



LESSON.—SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1908.

## Jesus the Saviour of the World.

John iii., 14-21. Memory verses 14-16. Read John i.-xxi.

### Golden Text.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John iii., 16.

### Home Readings.

Monday, January 27.—John iii., 1-17.  
 Tuesday, January 28.—John iii., 18-36.  
 Wednesday, January 29.—Rom. v., 1-21.  
 Thursday, January 30.—I. John iii., 1-11.  
 Friday, January 31.—I. John iv., 4-19.  
 Saturday, February 1.—Gal. vi., 1-18.  
 Sunday, February 2.—I. Pet. i., 3-25.

#### FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Do you know what love is? Let us think a little while what it means. Does any one love you, Willie? To be sure your father and your mother do, so they give you a nice home to live in and food to eat and clothes to wear. And do you love anybody? You love your father and mother, and do you give them anything? However, there is something that a boy gives his mother because he loves her, and that is obedience. There are not many things little folk can give to those they love, but as soon as we really know that we love anybody we want to give them something, and if we keep giving ourselves the best of everything, that shows who is the person that we love best, doesn't it? What does our Golden Text say? 'God so loved the world that he gave his . . . son.' Willie, do you know how much your father loves you? Suppose you asked him, 'Dad, how much would you sell me for?' He might say 'money couldn't buy you, my son,' or perhaps he would laugh at you for asking such a question. Fathers love their sons too much to sell them. Do you think then, that he would give you away? But perhaps when you grow to be a man there may come a time when our country will be in danger, and then if you say, 'Father I want to go and fight for our country, will you let me go?' He will say, 'Yes,' although he knows that perhaps you may die and he will not see you again. He is willing to 'give' you to your country, because you may be able to help save a great many others. So our text says God gave his son to save all the world if they would only come to him. God knew that Jesus must suffer and die, but 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.'

#### FOR THE SENIORS.

The visit of Nicodemus to Christ occurred during the early part of the Judean ministry in the first year of Christ's public service. The miracle of Cana had been followed by the cleansing of the temple, and other miracles about which we are not told in detail (John ii., 23; iii., 2). Christ, however, was widely talked about and Nicodemus was among those more deeply touched. Were it not that the reiteration of the fact that he 'came by night' (John vii., 50; xix., 39) conveys a hint that an early timidity was later overcome, there should be no suggestion of cowardice in his action. Christ and Nicodemus both were likely to be busy by day, and such matters as this earnest man would discuss would seem out of place in the push of a wondering crowd. The cool of the evening and Christ by himself

were the only suitable conditions. Anyhow it is British justice not to condemn a man unheard, and as the main point is the message of Christ, not the manner of Nicodemus in coming, too much time should not be given to that. If the previous lessons offered an embarrassment of riches for the scant study time allotted they are matched by this. In the words of Christ himself is given that great doctrine of the atonement, long the storm centre of attack and discussion in Christianity. Yet the 'sweet reasonableness' of God's divine method Christ thinks it only necessary to state—'God so loved,' that was all. Is any sacrifice too great for a mother to make in order to win a child's love and comprehension in return? Humanity exists, and being human is imperfect. God exists, and being perfect is incomprehensible to humanity. All the revelation of ages of love and goodness left in us as blind as ever. God chose the only possible means by which man could be reached. It was inevitable that Christ should die—human evil confronted with his pure perfection inevitably resented the contrast and re-ke. Self-defence demanded that they be removed. The words of Caiaphas (John xi., 49, 50) had, as the apostle shows, a divine significance he little thought.

#### (SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

Verses 14-21. Into a score of brief verses are condensed the core truths out of which have sprouted whole forests of discourses and commentaries. The great, central truths of Christianity—human guilt, the atonement by Christ, regeneration by the Spirit, the doctrine of the Trinity, God's love in redemption, the need and the nature of faith, and the promise of Heaven—are all packed into this one short, simple, solemn talk.—T. L. Cuyler.

Verses 17-19. The apparent contradiction, that Jesus has not come to judge, and yet with His coming accomplishes judgment, the Evangelist now explains. Jesus has come into the world in truth only as the Light, and it now lies with men, if instead of light they love darkness (Matt. vi., 23) because their works are evil (I. John iii., 12).—Weiss.

Verses 20-21. To do the truth is at any rate to live up to what one knows; to live an honest, conscientious life.—Dods.

If the only begotten Son were not equal to the Father, the gift would be less than the measure of divine love.—George Reith.

Christ must become Man in order to suffer, and He must continue to be God in order that He may suffer enough for all.—Anselm.

#### FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES.')

Verses 3-4. Life is full of illustrations. A stingy man cannot see the blessedness of giving. One who has no ear for music cannot understand the seventh-heaven exaltation of those who are filled with the spirit of music. Those who live and move and have their being in the works of the flesh do not understand, for they have not experienced the meaning, the blessedness, the glory of a life filled with the fruits of the spirit. He that is absorbed in the forms and organization of religion may be blind to the reality of the spiritual life these are intended to foster.

Verses 5-6. The Lord here declares that there are two elements or factors in the new birth; putting away the old life and receiving the new. Water was the natural and familiar symbol of cleansing from sin, of putting away the sinful past, of confession of sin. This act the Pharisees were not inclined to believe as applied to themselves. They refused to be baptized by John, and thus confess their need of forgiveness. Therefore to this Pharisee our Lord declares that an honest crying to the past is as needful as new life for the future . . . It is essential that our past be recognized as needing cleansing and forgiveness.—'Exp. Greek Test.' The same idea is found in Tit. iii., 3-5, where Paul describes the previous sinful state from which 'His mercy saved us, through the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit.' 'One (the new birth) stands at the beginning of the inward life, and the other (baptism)

at the beginning of the corresponding outward life. And therefore Jesus could say, with the utmost propriety: "You must confess me openly in the prescribed way—which you are unwilling to do—and you must also be the subject of a great spiritual change, which is represented by that confession, or you cannot enter my kingdom." For the order of expression, which is rhetorical rather than logical compare Rom. x., 9. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."—Professor Hovey in the 'American Commentary.'

#### BIBLE REFERENCES.

Num. xxi., 4-9; Ezek. xi., 19; xviii., 31; John xv., 22, 24; Rom. viii., 31, 32; John xii., 32; I. John iv., 8-11; Acts iv., 12; I. Tim. i., 15; II. Cor. ix., 15.

### Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, February 2.—Topic—The real heart of Christian Endeavor. Col. iii., 1-4, 12-25; iv., 1-6. (Christian Endeavor Day. Consecration meeting.)

### C. E. Topic.

Monday, January 27.—Confessing Christ. I. John iv., 15.

Tuesday, January 28.—Loving God. Deut. ii., 1.

Wednesday, January 29.—Loving one another. I. John iv., 7-11.

Thursday, January 30.—Serving Christ. Col. iii., 23, 24.

Friday, January 31.—Not loving the world. I. John ii., 15-17.

Saturday, February 1.—Keeping His commandments. Ps. cxix., 1-8.

Sunday, February 2.—Topic—The real heart of Christian Endeavor. Col. iii., 1-4, 12-25; iv., 1-6. (Christian Endeavor Day.)

### Every One Saved.

A lady teacher in the old country once expressed the opinion that she had prayed too much for her class of sixteen, for any of them to be lost. The narrator was a thoughtless girl at the time, and wondered at the remark, and thought it unduly self-confident. She was so sure. 'I shall have them all,' she would say. 'I will say to the Lord in the judgment, "Here am I and the class which Thou hast given me!"' And while she did not live to see it, the narrator, who was one of the class, did see every one of the sixteen brought into the kingdom.—Selected.

### What to do With the Inattentive Pupils.

Inattention shows want of interest, and want of interest may generally be overcome in the unprejudiced young people, by a consciousness of responsibility. If one child is more inattentive than the others, ask him or her to take charge of the 'reference' department for a month. This will give them a sense of responsibility in listening for any text to which you may refer in the course of your teaching. If too young for this, keep your eye turned as frequently as possible upon the inattentive ones, and follow the glance with sudden and frequent smiles and questions, which you know they can certainly answer. All this must be done, however, with the manner of one asking a favor. The silken cord of control and discipline must be out of sight if you would win a child's true attention.—Selected.

### Your Pastor.

Please show the 'Northern Messenger' to your pastor. At first sight he may not appreciate its intrinsic worth. But you can tell him how much more interesting it is than the ordinary Sunday School paper, and you can also assure him that it is very much cheaper than any other of its size—the price to Sunday Schools being just half the regular rate.