

The Mission of the Spirit.

John 16: 5-20.

IN a former lesson we saw how Jesus comforted the sad disciples. But the greatest comfort of all we did not then talk over. It was a comfort to know that by and by Jesus was coming again and would take them to the home He had prepared for them. But what were they to do in the meanwhile? They felt like orphans left alone in this world. By and by seemed far off; what would they do without their dear friend to help them, and tell them what to do. Then Jesus made them a wonderful promise. Read John 14: 18. This verse means, "I will not leave you orphans." It was not only that He would come back, but He would send them another Friend, one who would *stay* with them. Jesus even on earth had to be absent from His disciples sometimes, and often the twelve would be scattered. But this new Friend would be with all everywhere. See John 14: 16 for what He was to be called. Besides, the lesson verses, John 14: 26, will tell you what He would do for them.

Jesus died the next day. The third day after He rose from the grave. He stayed on earth forty days and then ascended to His Father. What would the disciples do now? The last thing Jesus did while on earth was to tell the disciples that the promised Comforter should come before many days. Just ten days after, the promise was kept. Read the story in Acts 2: 1-4.

If you take time to search your Bible you will find what the work of the Holy Spirit is.

There are a great many passages speaking of His work, but we will call your attention to three important points:

1st. He makes us feel how sinful we are. He takes God's Word, and bringing it to bear upon the conscience, making us feel our guilt, and our need of a Saviour.

2nd. He leads us to Jesus, and gives us a new heart.

3rd. He produces in our lives the fruits of righteousness. If you read Galatians 5: 22, 23, you will find there a list of the fruit of the Spirit. So we are dependent upon the Spirit for the beginning, continuation and ending of our lives as Christians.

Remember, dear children, the Holy Spirit is not a mere feeling, but a person, real though you cannot see Him, for He is equal with God the Father, and God the Son, as you will see by reading Matt. 28: 19. Would you have His strong help? Luke 11: 13 will tell you how you may get it.

Jesus Interceding.

John 17: 1-26.

NEXT to the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, this is the longest prayer in the Bible. In this prayer there are three petitions offered by Jesus.

(1) *Jesus prays that His disciples may be kept.* "Holy Father, keep those whom Thou hast given Me," verse 11. Jesus knew full well the dangers, temptations, and persecutions to which they were to be exposed. He longed for their spiritual safety, and hence His prayer for their continued preservation.

(2) *Jesus prays that they may be sanctified.* "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth," verse 17. To sanctify means to make holy. The Master knew well that His apostles were only frail disciples as yet, who needed much grace, in order to fulfil their duties as apostles.

(3) *Jesus prays that they may be united.* "That they may be one," verse 11. There was danger that when He left them, they would not agree. Remember that that very evening at the table of the Lord's Supper they had shown a spirit of strife. Imagine, then, what they would do, were the same spirit to animate them after He had left them. They would simply break in pieces. In this way all the work that Jesus came down from Heaven to do, and for which He gave His life, would be overthrown. Now we can see in a measure how wisely Jesus prayed for His disciples, and how important for them *and for the world* it was that

they should be kept sanctified and made one.

In verse 20, the prayer of Jesus broadens out and takes in all the world. "Neither pray I for these alone, *but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word.*" Dear children, you are included in this if you believe in Jesus, for you have believed in Him through the word of the disciples. Even the feeblest child who comes to God in Jesus' name may know that Jesus takes an interest in him and will present his petitions before the throne of God.

After this long, last prayer, Jesus and His disciples passed over the narrow stream of Kedron; and soon reached the gate of Gethsemane.



'OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.'

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