

The Quiet Hour.

The Ten Commandments.

S. S. LESSON.—Exodus 20 : 12-17. July 20.

GOLDEN TEXT.—MATT. 19 : 19. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Honour thy father and thy mother, v. 12. The commandment teaches the sanctity of the home, where respect to those who are the heads of the family is necessary. The promise of long life which is here attached is proof of the great importance which this fifth order carries. The Jews were known for the wise conduct of their homes, and for the care which they took to make their children familiar with the way of God. Says Eldersheim, "The Gentile world here presented a terrible contrast, alike in regard to the relation of parents and children, and the character and moral object of their upbringing. Education begins in the home, and there were no homes like those in Israel; it is imparted by influence and example before it comes by teaching. . . . What Jewish fathers and mothers were; what they felt towards their children; and with what reverence, affection, and care the latter returned what they had received, is known to every reader of the Old Testament. . . . The semi-Divine relationship between children and parents appears in the location, the far more than outward duties which it implies in the wording of the Fifth Commandment." The example of Jesus also reveals how beautiful was the relation between parents and child. No person will ever regret any sacrifice made on behalf of their parents, and any neglect of this duty will some day bring great remorse. By honoring our earthly father we come to know how to honor God, the heavenly Father.

Thou shalt not kill, v. 13. This guards the sanctity of life. The first death was due to murder, and every few days we read of another such act added to the long list of those who break this commandment literally. But the spirit of the commandment is broken far more often than the letter. How many have murderous thoughts in their hearts and are restrained only by fear or lack of opportunity! Think also of the way in which characters are murdered by the false accusations and criticisms of people. Think of the joy that is murdered by angry words; of the good resolves murdered by cynical remarks. Note the reading which Jesus gave to this commandment, Matt. 5 : 22. "According to our Lord's interpretation of the commandment, the same principle which forbids us to murder our fellow-men forbids us to treat him contemptuously and to refuse to acknowledge his claims to our consideration and respect."

Thou shalt not commit adultery, v. 14. This protects the sanctity of marriage. Marriage is an institution of divine origin, and was first celebrated in paradise. This is one of the things which keeps society together, and if marriage is allowed to fall into dishonor, it will soon happen that the supports of our civilization will drop out. Marriage must be the result of a true love of one for another, and this love cannot be retained if there be any want of fidelity of one to the other. Jesus expanded this commandment to include all impure thoughts, which, if they are allowed to take possession of the mind, are destructive of joy, religion and usefulness.

Thou shalt not steal, v. 15—protects pro-

perty. Stealing takes secretly that which belongs to another without giving any equivalent. We all have a duty to work, and also have the right to possess what we gain. It is therefore injurious to this duty of labor and reward when property is not safe. No nation is civilized which does not arrange for the security of property. Compare Eph. 4 : 28, where Paul contrasts theft and labor. Thieves are often referred to in the Bible, and in heathen nations still they are very numerous. But theft may take many forms. Is not gambling a species of theft? Is the laborer who wastes the time of his master not guilty of a similar offence? It is indeed a disgraceful thing to ever desire to rob others of what is their own. A little thought will show how widespread this commandment is: example in trade relations.

Thou shalt not bear false witness, v. 16. This guards the sanctity of reputation or character. With us all, our reputation is a matter of first importance. It is the only valuable asset that some of us possess, and if it is taken away we become paupers. The law of the land takes this into consideration, and even goes so far as to say it is sometimes criminal to reveal a truth we know to people's disadvantage. Falseness begins often in small things, in those "white lies" which children sometimes tell. It is not confined to words, but reveals itself often in looks, omissions, and signs. Wherever a false impression is intentionally left, there is falsehood. All our dealings with our neighbors rest upon mutual trust, and if we cannot trust each other's words we cannot carry on business with them. The love of truth is one that cannot be too earnestly sought after. Jesus came to teach us the value of truth. Satan is called the father of lies.

Thou shalt not covet, v. 17. Covetousness is the immoderate desire after earthly things. He who covets places the object, be it riches, fame, comfort, in a place of adoration which should be reserved for God. Hence it is idolatry, Col. 3 : 5. This is a sin hateful to God, Ps. 10 : 3; and it leads to misery, Prov. 1 : 19. It is a root from which the worst crimes spring.

Paul's Prayer For The Philippian Saints.

BY REV. R. L. MACWHERTER.

Phil. 1. 9-11.

The heart of Paul was filled with the spirit of prayer. All his writings are filled with the prayerful desires of his heart. The evidences of his prayerful spirit are found in the motives of his noble life: "For to me to live is Christ." In the great blessings which he was sure to find at life's end: "to die is gain." Also in the deep concern as to how all men about him lived.

There were at least three motives in the heart of Paul actuating in the utterance of this prayer. He desired to secure God's rich blessing upon his Christian friends; to acquaint them with his deep interest for them, and to incite them to holy living.

We ought to pray for those we love. We desire their happiness, and there is no wiser or surer way to secure or express that desire than to seek it of God. All our happiness is in God's hands. We can not depend upon the world for happiness. If God fits to prosper and bless us and our friends, no

matter what else happens to us, happiness will flee far from us.

It is great encouragement to every true heart to know that those who have an interest and power at the throne of grace are praying for them. Such knowledge has turned many from the ways of iniquity to serve the living and true God. Let us pray for those we love.

In this brief prayer Paul brings before the saints at Philippi and all Christians the ideal Christian life and character. Much has been said of the ideals of Philosophy. Too much can not be said of the ideals of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The ideals of philosophy are imaginary heroes or gods ascribed with human attributes. The ideal of the Gospel is a perfect being, the man Christ Jesus, possessed with divine attributes. The difference between the two is as great as the distance between heaven and earth.

The first attribute of every true Christian character is an ever-growing love. "This I pray, that your love may abound more and more." Had Paul prayed that they might have become rich, great and honored, they would have said of him, "Paul is a true friend." How much more truly could they say this of him when he sought for them heavenly riches?

This love is three fold in its objects. Our love ought to abound more and more toward God, for he is all lovable. There is no power which can so wonderfully take hold of our lives, making us better and more lovable, as the love of God. This power can take hold of every life. No matter how wild and sinful a man may have been, when he learns to love God his life and character will be completely changed. He will be a new creature. Once Paul's life had been full of anger, malice, wrath, strife and murder, but the love of God in his heart transformed him into a hero of righteousness.

If we abound more and more in love to God, we will abound more and more in love to our fellow-Christians. The Church and the world stand greatly in need of the quickening power of Christian affection. May God send it into our hearts!

Christian love never stops with God or his fellow Christian, but abounds toward the sinner. Is there any greater evidence of our lack of love to God than in our want of love to lost souls? Does the Church love sinners as she ought? Do I love the souls of those for whom Christ died as I should? If I truly loved lost men, would I not make a greater effort to lead them to Christ?

Christ-like love abounds in knowledge and in all judgment. It is an intelligent and discriminating virtue. It loves God and all things pure and holy; it hates Satan and all things sinful.

The second Christian virtue is righteous principle. "That ye may approve things that are excellent." When the chemist finds a piece of ore he casts it into the fire to determine the character of the metals contained. So does the Christian. By knowledge and judgment he determines between things right and wrong. If his love abounds more and more, all the powers and influences of his life and character are always and only on the side of right. The true Christian, like his Master, finds no excuse for any evil.

The third Christian virtue is sincerity. "That ye may be sincere." The Greek word signifies, "That which, being viewed in the sunlight, is found to be pure, spotless."

The Christian is inoffensive. "Is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." He exercises himself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men.

Christians are a fruitful people. "Being