



LESSON 1.—APRIL 1, 1906.

The Two Foundations.

Matthew vii., 15-29.

Golden Text.

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only. James i., 22.

Home Readings.

Monday, March 26.—Matt. vii., 15-29.
 Tuesday, March 27.—Matt. vii., 1-14.
 Wednesday, March 28.—I. Cor. iii., 9-23.
 Thursday, March 29.—Eph. ii., 11-32.
 Friday, March 30.—Matt. xxi., 33-46.
 Saturday, March 31.—Ps. cxviii., 14-29.
 Sunday, April 1.—Luke vi., 37-49.

(By Davis W. Clark.)

The conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount is easily recognized as in all respects worthy of the most important composition in human language. It is a solemn, earnest, significant and convincing close. It gathers up, in practical form, the fundamental principles and their consequences, previously enunciated.

Creed expresses itself in conduct, faith in works. You cannot get Escal grapes from acacia thistles. If conduct be right, creed must be right, and works justify the faith. . . . Knowing the will of God theoretically, and even teaching it to others is not sufficient. In the day of the test it will be all in vain for such persons to affirm that they have prophesied and cast out devils. The substance of religion does not consist in these things. Persons who have only such to their credit must certainly hear that fateful word, 'Depart.' It will not be the angry expression of personal enmity, but the enunciation of an irreversible decree, a penalty which inflicts itself.

The essential in religion is doing the will of God. No where is the antithesis of profession and life better expressed, 'In vain ye call me Master if ye do not the things which I say.' Doing Jesus' sayings is not the technical performance of specific arts. It is the being of a certain temper of mind and heart which will on occasion express itself in certain ways and deeds. Do, because one is.

It is by this means that the conditions of permanence are met. There is nothing fortuitous about it. No element of chance is here. Obedience to law is obedience to God, for law is the expression of the divine will. Whoever is thus allied to God has His omnipotence pledged for his success. . . . A sincere and persistent purpose in life finds the bed-rock of the divine will, and is not content with anything short of it. It accepts no substitute. Finding the bed-rock, it builds on it.

Strength, security, permanence are thus assured. . . . In contrast to this is the careless, haphazard way of building the life structure, the supreme folly of which is apparent. Such act as if they could claim exemption from the operations of universal law.

How soon the primitive Christian life was put to the severest possible test. Not in some far-off, mythical judgment day, but in their own time came the testing. The Roman persecution beat and blew upon the church as an organization, and upon believers as individuals. The church stood because rock-founded. So did the individuals, who were similarly grounded.

THE TEACHER'S LANTERN.

The Campaniles in Venice and Florence were much alike, were almost the same height and age. But without a sign three years ago last summer the bell tower in St. Mark's Square crumbled into a heap of ruin, while Giotto's

tower still stands. The difference between the towers was a difference of foundations.

So, too, men look alike until one crumbles into moral ruin. Again, it is a difference of foundation. . . . The architect Winstanley in the erection of the Eddystone light gave more attention to the making of something picturesque than to having the foundation secure. He paid the penalty with his life, for his ill-anchored structure was swept away while he was in it. It is far more important that life should be sound than splendid. . . . The two foundations signify two courses of conduct which cannot by any means be carried on at the same time. God and Mammon represent these two courses of conduct, inimical to each other. . . . One can find bed-rock to build upon anywhere, but in some places one must needs go deeper to find it than in others. . . . The ethical principles of Jesus developed in a human life make for that person a collateral security which, although not quoted among marketable stocks and bonds, yet has a high and assured value. If there was absolute certainty that the moral teachings of Jesus were concentered in one human being he would have unlimited credit.

There was a hymn quite popular a generation ago in which the believer was bidden to lay his 'deadly doing down at Jesus' feet.' The proposition is impossible. Faith finds its expression in doing. Creed without deed is dead. . . . House in Jesus' parable signified character. Things done are so many new courses in the masonry of life. . . . There is no room or apology for haphazard building. The moral laws of life are as persistent and universal as the physical laws of gravity and power of resistance. . . . 'Great fall' signified the entirety of ruin. Another Campanile can be built in the Venetian Square. It may be on the same spot and of similar material and proportions, but the same one can never stand there again. 'Great was the fall of it.' . . . The word-studies of the paragraph are especially interesting. For instance, the word 'ravening' (wolves) comes from 'harpies' from which 'harpies' is derived. 'Ye shall know them—' not merely and barely know—but fully and satisfactorily. 'Profess unto them' rather apologetically 'confess' as if he were to say, 'Probably I ought to recognize men who have done mighty deeds in my name, but in fact I do not.' 'I never knew you.' 'Never, never!' The original is lively. 'Descended the rain, came the floods, blew the winds.' 'Beat upon that house,' 'struck' a blow under which the house crumbled to ruins.

C. E. Topic.

Sunday, April 1.—Topic—Lives that endure. Matt. vii., 24, 25; I. Cor. iii., 10-15; Eph. ii., 19-22; I. Tim. vi., 17-19; II. Tim. ii., 14-19. (Consecration meeting.)

Junior C. E. Topic.

OUR FRIENDSHIPS.

Monday, March 26.—David and the king. I. Sam. xvii., 55-58.

Tuesday, March 27.—David and the prince. I. Sam. xviii., 1-4.

Wednesday, March 28.—Jonathan delighted in David. I. Sam. xix., 1-3.

Thursday, March 29.—He spoke well of David. I. Sam. xix., 4-6.

Friday, March 30.—An unselfish friendship. I. Sam. xxiii., 16-18.

Saturday, March 31.—David's love for Jonathan. II. Sam. i., 17, 25, 26.

Sunday, April 1.—Topic—A royal friendship. I. Sam. xx., 11-17. (Consecration meeting.)

A naturally quick, impetuous person will find that to cultivate a calm external habit is a great help towards gaining the inward even spirit he needs.—H. L. Sidney Lear.

Expiring Subscriptions.

Would each subscriber kindly look at the address tag on this paper? If the date thereon is March, it is time that the renewals were sent in so as to avoid losing a single copy. As renewals always date from the expiry of the old subscriptions, subscribers lose nothing by remitting a little in advance.

The Stereopticon for Mission Study.

The use of the stereopticon in the Sunday school will be found the greatest possible aid and inspiration to the study of missions. In my own school, and in many other parishes, the fifth Sunday in any month is known as missionary Sunday. At a signal the room is darkened by a number of young men who quickly cover the windows with heavy building paper, a lantern with electric light is then put to use, a brief service of hymns and prayers is projected on the screen, and followed by about fifty lantern slides with an inspiring, descriptive talk on the mission field, illustrated by the pictures. I have about three thousand missionary lantern slides arranged in sets corresponding with the various mission fields, and from this sort of study not only the children, but parents and visitors, are interested and instructed. As the missionary study only comes in the month in which there are five Sundays, it does not interfere with the regular Bible study often enough to be a disadvantage, and the inspiration for the advancement of the kingdom of God by this visual study of missions well repays any outlay or apparent disadvantage. The day has passed when the lantern is regarded as a toy to amuse children, and it should be regarded as part of the regular equipment of every well-ordered and up-to-date Sunday school, for an excellent outfit with lime-light or electric attachment may now be purchased for \$75. Lantern lessons convey through the medium of the eye, as well as the ear, things which our scholars need to know. The whole Levitical constitution, with its outer court, its holy place, its holy of holies, its high priest, its sacrifices, and all its ordinances, was designed to teach through the eye. The methods of teaching adopted by the prophets were meant to convey religious instruction through the eye. Jeremiah breaks in pieces a potter's vessel that he may illustrate and enforce the fact that the people would thus be broken. He wears a yoke as a parable of their approaching bondage. He redeems a field, illustrating that redemption is in store for all the land. The message of God came to the prophets in picture visions; they were essentially seers. This was certainly our Lord's method, to teach by pictures—a lily, a tree, a wheat-field. Children unable to focus their attention upon what they hear, never cease to take a lively interest in what they see. The missionary headquarters of all denominations carry a stock of lantern slides, or photographs from which slides can be made, and when requested will lend or rent these slides to such Sunday schools or mission study classes as may care to try the excellent experiment of using the lantern in their missionary departments. At occasional picture services, and especially on missionary Sundays, the stereopticon will be found invaluable.—'Sunday School Times.'

There is no 'cut and dried' way, no easy method in twelve lessons, of securing better teachers in our church schools. Better teachers and better teaching will be secured by the concurrence of several agencies working toward this all-important end. There must be more and better Bible-teaching in the family, in our denominational schools and colleges, in the Sunday-schools. To all these agencies we may hopefully look for a generation of teachers far better equipped in all respects than that which is now at work.

'Given, Given,' to the Lord.

There is a suggestive thought in many a marginal note in our English Bibles, where the literal meaning of a Hebrew word emphasizes, or makes clearer, the meaning of the English translation. Thus it is again and again stated in the Book of Numbers that the Levites are 'given,' or 'wholly given,' to the Lord, to be in his service, for the sacred duties of the tabernacle and its worship. Where this is stated in the text, the margin gives, as if in emphasis of the fact of the gift, 'given, given.' That is the ideal. If we have given ourselves to the Lord, we are 'given given.' No part of us can be kept back, nor should we be at any time less than wholly his.—'Given, given.' Nothing short of that is what the Lord would have from those who claim to be his.—Selected.