

ample of prayer in His own conduct: He taught us how to pray by giving us a suggestive model, which we call the 'Lord's Prayer,' and He directed by instructing His disciples as to the proper spirit of prayer. He would take up one point, direct attention to it, and give a forcible illustration of it in some incident or parable. We need not say that this was the only point, or the most important point, to be noticed in prayer. Our Lord's different teachings must be put together, if we would learn His full view, and worthily apprehend our duty."—S. S. U. Notes.

The parable of the widow and the unjust judge in the opening verses of this chapter is closely connected with the one we have as our lesson to-day. In that we have set before us the importance of *perseverance and importunity* in prayer, and to heighten the contrast an 'unjust judge' is taken to show, that if unceasing importunity prevails with him how much more it will with a just and merciful God. In this we have set before us the *spirit* in which we should come to God in prayer. That encourages us to pray without ceasing, this reminds us that while 'man looketh at the outward appearance' 'God looketh at the heart,' and teaches us *how* we ought to come before Him.

In reference to 'titles' the Pharisees were scrupulously exact. They tithed, that is gave a tenth of all the productions of their land, even to such as were not included in the requirements of the Mosaic law, as pot herbs. They also went beyond the letter of the law in their fastings. The law required only one fast in the year, *Lev. 16: 29*, but the Pharisees fasted every Monday and Thursday. On these points see *Matt. 23: 20; 23: 22; Lev. 27: 30; Dent. 14: 22; Gen. 14: 20; 23: 20*.

It is worthy of remark that the word used by the publican, and here rendered 'merciful' is the same, used in verbal form, as the word 'proportion' in *Rom. 13: 25; John 11: 2; and in 10: 10*; and seems to imply that the publican had a right to be merciful only through a sacrifice for his sins, a sacrifice foreshadowed by the daily offerings of the temple service. While the word 'justified' is the same word as is used in *Rom. 11: 24; 26: 5; 1; Gal. 1: 16*, and many other places. The man was justified not simply because he prayed for mercy, but also because he came in the right spirit seeking it by faith in the *will of God's appointment*. How great the contrast then between this man and 'those who trusted in themselves that they were righteous.'

IN THE CLASS.

Lesson outline. 1st. The two worshippers; 2nd. The two prayers; 3rd. The one received, the other rejected; 4th. The further lesson from the children.

THE TWO WORSHIPPERS.

Two men went up into the temple to pray.—1 Kings vii. 29-30, 41, 47-8; Mark ii. 17. The Temple was on high ground, and there was a court for the priests. The one a Pharisee. The word comes from the Hebrew word *pharisee*, to separate. The Pharisees were the most powerful religious sect in the Jewish state, the recognized teachers of the law, and professors of a greater sanctity than all others, yet proud, deceitful, and cruel—fair without but foul within. The other a publican. "The publicans were tax-gatherers. Judea was a province of the Roman Empire. The Jews bore this yoke with great impatience, and paid their taxes with great reluctance. It happened, therefore, that those who were appointed to collect the taxes were objects of great detestation. They were beside, often of abandoned character, oppressive in their exactions and dissolute in their lives. By the Jews they were associated with thieves and adulterers, and those who were profane and dissolute."—*Barnes*. "The publican represented those who, although they have sinned greatly, yet feel

the burden of their sins and desire to escape from them. The parable would make us feel how much nearer is such an one to the kingdom of God than the self-complacent Pharisee, or than any one who shares in the temper and spirit of the Pharisee—that he indeed may be within it, while the other is without it."—*Trench*.

How striking the contrast between these two worshippers—in their appearance, in their manner, their estimate of themselves, and the esteem in which they were held by the multitude! And yet how different from the popular opinion of them, and their own opinion of themselves was God's! How helpful the prayer of David.—Ps. cxxxix. 23-4.

THE TWO PRAYERS.

The Pharisee stood. Standing in itself was not an evidence of pride, for the publican also stood, it was the proud posture; 1 Kings viii. 22; Mark ii. 25; though in seasons of more than ordinary humiliation or sorrow the suppliant kneeled or even prostrated himself; *Dan. vi: 10; Acts ix. 40*. And prayed thus with himself. He boasted rather than prayed, and his prayer, if such it may be called, went not beyond himself; it was of himself, to himself, and beyond himself; it was of himself, to himself, I thank thee. For what? For the blessings of His providence, for His mercy and grace? no, nothing of the kind. He deserved the first, and he had the second, or sinful self, to thank for his performance is divided into two parts: 1st. Under the form of thanks he enumerates the bad things the rest of men are, but he is not; 2nd. He enumerates the good things he does; and there closes.—*Walden*. "He begins well: 'God, I thank thee,' yet even in his thanksgiving see three great errors:—He compares himself with other men, 2 Cor. x. 12. He trusts to what he is not, 'not an extortioner,' etc. The question is, *what we are*. We do not tell the doctor of all the diseases we have not, but the one we have. He boasts of his good deeds, 'I fast.' I give titles of all that I possess, '—of all that I acquire, of all his gains. *Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16; James i. 16*. But after all, is this prayer? What does he ask for?—*Stock*. And the publican standing afar off. Yet still in the court, for as he a Jew he had a right there. Augustine says, "That afar off from God, for He is nigh unto them, not far of a contrite heart." But feeling his own sinfulness and realizing God's holiness, in reverence awe he stood where he felt himself to be. "Would not lift up so much as an eye, a token of self-accusation; but smote upon his breast, of inward grief, saying, God be merciful. On the word merciful, see note above, 'a sinner' should be 'the sinner.'"

THE ONE RECEIVED, THE OTHER REJECTED.

I tell you. "With what emphasis did this 'I tell you' come from this Divine I."

This man . . . justified; "his sins forgiven, treated as a just person, and his prayer answered."

"Issuing to God and man, the prayer of the Pharisee, like a stone cast at heaven, returns to break his own head; while the publican's ascends like a cloud of incense that floated away fragrant and heavenward from the morning or evening sacrifice. Not that his confession and sorrow were the price of pardon; but that, feeling himself lost and undone, he cast himself on Divine mercy, and so became partaker of the righteousness which Jesus has provided for the chief of sinners."—*Guthrie*.

For every one. "To be self-emptied or 'poor in spirit' is the fundamental and indispensable preparation for 'the grace that bringeth salvation.'"

THE FURTHER LESSON FROM THE CHILDREN.

And they brought. Matthew says, "Put His hands on them and pray." It was customary to seek in this way the blessing of good men.—

Gen. xlviii. 8-16. There is no trace of infant baptism here.—*John iii. 1-2; Mark x. 16*. And yet this is one of the *proof* passages for that popish ordinance.

Suffer little children. Do nothing to hinder, place no barrier in the way of their early coming to Christ. Let there be nothing, in precept or example that will hinder them; but do all you can to help them to Jesus.

"So let our lips and lives express The holy gospel we profess."

that the little ones shall be won to Jesus.

Verily, I say unto you. "The lesson of this verse admits of only one interpretation. It describes the spirit and frame of mind which are absolutely necessary to salvation. Pride, high thoughts, and self-rightness must be laid aside. We must be converted and become as little children."—*Matt. xviii. 3—Ryle*. "Not childishness, but child-likeness, trusting and loving God as a child does its parents." May we not see here also an encouragement to *intercessory prayer*: you are the brothers of the Jesus, as

ILLUSTRATIVE.

"The Times of June 23rd, 1858, in recording petitions presented to the House of Lords, remarked of one that it was rejected on the ground of an omission—after all but a simple one—the word 'humble' was left out. How many petitions to a similar tribunal are rejected for lack, not perhaps of humility in the words employed, but in the heart of the individual employing them?"

Note.—The remaining lessons for November are left over till our next issue which will be published in ample time for their use.

DENOMINATIONAL NEWS.

Ministerial Changes. REV. D. P. McPHERSON has returned to his studies at Woodstock, and has accepted of a call for some time at Dresden, Ont. REV. GEO. GRAFFTYE, for many years pastor of the Kingston Church, has accepted a call from the First Church Oswego, N. Y. REV. J. B. HUFF, has resigned his pastoral care of the Leamington and Blythwood Churches, and is open to a call. P. O. address, Leamington. REV. L. M. RANDALL, has resigned the Dutton and Southwood Churches. His P. O. address is Iona. REV. C. W. HAYCOCK has resigned the Eden, Goshen and Courtland Churches. P. O. address Cornell. REV. W. D. REES, late of Louisville, Ont., has accepted a call from the Dutton and Southwood Churches. REV. JOSEPH WILLIAMSON has resigned the pastoral care of the Artemesia Church, and is open to a call: P. O. address, Mongolia. REV. GEORGE DAV, pastor of the Cape Kirk, Daywood and Woodford Churches, has changed his P. O. address from Leith to Woodford. REV. ELLMORE HARRIS, B.A., who some month ago resigned the charge of the First Church, St. Thomas, has been restored to health, and has accepted the unanimous wish of the Church to return to the pastorate. REV. ROBERT HOLMES, from Belfast, Ireland, has settled as pastor of the Baptist Church in Minesing, Ont. REV. M. GOLDY, of Kinsale, has gone to England to spend the winter. REV. JAMES COURTS, of Collingwood has accepted the pastorate of the Church in Guelph.

Church Organized. On the 5th of September, baptized believers to the number of 18, formed themselves into a regular Baptist Church at Orangeville. The new church is, under God, much indebted for its existence, to the labours of Rev. R. Cameron, M.A., of Brantford, who on that day baptized several of those who afterwards became constant members.