

it with their thirst and their water-jars, and, bailing deep, take out the cool, sparkling, priceless water. And now who are borne to these waters of life but the little children! The parents hold them out in their arms to the great Prophet that he may touch and bless them. Yes, let the water of life wet their lips.

But the disciples shake their heads. They frown. They object. They would send away the little ones. They cannot brook this interference with their Master's time. But, no! The great Master will not send them away. He calls them. O rich and strong and tender the tones of the great Shepherd calling to the lambs! How they run to him, climb his knees, nestle in his bosom, while upon their heads rest compassionately the hands one day to be cruelly nailed to the cross for them!

Like little children, he says, must seekers of his kingdom be in spirit.

But who now would drink of the flowing waters? It is a young ruler who asks about this heavenly kingdom, the price of eternal life. He is not only young, but rich. Do you see all those rustling fields and luxuriant vineyards and thrifty barns? They belong to this rich young ruler. Hear the lowing of his herds and the bleating of his flocks!

But he has asked Jesus a question and now waits for an answer. The young ruler and the Saviour face one another. O solemn moment when the human soul asks concerning its eternal destiny! He knows the commandments? Yes, knows and keeps them.

The eyes of Jesus look far down into the young man's heart. Those eyes are like the lustrous depths of the pools of Solomon when the sun shines into them. The young ruler hears the voice of Jesus bid him sell all his possessions and follow the Saviour.

What, give up, surrender, sell those fields, vineyards, flocks, herds, barns? What, go round the country, up and down the highways, following the great Prophet like those disciples, weary and worn, in robes dusty and threadbare?

Never!

He sorrowfully shakes his head. Jesus, too, is sorrowful. How can the soul encumbered with such beloved but hindering wealth squeeze through the heavenly gates?

Peter is speaking. He is one of those who through hunger and thirst, amid misunderstandings and persecutions, travel up and down the highways, patiently following Jesus. Peter would make a statement about those who have thus forsaken all and followed him.

Then the voice of Jesus is lifted, and it pronounces blessings upon faithful following. How they multiply—crown upon crown, diamonds upon diamonds, kingdom upon kingdom, life upon life, age upon age! The rills of blessing from that central fount deepen, spread, till they become a vast shoreless sea.

### By Way of Illustration.

*Children and the Kingdom.* A little child who heard that the blessed Christ when on earth had not where to lay his head, said, earnestly, "O, I wish I had been there, I would have given him my pillow."

*The Rich Young Man.* The commandments and doctrines are to the soul what the streets are which lead to the house of a friend who has invited me to dinner. They will lead me there. But if I remain in the streets my hunger will never be satisfied. The law will lead me to Christ. He alone is the living Bread.

"Put God first" is a good motto. The young man put riches first and lost all. When the Washington steamer was burnt one of the passengers, on the first alarm of fire, ran to his trunk and took from it a large amount of

gold and silver coin, and, loading his pockets, ran to the deck and jumped overboard. Of course he went down immediately. His treasure was his ruin.

*Self-denial and the Kingdom.* When Garibaldi marshaled his troops for his illustrious campaign a delegation of soldiers waited on him and asked him what pay he would promise.

"I can promise nothing certain but exposure and hardship, sickness, wounds, and death. But if we succeed I promise you a free country."

They retired and sent him this answer:  
"General, we are the men."

So does our Commander promise for us trials, but in the end a "better country."

Not the amount we give, but the amount we sacrifice, is the test. A rich man, when making his contribution, said,

"I can't give more than the widow's mite; that was commended, you know."

"O!" said his pastor, "you need not give so much as the widow's mite. She gave all that she had. You are worth at least a hundred thousand dollars, and I do not ask for more than half of it. When you have given all you have given the widow's mite."

Religion, in one sense, is a work of self-denial, just as husbandry, in one sense, is a work of death. You go and bury a seed, and that is husbandry; but you bury one that you may reap a hundred-fold.—*Becher.*

### The Teachers' Meeting.

Prepare background of the lesson [time, place, etc.] with sufficient fullness to make its two suggestive incidents vivid.... Two brief word-pictures: the coming of the infants and of the ruler.... Thoroughly study the phrases "kingdom of God," and "eternal life".... Christ's terms for entrance to this kingdom and this life.... In what regards Christians must be childlike:

- 1) Humble; 2) Teachable; 3) Trustful; 4) Affectionate; 5) Enthusiastic. [Get your class to suggest other such characteristics.].... Errors of the self-righteous: 1) That obedience of the letter of the law is meritorious; 2) That any thing short of self-renunciation is acceptable to God.... Additional practical teachings: 1) The highest honor parents can bestow on their children is to bring them to Jesus; 2) Nothing that concerns us is too small to receive the attention of Christ; 3) Christ will have no one between needy souls and himself; 4) The Gospel alone honors and ennobles those who are in the dawn of life.

### References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 15: Benedictions on children, 680. Ver. 25: The "needle's eye," 631.

### Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Way Into the Kingdom.*

The old device of picture-frames on the board may be used in teaching this lesson. Cover them with paper, removing the covers only as they are needed. Let the first be a circular frame. It will be easy to find a picture of Jesus and the little children to pin to the board inside the frame. Tell the story simply of the mothers bringing their little ones to the Master, and the result. Have children sing, "I think when I read," etc., or, "What did our Lord and Saviour say?"

See how many can recite the text, "Suffer little children," etc., and spend a little time, if necessary, upon it, making clear its sweet meaning and waking in the young hearts a desire to come to Jesus.

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