

to save it." To gain the world and forfeit life is unspeakable folly. Get the class to furnish instances of the gain of the world, and show how this is folly. For by whom are they to be judged? On what is His sentence to turn?

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The lesson contains four surprises; these are full of instruction, warning and comfort.

1. *The First Surprise*—Our Lord's question about Himself. He had been so full of thought for others, it was strange that now He should be anxious to know what others thought about Him. "The people, what do they think?" is His first question. The scholars will readily give reasons for each one of the suppositions, which were all good enough in their way, but fell far short of the mark, just as many people now think much of Christ, but do not recognize all His glory or the reach of His work. "Whom say ye that I am?" Now He is bringing it home. What will the answer be? It is the most important question that can be asked of any one. Whom sayest thou? Peter struck to the very centre of truth in his reply. The teacher will make very sure that the scholars understand—the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed (all words with the same meaning), the chosen promised Prince and Saviour: Jesus is He. No one can be a Christian who cannot say as Peter

said. Every one who can from his heart so say is a child of God, 1 John 5: 1.

2. *The Second Surprise*—Christ's look into the future. What a sight! This great Christ of God suffering many things, rejected of the rulers of the nation of which He was the king, killed. How their very heads swam! It could not be; it could not be! They were so dazed by the mere thought that they seemed not even to hear His final word, "after three days rise again." Let us not be too hard on them! Which of us will not rather follow a conqueror than a sufferer? a fighter than one who submits?

3. *The Third Surprise*—Christ's rebuke of Peter. Peter must have been surprised when he found himself rebuking his Lord. His dismay had made him bold. (See Matt. 16: 22.) But tenfold more surprised was he and they all, when the Master turned on His disciples with the awful words of v. 33; and this after the wonderful things He had said to Peter, Matt. 16: 17. Two things amongst others we learn: that Jesus will spare, least of all, the faults of those whom He loves; that a wise man may at any time show himself a fool.

4. *The Fourth Surprise*—Christ's law of life. Verse 34 is a command; verse 35, a riddle that any Christian can explain; verses, 36, 37, a double question with a single answer; and verse 38, a warning which none can disregard and have eternal life.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Lesson Outline

THE GREAT CONFESSION

I. The Circumstances of the Confession.

1. Jesus withdrawing from public teaching.
2. Giving Himself to the instruction of the twelve.
3. Current opinions regarding Him.

II. The Confession Itself.

1. The test question of Jesus.
2. The answer of Peter for the twelve.
3. The command of secrecy.
4. The prophecy of the end.
5. Peter's remonstrance.
6. His Lord's rebuke.

III. The Practical Bearings of the Confession.

1. To belong to the Christ involves self-denial.
2. Bodily life should be sacrificed to spiritual.
3. The infinite value of the spiritual life.
4. The penalty of denial.

Lesson Points

Dark is the doom of those from whom Jesus departs. v. 27.

Our convictions concerning the Christ are colored by our character. v. 28.

The Christian creed is not a heap of guesses, but a chain of certainties. v. 28.

Silence is often more eloquent than speech. v. 30.