

Lesson Word-Pictures.

"Love-His-Neighbor," that is a good name for him. They say he is peculiar; he hates a debt. May his peculiarity be a catching one! The only obligation he likes to feel is to love everybody. How his life shines with the proofs of this! Watch that life! Watch it in its relations to the neighborhood, and in his dealings with others what sin of anger or slander, theft or injustice, will Love-His-Neighbor commit! One neighbor has a fine garden and another has a fine house. You can see the one towering up in its fine proportions, and how brilliant and fragrant is the other! Those neighbors are very delicate ware to handle. One you might call Mr. Sensitive and the other Mr. More-than-Sensitive. What a big chance for anger and a long quarrel there was with each one day, when from different quarters they looked over the garden wall, and each unfairly accused Love-His-Neighbor of trespass! What an opportunity for a hot fire burning away all kindly relations, but Love-His-Neighbor quenched every spark with his careful, kindly words.

He might have reported each neighbor's injustice. He might have blown it about through a big trumpet of defamation to right and left, on the street, in the market place, in the church conferences. He thinks of his neighbors' good and keeps the story to himself.

He has another neighbor, Mr. Slow-to-See. Love-His-Neighbor has business dealings with Slow-to-See. How easy it would be to give a rosy flush to a mercantile venture and tempt Slow-to-See into a barren financial desert! For Love-His-Neighbor the desert would prove a garden. How careful he is to color the desert as a desert, and not look at it through Slow-to-See's poor eyes, who was rushing into it as a garden!

When Love-His-Neighbor lies down at night, how sweet his rest! A good conscience has made his bed. His pillow is stuffed with happy memories. He takes into his dreams that pleasant companion, a love for all humankind. He himself is always slow to speak of his spiritual attainments, but the recording angel that night, when making up the books, must write of Love-His-Neighbor that he has fulfilled the law by living out the loving spirit of Jesus.

He awakes early. How suggestive is the hour!

He sees the dawn flushing the walls of his chamber. He thinks the night of his probation is almost over. The day of his reward is close at hand. Yes, he recalls the apostle's thought in this chapter. The watches of the night of earth will soon end, and eternity will dawn!

Another life, a better life, a life visibly with Christ, will soon be his. Any work of darkness he cannot fellowship. Eternity's light will soon be about him. He rises. He echoes the cry of

the apostle to put on the armor of light. He has risen, too, in season for communion with God. The armor of light, the strong, beautiful armor, he must put it on.

He fastens on truth's girdle and the breastplate of righteousness, the sandals of peace and the helmet of salvation. He grasps faith's shield, and now he opens the old Bible. He reads, he wields the sword of the Spirit. He kneels, he prays, he rises gloriously appareled in the armor of light.

What a warrior for God!

He goes out. Through the day his conduct is that of the children of light, the soldiers of Jesus. He is tempted. The intoxicating cup solicits him. "The world, the flesh, and the devil" press upon him. He resists, he routs them. He cannot give any countenance to wrong. The very look of evil he avoids. He is the child of God. He has put on the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the heir of heaven. An eternity with God is his birthright. An imperishable crown shall be his reward. Will he give heed to things of sense and time, and make them first and final? Never.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

Verse 12. Putting on "the armor of light" recalls that the Roman armor was of two kinds, the heavy armor being distinguished from the light. The heavy is almost, if not entirely, alluded to in Eph. 6. 17. It omits the spear. The light armor had no breastplate nor shield, but consisted of a covering of skins, leather, or cloth; and instead of a sword or spear, darts, stones, bows and arrows, or slings. It thus included the covering of the entire person, and the suggestion of being armed becomes one of being fully covered or clothed with light.

Verse 13. The allusion to drunkenness and wantonness finds many illustrations in oriental life. The drunkards among the Israelites preferred the strong medicated wines to all others. Like oriental debauchees, they rose early in the morning to revel. The Mishna seems to show that the Jews drank to intoxication at the feast of Purim. When wealth and luxury had increased among the Romans it was customary to make the supper a course dinner, as we would say, served in three courses. The first was honeyed wine, salad, sausages, and eggs; the second was the heavy dinner, which was varied, and might consist of several dishes; the third was pastry, nuts, and fruits. After the dinner wine was brought and all drank freely. Then female dancers, singers, and buffoons were introduced, and dice were played, if the parties so liked.—*Æt.* Most abominable practices, named by Paul in the first chapter of Romans, are also mentioned by Seneca, and are found in all heathen countries. When the mis-