



LESSON.—SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 1908.

Jesus and His First Disciples.

John i., 35-49. Memory verses 35-37. Read John i., 35-51.

Golden Text.

We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth. John i., 45.

Home Readings.

Monday, January 13.—John i., 35-51.

Tuesday, January 14.—Mark i., 1-20.

Wednesday, January 15.—Luke v., 1-11.

Thursday, January 16.—Matt. x., 1-15.

Friday, January 17.—Luke x., 1-20.

Saturday, January 18.—Acts i., 15-26.

Sunday, January 19.—Acts iii., 37-47.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Look at the third word in our golden text. We generally say that you have to 'lose' something before you can 'find' it, don't we? But there are a great many things in this world that men are gradually finding that have never been lost. They have been there in their places all the time, but no one has managed to see them. This continent of America was here all the long centuries before Columbus discovered it. The gold and silver lies for centuries under the ground over which men and animals walk before someone finds it. But what does our text say that someone had 'found.' Jesus. Were you ever lost when you were little? A little girlie once went out with her mother and stopped to look in the window of a toy shop at the corner of a street. Her mother did not notice and turned the corner without her. That little girl is grown up now, but she says she will never forget how awful it felt when she looked out into the street again and found she was alone. She did not think of herself as lost, but she had lost her mother! Next minute of course the mother came back and the little girl sprang to meet her, saying, 'Oh, mamma, I've found you, I've found you!' Well, Jesus is near us all the time, but we sometimes can't see Him. He had been living on earth for thirty years, and all that time, so far as we know, there had been living in another little town near his home a man by the name of Philip. Of course he was not a man all that time, for Jesus and Philip must have been boys about the same time. But they didn't meet until after they were grown up. It is Philip who so gladly said the words of our text. Now let us see how and where they first met.

FOR THE SENIORS.

This is pre-eminently a study of personal work. The self-abnegation of John the Baptist is the first note struck. He has previously pointed his disciples to the Saviour, but they, seemingly unwilling to leave their master for another, are still with him when, on the day following he again sees Jesus and persuades the two then in his company to seek Christ. Although it is not definitely so stated, the evidence is so strong that it is generally accepted that John, the writer of this gospel, was one of the two, Andrew, we know, was the other. The different methods by which people may be led to Christ are shown in this lesson; by the influence of the pastor or teacher, by the compelling power of Christ's own personality, by the example of a friend. Here, too, is shown the reasonableness of our religion. There is an old saying that 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating,' and we

may reverently compare with it the Bible invitation, 'Oh taste and see that the Lord is good.' God does not ask blind acceptance on our part—'Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord.' So in the lesson to-day we have twice the invitation, 'Come and see.' In the first case Christ knew that behind the hesitating question as to where he was staying there was the real desire to know more of him—'Come,' he said, 'and see.' See, not the house he dwelt in, but the Man, his claims, and his purposes. In the second place it is Philip who gives the invitation. Like many a Christian to-day he felt incompetent to argue, but he knew Christ for himself and was confident in his power if only Nathanael could also meet him. So the one who is out of Christ must always lay his prejudices aside and simply 'come' if he would find Christ at all. It would have been no use for Nathanael to say, 'I don't see your friend. I don't believe in his existence. If he really were God's anointed, God would have made that plain to me.' 'Come, man, come. Come where he is. Come to him and then you will see, then God will make it plain to you, only come.'

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

43. Follow me. The finding of the one was not the finding of the other. For John and Andrew there was the talk with Jesus through the hours of that never-to-be-forgotten evening; for Simon, the heart-searching word, convincing him he was known and his future read off; for Philip, a peremptory command; and for Nathanael, a gracious courtesy, disarming him of prejudice, assuring him of a perfect sympathy in the breast of the Lord. Thus there are those who seek Christ, those who are brought by others to Christ, those whom Christ seeks for Himself, those who come without doubts, and those who come with doubts.—George Reith, the Gospel of John.

The great problem is not how to save the world, but how to persuade each Christian that it is his business to be the means of saving some one man in the world.—C. H. Parkhurst.

It is not by searching thou canst find our God—it is by following Him.—George Matheson.

The nearer the soul is to us, the greater the responsibility for it.—T. L. Cuyler.

(FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES.')

Dr. Trumbull, in his 'Individual Work for Individuals,' gives his own experience. When he wrote he had been editor of the 'Sunday School times' for more than twenty-five years—a paper that averaged more than 100,000 copies a week, and at times reached 150,000. He had, in addition, published thirty volumes, some of them with great research in lines never surpassed. He had addressed great numbers in public meetings. 'Yet,' he says, 'in looking back upon my work in all those years I can see more direct results of good through my individual efforts for individuals than I can know of through all my spoken words to thousands upon thousands of persons in religious assemblies, or all my written words. . . . Reaching one person at a time is the best way of reaching all the world in time. . . . Winning one soul at a time usually results in the winning of a multitude of souls in the process of time.'

Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? There is much loss in the world from our not recognizing that good can come from Nazareth. Much of comfort and hope and encouragement comes to many souls discouraged because they live in Nazareth, from the assurance that many of the best and greatest things in the world have come from conditions which Nazareth represents. It is very noticeable in all history that many of the great men in every department have sprung from the common people, so far as the absence of wealth, or rank, or great ancestry can make them common. Saints have come from amidst the dregs of humanity. Men and women of talent and genius have sprung from parents who gave no sign of such greatness. In the moral world, too, there are what the biologists term

'sports' in the natural world, unexpected and unexplainable developments.

BIBLE REFERENCES.

Rev. xxii., 17; John x., 27; Heb. iv., 13; Prov. xi., 30; Dan. xii., 3; John ix., 4; Psalm xxxii., 2.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, January 19.—Topic—Songs of the Heart. II. How God speaks to men. Ps. 19.

C. E. Topic.

Monday, January 13.—Christ's baptism. Matt. iii., 13-17.

Tuesday, January 14.—A verse Christ quoted. Deut. viii., 3.

Wednesday, January 15.—Our prayer. Matt. vi., 13.

Thursday, January 16.—Watch and pray. Matt. xxvi., 41.

Friday, January 17.—Strong in the Lord. Eph. vi., 10, 11.

Saturday, January 18.—Christ will help. Heb. ii., 18.

Sunday, January 19.—Topic—Christ's temptations and ours. Matt. iv., 1-11.

We Say So Too.

'A wide awake boy of about fourteen years came home from Sunday school one day, and, with the freedom with which boyhood usually expresses its feelings, announced to his parents that his Sunday school teacher made him "tired." When an explanation was demanded, he said: "Well, he preaches all the time. He don't do any teaching at all. He just preaches at us. What's the good of studying the lesson if the teacher isn't going to do anything but preach to us?"'—'Living Age.'

Never Pass Without a Greeting.

When you meet a scholar on the street, give him a smile of recognition and address him by name. This will be worth much to you and more to the scholar. Never pass one by without a greeting. When practicable, stop and shake hands and say a few pleasant words. Your heart will beat faster when you overhear, as you pass on, 'That is my Sabbath-school teacher; isn't she nice?' Remember the wise saying, 'He who has his hand on the head of a child has it on the heart of the mother.'—'Black.'

Explain the Contribution Box.

It is not enough to pass the contribution-box every Sunday for them to put in the pennies they have brought. Does the child clearly know why he has brought his penny? Some children, when asked the question, reply, 'Cause teacher said we must,' or 'I guess it is to pay the teacher,' or 'It is to buy our papers. Teachers should explain again and again the true spirit of giving. Impress upon the child's mind and heart that God wishes us to love and help those who have little or no food and clothing, those who have no churches, schools, books, nor papers, and who have never heard of the Saviour's love. Teach him that Jesus said we must go into all the world and tell all people about him. Explain the work of missionaries and why it takes so much money to send them far away to teach others. Every Sunday in connection with the act of giving there should be some simple exercise, consisting of Bible verses, song, and prayer, that will bring out the spirit of giving.'—Israel Black.

Your Teacher.

Please show the 'Northern Messenger' to your teacher. At first sight he may not appreciate its intrinsic worth. But you can tell him how much more interesting it is than the ordinary Sunday School paper, and you can also assure him that it is very much cheaper than any other of its size—the price to Sunday Schools being just half the regular rate.