

The Institute Leaflet for Church Sunday Schools.

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TEXTS TO BE LEARNED.—Jerem. x. 23 ; S. Matt. xxvi. 41.

COLLECT FOR THE DAY.

Keep, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Church, with thy perpetual mercy : and, because the frailty of man without thee cannot but fall, keep us ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I.—WHY GOD KEEPS HIS CHURCH.

What is the Church ? “A congregation of faithful men” ; God’s household and family. What are all its members by nature ? Frail and sinful. On whom must they rely for help and guidance ? What words of Christ’s prove this ? “Without Me ye can do nothing.” Why were we chosen as members of God’s Church ? Through the mercy of God. Titus iii. 5. How are we now kept in the Church ? By the same watchful mercy. Why does God thus keep His Church ? Because it needs keeping. Because God is always merciful.

II.—HOW GOD KEEPS HIS CHURCH.

For what is the Collect a prayer ? For God’s perpetual mercy. What does this mercy do for us ? It both guides and guards us. What is God called in Scripture ? “He that keepeth Israel.” Ps. cxxi. 4. From what do we ask Him to keep us ? “All things hurtful.” What is the next petition ? “Lead us,” etc. What is meant by all things profitable ? Food and raiment for the body ; grace and godliness for the soul. Where are similar words used ? Collect for 8th Sunday after Trinity. What other prayer is like this ? “Lead us not into temptation.” Why are we kept in safety ? Because we are members of God’s Church. Do we only do wrong to ourselves when we commit sin ? No, we bring shame upon Christ also. Heb. vi. 6. May we then all walk worthy of our high calling ! May we seek to lead others aright !

THE CATECHISM.

What is the Sixth Commandment ? (Learn answer in Catechism.)

ST. PAUL, FESTUS, AND AGRIPPA.

Read parts of Acts xxv., xxvi.

Learn Rom. vii. 23, 24.

What do we all value very greatly ? Our freedom.

Do we not make mistakes about it ? Yes, people *seem* free when they are not others *seem* bound though really free.

To-day let us study an instance of this.

After St. Paul had appealed to Cæsar, who visited Festus ? xxv. 13.

Why did Festus consult Agrippa about the prisoners ? He was better acquainted with the Jewish religion than himself.

What did Agrippa say on hearing about St. Paul ? Ver. 22

Of what did St. Paul speak ? Two periods in his life—what he once was and what he is now.

Why was he now in bonds ? Because of what he believes and does.

In which state was he really a free man ? Before he was the slave of sin and in the bondage of corruption.

How is he now ? Though his hands are bound, he has found that Christ’s service is perfect freedom.

What effect had his speech on Festus ? xxvi. 24.

Of what did St. Paul remind Agrippa ? Of the wondrous things done in Christ’s name.

Could he deny what had taken place ? What did he say ? Ver. 28.

How were his words spoken ? Scornfully—“in a trice thou art persuading even me.”

What was St. Paul’s fervent wish ? Ver. 29.

Now think of these two great men ; are they really free ? Their hands may be, but their *hearts* are fettered.

What did they need ? To be turned from the power of Satan unto God.

Who was really the free man ? The prisoner, St. Paul.

What should our prayer be ? That God would, by “the pitifulness of His great mercy, loose us” from sin.