

cannot make it otherwise. When I think upon God my heart is so full of joy, that the notes dance and leap." It was Jesus who gave us this true joyful thought of God.

He comes to give liberty. The tyrants of superstition, of fear, of injustice would rule over the hearts of men with an iron hand, but Jesus sets men free by his truth, which drives out error, by his perfect love which casteth out fear, by his imparted righteousness which makes for peace and good-will among men. He sets us free from every bondage, that we may without handicap engage in his service.

Let us come to him, counting the cost. It is a great matter for any man to know distinctly what he wishes. The greater part of the collapse in Christian living arises from the fact that men do not sufficiently understand their own aims. The man who intends to be a Christian should know that he has undertaken to build a tower of character and that he cannot build the same out of cheap sticks and straws. He must have plenty of good sand, stone, cemented with self-sacrifice.

Let us come to him without delay. The tempter is quite content to have us believe that there is a God and that Jesus Christ is his divine Son and that we, too, must be the sons of God, provided he can persuade us that there is always "time enough yet." Procrastination is the great devil-triumph. It matters not how much or how well we believe, if just now we refuse to do the thing we ought. Jesus calls unto his kingdom, "O enter, enter now," lest the hour should come, "when at his door denied we'll stand."

Let us come to him with all our heart. A half-hearted surrender is lacking in self-sacrifice and therefore falls short of the noblest joy and most fruitful service. No man who puts his hand to the plow and gives part of his thought to something else can ever turn a straight furrow. The Lord of glory gave himself for us, body, mind and soul, so that we might say,

"Love so amazing, so divine

Demands my life, my soul, my all."

THE LESSON GRADED

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of Bible Classes

The following outline may serve to guide the discussion :

1. *The promise of the king*, Isa. 9 : 2-7. Tell the class, briefly, the circumstances which called forth this prophecy, particularly, the new government of the weak king Ahaz, Isa., ch. 7. Note that the qualities attributed to the coming king were suggested by the defects of the character of Ahaz. Other qualities were attributed to the Messiah at other times, Isa., ch. 53. But the figure of the Messiah, in prophecy, however it changes in details, is always an expression of the undying hope of Israel, that God has prepared for his people "some better thing." So when Jesus came, the old hope had once more flamed forth, Luke 1 : 2. The wretchedness of the Jews had turned their hearts to the words of prophecy. So Christianity was cradled in hope. Point out that it is still the religion of hope : the king is still a coming king—coming into society, coming into the

hearts of men, coming in new power to believers.

2. *The love of the king*, Luke 9 : 49-56. The hope of the Jews was in a national king,—one who should guide their affairs with justice and benevolence, and guarantee their independence and happiness. But Jesus showed that his sway was broader ; it extended to : (1) other nationalities, yes, even to "the unthankful and evil," Luke 9 : 51-56 ; (2) every soul, by whatsoever name called, that sympathizes with his purposes, Luke 9 : 49, 50. Is your local church, Christian? Are you, Christian? Read carefully Matt. 7 : 21 ; 21 : 28-32 ; 25 : 31-46. Emphasize the truth that we should make every day, a Christmas day.

3. *Fellowship with the king*, Luke 9 : 57-62. What are the things which keep some from being Christians? Examine the grounds for the rejection of these near-disciples. Point out : (1) Their rejection was not due to *wrong* affections, but to the place which affections, *good* in themselves, usurped with reference to the kingdom. (2) We are not bidden to renounce these affections, as ascetics do,