

others equally wise." "Those who searching for virtue refuse to stay among the virtuous, how can they obtain knowledge?" "I find no man who esteems virtue as men esteem pleasure." "The perfect man loves all men; he is not governed by private interest, but only regards the public good or right reason. The wicked man, on the contrary, loves if you give, and likes if you commend him." "The perfect man is never satisfied with himself. He that is satisfied with himself is not perfect. He that is sedulous and desirous to improve in his studies is not ashamed to stoop to ask of others."

Before the Class.

Introduction. Begin the lesson with a few words about the Book of Proverbs, giving the class as clearly as possible a general idea of its varied authorship, composition, and value to the world to-day. As the lesson text is developed have parallel proverbs, or similar ones from other parts of the book, read by members of the class. Define a proverb. Why so helpful? Quote some of the choicest ones and ask the class to memorize them. Bring in other proverbs and compare them with those contained in the Book of Proverbs.

Development of the text. We see at least four parts to the verses selected as our lesson for the day: (a) The purpose of the book (verses 1-6); (b) What true wisdom is (verse 7); (c) A positive exhortation to obedience (verses 8, 9); (d) A warning against evil ways (verses 10-19).

The purpose of the book is to give guidance to the youth, that they may know wisdom and be so aided in their choices that these choices may be the right ones. In Solomon's time, as in our own time, there was great need of just such practical wisdom as is contained in this collection of proverbs.

The next verse—the 5th—shows how a wise man receives wisdom, and the result—an increase of learning. There are too many to-day who will neither profit by the wise advice of others nor by their own disastrous experiences. There are too many Solomons who know "wisdom's ways," but do not walk therein. Do not let us swell the number. Verse 7 gives us the beginning of the road of true wisdom—"the fear of the Lord." We should have constantly before us the guiding principles of God's word and seek to follow these principles, at the same time getting all the light upon our pathway which is possible from the wisdom and experience of others. The law of obedience to the instruction and law of the parents is then stated, and the result beautifully expressed. Instance cases, or have the class do so, of notable examples of filial obedience.

The last section (verses 10-19) is full of warning. The temptation here shown is the gain of sudden riches through open robbery. The remedy

is clearly stated. Impress upon the class that the only safe way in all cases of temptation to wrongdoing by others is to follow the advice as given in verse 15: "My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path." In this connection quote Psalm 1, 1, 2. The sure result of such wickedness as spoken of is given in verse 18—the final destruction of the wicked themselves.

Specific application. Our lesson to-day gives us wise words and warning words. The wise words come first, where we are exhorted to heed the instruction of the father and mother. The need of this teaching to-day is apparent in our land. God honors those who honor him, was the thought in our last Sunday's Golden Text (1 Sam. 2, 30), and we honor him by keeping his commandments. The commandment to honor father and mother is the first commandment with promise. The enticements to evil are so numerous to-day that we must be constantly on our guard and strengthen ourselves against these temptations. They come in all sorts of forms, but perhaps one of the worst is the temptation to get rich quickly, even though it be done by questionable means. Let us beware of this temptation, and earnestly strive to render an honest equivalent, as far as we may, for what we gain.

Close the lesson with the thought that if we keep the purposes of our heart right before God we shall act right, and in a way which will meet his approval. Let us, then, watch the heart, for out of it are the issues of life.

References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 9: Jewels, necklaces, 476. Ver. 11: Waiting for booty, 428. Ver. 12: The "pit," 444.

The Teachers' Meeting.

As an introduction to the lesson, obtain various definitions of a proverb by scholars; compare views and give a clear definition.... Illustration of a proverb in "extract of meat," of which a small jar will contain the concentrated essence of many pounds; "condensed milk," etc.... Next notice the aim of the Proverbs. Call attention to these aims as the especial needs of youth.... Notice also the author, Solomon, his history, position, and character, and why his counsels are worthy of notice. One who has tried pleasure and found it vanity can well counsel others.... Show also the two foundation stones on which the Proverbs rest. (Verses 7, 8.) 1) The fear of the Lord; 2) obedience to parents.... Any philosophy of life which removes either of these sanctions will be sure to lead astray.... Take, lastly, the warnings of the lesson against evil companions, robbery, etc.... More needed now than ever, in the age of a literature which takes the robber as its hero; for example, Jesse James,