

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL

International S.S. Lesson.

LESSON XI—PETER AND THE RISEN LORD.—JUNE 16.

John xxi. 4-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee," John xxi. 17.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Love for Jesus; Life for Jesus.

ANALYSIS.—**B**LESSING IN LABOUR, vs. 4-8.
BREAKFAST WITH JESUS, vs. 9-14.
BEING TESTED IN LOVE, vs. 15-17.

TIME AND PLACE.—Shortly after April 16, A.D. 30, on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, probably near Capernaum.

INTRODUCTORY.—Jesus, during two weeks beginning April 9, appeared seven times to His disciples—to Mary, to the women, to Peter, and to Cleopas and his friend, and to the apostles on Sunday the ninth of April—to the twelve again the following Sunday evening, and now, for the seventh time, to seven of the apostles by the Sea of Galilee.—PELOUBET.

BLESSING IN LABOUR, vs. 4-8.—The disciples were engaged in their daily toil, pursuing the labor by which they made a livelihood, when they were gladdened by this the seventh appearance of Jesus since the resurrection. It is gladdening to know that our busiest moments may be brightened by His presence; that when our work has been most discouraging—when our "catch" has been nothing, the Master is at hand watching our toiling, and ready to bless if we will but heed His command and promptly obey. Fishing is a type of our Lord's own choosing that serves to illustrate the seeking for souls, in which every Christian should be engaged. There are lessons to be learned from this incident which bear upon our work for Christ in an instructive way. We notice in the first place that He supplies the needs of those enlisted in His service and faithfully pursuing the path of duty. Second, the question of Jesus, "Have ye any meat?" in the Greek implies the expectation of a negative reply. Thus we see that He knows the requirements of His servants. Third, without the presence and power of Jesus in our work, nothing can be done. Fourth, patient continuance in apparently fruitless toil, will ultimately be blessed by the Master beyond all our expectations. Fifth, by following the command of Jesus in our Christian effort, we may expect a marvellous success, in measure like to Pentecost. There is a lesson for us in the fact that the disciples, or rather John, recognized Jesus as soon as they did His bidding. We also will know Him better, in proportion as we render Him prompt obedience. It was John the disciple whom Jesus loved, that first caught, through the morning mist, a glimpse of some familiar gesture or attitude that told him it was Christ. It was Peter—sad, remorseful, impetuous Peter—who first hastened to greet the risen Lord.

BREAKFAST WITH JESUS, vs. 9-14.—There is something intensely interesting in this early morning meal. The circumstances, the place, the Host, the events, all combine to form a picture thrillingly fascinating to our imaginations. Christ had already provided a fire of charcoal and a fish for His own repast, and now invited the disciples to bring of the fish they had caught under His divine guidance and break their fast with Him in sweet fellowship. Some see in this the Master's toilers bringing the fruit of their labors, the precious souls saved, and laying them at His feet. Peter drew the net to land, and though containing one hundred and fifty-three great fishes, it was not rent beneath the strain. So the Gospel net can hold all who will come. Not one believer will be lost. We are not told, in the meal that followed, whether Jesus ate or not; but it is most probable that He did, since we have the record of His doing so before the assembled disciples in Jerusalem (Luke xxiv. 42, 43). This gives us an idea concerning the character of the resurrection body.

BEING TESTED IN LOVE, vs. 15-17.—Note that Peter "had been called to the ministry after a miraculous draught of fishes; it is after a similar draught that the ministry is restored to him. He had lost his office by a denial beside a fire of coal; it is beside a fire of coal that he recovers it.—GODET in Peloubet's Notes.

The conversation of our Lord with Peter after the breakfast of fish is deeply interesting—more so, indeed, than can be realized from our English translations. Notice the form of address which Jesus uses. No longer Peter, the rock, that would have sounded like sarcasm, but Simon, the hearer, who seeing the folly of his impetuosity is now ready to listen and learn. Again we see that he who thrice denied his Lord, has now thrice to confess and assert his love for Him. In Christ's first question, "Simon, son of John (R. V.), lovest thou Me more than these?" we have a tender reminder of those bold words of Peter's, "Though all men should be offended I never will," and the reply of the apostle is beautifully humble, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee;" he does not now presume to compare his love with that of others, but meekly overlooks that suggestive phrase on His Saviour's enquiry. There are in the words used in these three questions some delicate shades of meaning, very difficult to express in English. Shaft summarizes the whole thus:

Questions.	Answers.	Commands.
1. Lovest thou me more than these?	I dearly love thee.	Feed my lambs.
2. Lovest thou me?	I dearly love thee.	Shepherd my sheep.
3. Dost thou love me dearly?	I dearly love thee.	Feed my sheeplings.

In the first two questions Christ uses a Greek word for love, which refers rather to the love formed from an intelligent estimate of character. More that of adoration than of affection. Peter over responds

with the same word meaning that personal, instinctive warmth of affection that often lacks logic, but never strength or sincerity. Again the three commands of Christ are exceedingly suggestive to Christian workers. It will be seen that the Master both begins and ends with instructions to feed the lambs or young sheep, thus laying emphasis upon the importance of work among children. Some one has said "An adult saved is a unit, a child saved is a multiplication table.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.—V. 4. *Morning was now come*—R. V. Day was now breaking. V. 5. *Any meat*—R. V. Aught to eat. V. 7. *That disciple whom Jesus loved*—John, the teller of the story. *Naked*—Stripped of all but his light undergarment. V. 8. *Two hundred cubits*—Three hundred and fifty feet. V. 12. *Come and dine*—R. V. Break your fast.

Application and Illustration.

LIGHT FROM THE ORIENT.

It is a beautiful picture of the office of the ministry that is implied in the Master's charge to Peter, "Feed my lambs," "Feed my sheep." The oriental sheep master is with his sheep night and day, and it is his duty to count them, conduct them, feed and guard them. The Rev. Joseph Hartley, of Greece, asked a shepherd to call one of his sheep by name, and the sheep instantly left the pasture and came to his side. It is common to give each lamb a distinct name, and it often becomes more of a marvel how the shepherd can remember these names than how each sheep should be trained to answer to its own. A writer quoted in the Biblical Museum vouches for the story of a friend of his who, while travelling in Greece, met three shepherds with their flocks; one contained 650 sheep; another, 700, and the third, 760—in all 2,100 sheep. These flocks were put together, but each sheep would at any time answer to the name given to it, but would not so answer unless called by its own shepherd, nor would it answer his call by any other than its given name.—S.S. Banner.

WHAT CAN I DO?—*Feed the lambs*, v. 15. A worker among children once said that some ministers seem to translate the Master's injunction as, "Feed my giraffes," because they put the food so high above the children's heads.

At a late convention Mr. B. F. Jacobs said that the triumphs of the Church were to be won among the children; and if men and women were to be converted, it was when they were children.

"I'll prove that statement to you," said Mr. Jacobs, and he called upon those in the audience who were converted after they were fifty years of age to rise. An old lady and a venerable-looking gentleman were the only ones to respond. "Two," said Mr. Jacobs. "Thank God for that. Now will those who were converted after thirty-five please rise?" Not more than half a dozen responded; but as Mr. Jacobs called for those who were converted when under twenty-one years of age, nearly every one in the audience rose to their feet. Mr. Jacobs smiled; and as the audience appreciated the value of the object-lesson he had taught in support of his statement, the applause was spontaneous and hearty.—Peloubet's Notes.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

Loyalty.

- Mon., June 10—Loyal service—Pa. xl. 7-11.
 Tues., June 11—Loyal testimony—Acts i. 1-8.
 Wed., June 12—Loyal endurance—2 Tim. ii. 1-13.
 Thu., June 13—Loyal obedience—John xii. 23-26.
 Fri., June 14—Loyal trust—Job xiii. 15, 16; xix. 23-27.
 Sat., June 15—Loyal rejoicings—Matt. xxi. 1-11.
 Sun., June 16—Torio—The proof of our allegiance to Christ.
 1 John iv. 1-21.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, June 16th.—"THE PROOF OF OUR ALLEGIANCE TO CHRIST," 1. John iv. 1-21. Loyalty, not to a principal or code of principles, not to a society or organization, not to an idea or an emotion; but to a person, from whom all true principles have origin, round whom all useful societies centre, in whom all worthy ideas and emotions find their perfect fulfillment; this is the loyalty to which we as Christians are called. The passage before us gives us some tests of our loyalty; let us run over them and measure our lives by their standard. 1. *Confessing Christ*, v. 2-15. He who is loyal will not be ashamed to confess and acknowledge his Master at all times. This is a good proof, the presence of which leaves no room for doubt. 2. *Victory*, v. 4. Loyalty to Christ always results in victory over His enemies and those of His people. Let all who do not know what it is to triumph constantly over the world, the flesh and the devil, search themselves concerning their loyalty to Christ. A strong proof is lacking if victory is not experienced. 3. *Love*, v. 7, 8, 12. Christ loves, and if we are loyal to Christ we must love also. Comrade, are there any you cannot love? Herein you lack loyalty. Listen, the secret of loving the unlovely is to let Christ love them through you. 4. *Possession of His Spirit*, v. 13. To all who loyally obey and serve Him, Christ gives His Spirit as a source of comfort, wisdom, and power. In fact loyalty, in the true, full sense of the word, is impossible without the dwelling of His Spirit. Bow to Christ's sway, accept His yoke, and He will give you His Spirit. Many are striving to serve Christ with a sort of pseudo loyalty that reaches no further than their own inclinations, and always fails at the critical moment. They are fair weather followers. They have never made a complete surrender; they do not possess the Spirit of Christ.

JUNIOR TOPIC—Sun., June 16—What are some kind things we might do to help others? 1. John iv. 11-13, 16, 20, 21.