

Verses 27, 28. Seeing his own condition could not be remedied, what did he ask? Why did he want Lazarus to testify? What did he want Lazarus to testify to? Was that an insinuation that he and his brothers had not had sufficient testimony?

Verse 29. What is Abraham's reply? In what sense did they "have Moses and the prophets"? What more than "Moses and the prophets" have we? Is there sufficient testimony in the word of God to warn us of that place? Whom especially are we urged to hear? (Acts 3:22, 23). What is He telling us about in this lesson?

Verse 30. Did the man think the word of Moses and the prophets was sufficient? What did he think would do more good? What effect did he think Lazarus' word would have? What had neither he nor his brothers ever done? Had they ever really believed the Word? Had they ever repented? Why were they all doomed to this perdition? (Luke 13:5).

Verse 31. (Abraham's final reply). If the word of God, written and preached, does not reach the heart, can anything else? What singular proof of this? (John 12:9-11).

NOTES ON LESSON 4.

IS IT A PARABLE?

We hear it said that this story, told by the Lord Jesus, of the Rich Man and Lazarus, is only a parable; and that its description of conditions beyond death do not portray actual literal fact, but are only allegorical and figurative representations of certain spiritual lessons.

It was in exactly this manner that Israel turned aside the most solemn warnings of their prophets. "Ah Lord Jehovah," said Ezekiel, heart-sick, "they say of me, Is he not a speaker of parables?" (Ezek. 20:49).

But let us look into the question.

1. It is nowhere stated or intimated that this is a parable.
2. The statement that "without a parable he spake nothing unto them" (Matt. 13:34) refers to a particular time and circumstances. In this very chapter (Luke 16) the Lord says a number of things to them which are not parables.

3. If this is a parable it is different from all other parables. The Lord not only states, "There was a certain rich man"; but of the beggar, He actually gives the name. This contrasts with the indefinite language of parables.

4. If we grant that it were a parable—what were the parables of Jesus? They were not fables; nor absurd and impossible tales. He always uses true occurrences—things that were continually happening, as, "Behold a sower went forth to sow, etc.," or that could happen as "a certain king . . . made a marriage feast for his son." The Lord never had to resort to fiction and fairy tales to illustrate His point.

5. We are told that much of the story is evidently figurative: for example "Abraham's bosom;" the parched tongue, the finger, and the drop of water; and if we take any of it figuratively we ought to take all figuratively. This is sophistry. In the soberest narratives of truth we find figurative expressions; and literal truth is often mingled with symbol and figure in God's word. (See, for example, Ps. 80:8f.) Moreover we do not know enough about conditions beyond to say that the flame, the thirst, etc., is figure, or that the counterpart of finger and tongue is impossible in case of the spirits of the departed.

Immeasurably better and safer is it to take this lesson just as it stands, and to assume no risk of lulling ourselves and others to sleep with easy-going explanations.

THE TEACHING OF THIS LESSON.

We omit the "Teaching Points." A survey of the chapter leads naturally up to our lesson. The discussion above on "Is It a Parable?" is important, where the class is mature enough to consider the question. The questions given alongside of the printed text are sufficient guidance to the study and teaching of this weighty lesson.

FEBRUARY, 1923.

WORD AND WORK

A Monthly Magazine Devoted to the Declaration of
the Whole Counsel of God.

R. H. Boll, Editor and Publisher

One Dollar a Year.

In Clubs of Four or More, Seventy-five Cents.

Entered at the Post Office, Louisville, Ky., as second class matter.

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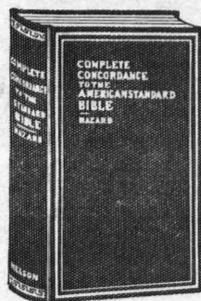
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This eight-page tract by Boll, though only a few years old, has attracted wide attention, and is now quite generally regarded as the standard pamphlet to put into the hands of friends who have not yet seen the importance of taking the outside place with reference to denominationalism. Its plea for the independent, unsectarian religious stand, is not only unanswerable from the logical view-point, but, unlike so many works on the same subject, it is written in the fraternal, unsectarian spirit as well. The price is 5c each, 50 for \$1, \$15 per thousand, with or without a notice printed to order upon it.

WORD AND WORK, Louisville, Ky.

WORD AND WORK

REMEMBRANCE.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.—Phil. 1:3.

"I want you to know you are never forgotten,
That the old, old days hid in memory sweet
Are still a part of my life that I cherish,
Without them so much would be incomplete.
And you are mixed up with so much I remember,
Your name so often I utter in prayer;
Never forgotten, on earth or in heaven,
Always the child of God's tenderest care.

"I want you to know you are never forgotten,
That my thoughts and my prayers are folding you round;
Rest in His promises, go where He sends you,
Do what He bids you, faithful be found.
Look up and trust Him, a new year is dawning,
Stretch out your hand and take His today;
Bought by Him, loved by Him, never forgotten,
Hid in His heart forever and aye."

—Selected.

WORDS IN SEASON.

R. H. B.

LOVE VERSUS KNOWLEDGE.

"Cease from an inordinate desire of knowledge," said one of old (Thomas a Kempis) "for therein is much distraction and deceit." In his days the Scholastics spent their time in barren, abstract intellectual discussions; and he was esteemed as great who could put up the most perfect syllogisms, and furnish the exactest definitions, and draw the subtlest distinctions. But "I had rather feel compunction" the old saint told them, "than know the definition thereof;" and "if thou knewest the whole Bible by heart, and the sayings of the philosophers, what would it profit thee without the love of God and without grace? Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, except to love God and him only to serve." The old man shrewdly observed that it was the ill-concealed weakness of the wise to wish to impress others with the vastness of their own attainments. "Learned men are anxious to seem learned to others," he says, "and to be called wise." But what is the good of it after all? "Tell me, where are all those Doctors and Masters with whom thou wast well acquainted

while they lived and flourished in learning? Others occupy their places, and perhaps do scarce ever think of those who went before them. In their lifetime they seemed something, but now they are not spoken of. O how quickly doth the glory of the world pass away!" Not that he objects to education: "Learning is not to be blamed, nor the mere knowledge of anything whatsoever, for that is good in itself, and ordained of God; but a good conscience and a virtuous life are always to be preferred before it. A humble knowledge of thyself is a surer way to God than a deep search after learning." "Because they rather choose to be great than humble, therefore they become vain in their imaginations. He is truly great who hath great love. He is truly great that is little in himself and that maketh no account of any height of honor. He is truly wise that accounteth all things as dung that he may win Christ. (Phil. 3:8). And he is truly learned that doeth the will of God and forsaketh his own will."

To which add the good word of God's inspired apostle: "Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up. If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know. But if any man loveth God, the same is known of Him." (1 Cor. 8:2, 3).

HUMILITY AND PEACE.

There is something quiet and peaceful, a tranquilizing and stabilizing air, in the simple wisdom of the mediaeval saint, that contrasts strangely with the driving haste and restlessness of our generation. Have we not felt the fevered ambition, the restless unappeased desire, the envy-bitten, anxious, weary, unhappy spirit of our day? But in the lowly wisdom of God, which somehow this old man understood, there breathes an infinite calm.

Are you ambitious to climb and to shine? Listen: "Whenever a man desireth anything inordinately, he becometh presently disquieted within himself.—The proud and covetous can never rest. The poor and humble in spirit dwell in the multitude of peace. The man that is not yet dead to himself, is quickly tempted and overcome in small and trifling things. He is easily angered when any opposeth him.—It is great wisdom not to be rash in thy doings, nor to stand stiffly in thine own conceits.—A good life maketh a man wise according to God, and giveth him experience in many things. The more humble a man is in himself, and the more subject unto God, the more wise and peaceful shall he be in all things."

MAN'S DEEPEST NEED.

Man's supreme need in this world is *rest*—not freedom from work and labor; not release from pain, or from conflict with evil, from obligation or responsibility; not sleep or repose or ease or leisure, but what is greater than any of these: *rest*. "The notable thing in human life," says one, "is its weariness. Rest is the deepest craving of the heart. Is it not rest you need? Look round any congregation. Do you realize how many are

broken, disappointed, weary? Let your thoughts range further afield. Have you realized how full the world is of men who are weary with its burdens, languid from its incessant struggle, sore distressed because of the sin that scourges and humbles and defeats them every day? As they open their heart to you they cry, 'Ah, I need rest—rest from toil, rest from fear, rest from strain, rest from life's fitful fever, rest from sin' And all this unrest is but a symptom of a deep-seated disease. A man might have only a dinner of herbs, and few to call him friend, and might be stripped of all that makes his days full of natural joy, and yet have rest."—No, the unrest is not caused by outward circumstances. Its bitter source is deep within the heart. What is it that so burdens and wearies and corrodes and consumes the life of a man? Is it not the hate and strife and jealousy and pride, the envy and rancor, the evil and ambition, the unlawful desire, the tortuous way of falsehood, the fires of passion, the bondage to wrong, self-seeking, covetings, accusing conscience—in short *Sin* with all the sorrows and fears it entails? Therefore there is no peace where sin reigns, and who would save us from unrest must save us from sin: from the *guilt* and the *love* and the *power* of it. It is He alone who said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and who made peace for us in the blood of His cross that can give us rest. He only can say—"Let not your heart be troubled;" and "My peace I give unto you." Jesus only can deliver, and the cross of Christ alone is the cure of the world's sin and the world's unrest.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP IN THE LAST DAYS.

As the last days draw nigh Christian fellowship becomes more imperative. As in the last days of the former dispensation, when faith had declined and convictions were dying and the people of God had become lukewarm and indifferent (as the last book of the Old Testament shows)—those that feared the Lord "spake oft one with another" ("and Jehovah hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared Jehovah and that thought upon his name: and they shall be mine saith Jehovah of hosts, even mine own possession")—so in the perilous last days of this ending dispensation when failing faith and worldly compromise mark the church's defection, how needful and blessed is the fellowship of the saints! Therefore we should take especial heed not to forsake our own assembling together "as the custom of some is" (they had that sort even then!) but to exhort one another, and that *so much the more* as ye see the Day approaching. (Heb. 10:25). For indeed, "the night is far spent, the day is at hand;" and we have every reason to stand together and to renew our faith and hope and zeal.

ASSEMBLING.

It is a common thought among Christians that the object of an assembling is chiefly to hear preaching. The benefit of good

preaching nobody will be inclined to dispute; but that is not all the object, nor the chief object. The first point is that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:20). In the fellowship of Christians met together for worship and mutual comfort and exhortation, the presence of Christ is realized, as nowhere else. And there we have the advantage of the contact with others who share in like precious faith with us; which contact creates an atmosphere in which the word of God hath free course, and the Spirit of God can sway the hearts. There each one's peculiar gift becomes the supplement of the other's need; and each one's love provokes the other unto love and good works. It is in the assembly of the saints that the unity of the Body is confirmed, and the church becomes conscious of its oneness, member with member, and of all the members with the Lord.

THE CONDITION OF FELLOWSHIP.

All that is here said, however, is true on condition. The blessing and benefit of the assembly depends on the reality of the fellowship in the bond of the common faith and love. It is at this point that a woeful lack exists. Says James Denny:

"It can hardly be doubted that the want of fellowship in the primary Christian sense, is at this moment one of the greatest wants in the church's life—the one which is most to be deplored, which more almost than any other makes the church helpless and exposes it to contempt. Is it not pitiable to see the substitutes that are found for it, and the importance that is assigned to them only because the real thing is not there? We speak of having 'a social meeting of the church,' as if a meeting could not be social unless its Christian character were disguised or put into the background. We approve of the literary society because it keeps the young people in contact with the church, as if this kind of contact had anything to do with the ends for which the church exists. We congratulate ourselves on the success of the bazaar, because though it did involve an immense amount of labor and of waste, it brought the members of the congregation together, and united them in a common interest. . . . How small and trivial it does look in face of many other fellowships which absorb men in the world around us! The fellowship of the members of a political club in promoting what they think the good of the nation—the fellowship of scholars in the advancement of science—the fellowship of the members of a Trades Union in promoting the material interests of their class—all these are more powerful, more stimulating, more attractive than the small incidental fellowships which seem to be all that is real in some churches. Why is it that the powerful and fundamental fellowship constituted simply by membership in the church has fallen into the background? Why do we not feel the power and the charm of a common relation to the Father and to His Son Jesus Christ, of a common participation in that eternal life which was with the Father and has been revealed for us in the Son? Why is not this the center around which we rally, where we find our greatest joy, where we can be most truly one, and are inspired for higher ends?"

The reason is given us by John. "If we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7). All lack of true fellowship is due to this that the members do not walk in the light. Fellowship is in the light, not in the darkness. And what is light? Purity? Holiness? Love? Yes.

Moreover light is that which makes manifest. We have much to hide, one from another. Whether from lack of confidence in one another, or from shame and pride, we cover up our ways and walk and work, our real thoughts and feelings. That is the concealment of darkness, and due to our walking in darkness. Opening our hearts before Christ and one another, open confession and repentance of wrong, brings us into the light. We shall find unexpected friends and kindred hearts in the church of the Lord; we shall feel love and compassion for others and receive it in return, and a tender concern one for the other in the Lord. Above all so walking in the light the healing, purifying, sanctifying blood of Christ will do its work, going on cleansing us from all sin. That makes fellowship. That is the crying need in the assemblies of Christ.

THE CONTROL OF RELIGION.

Religion can make very devils out of men. What devilish hate has been generated, what monstrous deeds have been perpetrated under religious stimulus, only God can count and measure. One might placate any other passion and hate—even the fire of jealousy and the thirst for revenge, but the hate engendered by religion is implacable and merciless. The *Odium Theologicum* stands alone in its peculiar virulence and infinite meanness.

The reason is not far to seek. Whatever men feel strongly about—whether matters touching politics, national or family or private personal interests, or what not—will create animosity in proportion to the vehemence of the feeling. But by nothing are men so gripped as by religion. Which explains why irreligious people are often more amiable and easier to get along with. But the religious propensity lies deepest, in the natural and fleshly man as well as in the regenerated. The atheist may disavow any and all religion; and yet he blazes forth so fiercely when he clashes with somebody's faith that it is evident that *his* sort of religion, which he calls no religion, has been touched and interfered with. All men have a religious side; and if they are stirred through it they are stirred to extremes. The religious conflict is the bitterest known. It spurns every human consideration and tie. Religion without counterbalance and control is the most terrible thing in the world. The Pharisee and his proselytes are children of hell. But the true faith that is in Christ carries its own control. Its chief mark and first evidence is *love*. Christianity without love is no Christianity. Mere "religion" makes men inhuman. Because religion is the most powerful of all motives and forces, it requires the most powerful control. This control is not to be sought in the weakening of convictions, in cultivating indifference and compromise; but in the Spirit of God, the Spirit of truth and of love. No other force can keep a believer on the path of Christlike kindness, forbearance, mercy and self-sacrificing compassion toward gainsayers and toward all fellow-men.

WORD AND WORK

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WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD.

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NEWS AND NOTES.

"I had a delightful visit to Rockport, Ky., lately. Since the little band organized in October, the attendance has increased from 22 to 70."—D. H. Friend.

Sister Witty writes that the work at West Side Central Church, Detroit, moves forward splendidly.

From Stanford Chambers, New Orleans: "Three baptized since last report. A colored brother here is accomplishing somewhat among his own people. The introductory lesson on Revelation is fine."

H. L. Olmstead is now in a good Bible study class at Ebenezer Church, near Harrodsburg, Ky. Would that the custom of winter Bible Readings, led by competent teachers, might spread greatly!

The Word and Work Lesson Quarterly—R. H. Boll's notes and questions on the Uniform Lessons, may still be had for the first quarter. They cost 6c each in any quantity. We send Elam's Junior Quarterly, 6c, to those who want something for children's classes. The best Picture Cards cost 4c per quarter. The Little Learner paper for children (3c per quarter) cannot be duplicated at twice the price. They are not our own publication, however, and teachers will sometimes—not often—find a word or sentence which needs correction.

W. Stillman Martin, of Atlanta, composer of "God will take care of you," and other famous songs, writes of "Great Songs of the Church": "I unhesitatingly say it is the best song book I have seen since the days of the old 'Gospel Hymns' of Moody and Sankey, and it is equal to their combined collection.

Had I known you were compiling such a book I would gladly have contributed a new song or two."

From A. K. Ramsey: "Glenmora, La., closed out its first year as a congregation in a gratifying way, one added to our number the last day of the year. There were 49 baptisms in the field in which I labor. I was in 294 public services. Received \$1069.30; Traveling expenses and postage \$356.85; my cash contributions amounting to \$102.95, leaving a net balance of \$609.50. It is a great privilege to be a Christian."

Will not those congregations of Christ that have helped Minneapolis in the past renew their interest in this important field, and in this worthy worker? Brother Ray Lawyer, 2613 Fourth Ave., So., asks us to publish the following: "We have been asked to take up the work here since Bro. Plank has gone to assist the church at Wellington, Kan. There are about fifteen faithful disciples. A place in which to meet costs twenty-nine dollars, heated. Contributions have fallen off during the past two years from one hundred dollars to ten or fifteen per month. This statement explains why I shall be able to do little of the personal work which above all else needs to be done."

"The Living Message," Harper, Kansas (weekly) and The Word and Work may both be secured through this office for \$2.

Sister Phebe Harlow sends a gift club of four names, adding, "I couldn't think of anything more profitable for a present."

At last report Bro. and Sister Janes were at New Orleans, expecting soon to visit the Louisiana French field where Ben J. Elston labors so sacrificially, humbly and helpfully.

Two hundred subscriptions can still be started with the January Word and Work. In years to come (should the Lord tarry) Brother Boll's Revelation articles, begun last month, will be sought after. We have never published a special series—the Kingdom articles for example—that were not in demand long after all copies were gone. Get your friends in on these Revelation articles before it is "everlastingly too late."

From M. E. Gibbs: "The Revelation article in the January number is fine; not one thing in it for any one to stumble over or be offended about."

"I enclose check for \$1 for year's subscription. It's worth more."—Clinton Davidson, Buffalo.

"Word and Work gets better all the time, and I want it to visit some of my friends this year that they may get the Revelation articles."—W. W. Colglazier.

"On December 20, I was called to Cynthiana, Ky., to preach the funeral of Bro. J. T. Padgett, one of my very best friends on earth. He was a fine Christian man, having stood loyally by the preacher and the church during the five years I labored there, and since as well. The church at Salem has lost one of its

main members, and the family its head. He leaves his good Christian wife, five boys and one girl, all Christians but the youngest. May the Lord be merciful to them."—J. Scott Greer.

Brethren at Campbellsville, Tenn., have arranged a "union" song drill for ten days in February. E. L. Jorgenson will lead, and all the churches of the place will join in the class. There are a number of good song directors in various sections of our States capable of this work: why not many such classes during the winter months? "Great Songs of The Church" contains an inexhaustible supply both of easy gospel songs and the stately hymns for such classes.

The Highland Church, Louisville, "laid by" \$100 for every Sunday of 1922, according to the treasurer's report—the highest mark in its history. Better still, about two-thirds (over \$3,000) was for "others": missions, Christian education or other work outside. The church is at peace and "pressing on."

A number of large clubs are coming in: E. H. Hoover, 43; Jno. Abrams, 37—he intends to pass Hoover and make it 50—many others. The brethren are wanting those Revelation articles. Mrs. L. B. Holloway sent a club of 122.

Our faithful Louisville evangelist for the colored people, G. P. Bowser, and Sister Bowser, lost their child Lucille in January. (We ought not to say "lost"). She was an earnest Christian girl.

From E. L. Jorgenson: "At this writing Chas. Neal and I are partners—workers together with God—in a remarkable meeting in Neal's home church at Dugger, Ind. 57 have been added so far, 45 of them in the last five days. Bro. Neal has tremendous influence here."

From Portland, Me.: "The work in Portland and Westbrook seems to be reviving some of late. We are unable to report any additions so far, but very shortly, we feel, there will be some in both places. Our Bible classes are doing good work. Just now we are studying Matthew on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; and Genesis, Tuesday and Thursday.

"Unity, Me., reports four baptisms during the year 1922; and the church strong in faith and courage, in spite of the very straitened financial conditions. Two young men from Unity are attending our Bible classes."—R. G. Schell.

Bro. Don Carlos Janes has spoken in more than fifty of the churches and schools since his return from the old world and is not aware of having found any opposed to missions. Of more than twenty congregations visited on the present southern trip, nearly all are doing or have promised to do missionary work.

Bro. Janes' condensed report of mission funds for first half of 1922 (examined by H. W. Wrye, B. W. Boyd and E. H. Hoover) shows \$5 for the Missionary Residences Fund; Chas. Paine Bible, \$12; work in China, \$11; for Bro. McCaleb, \$2; for his free literature, \$4.25; his personal support on world tour, \$189.25. Total \$223.50. The balances in hand were: Building fund, \$5; Bible fund, \$12; China, \$1.

ADORNING THE DOCTRINE.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

"Showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." (Titus 2:10). It would seem a thing incredible that human beings could adorn the doctrine of Christ, yet that is the end of the charge in this passage of Scripture, and, the more wonder, it is the ideal held up to servants! If servants may have such a high aim, then so may any Christian who will. What a beautiful thought! And what a blessed thing to do! To those who know the doctrine—that it is of God, and true and holy and healthful and life-giving—to them it needs no adornment to make it acceptable. But even so, who does not appreciate such adornment as the Scriptures direct? God, Himself, appreciates it. That "meek and quiet spirit is, in the sight of God, of great price." And for those who do not know the doctrine nor its Christ, adornment is required in order to their acceptance of it. They do not know that it brings life and liberty and peace unless they see it demonstrated in others.

Here lies grave responsibility, a thing too many do not feel sufficiently. What if the unsaved do not see an adorned doctrine! What if the Gospel is not commended to them by the conduct and conversation they observe in those who profess! Suppose they see our profession contradicted by questionable, if not actually sinful, practices; by filthy conversation (oh, these foul mouths of church members!); by fraudulent dealing, by irreverent demeanor! God has made us our brother's keeper. This is fact, not sentiment, and there is no escaping the responsibility. Shall we by neglecting to adorn the doctrine be the cause of souls spending eternity in hell? God forbid the neglect and save us the consequences. What is he but a criminal before God who causes the eternal death of another? Better were it that a millstone be tied about his neck and he be sent to the bottom of the sea! Yea, better had he never been born—so teaches the word of God!

By the Holy Spirit every Christian may bear the fruit of "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control," against which there is neither law nor criticism. By the same Spirit can be supplied to each one's faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. For the asking may be had that "wisdom from above which is pure, peaceable, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy, bearing the fruit of righteousness; and thus can we adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. Or one may be "earthly, sensual, devilish," mar the beauty of that doctrine, bring reproach upon the name of Christ and lead a multitude to hell! May God help us!

THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD.—ITS FAILURE.

J. EDWARD BOYD.

Men have great confidence in the opinions and conclusions of those who are reputed to be "wise." But whatever may have been the accomplishments of the wise men of the world, there is one thing in which they have failed utterly, "For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God"—not through their philosophy, not by means of scientific research, can they obtain a knowledge of the one true God. When the Apostle Paul stood upon the Acropolis of Athens, he gazed upon a city which could boast of a Socrates, a Plato, and an Aristotle, men who all these centuries have been renowned for brilliance of intellect and profundity of thought. Surely, if God can be discovered by human wisdom, these men would have readily found Him. But no! when the Apostle walked about the streets of that renowned city, where these and others had lived and taught, among the many altars erected to the "Gods many" of that day, he found one bearing this inscription, a *confession of their failure*, "To an unknown God." They had found many gods, but the one true and living God was with all their learning yet unknown to them.

And not only so—the very confidence they placed in their great learning and culture blinded their eyes to a clear vision of Him in whom "we live and move and have our being." What a glorious opportunity it was, we might think, when Paul stood before that expectant throng to deliver his simple message to the men of Athens! But the word of the cross and the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was to them foolishness, an idle tale to beguile the hour and feed their curiosity. The wisdom of the world cannot discover God, though He is not far away; and when He is plainly revealed, it fails to recognize Him.

As it was then, so is it now. To those who are perishing the word of God is foolishness. They think to find God in science, or in philosophy. They become "wise in their own conceit," and conceited in their own wisdom. "Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools," easily susceptible to the deceitful devices of Satan. They mock the simple truths of the Gospel. So did those cultured Athenians mock; yet that simple story brought about a transformation in the lives of men and exerted an influence upon the history of the race such as all their wisdom and philosophy was powerless to accomplish. Human wisdom is no better now, and will be no more successful, than it was then. Through it men will never come to a knowledge of God. Those who depend upon it will be led astray. "Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ: for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. . . ." (Col. 2:8).

"AND THE PRISONERS HEARD THEM."

As Paul and Silas, "prisoners of the Lord" in the jail at Philippi prayed and sang praises to God the record tells us that the prisoners heard them. What a testimony to the power of a living Christ this was! How strange it must have sounded in the ears of the other prisoners, and how different from the sounds usually heard within such places. All of which reminds us that today within the walls of our jails, State and Federal prisons, there are confined hundreds of thousands of men and women. What are the churches of Christ doing for them? They are beyond the reach of our church houses but certainly not beyond the reach of the church.

Some months ago through the suggestion of a sister whose husband, a brother in the church, is a member of the city police force, Bro. H. N. Rutherford visited a prisoner in the jail at Jacksonville. Thus a door was opened for the preaching of the Word. I am not informed as to the number of prisoners who have accepted the Lord, but among the number are two men convicted of murder. Bro. Rutherford makes regular visits to the jail, preaching twice a week—Thursday and Sunday afternoons. Usually some of the members of the church accompany him. He preaches the Word to them, prays for them and sings praises to God, "and the prisoners hear him." They listen attentively, respectfully and many of them eagerly. But this is not all he does. With painstaking earnestness he serves them, delivers their messages, attends to many of their business details, sometimes bringing their loved ones to see them, and hundreds of little kindnesses within the bounds of the law and propriety and discretion.

Men from all walks of life are found there and from every station. Some are from homes of poverty, some have been schooled in crime, others have been guilty of but one offense. Many are from homes of respectability and have been raised under Christian influence. Not a few are backslidden Christians. Rutherford preaches to them as though he were dealing with a regular audience of sinners in a revival meeting. He makes no boasts of his superior character, nor wastes time telling them how to assert their own manhood and rebuild their lives. He speaks as one who knows that there is no essential difference in men, though some be in prison and others outside. He speaks as one of their number of fallen human beings, saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and triumphantly points them to the same source for help.

What has been the result of this labor of love? Eternity will have to reveal that; but some things can be clearly seen. Some bad men have become the temples of the Holy Spirit by having their hearts cleansed by faith in Christ. A number of their relatives have been led to Christ. Attention has been centered upon the church and interest in the work has been aroused

in many outside. According to the jailor it has helped the entire section of the jail where Rutherford labors and his work in that respect superior to that of trained "social workers." It was my pleasure to speak several times to these men while there, and I never spoke to more attentive audiences.

Here is a vast field for missionary endeavor. Cannot other churches and other preachers follow this good example?

H. L. OLMSTEAD.

A CRITICISM AND SUGGESTION.

The following kind and brotherly criticism of an article in December Word and Work was received too late for the January issue:

Brother Jno. E. Dunn's article in December issue is very good in the main I believe, and yet if I get his meaning correctly he teaches some error it seems. Bro. Dunn says, "Instead of disciples in a city where there is division calling themselves the Church of Christ, they should recognize that the body of Christ in that city is divided." Do you believe that God's children can be divided on such matters as he mentions (congregational practices) and both congregations be Christ's body? Of course the relationship to God is still that of a child but IN ERROR. I thought your article, "The Church I Found and How I Found It" was the best yet but did you not say in the above named article, "In order to worship together we must be at one as to congregational practice and must therefore stand together on the simplest New Testament ground." Then should we recognize those who persist in refusing such ground as faithful Christians? The church in its more comprehensive sense includes all the redeemed. And yet is it not a fact that they are known only to Him? (Matthew 18:17). We are told to take certain matters to the church. Would that mean for us to go up and down the street to organ and society brethren with the matter?

C. T. C.

The point is well taken, and the misconception should be guarded against. It is one thing to recognize the fact that God has children scattered abroad in Christendom, who, because they have from the heart obeyed the gospel, were added by the Lord to the Church, in the general and universal sense of that word. It is quite another to recognize the various sects and denominations as divisions of the church of Christ. On the other hand a congregation which avows and stands upon simple New Testament ground has the right to the name of a "church of Christ." I think Brother Dunn would agree with this.

"THE LIVING MESSAGE."

We welcome the appearance of "*The Living Message*," a neat, clean Christian monthly, representing the merger into one of *The Harvest Work*, *Kentucky Evangelist*, and the *Gospel Herald*, of Harper, Kan. The new monthly is published from Harper, Kan. It will be characterized by the spirit and teaching which made the paper excellent previous to combination; and the editors and writers will make it their aim to produce a journal well-pleasing and honoring to God and a help and blessing to men. It will be, we are assured, a Message of righteousness, and peace, and good will.

THE WORLD'S TROUBLE AND GOD'S SURE CURE.

CHAS. M. NEAL.

What is the trouble with the world? Our brief answer is, earth's rightful King is absent and the devil is loose. What is God's sure cure? Enthroned Christ and imprisoned the devil. Thus briefly and scripturally we answer the above questions. But for the sake of clearness let us proceed step by step in the investigation of this interesting, timely and much discussed question. Let us take nothing simply for granted. Darwin often says, "We may well suppose." but as far as us, let us say, "Thus saith the Lord."

The scriptures clearly teach that a vast host of both good and bad spirit beings dwell in the heavenlies. These have access to the presence of God and also to the spiritual nature of man. Note the following scriptures: "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." (1 John 4:3, 4). The world is in the devil—"The whole world lieth in the evil one." (1 John 5:19, R. V.): Christians are in Christ—"created in Christ Jesus for good works." (Eph. 2:10). The devil works in unbelievers to will and do—"The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2). God works in Christians to will and to work—"It is God that worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13).

From the above passages we are informed of a great host of spiritual powers which work for our downfall—spiritual hosts of "world rulers of this darkness," and spiritual hosts of "wickedness in the heavenly places." Christians are unable to successfully cope with these without aid from the spiritual hosts of God which He promises. (Heb. 1:14; Dan. 6:22; Acts 12:7; 1 Cor. 10:13). One may be wholly given up to God's influence or one may sell himself to work evil continually. There are but few wholly consecrated to God, but the forces of good in the world raise the world's standards so that many resist the devil to a certain extent in order to be respectable in the community. Even the devil sometimes preaches the truth if it serves his purpose of deception better.

Of the seventeen hundred millions of people in the world, less than three hundred millions even profess Christianity. From this it can be seen that the devil can carry on in the business of the world of which (Jesus says) he is prince. (Jno. 14:30; 16:11). But why does God permit the devil such liberty and endanger men thereby? We may not fully know but the word of God will help us very much. Israel refused to hear God in His commands regarding the inhabitants of Canaan, but acted from their own wisdom without even consulting Him. (Deut. 7:2-5; Josh. 9:14, 15). "Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in

your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you." (Judg. 2:3). He acts on the same principle now. He will not suffer the destroyer to come in so long as we follow His instruction. (Ex. 12:23). On the other hand He will allow people to be beset by strong spiritual foes. Why is this? There are at least two reasons. First, to prove God's power over the devil and the power and sway of His love over man. (Job 2:12; 2:6). Second, to harden disobedient men and ripen them for judgment. "If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that perish. In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving that the light of the gospel . . . should not dawn upon them." (2 Cor. 4:4). Refusing to believe the gospel not only allows the devil to blind the mind but opens the way for "strong delusions" which God sends, "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved . . . but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. 2:8-12). It is dangerous to reject the truth. How God acts toward such rejectors may be read in 1 Kings 22 where God said "go" to a lying spirit that he might "entice" a king to his "fall." "The kings of the whole world" will be enticed in just such a way to assemble for their fall at God's appointed time. (Rev. 16:13-16). Why will God act in this way on such large scale? There is but one answer—"The falling away," that great apostasy from the faith (2 Thess. 2:3) which is noted so frequently in the Bible. The world is sick. The writer's personal belief is that the world is entering into just such a condition as shall prevail, according to his Scriptures, on the earth at the time of our Lord's return.

But what is God's sure cure? The Jews rejected their king and sent Him back to heaven with five wounds on His body. "We have no king but Caesar." (John 19:16). The Gentiles to whom the word of the Lord came "stand" only by faith. If they cease to believe they likewise shall be "cut off." "The great Christian nations" have come about this far. What remains now is the coming of Christ, the judgment of the nations, the dethroning of Satan and his imprisonment. Revelation 19 and 20 portray this.

A word about Satan will help. He has access to heaven and is loose in the earth and is "prince over the power of the air." (Job 1:6-10; 1 Pet. 5:8; Eph. 2:2). He will yet be cast out of heaven into the earth (Rev. 12:7-12), and out of the earth into the pit. (Rev. 20:1-3). After the thousand years he will be "loosed for a little season" and will then be cast into the lake of fire never to have his liberty again. (Rev. 20:7-10). When Jesus occupies His throne (Rev. 3:21), and the church has been exalted into the heavenlies (1 Thess. 4:13-18) and Israel occupies his own land (Jer. 31:35-46; Amos 9:14, 15), and the devil is imprisoned (Rev. 20:1-3), then, and not till then, will all be well. (Isa. 2:2-4; Hab. 2:14; Psa. 72). "Blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen and Amen."

THE REVELATION.

R. H. B.

With verse 9 of the first chapter of Revelation begins the theme proper of the book, and we are fairly face to face with its vast message. The limits of these articles would prevent a minute and continuous exposition of the text; and such a thing is not intended. If they may serve to a better interest and to assist the reader to a better understanding of this great book; if they will lead the reader to and into the Book itself we have realized the purpose of these articles.

THE VISION OF THE SON OF MAN.

"I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus." This is the introductory sentence. Banished to the lonely barren island Patmos in the Aegean (Icarian) sea is John—"I, John," well known to all without further epithet or description; and although an apostle, yet simply a brother, and sharer along with other brethren in Christ in the same trials and sufferings, in the same privilege and promise, in the same task and test. No distinctive title adorns his simple name. He is not an ecclesiastical dignitary; not a prince or magnate of the church; not a be-titled clergyman—only and simply "His servant John" (v. 1) and "John your brother." "*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day*" he continues. The state of special inspiration and ecstatic vision granted to him through the Spirit of God is later on again referred to (4:2; 17:3; 21:10). Compare Matt. 22:43; Ezek. 37:1). Some have thought that John was carried away "in the Spirit" into the midst of the scenes of the "Day of the Lord"—that "great and terrible day." Others call attention to the difference in the Greek—not "*hemera tou kuriou*," the day of the Lord; but "*kuriake hemera*," indicating a day consecrated to, and belonging to the Lord, in the very earliest Christian writings (Didache, Ep. of Barnabas, et. al.) recognized as the day of Christ's resurrection, the first day of the week, the day of worship when Christians met to break bread. (Acts 20:7). Without entering into the merits of the controversy, to us it is sufficient to note that, in this first vision and through chapter 3, at least, John was evidently *not* transported into the Day of the Lord, but was occupied with things then present and still present: the conditions of the churches.

As thus he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day John heard behind him a great Voice, as of a trumpet (many a "great voice" is heard in this book!) announcing the first vision and commissioning the apostle to write it in a book and send it to the seven churches: "*What thou seest write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*" All he was to see was to be

sent to all the seven. Seven separate messages, one to each church, follow; but they were not to be separated: all must read all, with all that follows. Moreover, there is significance in this "write in a book." Not an oral message to be heard once; nor a written message of merely present and transient importance it was; but "write it in a book" for the church to have, to read, to keep, through all the coming days. Thus was Jeremiah bidden to write in a book the visions that were for the consolation of Israel in the future years. (Jerem 30:1-3). The *book* makes the message permanent—a perennial spring of truth and comfort till He come.

And John turns to "see the voice"—and having turned HE SAW: first of all *seven golden candlesticks* (properly, lamp-stands). But in the midst of the golden lamp-stands he beheld a wondrous figure: *one like unto a son of man* (the same words as in Dan. 7:13). There follows a careful description of this Person:

1. Clothed with a garment down to the foot,
2. Girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle,
3. His head and his hair were white as white wool, as snow;
4. His eyes were as a flame of fire;
5. His feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace,
6. His voice as the voice of many waters.
7. He had in His right hand seven stars.
8. Out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword.
9. His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

This is symbolism. The description is not intended to give us a picture of the external appearance of our Lord's Person. The various descriptive items by which He is here portrayed are not such as would lend a theme to the art of painter or sculptor.*

But these descriptions are symbolic, emblematic of His Divine dignity, power, office, and character. The meaning of some of these items is obvious; some are explained here or further on or elsewhere in the scriptures.

But though the Son of Man is here presented to us in symbolic array, note well that *all* is not symbolic. It was actually the Lord Himself whom John saw, not merely a vision representing Him. It was the same Person whom Stephen had beheld standing at God's right hand, and Saul saw on the road to Damascus. The glory of His countenance also "as the sun shineth in his strength" was simple sober fact. Beware of the false assumption that says, "If any of it is symbolical, then all is; and if any is literal all is literal." Such a principle would be as misleading as it is sweeping. We shall constantly find symbolism grouped around central literal fact; and literal truth

*The New Testament always and carefully avoids that—for the weakness of human beings toward idolatry and image-worship is too well known. God never gives occasion for such a thing. (Deut. 4:12, 15).

woven into symbolic texture. (See Psalm 80:8-11 for an example).

JOHN'S COMMISSION.

But frail flesh could not endure the sight of this glory. "When I saw him I fell at his feet as one dead." In the presence of even one of the angelic princes Daniel fell dumbfounded to the earth, and all his comeliness was turned into corruption. (Dan. 10:8, 9). No wonder Paul tells us (2 Thess. 2:8) that the Man of Sin shall be brought to nought by the manifestation of Christ's coming (literally, "the outshining of His presence"). But for John is the welcome, reassuring word, "Fear not," and the gentle reviving touch of His right hand. No—we have nothing to fear from Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

"Fear not," He says to John, "I am the first and the last and the Living one" (titles belonging exclusively to God, yet openly applied to our Lord Jesus Christ: He and the Father are of one glory, John 17:5); "and I was dead and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the Keys of Death and of Hades." To the conqueror are delivered up the keys of the fallen fortress and citadel, token of his power and authority over it. So holds the Lord Jesus power over the realm of Death, and the keys of the gates of Hades. At His bidding the dead come forth (John 5:29); at His command the eternal prison-gates swing open and release their prey. (Rom. 14:9). WRITE THEREFORE! "Go ye therefore" He says in Matthew 28:19. On what ground shall they go? "All authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me: go ye therefore." And on what ground shall John write? "I am the first and the last and the Living one; and I was dead and behold I am alive forevermore and I have the Keys of Death and of Hades: Write therefore." All the books of the New Testament are alike given by the inspiration of the Spirit; but behind none other is so specific and solemn a commission to write. This is not the book to be ignored.

THE DIVISION OF THE BOOK.

In giving John the commission to write the Lord also laid out for him and for us the ground-plan and division of the book: "Write therefore"

- (1) *The things which thou sawest,*
- (2) *And the things which are,*
- (3) *And the things which shall come to pass hereafter.*

What the first part includes we already know. What had John seen thus far? Manifestly nothing more than this Vision of the Son of Man, which he records in verses 10-18. The last of the three divisions, of things future, as obviously begins at chapter 4:1, which see. The middle one, dealing with "the things that are," things present, therefore lies between chapters one and four. This division, so clearly marked, has an important bearing on the proper understanding of the whole book.

THE MYSTERY OF THE STARS AND CANDLESTICKS.

To the commission to write the Lord adds an explanation of the significance of the stars in His right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks.*

The mystery of the seven stars. As always in the New Testament "mystery" does not mean an enigmatical, incomprehensible thing, but a previously unrevealed thing; a secret, now disclosed. "*The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.*" But there is a difficulty in determining what or who is the angel of a church. The commonest meaning, a messenger (2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25) does not seem to apply here: the angel is a more important personage. Moreover we send messages by a messenger; but the messages that follow are addressed to the angel. Nor is it a heavenly angel, for obvious reasons. However this need not detain us. Sufficient to recognize that the angel in each case is a representative of the church, and seems more or less responsible for what the church does.†

It has been suggested that an "angel" is always the mystic representative of that which is not present, or not seen. (As, see, Acts 12:14, 15). On the same line is the thought that the angel of the church is the ideal personification of the spirit of the church—so that the angel of the church is in this sense the church itself. Uncertainty on this point will not prevent us from understanding the seven Messages that follow.

But "*the seven golden candlesticks are seven churches.*" They were of gold—as were all the furnishings of the inner sanctuary of the Tabernacle and the Temple where God's presence dwelt. They were lightbearers; for the church is the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. 3:15).

Beyond this lies more to challenge our inquiry and attention. Why are they seven? We are bound to think immediately of the seven-armed candlestick that stood in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. But that was one candlestick, all its branches uniting in the one central stem. Here we have seven separate ones—each representing a church. This is significant. It proclaims loudly the great principle of congregational independence. Each candlestick stands on its own base, carries its own light, and is entirely separate from the others so far as control and government goes. Each congregation of His church stands as a separate entity before God. In the messages that follow no church is criticized or commended for what another does; and the one is not vitally affected for good or ill by the faithfulness or disobedience of another. Each church is entirely autonomous: there is no visible centralized government that controls

*Verse 20 is not grammatically dependent on verse 19; and is best rendered, "As for the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest, etc." (H. B. Swete.)

†Of course it was not a "bishop" in the modern ecclesiastical sense, nor yet the "clergyman in charge." That sort of functionaries was not known in those primitive days or in God's order.

all the different congregations. This fundamental God-ordained constitution of the church cannot be violated or even tampered with without disastrous consequences. In it lies one of the chief safeguards of the church's purity and spiritual power.

But though visibly separated and independent, the candlesticks are after all joined together. They do after all form a "seven-armed candlestick." The central stem is there—visible to John's enlightened eye: it is *the Son of Man in the midst*. They are not one with each other in earthly connection: they are one in Him. Each invisibly joined to Him the many churches (congregations) become in Him the Church Universal.

SEVEN.

But why just seven? The question is not yet answered. "John to the seven churches in Asia. . . . What thou seest write in a book and send it to the seven churches. . . . I saw seven golden candlesticks and in the midst of them one like unto a son of man. . . ." Did this Son of man walk only in the midst of these seven? Were there no others? Was He not in the same relation to them all? Did He not hold all their stars in His right hand? Were there not some others even in "Asia"? What about Colossae? What about Hierapolis? Or were the hundreds of other congregations in the world not included nor concerned in this scene which John beheld nor in the messages that follow? Assuredly they were. Then why limit to the seven? The answer lies in the symbolic value of the number seven; and in the characters of these seven churches. We have already had a reference to "the seven Spirits of God" (1:4; 3:1). But we know of a certainty that there is but *one Spirit*. The "seven Spirits" represent the One Spirit in His totality and perfection, in all His offices and functions:

"In all the characters He bears
And all the forms of love He wears."

Seven is the number of perfection and completion. Seven rounds out the cycle and compasses the whole. There are many series of sevens running through this book, and we shall have occasion to observe that in every case the seven signifies a fullness.

So here. The seven churches are representative of all the churches, then or since or now. And they are all included from the worst to the best and every degree between, answering to all possible conditions and situations in which any church may ever be found. The cycle of all the phases of the One Church is summed up and completed in these "seven churches that are in Asia," and what is said to them is said to all.

* * *

PERSONAL AND HELPFUL THOUGHTS.

In Jesus we have the tribulation, the kingdom, the patience (steadfastness). We have been translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:13)—but the kingdom is also yet before us, as a promise we have in Him. (Jas. 2:5). But "through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22). By faith and patience we inherit the promises.

"Be patient therefore brethren until the coming of the Lord." (Jas. 5:7). Patience is "the key-note of the hour." Revelation is the book to sustain the Christian's patience.

"His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." "And we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:13). "For Jehovah God is a sun and a shield; Jehovah will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." (Ps. 84:11).

The Living One. He dieth no more: death no more hath dominion over Him. How much that means to us! "Because I live, ye shall live also." "We shall be saved by his life." (Rom. 5:10). He is able to save to the uttermost all them that draw near unto God through Him: "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Is my life united to the Living One? "He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son hath not the life." (1 John 5:12). "With thee is the fountain of life." (Ps. 36:9).

"In the isle of Patmos. . . partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience." "These things I have spoken unto you that in Me ye may have peace: in the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." (John 16:33). In this lies an indication of the purpose of the Apocalypse.

It is night. Stars shine at night. Candlesticks are in use at night. It is night still. The world lies in darkness and in the shadow of death. "Watchman, what of the night?" The book has an important bearing on the answer to this question.

There is no light provided to illuminate the world's awful night in this dispensation, save that of the candlesticks, the churches, and individual members who "are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." (Phil. 2:15, 16). The Lord Jesus is the Light of the world; yet does He not Himself shine directly in the world, but depends on His own to illuminate this darkness through Him and for Him. "For ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of the light."

"The darkness is passing away and the true light already shineth." (1 John 2:8). The Light that is destined to shine in the coming Day is already shining, a pledge of soon Daybreak. As the high mountain-tops glow and glisten in the rays of the rising sun while the valleys are still veiled in night, so Christ's people behold and reflect His glory beforehand. By and by He will come. He is "the bright and Morning-star"; He is also the Sun of the righteousness with healing in His wings. The light of the glorious coming Day already shines reflected in the people of God.

* * * * *

Our Father: we have undertaken to study a book which Thou hast sent to Thy servants, in which the Spirit is showing us things that are to come. We feel very deeply our dependence on thee as we enter upon this sacred ground. Help us to come with reverence and earnest purpose: not in idle curiosity, nor yet as despising the message of prophecy. Help us to read, to hear, to keep these words that we may obtain the promised blessing. Help us to receive it with simple heart and see it with single eye; for as our hearts are, so will our understanding be. May we get a truer knowledge of Thee and of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; of Thy purposes and Thy work, that we may work in line with Thy aims and plans. May we learn from it that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to usward. May we see through it all the solemn meaning of what now is, in the light of the end. May we seek and find that in it which will draw us closer to Thee in life and work and faithful earnest service. Make it a blessing to us, and us a blessing in the world, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Those who are enjoying the Revelation articles would like the Editor's book, "Lessons on Hebrews," price \$1.00.

ORIENTAL ODDITIES.

Japan is very Oriental. It lies in the "Far East." Indeed, for its latitude, which is that of Kentucky, Spain and Asia Minor, it is farthest east. Occasionally one of the naturally tailless cats is seen in the streets, though even "tailless" cats have a short caudal appendage. Down in the island of Tosa a variety of tame chickens have produced tails ten or twelve or more feet in length, which are carefully rolled up in paper and protected when the fowls are let out to scratch. Some fine specimens of these are seen mounted in a glass case in the Imperial Museum in Ueno Park.

The island of Miajima, accounted one of the *Sankei*, or three most beautiful sights in the Empire, is regarded as sacred. One writer says the claim is made that no one has been born and no one permitted to die on this island. Although the great temple, built on piles in the water and approached through a giant *torii*, or gate, is dedicated to the goddess Itsukushima and her two sisters, formerly no woman was allowed to set her foot there. As the island is fortified, sketching and photographing are rigorously prohibited in the fortified area.

The city of Nagasaki used to have a picturesque ceremony in its festival of the dead. On the night when the spirits were expected to return to the places from whence they had departed, lights could be seen twinkling in all the cemeteries, and mourners carried tiny, little straw boats laden with food offerings down to the edge of the water and, after lighting them, set them afloat. These little torches were generally swept out to sea, a fleet of blazing lights, "a maze of floating constellations," but many bridges and junks were accidentally burned by them and the authorities have forbidden the observance.

It was Francis Xavier, that tireless Catholic missionary of the Jesuit order, who first came to Japan in the somewhat modern times. He and his colleagues "converted" thousands of the people who afterwards became the objects of much persecution and hatred. The missionaries were expelled from the islands and the converts were called upon to tread on paper pictures of Christ. They experienced sufferings, it is said, as severe as anything in Fox' *Book of Martyrs*, and under Iyeyasu, they were so severely tried and tortured that they were supposed to be destroyed, but when the country was opened by Perry's expedition in 1853, it was found that after three hundred years whole communities of them in the district about Nagasaki had retained their belief, knew the prayers, made the sign of the cross, and wore the clothes prescribed by the Jesuits.

"In the summer-time the Nagasaki climate leaves much to be desired. The air is heavy with moisture, and when the thermometer registers 90 degrees there is a steamy, green-house temperature that encourages the growth of the hundreds of ferns that amateur botanists collect on these hills. This damp heat is

exhausting and wearing, trying to temper and patience, and annihilating to starch and artificial crimps. Man's energy falls with his collar, and although all the sights of the empire were just over the hill, the tourist would miss them rather than go to see them; boots taken off at night are covered with green mould in the morning, gloves spot and solidify, and *fungi* gather on any clothing packed away."—*Seidmore*. At such a time, a foreigner likes to get away to the mountains.

DON CARLOS JANES.

TENNESSEE MOUNTAIN MISSION.

Shall we give Brother and Sister Dickson more than just a passing nod? They went down into Tennessee about two years ago and have been faithfully laboring under no ordinary handicap. Used to as good a living as some of us are, they have a little spot on the mountain they call "home," where it is scarcely possible to make a living. But the Lord will see to the living.

Last September some children came to Dickson's home on Sunday, and Sister Dickson (as is her custom) told them the "old, old story." She invited them back, and they came the next Sunday; they also brought her word that an unused house in the neighborhood was available for a Sunday school class. The owner said he would fix it up some and put seats in it; so on October 8 they had their first meeting in it. Being warm weather, what odds if there were no door or windows—just openings? Now, however, the weather is rather severe for open air meetings, and some friends who know of this worthy work, have sent some muslin to be tacked over window openings.

The illiteracy is pitiable. From the picture of good schools, with every educational facility, and having to urge (or force) our children to apply themselves, turn to a picture of children poorly clad, walking a mile or more over mountains to get one little lesson! Children ranging from four to sixteen years of age, desiring to learn to read, meet in this doorless, windowless house on Saturday afternoon, and the Dicksons teach them to read and to sing. Sister Dickson writes:

"Twenty-five attended the first meeting in the rain. Bro. Dickson sat on a rock with a plank over it, in front of a fireplace, and used a pointer to show them how to sing from a book. The next Saturday there were sixteen present, and twenty-nine the following Sunday, but the weather was very cold."

So now we have a Tennessee mountain mission, named "Forest Hill," two miles from the Dickson home. Roads are rough (hard on shoe leather). A Christmas package sent to them was carried in mail pouch twenty miles horse-back. So some of us deem it wise to make the package small and "weekly." Sister Dickson says, "O, sister, pray, as you've never prayed before, for that men's Bible class."

MRS. L. B. HOLLOWAY.

ON FOREIGN FIELDS. MISSIONARY NOTES.

DON CARLOS JANES.

There were about 46,000,000 church members in the U. S. in 1916 and the average Protestant gift for the ministry was 9c a week.

A friend writes from China: "After three days teaching and helping them we were compelled to go on our way, but they begged us with tears in eyes and pleading voices not to leave them, that they were only beginning to understand, . . . but we had to go on to Shek Lung. . . . where a woman teacher had never been. . . . They voluntarily sent 30 armed soldiers to escort us on our way. We told them that we trust in God and did not fear and not to send the soldiers, but they would send them through respect." ** If we were to supply China with preachers as we have supplied the U. S., we would have about 10,000 there, but "we" have *none at all*. Who is willing to pioneer the work in a land where they are begging for teaching?

From India: "Our rainy season is over. We had nearly 100 inches during the three months." ** Sister Sarah Andrews was to arrive again in Japan early in January. A good start has been made toward her building fund. This faithful woman whose health is not very good should be supplied promptly with the means to provide her a sanitary home. Failure here on our part may shorten her life. Please think and act—*promptly*. ** Sister Rhodes reports that the girl who lives with them has been baptized. ** Of the total population of India, only 59 to the 1,000 are able to write a letter and read the reply. ** A Chinese carpenter gets about 70c for a day of from 12 to 15 hours. ** "The three little Foxes and the two Bixlers and Master Rhodes are well."—*McCaleb*. These are precious children and we wish them and their parents the rich blessings of Heaven. ** Some of the first Latin missionaries who sought out our ancestors on the rough beaches of southern England were murdered. But how glad we should be that somebody gave us the Bible and taught our foreparents. ** "Some of the young boys at Otsuka are just fine."—*Mrs. E. A. Rhodes*. This is the church Bros. Hon and Ishiguro began years ago. Bro. Ishiguro is to do three years of service among the Japanese in Los Angeles, Cal., and Bro. Rhodes is to move to Omiya as soon as his house is ready. Who will go to Japan to help the Otsuka mission? ** St. Louis with less than a million people has 2,500 doctors. Tibet had four million population and only one doctor last May. ** The money cost of the world war per hour the last year it ran would have built 20 high schools at a cost of \$500,000 each. * A missionary in Hong Kong writes that October 1st was a great day because "23 men and women were buried with Christ by baptism." Brethren, why are we

not there sharing in the work and the ingatherings? ** A wealthy brother in Kansas gave 25c to the Lord and \$5 for tobacco; a Florida brother is reported as spending more for cigars than the family meat bill; and a Louisville, Ky., elder was sick and supposed the doctor would charge about \$20. He put the money in the church treasury and got along without a physician. ** The missionary sentiment seems so generally prevalent that it looks like the preachers and elders can promptly increase our work very greatly.

HERMAN J. FOX MISSIONARY FUND.

(Report for Fourth Quarter, 1922)

	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Thorne's, Kentucky	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$15.00
Buechel, Kentucky	8.70	10.10	8.35
Sellersburg, Indiana	5.00	5.00	5.00
Sugar Creek, Kentucky	10.00	11.95	10.00
Oak Grove, Kentucky	18.00		
Ripley, Tennessee	8.00	8.00	4.46
Highland Church of Christ	5.00	3.00	9.50
Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Wiseheart	2.00		2.00
Utica, Indiana	14.50	14.00	43.00
Fisherville, Kentucky	6.00		19.50
Waterford, Kentucky		2.59	9.89
Eubank, Kentucky		10.00	10.00
Ida M. Waterhouse	2.00	2.00	2.00
Westbrook, Maine		5.00	
H. N. Rutherford		16.00	
Campbellsville, Tennessee		10.00	8.75
Bowling Green, Ky.			2.50
Mrs. J. T. Baskerville, Gallatin, Tenn.			
	\$89.20	\$112.64	\$149.95

\$27.00 of the Utica, Ind., contribution for December was a Christmas present. \$5.00 of Thorne's contribution for November, also December, was special for the new baby. Worthington, Ky., sent \$20.00 direct in October. Celtic, Tex., sent \$125.00 direct in October. Balance on hand, Jan. 1, 1923, \$165.93. Respectfully submitted,
Delmer J. Ramers,
1800 Shady Lane, Louisville, Ky.

"As the scribe who is instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like a householder that brings forth out of his treasures things both new and old, so let us, as householders, possessing all the good lessons of the old book, bring forth in this new year all the good things we have learned and hitherto left undone, and add them to the things of our store we have already brought forth; forgetting the malice and guile, the envyings and strifes, and the things not worth while, and seek rather for a furtherance of his kingdom; a binding up of wounds; a discountenance of all evil; a quitting of ourselves like men; and a prayer to the one above us all to keep us faithful unto the end, that we may be partakers of Christ and be with him to start that glad new year that hath no passing."—*Managers Apostolic Review*.

FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

The Scripture Text used in these lessons is the American Standard Revised Version, Copyright, Nelson & Sons.

Lesson 5.

February 4, 1923.

THE GRACE OF GRATITUDE.

Golden Text.—Enter into his gates with thanksgiving
And into his courts with praise:
Give thanks unto him, and bless his name.—Ps. 100:4.

Lesson Text.—Luke 17:11-19.

11 And it came to pass, as they were on the way to Jerusalem, that he was passing along the borders of Samaria and Galilee. 12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off: 13 and they lifted up their voices, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. 14 And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go and show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed. 15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God; 16 and he fell upon his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. 17 And Jesus answering said, Were not the ten cleansed? but where are the nine? 18 Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger? 19 And he said unto him, Arise, and go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

Verse 11. Where was Jesus going? (See Luke 9:51). Note marginal reading "through" instead of "along." Locate Galilee, Samaria, and Jerusalem on map.)

Verse 12. Was leprosy a terrible disease? Was there any earthly hope or joy left for the leper? How many lepers in this company? Why did they stand afar off? (Lev. 13:45, 46). Who once was "far off" and unclean and was brought nigh? (Eph. 2:12, 13).

Verse 13. To whom did they make their appeal? Was that the right One to appeal to? (Acts 4:12). Is there any instance on record where the Lord Jesus refused or ignored the cry of need? (Not a single case). What did these lepers call Jesus? As what must we confess Him? (Rom. 10:9).

Verse 14. Did He heal these like he healed the leper in Luke 5:12, 13? Did He heal them at all just then? What only did He do? Why go to the priests? Lev. 14:1-3. Did it require faith on part of these lepers to

do just what Jesus said? Why? When were they cleansed? Did their going cleanse them? If they had gone on their own account, would it have had any effect upon the leprosy? What and who really cleansed them? What does God expect of sinners? (Rom. 1:5). When and how are our souls purified? (1 Pet. 1:22).

Verses 15, 16. Of what nation was one of these lepers? What does a common misery make men forget? (John 4:9). Was this Samaritan's good fortune due to his association with Israelites? Did he feel all the more how free and gracious his blessing? Why? When he saw he was healed, could he go on? What did he feel compelled to do? How did he give thanks? Would he not have been the last one of the ten of whom we would have expected that? Would not he have been more excusable for not giving thanks? Are there other such like surprises in the New Testament? (See for example, Matt. 8:10-12).

Verses 17, 18. Was the Lord Jesus disappointed at the unthankfulness of the nine? If the Lord grants us blessing, is it a great thing for us to thank him? Do we always do it? (2 Pet. 1:9). Does the Lord note and care whether we do it or not? (See Note on Thankfulness).

Verse 19. What consolation and benediction did the Lord pronounce on the one who did come back and gave thanks? Was that acknowledgment from Him a happy recompense to the poor Samaritan?

NOTES ON LESSON 5.

SURVEY OF LUKE 17.

The first four verses of this chapter contain an important lesson on "occasions of stumbling;" on brotherly rebuke, repentance and forgiveness. The next paragraph opens with the disciples' request for increase of faith—that mighty means of wielding the power of God; which is followed by a warning lest any one by his great and good work, might think to have put God under obligation. At this point comes the incident of the Ten Lepers.

The latter part of Luke 17 is prophetic, in answer to the Pharisees' sneering question "when the Kingdom of God cometh." It would hardly be feasible to go into that in today's lesson.

THANKFULNESS.

This, as the name of our lesson implies, is our great theme, illustrated by the healed Samaritan in contrast with the conduct of "the nine."

Thankfulness is not a little incidental virtue, a sort of ornamental grace; it is really at the foundation of right attitude toward God and man. It was at exactly this point that all humanity first failed, and all heathenism began. "Because that knowing God they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks." That is the beginning and the root of all the sad story related in Rom. 1:21-32. • Not only was this at the bottom of the Gentiles' failure, but Israel's fall was due to the same thing. (Deut. 32:15, 18).

We are not surprised therefore that in the New Testament Christians are so often and so earnestly urged to give thanks. "Be ye thankful." (Col. 3:15). "Giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God even the Father." (Eph. 5:20). "Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward." (1 Thess. 5:17, 18). "In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. 4:). Seeing that Christians are priests on behalf of all other men, the apostle exhorts that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made for all men." (1 Tim. 2:1).

"Whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifieth me," says God. (Ps. 50:23). "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. And it will please Jehovah better than an ox, or a bullock that hath horns and hoofs." (Ps. 69:30, 31).

TEACHING POINTS.

1. **The Ten Lepers**—one a Samaritan. Common ruin and misery levels for the time all distinction. Jews and Gentiles, being alike lost, are clasped together. Rom. 3:22, 23; 10:12.

2. **Their appeal to Jesus.** No man in distress ever appealed in vain to Him for help. Consider John 6:37.

3. **"As they went they were cleansed."** Not by the going, but in the going. This illustrates the "obedience of faith." Recall Naaman (2 Kings 5); or the instance of the Blind Man in John 9.

4. **The Samaritan returns to give thanks.** The one of whom it would have been least expected; the one who would have been most excusable of the ten, if he had not. He was more appreciative than the others, because humbler. Being only a Samaritan, and having come to this blessing only by chance association with lepers of Israel, it seemed such a free, gratuitous gift of overwhelming grace and goodness from the Lord, that he could not do otherwise than he did.

5. **"Where are the Nine?"** The Lord felt the ingratitude of the others. Does He feel ours? But consider last clause of Luke 6:35.

6. **The further benefit the Samaritan received through his gratitude.**

7. **Why and for what should we give thanks?** Let the class name and suggest what they can think of. Consider James 1:17.

SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson 6.

February 11, 1923.

THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER.

Golden Text.—The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
A broken and a contrite heart,
O God, thou wilt not despise. —Psalm 51:17.

Lesson Text.—Luke 18:1-14.

1. And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint; 2 saying, There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, and regarded not man: 3 and there was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. 4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; 5 yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming. 6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge saith. 7 And shall not God avenge his elect, that cry to him day and night, and yet he is long-suffering over them? 8 I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? 9 And he spake also this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at nought: 10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12 I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get. 13 But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner. 14 I say unto you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Verse 1. The object of this parable. To whom spoken? (The disciples). Was it simply that they ought to pray? What more? What is it to "faint"? (Heb. 12:3). Is there temptation to faint in prayer? Why?

Verses 2, 3. What two things are we told of this judge? Would such a man be likely to pay much attention to a poor widow? What did the widow want? How many times did she go to the judge about it? Why did she have to go often? Did she get disheartened at his indifference? What does the Lord wish to illustrate by her persistence?

Verses 4, 5. Was the judge only indifferent, or did he positively refuse for a while. Did that stop the woman? What did the judge finally decide to do? Was he going to help her because of the fear of God? Or because he cared anything about her? Why then?

Verses 6, 7. What does the Lord want us to hear especially? Does He mean to imply that God is as hard and cold as that judge? (Matt. 7:11; Ps. 86:5). But if persistence met with success even with such a judge, would it not be sure to bring results with the loving and good God? Will He be sure to stand up for His elect in due time, if they faint not in their cry to Him? Does He seem to be slow and "long-suffering"?

Verse 8. In spite of the apparent delay, what will He do? But when Christ finally comes to vindicate and release His people, will there be many who have held fast the faith?

Verse 9. For whom was this second parable? What two serious mistakes does that sort of folk make?

Verse 10. What kind of men were the Pharisees? (Acts 26:5; 23:8). What were the publicans? (Tax-collectors—held in worst repute, greatly de-

spised and hated.) Where did both these men go? For what purpose? Verses 11, 12. What is meant by "prayed with himself"? (It never reached God.) For what did he thank God? Did he have a high opinion of

his own goodness? If a man is better than some others, is that not good cause for thanksgiving? Who alone is able to shield us from sin, and to guide our feet aright? (1 Chron. 4:10; Ps. 23:3). But did the Pharisee really mean to give God credit? Does contempt of others always go with self-conceit and self-righteousness? On what religious performances did the Pharisee plume himself?

Verse 13. Where did the publican stand? Why? What sort of attitude did he take before God? What only did he dare to say?

Verse 14. Of what does the Lord Jesus solemnly assure us? Is a humble penitent outcast nearer to God than a proud religionist and moralist? Why? (See this verse; Golden Text; and 1 Pet. 5:5). What is meant by "justified"? (Forgiven, made acceptable and accepted).

NOTES ON LESSON 6.

THE CHAPTER.

Our printed lesson is taken from the beginning of the lesson-chapter, Luke 18. If the class will sketch the whole chapter, let that be done first, in introduction. Note that the parable of the Judge and Widow follows in connection after the Second Coming teaching (17:22, 23, with 18:8). The lesson of the Pharisee and Publican follows naturally on the subject of prayer. Then follow three incidents, interrupted between the second and third by the Lord's announcement of His approaching sufferings. The incidents are (1) Christ blessing the babes. (2) The Rich Young Ruler's inquiry. (3) The healing of the Blind Beggar near Jericho.

TEACHING POINTS.

1. **The purpose of the first parable:** (1) that men should pray; (2) that they should pray always; (3) that they should not faint (give up). On praying "always" see, Rom. 12:12; Phil. 4:6; 1 Thess. 5:17. On persistent prayer, the last paragraph of the chapter is an illustration.

2. **The Judge and the Widow.** The Widow—one helpless and oppressed: Christ's people in this age, as in Rom. 8:36; Heb. 13:14. The Judge representing God by contrast: just as hard and indifferent as is this judge, so kind and compassionate is the great Judge, the Father in heaven, toward us. If even the callous judge yielded to the persistent plea of a widow for whom he cared nothing, how sure can we be that the Father will hear the continued cry of His children! Compare the similar teaching in Luke 11:5-8.

3. **The Pharisee.** For whose benefit this parable was spoken. That was the sort of righteousness the Pharisees had. It was false and counterfeit. (Matt. 23:23-28; Luke 16:15). All self-righteousness is of this worthless sort. True goodness makes a man very humble. Self-righteousness makes a man proud and contemptful toward others. Note that he prayed "with himself." He had come to boast rather than to pray.

4. **The Publican.** A far worse man than the Pharisee, after human judgment. But (1) he knew his own sinful condition—the Pharisee did not. (2) He humbled himself before God (Golden Text). 3. Therefore was he "justified" rather than the other. On justification see Rom. 3:20, 24; 4:5; 5:1. It is for no work or merit of ours but of God's free mercy that we are justified, by humble, penitent faith, involving the obedience of the gospel. (Rom. 6:1-4).

THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson 7.

February 18, 1923.

JESUS AND ZACCHAEUS.

Golden Text.—The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.—Luke 19:10.

Lesson Text.—Luke 19:1-10.

1. And he entered and was passing through Jericho. 2 And behold, a man called by name Zacchaeus; and he was a chief publican, and he was rich. 3. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the crowd, because he was little of stature. 4 And he ran on before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. 6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He is gone in to lodge with a man that is a sinner. 8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold. 9 And Jesus said unto him, Today is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Verses 1, 2. In what city is Jesus now? On what journey? (Luke 9:51). What was Zacchaeus by profession? What more are we told about him? What did the Lord say about the rich? (Luke 18:24, 25).

Verses 3, 4. What purpose had he? Had he not surely heard something about Jesus? What may he have heard? (Luke 15:2; Matt. 11:19). What shows that his purpose to see Jesus was very strong?

Verse 5. Did Jesus come that way as expected? But what unexpected thing did He? When Jesus calls, ought any man make haste? What did Jesus want of him?

Verse 6. Did Zacchaeus make haste? In what spirit did he receive Jesus?

Verse 7. What complaint of Jesus' conduct did the onlookers make? Why did that seem so bad to them? Did the Lord mingle with sinners merely for sociality? But for what? (Luke 5:30-32). Ought His people do the same? (1 Cor. 9:20-22).

Verse 8. Did the Lord's visit accomplish its purpose? How did Zacchaeus' change of heart show itself? What would he do with half his goods outright? Is that an easy thing for a

rich man to do? By what was he brought to do such a thing? (1 John 4:19; consider Luke 18:27). What even more important thing did Zacchaeus say he would do? Why "fourfold"? (Exod. 22:1; 2 Sam. 12:6). Were publicans apt to exact money wrongfully? (Luke 3:12, 13). Was it certain Zacchaeus had done this?

Verse 9. How did the Lord Jesus regard this? What was a sure proof that "salvation" had come to this man? (Matt. 3:8). What proved that Zacchaeus was really a son of Abraham? (John 8:39; Gal. 3:7).

Verse 10. For what purpose did the Son of man come? Who are lost? (1 Tim. 1:15). Did he come to save them only? What more? Is it important to seek them? Ought Christians to wait for sinners to come to them, or ought they go and seek them? To what extent did the Lord go in order to save the lost? (Rom. 5:6).

TEACHING POINTS.

1. **The Lord Jesus coming to seek and to save that which is lost.** Determine first who is lost (See Luke 15:4-10, 24, 32) and what it means to be lost. Then how the Lord came to seek them. Then, what He did to save them. How can we participate with Him in this great work?

2. **Zacchaeus: a very difficult case.** For (1) he was a publican—therefore despised and hated by all the better class of the people. That is a

great obstacle indeed and shuts many a sinner out. (2) He was rich. How great an obstacle that is can be seen in Luke 18:24, 25. Riches tend to make a man independent, proud, blind to his own need and weakness, wise in his own conceit, selfish, hard, and indifferent to God's warnings. The one hopeful thing in Zacchaeus' case was that he wanted to see Jesus.

3. **The Lord's loving condescension.** No Pharisee, scribe, or respectable Jew would have gone into a publican's home. But the Lord Himself went in search of His lost sheep. Love is lowly: it forgets itself, its own reputation and advantage in its blessing of others.

4. **Zacchaeus making haste.** Many a man is lost because he would not make haste when his opportunity came. Was Zacchaeus aware of the Lord's kindness and condescension? What effect did it have on him?

5. **Zacchaeus' Speech.** Two things he said he would do. The first shows that the love of Christ broke the love of money. The second the sincerity of his repentance.

6. **The Lord's Acknowledgment of Zacchaeus.** This was the evidence of salvation. What, in a man's life is proof that salvation has really come to him? Zacchaeus a true son of Abraham—as seen by his faith and obedience.

7. **Repentance.** What it is. (Compare Matt. 12:41 with Jonah 3:10). How it is shown and known: Luke 15:18-20; Acts 26:20—confession, turning and returning to God (Isa. 55:6, 7), doing works worthy of repentance. The result of repentance: Luke 24:47; Acts 3:19; 2:38.

FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson 8.

February 25, 1923.

THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS.

Golden Text.—He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much.—Luke 16:10.

Lesson Text.—Luke 19:11-26.

11 And as they heard these things he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear. 12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. 13 And he called ten servants of his, and gave them ten pounds, and said unto them, Trade ye herewith till I come. 14 But his citizens hated him, and sent an embassy after him, saying, We will not that this man reign over us. 15 And it came to pass, when he was come back again, having received the kingdom, that he commanded these servants, unto whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by trading. 16 And the first came before him, saying, Lord, thy pound hath made ten pounds more. 17 And he said unto him, Well done, thou good

Verse 11. Does this connect very closely with preceding lesson? Where were they at the time? What journey was this understood to be? (Luke 9:51). What did they suppose? Who supposed this, believers or unbelievers? To whom therefore was the parable spoken? What were the two reasons for speaking this parable?

Verse 12. Who is the chief actor in the story? Where did he go? For what purpose? Then what? (V. 15). Who is represented by the Nobleman? What by the "far-country"? Was the "Kingdom" He went to receive, a Kingdom in the far country, or in the country from which he went? How much of this verse has already been fulfilled? (Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:9; 1 Pet. 3:22). What is yet future?

Verse 13. What did he divide among his servants? How much was this for each one? How does that differ from the parable of the Talents? (Matt. 25:15). What was the Nobleman's parting command? (Cp. Acts 1:8).

servant: because thou wast found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. 18 And the second came, saying, Thy pound, Lord, hath made five pounds. 19 And he said unto him also, Be thou also over five cities. 20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I kept laid up in a napkin: 21 for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that which thou layedst not down, and reapest that which thou didst not sow. 22 He saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I am an austere man, taking up that which I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow: 23 then wherefore gavest thou not my money into the bank, and I at my coming should have required it with interest? 24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take away from him the pound, and give it unto him that hath the ten pounds. 25 And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds. 26 I say unto you, that unto every one that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him.

Verses 18, 19. What did the second servant report? Was that as good as the first? Did his Lord praise him as much? But did he get a reward in proportion?

Verses 20, 21. What did this servant bring? Had he kept his pound safe? Had he done anything else with it? What reason did he give for not using his pound? Is that kind of "fear" right? Are there some who are so afraid they will do something wrong that they do nothing at all? Is it better to make mistakes in trying to do something, or not try, for fear of making a mistake? What estimate did this servant have of his Lord? Is one apt to render willing and glad service to "an austere man"? Is the Lord Jesus an "austere" (hard, stern, severe) Master? Does He "take up" where He has not "laid down"? Does He reap where He has not sown? (Matt. 13:37). But does He require His servants to use His goods faithfully and to make increase with them?

Verses 22-24. How did the unfaithful servant's own speech condemn him? What was his punishment?

Verses 25, 26. How did the Lord justify giving the pound to the one who already had ten? Is that not a great spiritual law?

NOTES ON LESSON 8.

THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS.

It is important to note when, where, and why this parable was spoken. It was on the last journey; nearing Jerusalem, His destination; and because they, knowing this, expected the kingdom (in outward glory and power) immediately to appear.

How long only was their trading time? Who are Christ's servants? Has each received a gift to administer for Him?

Verse 14. Who were His citizens that hated Him? (John 1:10; 15:24, 25). What kind of treatment can His servants expect among such people? (John 15:18-20). What word did they send to "the far country"? (Comp. Ps. 2).

Verse 15. What great event now? Does He come back empty-handed? What has He received? Does He come clothed with authority and power? Who is called first of all? For what? Shall all Christians answer to their Lord? (Rom. 14:10, 12; 2 Cor. 5:10).

Verses 16, 17. How well had the first one administered his pound? Does he say he made ten pounds? What reward is accorded him? Can such a reward be granted by a king who has rule and authority over a land? Was the reward far greater than the original pound and all the pounds gained? Will it more than compensate for all the trouble and toil? (Cp. Rom. 8:18). Did the Lord promise His servants an actual rule? (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21). Over what had this servant been faithful? What fitness did that prove? (Gold. Text.)

The parable was to the point that before the Kingdom would be thus manifested, the Lord would have to go to heaven to receive the kingdom, and before His return there would intervene a time during which His servants would have to prove their faithfulness in administration of their Lord's goods "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation." But when He came back, "having received the kingdom," He would exercise His authority, assigning His servants rule according as they had proved faithful, and executing judgment upon the enemies that had hated and opposed Him.

The 27th verse, omitted in our printed lesson, is necessary to complete the picture: "But these mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." This corresponds with the teaching of 2 Thess. 1:7-10 and Rev. 19:11-21. "We find Him," says Trench (Parables) "on His return exercising kingly functions; setting His servants over five cities, and over ten; having power of life and death, and executing extreme judgment on those that had sent messages of defiance after Him."

THE REST OF LUKE 19.

The rest of the chapter treats of Christ's approach to Jerusalem, His "triumphant entry," His heartbreaking lament over the guilty and doomed City; then the cleansing of the Temple, and His teaching there the while His enemies, swelling with hate and rage, as yet saw no way to destroy Him.

TEACHING POINTS.

1. **The Reason for this Parable.** Premature, and also very crude, expectations. It was necessary to warn and check the disciples in this matter, both to prepare them for the awful disappointments awaiting them in the Lord's shameful death, and to prevent them from being carried away by a false enthusiasm into actions that might have appeared seditious to the Roman government.

2. **The Nobleman's Journey.** To what place? How did He go? (By the way of the Cross) When? (Acts 1:9-11). What for? Was He, and has He already been invested with universal authority? (See references given in Questions, on v. 12). What great event had He in view beyond that?

3. **The Trust left with His Servants.** This parable differs from that of the Talents (Matt. 25) in that their differing gifts were entrusted to the servants to be used with the same diligence in each case; but in the Pounds the gift is the same, and the difference lies in the varying degrees of diligence with which it was used. "Trade ye herewith"—till when?

4. **The Pounds.** "Not weapons, but pounds"—that is, money (v. 23). The pound is the Lord's. It is to be used for blessing and increase. It is the pound, not the man, that makes the increase; but through the man's diligent use of it. (Comp. 1 Cor. 15:10). It is a meek and peaceful ministry of love and grace that the servants must fulfil in the world during their Lord's absence on that great errand. Some have thought, says Trench, "to fight the world with its own weapons, and by the wrath of man to work the righteousness of God. Such identifying of the Church with a worldly kingdom has been the idea of the Papacy . . . and that they, not Christ Himself, were to bring it into outward form and substance; instead of seeing that their part was with diligent but silent occupation of their talent, to lay the rudiments of that kingdom and so to prepare the world for the outbreking of it; which yet should not actually come to pass till the King Himself returned in His glory."

5. **The Rewards.** The first thing upon the Lord's Return, is the account held with His servants. Their reward is according to their faithfulness. It consists in rule, a ruling together with Him. (See references given). The servant who used not his pound gets nothing, and loses even that pound. Add to that Matt. 25:30. In this lies the great practical lesson and appeal.

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