well-known fable of the reeds and the oak offers a striking illustration of this attitude and its value. The wind uprooted a great oak and hurled it into the river. As it was being whirled down the angry stream, it said to the reeds on the bank: "How is it that you, as weak and fragile as you are, are not torn up by the cruel and violent winds? You groan under the weight of a tiny bird, and bow to the gentlest breeze. My lofty brow was uplifted in the sunshine, far above your kind, I generously scattered my leaves to enrich the bank whereon you grew, and I have opposed my stalwart back to many a terrific gale." "Ah, that is it," replied the reeds. "You resisted the winds and struggled against them, and for this reason you were uprooted; while we bent to every breeze, and so remained unharmed."

There are some who struggle against everything that life brings, as the years pass. They fret against the first signs of age, which only

brings more wrinkles; they fume over changed material conditions, thus often driving away those who would help; they rebel against sickness or the apparent indifference of friends who were once ardent and solicitous in their attention, an attitude which is neither conducive to health nor personal attractiveness.

If such persons could only take a lesson from the graceful reeds, and bow to the inevitable! "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," and "a bruised reed shall he not break;" "submit yourselves, therefore, to God."

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The Anvil.

Last eve I paused beside the blacksmith's door,

And heard the anvil ring the evening chime, And, looking in, I saw old hammers on the floor,

Heaten with the years of time.

"How many anvils have you had?" I asked, "To beat and wear these hammers so?" "Just one," he said, with twinkling eye; "The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

"And so," I thought, 'The Anvil of God's Word For ages skeptics' blows have beat upon: And though the falling blows are heard,

The Anvil is unword—the hammers gone!"

—Anonymous.

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The South Side.

"May I come in, dear?" called the girl's bright voice.

"Pull the bobbin and the latch will fly up," was the merry answer.

The girl pushed open the door and ran across the room to the bed. Nobody could have guessed the pain and wearisome plaster cast from the cheery voice; still less could one have guessed that the need to earn made the weeks of pain still harder to bear. These things the woman lying there told to her God, never to her guests.

The girl held up a forlorn handful of late asters. "The very last," she declared. "I hunted and hunted!"

"Are you sure?" her friend asked, quickly.

"I've always found them later than this every year. Did you go over to the south side of the hill?"

"No," the girl confessed, laughingly. "I believe I looked on every side but that. I'll go straight back and hunt again."

Twenty minutes later she returned, laden with autumn bloom.

"You are right," she said. "I had no idea that the south side made such a difference. The slope was half covered with the beautiful blossoms, so big and deep colored! I'm going to put them in this pitcher beside you so that you can reach your hands down deep into the autumn and pretend you're picking them yourself."

"Then," her friend returned, "I should have to give up the memory of somebody who picked them for me."

The girl stopped her pretty work. "Now I understand the difference!" she said, slowly. "You will insist, wilful woman that you are, in living on the south side of life, and getting every bit of sunshine there is, while most of us deliberately go and sit on the north side and grumble because it's cold! Never mind, I've caught your secret now, and I'm going to sit in the sun. Then, maybe, I'll blossom."

The white face in the bed smiled. "And the best of it all is, that there always is a south side," she answered—"the sun's side, and God's."—*Presbyterian Review*.

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NEVER give way to melancholy. Nothing encroaches more. Fight against it vigorously. One great remedy is to take short views of life. Then why destroy a present happiness by a distant misery, which may never come at all, or you may never live to see? For every substantial grief has twenty shadows, most of them your own making.—*Sydney Smith*.

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TRUE faith expands for every fresh need, and when the need comes the comfort comes also, and out of weakness men are made strong. When we are oppressed by the burden and overwhelmed by the spectacle of human misery, we must learn that there is a deeper thing than happiness, and that is peace, and eternal peace is only to be had in communion with the eternal God.—*Hugh Black*.

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THE power of the Holy Spirit! What is that but the thing we want? The power of the Holy Ghost by which every man who is in doubt may know what is right, every man whose soul is sick may be made spiritually whole, every weak man may be made a strong man—that is God's one great response to the unconscious need of spiritual guidance, which he hears crying out of the deep heart of every man.—*Phillips Brooks*.

International Sunday School Lessons.

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

LESSON 1.

OCTOBER 1, 1916.

A Plot That Failed.

Motto Text.—"They shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee, saith Jehovah, to deliver thee." (Jer. 1: 10.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 23.

MEMORY VERSES, 20, 21.

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Lesson Text.

14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15 Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17 Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19 Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that thou hast to tell me?

20 And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21 But do not thou yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with

an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

22 So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and charged him, See thou tell no man that thou hast shewed these things to me.

23 And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night:

24 And provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor.

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Lysias Foiled.

In his letter to Felix, Lysias said: "I rescued this man from the mob, having learned that he was a Roman." Not a word of truth in the latter clause. Fact is, he took Paul for an Egyptian handit, and was about to scourge him into admission of it, when Paul disclosed his Roman citizenship. Lysias is puzzled over his evidently distinguished prisoner, and wants to know the nature of the crime that has stirred the fury of the Jews. Sending him under guard to the council was a natural move, but no information was secured. This body was vindictive and dangerous as the mob of yesterday. Their eyes glared on the renegade, the blasphemer, the traitor, the enemy of God and man. Roman spears screened him against deadly malice. The guard seeing the futility of their mission, withdrew the prisoner and bound him again in his cell. It was now clear to Lysias that Paul was guilty of no crime against Roman law, and that the enmity against him was due to some questions in the Jews' religion, which held no interest for him. Remember this is the council that condemned Jesus and Stephen. Paul was

once a member of it. They still justify the scourging charge, "blind guides."

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The Comforting Christ.

That night Paul lay in his cell pondering the cruel disappointment of dearest hopes, and the possible outcome of the present tragic situation. After all, was it a mistake to come to Jerusalem? Had he blundered by too stern adhesion to his purpose against the tearful warnings of his brethren? No. In the deep night the vision of Jesus appeared to him. That heavenly Friend approved his course, commended his devotion, and assured him that he should yet declare the gospel in Rome. Peace like a river flowed into his soul, and God gave his beloved sleep.

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Thwarted Plot.

That same night more than forty Jews bound themselves with an oath that Paul should die in Jerusalem. Lysias was to be courteously asked to send the prisoner to the council for a fuller investigation. On the way, at the risk of their lives, they would rush on the guard and kill Paul. Willingly would they dash themselves to death to secure the destruction of the one supremely hated Jew. Paul's nephew discovered the plot, and hastened to the prison with the news. Heavenly assurance of deliverance did not make Paul careless of personal activity. Instantly he sent the boy to Lysias, feeling sure that Roman authority would not be lax in protective diligence. The message delivered, the youth was advised to keep the matter strictly to himself.

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Deliverance.

That night at nine o'clock Paul rode out of the gate of Jerusalem, escorted by a little Roman army of four hundred and seventy soldiers. This fact gauges the peril in the estimate of the Roman officer. It also emphasizes the grim resolution of Rome that no violence shall be done to a prisoner unconvicted. He shall have a fair trial before Felix, the governor of the province. The Roman empire covered Paul with its shield of religious liberty, and laughed to scorn the wrath of degenerate murderous Judaism. It is safe to say that Judaism would have strangled early Christianity but for the sheltering arms of the Roman power. The empire was its best, indispensable friend: Judaism was its deadliest, implacable foe.

MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Plot, Acts 23: 1-13.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Be of good cheer."

The trouble of it is, all these furious men were sincere and conscientious in their hostility. They honestly thought it service to God to destroy Paul. This is a discouraging fact in human nature. The best sample of religion on the earth became the malignant menace of religion pure and true. Fortunate it is that appeal to force is possible in such a situation. Rome stops the persecuting Pharisee with a spear. Where moral suasion was impotent, the voice of authority uttered its challenge. Jesus puts courage in the soul of his servant, and uses the power of Cæsar to secure him against the violence of foes.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Plot Made Known, Acts 13: 14-24.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait."

Even without the intelligence brought to him it is doubtful that Lysias would have been fooled by the craftiness of the Jews. Already he knew them well enough to be on his guard. His policy was settled at once, when the plot was revealed. Imagine the astonishment of the council when they were informed that Paul was in Cæsarea, sixty miles away, and that he was ready for trial when it suited them to appear before the governor as his accusers. You know they gnashed their teeth. The youthful informer would have suffered had they known his share in the episode.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Futile Plotting, Isa. 7: 1-9.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Take heed and be quiet."

That is, be keenly alert and active in the presence of danger, and preserve a calm confidence in the faithfulness of God. This was the wise counsel of Isaiah to his king, when Jerusalem was threatened by the kings of Israel and Syria. Some people would like to leave all their trouble to God, and do nothing for themselves. They take this for pious trust. It is not; it is lazy, ignorant presumption. The phrase, "co-workers with God," carries the meaning of Isaiah's advice. We must do our wisest and best for ourselves, and then lean on the arm of God. Act and trust; take heed and be quiet. He will take care of you.

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Comfort in Persecution. Matt. 10: 16-23.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Wise as serpents, harmless as doves."

Beware of men, said Jesus, when sending out his disciples on mission tours. Your message is God's truth, but it is unpopular. Do not add to its unpopularity by the awkward ordering of your speech and conduct. Be careful to make no blunders. Avoid all needless irritation of the rulers; engage in no heated debates; study to win the people with courtesy and kindness. Combine the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. You shall be hated and maltreated, but on your part give no occasion of blame. God will be your helper, and in the end you shall attain eternal life.

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Plot Overruled. Gen. 45: 1-15.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"It was not you that sent me hither, but God."

That was a remarkable experience when Jacob's sons met in Egypt, a brother deeply wronged long years before. They were troubled. Had their execution been ordered at once, they would not have been surprised. Joseph behaved nobly. He assured them that they were not in danger. Seeing their self-accusing faces, he magnanimously became their comforter. After all, brothers, it was not you that did it, but God. The Lord foreseeing the evil, made provision for it. It was good that I came here, for by the providence of God I have become a preserver of life.

LESSON 2.

Paul Before Felix.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and men always." (Acts 24: 16.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 24.

MEMORY VERSES, 14, 15.

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Lesson Text.

10 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, For as much as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Morning Prayer of Trust. Psa. 3.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"But thou, O Lord, art a shield about me."

This psalm is supposed to have been written by David at the time of Absalom's rebellion. It was an evil day when his own son turned against him and stole the hearts of his people. His throne was lost, and calamity increased upon him. But the tide turned again in his favor, and once more he sat on his throne in peace. His fallings and sins were many, but David always turned in penitence to God. In a passion of praise he gave thanks to God for all his mercies. He was a great sinner, and he was a great penitent.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Evening Prayer of Trust. Psa. 4.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Offer the sacrifices of righteousness."

David had no respect for formal services rendered to God. To him it was a mockery, an insult to God, to put one's religion in external observances and leave the heart untouched by gratitude and love. Such sacrifices were empty and worthless. He tried to cherish a personal relation with God. He wished to accompany his acts of worship with deeds of affection and obedience. These are the real sacrifices of righteousness. Right living before God is the supreme thing. This is the soul of religion.

11 Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.

12 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:

13 Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.

14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

15 And have hope toward God, which they

themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

17 Now after many years I came to bring aims to my nation, and offerings.

18 Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

19 Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.

20 Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council,

21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question of you this day.

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The Charges.

Here come the venerable hypocrites of Jerusalem, disgusted and maddened at being required to make the long journey to Caesarea. Why should the hated Roman officials put them to so much trouble in the laudable work of killing an odious Jew? The court is set, and Paul is brought in. The Jews' lawyer opens the case. He is a hired Roman practitioner. His first words are a tribute of flattering mendacity to the virtues of the corrupt scoundrel, Felix, who sits as judge. How low has Israel fallen. In the speech of her orator she crawls and fawns at the feet of the heathen master she hates, in order to win his favor against the noblest Jew in the world. The spectacle touches the bottom of moral and national infamy. Pointing to Paul, the attorney says: "Here is a notorious pest whose villainies break down the patience of his countrymen. We accuse him on three counts: (1) He is guilty of sedition on a wide field. (2) He is a noxious heretic of the Nazarene sect. (3) He is guilty of sacrilege, profaning the holy temple of his nation." Felix examines the witnesses. High priest and elders say that every word is true. The case looks bad for the prisoner. The accusers are confident and happy.

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Paul Replies.

Felix nods to him, and he rises. He stands alone in the hostile group. Himself is his only witness. He, too, gives courteous recognition to the judge, but no fulsome praise. He denies the whole indictment. (1) I am not guilty of sedition. It is now only twelve

days since I went up to Jerusalem from this city. Half that time I was in the temple as a Nazarite, the other half I have been a Roman prisoner. These men never found me disputing or causing riot. There was no time for it. Never anywhere, or at any time, have I been a lawless citizen. (2) I deny the charge of heresy. I believe in God as they do. I accept the prophets as they do, and I believe in the resurrection as most of them do. I cherish the same hope as my people, and try to preserve a clear conscience before God. This is not heresy. (3) The charge of sacrilege is not true. I was lawfully in the temple, being ceremonially clean. I was there bringing alms to the poor of Jerusalem, and offerings to the temple. I was not mixed up with any mob or riot. These witnesses did not see me in the temple, and so are incompetent to testify as to my conduct. Jews from Asia did see me in the temple. They know the facts. Why are they not here to testify? Besides, I was before these very men as a prisoner at a session of the council in the temple. Can they name any fault in me at that hour? No; I boldly affirm my innocence of all their charges. The case looks better. Paul's self-vindication is complete.

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Suspended Verdict.

Felix knows he ought to set Paul free. The cowardly, unjust judge wriggles and quibbles. He will wait to hear the testimony of Captain Lysias. False, he never expects to confer with Lysias. Still the crestfallen priest and elders know their case is lost, and sullenly retire. Court adjourns, and Felix shows by his orders his conviction of Paul's innocence. "Make his imprisonment light as possible; give free admission to his friends who want to minister to his necessities." Himself sought frequent interviews with Paul. Once he complimented him with request for a sermon. That discourse shook the governor's soul. "I will hear thee again," said the guilty man, but he never did. Why all these special attentions to his harmless prisoner? Didn't he hear Paul say that he brought money to Jerusalem? Was he not sure that Paul had influential, well-to-do friends? May he not get a large bribe for setting the prisoner free? That was the motive of his sordid soul. He hopes to sell justice. Poor Paul is the victim of Jewish malice and Roman greed.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Committed to Felix. Acts 23: 25-25.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or bonds."

So Lysias wrote to Felix concerning Paul. Committing him to the governor, he plainly indicates his views. He is a Roman citizen, and has done nothing worthy of death or of bonds. That is, he ought to be set at liberty. Yet, at the end of the trial the false-hearted, contemptible Felix says he will defer judgment until he can get the opinion of Lysias! The Roman law was just and good. It pledged religious liberty to all the faith of the empire. But law's benevolence is defeated by base and perjured officials. When the righteous rule, the people rejoice. God bless every man in office whose heart beats to justice and mercy.

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Charge Presented. Acts 24: 1-9.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"We have found this man a pestilent fellow."

Blessed are you when men shall persecute and revile you for my sake. That happiness is Paul's as he hears himself arraigned as a revolutionist in government, a blasphemer of true religion, and brutally irreverent of its institutions. Blind and bigoted Judaism forged these charges. It is deeply sunk in moral degeneracy and spiritual night. Its priesthood and its theologians are given over to believe a lie. Such is the penalty that waits on human narrowness, selfishness, and pride. The spirit of old Judaism is the chief criminal of this world. It murdered the Son of God. It plots the death of his greatest apostle.

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul's Defense. Acts 24: 10-21.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"I exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and men alike."

When they bring you before kings and governors it shall be given you what you shall speak. Jesus kept his word with Paul that day. Calm and undismayed, he made a great speech that convinced an unjust judge and frustrated the hopes of his adversaries. It was devoid of enmity and hate. A Christly pity for the persecutors ran through it. Had not himself once thought and felt toward the Nazarene as they do now? The speech is without bitterness. My heart's desire and prayer for Israel is that they may be saved. Luminous sincerity beamed in his face, and self-evidencing truth thrilled in his voice. It was the indwelling Christ who spoke.

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul in Bonds. Acts 24: 22-27.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Felix was terrified."

Was Felix fooling Paul by his attentions? Not a bit of it. Paul read the heart of the little man. Why then should he speak on religion to the scheming, calculating official? Why waste words on a moral desert? There is no hope of winning him to right views of justice. He has no thought of liberating his innocent prisoner. Paul had written—preach in season and out of season. This was one of the "out" seasons. I will give him some thoughts on personal religion. It was frank, bold preaching. Every point went through Felix's soul like a javelin. Not abusive, but faithful, kindly and able was this sermon. The sordid soul trembled, but waited for a more convenient season.

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Christ Before Sanhedrin. Matt. 26: 57-68.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"The chief priests and the whole council sought false witnesses against Jesus."

They must have a formal process of law, and condemn Jesus in the mouth of two or more witnesses. They were hard put to it. They hired men to tell deliberate lies. All this for the glory of God and the purity of religion! Judaism plunges into a hell of guilt. The lying witnesses contradicted each other. In the haste of the moment there was no time for collusion. Finally Calaphas despairingly asks Jesus, "Art thou the Christ?" Jesus affirms it, and the jubilant high priest exclaims: "He has spoken blasphemy, what need of witnesses?" None at all. The predetermined decision is made, based on the self-testimony of the prisoner.

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Christ Before Pilate. Matt. 27: 11-18.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"He knew that for envy they had delivered him up."

Felix knew the intolerant Jewish spirit and the falseness of the charges against Paul. Pilate knew the venomous malignity of the Jews and the absolute falsity of the accusations levelled against Jesus. Each governor was sworn to uphold Roman law in the punishment of the guilty and in the protection of the innocent. Each was persuaded that his prisoner was a victim of unjustifiable hate. Each man's conscience demanded that

he obeyed the call of truth and justice. Each refused, disgracing his Roman judgment seat and handing his name into the keeping of eternal infamy.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Cowardly Governor. Matt. 27: 19-26.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man."

He was a moral coward. He wanted to do his duty, but not if it touched his own stand-

ing and comfort. He presents the pitiful spectacle of a Roman governor cowering before a mob, and begging permission of it to do right. He is in a crisis. He cannot do right and escape intense unpopularity, with the risk of damaging reports to Caesar. For his own interest he commits judicial murder, and in vain symbol washes away a stain. He had the chance to be an immortal hero, and missed it. He could have released the faultless Jesus, calling on every Roman soldier to back him. Let us beware of moral cowardice.

LESSON 3.

The Appeal to Caesar.

OCTOBER 15, 1916.

MOTTO TEXT.—"It is enough for the disciple that he be as his teacher, and the servant as his lord." (Matt. 10: 25.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 25.

MEMORY VERSES, 10, 11.

Lesson Text.

1 Now when Fes'tus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cæs-a-ræ'a to Jê-rô'sâ-lêm.

2 Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him,

3 And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jê-rô'sâ-lêm, laying wait in the way to kill him.

4 But Fes'tus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cæs-a-ræ'a, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither*.

5 Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

6 And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Cæs-a-ræ'a; and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be brought.

7 And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jê-rô'sâ-lêm stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.

8 While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cæs-ar, have I offended any thing at all.

9 But Fes'tus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jê-rô'sâ-lêm, and there be judged of these things before me?

10 Then said Paul, I stand at Cæs-ar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

11 For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cæs-ar.

12 Then Fes'tus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Inasmuch that thou appealed unto Cæs-ar? unto Cæs-ar shalt thou go.

New Governor.

FELIX, the swine, is removed. The Jews despised him, and he paid them back with scorn. He wouldn't let them have Paul, not that he was too honest, but it was too dangerous to himself. Such betrayal of a Roman citizen would cost him his life. The venal hypocrite has kept Paul in jail two years, hoping for a bribe. Under one lying pretense or another he could rob a Roman citizen of his liberty, he being already in bonds, and not endanger himself. In going he leaves Paul in chains, hoping thus to mitigate the Jew's contempt for him. Indeed, under what plea could he release Paul now, that had not been equally valid for two years? The first iniquity bound the wretch fatally to its perpetuation. If the Jews might not lay hands on Paul, it was immense comfort to know that his ministry was blocked. Think of the deep sorrow of the apostle over two years of enforced inactivity, just when his mighty labors were approaching a glorious climax.

Can God make Jewish hate and Roman venality work together for good? Yea, Paul believes it. Festus come in.

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A New Trial.

Festus is active and prompt. He goes at once to Jerusalem to get on good terms with his new charge. Jewish insincerity gives him a flattering welcome to the city. Neither party is deceived, but the game of diplomacy is well played. Priests and rulers ask a favor. Allow us to bring your prisoner, Paul, up to Jerusalem for trial. Those devout byenas still thirst for his blood. Already the new plot of assassination is hatched, and for consummation only the compliance of Festus is needed. No; Roman law never turns over a prisoner to an alien court. Come down to Caesarea and the trial shall be had at once. Defeated, they had to accept. Paul is in court again, his accusers make the same old charges, and Paul repeats his defense. Festus grasps the situation. Paul is, to him, a harmless, scholarly, religious enthusiast, who has made himself intensely obnoxious to the Jewish rulers. He deserves his freedom on the spot, and the governor knows it. Is it granted? Not at all. What can this old man's friendship do for me? Like the contemptible Felix, he balances justice against self-interest. What can the favor of the ruling Jews do for me? Much every way. I will ingratiate myself with them by asking the prisoner's consent to go to Jerusalem for a new trial. The moral coward shuts himself up in eternal infamy.

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I Appeal to Caesar.

Paul understood the trick of the vacllating Festus. He knew better than Festus the deadly purpose of the rulers. He saw that all hope of justice in this provincial court was gone. Here is the tribunal before which I ought to be tried. You cannot send me to Jerusalem, and I, as a Roman citizen, flatly refuse to go. I will carry my case to the supreme court; I appeal to Caesar. It was his privilege, and boldly he asserted it. That moment the whole situation changed. In a twinkling Paul passed himself out of the jurisdiction of Festus. Proceedings instantly stopped. The Jews turned blankly on each other, and then looked daggers at the hoped-for victim who has escaped under the majestic shield of Roman law. Festus is astonished. His prisoner has suddenly slipped out of his hands. He has lost his chance to

dispense justice on the one hand, and to win the Jews' favor on the other. I appeal to Caesar was an omnipotent word in a provincial court. All that remained to be said by the disconcerted governor was this: "Thou hast appealed to Caesar, to Caesar thou shalt go."

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Appeal to Caesar. Acts 25: 1-12.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"To the Jews I have done no wrong, as thou very well knowest."

All the proceedings of this court were an empty sham. It was a solemn iniquity. All the parties were inwardly aware that righteousness and justice were not the controlling motives. Never was a tribunal more completely dominated by moral rottenness and vindictive hate. Personal advantage is the governor's aim, and murder was the animus of the prosecution. Between this upper and nether millstone the accused is to be ground to powder. It is not Paul the Jews hate; rather, it is his message. All this infernal machinery is designed against the gospel of Jesus. Theological hate is the most devilish this world has ever known.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Agrippa Interested. Acts 25: 13-22.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"I also could wish to hear the man myself."

Agrippa pays the new governor, Festus, a visit of courtesy. Festus is doubly glad to see him. Paul's case is worrying him. He tells the king about the trial; how the Jews accused him in matters of religion, and proved nothing. The man appealed to Caesar, and now I have to send him up with a bill of charges and testimony. There is no proof; the man is innocent. There is my quarry. Caesar will think I am a fool to send a prisoner with no evidence supporting the charges. I am terribly embarrassed. I want you to help me frame some document suitable to the case." "Very well," said Agrippa, "I will be glad to hear him and help you."

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Paul Bright Before Agrippa. Acts 25: 23-27.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord."

Festus is in a ferment of trouble. He deserves it. It comes from withholding liberty from the blameless Paul. He is ensnared by

his own mean selfishness. A prisoner on hand to send to Caesar, and not a thing to record against him. A wretched tangle for a governor just settled in his province. It was a humiliating speech he made to the distinguished company. He makes an abject appeal for help. As a new man on a strange field, I crave your sympathy. Doubtless they shrewdly guessed the reason of his embarrassment. He has sowed injustice and now he reaps. No, we can't help him. A speech from the prisoner will give us no clues, but we will hear him.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Mighty God. Isaiah 44: 1-8.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Is there a God beside me?"

Moses proclaimed the unity and the holiness of God. There is no God beside him, and him only shall thou serve. Moses put this in the constitution of Israel and outlawed idolatry forever. He committed the people, by oath, to this holy faith and pledge. It stands forever, the Hebrew contribution to true religion. The Hebrews found it hard to keep this faith and pledge in an age wholly given to idolatry. Apostasy to heathenism was their constant drift for centuries. The destruction of Jerusalem and the exile worked Israel's cure. From that day to this, the Hebrew race has clung to the doctrine of the supremacy of Jehovah. They learned it in the furnace of affliction.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Supreme Helper. Psalm 42.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Why art thou cast down, O my soul?"

Human life is full of strange vicissitude. The mystery of it grows with age. Few and evil have been the years of my pilgrimage, said Jacob. Youth is full of dreams and visions, but our maturer years are sobered by disappointed hopes and unrealized aims. Experience often dips into twilight and darkness. The soul is depressed and discouragement settles on the spirit. Our psalmist felt

the heavy and the weary weight of the world. This mood is not good. Its cure is in God. Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. The morning cometh. He maketh all things to work together for good to them that love him.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Faithful and Unfaithful Servants. Matt. 24: 45-51.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"He will set him over all that he bath."

Work is a divine and healing ordinance. The Father worketh hitherto and I work. Activity is the law of our being. Sloth is the rust and decay of the soul. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Our Saviour has appointed our tasks, and it is at our peril that we neglect them. We are partakers of the nature of the working God. His life is divine, so is ours. Doing good was the business of our Master. Follow me, in the same spirit and method, is his benevolent command, my joy I give unto you. What is it? The joy of work, making the world better, and people happier.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Righteous Judge. 2 Cor. 5: 1-10.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ."

This is just another way of saying: Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap. Accountability to God for the way we live, is Paul's thought. In the other world we meet our record. What we are here, that shall we be there. Death, no more than sleep, changes one's character. Let us try to get to heaven while we live in this world. Why not be sensible and practical in the matter of religion? "Some people's notions of heaven are a superstition. They regard it a sudden, magical passing from ignorance, indifference and unfaithfulness into the joys and satisfactions of the opposite qualities. No, Paul says we will be manifested, and rewarded, exactly according to our deeds."



LESSON 4.

OCTOBER 22, 1910.

Paul's Defense Before Agrippa.

MOTTO TEXT.—"I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." (ACTS 26: 19.)

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 26.

MEMORY VERSES, 28, 29.

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Lesson Text.

1 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

24 And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

30 And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Herod, and they that sat with them:

31 And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

32 Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.

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The Audience.

It was a distinguished set. The little king-let, Agrippa, and his wife, the local Roman commanders and some of the leading citizens of Caesarea were there. A good deal of pomp and splendor radiated from the assembly. Have they come to hear a sermon? Any religious interest in their minds? Hardly.

Festus has a notorious prisoner on hand, with a new fad in religion, keen, scholarly, able, crunky and fearless. Festus is new on the field, and is painfully perplexed over the case. This odd genius is to make a speech today, and the grandees are agog to see and hear him. The occasion is going to be interesting as a show. Wonder what he looks like? They say he is an orator. Won't it be fun to hear him talk? Wonder if he will be abashed before this august assembly of royalty and culture? Such is the precious rattle of tinselled mediocrity, waiting expectantly the entrance of Paul. One man is serious and anxious. Festus hopes the occasion will bring relief to his embarrassment. He has to deal with Caesar. He must write the emperor a letter, and this is his last chance to learn what to say. Paul enters to the clink of chains on his wrists, accompanied by a soldier. Festus introduces him courteously, explaining the nature of the case, and frankly admitting his own belief of the prisoner's innocence. He has appealed to Caesar, and to Caesar he must go. What charges can I write? I implore your aid in this dilemma.

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Paul's Speech.

A preacher needs a sympathetic audience, for the best working of his mental forces. Curiosity was all this one had to furnish. An hour's entertainment is their only motive. Besides, what advantage to himself in speaking to this crowd? Nothing at all. They can do him no service. Yet the great man will speak. Some word may help the spiritual poverty before him. With the courtesy of a gentleman, and the calm courage of a hero, he opens his address. Expectation was disappointed when he avoided the line of self-defense pursued in the court. This is not a trial scene. Ingeniously he will cover the end of self-vindication by following a different course. He will give an account of his Christian experience. He will sketch his personal history. Now follows an immortal gem of sacred eloquence. Nothing is so enchanting as the dealings of God with a human soul. Sermons can often be made richer by touches of humble self-reference. Paul's story of antagonism to Jesus, the heavenly vision, the new life in Christ, the sorrows and sufferings,

the joys and triumphs, swept the hearers' hearts like a celestial gale. Borne on in a holy passion, he daringly asks the king a question, and gets a respectful answer. Festus feels himself completely thwarted and impatiently exclaims: "Paul, you are mad, your great learning has made you insane." "Not so, your excellency; I speak the words of truth and soberness. I could wish all this company such as I am, except these chains."

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Agrippa's View.

The speech ended, the crowd dissolved, not in lightness but in solemnity. They came to a show, and found themselves in a revival meeting. The king looks serious as he draws Festus aside. This man is no criminal. He has done nothing worthy of death, nor even of imprisonment. He ought to be set free, and could be today, but for his appeal to Caesar. Alas! It is too late. Festus might have freed him once, but not now. This occasion has intensified his perplexity. The prisoner must go to Caesar at once, and there is not a single charge to send up. Something had to be written; something was written, but no man knows what. If men would do right it would save them a lot of trouble.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Saul, the Persecutor. Acts 26: 1-9.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"I thought I ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth."

He was the fiercest foe of them all. With good conscience he hated men and women to prison for their devotion to Christ, and sometimes voted in the Sanhedrin for their death. He did it honestly for the sake of God and the old religion of Israel. He was conscientiously mistaken, and he says that God forgave, because he did it in ignorance. His nature was intense, and he was the devoutest of the Pharisees. The gospel seemed to him a deadly menace to the sacred faith given by Moses, and, of course, ought to be exterminated. His conscience needed enlightenment. Such a man will always come to the light.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Conversion of Saul. Acts 26: 10-18.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Who art thou, Lord?"

This was the most important event in early Christianity. His was the ablest and best educated intellect of the age. As a perse-

cutor his soul was hungering for righteousness. He longed for the peace of God, and did not find it in keeping the laws and forms of Judaism. Back of all his zealous works, he knew the presence of sin in his soul. It pleased God at the gate of Damascus to reveal his Son in me. In a blessed vision he saw the crucified and risen Christ, and submitted to him. He saw in that sinless, life-giving Spirit the grace and power he longed for. Salvation is identification with Christ. I am his.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Confession and its Effect. Acts 26: 19-32.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

"I turned instantly to preaching the faith I had been trying to destroy. Everywhere I declared to Jews and Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God. Dangers thronged about me, but I counted not my life precious. I sacrificed all things dear, that I might spread abroad the good news of the gospel. For this the Jews sought to kill me; for this I meet the contempt and hate of the Gentiles. But my greatest woe would be, not to preach the gospel. My troubles are but a filling up of the sufferings of Christ. The servant is not above his master. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—John's Disclaimer. John 1: 19-28.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness."

John's ministry was popular. People took him for a great man. Jerusalem sent down to inquire about his dignity and mission. Pride had a chance for transient glory, but John was humble. Are you the Christ? No. Elijah? No. The prophet? No. I am only a voice crying in the wilderness. Make his paths straight. One is in the midst of you, whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I baptize in water. He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire. He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Let us all exalt the name of Jesus.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Witnessing for the Master. John 1: 29-34.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"I have seen him, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

Jesus came to John, and he said: "This is he of whom I said, after me cometh a man, which is become before me. That he should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing with water. I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him. John's keen spiritual intuition recognized Jesus as his Lord, though he knew him not. Humbly he shrank from baptizing him, because that rite did not apply to heavenly purity. Later he submitted to Christ's demand. The Son of God sanctified the rite forever.

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Effect of Faithful Witnessing. John 1: 35-42.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"He brought him to Jesus."

John's disciples multiplied around him. One day Jesus passed by, and John pointing to him, said, "Behold the Lamb of God." Two of his disciples followed Jesus and spent a large part of the day in his company. It was the beginning of the decline of interest in John, but it roused no mean feeling of jealousy.

LESSON 5.

The Voyage.

MOTTO TEXT.—

"Commit thy way unto Jehovah: Trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass." (Psa. 37: 5.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 27: 1-38.

MEMORY VERSE, 22-24.

Lesson Text.

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, looking *thereon*, they sailed close by *Crète*.

14 But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called *Eolus*.

15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let *her* drive.

16 And running under a certain island which is called *Clau'da*, we had much work to come by the boat:

17 Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, sprake sail, and so were driven.

ousy. He must increase and I must decrease. Therein is my joy fulfilled. What a noble soul was that. John and Andrew were the first to depart to Jesus. Next they brought their own brothers, Peter and James. So the work began, winning one by one.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—From Darkness to Light. 1 John 1: 5-2: 6.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins."

Confession means making a clean breast before God. Hide nothing from him. If we say we have no sin, we lie. No room here for the claim of a sanctified, perfect life. Don't cover sins by confessing sinfulness. Not general but specific statement. Tell God of your envy; your pride; your evil thoughts. Don't make evasion by your fancied righteousness, or by urging extenuating circumstances. Name your sins to God. Turn from them in disgust, and be faithful and righteous to forgive and forget. God hates the sin, but loves the sinner.

OCTOBER 29, 1916.

18 And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next *day*, they lightened the ship;

19 And the third *day* we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, *Sirs*, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from *Crète*, and to have gained this harm and loss.

22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of *any man's* life among you but of the ship.

23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 Saying, Fear not, Paul: thou must be brought before *Cæsar*; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

25 Wherefore, *sirs*, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

26 Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

To Rome.

At last Paul sets his face to the west. Low greed and brutal selfishness have cheated him out of two precious years. Though a prisoner, there is deep satisfaction in getting under way to Rome. From the deck of the sailing vessel he waves adieu to friends, and the scenes where he has suffered outrage. He never expects to see them again. The sad reflections of his soul recall the lamentation of Jesus over Jerusalem. He has the comfort of the companionship of Aristarchus and Luke. Julius, the Roman officer, having been in charge, shows him great respect. One day out, the boat stopped at Sidon, and he allowed Paul to go ashore to meet friends. The voyage was northward until they came into the waters along the shores of Cilicia. Here was the home of his childhood. From the ship's deck, he could almost see his native city of Tarsus. One would love to know the tender emotions of his remembering soul. That earth and sky held sweetest memories of father, mother and sister. There were born his boyish dreams and hopes. Life promised him so much. And now, his life far spent, he passes a sea-borne prisoner, to distant Rome. Oh, the pathos of human life! Every day Paul looked out over waters and coast lines made familiar in his mission journeys. The ship sailed slowly. The autumn comes on and Paul is transferred to another vessel, going direct to Rome.

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The Storm.

All told, there were on the new ship, two hundred and seventy-six souls. She made slow headway against the winds. The season for navigation was closing. Paul made bold to suggest going into harbor until spring. Those in charge said: "Go on. What does an old preacher and prisoner know about business on the sea?" Well, we shall see. That ship carried the greatest man in all this world, but they did not know. The storm broke. The fury of it was resistless, and the ship was instantly helpless in its grip. Luke's account is one of the most graphic ever made of disaster on the waves. They had no compass, they had no sunlight, no moon nor stars for fourteen days. Tempest-tossed and billow-driven, all hope of escape perished utterly. It looked as if the wrathful forces of sea and sky had become confederate with malignant human enemies to destroy Paul. His loss would be a vast human calamity. Thank God, it was not yet to be!

Be of Good Cheer.

Paul became ruler of ship and crew. He was born to masterful leadership. Always and everywhere his regal manhood came to exhibition. The storm was unspent and wreck was momentarily expected. Paul rose up in the mist and roaring gloom. All were drenched and chilled, all were nearly starved, for horrible dread had paralyzed hunger. Good news at last! "Cheer up. Last night an angel of God stood by me, saying, Have no fear, Paul: you must stand before *Cæsar*. God has granted you the lives of all your fellow-voyagers." That cheerful, confident voice was magical. The mass of human helplessness and despair owned his leadership. His hopefulness was contagious. He took bread, gave thanks, and ate, encouraging the others to do likewise. Brave, encouraging speech is always welcome to men under oppression of fear. Let us try to serve in like manner. No, they did not laugh him to scorn; they ate, were refreshed and began to hope the God of Paul would save from death. From that moment he was virtual master of the ship.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Voyage Begun. Acts 27: 1-13.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"But the centurion gave more heed to the master and the owner."

You can't blame these men for inclining more to their own views than to Paul's. None of them knew certainly what was coming. It was a matter of opinion, and it would have been curious, had they taken counsel of Paul, of whom they knew nothing. In the storm, he gently reminded them of the correctness of his judgment. There was none of the air of the man who says, "I told you so." All felt a growing respect for the strange prisoner. To this day, all men feel increasingly admiration for his immense abilities, and sublimity of character, the more deeply they study him. There is only one greater man.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Voyage Dangerous. Acts 27: 14-26.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Neither sun nor stars in many days."

In vain these seamen struggled against the violence of the storm. They took in the sails, they cast out the freight and fixtures of the ship, they girded her with strong ropes to strengthen against the fearful shocks of the waves. Black clouds snuffed out sun and stars, and the mad waves urged the ship on

to unknown shores. Yea; the master will lose all his goods; the captain will see the wreck of his ship; but Paul will see the safety of all the souls on board. God has given them to him. How fortunate to have a good man's company in times of danger.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Calm Amid Danger. Acts 27: 27-37.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved."

Amid the howling of the mob at Ephesus, Paul was serene. In the terrors of the Jerusalem mob, he was the man most composed. Now, in nature's tumult on a darkened sea, he maintains a complete self-possession. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee. Faith in that promise, given in his cell in Jerusalem, was the stay of his soul. Thou shalt testify of me in Rome. Blessed is the man who trusts in God. But Paul was vigilant as well as trustful. He saw the sailors lowering the boats, in an effort to escape. He told the centurion what it meant, and instantly the ropes were cut, and the boat fell in the sea.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—An Eventful Journey. 1 Kings 19: 1-8.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"He slept under a juniper tree."

Brave Elijah was not scared, but he was tremendously discouraged and depressed. He thought Jehovah's cause was lost, and he wanted to die. In this frame of mind he could not work. *Non enim.* We must have the joy of the Lord, for effective service. Elijah goes to the right sanitorium—the old meeting house of Israel at Horeb. God takes away discouragement (1) by physical rest, (2) clearing the mind of mistakes. The cause is not lost. Seven thousand are faithful still. (3) You have reeked idolatry with deadly blows; now go back and speak in the power of the small, still voice to the people. The journey was worth while.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Elijah Sees God. 1 Kings 19: 9-14.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Go forth and stand on the mount before the Lord."

Heretofore Elijah, your work has been destructive. It had to be, and it has been well done. Behold the types of emblems of that work! Wind, fire, earthquake. They do not build up, but destroy. They don't bring people to God in penitence and love. And yet you are discouraged that your ministry has not had these results. Now listen. A still, small voice sounded in his ears and melted his heart. That, Elijah, is the emblem of a ministry that builds up my people in faith and holy living. That is the constructive force in religion. You have not tried it yet. Go back and appeal to my people, in tenderness and love, and it will surely win. I am in that.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Courage Restored. 1 Kings 19: 15-21.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"He departed thence and found Elisha."

Elisha has the secret of a spiritual ministry. Denunciation of evil is not power. Many preachers would do well to learn Elijah's lesson. Storming at sin and sinners requires little brains or study. Impressing the sweetness and beauty of the divine life in Christ, requires real thought and study. Your wind and fire and earthquake, never break human hearts or build up Christian character. Jesus is the incarnation of the still, small voice. That must be the major chord in a successful ministry. Elijah found Elisha and taught him the mighty secret. Elisha's gentle spirit blessed Israel for half a century.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Journey of Faith. Genesis 12: 1-9.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

That ancient patriarch was one of the great souls of our race. He was the most spiritual man of his age, and he became the father of the most religious nation in the history of the world. His faith in an invisible holy God was a wonderful thing among men. His obedient self-sacrifice, mystified his friends and neighbors. His confident hope of being a blessing to all the children of men is too sublime for comprehension. It has all come true. The finest ideals of this world, the noblest aspirations, the grandest hopes, have come through Abraham and his descendants. Christian missions are to tell the world about them.

LESSON 6.

NOVEMBER 5, 1916.

Shipwrecked on Melita (Malta).

MOTTO TEXT.—

"Jehovah redeemeth the soul of his servants;

And none of them that take refuge in him shall be condemned." (Psa. 34: 22.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Acts 27: 38—28: 10.

MEMORY VERSES, 42-44.

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Lesson Text.

38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39 And when it was day, they knew not the land; but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

40 And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed *themselves* unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

41 And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmovable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape.

43 But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast *themselves* first into the sea; and get to land:

44 And the rest, some on boards, and some on *broken pieces* of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

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Saved.

God promised all the ship's company to Paul; not one should be lost. Then why concern himself farther? Isn't it the sensible and proper thing to sit down and let God work? So some reason, but not Paul. We are co-workers with God. There is not a more wide-awake stirring man on the deck. God helps those who help themselves, not laziness

and stupidity. The ship is anchored while it is pitch dark. Some shore is near. When daylight comes she will be cut loose and driven to the shore, and all aboard will take their chances at swimming to land. Meantime Paul is alert; tells of the angel visit; exhorts to good cheer; urges all to eat a square meal, and does so himself after offering thanks to God. The whole dinned and benumbed group feel the warmth of his spirit. He watches all that is done, divines the sailors' scheme of escape and frustrates it. At last, with the dawn, the cables are cut and the doomed vessel plunges into the reef near the shore. Orders follow for every one to leap into the waters and make his way to the beach. Right here the centurion does a noble thing. The soldiers propose to kill all the prisoners, for their own lives are at stake, should these escape. "No," said Julius, "I will take the risk," for he wants to save Paul. The whole company got to land. God kept his word, and yet Paul had strained every nerve to bring it to pass. The awful experience of the storm is over, the ship has perished, but the people are safe on the island of Malta.

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Hospitality.

The natives, discovering the wreck, gathered and welcomed the unfortunates. Natural human kindness was instantly on expression. All were chilled, and soon they stood round a warming fire. Paul is not a man to be still and let others wait on him. The instinctive refinement and energy of his character shows itself on this homely and commonplace stage. He gathers up a bundle of sticks to replenish the fire, and extends his hands to catch the heat. A viper crawls out and strikes him on the hand. The superstition of the islanders jumps to a conclusion. This man is a murderer. He has escaped the sea, but justice suffers him not to live. *Bad signs* inhabit and distress the brain of ignorance. They did then, they do now. Believe in God and cast these senseless fancies out. The viper is shaken off, and Paul has no hurt. Stupidity reverses, and beholds a god. The governor of the island, Publius, entertains the whole party for three days. Trouble evokes human brotherhood. There is a great deal

of good in human nature. If not, to what could the gospel appeal? Men and women are so good; they ought to be a great deal better.

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Compensation.

Publius' father was sick with a complication of diseases. Paul heard and paid the sick man a visit. He prayed and laid his hand on the patient, the sick improved, and recovered his health. Bread cast on the waters comes back. From this time Paul became the center of interest, and his ministry was much sought by the people. All the sick folk of the island were brought to him and were healed. Calamity to the ship's party meant blessing to the people. The party stayed on the island three months, waiting for the coming of spring, when navigation would open again. Due to Paul, they all fared sumptuously, and at the time of departure were loaded down with presents. It was now more than six months since Paul dropped out of port at Caesarea. Out of the terrible voyage, out of the motley group of his fellow-voyagers, his great manhood emerged resplendent like a star, compelling homage from all classes of men.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Shipwreck. Acts 27: 38-44.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"They escaped all safe to land."

If Paul had not been on that ship, would all have perished? Now, here is a fine question for profitless discussion in a Sunday school class. What might have been had the circumstances been different? I don't know; you don't know; nobody knows. Let us refuse to waste time and speech over supposititious issues. The fact is, that Paul was on the ship, and that his presence was a blessing to all. Here is a good question to raise: How can we so behave ourselves in all situations as to command the respect of men, and do them the most good? This is vital and important. Practical religion is the thing.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Saved from Death. Acts 28: 1-10.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"The barbarians showed us no common kindness."

That was pretty fine conduct for "barbarians." I suspect that Paul and the rest thought they behaved like civilized people. Hospitality is a Christian grace, and these

islanders dispensed it generously. Luke shared it, and it is he who calls them barbarians. He meant no reproach. He was following the common Greek designation. Outside their own nation, they classified all people thus. True, the usage grew out of Greek conceit of superiority, but Luke uses the word in the general sense, without its offensive implication. To us the word "natives" would have a better sound. No man is common or unclean. God has stamped a divine dignity on all men. The designation "heathen" is dropping out of Christian usage.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Song of Deliverance. Jonah 2: 2-9.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Salvation is of the Lord."

On this same sea, another of the Lord's servants went voyaging. He was not constrained as a prisoner, but was deliberately fleeing from duty. A storm overtook him, he confessed his sin, and was thrown to the deep. In the heart of the sea, he called unto the offended God. Hear his confession: "Thou art righteous altogether, O Lord; thou didst cast me into the deep; all thy waves and thy billows passed over me. Yet I will look again to thy holy temple. My prayer came in unto thee; thou hast brought up my life from the pit. I will sacrifice unto thee the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that which I have vowed." His sorrows made him a better man. When we see duty, we see God. We cannot escape either.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Mighty Deliverer. Psalm 18: 6-20.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"He brought me forth also into a large place."

David says, "In my distress, I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice out of his holy temple." This psalm is uncommonly rich in noble imagery, setting forth the terrors of calamity, and the gracious interposition of God. The religious imagination of the Hebrew race has never been equaled. There is much suggestion in the words: "He brought me into a large place." God lifts us up into communion and fellowship with himself. There is the region of solid comfort, freedom and heavenly peace. We are all invited into that large place. Let us practice the divine presence.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Cry of Anguish. Psalm 22: 1-10.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Why hast thou forsaken me?"

This was the awful cry on the cross of Calvary. The greatest souls are the greatest sufferers. Physical pains are as nothing when compared with mental torture. The sense of being left alone in God's universe is the supreme pang of a human spirit. The sufferer in the psalm has not lost faith in God, but is overwhelmed at the sense of his silence and withdrawal. Such seasons of desolation come to all of us, sooner or later. In lower moods, life looks like an empty, aimless thing. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him."

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Prayer for Deliverance. Psalm 22: 11-21.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"Be not far from me, for trouble is near."

Afflictions are sanctified when they force on us the consciousness of perfect dependence on the goodness of God, when they bring us to his feet in humble contrition and repentance; when they induce a spirit of entire submission to his will. Really, we are never far from God, for in him we live and

move and have our being. Our pride, worldliness and selfishness destroy our sensibility to the divine presence. He is not afar off; we are only blinded by evil, that we cannot see. Affliction wars on evil, and makes way for light in the soul. In truth, God is never nearer than in time of trouble.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Song of Praise. Psalm 22: 22-31.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"He is the ruler over the nations."

There is only one God. That is the greatest thought ever received by the human mind. It was new theology in Abraham's day. The world then was full of idolatry. There were gods many, and the race of men was sodden in superstition and moral corruption. The gods were base in the character ascribed to them, and their worship was pollution and shame. The Hebrew race was lifted to the conception of One God, holy, just, and good. That sublime doctrine has abolished idolatry and advanced civilization. It has brought numberless blessings to the children of men. He is the real ruler of the nations, and in keeping his commandments there is great reward.

LESSON 7.

NOVEMBER 12, 1916.

World's Temperance Sunday.

MOTTO TEXT.—"It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth." (Rom. 14: 21.)

LESSON PASSAGE, ROMANS 14: 13-15: 3.
MEMORY VERSES, 14: 16, 17.

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Lesson Text.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of;

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he

eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

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Supremacy of Consciences.

It is the voice of God in us. It is the divine response to things good and evil, which he has put into our spiritual nature. Thou shalt and thou shalt not. Conscience is not the power that decides what is right or what is wrong. Your thinking, judging intellect does that. When you decide that a certain act or principle is right or wrong, then the sovereign conscience says, "Duty is plain, do it." This vice gerent of God in your bosom, is set to enforce your reasoned decisions concerning what is good and bad in conduct. Its command is imperative, absolute, uncompromising.

Some of Paul's brethren made an issue over eating meats offered to idols. In their thinking the meat was defiled, tainted with idolatry, and the Christian eating it, is simply worshipping the idol. That eating is therefore wrong. Authoritative conscience instantly forbids. Square your conduct in line with your conviction. If you consider this meat unclean, then to you it is unclean. You sin if you eat it, for every act that is not based on faith or conviction of its rightness, is sin. You may mistake in your judgment, as to an action being wrong, but that judgment is sincere, and your course is clear. We may differ from a man's views of duty, but we are bound to respect and commend his conscientious performance. Insult to conscience is insult to God. Conscience strangled and seared means wreck to the spiritual nature and loss of the soul. Respect, honor and reverence conscience always, and give loyal obedience.

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Tyranny.

Paul's conscientious abstainers from these meats tried to force their views on the brethren. There the apostle calls a halt. That is always wrong and conscience forbids. The intellect needs enlightenment that it may revise its decisions. There is the root of the matter. Paul calls them weak brethren, be-

cause they have ignorantly found evil where none exists. The idol is nothing in the world, the gods are simply the vain fancies of superstition. Then how can meat, offered by ignorant priests to empty delusion, be defiled thereby? Intelligent, strong brethren understood the facts, and bought the meats in the market and ate without a single doubt. Paul agrees with them. The weak raise a hue and cry. They have settled the fact that such eating is wrong for themselves, and so it is wrong for all. Conscientious, narrow brethren can greatly disturb a church. What they need is not a new conscience, but a larger intelligence. Conscience is all right, but their understanding wants fuller light. That is the remedy for religious dictation and intolerance. Let every man settle what his duty is, in the light of God's Word and his own reason. You must not penalize me for coming to a different view from yourself. I must not punish you for daring to disagree with me. Common sense teaches that this is an evil thing. Religious freedom is a principle forever true and holy. If we refuse to see, or cannot see that, then we will make persecutors. There is the evil of conscientious error. There arises the bloody inquisition.

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Christian Love.

But suppose the strong brother's action tempts the weak to eat against his convictions of right and duty? That is another phase of the situation. What is the strong brother's duty? Surrender of his acknowledged right to eat that meat. He must not imperil the weak man's conscience. He should teach him better and sounder views, but for Christ's sake he must not give inducement to any brother to sin against his conscience. Christian liberty is dear, but a good conscience outranks it. This principle of Christian love applies to the practice of strong drink. A man claims his liberty, saying, "I can command myself to moderation." Very well, maybe he can, but his very success will endanger the weak neighbor who lacks self-command. Conscience thunders, "Thou shalt not." This is the weak man's burden, and we are required to bear it.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Mutual Helpfulness. Romans 14: 13—15: 3.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Let us not therefore judge one another."

Quit this low, mean business of criticizing folks. On the whole, these are all good men.

The weak are contentions and irritating: the strong are impertinent and contemptuous. Both sides indulge in bitter reproach. It is a bad day for the church. Paul treats the case wisely. Stop criticizing. It is unchristian business. All of you seek the mind of Christ and a good conscience. Live by the rule of love. Let not the weak dictate opinions to wiser brethren; and by all means, let the wiser renounce his liberty in the matter of foods; if a weak brother's conscience is in danger, by imitation, we are to give up liberty, not because it offends others, but because it tempts others to offend against their own consciences. Get that point clear.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Divine Requirements. Isaiah 58: 6-12.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"The glory of the Lord shall be thy reward."

Isaiah grasps the idea of unity among men. We are all kin, descended from one Father—God. Made of one blood, all are our brethren. The snobs and aristocrats of the world dislike this doctrine, and yet call Jesus brother and Saviour. The Spirit of God in the prophet condemns oppression of the weak, indifference to human hunger and nakedness. All haughty and conceited aloofness. Hide not thyself from thine own flesh. Like Pharisees, we can so easily fool ourselves. The only way to be right with God is to be right with men. God identifies himself with men, demanding reverence, justice and love. Let us quit calling ourselves religious if we do not purpose respect, kindness and love to all men.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Perfect Love. Matt. 5: 38-48.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Ye are the light of the world."

Intensely personal, intensely practical, this is the one supreme sermon. One hundred and eighty-five times the Preacher uses the personal pronouns, "ye, your, thee, thou, thine." The lack of them makes the sermon dull. Jesus is teaching what "the light" avoids, in our passage. It excludes hate, lust, and lying. Hate is murder, and no murderer shares in the eternal life. Lust is the rottenness of the soul, landing in the hot fires of hell. Lying is the dissolution of character, making a man fit companion of devils. How shall we steer clear of these moral degradations and disasters? By the cultivation of Christian love. The Teacher deepens all the religious

conceptions of his age. Are we Christians? Our neighbors will know it without asking the question. They see the light.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Brotherly Love. Luke 10: 25-37.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Brought him to an inn, and took care of him."

This wonderful story takes your religion outside your church, your denomination, your country and your racial lines. It finds your neighbor in every needy human soul. Some limit their regards and sympathies to their own set, their own denomination or tribe. That is not religion. God loved this whole world, and Jesus tasted death for every man. He has committed us to home and foreign missions. We dare not imitate the priest and the Levite. The good Samaritan is your model. At personal inconvenience and expense he cared for a suffering man he never saw before. Go thou and do likewise.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Separation from Uncleanness. 2 Cor. 6: 14-18.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"What fellowship have righteousness and iniquity?"

Be not unequally yoked together. What communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial? What portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? What agreement hath a temple of God with idols? The Christian partakes of the nature of God; he is in sacred union with Christ. His life must be Godlike, he must become conformable to the moral image of God's Son. We are temples of the living God, and must not contaminate our souls by corrupt associations. Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord. Abraham lived apart. Lot mixed with the Sodomites. Which one did Sodom most good? Stand with Christ and his people. The Lord help us.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Resisting Temptation. James 1: 12-18.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"God cannot be tempted with evil."

Some men dare to lay their evil doings on God. Robert Burns sang this blasphemy thus: "Thou knowest thou hast made me, with passions wild and strong; and listening to their witching voice, has often led me wrong."

There is the impudent and insulting effort to lay the responsibility of Hurns' immoralities on the holy God. You have heard men excuse themselves under this same monstrous plea. His own lust, his own selfishness and pride have drawn him into sin. The guilt is his own, and responsibility cannot be escaped or transferred. Let us confess our sins to God, and be as faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Prayer for the Tempted. Psalm 141.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me."

LESSON 8.

NOVEMBER 19, 1916.

From Melita to Rome.

MOTTO TEXT.—"I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. 1: 16.)

LESSON PASSAGE, ACTS 28: 11-31.

MEMORY VERSES, 30, 31.

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Lesson Text.

11 And after three months we departed in a ship of *Al-ix-án-dria*, which had wintered in the *Isle*, whose sign was *Cás'tor* and *Póllux*.

12 And landing at *Syr-a-cúse*, we tarried *there* three days.

13 And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to *Rhé-gí-um*: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to *Pó-tó-ni*:

14 Where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome.

15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as *Áp-pi-l ó-rúm*, and *The three taverns*: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I

Keep the door of my lips. How good a prayer is that for every rising morn. We speak a multitude of words each day. If a man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man. We have so many impulses during the day, to smite somebody unkindly. Our dangerous foes are from within. Can't we live one day without criticism and harsh judgment? Let us try it. Then let us be willing to receive rebuke at the hands of the wise and good. Faithful are the wounds of a friend. Judas was angered when Jesus commanded ignorant criticism to cease, while he approved the good deed of many. That night he began to confer with the enemies of his Master.

have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from *Jerú-sá-lem* into the hands of the *Ró-mans*.

18 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me.

19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto *Cás-sar*: not that I had ought to accuse my nation of.

20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of *is-ra-el* I am bound with this chain.

21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of *Jerú-sá-lem* concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee.

22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging: to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning *Jesús*, both out of the law of *Moses*, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him,

31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord *Jesús* Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

The Last Lap.

Spain opens, and the last lap of the journey is at hand. Trading vessels venture out of winter harbors, and on one Paul's company takes shipping for Rome, reaching the city in three weeks. Landing at *Puteoli*, 140 miles from Rome, he has the joy of meeting Christian brethren, with whom, by the kindness of the centurion, he is allowed to spend a week. On the road he met two groups of brethren who came far out of the city to give him welcome. These evidences of respect and love were uncommonly precious to the heart of Paul, long starved for fellowship and affection. In Rome he got permission to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him. The Roman officials continue to treat him with all permissible favor. Such has been the profound impression made upon others by the nobility of his gifts and character. They know likewise that such a man in chains was an outrage on all justice. They gave him every allowable courtesy, and it was particularly fortunate that they refused to confine him in a prison.

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Preaching.

He never forgets that he is Christ's slave. The king's business urges him on. He invites the leading Jews to his house, makes simple and unembittered explanation of his presence in Rome as a prisoner. They respond: "We have heard nothing ill against you, but of this sect you represent, we have heard it much spoken against." With that he preaches Christ to them, showing how he is the fulfillment of the Scriptures. Some were impressed and convinced, but others would not believe. Then he said to them as they turned away: "Thus is fulfilled the Scripture, which speaks of your unhearing ears and unseeing eyes. Lo, I turn unto the Gentiles." It was two years before his case got to *Cásar*, due, perhaps, to a full docket before him. Under pathetic limitations the sublime hero did a mighty work that reached even *Cásar's* household, and during the period the great letters were written to the *Philippians*, the *Ephesians*, and the *Colossians*. Here Luke strangely ends his story. What came of the trial we know not. Historic legend drops round the immortal missionary at the point where Luke's record ceases. The splendid life closes in a cloud of uncertain tradition. The good fight is fought, the cross is exchanged for a crown.

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Why the Acts.

The book divides itself into four parts of seven chapters each. Part first, the growth

of Christianity in Jerusalem; part second, spread of Christianity and conversion of Paul; part third, Paul's widening missionary labors; part fourth, the trials of Paul before Roman courts. Luke evidently regards part fourth the important part of his history. All of it is vitally interesting, but here he puts the emphasis. Why? Because his main design is to show the spirit of the Roman empire toward early Christianity. That is shown strikingly in its dealings with Paul, the chief representative of Christianity. The book was written between 75 A.D. and 80 A.D. At this time the empire was growing distinctly hostile to the faith as it is in Jesus. Roman authorities were beginning to persecute, and this was the supreme peril of the cause. It was assailed as an illegal religion, and a menace to the peace of the empire. This was the crisis that called out Luke's story of early Christianity. In its beginnings Rome recognized its legitimacy and its harmlessness. She protected Paul's rights as a Christian minister. Philippian rulers apologized for the wrong done him as a Roman citizen. Gallio, at Corinth, drove out his assailants from the Roman court. Captain *Lysias* saved him from the mob in Jerusalem. *Felix* and *Festus* guarded him against the malice of the Jews. Captain *Julius* showed him all courtesy. In Rome he is kindly treated by the authorities. Luke brings out all these points. Why seven chapters devoted to the trials? There the chief stress lies for the Roman public. The government then saw no peril in Christianity, but recognized it as a permissible religion, and protected it. Why persecute it now?

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—From *Melita* to Rome. Acts 28: 11-22.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage."

It was a touching scene. Paul warmly shaking the hands of strange brethren, and the gladness of his heart shining in his face. Dear man, he was showing age under the blows and sorrows endured for the sake of Jesus. His soul was rich in affection. He had given it freely, and craved it in return. Too little did he ever receive. His shoulders bore others' burdens, but too few helped to bear his own. The show of love melted him to tenderness and inspired his courage. Let me tell you a secret. There are old people round you who need your cheering words and hearty hand-grasps. If you would only think about it. Don't forget. Know this, the old minister appreciates attention now more than he did when he was young. Remember.

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Preaching in Rome. Acts 28: 23-31.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"He received all that came in unto him."

In Rome now, but not as he had hoped when he wrote his great letter to the Romans, more than two years ago. I have learned in whatsoever condition I am, therein to be content. I was called to preach and suffer. By his grace I have learned even to glory in my sufferings, for I am persuaded that thereby the power of Jesus is magnified. Conditions for a large ministry in Rome are lacking, but thank God they are no worse. That hired house of Paul's became well known, and many felt the attraction of his genius and his piety. Some, evil-minded, wanted to add affliction to his bonds by preaching Christ out of derision. No matter for that. One good result; the name of Christ becomes more widely known.

WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—An Innocent Prisoner. Gen. 39: 19-23.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"But the Lord was with Joseph."

There is nothing more shameless and cruel than a bad woman. The chastity of Joseph is his snare. Basely slandered, he lands in jail. Conscious honor is a vast support in such a hour. He did not collapse nor yield to vain regret. Bearing himself bravely and cheerfully, he won the favor of the prison keeper. Seeing his competency, the keeper turned over the order and discipline of the prisoners to his hand. The Lord was with the undaunted clean young man. So is he with all young men today stimulating to energy, purity, and courage. The boy worked with God. He helps your son in the same way. Too often the vile woman snatches away the glory of young men and bars the door to honor and achievement.

THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Happy Prisoner. Phil. 1: 12-21.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"For me to live is Christ."

Unity of the believer with Christ was the sublime Pauline doctrine. Oneness with Jesus in a divine life is his interpretation of the Christian life. It is the loftiest conception of salvation ever proclaimed. The piety of it is, this view is not sufficiently understood and enforced. It is our Saviour's view. "I am the Vine and ye are the branches. I in you, and you in me." Paul grasps the

thought with more clearness than any other man in the New Testament. For me to live is Christ. I am in a divine life now, so are all believers. This is what he means when he says we are no longer under law, but under grace. Here and now you and I are to live a divine life. Sin must have no dominion over us.

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Prisoner not Ashamed. 1 Tim. 1: 7-18.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"I thank him that enabled me . . . and appointing me to his service."

Here shines out again the astounding spirituality and heroism of Paul. He has lost all, commonly held dear in this world, for his devotion to Christ. Ease, comfort, friends and country all laid on the altar. Poverty, shame, distress, and hate cheerfully accepted. Worn and battered into a premature old age, there is no abatement of faith, hope, and consecration. His glory is oneness with Christ, identified with him in labors and sorrows, in losses and tribulations; but also in his peace and joy and blessed hope for the kingdom of God. I am glad he honored me with a call into this ministry; blessed be his holy name. Yes, he lives a divine life.

SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Suffering and Reigning. 2 Tim. 2: 1-13.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"If we endure, we shall also reign with him."

Long ago Paul picked up Timothy at Lystra on his second missionary journey. The youth had met all fond expectation. His theological seminary was the mission field, and Paul was his consummate teacher. The teacher is old now, and his hope rests more and more in the younger disciples he has trained. He renews exhortations to Timothy, not that he distrusts, but that he believes in the firmness of his faith and love. He can but remind him that the hardships of the Christian ministry are inevitable. But a good soldier expects no ease in a fierce campaign. Be steadfast, knowing the cause is sure to win, and we shall reign with him in glory.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Prison Hardships. 2 Tim. 4: 9-18.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Take Mark and bring him with thee."

Don't you remember Mark? He made a bad break at the opening of his career. He deserted Paul and Barnabas on the first

mission journey. Repentant and desirous of joining them again at the outset of the second, Paul would have nothing to do with him. He has recovered himself, and won the heart of the great apostle. Don't cast out a man who falls once or twice. Paul did not want him

until he had proved himself. Too much was involved. Let Mark show his manhood. He did, and Paul gladly welcomed him. He became a solid comfort to the mighty exponent of the gospel of Christ. Thank God for Paul, the grandest servant Jesus has ever had.

LESSON 9.

NOVEMBER 26, 1916.

A Living Sacrifice.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." (Romans 12: 1.)

LESSON PASSAGE, ROMANS 12.

MEMORY VERSES, 6-8.

Lesson Text.

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Eternal Fact.

God is love, love is self-giving, and that is eternal sacrifice. This is the glory of God; love, service, sacrifice. This is the divine perfection referred to by Jesus when he said:

"Be ye perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect." Because God is eternal love, he is eternal sacrifice, and the blessedness of love is the blessedness of self-giving. Jesus prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." He was not asking for the glory of the transfiguration, but for that eternal glory which he had before the world was. The prayer was granted. He was given the glory of the "Lamb slain before the foundation of the world." Sacrifice, self-giving, is the essential, the eternal glory of God. Faith in God accepts this view and acknowledges the duty, the necessity, and the glory of cross-bearing. When we sing, "In the cross of Christ I glory," how many of us know what the words mean? How many could sing them at all if they really grasped the meaning as Jesus did? The Christian life is a divine life of love, service, and sacrifice. In the degree that we enter into the Spirit of Christ we are Christianized. To his likeness it is God's purpose that we all shall come. This is an high calling, surely. Don't try to lower its standard. Don't soften its requirements, or tone it down to meet the demands of selfishness. "He saved others, himself he cannot save." Never truer words spoken, in a sense, not meant by the speaker. Except a grain of corn give itself away in sacrifice, it abides alone. Selfishness is the effort to save one's life with total indifference to the good of others. It is the loss of life, because it is apart from the true fountain of life, which is the eternal self-giving, sacrificing love of God.

Great Exemplars.

Abraham saw the love of God, and its nature of unselfish sacrifice. "He saw my day," said Jesus; that is, he laid hold of the deepest element in God's character which Jesus brought to complete expression on earth. Yes, Abraham saw the glory of living for others, and in the strength of a great faith gave up

friends and country for the good he might do to all the children of men. Personal ease and comfort on the one hand; blessing to all nations on the other. I will live and sacrifice for others was his decision. "Friend of God" and "father of believers" are his crowns of glory.

Moses saw Christ's day when he rose to grand sacrifice of Egypt's pleasures and honors, identifying himself with his own suffering people. That is the spirit of Christ. That is oneness with Christ, whose eternal glory is that of the slain "Lamb". Beloved, that is salvation. Don't fancy that salvation is a local transfer to a heavenly home—getting to heaven when we die. It is seeing Christ's day of love, service, and sacrifice; it is being made conformable to his image: For Christ's sake, and for our own soul's sake, let us not miss the meanings of our religion. It is a great thing to be a Christian in deed and in truth. The selfish life is in deadly contradiction of the life of God in Christ.

Paul said, "For me to live is Christ," "Christ liveth in me." He verified it in the surrender of all he had, and even his very life itself. For whom did he make the sublime sacrifice? For others. He loved his neighbors, even as Christ loved them. Such was his aspiration. He saw Christ's day. This was the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This was the mark to which he was always pressing. Do we believe in God? Yes, we do believe. Lord increase our faith. Let us remove all the mountains of our selfish belief.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Living Sacrifice. Rom. 12: 1-8.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Present your bodies a living sacrifice."

God revealed himself to Abraham as one who delights not in dead but living sacrifices. By faith in the one spiritual God, he was saved from offering a dead son, but on the contrary was led to devoting the living boy to the divine life of love, service, and sacrifice. Soul and body belong to God, and obedience to his will is the health of each. The body has not an appetite that is wrong in itself. It is made to be an instrument of righteousness. Mind controls body, and will do it if it believes God. Great convictions and a determined purpose will ensure the living sacrifice. None of self and all of thee.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Christian Ideal. Rom. 12: 9-21.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Let love be without hypocrisy."

You can't love many people with an affectionate, personal attachment. That is not the meaning. You can bear good will and a kindly spirit toward all men. That is the thing required. You can refuse to dislike people, and you must. You can sympathize and help in cases of human need, and you will if you have the Spirit of Christ. You can have good will to the unlovely. You can bear good will to your enemies, while disapproving of their thoughts and ways. You dare not hate, and so commit spiritual suicide. Don't pretend more regard for people than you feel. Abhor hypocrisy. We must be friendly and kindhearted to all men. Live the divine life.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Better than Sacrifice. Mic. 6: 1-8.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with thy God."

The prophet spoke words that go to the heart of religion. They can never be improved. Israel was so punctilious about the offerings of the sanctuary; she was so careful about all the outward forms of worship. This was good so far as it went. But she missed the soul of religion. Men were unjust to their neighbors, indifferent to their burdens and sorrows, and puffed up with religious pride. They walked in a vain show of piety, with not one hint of its reality in conduct. Their zeal for the usual services and sacrifices made their inward hypocrisy all the more shocking. The true sacrifices are justice, mercy, and humility.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Divine Standard. Isa. 1: 10-17.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Wash you, make you clean."

Pharisaic religion has always been a temptation and a peril. The outward shows of religion come easy, but not so the inner reality of goodness and truth. It is easy to conform to the letter of the law, but it is a much more serious thing to have its spirit. Isaiah was disgusted at horrible impieties that cloaked themselves in the guise of true religion. He unsparingly tore the veil off their iniquities, and they persecuted him to death. Jesus met the same hollow mockeries, and uncovered them to the gaze of men. Angered hypocrisy murdered him. Wash and be clean is still the cry of the true men of God.

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The New Covenant. Jer. 31: 31-37.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"I will put my law in their inward parts."

The letter of the law will be written on the hearts of men. Emphasis will be transferred from the outward to the inward. From objective rules God will pass to subjective principles. In these words is predicted the vanishing of Moses' law, and the coming of the gospel. At the heart of that law the spiritual character of God was enshrined, but Israel was blind and deaf to the fact. God will make love and service and sacrifice more evident. He will incarnate them in his Son. They shall live and move and act in the divine-human Jesus. I will draw all men unto me. They shall share my glory.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Essence of Religion. Hos. 6: 1-6.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"I desire mercy and not sacrifice."

All the great prophets grappled with the same problems. Religious sham outraged them on every hand. The people, high and low, were alive to the forms, but dead to the power of religion. Spiritually was wanting. The altars were piled with victims, and

a riot of transgression followed. They proposed to win the favor of God by outward conformity, not by loving filial efforts to resemble him in moral character. It was practical heathenism masquerading in the vestments of true religion. This it was that broke the hearts of the prophets. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a contrite heart. Let us not say, Lord, Lord, and then do not the things he says.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Ideal Christian. Matt. 5: 1-12.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"Blessed are the pure in heart."

Jesus defines the nature of citizenship in the kingdom of God. The Jews of his day fancied that they were already in that kingdom by virtue of descent from Abraham. Ye must be born again. You must yield to the domination of God's Spirit. You must be made a new creation in Christ. The pure in heart shall see God. They shall see duty; they shall see the nature of his holiness and love. They shall live in his divine life of love, service, and sacrifice. Seeing the beauty of God, they shall be transformed into his likeness. Righteousness is the badge of his children, the reward and glory of his kingdom. God help us to be pure in heart.

LESSON 10.

DECEMBER 3, 1916.

Jesus Christ, the First and the Last.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore." (Rev. 1: 17, 18.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Rev. 1.

MEMORY VERSES, 4-6.

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Lesson Text.

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced

him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wall because of him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter:

20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

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Aim of the Book.

CONSOLATION and encouragement to distressed Christians, is the aim of this book of Revelation. John is certain that divine vengeance will overtake the Roman empire. He hates it, as an empire of iniquity and persecution. No such enmity is found in the epistles of Paul, due to the fact that in his day the empire had not become a persecutor of Christianity. Revelation was written during the term of the Emperor Domitian, who reigned 81 A.D. to 96 A.D. It was in this reign that the empire adopted a policy of persecution against its Christian subjects. Christians were hated as unpatriotic and atheistic, as devotees to the black arts and enemies of the human race. These charges grew out of the facts that the Christians refused to worship the Emperor Domitian; that they scorned all the popular idolatry; that their services were held in secret, and that they kept themselves separate from all heathen assemblies and practices. On these grounds an uncompromising war was declared by the empire against the churches of Jesus Christ. It was a time of untold tribulation. It looked impossible for Christianity to survive. The book of Revelation is written to give comfort and hope to the suffering Christians.

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The Vision.

In this awful depression that fell on Paul at the beginning of his work in Corinth, he was cheered by the vision of the comforting

Christ. The same vision came to him later in the gloom of his prison in Jerusalem. I will be with thee, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. These were instances of personal discouragement. Times are changed, and the whole brotherhood of Christians is in a fiery furnace. To John, as representative of the widespread sorrow, a vision of Christ is granted. It is born of the steadfast faith of his people in him as the power of God and the wisdom and love of God. The general grief felt that it was a time for God to bare his arm and save his cause from destruction. The eagles swoop on the trembling doves; the wolves rush on the little flock. All hope centers in God and his Son, Jesus. On the Lord's day, John was rapt in the spirit of adoration and longing for God, when a voice greeted his ears, like the sound of a trumpet. Turning, a most wonderful, heavenly pageant broke on his sight. The supplication of his downcast soul was about to be answered. All the emblems of interposing love and might were grouped in the vision. A majestic human form, robed, belted with gold, eyes flashing fire, voice sounding like many waves, face shining as the sun, and a sharp, two-edged sword proceeding out of his mouth. Here were all the insignia of dignity and power; all the symbols of love and protection. The vision met the needs of the hour. He always comes to guard and bless his troubled ones. John fell at his feet as a dead man. That good, pierced hand was laid upon him. That voice of assuring gentleness bade him fear not. "I am the first and the last. I was dead and here I am alive forevermore, holding the keys that unlock death and hades. The seven stars in my right hand are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lamp-stands are the seven churches. Write down your vision of what is, and what shall be hereafter." God hears the cry of his servants. His cause shall not die at the hands of the hostile Roman empire. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. God will save his people. Such is the Revelation.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—THE FIRST and the LAST. Rev. 1: 1-8.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."

Already the Christian Sunday had established itself in the hearts and religious services of the early church. As a memorial of Christ's resurrection, it had displaced the old Jewish sabbath, as the day of worship. John was in the Spirit. Humbly, reverently, imploringly, his distressed soul cries out for the

living God. The Christian lives in the Spirit and the Spirit indwells the Christian. But on the Lord's day, it is good to concentrate our thoughts and aspirations on the living God. Order all other interests of home and business into the background, and try to practice the presence of God. We need the bread of life.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—THE LIVING ONE. Rev. 1: 9-20.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore."

I was persecuted as a traitor, malefactor and enemy of God and man. I passed through tribulation and death into the eternal life of God. I was dead, but I live forevermore. See the ground of comfort in these words. God is Spirit and can never perish. The Master suffered, and his people must suffer. An ungodly world is inevitably hostile to him and to them. They, too, may be killed, but they shall not perish. God is the life of his cause, and hence it shall live forever. Christianity is Christ in men and women, and, hence, it shall never pass away. Right at the start, stands the blessed assurance that the religion of Jesus shall outlast the Roman empire.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—THE THRONE IN HEAVEN. Rev. 4: 1-11.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"For thou didst create all things."

Affliction draws men to God. We must find the Rock that is higher than our own. John's mind, saddened by the scenes and woes of earth, is invited to enter the door of heaven and to behold the glory of the sovereign God. Witness the throne of his power, and the adoration given him by all living creatures. The symbolism is evident. God has power to help, restore and preserve. The Roman empire cannot dethrone God. Until it can, Christianity is safe on the earth. In your grief, look up, not down. Dwell on the goodness, love and power of God; hope thou in God. He made all things, and will make all things work together for the children of God.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—THE SEALED BOOK. Rev. 5: 1-6.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"The lion of the tribe of Judah hath overcome."

The best key to understanding this book of Revelation is its aim at comfort and encouragement in a time of great tribulation. That

will give you the largest sum of its meanings. Why these sufferings of God's people? Why does he permit the brutalities and crimes of the Roman empire against the followers of his Son? Here is certainly a sealed book, the mystery of God's providence. John wept that no man could open it. Our very life is mystery; our presence in a vast universe is mystery; our heartbreaks are mystery. Believe in God. We are the sheep of his pasture. The good Shepherd knows. His whole nature is love. We are in his hands. Let us trust and wait.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—WORSHIP OF THE LAMB. Rev. 5: 7-14.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"And they sing a new song."

The same person is Lion and Lamb in the text. Christ, the Lion, overcame the world, conquered death and the grave. Christ, the Lamb, bore his sufferings in meekness and invincible faith. In his nature, the force of the Lion blends with the gentleness of the Lamb. He opens the book. He understands the ministry of pain in the universe, and its harmony with God's love and power. He knows, but cannot tell us now. He will give us the secret some day. Through sufferings to glory was the way he trod. And now a new song in heaven celebrates love's deepest mystery. Sacrifice is the crown of glory. For them who toil and suffer with him there is a crown of life. Be strong, be of good courage. His kingdom on earth cannot die.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—WHITE-ROBED MULTITUDE. Rev. 7: 9-17.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"These are they that come out of the great tribulation."

In bringing many sons and daughters into the kingdom of his glory, God made the captain of his salvation perfect through suffering. Keep firm grip on the book's aim, comfort and encouragement. That white-robed throng before the throne, who are they? They shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more. The Lamb shall lead them unto fountains of waters of life; and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. Who are they? These are they who suffered in his name and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They entered into his life, suffered with him, and so shall ever be with the Lord.

SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Fourfold Hallelujah. Rev. 19: 1-10.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—“For the marriage of the Lamb is come.”

Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him. Here the book foretells the final issue of redemption through Christ. In vision the author sees the glorified church, the bride of the Lamb. In love's holy ceremony, the unity of Christ

and his people receives its eternal ratification. The Roman empire is long dead, with its criminals and vain idolatries. The church of Christ was built on a rock. Christianity was the life of God in men. Redemption is complete, God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. We are bidden to the marriage. Let us make our robes of righteousness ready. Let us tune our voices for the song of Moses and the Lamb.

LESSON 11.

DECEMBER 10, 1916.

Faithful Unto Death.

MOTTO TEXT.—“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.” (Rev. 2: 10.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Rev. 2: 1-17.
MEMORY VERSE, 7.

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Lesson Text.

1 Unto the angel of the church of Eph'e-sus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works: or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nic-o-lai'tanes, which I also hate.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyr'na write: These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive:

9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Sa'tan.

10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

12 And to the angel of the church in Perga-mus write: These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Sa'tan's seat is, and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein An'ti-pas sees my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Sa'tan dwelleth.

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast these things that hold the doctrine of Ba'alam, who taught Ba'laac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Is-ra-el, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nic-o-lai'tanes, which thing I hate.

16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

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Ephesus.

EPHESUS WAS a good church; she was not perfect, but there were many excellent points

to her credit. The Spirit is going to mention things commendable and one thing not commendable. Notice that he begins with the praiseworthy things. Paul was in the habit of doing this. It is sense and religion. It is just and true. Recognition of the virtues of individual or church, warms the heart, gratifies a proper self-esteem, and makes the mind receptive of admonition and reproof. The other method hardens and repels. It is not true nor just, and renders blame or correction ineffective. Always and everywhere, say the good things first. Ephesus is an active body of men and women, not slothful, not too lazy or indifferent to attend services, or too stingy to help bear expenses. She is patient under the general persecution, not retreating from the Christian faith, nor wrathfully storming at her foes. One count is against her, she has lost her first love. The old-time zeal and fine, brotherly devotion, one to another, is missing. She has become a little too cold, stiff and formal. Dear brethren resist this tendency. Cultivate the feelings of cordial, good fellowship with Christ and one another. Be a beautiful family for God, in the community, keep the faith, do the work, and fill the house with love.

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Smyrna.

She gets a loving message from the Lord. "I know your works, your tribulations and poverty, and the wrongs you suffer at the hands of your evil-minded and evil-speaking neighbors. Known unto God are all these things." Your Saviour bids you be of good cheer; fear none of those things which you shall suffer. Let not your faith break down in the storms of trouble that are yet to come. Be steadfast unto the end and I will give thee a crown of life. If any man will be a Christian, he shall not be able to escape persecution. Endure it as the Master did, who received a name above every man. Smyrna is poor in the goods of this world, but she is rich in spiritual things. Her first love had not grown cold. What a joy to be pastor of such a church! The Lord finds only good in it: not one thing to blame. Think of it, every member a devoted, active, loving, exemplary Christian. Are there any Smyrna's now? Happy, if there was one in every seven, as in Asia. Let us be sunny and gracious, and hope that there are many Smyrna's now in the world.

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Pergamum.

I know thy works, thy character, thy community, where Satan sits enthroned. This

church had the worst possible surroundings; her light shone in the midst of the darkest spiritual night. There is a test of courage and strength. Yet she adheres to his name and renounces not her faith, though one of her members has been murdered. One fault she has, she is lax in discipline. Immorality and false doctrines were in the membership, and she has not taken pains to correct either. Repent, change your mind on this matter of discipline, and cleanse the leaven of sin out of your body. Each time there is an impressive exhortation to bear the voice of the Spirit. Christ is that Spirit. The words of the Spirit of God are solemn words, and the church must take heed. Note the different descriptions of the Christ in each message. He who holds the seven stars in his hand, speaks to Ephesus; the first and the last, speaks to Smyrna; and he who wields the sharp two-edged sword, speaks to Pergamum.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Faithful unto Death. Rev. 2: 1-11.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—“I know thy works.”

Christ in this vision walks among the golden candlesticks. This is in full accord with his words, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.” He still walks among his churches. They are his, and it is his right to watch their activities and note the spirit that moves them. He knows your church, and attends all its services. He hears every song, prayer and sermon. He watches every collection and knows the size of every one's contribution. He sees the inner motives in each soul. He knows merits and demerits, fidelities and delinquencies. Would you love to hear him speak his estimate of your church? His Spirit gives the information.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Faithful in All Things. Rev. 2: 12-17.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—“To him that overcometh.”

Get the militant idea of Christianity running through all these messages. The Christian life means struggle and achievement. Press on, strive to enter in, resist evil, be steadfast, grow in grace, fight a good fight, let your light shine. In face of all these urgencies, how can people say, “I was soundly converted and I am saved; nothing more remains to do”? Oh, the sinful ignorance of some who expect to go to heaven when they die! To him that overcometh. Does that mean just nothing to the idle, useless church

member? Listen: To him that overcometh, I will give to eat of the tree of life in the paradise of God; he shall not be hurt of the second death; I will give him of the hidden manna, and a white stone with a new name written on it. Heaven is for victorious faith and work.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Exhortation to Watchfulness. Rev. 3: 1-6.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"He that hath an ear, let him hear."

To Sardis, he says, "I know thy works." Christ is not listening for words, but looking for works. What are his people doing? If they are not trying to duplicate his life in the community, why do they call themselves Christians. Sardis gets a terrible rebuke. Thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead. They were doing nothing for God. I reckon they were too lazy even to keep house clean. Yes; there were a few members who were worth while. How lonely they were! Let the church repent, mend its ways and watch. He that overcometh shall be arrayed in white garments, and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Promise to the Faithful. Rev. 3: 7-13.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"I also will keep thee from the hour of trial."

Neither is there a word of disapproval for the church at Philadelphia. For though your strength is small, you have kept my word; you have not renounced my name. You see the implications of persecution, in these words, with the natural temptation to give up a profession of faith in Christ. I will give you power over your persecutors; by your noble example of meekness and heroism, they shall know there is reality and power in the Christian religion. Ye are the light of God in Philadelphia. I am coming to you. Him that conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God; on him I will write the name of my God.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Spiritual Fervor. Rev. 3: 14-22.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Lo, I stand at the door and knock."

Laodicea is the worst church in the whole group. She is even deader than Sardis. She

is lukewarm, neither cold nor hot; too bad to be saved, a little too good to be lost. I will spit thee out of my mouth. One thing, she was conceited, her members were prosperous in business. We are rich, and our church is getting on well. Christ says, "You are miserable, pitiful, poor, blind, naked." There was not enough religion in the church to call for opposition of foes. They have literally turned Christ out of its membership. Think of Jesus as an excluded member of one of his churches! It can be done, and that is what the grossly inconsistent member tries to do. "Lo, I stand at the door and knock."

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Trust in God. Psalm 125.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"So the Lord is round about his people."

Trust in God means solid conviction that truth and righteousness and perfection is the divine standard for human character; that love is an external principle, supreme in the life of God and man; that Jesus is God's model of a redeemed life, and obedience to him is the great all-comprehensive duty of men and women. If you believe these, you can't help trying to please him in all your ways. Faith sets a man to working and acting for the honor of God. It is not faith, if such is not its effect. A life so directed, inspired and energized, is sheltered under the wing of the Almighty; it is hid in God.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—God's Forgiving Love. Psalm 130.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"That thou mayest be feared."

The returning prodigal, humbled, penitent and imploring, met a forgiving father. All his days he could not love that father enough. He did not fear and tremble in his presence, but he gave him the most loving reverence and obedience. That great forgiveness, to him, was a revelation of his father's goodness and affection. Could he ever dispense him more? Could he ever again wound his heart? No; I love him, I reverence him with all my soul. That is the kind of fear that the forgiveness of God elicits. Not a slavish dread, that would dishonor God, but a deep veneration and love. The forgiveness of God calls for a lifelong devotedness and reverence.

LESSON 12.

DECEMBER 17, 1916.

The Holy City.

MOTTO TEXT.—"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples." (Rev. 21: 3.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Rev. 21: 1-4, 9-14, 22-27; 22: 1-3.

MEMORY VERSE, 21: 3, 4.

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Lesson Text.

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

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The Book's Theme.

You always want a great headlight in the effort at understanding any book in the Scrip-

ture. If you can get its theme, you have that light. Without it, satisfactory interpretation is impossible. Many interpreters think the theme of Revelation is the assured triumph of Christianity over all its foes. Destruction comes to the persecuting Roman empire, and glorious deliverance to the suffering churches. Caesar's defeat and overthrow, and finally Christ's victory in a new heaven and a new earth. This is the theme of a brilliant book. Its aim is to encourage the faith, hope and devotion of the little groups of Christians in the furnace of affliction. It was a dangerous book to write in that day. Rome must not be able to understand it. Hence, the author puts his thoughts in mysterious figures, visions and symbols. The brutal enemy knows not its meanings, but the faithful know. The book's inspiration came by the Spirit of God. John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. It served a noble purpose, heartening men and women, helping their souls to endurance. It mightily helped to preserve the kingdom of God on earth.

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The Analysis.

1. The Introduction—chapter 1.
2. Messages to the Seven Churches—chapters 2, 3.
3. Period of Struggle and Misery—chapters 4-7.
4. Christ's Final Struggle—chapters 8-14.
5. Victory over Rome—chapters 15-20.
6. Vision of Christ's Kingdom—chapters 21, 22.

Part first, discloses the comforting fact that the battle is the Lord's. Against him the fury of Rome is directed. In his hand is a two-edged sword. No weapon forged against him shall prosper. He is mighty to save. His kingdom endureth forever. Part second emphasizes the fact that he needs and must have the cooperation of his churches. The cause cannot fail if they are faithful and true to him, as he is faithful and true to them. That is the impressive lesson, absolutely true then, and just as true now. He is not able to overcome this wicked world, with a cowardly, hesitating, time-serving people. The messages to seven churches mean exactly this and they hold good for all time. Fidelity and

courage assured, the other parts show the progress of spiritual conquest and the final triumph of redeeming love in the coming of the city of God.

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Its Interpretation.

No book in the Bible has been subject to so many fantastic, useless and contradictory interpretations. It has been a paradise for authors who revel in the obscure and the mysterious. Forgetting the historical situation and the intensely practical purpose of John, along with the necessity for veiled statement, they have found many curious and astounding meanings, that John never dreamed of. Don't waste time on such books. Study it for yourself, and in the light of the outstanding facts. The book puzzled Luther, and he cared little for it. Calvin neglected it, refusing to comment on it. But since their day, it has come to its place of honor, and is properly esteemed. It is a brilliant piece of inspired imaginative writing, suffused with spirituality and instinct with power to stir religious emotion and Christian faith. It is the confirmation of hope and confidence that the gates of hell shall not prevail against our Lord. The letters to the churches show the frailties and sins that hinder the gospel's progress, along with the eternal principles of activity and consecration, indispensable to its victory. The last vision of a heavenly city on earth, is rapturous, inspiring to steadfast love, service and sacrifice. The book presents a noble ideal of Christian character, assurance of the unflinching justice of God, and a prophecy of the final triumph of good over evil.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Holy City. Rev. 21: 1-14.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"I saw a new heaven and a new earth."

That bridal scene of a redeeming Lord and a redeemed people is one of the loveliest pictures in all literature. Abraham's far-off dream of a world blessed by his faith has come true. The old prophet's hope of a world filled with righteousness is realized. Jesus' expectation of a human race unified in the kingdom of God on earth is fulfilled. Heaven is here, when God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. The Holy City is the symbol of human society, purged of its vanities, pride and cruelties, clad in white robes of righteousness, and filled with peace and joy. All this comes by struggle and sacrifice.

TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Presence of God. Rev. 21: 22-27.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"I saw no temple."

The temple loses its sacred uses in the great day coming. Its services were needful once, its forms and ceremonies helped to realize the presence of God. Not so now, in the Holy City. His presence is immediate to vision, and adoration calls for no mediation of temple rites. God is himself our temple. Sun and moon are no longer necessary, for the city is lighted by the glory of God and the Lamb. There is no night there. The gates of the city are never shut, for it is one eternal day. There the rivers of pleasure eternally roll, and the smile of the Lord is the peace of the soul. So shall we be forever with the Lord.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE VERSE.—River of Life. Rev. 22: 1-5.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"And his servants shall do him service."

This verse does not favor the idea that heaven will be a place of condition of rest and inactivity. Such is the too common anticipation. "God worketh, and I work," said our Lord. A heaven of eternal repose and singing of psalms does not appeal to energetic souls. Give us a heaven of service, where progress and growth go on forever. Poor, tired servants long for rest. It is promised in a divine activity that never knows weariness. Tollsomeness is banished, and service becomes an eternal habitude. They shall see his face, they will need no lamp or sun to shine upon them, and they will reign forever and ever.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Glory of Zion. Isaiah 60: 10-22.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation."

Thank God for men and women who despair not, but see visions of a brighter day. Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and put her people in exile. Isaiah comforts the hearts of his downcast countrymen. Cheer up! God will bring in a better day. Jerusalem shall be rebuilt. She shall become the joy of the whole earth and her walls shall be called Salvation, and her gates shall be called Praise. What a boon he was to the heartbroken and despairing. You be likewise. In the presence of distress, be sunny, speak hopefully. This is God's world, and evil shall not triumph over him or his people. Be of good courage.

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Zion Redeemed. Isaiah 62: 1-12.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken."

The pictures of the happiness and glory of a restored Jerusalem, fell like balm on the souls of the exiles. John clearly drew on Isaiah's great predictions, in portraying the coming of the Holy City on earth. "Yes," said Isaiah, "you shall be a crown of beauty once more on the dear hills of Judah. Jerusalem shall be a praise in the earth." No matter how dark the situation, you can speak confidently of coming good. Times shall be better to those who love the Lord. Believe in God. He does purpose good for his people. Be patient, wait for him, and he will surely bring it to pass.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—New Heavens and New Earth. Isaiah 65: 17-25.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"The voice of weeping shall be no more heard."

Revelation closes with the upward inflection of hope. So does Isaiah's glorious prophecy. He was a comforter of his people. He saw the certain coming of a new heaven and a new earth, and former sorrows should be forgotten. Jerusalem shall be filled with re-

joicing; there shall be no more crying nor tears. Happiness shall crown infancy and old age. Calamity shall flee away. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain. Without God, hope is dead; with God in his world, there is ground for blessed hope. It may not be in your way, nor my way, but in his own way the Lord will provide.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Final Judgment. Rev. 20: 11-15.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"I saw a great white throne."

In that sublime vision of judgment day, John saw heaven and earth flee away from the face of him who sat on the throne. Awful majesty and solemnity cannot be more impressively pictured. Then follows the assembling of the dead, both great and small. Next the opening of the book of life. All were judged out of that record, according to their works. Death and hades gave up their dead, and then were cast into the lake of fire. If any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire. "Rejoice," said Jesus, "because your names are written in heaven." Is yours? Is mine? We know the way. God help us to be good.

LESSON 13.

DECEMBER 24, 1916.

For and Against Him.

MOTTO TEXT.—"He that is not against you is for you." (Luke 9: 50.)

LESSON PASSAGE, Luke 9: 40-62.

MEMORY VERSES, 55, 56.

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Lesson Text.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

57 ¶ And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

50 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

40 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

41 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

42 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

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Vindictiveness.

John shows how sadly he lacks and misunderstood the spirit of Jesus. The Master and his disciples were rudely denied the rites of hospitality in a Samaritan village. John wanted to burn up the village. He was angry, and his hot indignation wanted to call down fire from heaven. He shrewdly quoted Scripture in justification. A mad saint can always find warrant for the wrong thing he wants to do. Jesus rebuked the wrathful temper. In your ignorance you have fallen into the spirit of the devil. Your indecent fury shows how sadly you have missed the patience and long suffering Spirit of God. Our divine vocation is to save men's lives, not to destroy them. John had a volcanic temper. Many Christians suffer from the same moral feebleness and spiritual incompetency. Their uncurbed and unrebuked anger would simply destroy the kingdom of God. John was a learner. He grew in grace and knowledge. So may we all. Love your enemies, and overcome evil with good.

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Procrastination.

Even on his way to Jerusalem, where he is soon to suffer, our Lord was calling men to follow him. To that call one man responded, "Yes, Lord, but not now. Allow me to wait the burial of my father." The father may have been dead, or he may have been old and near to death. "No," said Jesus, "I need you now. Let others attend to funeral rites." The pressure of the claims of the kingdom of God creates a duty outranking sacred filial obligations. Another said, "Yes, Lord, I will follow thee, but let me first go home and bid my family good-bye." Jesus said, "No, the kingdom needs you now; it demands instantaneous decision and obedience. No man putting his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. Seek first the kingdom of God. In it is contained all the highest good of men." Hesitation is

dangerous, procrastination is deliberate refusal of eternal life. Christ asks immediate acceptance and unconditional, glad-hearted surrender to his will.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—For and Against Him. Luke 9: 49-52.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"He that is not against us is for us."

It is a mistake to make membership in the church the test of salvation. That test is moral resemblance to Jesus. You can't assume that all in the church are saved and all out of the church are the unsaved. Fact is, there are church members who have little likeness of Christ, and there are outsiders who have much of it. Kindness, generosity, justice, honesty, truthfulness in your non-church neighbor are as pure gold, as the same qualities in you and me. Such people are near the kingdom. They should be encouraged to come in with open confession of Christ. Don't classify them with the vicious. It is unfair, and they know it and feel it. They are largely on Christ's side, and should be won to him.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Spirit of Cooperation. Num. 11: 24-30.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets."

Eldad and Medad were full of religion, and began to testify to their neighbors in the camp. Some sticklers for regularity were shocked at the invasion of holy functions. None but the ordained ought to preach. They rush to Moses. Grand democrat in religion that he is, he astonishes the informers by saying, "I am glad to hear it. I wish all the Lord's people would preach religion and live it." He wanted no monopoly of the teaching office. Whosoever can and will, let him speak the message of God to his neighbors. Ordination has its values, but it confers no peculiar sanctity or exclusive rights. Spurgeon never was ordained. The Spirit of God is the supreme equipment for preaching.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Life or Death. Deut. 30: 15-20.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"I have set before you this day, life and good, and death and evil."

Moses' life of love, service, and sacrifice for Israel is drawing to its close. He has spent his great powers of mind and heart for forty

years in liberating, organizing, and equipping his people. He has set them well on to the realization of national hope and the holy purposes of God. In his farewell addresses he reminds them, over and over, of their covenant with God to keep his commandments. Be faithful, for in keeping them is life and good. If you forsake the ways of God, you choose death and evil. True religion is safety in this present world and in the world to come.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Jehovah or Other Gods. Josh. 24: 14-28.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Here is the farewell speech of Moses' successor. Joshua had borne himself nobly in locating Israel in the land of Canaan. In his last days he assembles his people to impress them with the solemnities of their religion, and to get from them a new affirmation of their faith and devotion. He dreads the seductive and disastrous power of idolatry in the surrounding nations. He contrasts the greatness of Jehovah with the weakness and shame of all other gods. Then follows his own avowal of purpose for himself and family to serve Jehovah. Family religion is the hope of the church.

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FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Jehovah or Baal. 1 Kings 18: 20-29.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"How long halt you between two opinions?"

The battle between true religion and idolatry in Israel went on through the centuries. Spiritual faith was often almost extinguished in the dark idolatry of Israel. Great Elijah takes up the gaze of battle. He fights an idol-worshipping king. He puts Baal to shame by the three years' drought. Baal, said to be a god of rain and fertility, produces no rain. Another test, by fire, Elijah proposes. Ahab has to accept, for Baal is said to be a god of

fire. People in multitudes assemble on Mount Carmel. Elijah asks the rebuking question, "How long halt you between two opinions?" It grieved him to see the indecision of the Hebrews. Great leaders are a supreme necessity.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Jehovah Alone is God. 1 Kings 18: 30-39.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"Hear me, O Lord, hear me."

Prophets of Baal prayed and screamed to him to burn up their offering. All day long they shrieked, while Elijah made fun of their impotent folly. At last they gave up in despair. In the late evening Elijah stands before his altar three times drenched with water, and looking up to Jehovah, prays: "Hear me, O Lord, hear me." Fire falls on the altar and burns the sacrifice. He has won. The people see, and break into acclamation: "The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God." Then they arrested the prophets of Baal and slew them at the foot of the mountain. Elijah broke down idolatry in Israel.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Jesus or Barabbas. Mark 15: 6-15.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"And Pilate released unto them Barabbas."

It is the same old contest between the good and the bad, the high and the low in human life. Shall we be spiritual or carnal? Shall we worship God or ourselves? Shall we devote ourselves to purity and justice and honor! or shall we turn loose all the base feelings and greeds of our fleshly nature? That same old issue of God or idols comes up in one form or another for settlement in all of our souls. Barabbas is preferred, and Jesus is sent to crucifixion, because the cowardly soul of Pilate and the vindictive spirits of the priests and Pharisees were set on their own selfish ends, and not on the holy will of God.

LESSON 14.

DECEMBER 31, 1916.

Review.—Christ's Coming and Coming to Christ.

MOTTO TEXT.—"The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22: 17.)

READING LESSON, Rev. 22: 6-14, 10-21.

MEMORY VERSES, 12-14.

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Lesson Text.

6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

8 And I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

12 And, behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

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The Second Coming.

Jesus foretells it when he says, "Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this disloyal and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. Also in speaking to the high priest: "You

will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." In Acts, first chapter, we have the words of the angels: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? This Jesus which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you beheld him going into heaven." The time of his coming, no one knew, for as Paul says, the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night. Paul, in his first letter to the Thessalonians, expects him within the lifetime of himself and his brethren. "We the living, who survive till the Lord comes, are by no means to take precedence of those who have fallen asleep." James, in his epistle, expects him immediately. "Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand." Here in our lesson, in Revelation, we have the words, "Behold, I come quickly." There is no room to doubt that the apostles and the early churches confidently expected the return of Jesus. Nor is anything more certain than that this glorious expectation exercised a profound influence on the thoughts and conduct of the early Christians.

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Interpretations.

Great has been the vanity of interpretations given to this doctrine. They are so contradictory that it is impossible to harmonize them. Some have identified the second coming with Christ's resurrection; others, with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; others, with the destruction of Jerusalem, and the fall of the Roman empire; others, with the death of the Christian. Now, it is evident that no one of us can claim absolute certainty as to the nature or the time of the second coming. Fortunately, neither certainty is essential to our Christian usefulness, or knowledge. We do know the plain duties of our religion: we do know that the spiritual presence of God, of Christ and the Holy Spirit is promised to us every day and hour. What more do we need? When the day of the Lord comes we will know it. Meantime, it is ours to be watchful and diligent in right living. Don't waste time on matters not revealed. Christianity is practical. Do good and sin not. Be ye also ready. Is it not fair

to conclude that our Lord left these matters of his second coming vague and indefinite in order that they might act as a perpetual spur to Christian diligence and fidelity.

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Invitation.

This noble book of visions, symbols and exhortations closes with the true evangelistic note. Coming to Christ is the all-important human interest and duty. To know him is eternal life. In the days of his flesh, his call was, "Come unto me and I will give you rest." Ascending to glory, his last words were the same message sent to all this world. "Go tell the good news to every creature." God is among men. The Sun of Righteousness has risen with healing in his wings. The desire of all nations has come. God has laid help on one who is mighty to save. Inviting, Sovereign love, let it sing its music into every lost soul of Adam's race. The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." Let the bearer, too, say, "Come." And he that is athirst, let him come. He that will, let him take the water of life freely. It is a most fitting close. Boundless love, boundless provision for sinners; boundless invitation to the bliss and moral perfections of God.

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MONDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Unto Us a Son is Given. Isaiah 9: 2-7.

MONDAY'S VERSE.—"Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end."

Oh, the worth of a great soul in society, who feels a divine optimism. The prophet was the really great and invaluable man in Israel. Moral degeneracy and spiritual death looked him in the face. Mocking, arrogant sinners bullied and despised him for his brave rebukes and appeals. What room for optimism in a godless apostate generation? A great deal. Isaiah believed God. This world is his, and Satan shall not utterly defile and spoil it. God is a conquering, spiritual power. He has new remedies for the sickness of the world. A son of David will yet be born who will destroy the sin of this world, and fill it with the knowledge of God.

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TUESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Plot that Failed. Acts 23: 14-24.

TUESDAY'S VERSE.—"To taste nothing until we have killed Paul."

It was a shrewd and dangerous scheme. More than forty assassins under vow, at the risk of their lives, to kill the best and grandest man on the earth. God used his nephew and the Roman empire to save him. News was brought to Paul in his cell, and he sent the youth to the Roman captain, Lysias. The officer was instant in expedient. These bloody-minded Jews shall not harm a hair of the head of this Roman citizen! That very night a little army of Roman soldiers bore the illustrious prisoner away to Caesarea, the residence of the Roman governor, Felix. The murderers were defeated, and they had to eat, without the blood of Paul.

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WEDNESDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Appeal to Cæsar. Acts 25: 1-12.

WEDNESDAY'S VERSE.—"Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged before me?"

No; I will not! That was Paul's emphatic answer to the weak and cowardly Festus. This is the place, and the court, where I have the right to be tried, and I refuse to be carried back to a den of lions. He knew the unabated, deadly hate of his foes. He would as soon expose himself to tigers as to these rulers in Jerusalem. Seeing the willingness of Festus to favor the Jews, he despaired of justice in this court. "I appeal to Cæsar." He took refuge in his Roman citizenship and eluded the pliant governor, and the murderous priests. Felix cannot command him to Jerusalem. He has to send him to Rome. The empire was a strong shield to early Christianity.

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THURSDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—The Voyage. Acts 27: 13-21.

THURSDAY'S VERSE.—"We labored exceedingly with the storm."

What strange thoughts in Paul's mind, as the ship bore him along the shores of his native land! Poor, blind Judah! She could or would not see the day of her visitation and put to death the Lord of glory. Now she has bounded out of her coasts the chief representative of Jesus. Her house is left unto her desolate. The gospel turns to another race. The cup of Israel's iniquity is full. She rejects, against herself, the kingdom of God. So he mused during half the voyage. Then the ship fell into the grip of a storm, uncommonly fierce. It was nature's duplication of that hurricane of human wrath that forced him on the ship. God controlled the storm, and Paul arrived before Cæsar.

FRIDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—From Malta to Rome. Acts 28: 11-31.

FRIDAY'S VERSE.—"He thanked God and took courage."

The journey brightened at its close. Out of the tornadoes of Jewish hate, and the tempests of the sea, he emerges into peace and calm. Laden with honor in Malta, he passes into the sweet fellowship of Christian brotherhood at Puteoli. Nearing Rome, beloved unknown brethren came far out to welcome him to their hearts. The sunshine is breaking on the great apostle's soul. Thank God, who presses this wine of life to those blessed lips! Hope revives, and what heavenly dreams of freedom and the joy of preaching. In the city he is kindly treated and allowed, though a prisoner, to live in his own hired house.

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SATURDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—A Living Sacrifice. Rom. 12.

SATURDAY'S VERSE.—"Be not fashioned according to this world."

Remember Paul's conception of the Christian life. It is a divine life, because of the Christian's union with Christ. The Christian is so truly identified with Christ that he can boldly say, "For me to live is Christ; Christ

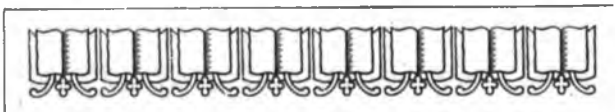
liveth in me." That is the living sacrifice. Of course, that excludes the sinful ways and thoughts of this world. Christ did not fashion himself after the model of a worldly life, neither must the disciple of Christ. He must be transformed by the renewing of the mind. In thought and deed and word, he must duplicate the life of Jesus. That is his religious ideal. That is salvation, that is heaven, that is the living sacrifice.

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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE READING.—Faithful unto Death. Rev. 2: 1-17.

SUNDAY'S VERSE.—"To him will I give to eat of the tree of life."

Christ overcame the world. He expects his churches to overcome likewise. How can they except the individuals composing them, overcome? We know our duty, because we know how Christ lived. You may not drive out the moral shames and sins of your community. Christ did not. But you can keep a clean heart and do good. That is what Christ did. That is to overcome one's own pride, envy and selfishness. Christ depends on your fidelity. Representing him, you must be the light of your community. You are his chosen means of saving your neighborhood. Let us be faithful unto death, and what a joy heaven will be.



Calendar

OCTOBER

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	...	...	...	...

NOVEMBER

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	...	...

DECEMBER

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 31	25	26	27	28	29	30

1916

Fellowship

When a man ain't got a cent, an' he's feeling kind
of blue,
An' clouds hang dark an' heavy, an' won't let the
sunshine through,
It's a great thing, O my brethren, for a fellow just
to lay
His hand upon your shoulder in a friendly sort of
way.

It makes a man feel queerish; it makes the tear-
drops start;
An' you sort o' feel a flutter in the region of your
heart;
You can't look up an' meet his eyes; you don't
know what to say,
When his hand is on your shoulder in a friendly
sort of way.

Oh, the world's a curious compound, with its honey
and its gall,
With its care and bitter crosses, but a good world
after all;
An' a good God must have made it—leastways
that's what I say
When a hand is on my shoulder in a friendly sort
of way.

—James Whitcomb Riley.