

Our Young People

For Dominion Presbyterian.

Topic for Jan. 28.—"Lessons for Simon and Us."—Luk. 7: 36-50.

Just as I am without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou hast me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

BY WOODFORD.

Topic.—Some of the unwritten stories of the Bible are as helpful as some that are written. The tenor of certain passages clearly suggests these unwritten tales. In connection with this reading we ought to think out the untold narrative of how the woman mentioned was led to repentance. If such work is undertaken we shall find that when we have satisfactorily outlined what led up to her heartfelt adoration of Jesus, we shall have written the chiefest chapter of our own lives,—the day, the circumstances, that led her "with open face" to behold Him; the look in return, the word that shot through her soul, with a revealing and purifying light, so that she saw herself as she was, and turned to God and purity. No life is, or has been what it ought to be, in which the prayers, "Lord show me myself," "Lord show me Thyself," have not been answered. Because these prayers were answered in the life of the woman, she is one whom all will call blessed. Because these prayers, so far as we know, were not prayed by Simon, his life is beneath even the commonplace. He is proud, impenitent, unkind, selfish, "a thing and no man."

MONDAY.—The indescribable something that made this woman conscious of her sins, and of the help there is in God, is here seen begetting faith that made the bearers of the palsied come to Jesus for strength. What press prevents some from coming nigh unto Him, or from bearing their dear ones into his presence? Never falter, but "do the one thing," for assuredly faith will be noted and help afforded. As for scribes, and others such, with their quibbling, they are but men needing healing themselves. Those who long for God, who know their own or other's need, must press through and over all that obstructs, that sin may be forgiven by Him who alone can forgive sin, and that strength may be renewed by waiting on Him in whom we live.

TUESDAY.—These are far from Jesus who bargain saying, "What will we have." Simon invited Jesus that his entertainment of Him might enhance his own popularity—it was for show. Herod would make gifts over to the Child to further his own ends. The woman bestowed her gift out of gratitude, looking for nothing again. The wise men were glad to have the opportunity of bearing their gifts. How about our gifts of time and money to the cause of Christ? Are they made in the spirit of Simon and Herod, or of the woman and the wise men?

WEDNESDAY.—The Corinthians were in

a dangerous condition when they thought there was no need of repentance. Until Paul's message made them sorrowful they were of the type of Simon and Herod. God's word, through Paul, sharper than any two-edged sword, came as the surgeon's knife. As the surgeon is sorry for the pain he causes at the time, so is Paul for this sorrow that must be wrought. But the surgeon cuts and Paul speaks, having in view health and holiness—and the end justifies the means. Better surely be the woman dissolved in tears, than Simon with his false and sinful pride, his coldness, unkindness. Better surely to be the Corinthians, in this strength begotten of God, repenting, than Herod on a throne, but morally rotten to the core, cruel and unclean.

THURSDAY.—There are those who, if we confessed our sin or fault to them, would make use of the same to our hurt. It may be that a pride, supposed to be correct, keeps us from making such confessions to Jesus. The incident recorded in this reading shows Jesus' treatment of the erring. For Simon to have laid his life bare to his fellow-Pharisees, as the woman did to Jesus, would have been disastrous. For us to lay our lives bare to our fellows would never do. It is because we know of the wideness of God's mercy, it is when we see some of the beauty there is in Him to desire Him that we say, "Lord remember me." These are the great moments of life when we cast our burdens upon Him, so believing that we know that He cares for us. Pitiful indeed is the foolish pride that keeps any from Him.

FRIDAY.—Because we sometimes think of God as our fellows have given us reason to think of them, the type of Simon rather than that of the woman prevails. We must not let this conduct of others hinder our direct communion with God; nor must we neglect this direct communion so as to make ourselves to be of those who shut out the vision of the forgiving God from others. All of us are "little ones" before God; He is the Great One who will forgive, and whose forgiveness will have the result in our lives of enabling us to forgive others. What need then there is for the prayer, "Lord increase our faith"—for by faithlessness we are kept out, and keep others out from the mercy and help of God.

SATURDAY.—Because she believed she sought help. Others could not help her:—but how long were the years before she came to know Him! God could help her and can help us. Let Pharisees and

scribes and physicians stand clear then, that the spirit of man may speak with the spirit of God, and may hear, "Son, daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." So there shall be fewer of the type of Simon, and more of the type of the woman, who (although a sinner) was made to be a saint; fewer Herods, more wise men.

As a Sinner.

A great artist had painted part of the city in which he lived, and wanted, for historic purposes, to include in the pictures some of the characters well known in the town. A crossing-sweeper, unkempt, ragged, filthy, was known to everybody, and there was a suitable place for him in the picture. The artist said to him; "I will pay you well if you will come down to my studio and let me take your likeness." He came around, but he was sent about his business, for he had washed his face and combed his hair and donned a respectable suit of clothes. He was needed as a beggar, and was not invited in any other capacity. Even so the gospel will receive you into its halls if you come as a sinner, but not otherwise. —C. H. Spurgeon.

Gratitude to Pardon.

Some years ago a soldier in the United States army was condemned to be shot for sleeping on his post when overcome with fatigue. The president pardoned him. It is said that ever after, that soldier prayed night and morning for the president; but certain it is that when, months afterward, he was fatally wounded in battle, he spent his last breath in prayer for the president of the United States.—Sunday-School Times.

Hints for Talks and Testimonies.

How do we invite Christ to our homes and then slight Him?

How should we treat those that have been guilty of base lives?

What does harshness in judgment of others show about ourselves?

In what are all human beings on a level?

How is a sense of one's sin gained?

What is the ground of love to Christ?

What is to be learned from those that have been rescued from the greatest degradation?

What is the connection between faith, forgiveness, and love?

In what way may our love to Christ be shown?

If our love to Christ is small, what does that show?

For Daily Reading.

Mon., Jan. 22.—Jesus in Capernaum. Mark 2: 1-12

Tues., Jan. 23.—Best gifts for Christ. Matt. 2: 1-11

Wed., Jan. 24.—Repentance in tears. 2 Cor. 7: 9-11

Thurs., Jan. 25.—The treatment of the fallen.

Luke 23: 39-43

Fri., Jan. 26.—Love and forgiveness. Luke 17: 1-4

Sat., Jan. 27.—From faith to peace. Luke 8: 43-48

Sun., Jan. 28.—Topic Lessons for Simon and Us.

Luke 7: 36-50

Here I am, Lord, send me; send me to the ends of the earth; send me to the rough and savage pagans of the wilderness; send me from all that is called comfort in the earth; send me even to death itself; if it be but in Thy service, and to promote Thy kingdom.—David Brainerd.