

16: 6). The Epistle deals chiefly with the cardinal doctrine of "justification by Faith," and concludes with practical exhortations (chaps. 12-16) regarding the various relations in which the Christian stands. Our lesson deals with personal character and holiness of heart.

LESSON PLAN. I. Walk in Love. vs. 7-10. II. Walk in the Light. vs. 11, 12. III. Walk Honestly. vs. 13, 14.

I. WALK IN LOVE. 8. Owe no man anything—"(1) Because it is part of our duty as good citizens; and (2) because it is a part of that law which teaches us to love our neighbor, and to do no injury to him (verse 10). This rule, together with the other rules of Christianity, would propose a remedy for all the evils of bad debts in the following manner: (1) It would teach men to be industrious. (2) It would make them frugal, economical and humble in their views and manner of life. (3) It would teach them to bring up their families in habits of industry. (4) It would produce sobered, chastened views of the end of life, of the great design of living; and would take off the affections from the splendor, gayety, and extravagances which lead often to the contraction of debts. (5) It would put a period to the vices and unlawful desires which now prompt men to contract debts. (6) It would make them honest in paying them." (Barnes.) Discharge all obligations, debts, taxes, revenues, respect (see verse 7), but you cannot pay back love so as to have no more obligation to love. You ought not to want to close that account. The more of this kind of coin you pay out the richer you become. Hath fulfilled the law—because the object of the law was to show him how love acts (Gal. 5: 14; Col. 3: 14; 1 Tim. 1: 5; Jas. 2: 8). "In order to illustrate this, the apostle, in the next verse, runs over the laws of the Ten Commandments in relation to our neighbor, and shows that all those laws proceed on the principle that we are to love him, and that love would prompt to them all." (Barnes.)

9. It is summed up (R. V.)—This is the one principle from which all the commandments flow. (Matt. 22: 39; Mark 12: 31; Gal. 5: 14.) "Love as obligatory is the law of our being. In substance, and as expressing his inmost nature, Love is the one imperative word uttered by God in the Bible. It is also the one imperative word uttered by him through the constitution and conscience of man, and in the coincidence of these two utterances we find perfect proof that both are from him. Law and love! These are the two mightiest forces in the universe. It is because there is in the divine Being this harmony of law and love that he is perfect." (Dr. Mark Hopkins.)

10. Neighbor—See Luke 10: 25-37, Jas. 1: 27. "Love leads us to make others happy. This law would silence the voice of the slanderer; it would stay the plans of the seducer and adulterer; it would put an end to cheating and fraud and all schemes of dishonest gain. And there are many employments, all whose tendency is to work ill to a neighbor. This is pre-eminently true of the traffic in

ardent spirits. It cannot do him good, and the almost uniform result is to deprive him of his property, health, reputation, peace and domestic comfort. He that sells his neighbor liquid fire, knowing what *must* be the result of it, is not pursuing a business which works no ill to him; and love to that neighbor would prompt him to abandon that traffic. See Hab. 2: 15." (Barnes.) Strong drink is the most fruitful source of misery in the world. "A story is current in the Orient of a wise old sheik, who gave to a young Arab prince, from whom he was about to part, a list of crimes, and bade him choose the one which seemed least harmful. The young man turned in horror from murder, theft and loss of virtue, and told the patriarch that he would choose intemperance. 'You have chosen that,' said the wise old man, 'which brings you all.'"

II. WALK IN THE LIGHT. 11. And this (R. V.)—i. e. "and let us do this," viz. live in no debt but that of love, for other reasons, and especially for this following one. (Alford). **Knowing the time**—Knowing that life is short and eternity close at hand. Every day is bringing us nearer to it. Therefore let us bestir ourselves and do all we can while we live. (1 Cor 15: 34; Eph. 5: 14; 1 Thess. 5: 5, 6). "The best thoughts we can have about the future life are thoughts that make better men now—more fit to live under the eye of God, and in daily intercourse with our neighbors, just where we are—kinder and purer at home, more just and honorable in business, more reverent and humble in prayer, more charitable in our judgments of each other. Unless we are very thoughtless indeed, there cannot fail to be a strong and salutary influence breathing on us continually by remembering this: that we are so near, one day's march nearer every night, to a world that is all love and all life, without selfishness and without death, and that world eternal. The prospect itself, if we realize it, would shed some new sanctity over the life we are living." (Bp. Huntingdon).

12. The night—the time of sin and sorrow—our life here on earth. "Our present imperfect and obscure condition as contrasted with the pure light of heaven." (Barnes). **The day**—the light and blessedness of heaven. (Rev. 21: 23, 25; 22: 5). Death is viewed not as the close of life's day but as the dawning of immortal existence. **The works of darkness**—break with all sinful acts, habits and customs. (Eph. 5: 11; Col. 3: 8). **The armour of light**—We are, as it were, to put off defiled cloths and put on the armour of a soldier of light for the battle against evil. (Eph. 6: 13; 1 Thess. 5: 8). We should not