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SABBATH-SCHOOL *Month 1 w*
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FOR SENIOR CLASSES

SECOND QUARTER, 1906

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Sabbath-School Lessons

A STUDY OF THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

FOR SENIOR CLASSES

SECOND QUARTER, 1906

General Note.

The main characteristics of this epistle, says Barnes, are these: 1. It is full of love. The writer dwells on it; places it in a variety of attitudes; enforces the duty of loving one another by a great variety of considerations, and shows that it is essential to the very nature of religion. 2. The epistle abounds with statements on the evidences of piety, or the characteristics of true religion. . . . A large part of the epistle is occupied with this, and there is perhaps no portion of the New Testament which one who is desirous of ascertaining whether he himself is a true Christian could study to more advantage. An anxious inquirer, a man who wishes to know what true religion is, could be directed to no portion of the New Testament where he would more readily find the instruction that he needs, than to this portion of the writings of the aged and experienced disciple whom Jesus loved. A true Christian can find nowhere else a more clear statement of the nature of his religion, and of the evidences of real piety, than in this epistle.

A Suggestion.

The portion of Scripture designated for each lesson should be so thoroughly studied that every question can be answered *in the exact words of the text*. The questions are framed with the purpose to make this possible. It is hoped that the notes will be found suggestive and helpful in the further development of the thought of the lesson. Teachers should encourage a careful study of the *ideas* presented, and, above all, should seek to make such a practical application of the subject-matter as will be a help in personal experience.

"There shall be delay no longer"—our confidence.

LESSON I.—Walking in the Light. 1 John 1: 1-10.

APRIL 7, 1906.

Questions.**I. Introduction. Verses 1-4.**

1. In what ways had the beloved disciple learned of the Word of Life?
2. What does John say of this life?
3. What kind of life was it?
4. Where was this life?
5. To whom was it manifested?
6. What does the apostle declare?
7. For what purpose?
8. With whom was his fellowship?
9. Why does he write these things?

II. Fellowship with God and with One Another. Verses 5-7.

10. What is the message John declared?
11. From whom did he receive it?
12. What is said of those who profess fellowship with God, but walk in darkness?
13. What is the experience of those who walk in the light?

III. Consciousness and Confession of Sin. Verses 8-10.

14. What is the result of claiming to have no sin?
15. Repeat the promise to those who confess their sins?
16. What is said of those who say that they have not sinned?

Notes.

1. Verses 1-4.—Christ is the Word (John 1:1) and the Life (John 14:6), and hence He is the Word of Life. The life was manifested in flesh (Rom. 8:3), and can be

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

known to us only as an experience (John 1: 12). When our eyes have been anointed (Rev. 3:18; 2 Kings 6:17), and our ears wakened (Isa. 50:4) so that we can hear aright (Mark 4: 24), then we must testify (Acts 4: 20), and our words will have effect (Acts 4:33). Fellowship with Christ is the experience of every Christian (1 Cor. 1: 9), and this extends to His sufferings (Phil. 3:10; 1:29), as well as to the joy (1 Peter 4: 13).

2. Verses 5-7.—God is light and dwells in light (1 Tim. 6:16), and as He was in Christ (2 Cor. 5:19), so Christ in His life (John 1: 4) was the true light (verse 9), and His followers become light (Eph. 5:8; Matt. 5: 14) if they walk in the light (John 8: 12), and are to shine (Isa. 60: 1); but this is done by the life (Matt. 5: 16). "What is light?—It is piety, goodness, truth, mercy, love; it is the revealing of the truth in the character and life." We can not have fellowship with light and darkness at the same time (2 Cor. 6: 14).

3. Verses 8, 10.—God has said that we are sinners (Rom. 3:23), and so we make Him a liar by saying that we are not sinners. But while there is no good thing in us (Rom. 7: 18), and we are poor and miserable (Rev. 3: 17), we can boast of the Lord (Ps. 34:2; 1 Cor. 1:31), in whom there is no unrighteousness (Ps. 92: 15), and who is made righteousness unto us (1 Cor. 1: 30). "He was condemned for our sins in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness in which we had no share." The only way by which we may be "made free from sin" is to confess that we are full of sin.

"Are you in Christ?—Not if you do not acknowledge yourselves erring, helpless, condemned sinners; not if you are exalting and glorifying self. If there is any good in you, it is wholly attributable to the mercy of a compassionate Saviour." "There can be no self-exaltation, no boastful claim to freedom from sin, on the part of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary's cross." "And the claim to be without sin is, in itself, evidence that he who makes this claim is far from holy."

4. ~~Verse 9~~.—There are some notable examples of confession on record for our instruction. Daniel (Dan. 9: 3-20), Ezra (Ezra 9: 5; 10: 1), and David (Ps. 51: 1-4) are familiar cases. "True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sin." "Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reforma-

We expend sixty per cent of our efforts upon four per cent of our field.

tion." "Whatever the character of your sin, confess it. If it is against God only, confess only to Him. If you have wronged or offended others, confess also to them, and the blessing of the Lord will rest upon you." "Sins that are not confessed will never be forgiven."

"Our past sins will sometimes come to mind and cast a shadow over our faith, so that we can see nothing but merited punishment in store for us. But at such times, while we feel sorry for sins, we should look to Jesus, and believe that He has pardoned our transgressions." "If you believe the promise—believe that you are forgiven and cleansed—God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it." But "it is not faith that claims the favor of heaven without complying with the conditions upon which mercy is to be granted. It is presumption." "We are to believe that God accepts us when we fulfil His conditions, simply because He has said that He would."

LESSON II.—Love and Obedience. 1 John 2:1-8.

APRIL 14, 1906.

Questions.

I. "We Have an Advocate." Verses 1, 2.

1. How are the readers of the epistle addressed?
2. For what purpose are these things written?
3. What provision has been made for any one who sins?
4. Who is this advocate and what is His character?
5. What relation does He sustain to sin?
6. For whom?

II. Keeping His Commandments. Verses 3-8.

7. By what evidence may we be assured that we really know God?

"There shall be delay no longer"—our confidence

8. What is said against those professing to know Him, in whom this proof is lacking?
9. In whom is the love of God perfected?
10. Of what is this the proof?
11. What is the true standard of the daily walk of the believer?
12. Is this a new requirement of the Christian?
13. How long since this commandment has been made known?
14. Although old in point of time, what is it called?
15. In whom is it true?
16. For what reason?

Notes.

1. ~~Verses 1-3.~~—Christ came to save, not *in* sin, but *from* sin (Matt. 1: 21). He redeems from *all* iniquity (Titus 2: 14), and delivers from the power of evil (Col. 1: 13); but God remembers our witness (Ps. 103:13, 14), and has adapted His plan of salvation to the weakest one. "The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, but he will maintain a constant warfare against it. Here is where Christ's help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength."

"There are those who have known the pardoning love of Christ, and who really desire to be children of God, yet they realize that their character is imperfect, their life faulty, and they are ready to doubt whether their hearts have been renewed by the Holy Spirit. To such I would say, do not draw back in despair. We shall often have to bow down and weep at the feet of Jesus because of our shortcomings and mistakes; but we are not to be discouraged. Even if we are overcome by the enemy, we are not cast off, not forsaken and rejected of God. No; Christ is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Said the beloved John, 'These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' And do not forget the words of Christ, 'The Father Himself loveth you.' He desires to restore you to Himself, to see His own purity and holiness reflected in you.

Nine-tenths of the women of India never heard of a Saviour.

And if you but yield yourself to Him, He that hath begun a good work in you will carry it forward to the day of Jesus Christ. Pray more fervently, believe more fully. As we come to distrust our own power, let us trust the power of our Redeemer, and we shall praise Him who is the health of our countenance."

"Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship," but "it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience."

~~2. Verses 4-6.~~—"Though John in his epistles dwells so fully upon love, yet he does not hesitate to reveal the true character of that class who claims to be sanctified while living in transgression of the law of God." "God is love, and His law is love," and so "the love of God has been perfected," or fully wrought out, in the one whose life is in harmony with His word. We are called to holiness (1 Thess. 4: 7), which is agreement with God, and "the command, 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,' would never have been given if every provision had not been made whereby we could obey the requirement,—be as perfect in our sphere as God is in His." "It is not Christ walking upon the sea, but His ordinary walk, that we are called to imitate."—*Luther*. Love to God (Deut. 6: 5) and love to man (Lev. 19: 18) was not a "new commandment" in fact, but to many it was "a new commandment" in experience.

LESSON III.—*True Love. 1 John 2: 9-17.*

APRIL 21, 1906.

Questions.

I. Love of the Brethren. Verses 9-11.

1. What is said of him who claims to be in the light, but hates his brother?
2. What is the condition of him who loves his brother?
3. What, then, is sufficient proof that a man is in darkness?
4. In what does such an one walk?

The needs of the cause of God are world-wide.

5. What does he not know?
6. Why can he not see the way?

II. Threefold Statement of Reasons for Writing. Verses 12-14.

7. Why does John write to children?
8. Why to fathers?
9. Why to young men?
10. What second reason is given for writing to children?
11. What reason is repeated?
12. What second reason is given for writing to young men?

13. What is the effect of the Word abiding in the heart?

III. A Solemn Warning. Verses 15-17.

14. What are Christians not to love?
15. What is said of one who loves the world?
16. What are the characteristics of the things that are in the world?
17. From what source do these come?
18. What is said of the world?
19. Who will abide forever?

Notes.

1. ~~Verses 9-11.~~—Love for the brethren is an evidence of conversion (1 John 3: 14), and no one can be in the light (John 8: 12) and not have this love. Christ identifies Himself with His followers, and counts every service rendered to them as if done to Him (Matt. 25:40). There are only two classes. All are either "in the light" or "in darkness." Love is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 22), by which it is shed abroad in the heart (Rom. 5: 5). When man sinned, "selfishness took the place of love," but "in the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the principle of action." God loved us when we were sinners (Rom. 5: 8), and Christians

"This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

must not limit this love to their brethren (Matt. 5: 44-46). "The Spirit of Christ's self-sacrificing love is the spirit that pervades heaven, and is the very essence of its bliss. This is the spirit that Christ's followers will possess, the work that they will do."

Christians are to love one another (John 15:12, 17), which is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10). "We should love and respect one another, notwithstanding the faults and imperfections that we can not help seeing." "We are to stand under the shadow of the cross of Calvary, humbling our hearts, confessing our sins, and entreating the Lord to pardon our defects of character, and strengthen our love for the brethren."

It is dangerous to trifle with light, for light rejected will bring darkness (John 12: 35), and this is the greatest darkness of all (Matt. 6:23). When minds are blinded by Satan (2 Cor. 4: 4), the people are in the deepest darkness (Isa. 60:2), and do not perceive the snares of the devil.

2. ~~Verses 15-17.~~—Our thoughts are to be above (Col. 3:2) where our citizenship is (Phil. 3: 20, R. V.), and our love can not be divided (Matt. 6: 24). Enmity between Christians and the world is of long standing (Gen. 3:15), and is really the hope of the race. "It is the grace that Christ implants in the soul which creates in man enmity against Satan." We may be friends of God (John 15:15) as Abraham was (Isa. 41:8), or friend of the world; but we can not be both at the same time (James 4: 4). "Conformity to the world will never be the means of converting the world to Christ." The world passes away, but character endures. The will of God is His law (Rom. 2: 18), which is everlasting righteousness (Ps. 119: 172, 144; Isa. 51: 6-8).

LESSON IV.—*Antichrists. 1 John 2:18-25.*

APRIL 28, 1906.

Questions.

I. A Latter-Day Lesson. Verses 18, 19.

1. To what time does this lesson especially apply?
2. Whose coming is foretold?

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."

3. How fully has this prediction been fulfilled?
4. What may we know by this?
5. With whom have these antichrists been nominally connected?
6. What proof is there that the fellowship was not true?

7. Why do they withdraw?

II. Knowing the Truth. Verses 20, 21.

8. What is given to the believers?

9. With what result?

10. What was the real reason for writing the epistle?

III. Denying Christ. Verses 22, 23.

11. What is he who denies that Jesus is the Christ?

12. Who is antichrist?

13. How close is the relationship between the Father and the Son?

IV. Precious Promises. Verses 24, 25.

14. What is to abide in believers?

15. What experience will then be theirs?

16. What is promised to them?

Notes.

1. ~~Verses 18-20.~~—Apostasy is a characteristic of the last time (or hour, R. V.). The Saviour predicted this (Matt. 24: 11, 12), and the church had been warned of it more than once (1 Tim. 4: 1; 2 Tim. 3: 1-5). The incarnation is the testing truth (2 John 7), and this really means the union of Divinity and humanity in the believer (Col. 1:27). This experience involves the death of self (Rom. 6: 6), and giving up all things temporal (Luke 14: 33), and many fail to endure the test. The power of God in the church is the best agency for relieving it of unworthy members (Isa. 52: 1), as is shown in the early church (Acts 5:1-14). Jesus was anointed by the Father (Acts 10:38), and so are His-followers (2 Cor.

Prayerfully consider the unentered fields.

1:21), and they are thus enabled to comprehend the things of God (Eph. 1: 17-19), which are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2: 12-14).

2. ~~Verses 22, 23.~~—Christ being the image of God (2 Cor. 4:4), one with the Father (John 10:30), through whom alone the Father could be known (Matt. 11: 27), to see one was to see the other (John 12: 45), and the denial of one includes the rejection of the other (compare 2 Peter 2:1; Jude 4).

3. ~~Verses 24, 25.~~—Love to one another was the command from the beginning (2 John 5) and this involves the new birth (1 John 4: 7), which results in the indwelling presence of both the Father and the Son (John 14: 23). Christ is the Life (John 11:25), and is from eternity (Micah 5:2, margin), and so is called the eternal life (1 John 1: 2), which was promised before man fell (Titus 1: 2), and announced to him before he was driven from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3: 15). To believe on Christ is to receive Him (John 1: 12) who is life (Col. 3: 4), and so believers have everlasting life (John 3: 36). When God gave Christ to the world, He poured out all the treasure of heaven in one gift (Col. 2: 9), and it will be our constant study to all eternity to learn what we have in Christ.

LESSON V.—Abiding in Christ. 1 John 2:26 to 3:3.

MAY 5, 1906.

Questions.

I. The Teaching of the Spirit. Verses 26, 27.

1. Concerning whom has this instruction been given?
2. What abides in the believers?
3. Of what have they no need?
4. How are they taught?
5. What will this teaching enable them to do?

II. Ready for His Appearing. Verses 28 to 3: 3.

6. What are the "little children" exhorted to do?
7. How will those who abide in Him be able to stand before Jesus when He comes?

Nine-tenths of the women of India never heard of a Saviour.

8. What is the character of Christ?
9. What is true of every one who does righteousness?
10. To what is especial attention now directed?
11. How is this love manifested?
12. How does the world regard those who are accepted as sons of God?
13. Why is this?
14. When is this relationship with God entered upon?
15. What doth not yet appear?
16. What change will take place "when He shall appear"?
17. What effect does this hope have upon the one who cherishes it?
18. What is the true standard of piety?

Notes.

1. ~~Verses 26-29~~.—Paul warned the church of future trouble (Acts 20:29), and this apostasy began in his day (2 Thess. 2:7). Jude writes very strongly concerning these deceivers (Jude 4, 10-13) who abounded before John's death (2 John 7). The Holy Spirit, which was promised by Christ (John 16:7) and had been poured upon them (Acts 2:33), would teach them the truth (John 16:13), and would protect them from deceivers (Acts 10:19, 20). Jesus says, "Abide in Me." These words convey the idea of rest, stability, confidence. See the lesson in John 15:4-7. Such a life brings conformity to the divine character (2 Cor. 3:18), and confidence at His coming (Isa. 25:9).

2. ~~Verses 1-8~~.—It would require the language of the Infinite to express the love that has made it possible for us to be called the sons of God. Faith makes us children of God (Gal. 3:26), and this is a present experience. The Holy Spirit belongs to the sons of God (Gal. 4:6), who are also heirs (Rom. 8:17) of the inheritance. In fact, "all things" belong to them (1 Cor. 3:21). The world knew not Christ (John 1:10) nor the Father (John 17:25), and for this reason (John 16:3) will persecute true Christians (John

Prayerfully consider the unentered fields.

15: 18-20). This present life is the time for the perfect character. "If you give yourself to Him and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in the place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned." The character is fixed at the coming of Christ (Rev. 22:11), who "shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory" (Phil. 3: 21, R. V.), and thus shall we "appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3: 4). So shall we be satisfied (Ps. 17:15). Holiness is required of those who shall see God (Heb. 12:14), and this privilege is promised to the pure in heart (Matt. 5:8); but "who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from sin?" (Prov. 20:9). It is by faith (Acts 15: 9) which works (Gal. 5: 6) in obedience (1 Peter 1: 22) that we are purified. "He who hath this hope in him learns from the Scriptures that he must be a worker together with God."

LESSON VI.—Sin and Righteousness. 1 John 3: 4-15.

MAY 12, 1906.

Questions.

I. Transgression of the Law. Verses 4, 5.

1. What is the sinner's attitude toward the law?
2. What is the definition of sin?
3. For what purpose was Christ manifested?
4. From what is He free?

II. Freedom from Sin. Verses 6-10.

5. How is freedom from sin insured?
6. What is the sinner's relation to Christ?
7. What is the character of the one who "doeth righteousness"?
8. What is the character of the one who "committeth sin"?

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

9. How long has Satan continued in sin?
10. Why was the Son of God manifested?
11. What course of life results from the new birth?
12. What reason is given for this statement?
13. How are the "children of God" distinguished from the "children of the devil"?

III. Love One Another. Verses 11-15.

14. What message has been heard from the beginning?
15. Whose case is cited as an illustration?
16. Why did Cain kill his brother?
17. What should cause no astonishment to the brethren?
18. What is an evidence of the change from death to life?
19. Of whom is it said that he "abideth in death"?
20. How broad is the meaning of the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill"?
21. What character does not possess eternal life?

Notes.

1. ~~Verses 4-6.~~—Unrighteousness and sin are the same (1 John 5: 17), and both are the result of being out of harmony with God's law, which is righteousness (Ps. 119: 172). "The character of God is righteousness and truth; such is the nature of His law." The law detects sin (Rom. 3: 20), and drives to Christ for justification (Gal. 3: 24). "A view of our sinfulness drives us to Him who can pardon." Christ came to take away sin and abolish death (2 Tim. 1: 10), but not the law. "Had it been possible for the law to be changed or set aside, then Christ need not have died to save man from the penalty of sin." "A wrong conception of the character, the perpetuity, and obligation of the divine law, has led to errors in the relation to conversion and sanctification, and has resulted in lowering the standard of piety in the church." "It is only as the law of God is restored to its rightful position that there can be a revival of primitive faith and godliness

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among His professed people." Christ bore the sins of the world (John 1: 29, margin) in the sinner's place (Gal. 3: 13); and, although free from sin (1 Peter 2: 22), and "hating sin with a perfect hatred, He yet gathered to His soul the sins of the whole world." "Under the mighty impulse of His love, He took our place in the universe, and invited the Ruler of all things to treat Him as a representative of the human family." "Though the guilt of sin was not His, His spirit was torn and bruised by the transgressions of men." It was at such cost as this that "He was manifested to take away our sins." That vital union with Christ which imparts His nature (2 Peter 1:4) enables us to realize the fulfilment of "God's mighty emancipation proclamation" (Rom. 6: 14).

2. ~~Verses 7-9.~~—Righteousness must be within before it can be manifested in outward works. "Genuine Christlikeness can not be manifested in the character until Christ is received by faith and formed within the hope of glory." "The tree that bears good fruit is a good tree and has a living root; not that the fruit *makes* the tree and its fruit to be good, but it *shows* that they are so."—*Fausset*. God condemned sin in the flesh once (Rom. 8:3), and the "union of Divinity with humanity in Christ was to reveal to us God's purpose to bring men into the closest connection with Himself." "He who lays hold upon the righteousness of Christ may become a perfect man in Christ Jesus." "The character is revealed, not by occasional good deeds and occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of the habitual words and acts." Christ prayed in behalf of all His disciples that the Father might "keep them from the evil one" (R. V.) and that prayer avails now.

3. ~~Verses 12-15.~~—The cause assigned for the murder of Abel is really at the root of all the injuries inflicted upon the righteous by evil men, and was illustrated in the death of Christ. "It was not so much because He appeared without worldly wealth, pomp, or grandeur, that the Jews were led to reject Him. They saw that He possessed power which could more than compensate for the lack of these outward advantages. But the purity and holiness of Christ called forth against Him the hatred of the ungodly. His life of self-denial and sinless devotion was a perpetual reproof to a proud, sensual people. It was this that evoked enmity against the Son of God." "So in all ages the wicked have hated those who were better than themselves." "It is the

"The advent message to the world in this generation"—our watchword.

spirit that through all the ages has set up the stake and kindled the burning pile for the disciples of Christ." The world hated Christ (John 15: 24), and so would naturally hate His followers. "Love is of God. The unconsecrated heart can not originate or produce it; it is found only in the heart where Jesus reigns."

Christ explained the spiritual nature of the sixth commandment (Matt. 5: 21, 22), showing that it is "exceeding broad." If it were the duty of the civil power to enforce the law of God, there would not be a sufficient number of innocent persons to inflict the penalty upon those who are really guilty of murder. The spirit that leads to murder is not in harmony with the Spirit of Christ (Luke 9: 56), and so shuts its possessor out of heaven (Rom. 8: 9).

LESSON VII.—Love for One Another. 1 John 3:16-24.

MAY 19, 1906.

Questions.

I. The Spirit of Sacrifice. Verses 16-18.

1. How has the love of God for us been shown?
2. How far should the spirit of self-sacrifice be carried?
3. In what way is a lack of this love shown?
4. Is a profession of love sufficient?
5. To what kind of love are the believers exhorted?

II. Confidence toward God. Verses 19-24.

6. What will be known by those who cherish true love?
7. When the heart condemns, can it be expected that God will commend?
8. What is the experience when the heart does not condemn?
9. What is given to those who have this experience?

The Son of God beggared Himself to enrich us.

10. For what reason?
11. What is His commandment?
12. What union is entered into by commandment keepers?
13. How may we know that He abides in us?

Notes.

1. ~~Verses 16-18.~~—The Revised Version renders the first clause of verse 16 thus: "Hereby know we love, because," etc. The cross of Calvary is the grandest display of love which the universe has ever seen (John 3:16). "Jesus died because God loved the world. The channel had to be made whereby the love of God should be recognized by man and flow into the sinner's heart in perfect harmony with truth and justice." "The resources of infinite love have been exhausted in devising and executing the plan of redemption for man." It is love which draws man to God (Jer. 31: 3) and leads him to repentance (Rom. 2: 4), and "the Lord has no reserve power with which to influence men. He can give no greater manifestation of His love than that which He has given." "Oh, what a God have we! What a benefactor! What claims has He upon our love! Having collected all the riches of the universe and laid open all the resources of infinite power, He gave all the heavenly treasure into the hands of Christ, and said: 'All these are for man. Use them to convince him that there is no love greater than Mine in earth or heaven. His greatest happiness consists in loving me, and giving his heart to Me, who hath loved him with an infinite love.'" "He who has shared in the grace of Christ is thereby placed under obligation to others (Rom. 1:14), and this grace is more sacred to him than life" (Acts 20:24). "This plan of salvation was laid by a sacrifice, a gift" (2 Cor. 8: 9), and the same spirit should characterize all Christians (Matt. 10: 8) as was shown by the Macedonians (2 Cor. 8: 3-5). "Thus while our gifts can not recommend us to God, or earn His favor, they are an evidence that we have received the grace of Christ. They are a test of the sincerity of our profession of love." "He tests the love of His professed followers by committing to their tender mercies the afflicted and bereaved ones, the poor, and the orphan." Deeds should accompany words in order to make them effective (James 2: 15, 16).

"Lift up your eyes and look on the field; for they are white already to harvest."

2. ~~Verses 19-24.~~ A clear conscience is a good thing (2 Cor. 1:12), but God is the final judge (Rom. 2:16), and the life record determines the result (Rev. 20:12). "Believers, as such, ask only what is in accordance with God's will; or if they ask what God wills not, they bow their will to God's will, so God grants them either their request or something better than it."—*Fausset.*

God can bestow special blessings upon only those who will use them to His glory, which is always for their good (Deut. 6:24). The obedience of faith is evidence of such a purpose. As Christ pleased not Himself (Rom. 15:3) but the Father (John 8:29), so we are to do; but this is not natural to man (Rom. 8:8), and is accomplished only through faith (Heb. 11:6). Belief in Christ insures salvation (Acts 16:31), and is the work of God (John 6:29). Love to man is the outgrowth of this experience. Christ dwells in genuine Christians (2 Cor. 13:5), as in Paul (Gal. 2:20), and works in us through His power (Phil. 2:13) to obedience (Rom. 5:19).

LESSON VIII.—*Test of False Teachers. 1 John 4:1-6.*

MAY 26, 1906.

Questions.

I. Discerning of Spirits. Verses 1-3.

1. How are believers addressed?
2. Is every spirit to be believed?
3. What point should be settled by investigation?
4. What fact makes this necessary?
5. How may the Spirit of God be known?
6. What spirit is not of God?
7. What is such a spirit?
8. What prediction had been made concerning it?
9. Had the prediction been fulfilled?

II. Overcoming. Verses 4-6.

10. Who had "overcome them"?

The Son of God beggared Himself to enrich us.

11. What had enabled them to do this?
12. Of what are "they"?
13. Of what do they speak?
14. What heareth them?
15. Of what are the believers?
16. Who heareth them?
17. Who heareth them not?
18. By these things what is known?

Notes.

"The connection of the visible with the invisible world, the ministration of angels of God, and the agency of evil spirits, are plainly revealed in the Scriptures, and inseparably interwoven with human history." "Evil spirits, in the beginning created sinless, were equal in nature, power, and glory with the holy beings that are now God's messengers. But fallen through sin, they are leagued together for the dishonor of God and the destruction of men." These evil spirits work "in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2: 2), who yield themselves as servants (Rom. 6: 16), in marvelous ways (Matt. 24:24), and more and more as time advances (2 Tim. 3: 13), until fire is brought down from heaven (Rev. 13:13), "and as the crowning act in the great drama of deception Satan himself will personate Christ." "The people of God are directed to the Scriptures as the safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness" (Isa. 8:20). Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the holy Scriptures." Error is not to be countenanced, although preached by an angel (Gal. 1: 8); neither, because we despise the messenger (Mark 6: 3), are we to reject truth (John 10:37, 38). Christ was born of the Spirit (Luke 1: 35), and dwelt in the flesh (John 1: 14), and so He must dwell in our flesh (Eph. 3: 17), living in us (Gal. 2: 20), to give us victory (2 Cor. 2: 14) in the conflict with unseen powers (Eph. 6:12). Any one who presents any other hope of salvation is a deceiver and an antichrist (2 John 7). "Jesus fought all our battles during His life upon earth" (John 16: 33), and "we each have a battle to fight *with a fal-*

The needs of the cause of God are world-wide.

len foe." "The hand of the Infinite is stretched over the battlements of heaven to grasp your hand in its embrace. The mighty Helper is nigh to help the most erring, the most sinful and despairing." God and the world, the followers of Christ and the servants of Satan, "the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error," are in marked contrast. All are found in one of two classes (Matt. 12:30), and the same person can not be found in both (Matt. 6:24).

LESSON IX.—The Source of Love. 1 John 4:7-14.

JUNE 2, 1906.

Questions.

I. God's Love for Us. Verses 7-10.

1. What are the "beloved" urged to do?
2. Who is the source of love?
3. What is the experience of every one that loveth?
4. Of what is the lack of love an evidence?
5. What proves this to be true?
6. How has the love of God been manifested toward us?
7. For what purpose?
8. On whose part was this love shown?
9. In what way?

II. God's Love in Us. Verses 11-14.

10. On what basis is brotherly love urged?
11. What has no man seen?
12. What shows His indwelling presence and the perfecting of His love?
13. How may we know that we are in union with Him?
14. What testimony may be borne by those who have His Spirit?

"One dollar now is of more value to the work than ten dollars will be at some future period."

Notes.

1. ~~Verses 7-11.~~—"Whenever the life of God is in the hearts of men, it will flow out to others in love and blessing." "Of God he hath been begotten and doth know God" is Dr. Young's rendering of the last clause of verse 7. The new birth is a past experience, but knowing God is always a present experience. It is not only true that God loves and is a source of love, but "God is love," and this is the essence of the whole gospel. There can be no discord in the home, the church, or the community when the love of God abides in all hearts. God's love to us is not simply an abstract thing, but it was shown in a most practical way (John 3: 16). Man lost his life by sin (Gen. 2: 17), and Christ came to restore life (John 10: 10), which is wholly the gift of God (Rom. 6: 23). "Had not God specially interposed, Satan and man would have entered into an alliance against heaven, and, instead of cherishing enmity against Satan, the whole human family would have been united in opposition to God." "The reconciliation of mercy and justice did not involve any compromise with sin, or ignore any claim of justice; but, by giving to each divine attribute its ordained place, mercy could be exercised in the punishment of sinful, impenitent man without destroying its clemency or forfeiting its compassionate character, and justice could be exercised in forgiving the repenting transgressor without violating its integrity." "Said the angel, Think ye that the Father yielded up His beloved Son without a struggle? No, no. It was even a struggle with the God of heaven, whether to let guilty man perish, or to give His beloved Son to die for him."

2. ~~Verses 12-14.~~—Men can not see God with the natural eye, but they ought to see His character wrought out in Christians. "Perhaps they do not read the Bible, or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if you are a true representative of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand something of His goodness, and be won to love and serve Him." The Spirit is given to those who ask for it (Luke 11: 13), but the asking must be in the name of Jesus (John 16: 23, 24). But to pray in the name of Jesus is something more than a mere mention of that name at the beginning and ending of a prayer. It is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works." The purpose of Christ in coming to this

"There shall be delay no longer"—our confidence.

world was to save (Luke 19: 10), not to judge (John 12: 47); but rejection of His work results in condemnation (John 3: 18). The price paid was sufficient to redeem the world, but no man is saved contrary to his own will and choice. We can do nothing without Him (John 15: 5), and He will do nothing without us. Christ sends His followers on the same errand which brought Him to the earth (John 20: 21), and has promised His presence to them (Matt. 28:20). "As Jesus has revealed to us the true character of the Father, so we are to reveal Christ to a world that does not know His tender, pitying love."

LESSON X.—The Influence of Love. 1 John 4: 15-21.

JUNE 9, 1906.

Questions.

I. In Union with God. Verses 15-17.

1. What relationship exists between God and him who confesses that Jesus is His Son?
2. What have we known and believed?
3. What is God?
4. What follows as a result of this truth?
5. What is the effect of this union?
6. What confidence does perfect love give?
7. What is the reason for this?

II. Casting Out Fear. Verse 18.

8. What is wholly excluded by love?
9. What state of mind does fear produce?
10. Of what does the presence of fear give evidence?

III. A Proof of Discipleship. Verse 19-21.

11. Why do believers love God?
12. What charge is made against him who professes love to God but hates his brother?

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."

13. Why is such an one inconsistent?
 14. What commandment has been given?

Notes.

1. ~~Verses 15, 16.~~—When Peter confessed that Jesus was the Son of God, the reply of Christ indicated that this truth can not be discerned by the natural man (Matt. 16:16, 17), and it is only when Christ, in whom God dwelt (2 Cor. 5:19), is revealed in us (Gal. 1:16) that we can confess this truth in the sense of the Scripture. Thus the Spirit which is to testify of Him (John 15:26) witnesses through us to His Divinity (1 Cor. 12:3). The love of God can be known only by experience, as it is poured out in the heart (Rom. 5:5). "Human language can never explain how the love of Christ can take possession of the soul, and lead captive every power of the mind; but you will know it by personal experience." Since God is love, and all love is of God, no one can be in love and separated from God at the same time.

2. ~~Verse 17.~~—The result aimed at in all God's love to us is that we may be restored to His favor and dwell in His presence (1 Tim. 2:4), but this involves a testing of the character (2 Cor. 5:10), and the Law demands perfection (James 2:10). No righteousness of our own (Phil. 3:9) will give confidence in that day. Those who have "had a sense of the righteousness of Jehovah, and felt the terror of appearing in their guilt and uncleanness before the Searcher of hearts," will desire a robe of righteousness (Isa. 61:10) as a wedding garment (Matt. 22:11, 12), clean and white (Rev. 19:8). "None are so sinful that they can not find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments, stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness."

Our likeness to Christ must begin here. "We must perfect a Christlike character, or we shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven." "The saints in heaven will first have been saints on earth."

3. ~~Verse 18.~~—Although there is a certain fear (1 Peter 1:17) in which we are to live (Phil. 2:12), yet "not in distrust of the grace of God, but in fear that self shall gain the supremacy. We are not to fear that there will be any failure on the part of God, but fear lest because of our own sinful inclinations any of us should seem to come short of the promise."

"One dollar now is of more value to the work than ten dollars will be at some future period."

"Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to *choose* another master, for we are always free to do this."

God has given us every reason for assurance (Heb. 6: 17, 18) that He will carry us through (Phil. 1:6) and enable us to pass the test (Jude 24), if we believe in Him (2 Chron. 20: 20).

4. ~~Verse 19-21.~~—"We love, because He first loved us," is the revised version of verse 19. We should never have known the meaning of love, and never have exercised it toward any one, if God had not first loved us. If we love God, whom we have not seen (1 Peter 1: 8), then we shall surely love all the objects of His love about us whom we can see. This love is a proof to the world of our discipleship (John 13: 35). Love to God and love to man are inseparably connected (Matt. 22: 37-40), and both will be manifested by the follower of Christ. "There has been too much of a spirit to ask, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' Said the angel, 'Yea, *thou art* thy brother's keeper. Thou shouldst have a watchful care for thy brother be interested for his welfare, and cherish a kind, loving spirit toward him.'" While we can not fellowship those who are the bitter enemies of Christ, we should cultivate that spirit of meekness and love that characterized our Master,—a love that thinketh no evil, and is not easily provoked."

LESSON XI.—*The New Birth. 1 John 5: 1-6.*

JUNE 16, 1906.

Questions.

I. Love and Obedience. Verses 1-3.

1. Who is born of God?
2. What is said of every one who loves the Father?
3. How is it known when one loves the children of God?
4. What is the love of God?
5. What is said of the nature of the commandments?

II. Faith. Verses 4-6.

The Son of God beggared Himself to enrich us.

6. Who overcomes the world?
7. What is the victory?
8. On what point must faith be exercised in order to overcome the world?
9. How did Christ come?
10. What point is made emphatic by its repetition?
11. What bears witness?
12. For what reason?

Notes.

1. ~~Verses~~ 1-3.—The new birth is the condition of entrance to the kingdom (John 3: 3), and it is a spiritual birth (verse 5). Man "must have a new life from above. This change is the new birth." To thus become children of God is granted to believers (John 1: 12, 13) in Christ (Gal. 3: 26). Such are children of promise (Gal. 4: 28), being born of the word (James 1: 18). Love to the brethren is a proof of conversion (1 John 3: 14), and obedience to God is proof of love to the brethren, hence obedience is proof of conversion. There can be no true love apart from obedience (John 14: 23), which is the highest form of worship. "If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new covenant promise is fulfilled, 'I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them' (Heb. 10: 16). And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life?" "If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in us, our purposes, our actions will be in harmony with the will of God, as expressed in the precepts of His holy law. God is love and His law, "being an expression of the mind and will of God," "the transcript of the character of God," is founded upon love (Matt. 22: 40) and fulfilled in love (Rom. 13: 10). His commandments "are not burdensome" (Matt. 11: 30) to those who have been set free from the bondage of sin (John 8: 34-36), but rather a delight (Ps. 1: 2). "The truth a bondage?—Yes, in one sense; it binds the *willing* souls in captivity to Jesus Christ."

"The advent message to the world in this generation"—our watchword.

2. ~~Verses 4, 5.~~—The greatest victories of the world have been gained through faith (Heb. 11: 32-34) in Christ (1 Cor. 15:57), who was an overcomer (John 16:33), and “has given us the advantage of His victory, that we may be able to resist the temptations of the evil one.” “We gain the victory through faith in Christ’s power to save us.” “This is the victory that *hath overcome* the world,” is the reading of the Revised Version, thus making the victory an accomplished fact.

“The Lord Jesus is making experiments of human hearts through the exhibition of His mercy and abundant grace. He is effecting transformations so amazing that Satan, with all his triumphant boasting, with all his confederacy of evil united against God and the laws of His government, stands viewing them as a fortress impregnable to his sophistries and delusions. They are to him an incomprehensible mystery. The angels of God, seraphim and cherubim, the powers commissioned to cooperate with human agencies, look on with astonishment and joy that fallen men, once children of wrath, are, through the training of Christ, developing characters after the divine similitude, to be sons and daughters of God, to act an important part in the pleasures and occupations of heaven.” Only in him who “believeth that Jesus is the Son of God” can such a work as this be wrought.

3. ~~Verse 6.~~—Jesus came by water and by blood (John 19: 34). “In the shed blood we see the sacrificed life of Christ, and in the water we see the Word and the Spirit of Christ. In the blood we see the expiation made for sin, and through the blood we get remission of sins. Then comes the water to sanctify and to cleanse us.”—*Rogers*.

Blood and water are both used in the typical service (Lev. 14: 6, 8) as symbols of cleansing. So we are cleansed by the blood (1 John 1: 7), and by water which is explained to be the word (Eph. 5: 26, compare with John 15: 3).

LESSON XII.—*Eternal Life.* 1 John 5: 7-15.

JUNE 23, 1906.

Questions.

I. The Witnesses. Verses 7-10.

1. How many bear witness in heaven?

“There shall be delay no longer”—our confidence.

2. What are they?
3. How are they related to each other?
4. How many others bear witness?
5. What are they?
6. How are these related to each other?
7. How does the witness of God compare with that of men?
8. Concerning whom has God borne testimony?
9. Who has this testimony in Himself?
10. What does the unbeliever declare God to be?
11. In what way does he do this?

II. Life in Christ. Verses 11-13.

12. What is this record or testimony?
13. In whom is this life?
14. Who has life?
15. Who has not life?
16. To whom have these things been written?
17. For what purpose?

III. Effective Prayer. Verses 14, 15.

18. What confidence do believers have in God?
19. When God hears prayer, what is the result?

Notes.

1. **Verses 7-10.**—In ancient times two or three witnesses were required (Deut. 19:15), and this custom is continued by our Saviour's express command (Matt. 18: 16). The Spirit witnesses to our sonship (Rom. 8: 16), as it speaks through the Word (Acts 28: 25; 2 Peter 1: 21), which is represented by the water (Eze. 36: 25; John 15: 3; Eph. 5: 26), of the efficacy of the blood of Christ (Heb. 9: 14). Those who bear witness against Christ can not agree (Mark 14:55, 56), but there is always harmony in the truth. God can not lie (Titus

"One dollar now is of more value to the work than ten dollars will be at some future period."

1:2), even when He calls things that be not as if they were (Rom. 4:17), because His word, when spoken, has power to produce the thing or situation mentioned. "In His dealing with sin God could employ only righteousness and truth. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit." The closing clause of the ninth verse is made clearer by the Revised Version: "For the witness of God is this, that He hath borne witness concerning His Son." God has borne witness concerning His Son by audible voice (Matt. 3:17; 17:5) and by the works wrought through Him (John 10:37, 38). It is a serious thing to charge God with being a liar; but when He states a thing and we do not believe Him, that is what we do, yet He remains the same (2 Tim. 2:13). Though all men deceive (Rom. 3:4), God does not (Num. 23:19).

2. ~~Verses 11, 12.~~—The Lord had given the land to the Israelites (Josh. 1:3) as soon as He had made provision for its conquest by them, but not in their own strength (Ps. 44:3); so all blessings (Eph. 1:3), even eternal life, have been bestowed upon us, and it only remains for us to accept them upon the stated conditions. "Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse." "There must be a power working from within, a *new life* from above, before we can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ." "But it is *the life of Jesus Christ* in the soul, it is the active principle of love imparted by the Holy Spirit, that alone will make the soul fruitful unto good works." "Before works we must have eternal life; but when we are born again, and made children of God by the word of grace, then we perform good works."—*Luther.*

3. ~~Verses 13-15.~~—Those who believe "may know" these things (Heb. 11:1), not through faith in a creed, but by receiving Him (John 1:12) who is the life (John 14:6). It is God's will that we should be saved from sin (Gal. 1:4); and be sanctified (1 Thess. 4:3), not that we should perish (Matt. 18:14); and so we know that He hears the requests of His children when they ask for these experiences. So the Christian can wait patiently (Ps. 40:1-3) for the Lord to work in His own way. "But to claim that prayer will always be answered in the very way and for the particular thing that we desire, is presumption." "We should be willing to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us." "The prayer of the sincere heart offered in faith will be heard in heaven. It may not be grammatical, but if the heart

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

is in it, it will ascend to the sanctuary, where Jesus ministers, and He will present it to the Father, with the fragrant incense of His own perfection, without our awkward, stammering word, graceful and perfect through His merit, for His righteousness refines and ennobles it, and makes it acceptable before the Father. The Lord accepts the prayer of the sincere heart, and will answer it out of His abundant fulness."

LESSON XIII.—Knowing the True God.

1 John 5:16-21.

JUNE 30, 1906.

Questions.

I. Praying for Sinners. Verses 16, 17.

1. What instruction is given for the benefit of those who sin not unto death?
2. What is said concerning a sin that is unto death?
3. How is righteousness defined?
4. What statement is made concerning a kind of sin?

II. The Summing Up of the Christian's Knowledge. Verses 18-21.

5. Who does not sin?
6. What is his experience?
7. What contrast is drawn between believers and the world?
8. What is known of the Son of God?
9. What has He given?
10. For what purpose?
11. In whom are the believers?
12. Who and what is He?
13. What closing admonition is given?

Prayerfully consider the unentered fields.

Notes.

1. ~~Verses 16-18.~~—It is evident from many scriptures that the prayers of the righteous avail in behalf of the sinner who has not entirely cut himself off from God (Job 42:7, 8), and this intercession brings a blessing to him who prays (verse 10). Thus a soul is saved from death (James 5:20). Sin ends in death (James 1:15) unless repentance has been granted to life (Acts 11:18); but "it is the Holy Spirit that draws men to Christ;" and so when this means of grace is refused, there is no way by which the sinner may be reached. "There is a terrible danger—a danger not sufficiently understood—in delaying to yield to the pleading voice of God's Holy Spirit, in choosing to live in sin; for such this delay really is." "Every act of transgression, every neglect or rejection of the grace of Christ, is reacting upon yourself; it is hardening the heart, depraving the will, benumbing the understanding, and not only making you less inclined to yield, but less capable of yielding, to the tender pleading of God's Holy Spirit." There is a sin which is not pardoned (Matt. 12:31, 32) here or hereafter. "What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost?—It is wilfully attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit. . . . It is through the medium of His Spirit that God works upon the human heart; and when men wilfully reject the Spirit, and declare it to be from Satan, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. . . . For a time persons who have committed this sin may appear to be children of God; but when circumstances arise to develop character, and show what manner of spirit they are of, it will be found that they are on the enemy's ground, standing under his black banner." The Lord is righteous (Ps. 119:137), and His commandments are righteousness (verse 172). Anything out of harmony with His character, as expressed by His law, is unrighteousness or sin, but it is by faith that our hearts are purified (Acts 15:9) and that we attain to righteousness (Rom. 9:30-32); thus it is that whatever is not done through faith in the merit of Christ is sin (Rom. 14:23). Christ's petition (John 17:15) and the statement of Scripture (2 Thess. 3:3) both show that it is God who keeps us from "the evil one" (both texts are so translated in the Revised Version), "but He can do nothing for us without our cooperation." It is so arranged in the plan of salvation that its great object can not be consummated

"One dollar now is of more value to the work than ten dollars will be at some future period."

without human cooperation. "All the power is of God, and all the glory is to redound to God, and yet all the responsibility rests with the human agent." Satan was permitted to tempt Christ (Matt. 4:1), but according to the prophecy (Gen. 3:15) He did not touch any vital part. So with the Christian. Angels will give strength to us (Heb. 1:14), "but the ministry of angels will not insure us against sorrow and trial. Angels ministered to Jesus; but their presence did not make His life one of ease, nor free Him from conflict and temptation."

2. ~~Verses 19-21.~~—"The whole world lieth *in the evil one*," says the Revised Version; but Christians have been delivered (Col. 1:13).

The Christian experience set forth in this epistle is a very positive one. Fifteen times occurs the statement "we know," or "know we," or "we have known," and by other expressions it is clearly shown that positive knowledge concerning the things of God is the privilege of the Christian (1 Cor. 2:12). One does not need to bow down to a visible image in order to be an idolater (Eph. 5:5). "It is as easy to make an idol of false doctrines and theories as to fashion an idol of wood or stone. By misrepresenting the attributes of God, Satan leads men to conceive of him in a false character. With many, a philosophical idea is enthroned in the place of Jehovah; while the living God, as He is revealed in His work, in Christ, and in the works of creation, is worshiped by but few. Thousands deify nature, while they deny the God of nature. Though in a different form, idolatry exists in the Christian world to-day as verily as it existed among ancient Israel in the days of Elijah. The god of many professedly wise men, of philosophers, poets, politicians, journalists,—the god of polished, fashionable circles, of many colleges and universities, even of some theological institutions,—is little better than Baal, the sun-god of Phoenicia."

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