

May 7. Mark 7: 24—37.

Parallels, Matt. 15: 21-31.

Golden text, Ps. 145: 9.

Catechism, 10, 36.

TOPIC: SUFFERERS BROUGHT TO CHRIST.

I. ONE IN THE ARMS OF FAITH ONLY.

1. *A dear daughter by a devoted and importunate mother.*

(1) This is a case of peculiar interest.

a. Because it exhibits a mother's tender affection.

b. Because it is the case of a mother in behalf of a distressed but loved daughter.

c. Because it is the first case in which our Lord seemed to turn a deaf ear to a suppliant.

d. Because it is a case in which faith comes off more than conqueror.

e. Because the cure was wrought when the patient was absent and at a distance.

II. ONE BROUGHT IN PERSON BY DEAR FRIENDS.

1. *There are peculiar features of in-*

(1) It is the first instance in which our Lord takes a patient aside from the crowd.

(2) It is the first instance in which Jesus is said to have sighed and prayed before the miracle was performed.

(3) It is the first instance in which the people join together in a song of praise to the Lord Jesus.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The personal presence of the patient was not necessary for the exercise by Jesus of His healing power.

2. Importunatecess is the essential element of faith.

3. It matters not whether the suppliant be Jew or Greek. "God is no respecter of persons."

4. It matters not what class of disease is brought before Jesus.

5. The prophetic refrain of coming ages is here given: "He doeth all things well."

May 14. Mark 8: 1—21.

Parallels, Matt. 15: 32; 16: 12.

Golden text, Luke 12: 1.

Catechism, 37, 38.

TOPIC: THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES.

I. A SUGGESTIVE FIGURE OF SPEECH.—LEAVEN.

1. *A suggestive figure of the power of influence, good or bad.*

(1) Aggressive. (2) Subtle in its aggressiveness. (3) Unless resisted, all-conquering in its subtlety.

2. *Our Lord's suggestive use of this figure.*

(1) To represent the powerful influence of erroneous doctrine.

(2) To represent the danger to which His disciples were exposed from erroneous doctrines.

II. A SUGGESTIVE EXAMPLE OF THE EXERCISE OF BAD INFLUENCE.

1. *Its agency.*—Pharisees.

(1) The secret of their power.

(a) Their ecclesiastical, social, and political position.

(b) Their great pretensions to piety—in fasting and prayer.

2. *Its method.*—Doctrine.

(1) Public teaching a great power for good or evil.

(2) As the respect felt for the Pharisees enhanced their power so our respect for either the genius or supposed sincerity of a public teacher enhances his power.

3. *An imperative duty in view of this fact.*—"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. The compassion of our Lord Jesus.—Vs. 1-3.

2. That His power is equal to His compassion.—Vs. 4-8.

3. As our Lord was affected by the hardness of the Pharisees, v. 12, so is He affected by our hardness.

4. Though our Lord was deeply pained at the hardness of the Pharisees, they were so far gone that "He left them;" so we may be confident that the assurance of His love is not the assurance of our salvation.

5. Our Lord's solemn warning to the disciples should be prayerfully heeded by us.

6. We may test the degree of our spirituality by our readiness to apprehend the teaching of God's word.

7. Every doctrine should be carefully tested by the word of God.