

heart, while the logical interpreter expends much profitless labor in the dissection of a dead letter.—Dr. W. Arnot.

"Kisses of peace, feasts of plenty, robes of honor—this world can never again be wholly dark to any sinner."—Bishop Warren.

#### TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

Where the present writer habitually works at his desk, he has but to raise the curtain in the morning, to look out upon the green sward and the beautiful flowers of a public garden. Every day it brings some new delight. The shadows and colors, the sweet-scented air, and the merry voices of the children at their play floating through the open window, give rest to the spirit. Our Lord in the parables of this chapter draws back the curtain from the unseen and the heavenly and oh, what solace and uplift in the vision, solace and uplift to weak and wandering and sin-stricken souls!

It is worth while to bring out, first, the contrast between the senseless, hard, and hateful pride of these self-righteous scribes and Pharisees and the tender compassion of the meek and lowly Jesus. (vs. 1, 2, compared with vs. 3-10.) They would crush down and thrust out all but their own sort. He seeks men of every sort, the vilest of the vile even, that He may transform them into His own image.

It may be convenient to take the two parables together. The following points will be noted:

1. We understand heaven through earth and God through man. The shepherd seeking, finding, rejoicing; the woman searching, discovering, rejoicing—these are God, the gracious Lord to whom we belong. And the gladness of a neighborhood where friends rejoice in the good fortune of a friend, is a picture of how all the high and lowly are glad together, each one the gladder for the other's joy.

2. It is the lost and not the safe that, if one may so speak, weigh upon God's heart. All Scripture testifies to this. God comes from the company of the angels in heaven to visit Eden, when it has been desolated by sin. The Old Testament is throughout the story of God seeking wanderers. Take as an example the work of such prophets

as Elijah, Jeremiah, Jonah.

3. God spares no pains in finding the lost. He Himself searches like the shepherd and the woman. God entrusted not men's salvation to any other, but Himself came in the person of Jesus Christ, and is Himself here in the person of the Holy Spirit. What pains He takes—His word, His ministers, His gracious providences, His chastisements.

4. God rejoices when the lost are found. He has a tender heart, like the shepherd. He sets a high value on souls, as does the woman on her coin.

5. He shares His joy with those about Him. There are some joys we can bear alone. There are others, when we must speak, sing, shout, must tell them all abroad. It gives us some conception of how glad God is when sinners repent, that He proclaims His joy to the heavenly hosts.

6. The joy-bells of heaven ring for one, as for a multitude. This is, perhaps, the sweetest thought of all. Rev. 19: 5-7 does not surprise us, for it is the whole Church that is rejoiced over; but as the child's hymn says:

Wonderful things in the Bible I see;

This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me,  
Even me.

Questions for Juniors—1. What was Christ's object in using parables? How many recorded in this chapter? What their subjects? What two classes of despised people here mentioned? Who were the publicans? (Luke 3: 12; Matt. 18: 17.) Did any of them believe in Christ? (Luke 5: 27; 19: 2-9.) What brought sinners to Jesus? Who were the Pharisees? Give meaning of "Pharisee". What their chief sin? Whom did Christ come to save? (Matt. 9: 13.)

3-6. Relate the parable of Lost Sheep. Why was the flock safe? How many lost? How did the shepherd act? Who is our "Good Shepherd"? Whom does He know?