

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

From the International Lessons for 1879, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday School Union.)

LESSON XXX. JUNE 27.]

VICTORY OVER DEATH.—READ 1 Cor. 15: 50-57. COMMIT TO MEMORY, vs. 54-58.

- 50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.
51. Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.
52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.
53. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.
54. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.
55. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?
56. The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.
57. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.—John 11: 25.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Saints share Christ's victory over death.

INTRODUCTORY.—The Apostle lays the foundation for his proofs of the resurrection, in the historical fact that Christ rose from the dead. He then passes from the fact of the resurrection to the manner of it, which he illustrates by analogies from nature—as the seed sown, and the various kinds of bodies. He then asserts the existence, and declares some of the characteristics, of the spiritual body. The lesson shows the final victory over death.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Read the whole of this fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and try to get the Apostle's argument and teachings clearly before your mind. This chapter is read at funerals more, probably, than any other in the Bible. Make its comfort real, and blessed in your own bereavements, and those of your friends.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) CHANGE OF THE BODY. (II.) MANNER OF THAT CHANGE. (III.) VICTORY IN THAT CHANGE.

I. CHANGE OF THE BODY. (50.) THIS I SAY, and call your especial attention to it; FLESH AND BLOOD, the natural, earthly body, born of the flesh, which the spirit inhabits here; KINGDOM OF GOD, which will be entirely spiritual; CORRUPTION, things in their nature perishable decaying.

II. MANNER OF THAT CHANGE. (51.) BEHOLD, a word always calling special attention to what follows; A MYSTERY, heretofore hidden, and now communicated through me, by revelation; NOT ALL SLEEP, all will not die, some will be living when Christ comes; SHALL ALL BE CHANGED, whether living or dead. Lachman and some MSS. read, "We shall all sleep, but we shall all not all be changed." (52.) IN A MOMENT, literally in an atom, an indivisible time, the change will be instantaneous, although so great; TWINKLING . . . EYE, as soon as one can wink; LAST TRUMP, sounding of the trumpet. The people assembled and called to battle by a trumpet. Compare Matt. 24: 31; 1 Thess. 4: 16; Rev. 8 and 9, and 11: 15; we, all who are alive, comp. 1 Thess. 4: 15. (53.) CORRUPTIBLE, body subject to dissolution.

III. VICTORY IN THAT CHANGE. (54.) THEN, be fore that time the body remains in the power of the grave; THE SAYING . . . WRITTEN, in the Hebrew of Isa. 25: 8; SWALLOWED UP, "at one momentary draught," and forever disappears. (55.) STING, as of a poisonous creature which kills, comp. Gen. 3 and Num. 21: 6; GRAVE, Hades, the realm of the dead. Some MSS. have the word "death" instead of grave. (56.) STING . . . SIN, by which all the human race have been stung and slain, Rom. 7: 9-11. (58.) STEADFAST, firmly seated, so as not to slip from your faith; UNMOVABLE, through unbelief or the evil influences of others, Col. 1: 23; WORK OF THE LORD, the promotion of Christ's kingdom; YE KNOW, God's word assures you; LABOR, toil, wearisome effort in Christ's cause; NOT IN VAIN, since there will be a resurrection and an eternal reward.

What facts in this lesson teach us—

- 1. The nature of the heavenly kingdom?
2. The power of God?
3. Hope for ourselves, and for our friends, in death?
4. Faithfulness to present duty?

ILLUSTRATIONS.—Death. Death is the liberator of him whom freedom cannot release, the physician of him whom medicine cannot cure, and the comforter of him whom time cannot console.—Colton. Death is the dropping of the flower that the fruit may swell.—Becher. Oh! brother Payne, the long looked for day is come at last, in which I shall see that glory in another manner than I have ever yet done, or been capable of doing.—Owen. Heavenly Inhabitants. What a heaven full of princely creatures the Eternal Father will have, when all the redeemed shall be presented to Him in the brightness of His Son's glory! . . . A whole heaven full of glorious-bodied creatures, each one emitting a splendor like the glorious body of the Lord, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."—Hamilton.

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LESSON XXXI.

AUGUST 3.]

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

READ 2 Cor. 5: 14-21.

COMMIT TO MEMORY, vs. 20-21.

- 14. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.
15. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.
16. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.
17. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new.
18. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.
19. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.
20. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.
21. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

GOLDEN TEXT.

We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.—2 Cor 5: 20.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Ministers are God's messengers of peace.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) NEW LIFE FROM CHRIST. (II.) AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST.

I. NEW LIFE FROM CHRIST. (14.) FOR, showing the reason of his devotion to God and to them, v. 13; LOVE OF CHRIST, to us, as shown in his death; CONSTRAINETH, shews us up so to act, as he had been doing: THIS JUDGE, formed the judgment; WERE ALL DEAD, or, "all died." (15.) DIED FOR ALL, in behalf of all; UNTO THEMSELVES, for self and selfish gratification; DIED FOR THEM, read, "died and rose again for them." (16.) AFTER THE FLESH, in his merely carnal and earthly relations of birth, wealth, position, power, but spiritually in his relations to God. (17.) A NEW CREATURE, created anew by divine power, passed into a new life; OLD THINGS, the old nature. Some MSS. read, "his old things are passed away: behold they are become new."

II. AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST. (18.) RECONCILED, forgiven and restored to favor; MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION, a ministry whose business it is to make known that God is willing to be reconciled to every sinner. (19.) THE WORLD, the human race in its sin; NOT IMPUTING, etc., since the trespasses are forgiven through Christ's atonement; THE WORD, the good news, the gospel. (20.) AMBASSADORS, officers sent by a sovereign, instructed to declare his will and purpose; IN CHRIST'S STEAD, in behalf of Christ. (21.) TO BE SIN, a sin-bearer suffering the consequences of sin; WHO KNEW NO SIN, never committed any sin, 1 Pet. 2: 22.

What statements in this lesson show that—

- 1. Through Christ's death we may have life?
2. Christians should live for Christ, not for themselves?
3. Ministers are Christ's agents in proclaiming redemption?

A LITTLE CHILD heard one man tempt another to drink, and just as the latter was raising the glass to his mouth the child said: "I wouldn't!" Those two words were the means of saving that man.

LESSONS FROM THE LOWLY.—An alarm of fire in a New York schoolhouse was good cause for the immediate evacuation of the building. Fortunately the children had been well drilled in view of such an emergency, and the way in which they made their exit was a model of good order and self-possession. But towards the end of the procession there was noticed to be some delay. The anxious teachers hurried to the rear to see what was wrong, and found the somewhat narrow passage a little blocked by the presence of two lame children, who, although doing their best to get out, could not make as great speed as the sound ones who were behind them. And yet those who were behind did not push or crowd the lame children, but patiently awaited their tardy and clumsy movements. A teacher asked why they did not push on and hurry out more quickly; and the answer came from the children in the rear: "We're waiting to let the lame ones out." It was contrary to the custom of the world. When there is a panic, whether with cause or without, it is the habit of the strong and hearty ones to push aside the others and make good their own escape, not caring who may be trampled on and crushed. It is understood that Satan may take the hindmost ones if he can get them, and that if the weak ones are crowded to the wall it makes no particular difference. There are noble exceptions to this custom, as in the case of these youngsters, who so kindly gave the little cripples a chance. These children's names should be inscribed on the roll of the world's heroes. The lesson their brave and considerate action teaches is an honorable one, worthy of imitation.—Philadelphia Telegraph.

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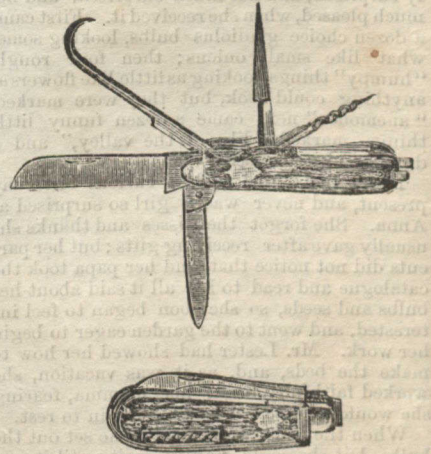
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