

FOR DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

**Bible Study: One Clause at a Time.**

No. 4. Luke 11: 1-13.

MRS. ANNA ROSS

"Thy kingdom come." What strong ground we are on before God when the burden of our prayer is for the advancement of the kingdom and glory of His Son. Jesus Christ!

"Prayer also shall be made for Him continually." I remember once asking a friend if this was not a mistranslation. Should it not be, "Prayer also shall be made to Him continually."

"How you people would spoil the word of God!" was the reply, with a peculiar smile that meant volumes. "No, it means what it says, 'Prayer also shall be made for Him continually, and daily shall He be praised.'" But he did not enter into any explanation.

At a missionary convention a few years ago a returned missionary spoke words that have lingered in memory somewhat as follows. I have not a verbal report.

"When I gave myself to foreign missions, it was from a yearning pity to the poor heathen multitudes, perishing daily, 'having no hope and without God in the world.' But it has been the grief and disappointment of my missionary life that I have been so feebly able to reach those for whose uplifting I was ready to spend and be spent, to die if need be.

"Since coming to this convention my eyes have been opened to see a higher motive for missionary effort, and a more inevitable inspiration for missionary courage. I have seen a little of the real glory of Jesus Christ and the meaning of His kingdom.

"Loyalty to Jesus Christ, my Divine King' shall henceforth be my inspiring motive, and 'Thy kingdom come,' my uppermost prayer. With my eye upon Him, and His surely triumphant cause, I can pray the triumphant prayer of faith no matter what my own prospects or surroundings. But with my eye filled with the miseries of the multitudes and my own powerlessness to minister to their appalling needs, faith has staggered and prayer has often been a despairing cry, and effort has been accompanied with a hopelessness which itself insures failure.

"Now I know that the way to reach these perishing multitudes is to be yourself filled with the glory of Jesus Christ our King."

The wilderness shall blossom as the rose when it shall be written of those who work in it, "They have seen the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." The coming of Christ's kingdom waits upon the manifesting of His glory to His own people. "Nations that knew not Thee shall run unto Thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for He hath glorified Thee." The nations shall run to Jesus Christ as soon as Christ's own people shall see His real glory, for then they shall know how to lift Him up. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

These two petitions are linked indissolubly together: Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come. As the Holy One of Israel causes "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ to shine into the hearts" of God's people. His kingdom shall come with power. The rod of His strength shall go forth out of Zion, and He shall rule in the midst of His enemies.

"Be still, and know that I am God, I will be exalted among the heathen. I will be exalted in the earth." Here are the steps: 1st, Be still; 2nd, Know the glory of God; 3rd, I will be exalted in the earth—My kingdom shall come.

## Our Young People

### Topic—What Does the Parable of the Prodigal Son Teach Us?

Sunday, May 3.

Luke 15: 11-32.

#### The Prodigal's Free Will.

The father of the prodigal knew the sin and the danger that lay before his wilful son. Yet he gave him his portion and let him go, freely to work out his own desires. Only thus could the prodigal learn his lesson, and find out his own ingratitude and ill desert. The time had come when he must work things out for himself.

A forced filial obedience is no filial relation at all. Our Father in heaven will have true sons and daughters or none. So he leaves the souls of men free. He does not want us ever to leave him; but if we turn from him and go into sin, we go freely. He does not compel us to love him.

We are responsible for the spending of our own spiritual portion. God gives each of us the full portion. If we love the Father of our spirits we will strive to use our portion with and for him and dwell always near him. To go away from God is to waste our portion and find misery and shame instead in the far country of sin.

#### In the Far Country.

A great thinker has said that in the last analysis "there are but two things in the whole universe—our own soul, and God who made it." Other things must stand aside until these two greatest of realities are harmonized. Until the soul and God are in right relation to each other life is out of joint.

Willfulness—the preference of our own will to God's—is the atmosphere of the far country. The prodigal wanted his own way. He wanted to choose his own companions and his own amusements. He went far away from his father's house, and tried to forget him. But his experience in the far country made him wretched; a slave, and not free. Liberty and happiness were in his father's house, and not in wilful wandering. "The mistakes which we mortals make when we have our own way," says George Eliot, "might fairly arouse some wonder that we are so fond of it." God's way is best for us because God's fatherly love and wisdom are better than our wilful and ignorant desires. The far country is no place to stay in. When we are broken, unhappy, lonely, the repentant journey to the Father's house is the only way to peace and joy.

#### For Daily Reading.

- M., Apr. 27.—The far country. Rom. 1: 21-25  
T., Apr. 28.—A sensible decision. Lam. 3: 39-41  
W., Apr. 29.—A penitent prayer. Luke 18: 13, 14  
T., Apr. 30.—Our Father's remembrance. Isa. 49: 14-16  
F., May 1.—His promise to receive. Jas. 4: 7-10  
S., May 2.—Rejoicing over the found. Luke 15: 4-7  
S., May 3.—Topic—What does the parable of the Prodigal Son teach us? Luke 15: 11-32.

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### An Outgoing Faith.

BY C. H. WETHEFBE.

In Paul's letter to the Colossian church he says: "Having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus." Several times, in recent years I have somewhat reflected on those words, for they particularly impressed me. It occurs to me that Christian people do not in these days use such an expression. They do not speak of "hearing" of the faith of others. We are in the habit of regarding faith as being an invisible exercise of the power of one's believing. How can I tell how much or how little another person has of genuine faith? When one exercises faith in the gospel, how can I hear of it? Paul wrote that he "heard" of the faith of the Colossian believers. I have been wondering how he could hear of it, or in what sense he did hear of it, and I have concluded that it must have been an outgoing faith. It must have cropped out in visible forms. The faith of those Christians issued in appropriate works, in deeds which corresponded with their profession of love to Christ; and, as Paul had been informed of their works, their deeds of righteousness, he could properly say that he had "heard" of their faith. This is very different from hearing professed Christians talk about their having strong faith in God. There are very many professors of religion who often say that their faith in God is strong and steadfast; they very confidently declare that they are holding right on to God by faith and that they intend to never give up; but the chief question is, Do they give proof of their faith in any other way than talk? I doubt that Paul had any confidence in a mere talking faith. He had heard many people talk of their having clear and abiding faith, yet I think that he paid but very little attention to such talk. What he looked for was an outgoing faith, a faith which bore a visible crop of spiritual fruit. This is a true test of a true faith. Genuine faith in Christ issues in brotherly kindness, in a strict regard for one's promises, in deeds of straight honesty, right industry and pure benevolence. There are far too many professors of religion who seem to think that because they have great faith in the soundness of their church creed their faith saves them, and is also very pleasing to God, but they are much mistaken, if such be the boundary and quality of their faith. Some of the very worst, meanest people that I ever dealt with are exceeding strong in their faith in behalf of the doctrines which their church holds to. They are untruthful, stingy, hard hearted, and too despicable to be endured by decent folks.

Paul's heart was gladdened by hearing of the faith of the Colossians, because its outgoings were in harmony with the truth which they professed to believe in. Is the outgoing of your faith of this kind? If so, then you are not ashamed to have even unconverted people hear of your faith.

#### What Our Scripture Suggests.

Sin is going away from God, our home. Sin wastes the inheritance and leads to want.

The love of God waits to be merciful,

You may limit the flight of an eagle's wing and the light of a falling star. But you cannot limit the power of good or tell what its blessings are.