



LESSON,—SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 1908.

Jesus Anointed at Bethany.

John xii., 1-11. Memory verse, 3.

Golden Text.

We love him because he first loved us. 1. John iv., 19.

Home Readings.

- Monday, April 13.—John xii., 1-11.
- Tuesday, April 14.—John xii., 12-22.
- Wednesday, April 15.—John xii., 23-36.
- Thursday, April 16.—John xii., 37-50.
- Friday, April 17.—Matt. xxvi., 1-16.
- Saturday, April 18.—Mark xiv., 1-11.
- Sunday, April 19.—Luke vii., 36-50.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Our lesson to-day is about different ways of serving Jesus, and in the lesson we read about some of the very same people that we learnt about last Sunday. Who did we particularly learn about then? Yes, Lazarus, and he had two sisters, Martha and Mary. They lived in the little town of Bethany not far from Jerusalem, and here Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead. Our lesson to-day is sometime after that, but Jesus is again in Bethany. He had not stayed there all the time, because the Jewish officials would have arrested him, so Jesus had gone away and worked and taught in other places. He had come back now however, because it was near the Passover and Jesus wanted to be in Jerusalem for that feast time. When he came back to Bethany a great many of the people were very glad to see him, and some of them got together and made a sort of party for him. They sent out invitations to many to come and have supper with Jesus, and Lazarus was one of the most important guests, while Martha was helping to see that everybody had enough to eat and that all should go off well. The man in whose house the supper was given was named Simon, and he had once been a leper whom Jesus most likely had cured, so he was very proud to give the supper and glad to tell people what Jesus had done for him; then there was Lazarus, and a great many people came particularly to see him, and again and again he told the story of how Jesus had brought him back to life after he had been dead four days; then there was Martha, and a great many would stop to speak to her and say, 'Is that story really true about your brother?' 'Indeed it is,' Martha would say as she hurried to see that everything was cooking properly and that the maids had prepared enough rolls for the tables and that everybody was having a good supper; 'Indeed it is, every word of it. And nothing we can do for Jesus is too much to honor him.' Then there were the disciples who had travelled about with Jesus for three years and they would have all sorts of stories to tell of the wonderful things Jesus had done, and how he had raised to life two other dead people. But where was Mary all this time?

FOR THE SENIORS.

The time between this and last Sunday's lessons had been spent by Christ awhile in retirement at Ephraim (John xi., 54) and later in journeying along the northern border of Judea and by a roundabout way, probably to avoid the officers of the Jews now on the watch to take him, through Jericho and back to Jerusalem and Bethany. The incidents of this time are covered in Luke xvii., 11; xix., 27; Mark x., and Matt. xix., 20. His return to Bethany was the signal for general rejoicing among the townspeople and for the

curious visits of crowds from Jerusalem to see the miracle worker and the man he had raised to life. From this on Christ did not attempt to hide his whereabouts. He had come to Jerusalem with his sacrifice in mind, the time had come for his departure and the rest was in God's hands. His freedom from molestation now rested on the curiosity and favor of the multitude (Mark xiv., 1, 2). Vainly again had Christ been trying to prepare the minds of his disciples for what he knew was to come (Mark x., 32-34), yet the burden on his heart was not allowed to darken the pleasure of the supper at which his friends rejoiced to greet him. Only when Mary's loving gift showed that one heart understood somewhat, and sympathized (Mark xiv., 8; John xii., 7), did he let its shadow fall on those about him. This open prophecy of imminent death in spite of the seeming popularity of the moment, and the equally open reproof seem to have taken away the last barriers to Judas's rising treachery. That this was the final incident to influence Judas in his action seems to be the reason why Matthew and Mark give it in the order in which they do, for it is generally conceded that John's placing is chronologically correct. The supper was given at the close of the Sabbath, just preceding the day of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

People are apt to suspect that emotion is an alternative to action, but emotion rightly directed is the highest motive power. What can never be accomplished by the most convincing argument or the keenest sense or duty can be wrought by the impulse of love. A mother will make sacrifices which no one can ask of a nurse; the best drilled conscript will never touch the heroism of a patriot fighting for home. First there is the emotion which sets men's hearts on fire, and then there is the deed. Christianity obtained her martyrs and won her victories, not because men reasoned that Christ was the Son of God, or concluded that His law was the most perfect righteousness, but because multitudes of ordinary people loved Him with all their heart and were prepared to die for Him. When women like Mary gave the best that they possessed to Christ in the hour of His defeat, and before He was crucified poured over Him the spikenard of their love, the future of Christianity was securely assured, and Christ already had ascended His throne.—John Watson, the 'Inspiration of Our Faith.'

There are thousands of persons who think it essential to teach children arithmetic, but pernicious to instill into their minds a love of poetry or art. They judge of education by the test, Will it pay? Can this attainment be turned into money? The other question, Will it enrich the nature of the child and of the man? is not asked. They proceed as if they believed that the man is made for business, not business for the man; and thus it comes to pass that everywhere among us men are found sacrificed to business, stunted in their moral development, shut off from the deeper things of life. The pursuits which such persons condemn are the very things which lift life out of the low level of commonplace buying and selling, and invite us to remember that man liveth not by bread alone, but by high thoughts, by noble sacrifice, by devoted love and all that love dictates, by the powers of the unseen, mightier by far than all that we see.—Marcus Dods.

To feel gratitude without showing it is perhaps no better than to show gratitude without feeling it.—Ivan Panin.

(FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES.')

'She who has chosen Martha's part, The planning head, the steady heart, So full of household work and care, Intent on serving everywhere, May also Mary's secret know, Nor yet her household cares forego;— May sit and learn at Jesus' feet, Nor leave her service incomplete.'

—Richard H. Thomas.

'Be kingly prodigal of time, for use In God's sweet service. 'Tis a jealous cruse

That holds thy life from love's anointing wide. Shatter it grandly. See! an eager tide Of fragrance and of healing ministries, Wrought on the Lord if on the "least of these;" And see! the ragged edge, the flakes fallen down, Form, at His word, thine alabaster crown!' —Amos R. Wells.

Henry Martyn, that heroic missionary to India who 'burned out for God,' once wrote: 'We would not make a hard bargain, and know the precise quantity of virtue necessary for salvation; but we wish to serve Christ with the full flow of affection, to have body, soul, and spirit, unreservedly dedicated to his service.' Every missionary biography gives examples of this whole-hearted service.

'Never forget that we serve a Lord who can read the humblest action gloriously. He so interprets our poor and tangled service that we shall hardly know it in the morning.' —Rev. G. H. Morrison.

Often, those that criticize Christians for their lack of practical charity are the least charitable themselves. Mark the striking contrast between the money box of Judas and the alabaster box of Mary, his thirty pieces of silver (= shekels, each = 4 denarii) and her three hundred denarii, his love of money and her liberality, his hypocritical profession of concern for the poor and her noble deed for the Lord, his wretched end and her noble memory forever.—Schaff.

2. But, even if Judas had not been a thief, he would have been wrong, because giving begets giving. The same spirit of love that led Mary to pour out the spikenard upon Christ would lead her to give to Christ's poor, while her example of sacrifice has inspired countless deeds of beneficence through all the ages. So with the influence of Christian conventions, noble church architecture, uplifting paintings, inspiring music. They give back, in the service they prompt, many times their cost.

BIBLE REFERENCES.

Mark xiv., 3-9; Matt. xxvi., 6-13; Luke x., 38-42; John xii., 26; Matt. xxv., 40; Jas. iv., 12; I. Cor. xiii., 13.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, April 19.—Topic—Sunday, our weekly Easter, and how to observe it. John xx., 1-10, 19-23; Rev. i., 10.

C. E. Topic.

Monday, April 13.—They should be workers. II. Chron. xxxi., 21.

Tuesday, April 14.—They should be glad. Ps. lxxviii., 3.

Wednesday, April 15.—They should be trustful. Ps. cxiii., 6, 7.

Thursday, April 16.—They should be gentle. II. Tim. ii., 24.

Friday, April 17.—They should be examples. I. Tim. iv., 12.

Saturday, April 18.—They should be strong. Col. i., 11.

Sunday, April 19.—Topic—What Christians should be like. Matt. v., 13-16.

Sabbath School Wreckers.

'I call them Sabbath School wreckers,' said an earnest Sabbath School worker. 'What do you mean?' said his surprised listener. 'I mean teachers who come irregularly to Sabbath School. They wreck their classes,' was the answer. It was a strong way of putting it, but is it not true? Scholars do not like substitutes; they are quick to copy the bad example set by their teacher. They soon begin to come irregularly themselves, and after a time are lost to the school. The class is wrecked. Now, one may not be a very capable teacher, but regular attendance is possible. Certainly every teacher can do that much. Whatever you are, don't be a Sabbath school wrecker.—Exchange.