

nation's history it is due the government from all those in its service that they should not only render the most earnest efforts for its honor and welfare, but their full physical and intellectual force should be given to their public duties uncontaminated by any indulgences that shall dim, stultify, weaken, or impair their faculties or strength in any particular. Officers of every grade, by example as well as by authority, will contribute to the enforcement of the order." A regulation to be heeded not only by the nation's army, but by every soldier of Jesus Christ.

### The Teachers' Meeting.

A worthy introduction to this lesson would be a word-picture of the splendor and wisdom of Solomon. Read 1 Kings 4, 20-34; 10, 1-29; besides the accounts of the erection of the temple of God and the king's palaces. Picture this wise and wealthy monarch as, in his purer days, he turned from the sordid power of gold and armies to the truer power which is to be found in wisdom, and counseled the youth of his day and of ours to covet instruction and avoid sin.... I. *The way of the wicked* (1) Is a path; (2) Leads from bad to worse; (3) Is full of moral infection, and brings misery to many who do not tread it; (4) Is a way of darkness. II. *The path of the just*. A way leading through ever-increasing light to perfect day.... Show how intemperance is the most typical of all sins, containing all others in it as the seed contains the beginnings of every part of of the full-blown tree.

### Before the Class.

*Introduction.* The Book of Proverbs, from which the lesson for the day is taken, is a composite book, written by different authors and at different times. The basis of the collection was perhaps Solomon's collection, which was added to in later years. This book contains the condensed practical wisdom of the ages. There is scarcely a condition in life which cannot be matched with one of these proverbs.

*Development of the text.* Place upon the board the subject, "The Way of Wisdom," and the following four divisions: 1. Listening to counsel; 2. Following instruction; 3. Avoiding evil; 4. Perfecting character.

1. *Listening to counsel.* The writer admonishes his hearers to listen to and receive his words. He had been well trained by his father and mother (see first few verses of chapter), and had been exhorted by them to seek after wisdom and to hold to her. This teaching he was now to pass on to the next generation. Note in this

connection that the counsel was (a) The result of experience; (b) Given with a promise of reward attached; (c) Intended to be a guide into the right path; (d) Intended to save the follower from many stumbles (verse 11). Wisdom crieth in the streets to-day, "Hear, O my son!" This is the first step in the way of wisdom.

2. *Following instruction.* Instruction or learning is essential to any well-ordered life. As the lesson well says, personifying instruction, "She is thy life." Learning is the means of mental and moral growth. Note that when properly used it (a) Enlarges capacity; (b) Gives pleasure, both in possession and in ability to gain further knowledge; (c) Adds to one's usefulness in the world; (d) Gives one greater power—"Knowledge is power;" (e) Saves from much that would harm, thus indirectly aids development; (f) Is the great means of direct mental and spiritual enlargement. The way of wisdom is certainly to follow instruction, to lay hold of her, that through such we may live, and live in a large and useful way.

3. *Avoiding evil.* The man of experience knows that there are many pitfalls in the way of the young. He has seen the awful results of associating with the wicked, and so turns away from the positive to the negative to warn his hearers against straying into the path of the evil men. Note (a) The earnestness of the warning (verse 15); (b) The intensity of the evil men's desires (verse 16); (c) The final result: Their entire living is gained by wickedness (verse 17). Association with such men would eventually drag one down to their level. The way of wisdom for all is to avoid all evil possible, and in the strength of God to overcome such as must be met. Remember certain cautions: (a) Do not temporize with evil—it is like playing with fire; (b) Do not rely on human strength—seek the divine; (c) Build up strongly right habits—the surest way of overcoming; (d) So far as possible give all form of evil a wide berth—"avoid it."

4. *Perfecting character.* This is the result of daily walking in the way of wisdom. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Each day opens to us new and brighter light. We can see our way more clearly and follow that way more easily. As we thus grow in power of discrimination between right and wrong, and in power to follow the right, we grow in perfection of character. The time is coming when our characters shall be like unto that of the Son of man—complete in the sight of the Father.

*Specific application.* The lesson for the day is entitled "Temperance Lesson." The way of wisdom with reference to the great evil of drink

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