

for use in the meetings. But the principal record is the Scriptures, and though these other books may help us understand the Bible record better, they cannot take the place of the Bible itself. The facts about Abraham should be outlined for the Juniors in some home readings at least a week ahead, and the subject matter treated in the League meeting should be largely a restatement of these facts, and the illustration of the principles of conduct underlying them. We are going to attempt a review of these simple Bible facts, but rather impress here and now the one outstanding characteristic of Abraham as we see it for the girls and boys of to-day. Abraham is called "the father of the Faithful." The principal children of Abraham with whom we are all more or less familiar were Isaac and Jacob; but "the children of faithful Abraham" of whom we both hear and speak from time to time are all those who learn God's will and obediently do it. . . . Besides the passages so readily found in the Old Testament, relating the early life and experiences of the Patriarch Abraham, there are important New Testament passages which should not pass unheeded, for they go right to the heart of his actions. Hebrews 6: 13-15 is one such, and is in itself enough to expound and apply in one short meeting. The promise of God to Abraham, the faith of the Patriarch in God's word, his patience and endurance of all that was involved in obeying God—all are suggested. What the call of God meant to Abraham perhaps we cannot fully appreciate, but at least it meant the giving up of all that was within sight as valuable. Perhaps the word "valuable" does not represent it. To give up home and friends and country for something that must have seemed far away in the distance and future could not have been easy. God always calls to hard things. Do not try to misrepresent the godly life to your Juniors. It is not a life of ease and hardship, not one of self-indulgence, but of sacrifice, to which God calls us all. But what of that? Abraham obeyed God. Get your Juniors to memorize this little sentence, which will unfold to them more and more as they experience the larger life that awaits them in the days and years ahead—"Abraham did not know where he was going, but he knew *why*." The "why" was God's call, the "where" God would make plain in his own good time and way. That is what is meant by Abraham's patient endurance alluded to in the passage referred to in Hebrews. . . . And make it clear that God did not appoint Abraham's faith and obedience. He never does. And make it equally clear, too, that God did not bless Abraham because he was a "favorite." The Juniors will understand the word. God has no "favorites." Abraham received God's blessing because he kept God's word and followed God's lead. He will be so to the end of human life. They who, like "faithful Abraham," hear God's call and obey will be rewarded. God never breaks his promises. As Abraham "obtained the promises," so may we. But how? In the same way as Abraham obtained them—by faithfulness. . . . Who then are the children of Abraham? The Jews? They pride themselves on their descent from Abraham and glory in calling him their father; but whether Jew or Gentile, only those who have Abraham's spirit are his true children. All over the world and to the end of time there are members of the true family of Faithful Abraham who "hear the word of God and keep it." Not by physical inheritance and descent so much as by spiritual motive and purpose are Abraham's children to be numbered. They are "more than the sands of the sea." Let us make sure that we are in the family of the faithful.

NOVEMBER 8.—THE SONS OF JACOB.
Gen. 37: 1-11.

The Juniors all will readily tell you that Jacob had twelve sons, and perhaps many of them will be able to explain that the Twelve Tribes of Israel took their names from these twelve sons of Jacob. But very likely few, if any, of them can give you the names of either the men or the tribes. See that they learn them. In the Junior League Handbook, written a number of years ago, and used by a large number of our earlier Juniors workers, we gave the names of Jacob's sons in the form of a four-line verse. They are as follows, not in order of age, but that does not particularly matter. The boys and girls will memorize them very quickly in the rhyming form. Give them the exercise. Here they are:

Reuben, Simeon and Levi,
Juda, Dan and Naphtali,
Gad, Asher and Zebulun,
Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin.

It will be quite impossible, and if it were possible it would be inadvisable to try to follow these men in their several histories. For our purpose is enough to see that the first ten at least, with Joseph at home in their father's tents. The older brothers learned to look with jealous eyes upon the younger Joseph. The reason is suggested in the lesson text. How far Joseph himself was to blame or to what extent the partiality of Jacob for Joseph gave rise to this spirit of envy we need not speculate upon. Perhaps the whole blame should not be placed upon the older brothers in the first instance, and it may be that the disposition to boast on the part of Joseph left him not altogether blameless. But let us not discuss that. The principal lesson for the Juniors is simply the growth of the spirit of envy when it is allowed to go unchecked in the hearts of brothers and sisters at home. These brothers of Joseph's increased their bitter feelings toward their younger brother as they allowed themselves to dwell in their hearts. And the issue showed that "jealousy is as cruel as the grave." The story of Joseph's mission to visit his brethren, told in the 37th chapter, makes most interesting reading. Ask some one of your Juniors to read and then to tell the story aloud. The point out how cruel was the end of their evil council meeting. And then show how lying and deception were necessary because of what they had done in selling Joseph. . . . There are no such sins as little sins. What some people call "little sins" are the biggest and most dangerous. . . . And sins accumulate rapidly. One sin leads to another and makes more and still more sins necessary to try and cover up those that have already gone before. It is always so, and what was enacted before poor old broken-hearted Jacob when his cruel sons lied to him about the missing Joseph is only a picture of what has been going on ever since in the families where such vices prevail. Here is a great lesson in family life. Teach the children to be true, to be kind, to live together at home in love, and so prevent evil. It is better to prevent than to repair. The damage done in Jacob's home by the sins of his sons was never repaired. The home was never what it might have been. Domestic happiness rests on domestic unity. Love and true brotherly-kindness are the ties that bind families together. Such love is stronger than law. Without it discord and disaster are sure to come, and the degree of sorrow and sadness to rest on all hearts. . . . For many years Jacob's sons were haunted by their

guilty consciences for what they had done to Joseph, and as we shall see later on they paid a sad penalty for their crime. . . . There is one great New Testament exhortation which we should take to heart in this study: "Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. . . . See that none render evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing. . . ." Emphasize this home virtue in teaching this lesson rather than discourse on Jacob's sons as mighty men and progenitors of the twelve tribes, and you will do your Juniors members more good than mere facts of history will be likely to do.

Converting Influences

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The word translated convert or turn is an active and not a passive word. The turning is our responsibility. We can turn ourselves, and we can help others turn. The regenerating power belongs to God, We turn; God renews. We need not fear the results if we do our part. The divine law is unchangeable and never-failing.

We cannot regenerate a soul, but we can so convert or turn it that it will be brought into contact with the regenerating forces. There are many people who are not directly aware that they have been the means of bringing a soul to Christ. This is a very serious charge against them according to some folks. But after all may it not be that those very people have done that service for the Master by keeping their children from wandering away from Christ? We hear a great deal about converts that are affected and wonderful results brought about by revivals; how little we hear about what has been prevented. The one wanderer returning seems, the way human nature is constructed, to cause more rejoicing than the ninety and nine that have not wandered.

If we can be instrumental in surrounding young lives with converting influences and make an atmosphere which will encourage and assist Christian living, we could not do a greater service. That will not do away with the need of a definite personal acceptance of Christ somewhere along the way, but it will make that a likely and a natural thing. We are bound to believe that a child can that piety will become the habit of his life. He may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, as was Timothy. He may carry a life-long consciousness that he is the Lord's. By a continuous series of stages which it is impossible for us to register, and of which we may be largely unconscious till manhood or womanhood is reached, the soul may come into its Christian heritage.

For these converting influences the home, the Church, the school, have a responsibility. What is the home like? Is there, first of all, parental Christian example? Do the parents have a definite goal in view toward which they direct the lives of their children? What about the pictures on the walls, the music that is sung, the habits of worship in that home? It will all tell among the "converting" influences.

The school has a responsibility too. There is as much need of positive moral and religious influences there as in the home. Good works of art on the walls, good teaching, inspiring addresses, will act as converting influences. The purpose of education is in one aspect at least to teach pupils to discern between the true and the false. The Church must be the chief inspirer of converting influences, and by loving activities "turn" the lives of all, especially the children, unto the Father.