

LESSON VIII. (February 22.)

CHRISTIAN LOVE. 1 Cor. 13.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." 1 Cor. 13. 13.

Primary Notes.



Approach. A little talk about great things. Draw out childish thoughts of largeness, power, greatness. Take the physical first, the power of a giant, of a strong arm and hand, of a great soldier, of steam, of water, like Niagara, of electricity. How much these can do! Speak of money and how much it can do. Lead on to powers of mind. Is not the courage and the power that a great general has to lead men to battle greater than the guns they carry? Is not the knowing how to use electricity as Edison does more wonderful even than the lighting? Then the brain or the mind may be greater than the body. But suppose a man has great strength in his body and in his mind, and yet has such a mean, cold, stingy heart that he never wishes to help anyone, can he ever be really great?

There was a mother once with her baby on a boat that went to pieces in a storm. Mother and baby were thrown into the water. The mother took the wee baby's dress in her teeth and then with her hands held on to some floating boards, so keeping her child above water till both were saved. Now, wasn't there something in that mother's heart that was even stronger than her hands? What was it? How did she feel toward her baby? Would anything but love have made her so strong? Then, after all, love in the heart is strongest of all and makes people do more brave, strong things than anything else.

(Give other incidents, if time allows, showing mother love and father love, always ready to do anything for the loved ones, no matter how hard.)

The Love Chapter. Paul is still writing to the people of Corinth. What he wrote is still called the Epistle, or Letter, to the Corinthians. In this letter is what is called "the love chapter." It is the thirteenth chapter of this book, Corinthians. In it Paul writes what Jesus wished him to tell about love, for without love nothing else amounts to very much.

Paul said he might give away all he had to feed the poor, and if he did not love them truly he was no better than a piece of brass giving out a hollow sound when it was hammered. He said that no matter how much he knew or how much he believed he was nothing without love. This shows what Jesus thinks of love, for he had this "love chapter" put in the Bible for us.

Three Things about Love. Paul tells many things about love, but we will try to remember three, putting one on each of the first three fingers of the left hand. So we will carry them away with us. First, love is kind. Illustrate by every day acts at home, in school, on the street, at play, and at work, showing how the truly loving heart is kind and thoughtful. Second, love seeketh not her own; that is, love is unselfish, not looking out for self all the while, not trying to get the best things and the first place and have it our own way always. Third, love thinketh no evil. We think evil of people when we make up our minds that they mean harm or mean wrong, without giving a chance for them to show what they do mean. Thinking evil is believing the worst instead of the best of others. (Illustrate by childish experience of hasty judgment about injuries or intentions of playmates, etc.)

Forget-me-not Thought: Love is the Greatest Thing in the World. What was it that brought Jesus from heaven to give his life for us? It was love. Could anything be greater than that? Jesus cares more for love than for anything else. He wants a love that is obedient, kind, unselfish, and thinks no evil. This is the only true sort.

Are we like Jesus? Then we are loving. Do we please Jesus? Then we must be loving.

Thought for Teachers. What we need is more love—love for the work which Phillips Brooks says is the consummate test of fitness; love for our scholars, whether they are lovely



or not; and, most of all, love for our Lord, who says, "Lovest thou me? Feed my lambs."