

The Quiet Hour.

The Ten Commandments.

S.S. Lesson.—Exodus 20 : 1-11. July 13, 1902
 Golden Text—Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart—Luke 10 : 27.

And God spake all these words, v. 1. It is all important to know that God hath spoken these words, and that the passage of time and the advance of human thought cannot destroy the claim which these verses have upon us all. These Commandments rest upon the understanding that we are the subjects of God, and that what He tells us is compulsory for us. He is the King of the conscience, and His orders must be obeyed. When Christ came, the complete image of the Father, He had new commandments to give, and these are also to be obeyed in a spirit of entire faith and humility. It is worth while to collect the new commandments of Jesus.

I. brought thee . . . out of the house of bondage, v. 2. God's claim upon Israel was more than the control of an earthly ruler; for the claim of God on His people grew out of the great kindness which He had shown them in the history of their nation. He had saved them from bondage. The claim of Christ upon us is not due merely to His sovereign authority, but also comes from His great sacrifice on our behalf. It is the claim of infinite love. He came to preach deliverance to the captives; and since He has brought us out of the house of bondage we are bound to serve and obey Him. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." When once we have understood the work which God has undertaken on our behalf, then we shall feel that nothing is too great for Him to ask of us. The way to obey is first to love. "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments." John 14 : 15, R.V.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me, v. 3. The first four Commandments deal with man's duty to God, whereas the remaining six are concerned with man's duty to man. The union of these two in one Decalogue proves that religion and morality must go hand in hand, and that it is impossible to separate our faith from our conduct. "If we say that we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth," John 1 : 6. Let us note, (1) the implied positive teaching that we must worship God the only living and true God. There are many who have no God at all, who worship nothing but their own pleasure. While many in times past have worshipped false gods, there are many to-day who have become complete atheists. (2) The commandment also condemns the worship of false gods. In the literal sense this does not apply to us as it did to Israel, since we are not in danger of worshipping heathen deities; but we do run great danger of falling down before the god of this world, success or wealth. Christ was tempted to fall down and worship Satan and He replied, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve."

No graven image, v. 4. There is still a danger in the use of images or pictures, which Isaiah denounced in his prophecies of Is. 40 : 18, 20; 44 : 12. The Roman Catholic says that the picture or a crucifix is an aid to stimulate his religious emotion; but the result usually is that he worships the material object instead of Christ. "In my

college days I had an engraving of our Lord hanging over my mantle piece. The calmness, the dignity, the gentleness, and the sadness of the face represented the highest conceptions which I had in those days of the human presence of Christ. I often looked at it, and seldom without being touched by it. I discovered in the course of a few months that the superstitious sentiments were gradually clustering around it, which are always created by the visible representation of the divine. The engraving was becoming to me the shrine of God manifest in the flesh, and I understood the growth of idolatry. The visible symbol is at first a symbol and nothing more. At last it is identified with the God whom it represents." (R. W. Dale.)

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. God requires of us to guard the sanctity of His name. It is a curious thing that God's name is so often used in profane language, as if there were no fear of His power and anger, whose name is thus so lightly passed on the lips. Profanity in utterance is a sin that prevails only too extensively throughout our land, and it may be regarded as one of the modern forms of guilt. At the foundation of the sin of profanity lies the sin of irreverence, which does not consider how majestic and awful is that Being before whom the angels bend in adoration.

Remember the Sabbath day, v. 8. God claims of us part of our time; and Sabbath breakers are guilty of robbery. "Will a man rob God?" The day is essential to the continuance of our spiritual life. How can a person do any work who does not assign some time to that particular duty? Neither can we worship God unless we separate off a part of our week for the remembrance of His mercy, and the supplication of His grace. God's worship requires God's day.

Whenever we sleep, we are completely delivered from our cares and troubles. Krummacher, the wise German, reminds us that every sleep, however brief, is yet a token that God could as easily deliver us from our cares for all time, if it were best.

No one can fairly be said to be a slave to his worries if he is fighting against them. In "The Pilgrim's Progress," Bunyan illustrates this by having Mr. Feeble-mind fall into the hands of the Giant Slay-good. "I had heard," says Mr. Feeble-mind, after his escape, "that no one who is taken captive will ever lose his life if he is taken captive unwillingly, and keeps heart whole toward his master. So you see that though I am robbed, to be sure, yet I have myself come off safe."

Religious Journals in the Home.

One piece of religious furniture may be regarded as most important in the Christian home; it is the religious newspaper. It would be hard to find in city, village, or country, a home without a weekly, semi-weekly, or daily secular paper. But to find one and even many without a religious paper would not be difficult. Should we not, however, be as deeply interested in the current events of Christ's kingdom as in the affairs of the state and nation, and in the discussion of the principles of God's Word as in the consideration of social and political

matters? Yea, would we not arrive at a more speedy and satisfactory solution of social and political problems if we were more familiar with the principles of Christ's kingdom? Give to religious journals and periodicals the prominence and wide-spread circulation which the secular papers have, and the happy effect upon society and the world would soon be apparent. One has said: "It has long been the policy of the devil to keep the masses of the world in ignorance, but finding at length that they will read, he is doing all in his power to poison their books." Whatever may be the danger from poisoned literature, the danger to ourselves and our children is not inconsiderable from allowing literature purely secular to crowd out that which is sacred. When we miss from a home, especially where there are children, a religious paper, we feel that something is lacking which by all means ought to be there. Above all, on God's day, let the daily papers be put out of sight, and let the place of easy access and of honor be given to such reading matter as is entirely in keeping with the sanctity of the Sabbath, and will furnish incentive and instruction to the soul.—Christian Intelligencer.

The Divine Magnet.

BY REV. R. V. HUNTER, D. D.

Some time ago the world was greatly stirred over the discovery by Mr. Edison of a process by which low-grade iron ore could be saved for commercial uses. The interesting feature of this discovery was the application of the principles of the magnet on a tremendous scale. By this means the little particles of ore are drawn from pulverized rock. These particles are allowed to fall in proximity to electro-magnets which deflect the iron ore to one side, while the non-metallic matter falls by gravity to the other side. These small particles of ore are compressed into bricks for shipment. This gathering of the otherwise useless ore and saving it from the worthless rock suggests the divine method of saving souls through the power of Jesus Christ. He said: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

The true gospel minister must aim to bring men in contact with Christ and up to the Master's own standard. He must teach men how hateful sin is in God's sight, and how to pass from under its dominion. The Master must be held up as the perfect model in love, forbearance, sincerity, unselfishness; as possessing the real spirit of Saviorhood. Men become broader-minded when well instructed in the mighty plans of Jehovah to secure their redemption. Then they must be taught the practical application of the principles of religion with human relations. To successfully hold up the Son of God, while it requires learning and wide reading, also requires much thought and prayer. The ideal is so far above the most of us that we are in danger of losing the way. The Spirit alone can steer us in the right direction. Not only are we to make it clear to the unsaved that Jesus alone can redeem them, but we are to hold up the Master to the saved, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect man, into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

A force sixteen times as large as Xenophon's famous army is now added to the churches yearly from the ranks of our societies.