

S. A. Wellman

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON QUARTERLY

Fourth Quarter, 1931



THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, December 26, 1931

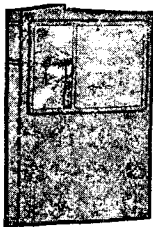
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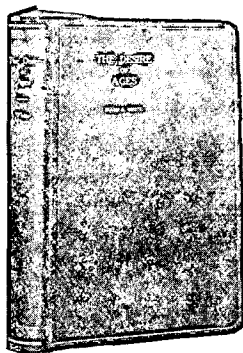
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Lesson 1—October 3, 1931

The Mount of Blessing

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 5:1-12.

MEMORY VERSE: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake."
Matt. 5:11.

LESSON HELPS: "Mount of Blessing," pp. 17-58; "The Desire of Ages," pp. 298-305.

The Lesson

1. From what parts of the country had the people come who were following Jesus? Matt. 4:25.

2. As the multitude surrounded Him, where did Jesus go? Who came close to Him? Matt. 5:1.

NOTE.—"The Sermon on the Mount, though given especially to the disciples, was spoken in the hearing of the multitude. After the ordination of the apostles, Jesus went with them to the seaside. Here in the early morning the people had begun to assemble. . . . The narrow beach did not afford even standing room within reach of His voice for all who desired to hear Him, and Jesus led the way back to the mountain side. Reaching a level space that offered a pleasant gathering place for the vast assembly, He seated Himself on the grass, and the disciples and the multitude followed His example.

"The disciples' place was always next to Jesus. The people constantly pressed upon Him, yet the disciples understood that they were not to be crowded away from His presence."—"The Desire of Ages," pp. 298, 299.

3. Whom does He first call blessed? Why are they blessed? Verses 2, 3.

NOTE.—The "poor in spirit" are those who recognize that they are nothing and have nothing outside of Christ. They feel their entire dependence upon One who is mighty to save. To them are promised the greatest and best of all riches,—the kingdom of heaven "within you" (Luke 17:21), and "in the world to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:30).

4. Upon whom does the Lord say that He looks with favor? Isa. 66:2.

5. By what parable did Jesus emphasize this truth? Luke 18:10-14.

6. What does Jesus say of those who mourn? Matt. 5:4.

NOTE.—"They that mourn." (1) For their sins. Sorrow for sin is the first condition of forgiveness. It is the best assurance that the sin will not be willingly repeated. The mourning state is blessed because it is a necessary step to the more blessed state of forgiveness. (2) For temporal losses. Mourning for a dear one that death has taken, or in sympathy with the afflicted, or even for property loss mellowes the spirit, and tends to lead the mourner to sorrow for sin. And there is comfort for the sorrowing from the "God of all comfort."

7. What does He say of the meek? Verse 5.

NOTE.—“The meek.” Those who are patient and gentle under trial or under wrong. They show no spirit of retaliation, no resentment, no bigotry, no hardness. Self and self-consciousness are subdued. The spirit is not contentious, or quarrelsome, or irritable. Self-possession, calmness, and peace mark all they say and do.

True meekness comes from Christ. “It is the love of self that destroys our peace. While self is all alive, we stand ready continually to guard it from mortification and insult; but when we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, we shall not take neglects or slights to heart. We shall be deaf to reproach, and blind to scorn and insult. . . . The meekness of Christ, manifested in the home, will make the inmates happy; it provokes no quarrel, gives back no angry answer, but soothes the irritated temper, and diffuses a gentleness that is felt by all within its charmed circle.”—“Mount of Blessing,” pp. 31, 32.

8. Upon whom does Jesus next pronounce a blessing? What promise is theirs? Verse 6.

NOTE.—Hunger is one of the strongest cravings of human nature. Men have become so overpowered by it that they have taken human life to relieve it; but thirst is even more intense. Men go insane from thirst. Men sometimes live without food for many days, but they can live only a short time without water. These characteristics of our physical needs should teach us the importance of supplying our spiritual sustenance. Does our body need bread? More than this our souls need the bread of life. Does the physical man call for water? Infinitely more do we need the water of life? But if we hunger and thirst, the Great Provider will abundantly supply our need.

9. What promise is made to the merciful? Verse 7.

NOTE.—“The merciful.” In human experience, only those who know how to exercise mercy may obtain mercy; and those who do exercise mercy are sure to obtain mercy. The Lord exercises mercy toward us, that we may learn the meaning of mercy, and so become better acquainted with Him, and, like Him, exercise it toward our fellow men. “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.”

“The merciful are ‘partakers of the divine nature,’ and in them the compassionate love of God finds expression. All whose hearts are in sympathy with the heart of Infinite Love will seek to reclaim, and not to condemn.”—Id., p. 39.

10. What is said of the pure in heart? Verse 8.

NOTE.—“In one who is learning of Jesus, there will be manifest a growing distaste for careless manners, unseemly language, and coarse thought. When Christ abides in the heart, there will be purity and refinement of thought and manner. But the words of Jesus, ‘Blessed are the pure in heart,’ have a deeper meaning,—not merely pure in the sense in which the world understands purity, free from that which is sensual, pure from lust, but true in the hidden purposes and motives of the soul; free from pride and self-seeking; humble, unselfish, childlike.”—Id., p. 42.

11. What class does Jesus next mention? What shall they be called? Verse 9.

NOTE.—It is easy to stir up strife, to cause hard feelings among associates. Many heartaches, much sorrow and suffering, have been caused by the thoughtless word and the unkind gossip. The true Christian will seek to heal all differences between others, and to promote a spirit of love and harmony.

Where contention and strife and irritability make life miserable, the one who possesses the gift of composing differences, who has the happy faculty of "pouring oil on the troubled waters," has indeed a blessed ministry. The world is so full of unrest and conflict that peace-makers are needed everywhere, in the home, in the church, in the community.

12. Who among the persecuted are blessed? What is given to them? Verse 10.

13. How is the experience of the persecuted further described? Verse 11.

NOTE.—"While slander may blacken the reputation, it cannot stain the character. That is in God's keeping. So long as we do not consent to sin, there is no power, whether human or satanic, that can bring a stain upon the soul. A man whose heart is stayed upon God is just the same in the hour of his most afflicting trials and most discouraging surroundings, as when he was in prosperity, when the light and favor of God seemed to be upon him."—Id., p. 52.

14. What should God's people do when persecuted? What reason is given for rejoicing? Who has shared in this experience? Verse 12.

NOTE.—"It was this joy that filled the hearts of Paul and Silas when they prayed and sang praises to God at midnight in the Philippian dungeon. Christ was beside them there, and the light of His presence irradiated the gloom with the glory of the courts above. From Rome, Paul wrote, unmindful of his fetters as he saw the spread of the gospel, 'I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.' And the very words of Christ upon the mount are echoed in Paul's message to the Philippian church, in the midst of their persecutions, 'Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.'"—Id., pp. 57, 58.

Lesson 2—October 10, 1931

Admonitions to Believers

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 5:13-26.

MEMORY VERSE: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5:16.

LESSON HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pp. 306-311; "Mount of Blessing," pp. 59-92.

The Lesson

1. Name the classes which Jesus calls blessed in His Sermon on the Mount. Matt. 5:3-11.

2. Continuing His instruction, what does Jesus declare His people to be? Verse 13, first part.

3. To what are those compared who lose these blessed experiences? Verse 13, last part.

NOTE.—Salt is a preservative, and is therefore used as a symbol here. God's church, instead of bringing calamity upon the world, preserves the world. Ten good persons in Sodom would have kept it from destruction.

“But if the salt have lost his savor.’ That this is possible in the land of Judea, we have proof from Mr. Maundrell, who, describing the Valley of Salt, speaks thus: ‘Along, on one side of the valley, towards Gibul, there is a small precipice about two men’s lengths, occasioned by the continual taking away of the salt; and in this, you may see how the veins of it lie. I broke a piece of it, of which, that part that was exposed to the rain, sun, and air, though it had the sparks and particles of salt, yet it had perfectly lost its savor: the inner part, which was connected to the rock, retained its savor, as I found by proof.’”—Clarke.

“As they listened to the words of Christ, the people could see the white salt glistening in the pathways where it had been cast out because it had lost its savor and was therefore useless. . . . It represents the life of every soul from whom the power of the grace of God has departed, and who has become cold and Christless.”—“Mount of Blessing,” p. 60.

4. To what else are the people of God likened? Verse 14.

NOTE.—“In the brilliant light of the morning, the towns and villages upon the surrounding hills stood forth clearly, making an attractive feature of the scene. . . . Most of those who listened to the words of Jesus were peasants and fishermen, whose lowly dwellings contained but one room, in which the single lamp, on its stand, shone to all in the house.”—Id., pp. 63, 64.

5. For what is a light used? How is a lamp or candle made to serve its purpose? Verse 15.

NOTE.—“No other light ever has shone or ever will shine upon fallen man, save that which emanates from Christ. . . . Humanity has in itself no light. Apart from Christ, we are like an unkindled taper, like the moon when her face is turned away from the sun; we have not a single ray of brightness to shed into the darkness of the world. But when we turn toward the Sun of Righteousness, when we come in touch with Christ, the whole soul is aglow with the brightness of the divine presence.”—Id., p. 64.

6. What should a follower of Christ be to the world? How is the Father glorified? Verse 16.

NOTE.—“Angels of glory wait to communicate through you heaven’s light and power to souls that are ready to perish. Shall the human agent fail of accomplishing his appointed work? Oh, then to that degree is the world robbed of the promised influence of the Holy Spirit!”—Id., p. 67.

7. How did Jesus guard against any possible charge that He was setting aside the law of God? Verse 17.

NOTE.—“Christ did not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill by obedience both in His own person and in the person of all

who believe and obey.”—William W. McLane, in the *Homiletic Review* of October, 1908.

“The mission of Christ on earth was not to destroy the law, but by His grace to bring man back to obedience to its precepts.”—“Mount of Blessing,” p. 77.

8. By what statement did Jesus show the unchangeableness and the perpetuity of the law? Verse 18.

NOTE.—“The smallest letter in the entire alphabet [Hebrew] is called ‘Yoth,’ jot. It is as large as a comma. . . . Some of the Hebrew characters have what is known as crowns or tittles. These tittles are about the size of the dot of the i. . . . The Saviour, in order to show the people how He regarded the law, . . . said, in substance: Not only do I believe in the law; . . . not only do I believe in its perpetuity; not only do I believe that not a verse or a word can be changed; but I believe and I teach that not the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet, nor the smallest point on that smallest letter of God’s law, can under any circumstances be set aside, or lightly esteemed. As long as the heavens and the earth shall remain, not a single point of any of the law shall be annulled.”—F. C. Gilbert.

9. How did Jesus show the importance of obeying and teaching the law of God? Verse 19.

NOTE.—The expression “least in the kingdom of heaven” is translated by Adam Clarke thus: “Shall have no place in the kingdom of Christ here, nor in the kingdom of glory above.”

10. By what comparison does Jesus show that more than outward observance of the law is required? Verse 20.

11. What had Isaiah said the Lord would do with the law? Isa. 42:21.

12. How did Jesus fulfill this prophecy relative to the sixth commandment? Matt. 5:21, 22.

NOTE.—“Whosoever shall say unto his brother, Raca [vain fellow], shall be in danger of the council.’ In the gift of His Son for our redemption, God has shown how high a value He places upon every human soul, and He gives to no man liberty to speak contemptuously of another. We shall see faults and weaknesses in those about us, but God claims every soul as His property,—His by creation, and doubly His as purchased by the precious blood of Christ.”—“Mount of Blessing,” p. 89.

13. What is implied in this matter concerning our acceptance by the Lord? Verses 23, 24.

NOTE.—“Our brother may have done us a greater wrong than we have done him, but this does not lessen our responsibility. If when we come before God we remember that another has aught against us; we are to leave our gift of prayer, of thanksgiving, of freewill offering, and go to the brother with whom we are at variance, and in humility confess our own sin, and ask to be forgiven.

“If we have in any manner defrauded or injured our brother, we should make restitution. If we have unwittingly borne false witness,

if we have misstated his words, if we have injured his influence in any way, we should go to the ones with whom we have conversed about him, and take back all our injurious misstatements."—Id., pp. 91, 92.

14. Why should we agree quickly with an adversary? Verses 25, 26.

NOTE.—"Verses 25, 26 contain another argument by an example for putting an end as soon as possible to all angry feelings, and settling everything that may lead to crime. 'Agree with,' come to an agreement, settle your difficulty. 'Thine adversary.' The one who has a grievance against you, that he is carrying to the law courts. Do not let anger, which has been shown to be so dangerous, prevent or delay you. Do it quickly, for a time will come when it will be too late, and you must suffer the full consequences. 'The uttermost farthing,' that is, 'fourth thing,'—here the fourth part of a Roman 'as,' a small brass coin worth about a quarter of a cent. It is right and wise to apply this truth to your own personal relations with God."—Peloubet.

Lesson 3—October 17, 1931

Magnifying the Law

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 5:27-37.

MEMORY VERSE: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Eph. 4:29.

LESSON HELP: "Mount of Blessing," pp. 93-105.

The Lesson

1. Continuing His Sermon on the Mount, how did Jesus magnify the meaning of the seventh commandment? Matt. 5:27, 28.
2. How is the principle here involved made clear in another scripture? James 1:14, 15.
3. What instruction shows the importance of keeping the heart pure? Prov. 4:23.

NOTE.—"The Jews prided themselves on their morality, and looked with horror upon the sensual practices of the heathen. The presence of the Roman officers whom the imperial rule had brought into Palestine was a continual offense to the people; for with these foreigners had come in a flood of heathen customs, lust, and dissipation. In Capernaum, Roman officials with their gay paramours haunted the parades and promenades, and often the sound of revelry broke upon the stillness of the lake, as their pleasure boats glided over the quiet waters. The people expected to hear from Jesus a stern denunciation of this class; but what was their astonishment as they listened to words that laid bare the evil of their own hearts! When the thought of evil is loved and cherished, however secretly, said Jesus, it shows that sin still reigns in the heart."—"Mount of Blessing," pp. 93, 94.

4. What illustration is given of the hatred that we should feel toward sin? Matt. 5:29, 30.

NOTE.—In the Revised Version, the expression "causeth thee to

stumble," is plainer than "offend thee." We should be willing to sacrifice what is as dear as the right hand or the right eye, rather than sin against God. He wants the whole man clean. What is true of the individual is true of the church.

"In order for us to reach this high ideal, that which causes the soul to stumble must be sacrificed. It is through the will that sin retains its hold upon us. The surrender of the will is represented as plucking out the eye or cutting off the hand. Often it seems to us that to surrender the will to God is to consent to go through life maimed or crippled. But it is better, says Christ, for self to be maimed, wounded, crippled, if thus you may enter into life. That which you look upon as disaster is the door to highest benefit."—Id., pp. 95, 96.

5. What instruction is given on the question of divorce as related to the seventh commandment? Verses 31, 32.

NOTE.—"Among the Jews a man was permitted to put away his wife for the most trivial offenses, and the woman was then at liberty to marry again. This practice led to great wretchedness and sin. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus declared plainly that there could be no dissolution of the marriage tie, except for unfaithfulness to the marriage vow."—Id., p. 99.

6. What was the ancient law concerning oaths? Verse 33.

7. What does Jesus say about swearing? Verse 34, first part.

NOTE.—"I saw that some of God's children have made a mistake in regard to oath taking, and Satan has taken advantage of this to oppress them, and take from them their Lord's money. I saw that the words of our Lord, 'Swear not at all,' do not touch the judicial oath. . . . I saw that if there is anyone on earth who can consistently testify under oath, it is the Christian. He lives in the light of God's countenance. He grows strong in His strength. And when matters of importance must be decided by law, there is no one who can so well appeal to God as the Christian. . . . Jesus submitted to the oath in the hour of His trial."—Testimonies, vol. 1, pp. 201-203.

8. Why should one not swear by heaven? Verse 34, last part.

9. At another time, what did Jesus say swearing by heaven meant? Matt. 23:22.

10. Why should one not swear by the earth? Nor by Jerusalem? Matt. 5:35.

11. For what reason ought one not to swear by his own head? Verse 36.

12. What simple manner of speech is becoming to a Christian? Verse 37.

NOTE.—"If these words of Christ were heeded, they would check the utterance of evil surmising and unkind criticism; for in commenting upon the actions and motives of another, who can be certain of speaking the exact truth? How often pride, passion, personal resentment, color the impression given! A glance, a word, even an intonation of the voice, may be vital with falsehood. Even facts may be so stated

as to convey a false impression. And 'whatsoever is more than' truth, 'is of the evil one.'"—"Mount of Blessing," p. 104.

13. Upon another occasion what solemn declaration concerning our words did Jesus make? Matt. 12:36.

14. In the judgment, what part do our words have in the final decision? Verse 37.

15. What admonition, closely related to this lesson, does Solomon give? Eccl. 5:2.

16. How does Solomon picture the beauty of fitly spoken words? Prov. 25:11.

Lesson 4—October 24, 1931

Love for Others

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 5:38-48.

MEMORY VERSE: "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5:44, 45.

LESSON HELP: "Mount of Blessing," pp. 106-118.

The Lesson

1. What was the ancient law of compensation for wrongdoing? Matt. 5:38; Lev. 24:17-22.

NOTE.—"The rule, 'Eye for eye, tooth for tooth,' was a provision in the laws given through Moses; but it was a civil statute. None were justified in avenging themselves."—"Mount of Blessing," p. 109.

2. Instead, then, of seeking to avenge one's self when wronged, to whom should one look for redress? Prov. 20:22; Rom. 12:19.

3. What instruction shows a great contrast between the right attitude of the Christian and the customs of the world? Matt. 5:39-41.

NOTE.—"Jesus bade His disciples, instead of resisting the demands of those in authority, to do even more than was required of them. And, so far as possible, they should discharge every obligation, even if it were beyond what the law of the land required. The law, as given through Moses, enjoined a very tender regard for the poor. When a poor man gave his garment as a pledge, or as security for a debt, the creditor was not permitted to enter the dwelling to obtain it; he must wait in the street for the pledge to be brought to him. And whatever the circumstances, the pledge must be returned to its owner at nightfall. In the days of Christ these merciful provisions were little regarded; but Jesus taught His disciples to submit to the decision of the court, even though this should demand more than the law of Moses authorized. Though it should demand a part of their raiment, they were to yield. More than this, they were to give to the creditor his due, if necessary surrendering even more than the court gave him authority to seize."—Id., pp. 110, 111.

Verse 41 refers to a custom of the Roman soldiers in compelling Jewish peasants who might be working in the fields or elsewhere, to carry burdens for them along the highway or up the mountain side, or render other service required by a company of soldiers.

4. How should we respond to those who ask for help? Verse 42.

5. What definite instruction should be our guide in giving to the needy? Deut. 15:7, 8.

NOTE.—A helpful comment upon this text is given. "This scripture makes plain the meaning of the Saviour's words. Christ does not teach us to give indiscriminately to all who ask for charity; but He says, 'Thou shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need;' and this is to be a gift, rather than a loan; for we are to 'lend, hoping for nothing again.'"—Id., p. 112.

6. In what spirit should we render aid to the needy? Luke 6:35.

7. What promise is made to those who give to the poor? Deut. 15:10.

8. What other ancient saying did Jesus mention? Matt. 5:43.

9. What course toward enemies does Jesus urge upon us? Verse 44.

10. By following this instruction, whose children do we become? Verse 45, first part.

NOTE.—"The children of God are those who are partakers of His nature. It is not earthly rank, nor birth, nor nationality, nor religious privilege, which proves that we are members of the family of God; it is love,—a love that embraces all humanity. Even sinners whose hearts are not utterly closed to God's Spirit, will respond to kindness; while they may give hate for hate, they will also give love for love. But it is only the Spirit of God that gives love for hatred. To be kind to the unthankful and to the evil, to do good hoping for nothing again, is the insignia of the royalty of heaven, the sure token by which the children of the Highest reveal their high estate."—Id., p. 115.

11. What do we see in nature that proves the Father's love for all mankind? Verse 45, last part.

NOTE.—"It is not because of inherent power that year by year the earth produces her bounties, and continues her motion round the sun. The hand of God guides the planets, and keeps them in position in their orderly march through the heavens. It is through His power that summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, day and night follow each other in their regular succession. It is by His word that vegetation flourishes, that the leaves appear, and the flowers bloom. Every good thing we have, each ray of sunshine and shower of rain, every morsel of food, every moment of life, is a gift of love."—Id., pp. 114, 115.

12. To whom may we justly be compared if we love and help those only who love us? Verse 46; Luke 6:32.

13. What is intimated concerning those who greet their brethren only? Matt. 5:47.

14. What standard is set before us? Verse 48.

NOTE.—"God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your

Father which is in heaven is perfect.' This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.

"The tempter's agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 311.

Lesson 5—October 31, 1931

Giving Alms; Prayer

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 6:1-18.

MEMORY VERSE: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matt. 6:14, 15.

LESSON HELPS: "Mount of Blessing," pp. 119-132, 151-176; "Christ's Object Lessons," pp. 141-149 (new edition, pp. 139-148).

The Lesson

1. In talking to the people assembled on the mount, what instruction did Jesus give concerning almsgiving? Matt. 6:1.

NOTE.—"In the days of Christ the Pharisees were continually trying to earn the favor of Heaven, in order to secure the worldly honor and prosperity which they regarded as the reward of virtue. At the same time they paraded their acts of charity before the people in order to attract their attention, and gain a reputation for sanctity.

"Jesus rebuked their ostentation, declaring that God does not recognize such service, and that the flattery and admiration of the people, which they so eagerly sought, was the only reward they would ever receive."—"Mount of Blessing," p. 120.

2. How are we assured that a very simple act of kindness done in the right spirit will be rewarded? Mark 9:41.

3. What are those called who do good in order that they may have the praise of men? In receiving their praise, what do they have? Matt. 6:2.

4. By what figure of speech is the true spirit of service emphasized? Verse 3.

NOTE.—"In these words Jesus did not teach that acts of kindness should always be kept secret. . . . Christ's own words make His meaning plain,—that in acts of charity the aim should not be to secure praise and honor from men. Real godliness never prompts an effort at display. Those who desire words of praise and flattery, and feed upon them as a sweet morsel, are Christians in name only."—Id., pp. 120, 121.

5. What contrast is made in the rewards of those who give to be seen of men and those who give from the right motive? Verses 1, 4.

NOTE.—“We are to give in sincerity, not to make a show of our good deeds, but from pity and love to the suffering ones. Sincerity of purpose, real kindness of heart, is the motive that Heaven values. The soul that is sincere in its love, whole-hearted in its devotion, God regards as more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir.”—Id., p. 121.

6. What manner of praying is forbidden? Of what class of people are ostentatious prayers characteristic? Verse 5.

7. Where should Christ's followers love best to pray? Of what may we be assured? Verse 6.

NOTE.—“In the secret place of prayer, where no eye but God's can see, no ear but His can hear, we may pour out our most hidden desires and longings to the Father of infinite pity; and in the hush and silence of the soul, that voice which never fails to answer the cry of human need, will speak to our hearts. . . .

“The soul that turns to God for its help, its support, its power, by daily, earnest prayer, will have noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth and duty, lofty purposes of action, and a continual hungering and thirsting after righteousness.”—Id., pp. 126, 127.

“It is often said that we have no such place, and can secure none. We are away from home; we are traveling; we are among strangers; we are in stages and steamboats, and how can we find such places of retirement? I answer, the desire to pray, and the love of prayer, will create such places in abundance. The Saviour had all the difficulties which we can have, but He lived in the practice of secret prayer. To be alone He rose up ‘a great while before day’ and went into a solitary place and prayed. With Him a grove, a mountain, a garden, furnished such a place.”—Barnes.

8. How do the heathen pray? Why do they pray in this manner? Verse 7.

NOTE.—“The heathen looked upon their prayers as having in themselves merit to atone for sin. Hence, the longer the prayer, the greater the merit. If they could become holy by their own efforts, they would have something in themselves in which to rejoice, some ground for boasting. This idea of prayer is an outworking of the principle of self-expiation which lies at the foundation of all systems of false religion. The Pharisees had adopted this pagan idea of prayer, and it is by no means extinct in our day, even among those who profess to be Christians. The repetition of set, customary phrases, when the heart feels no need of God, is of the same character as the ‘vain repetitions’ of the heathen.”—“Mount of Blessing,” p. 129.

9. What does our heavenly Father know of each of us? Verse 8.

10. Repeat the model prayer Jesus gave to His disciples. Verses 9-13.

(a) How close is the relationship of God to His people, as expressed in this prayer?

(b) What are we to pray concerning His will?

(c) For what are we to ask daily?

- (d) What is the measure of forgiveness for which we may ask?
- (e) Of what help are we constantly in need?
- (f) With what words of praise does the prayer close?

11. In what way did Jesus emphasize one part of the prayer? Verses 14, 15.

12. In the parable that Jesus used to illustrate prayer, what did a man ask of his friend? How urgent was his need? Luke 11:5, 6.

13. What answer was given to the request? Verse 7.

14. What shows that the man continued to press his petition for aid? Verse 8.

NOTE.—“The selfish neighbor in the parable does not represent the character of God. The lesson is drawn, not by comparison, but by contrast. A selfish man will grant an urgent request, in order to rid himself of one who disturbs his rest. But God delights to give. He is full of compassion, and He longs to grant the requests of those who come unto Him in faith. He gives to us that we may minister to others, and thus become like Himself.”—“Christ’s Object Lessons,” p. 141.

15. What instruction is given concerning fasting? Matt. 6:16-18.

NOTE.—“‘Anoint thine head, and wash thy face.’ These were forbidden in the Jewish canon on days of fasting and humiliation; and hypocrites availed themselves of this ordinance, that they might appear to men to fast.”—Clarke.

Lesson 6—November 7, 1931

Our Father’s Care for His Children

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 6:19-34.

MEMORY VERSE: “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” Matt. 6:20.

LESSON HELPS: “Mount of Blessing,” pp. 133-150; “The Desire of Ages,” pp. 312, 313.

The Lesson

1. Where does Jesus warn us not to place our treasures? What danger threatens earthly treasures? Matt. 6:19.

NOTE.—The rich and the poor, the high and the low among men, were in the company that listened to Jesus as He sat upon the mount. “The love of money was the ruling passion in the Jewish age. Worldliness usurped the place of God and religion in the soul. So it is now. Avaricious greed for wealth exerts such a fascinating, bewitching influence over the life that it results in perverting the nobility and corrupting the humanity of men, until they are drowned in perdition. The service of Satan is full of care, perplexity, and wearing labor, and the treasure men toil to accumulate on earth is only for a season.”—“Mount of Blessing,” p. 133.

2. Where may we find a safe place for our treasures? For whom do we lay up these treasures? Verse 20.

NOTE.—Jesus does not forbid our having treasures, but He warns us to put them in a safe place. “The instruction is to ‘lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.’ It is for your own interest to secure heavenly riches. These alone, of all that you possess, are really yours. The treasure laid up in heaven is imperishable.”—*Id.*, pp. 133, 134.

“In every effort to benefit others, we benefit ourselves. He who gives money or time for spreading the gospel enlists his own interest and prayers for the work, and for the souls to be reached through it; his affections go out to others, and he is stimulated to greater devotion to God, that he may be enabled to do them the greatest good. And at the final day, when the wealth of earth shall perish, he who has laid up treasure in heaven will behold that which his life has gained.”—*Id.*, p. 135.

3. What is the result of laying up our treasures in any place? Verse 21.

4. How does Jesus further show the importance of seeking God with singleness of purpose and heart? What only is necessary to have the whole body full of light? Verses 22, 23.

NOTE.—The direction of the eye shows the purposes of the man, and the laying up of treasures shows the affections of the heart. He who has a single purpose to do God’s will and steadfastly looks to God will be guided and filled with the light of God. He whose purpose is turned upon the low, dark ambition of selfishness, worldliness, and sin will become a body of darkness.

5. What can no man do? Why not? What two masters are mentioned? Verse 24.

NOTE.—“Christ does not say that man will not or shall not serve two masters, but that he cannot. The interests of God and the interests of mammon have no union or sympathy. Just where the conscience of the Christian warns him to forbear, to deny himself, to stop, just there the worldling steps over the line, to indulge his selfish propensities. On one side of the line is the self-denying follower of Christ; on the other side is the self-indulgent world lover, pandering to fashion, engaging in frivolity, and pampering himself in forbidden pleasure. On that side of the line the Christian cannot go.

“No one can occupy a neutral position; there is no middle class, who neither love God nor serve the enemy of righteousness. . . . He who does not give himself wholly to God, is under the control of another power, listening to another voice, whose suggestions are of an entirely different character. Half-and-half service places the human agent on the side of the enemy, as a successful ally of the hosts of darkness.”—*Id.*, p. 139.

6. When we are serving God, about what would He not have us become anxious? What is most important? Verse 25.

NOTE.—Jesus anticipated that some would be tempted to believe that they cannot get clothing or food unless they serve the world or themselves. His effort in all this instruction is to lead men to the higher service alone, that of God. Whatever we do, do it as unto God, and leave results with Him. “Take no thought” is better expressed in the Revised Version, “Be not anxious.” The word means anxious, troubled, worried thought. So also in verses 27, 28, 31, and 34.

7. What illustration is given to teach us trust and confidence in our Father's care for us? Verse 26.

8. However anxiously we may take thought, what can we not do for ourselves? Verse 27.

9. For what else are we not to be anxious? What are we asked to consider? Verse 28.

NOTE.—“Consider, says Jesus, how the lilies grow; how, springing from the cold, dark earth, or from the mud of the river bed, the plants unfold in loveliness and fragrance. Who would dream of the possibilities of beauty in the rough brown bulb of the lily? But when the life of God, hidden therein, unfolds at His call in the rain and the sunshine, men marvel at the vision of grace and loveliness. Even so will the life of God unfold in every human soul that will yield itself to the ministry of His grace, which, free as the rain and the sunshine, comes with its benediction to all. It is the word of God that creates the flowers, and the same word will produce in you the graces of His Spirit.”—Id., p. 144.

10. With all his caretaking, who was not arrayed as beautifully as the lily? Verse 29.

11. What may we conclude from these examples of God's care? Verse 30.

12. What admonition concerning anxiety for temporal things is repeated? Verse 31.

13. What is the basis of this counsel? Verse 32.

NOTE.—It is the Gentiles, nations of the world, who seek such things, whose hopes are only temporal, earthly. The children of God should have higher objectives. “‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.’ I have come to open to you the kingdom of love and righteousness and peace. Open your hearts to receive this kingdom, and make its service your highest interest. Though it is a spiritual kingdom, fear not that your needs for this life will be uncared for. If you give yourself to God's service, He who has all power in heaven and earth will provide for your needs.”—Id., p. 147.

14. On what condition may we claim the promise that the necessary things of life shall be given us? Verse 33.

NOTE.—“Jesus does not release us from the necessity of effort, but He teaches that we are to make Him first and last and best in everything. We are to engage in no business, follow no pursuit, seek no pleasure, that would hinder the outworking of His righteousness in our character and life. Whatever we do, is to be done heartily, as unto the Lord.”—Id., pp. 147, 148.

15. How should we relate ourselves to the future? Verse 34.

NOTE.—Borrow no trouble for the future. God gives us to-day strength for to-day's duties, trials, sorrows, evils. We can borrow no grace for future troubles. How foolish it is, then, to borrow trouble which we may not meet! The day brings sufficient anxiety and care. There is always grace for the day. God is a present help in trouble.

Judging Others; Asking of the Lord

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 7:1-14.

MEMORY VERSE: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matt. 7:12.

LESSON HELP: "Mount of Blessing," pp. 177-207, selected portions.

The Lesson

1. Continuing His Sermon on the Mount, what did Jesus say we should not do? Matt. 7:1.

NOTE.—Speaking of the Pharisees, this statement is made: "Their own attainments became the standard by which they judged others. Putting on the robes of self-dignity, they mounted the judgment seat, to criticize and condemn. The people partook largely of the same spirit, intruding upon the province of conscience, and judging one another in matters that lay between the soul and God. It was in reference to this spirit and practice that Jesus said, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' That is, do not set yourself up as a standard. Do not make your opinions, your views of duty, your interpretations of Scripture a criterion for others, and in your heart condemn them if they do not come up to your ideal. Do not criticize others, conjecturing as to their motives, and passing judgment upon them. . . .

"We cannot read the heart. Ourselves faulty, we are not qualified to sit in judgment upon others. Finite men can judge only from outward appearance. To Him alone who knows the secret springs of action, and who deals tenderly and compassionately, is it given to decide the case of every soul."—"Mount of Blessing," pp. 178, 179.

2. What rule will be followed when the Lord judges us? Verse 2.

3. What illustration is used showing the unfitness of one brother to judge another? Verse 3.

NOTE.—A "mote" is a speck of dust such as one sees floating in the sunlight. This little particle is placed in contrast with a great beam or timber used in building the framework of a house. How can one with a great beam of wood in his eye see to take a mere speck from another's eye? Sitting in judgment on others is one of the greatest of sins. This judging does not refer to proper church discipline, where the Spirit guides. 1 Corinthians 5.

4. What inconsistent course do we frequently take? Verse 4.

5. What should we do before beginning the work of reforming others? Verse 5.

NOTE.—"Not until you feel that you could sacrifice your own self-dignity, and even lay down your life, in order to save an erring brother, have you cast the beam out of your own eye, so that you are prepared to help your brother. Then you can approach him, and touch his heart. No one has ever been reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many have thus been driven from Christ, and led to seal their hearts against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle, winning de-

portment, may save the erring, and hide a multitude of sins."—Id., pp. 184, 185.

6. What counsel should we follow respecting those who will not hear God's truth? Verse 6.

NOTE.—"Jesus here refers to a class who have no desire to escape from the slavery of sin. By indulgence in the corrupt and vile, their natures have become so degraded that they cling to the evil, and will not be separated from it. The servants of Christ should not allow themselves to be hindered by those who would make the gospel only a matter of contention and ridicule.

"But the Saviour never passed by one soul, however sunken in sin, who was willing to receive the precious truths of heaven. To publicans and harlots His words were the beginning of a new life. Mary Magdalene, out of whom He cast seven devils, was the last at the Saviour's tomb, and the first whom He greeted in the morning of His resurrection. It was Saul of Tarsus, one of the most determined enemies of the gospel, who became Paul, the devoted minister of Christ. Beneath an appearance of hatred and contempt, even beneath crime and degradation, may be hidden a soul that the grace of Christ will rescue, to shine as a jewel in the Redeemer's crown."—Id., p. 186.

7. How are God's blessings to be obtained? What is the threefold promise? Verse 7.

8. What assurance is given to one who asks? seeks? knocks? Verse 8.

9. What illustration is cited to emphasize this truth? Verses 9, 10.

NOTE.—It is characteristic of Jesus' teaching to draw upon the things of common experience to illustrate spiritual truth. Here He chooses the tenderest of human relations, that of parent and child, and selects a touching incident in this relation—a hungry child asking for something to eat. Parents will and must refuse some things asked by children, but they do not refuse food to the children when they need it. So our heavenly Father responds to the cry of him who hungers and thirsts after righteousness.

10. What conclusion is drawn from this illustration? Verse 11.

11. What golden rule is given for our guidance under all circumstances? By what is this rule strengthened? Verse 12.

NOTE.—"In your association with others, put yourself in their place. Enter into their feelings, their difficulties, their disappointments, their joys, and their sorrows. Identify yourself with them, and then do to them as, were you to exchange places with them, you would wish them to deal with you. This is the true rule of honesty. It is another expression of the law, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' And it is the substance of the teaching of the prophets."—Id., p. 192.

12. Alluding to the Christian life as a pathway, what gate are we urged to enter? Where do the wide gate and the broad way lead? What is said of the number of travelers on the broad way? Verse 13.

13. Why do but few find the way leading unto life? Verse 14.

NOTE.—"If you would climb the path of spiritual life, you must

constantly ascend; for it is an upward way. You must go with the few; for the multitude will choose the downward path.

"In the road to death the whole race may go, with all their worldliness, all their selfishness, all their pride, dishonesty, and moral debasement. There is room for every man's opinions and doctrines, space to follow his inclinations, to do whatever his self-love may dictate. In order to go in the path that leads to destruction, there is no need of searching for the way; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad, and the feet naturally turn into the path that ends in death.

"But the way to life is narrow, and the entrance strait. If you cling to any besetting sin, you will find the way too narrow for you to enter. Your own ways, your own will, your evil habits and practices, must be given up if you would keep the way of the Lord. He who would serve Christ cannot follow the world's opinions, or meet the world's standard. Heaven's path is too narrow for rank and riches to ride in state, too narrow for the play of self-centered ambition, too steep and rugged for lovers of ease to climb."—Id., pp. 197, 198.

Lesson 8—November 21, 1931

Fruit Bearing; Doing; Right Building

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 7:15-29.

MEMORY VERSE: "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." Matt. 7:21.

LESSON HELP: "Mount of Blessing," pp. 208-218.

The Lesson

1. In the closing verses recording the Sermon on the Mount, what warning does Jesus give? In what guise do these false leaders come? What is their true nature? Matt. 7:15.

NOTE.—Jesus continues His Sermon on the Mount, pressing the truths of His message closer and closer to the hearts of the people. The sermon closes with a startling parable illustrating the extreme importance of putting His words into practice.

2. How are we to discern these false prophets? What questions does Jesus ask to make His meaning clear? Verse 16.

3. What kind of fruit does every good tree bear? What is true of a corrupt tree? Verse 17.

4. What can a good tree not bring forth? What can a corrupt tree not do? Verse 18.

NOTE.—"We are not bidden to prove them [false prophets] by their fair speeches and exalted professions. They are to be judged by the word of God."—"Mount of Blessing," p. 208.

5. What is done with trees that do not bring forth good fruit? Verse 19.

6. Before fruitless trees are cut down, who inspects them? Luke 13:6.

7. What did the owner say to the caretaker? Verse 7.

8. How does the dresser of the vineyard show his concern? Verse 8.

NOTE.—“In the parable the dresser of the vineyard does not question the sentence that the tree, if it remained fruitless, should be cut down; but he knows and shares the owner’s interest in that barren tree. Nothing could give him greater joy than to see its growth and fruitfulness. He responds to the desire of the owner, saying, ‘Let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well.’

“The gardener does not refuse to minister to so unpromising a plant. He stands ready to give it still greater care. He will make its surroundings most favorable, and will lavish upon it every attention.

“The owner and the dresser of the vineyard are one in their interest in the fig tree. So the Father and the Son were one in their love for the chosen people. Christ was saying to His hearers that increased opportunities would be given them. Every means that the love of God could devise would be put in operation that they might become trees of righteousness, bringing forth fruit for the blessing of the world.”—“Christ’s Object Lessons,” pp. 215, 216.

9. If all efforts in behalf of the fruitless tree fail, what is the final verdict? Verse 9.

NOTE.—“Are you, O careless heart, a fruitless tree in the Lord’s vineyard? Shall the words of doom ere long be spoken of you? How long have you received His gifts? How long has He watched and waited for a return of love? Planted in His vineyard, under the watchful care of the gardener, what privileges are yours! How often has the tender gospel message thrilled your heart! You have taken the name of Christ, you are outwardly a member of the church which is His body, and yet you are conscious of no living connection with the great heart of love. The tide of His life does not flow through you. The sweet graces of His character, ‘the fruits of the Spirit,’ are not seen in your life.

“The barren tree receives the rain and the sunshine and the gardener’s care. It draws nourishment from the soil. But its unproductive boughs only darken the ground, so that fruit-bearing plants cannot flourish in its shadow. So God’s gifts, lavished on you, convey no blessing to the world. You are robbing others of privileges that, but for you, might be theirs.

“You realize, though it may be but dimly, that you are a cumberer of the ground. Yet in His great mercy God has not cut you down. He does not look coldly upon you. He does not turn away with indifference, or leave you to destruction. . . . The pitying Saviour is saying concerning you, Spare it this year also, till I shall dig about it and dress it.”—Id., pp. 216-218.

10. What statement did Jesus repeat to His hearers on the mount? Matt. 7:20.

11. How only may we rightfully call Jesus “Lord”? Verse 21.

12. What pleas will many make in the day of the Lord? Verse 22.

13. How will Jesus respond to these boastful statements? Verse 23.

NOTE.—“Saddest of all words that ever fell on mortal ear are those

words of doom, 'I know you not.' . . . You are shut out from heaven by your own unfitness for its companionship."—Id., p. 413.

14. To whom does Jesus liken the obedient hearer of His sayings? Verse 24.

NOTE.—"The great principles of the law, of the very nature of God, are embodied in the words of Christ on the mount. Whoever builds upon them is building upon Christ, the Rock of Ages. In receiving the word, we receive Christ. And only those who thus receive His words are building upon Him."—"Mount of Blessing," p. 213.

15. What tests will such a house stand? Why? Verse 25.

NOTE.—"We build on Christ by obeying His word. It is not he who merely enjoys righteousness, that is righteous, but he who does righteousness. Holiness is not rapture; it is the result of surrendering all to God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father."—Id., pp. 214, 215.

16. To whom does Jesus liken one who hears His sayings, but does them not? Verse 26.

NOTE.—"He who, like the Jews in Christ's day, builds on the foundation of human ideas and opinions, of forms and ceremonies of man's invention, or on any works that he can do independently of the grace of Christ, is erecting his structure of character upon the shifting sand. The fierce tempests of temptation will sweep away the sandy foundation, and leave his house a wreck on the shores of time."—Id., p. 216.

17. What test will such a house not stand? What is said of its fall? Verse 27.

NOTE.—"You who are resting your hope on self, are building on the sand. But it is not yet too late to escape the impending ruin. Before the tempest breaks, flee to the sure foundation."—Id., pp. 217, 218.

18. How did the teachings of Jesus affect His hearers? Verse 28.

19. Why were they astonished? Verse 29.

Lesson 9—November 28, 1931

The Sending Forth of the Twelve

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 10:1-15.

MEMORY VERSE: "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 10:7.

LESSON HELP: "The Desire of Ages," pp. 349-352.

The Lesson

1. After ministering for some time in Galilee, whom did Jesus call to Him? What power did He bestow upon them? Matt. 10:1.

NOTE.—"The apostles were members of the family of Jesus, and they had accompanied Him as He traveled on foot through Galilee. . . . As Jesus ministered to the vast multitudes that gathered about Him, His disciples were in attendance, eager to do His bidding and to lighten His labor. . . . They taught what they had learned of Jesus,

and were every day obtaining a rich experience. But they needed also an experience in laboring alone."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 349.

To give them this experience, Jesus called them to Him, gave them the power for service, and sent them forth to gain the needed training for that wider service which they would be called upon to render after His return to His Father's throne.

2. What were the names of the twelve apostles? Verses 2-4.

3. In the beginning of their ministry, where were they cautioned not to go? Verse 5.

NOTE.—Christ cautioned His disciples in these, their first efforts, not to go to the Gentiles or to the Samaritans, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This did not indicate that they would never take the gospel to the Gentiles, but that they were first to present the claims of Jesus to Israel's straying ones. These were first to be called to repentance and reformation that they might be ready for the kingdom. More, the time allotted to special work for Israel as stated in Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:24), had not expired. Seven years yet remained to the people of Israel and to the city of Jerusalem. A turning to the Gentiles at this time would have been premature. Later our Lord said to His disciples, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8. He here indicates that after His ascension they were to begin their labors at home, and extend them to the whole world.

4. Upon whom were the first efforts of the twelve to be bestowed? Verse 6.

5. What was to be the central theme of their message? Verse 7.

NOTE.—The burden of the message to be borne by the apostles in their first independent labor was, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Not merely were they to spread the news, but, endowed with power by their Master, they were to demonstrate by their ministry the presence of the kingdom in their lives. To them was given power against unclean spirits, and for the healing of sickness and disease. With their Master they were to be living witnesses of the nearness of the kingdom of heaven to men. Only as this personal experience was manifest could their message lay hold upon hearts and prepare them for the kingdom.

6. What did Jesus instruct them to do for the people? Verse 8, first part.

7. What principle was to actuate their labor of love? Verse 8, last part.

8. What instruction did Jesus give them concerning provision for their temporal needs? Verses 9, 10, first part.

9. On what gospel principle was this instruction given? Verse 10, last part.

NOTE.—Christ had traveled throughout the country in which the disciples were to labor. They had been with Him. As they went back over the roads of Galilee and Judea, they traveled among friends and those who had benefited from the ministry of the Saviour. The apostles also went forth to serve, to help, to minister, to those in need. Those who

benefited from their labor should provide for their actual needs. Hence His instruction to the apostles as they started forth.

10. On entering a city, what inquiry was to be made? Where were they to abide? Verse 11.

NOTE.—As they entered a city, they were to seek abode for the time of their sojourn in the home of some one who was “worthy.” The original gives the thought of deserving or suitable. They were to seek an abiding place which would fit in with their mission, and from which they could uphold the name and kingdom of their Master.

11. What were they to do upon entering a house? What was to be their attitude toward a worthy or an unworthy house? Verses 12, 13.

NOTE.—The customary Oriental salutation was, “Peace be to this house.” If the house was unworthy, the proffered blessing would not rest upon it.

“Peace among the Hebrews had a very extensive meaning,—it comprehended all blessings, spiritual and temporal. . . . To wish peace to a family, in the name and by the authority of Christ, was in effect a positive promise, on the Lord’s side, of all the good implied in the wish. This was paying largely even beforehand. . . .

“If that house be worthy’—if that family [shall be found to] be proper for a preacher to lodge in, and the master be ready to embrace the message of salvation.

“Your peace’—the blessings you have prayed for shall come upon the family: God will prosper them in their bodies, souls, and substance.”
—Dr. Adam Clarke.

12. If their message was rejected, what were they to do on departing? Verse 14.

NOTE.—Christ’s instruction to the apostles to shake the dust off their feet as they departed from a city that had rejected their message was in harmony with the ancient Oriental custom. It signified that the one who did it carried no further responsibility for that city—they had made their own choice.

13. To the fate of what cities is the fate of those who rejected their message compared? Verse 15.

NOTE.—The fate of those who reject the overtures of God’s mercy is compared unfavorably with the fate of those who perished in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire. What must be the fate of those to-day who reject the greater light available to them, and spurn as of no account the warnings and entreaties of a merciful and just God?

Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, December 26, 1931

Mission Work of the
Central European Division

Instruction for Personal Ministry

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 10:16-28.

MEMORY VERSE: "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Matt. 10:20.

LESSON HELP: "The Desire of Ages," pp. 352-356.

The Lesson

1. To what are those likened among whom Christ sent forth the apostles? Matt. 10:16, first part.

2. What counsel did He give the apostles for meeting these conditions? Verse 16, last part.

NOTE.—Christ knew as He sent forth the apostles for personal ministry that theirs would be no easy task. The leaders of Israel had rejected Him, sought to entrap Him, endeavored by guile and subterfuge to lead Him into pitfalls that they might have cause to discredit and destroy Him. They would do no less in opposition to His disciples. He therefore warns them to live and act with discretion and wisdom, but love and peace were to be the controlling principles in their hearts.

3. Of whom were they to beware? For what reasons? Verse 17.

4. Before whom would they be brought? For what three reasons? Verse 18.

5. What provision would be made for them when arraigned before councils and rulers? Verse 19.

6. Who would be the spokesman in the hour of trial? Verse 20.

NOTE.—If God's servants are faithful in their study of the truths of His word, storing up, filling the mind with the principles of His kingdom, then when asked for a reason of their faith, whether before judges or councils, or in trial by the adversary of their souls, God through His Spirit will give them words to speak. He will bring to their minds His words as needed. He will speak through them. (See John 14:26.)

7. What normal relationships would be destroyed in these days of trial? Verse 21.

8. What would be the attitude of the majority of men toward Christ's followers? Verse 22, first part.

9. What would be the reward of those who endured? Verse 22, last part.

NOTE.—The martyrs—those who have witnessed for Jesus—have not all been burned at the stake, nor have they all died in dungeons. Some are in homes suffering for the truth's sake. As a result of obeying God and walking in the light, wives have borne persecution from husbands and husbands from wives and parents from children. To stand true to God under such circumstances takes a martyr's spirit and a heart made strong by the love of God. Those who as good soldiers endure to the end will be saved.

Supposed Fate of the Disciples and Apostles

"Matthew was martyred in a city of Ethiopia.

"Mark was dragged through the streets of Alexandria in Egypt till he expired.

"Luke was hanged upon an olive tree in Greece.

"John was bound and cast into a caldron of boiling oil in Rome without injury, and it is said that he died a natural death at Ephesus in Asia.

"Peter was crucified in Rome, with his head down, regarding himself as unworthy to be crucified as his Lord.

"James the Great was beheaded in Jerusalem.

"James the Less was beaten to death with a fuller's club.

"Philip was hanged against a pillar at Hierapolis in Phrygia.

"Thomas was slain with a lance at Coromandel, East India.

"Bartholomew was flayed alive.

"Jude was shot to death with arrows.

"Simon Zelotes was crucified in Persia.

"Andrew was crucified, says tradition, at Patræ in Achaia.

"Matthias was beheaded.

"Barnabas was stoned to death by Jews at Salamis.

"Paul was beheaded at Rome in the reign of Nero.

"Such was their fate, according to legends and traditions that have been handed down through the centuries."—Christian Herald.

10. What were the disciples to do when persecuted in one city? Verse 23.

11. What is the relationship of individuals to those in authority? Verse 24.

12. With what position should every disciple be content? Of what treatment accorded the Master may we expect to partake? Verse 25.

13. For what reason should we not fear the attitude and treatment accorded by Christ's enemies? Verse 26.

14. How were the disciples to proclaim that truth committed to them by the Master? Verse 27.

NOTE.—In Eastern countries, the housetops are usually flat. When a death occurs in a dwelling, the mourners, mostly hired for that purpose, go to the housetops, where they attract attention by their loud wailing and lamentation. From the housetops, decrees and proclamations of civil authorities are made. These proclamations are generally made in the evening, when the streets are full after the people have returned from their labors in the field. The public crier ascends to the highest roof, and lifts up his voice in a long-drawn call upon all faithful subjects to give ear and obey. He then proceeds to announce the will of their master and demands obedience. The call to divine worship is often made from the housetop in the absence of a tower or bell. Jesus taught His disciples that they were to go to the multitudes, and there proclaim the truth with courage and power.

15. Whom were they not to fear? Of whom, rather, should they be afraid? Verse 28.

NOTE.—"The servant is not above his master. The Prince of heaven

was called Beelzebub, and His disciples will be misrepresented in like manner. But whatever the danger, Christ's followers must avow their principles. They should scorn concealment. They cannot remain uncommitted until assured of safety in confessing the truth. They are set as watchmen, to warn men of their peril. The truth received from Christ must be imparted to all, freely and openly. Jesus said, 'What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.' Jesus Himself never purchased peace by compromise."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 355.

Lesson 11—December 12, 1931

Instruction for Personal Ministry (*Concluded*)

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 10:29-42.

MEMORY VERSE: "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven." Matt. 10:32.

LESSON HELP: "The Desire of Ages," pp. 356-358.

The Lesson

1. How does the Saviour illustrate the Father's care for His children? Matt. 10:29-31.

2. What promise is made to those who are faithful in confessing Christ before the world? Verse 32.

NOTE.—"The confession of Christ by the apostles was before the heads of their religion, the chief priests who had crucified Him. It was before rulers and kings, before the philosophers of Athens, the libertines of Corinth. It was the bold, unflinching avowal that the world was saved by the cruel and disgraceful death of a Jew, one of a nation regarded with pretty much the same contempt as they are now. They who made this confession always made it at the risk of their lives. . . .

"A Christian has now to profess the creative power of God among evolutionists, and the all-ruling providence of God in the company of unbelieving scientists. In some companies, he has to brave the ridicule attaching to the belief in miracles. In the society of filthy-minded men, he has to uphold the purity of Christ; and in the society of worldlings, he may be called upon to uphold the rooted antagonism between the world and Christ. These may seem very poor and mild ways of confessing Christ, compared with what our forefathers in the faith had to endure; but they all try the mettle of the Christian. If he is faithful in confessing Christ in these comparatively little matters, he may have good hope that God would, if called upon, give him grace to make a bolder and more public and dangerous confession if it was laid upon him so to do. Such is the confession of Christ; and the reward answers to it."—M. F. Sadler.

3. What will be the result of denying the Saviour before men? Verse 33.

NOTE.—There are many ways of denying our Saviour. In "The Desire of Ages," page 357, we are told, "Men may deny Christ by evil

speaking, by foolish talking, by words that are untruthful or unkind. They may deny Him by shunning life's burdens, by the pursuit of sinful pleasure. They may deny Him by conforming to the world, by uncourteous behavior, by the love of their own opinions, by justifying self, by cherishing doubt, borrowing trouble, and dwelling in darkness. In all these ways they declare that Christ is not in them."

4. What startling statement does Jesus make concerning His mission among men? Verse 34.

NOTE.—The prophet names Jesus "the Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6. At His birth, an angelic host sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:13, 14. How, then, are we to account for these words in verses 34, 35? The spirit of Christ is not at war with men, but with principles. Light and darkness will not blend. Oil and water will not mix. Jesus came to deliver man from the bondage of sin. To those who receive Him, He brings peace. In the hearts of those who reject Him there is war. While Christ came to give peace to all, His coming challenges the powers of darkness in the hearts of men. Thus it is said that the gospel divides families, and rends asunder the strongest ties of nature; but in reality, it is sin that brings division when some members of a family refuse to yield to righteousness.

5. How are the family relations sometimes affected by the teachings of Christ? Verse 35.

6. Who are often one's bitterest foes? Verse 36.

NOTE.—One of the strange anomalies of life is that those nearest and dearest because of ties of blood often turn to bitterest enmity when one chooses the path of self-denial and unquestioned loyalty to Christ. Throughout the history of the Christian church loyalty to the Master has meant to thousands scorn, ridicule, and open opposition with bitter persecution from those nearest of kin to them.

7. How definitely and completely must our love for Christ be manifest? Verse 37.

8. What must each individual do to be worthy of a part with Christ? Verse 38.

NOTE.—Christ bore the burden of the cross with its climax on Mount Calvary from the time His earthly ministry began. Scorned by His own townsmen who would have slain Him, tempted that they might find cause for condemnation by the religious leaders, betrayed by one of His own disciples, deserted at His betrayal and trial by all who professed to love Him, He was called upon to carry His heavy cross throughout His earthly life. The Christian who professes to love Him, but is unwilling to bear the crosses, sufferings, and burdens of life with Him "is not worthy" of Him. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." 2 Tim. 2:12. Only such are worthy.

9. What vital principle of living does Christ enunciate? Verse 39.

NOTE.—Again we meet an apparent contradiction of terms. Find and you lose: lose and you find. The text is fully explained in the words of the Saviour in Matthew 16:25, "Whosoever will save his life [seek his own safety and ease] shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life

for My sake [unselfishly give his life in Christ's service] shall find it." The Master speaks of the eternal rewards in which "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:23.

10. In our service for Christ, how closely are we related to Him and to His Father? Verse 40.

11. What will be the result of receiving a prophet? Verse 41, first part.

12. What will be the reward of receiving a righteous man? Verse 41, last part.

13. What simple illustration of true service is given to make clear the rewards of well-doing? Verse 42.

14. What further does the Saviour teach concerning the service rendered to the least of His children? Mark 9:41, 42.

NOTE.—The doing of the smallest, simplest act of kindness is not without its reward. Not alone is it recorded in heaven's records, but in this world it reacts upon the life of the doer. "It is twice blest; it blesseth him that gives and him that takes." It is thrice blest in that in doing in behalf of others we are serving the Master, in receiving them into our hearts and helping them we are receiving Him, and to receive Him is to partake of the eternal verities. Even the cup of cold water given, costing naught but the effort and the expression of our love and concern for another in need, has both its present and its future reward.

Lesson 12—December 19, 1931

Conditions of Entering the Kingdom

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 18:1-22.

MEMORY VERSE: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." Matt. 18:15.

LESSON HELP: "The Desire of Ages," pp. 437-442.

The Lesson

1. With what question did the disciples come to Jesus while they were ministering in Galilee? Matt. 18:1.

NOTE.—Although Christ's life had been one long lesson on humility and unselfishness, and He had told the disciples that He must still further humble Himself—even to death (Matt. 17:22, 23); yet His followers had not learned the lesson of humility. They were proud and selfish. Their hearts were filled with the same selfish desires for the best place that had caused Satan's fall from heaven—the same desires that were the foundation stones of Satan's kingdom of unrighteousness. Self appeared so large in their eyes that they could see nothing else.

2. Whom did Jesus call to Him and set in their midst before answering? Verse 2.

3. What statement did He then make concerning entering the kingdom of heaven? Verse 3.

NOTE.—The disciples had not yet come to realize the true spirit of service and life as exemplified by the Master. They had not recognized its need for self-sacrifice, for self-effacement, and for a complete reversal of the ways of the world. To bring home to their hearts this need, the Saviour called a little child, symbol of simple faith, loyalty, and willing obedience, and set it in their midst, saying "Except ye turn [be converted], and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18:3, Revised Version.

4. Who did Jesus state would be the greatest in His kingdom? Verse 4.

5. In receiving and treating kindly one who believes in Christ, whom are we receiving? Verse 5.

6. What is said of one who harms the least of God's children? Verse 6.

NOTE.—In the Revised Version the text reads, "Whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on Me to stumble." That is, whoso shall do anything to discourage one who has started to follow Jesus, and shall cause Him to fall into sin and be lost, "it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck; and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

7. What of necessity will exist in this world of sin? What is said of him through whom offense comes? Verse 7.

NOTE.—"Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh!" Matt. 18:7, Revised Version.

8. What counsel is given concerning a member of the body which causes one to stumble? Verses 8, 9.

NOTE.—A habit or practice of our lives which leads us to transgression of God's law, and to discouragement in Christian living, should be cut off at whatever cost to ourselves. As the surgeon operates to remove a diseased member and save life, so we should cut off every wrong practice which may separate us from God, and bring about spiritual death.

"Any habit or practice that would lead into sin, and bring dishonor upon Christ, would better be put away, whatever the sacrifice. . . . If the foot or the hand would be cut off, or even the eye would be plucked out, to save the body from death, how much more earnest should we be to put away sin, that brings death to the soul."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 439.

9. What further caution is given concerning the treatment of God's little ones? What reason is given? Verse 10.

10. For what purpose did the Son of God come into the world? Verse 11.

11. What illustration of the Father's loving care does the Saviour give? Verses 12, 13.

12. What is said to be the will of our heavenly Father? Verse 14.

13. What is the right procedure to take toward an offending brother? Verse 15.

14. If he refuses to listen to us, what further steps should we take toward reconciliation? Verses 16, 17.

NOTE.—“While we seek to correct the errors of a brother, the Spirit of Christ will lead us to shield him, as far as possible, from the criticism of even his own brethren, and how much more from the censure of the unbelieving world. We ourselves are erring, and need Christ’s pity and forgiveness, and just as we wish Him to deal with us, He bids us deal with one another.”—Id., p. 441.

15. What authority is bestowed upon the church of God on earth? Verse 18.

NOTE.—Of the authority thus vested in the church of Christ, we are told in “The Desire of Ages,” page 442, “You are acting as the ambassadors of heaven, and the issues of your work are for eternity. But we are not to bear this great responsibility alone. Wherever His word is obeyed with a sincere heart, there Christ abides. Not only is He present in the assemblies of the church, but wherever disciples, however few, meet in His name, there also He will be.” It is the obedient church, loyal to Christ, with whom He coöperates and of whose decisions He approves. With them He is present on every occasion.

16. Of what may we be assured if we are agreed concerning our requests from God? Verse 19.

17. Whose presence is promised in the assemblies of God’s people? Verse 20.

18. What question concerning forgiveness was asked by Peter? Verse 21.

19. What answer did the Saviour give to his question? Verse 22.

NOTE.—“We are not forgiven because we forgive, but as we forgive. The ground of all forgiveness is found in the unmerited love of God; but by our attitude toward others we show whether we have made that love our own. Wherefore Christ says, ‘With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.’”—“Christ’s Object Lessons,” p. 251.

Lesson 13—December 26, 1931

True Sabbath Keeping

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matt. 12:1-21.

MEMORY VERSE: “He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” Mark 2:27, 28.

LESSON HELP: “The Desire of Ages,” pp. 281-289.

The Lesson

1. As Jesus and His disciples walked through the fields one Sabbath day, what did the disciples do? Matt. 12:1.

2. What complaint did the Pharisees make to Jesus concerning the disciples’ act? Verse 2.

NOTE.—The Pharisees did not accuse the disciples of taking that which did not belong to them, for they knew that the Scriptures gave permission to take enough to satisfy present hunger. Deut. 23:25. It was because they took it on the Sabbath day that they found fault. Before this (Matthew 5) Jesus had reproved the Jews because they had interpreted some of the commandments too loosely, and He taught them that it was sin to disobey them even in their thoughts. Now Jesus finds them going to the other extreme concerning the fourth commandment, interpreting it so strictly that it had become loaded down with man-made restrictions and burdensome ceremonies. They claimed that the gathering of the grain was a kind of reaping, and the rubbing of it in their hands was threshing; therefore the disciples were doubly guilty of Sabbath breaking.

3. Whose example did Jesus first cite in justification of what His disciples had done? Verses 3, 4.

NOTE.—“The object of God’s work in this world is the redemption of man; therefore that which is necessary to be done on the Sabbath in the accomplishment of this work, is in accord with the Sabbath law. Jesus then crowned His argument by declaring Himself the ‘Lord of the Sabbath,’—One above all question and above all law. This infinite Judge acquits the disciples of blame, appealing to the very statutes they are accused of violating.”—“The Desire of Ages,” p. 285.

4. What work done by the priests was also referred to for their justification? Verse 5.

5. Whom did He say was present with them? Verse 6.

NOTE.—Standing in their midst was One greater than the temple, the One who had created all things, who was Lord of all. John 1:3; Gen. 2:2, 3. The law which He had instituted was that law which they accused His disciples of violating. He, its Giver, was its best interpreter both in life and in precept.

6. What statement did Christ make, quoting from the prophets? Verse 7.

NOTE.—Their many heartless rites and ceremonies, their condemnations of men for the transgression of the restrictions with which they had bound about God’s law, caused this rebuke of the Pharisees and scribes by the Saviour. Had they known God’s mercy, His long-suffering, His love, they would not have bound about His law with needless restrictions, nor condemned those who were in His sight guiltless.

7. What does He say is His relation to the Sabbath day? Verse 8; Mark 2:27, 28.

NOTE.—As One with the Father, Christ was the giver of the law. He could say concerning the Sabbath, “The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” Mark 2:28. By their traditions the Jewish leaders had hedged about the keeping of the Sabbath with so many petty restrictions, many of which were contrary to the true spirit of Sabbath keeping, that they had made its observance a burden rather than the blessing which God had intended the Sabbath should be. Christ takes His

rightful place as its author and Lord, and teaches its rightful and joyful observance.

8. Where did Christ then go? Whom did He find there? Matt. 12: 9, 10, first part.

9. What question was asked of Him by the bystanders? Verse 10, last part.

10. By what apt illustration did He reply to their question? Verses 11, 12, first part.

11. With what brief statement of truth did Christ settle the question? Verse 12, last part.

NOTE.—The Master well knew the selfishness of the human heart, and its immediate reaction, when in danger of losing temporal benefits. He uses this natural impulse of humanity to help the animal creation in need, even on the Sabbath day, to press home the principle which He clearly and forcefully states in verse 12, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days."

12. What command did He give to the man with the withered hand? On complying, what results followed? Verse 13.

13. What course did the Pharisees follow when Christ thus broke their tradition? Verse 14.

NOTE.—Christ, in violating their traditions by healing on the Sabbath, incurred the bitter enmity of the Pharisees. Their traditions, binding about in every little detail of life the observance of the law, were dearer to them than the sacred principles of the law itself. Christ's broader, richer interpretation of the law angered them, and as is often true, they sought to find means of getting rid of Him at any cost. To such lengths will the wounded pride and thwarted ambitions of men lead them. Christ, knowing their intentions as well as though they had published them, followed the counsel He had given to His disciples, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another." Matt. 10:23.

14. Where did Christ go? What work did He continue? Verse 15.

15. What charge did He give those whom He had healed? What reason is given for making this request? Verses 16, 17.

16. In quietly teaching and continuing His work of healing, what prophecy concerning Himself was Jesus fulfilling? Verses 18-21. (See Isa. 42:1-3.)

"The knowledge of God is obtained from His word. The experimental knowledge of true godliness, found in daily consecration and service, insures the highest culture of body, mind, and soul."—Testimonies, vol. 8, p. 63.

"Christ calls upon His people to believe and practice His word. Those who receive and assimilate this word, making it a part of every action, of every attribute of character, will grow strong in the strength of God."—Testimonies, vol. 8, p. 300.