

it is a sin which must be most carefully guarded against by those who are truly interested in religion. None of the apostles came so near to Jesus as the beloved John, and yet it is John who, in our lesson, fell before this temptation. Another John,—John Feble, the author of the *Christian Year*—is described by those who knew him as a man simple, humble, pure and unworldly, and yet he could be most intolerant. On one occasion when he came to pay a call at a certain house, learning that one member of the family with whose views of religion he did not agree, was at home, he refused to enter, and remained sitting in the porch.

4. To set any young life astray is to involve oneself in a terrible responsibility. Once a nobleman who was an avowed atheist, was going through the famous Wedgwood potteries accompanied by the proprietor and a young workman. The nobleman began to speak most contemptuously of religion. The young man listened, became interested, and at last burst out into a jeering laugh. Mr. Wedgwood, a little later, showed his noble visitor the process of making a fine vase. When it was finished the nobleman held out his hand to take it, when Wedgwood dashed

it to the ground, shattering it to pieces. The nobleman was very angry: "Nothing can restore it again." "No, my lord, and you forget that the parents of that young man who has just left us, and all good influences have been at work to make him a fit vessel for the master's use, while you, with your touch, have undone the work of years." "You are an honest man," was the reply. "I never thought of the effect of my words."

5. The title of our lesson to-day is: *Jesus Rebukes Selfishness*. One of the worst forms of selfishness is the sin of intemperance. It is a peculiarly selfish sin because it works its dire effects not only on the man who indulges in it,—the effects upon him are bad enough—but it reaches out to lay its hand on those who are innocent. The wife of the drunkard, the children of the drunkard, suffer hunger and poverty and shame because he selfishly puts his appetite before their good. Not only his whole family, but the whole community is the poorer because of his indulgence. There is another consideration, too. What is to be said of the man who persists in a habit which too often leads those who have had no taste for strong drink to fall victims to its evil power?

FOR TEACHERS IN THE SENIOR AND ADULT DEPARTMENTS

Seek to get the setting of to-day's lesson before the class. Jesus has, for the second time, plainly spoken of the fate which awaits him at Jerusalem, ch. 9:30-32. In view of this solemn declaration, is it not somewhat surprising to find the disciples engaged in such a dispute as is recorded at the beginning of our lesson? Peter, James and John obeyed Jesus' injunction to keep silent about the transfiguration (v. 10); but the other disciples may have resented the fact that Jesus had taken these three with him when he went up into the mountain. Discuss:

1. *The greatness of humility*, vs. 33-35. Point out that the disciples had probably been taking it for granted that Jesus had not been paying any attention to the discussion which they had been carrying on along the road. How easy it is for us to forget that our conversations are heard by the unseen companion of the way. Question the class as to any reasons why Christ did not rebuke them in the midst

of the dispute. While they were still in the heat of their discussion, would they have been as willing to listen to the quiet reasonableness of Jesus as later on when their tempers had cooled a bit? Is there an important lesson for us here in our relations to others? It is worth while pointing out that the disciples were shamed into silence at the question of Jesus. There is always hope for the man who is ashamed of his sin.

Now call attention to the wonderful paradox of Jesus in regard to true greatness. Seek to illustrate the truth of the paradox by illustrations from the lives of those who have been great because they knew how to serve others. Show how selfishness defeats itself in its attempts at greatness.

2. *A living parable*, vs. 36, 37. Jesus often told parables in order to enforce his teaching. This time he uses a child as a sort of living parable. What is the point of the parable? The childlike spirit is the one which is in keep-