

can fathom, for he is a child of God, and reconciled with his Father. v. 7.

4. A Christian may enjoy a sense of God's presence with him in all his life. v. 9.

5. A Christian may enjoy the consciousness of God's care, giving him contentment in his condition. v. 11.

6. A Christian may enjoy a consciousness of power, able to endure and to do all in the strength of Christ. v. 13.

English Teacher's Notes.

We read lately of a road which Paul pointed out to the Ephesians—the road of obedience. To-day we read about another road, of which he told the Philippians—the road of contentment. He was anxious that the Christians at Philippi should walk in this road, and so he commends it to them in his last chapter. Let us see what kind of a road it is.

There is something bright at the very outset—joy: "Rejoice!" Verse 4. Who would not like this part of the road? It ought to be particularly attractive to the young. But shall we find many of them here? Many a young face is bright and happy to-day, but look to-morrow and you may see something quite different—dullness and weariness, frowns, and, it may be, tears. Our passage says: "Rejoice in the Lord always." But they think they cannot do that—cannot rejoice when things go contrary, when trouble meets them, when their expectations are disappointed. This part of the road, they imagine, is really impassable. That boy who is working hard all day—that girl who cannot have the same pleasure as her richer neighbors—that man who is laid on a sick-bed—that woman who has just buried her child—can they rejoice? If they know the true meaning of those words, "in the Lord," Yes. The road is not impassable; it may be trodden by the feeblest.

Now we come to another part of the road—moderation, or, as we have it in the Revised Version, forbearance. Verse 5. This does not look at first sight equally attractive. "Stand up for your rights" is the world's motto, which even Christians are too ready to act upon. It may be that this was the cause of the difference between Euodias and Syntyche (ver. 2), each thinking that she had been aggrieved and that she was bound to vindicate her own cause. How many boys and girls of the present day are like these women of Philippi! But does the indulgence of such a spirit make any one the happier? There is no sunshine (see last lesson) on the path of pride and self-love. And if this path of forbearance looks hard it has something in full view that will strengthen and quicken the feet of those who pass along it. What is this? "The Lord is at hand." Why trouble so much about a passing slight, injustice, or unkindness, that will soon be over, when the Lord is coming to set every matter right? He that can forbear will be able to rejoice.

Look a little farther, and you come to freedom from anxiety. Ver. 6, Revised Version. Even children know something of what it is to be anxious. Many are the burdens, great and small, which they

carry upon their young shoulders. But suppose some kind friend came to a burdened one and said: "Don't trouble about that matter. Leave it all to me. I will arrange it all right. You need not have a minute's anxiety about it. And if you have any wish or any need, tell it to me;" would not the burden be thrown off, and would there not be rejoicing! This is what the Lord says. One would think this part of the road—of freedom, of anxiety—a most delightful one.

We have not quite done with the road. Look at one verse more, ver. 7, and you will find it is the road of peace. No worry there, no fear, no dissatisfaction, and no disappointment. The traveler can walk on contented in the sunshine—"in Christ Jesus." Has he then got everything he wants? The contented man is said to want nothing more, but I think this is a mistake. Could any one be truly happy if he had nothing to look forward to—nothing further to come? The traveler on this road is most truly contented because he has something to look forward to, to desire, and to hope for. What is this? It is the coming of his Lord: "The Lord is at hand."

Now suppose some of the Philippians had said: "This is a road no man can travel by; we can't always rejoice, can't always forbear, must be anxious and troubled sometimes," what had Paul to answer? That he had traveled, and was traveling, by the same road. "I have learned," he says, "in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound; in every thing and all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me. Vers. 11-13, Revised Version. We have gone through a good deal of Paul's life. We have seen him in suffering and in danger, and yet rejoicing in the Lord—as in the dungeon of that very city to whose people he wrote these words. Acts 16. 25. They knew this. And they knew also how he had used forbearance, when shamefully treated at Philippi, though he might have stood on his rights as a Roman citizen. They knew also that he often lacked the comfort and even the necessities of life, for therefore they sent the succor of which he speaks. From his own personal experience he could recommend the road of rejoicing, forbearance, freedom from anxiety, and peace.

But we must not forget that he spoke as the Lord's messenger. It was not a mere recommendation that he gave, but a command from the Lord. And the Lord Jesus has passed every step of that road which he commands his people to take. Who suffered, who was tempted, who was grieved like him? Yet he speaks to his disciples of "my joy." John 15. 11. Who was persecuted, provoked, and unjustly condemned like him? Yet he "threatened not, but committed himself to him that judged righteously." 1 Pet. 2. 23. He hungered, and thirsted, and was weary, and was in danger, surrounded by foes, yet none ever heard from him a whisper of

care of
pray to
discipli
has go

Hint

So
condit
may b
ing th
may
2. Wh
2.) Tr
charac
that I
urges
calls
tar com
Paul,
palm-
draws
in pris
....O
of an
Chris

The
and o
he ha
If the
of his
he rec
wheth
learn
not th
carele
ers, s
blessi
his ov
less a
along
ing in
the v
"tru
Cont
his h
day,
and i
sigh
peace
flow
gentl
saint
you
must
wher

Le
happy
(If y
cut o
in th
happy
who
dom
ter t
in th