

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

THE GOOD SAMARITAN*

By Rev. Clarence McKinnon, B.D.

A certain lawyer . . . tempted him, v. 25. Sometimes a great fire sweeps through the business section of a city, and leaves behind it a scene of ruin and desolation. Everything combustible has been licked up by the flames; the walls of the buildings are tottering to their fall, or have actually tumbled to the ground. But here and there stands a vault, filled with valuable goods or documents. It has stood the terrible test of the fierce conflagration and preserved its contents unharmed. So it is with the words of Jesus. They have been tested by the confidence of His friends, and the keen scrutiny of His foes. And there they stand today after all but two thousand years, as worthy of our trust as ever. The sharp tooth of time has destroyed many of the noblest products of human genius, but the words stamped with the authority of Jesus are as imperishable as His own nature.

What shall I do to inherit eternal life? v. 25.—

"The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,

The solemn temples, the great globe itself,

Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve, And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,

Leave not a rack behind."

So wrote the immortal Shakespeare. And what emphasis these lines received last April, when with scarcely a moment's warning, that dreadful earthquake leveled the city of San Francisco to its foundations, leaving its awful work to be completed by the fire that followed close on its heels. Who could miss the lesson? How loudly those ruins proclaimed that all the world can give soon passes away! It is not such things as these that can satisfy the soul. Only in God, who is eternal, can it find enduring happiness.

How readest thou? v. 26. One devout student of the scriptures tells us that he reads his Bible as one that takes a walk for recreation and profit in the field. He chooses his spot. He waits until he finds a shady nook where the flowers are fragrant, the mosses soft, and the prospect inviting. There he rests his tired body and feasts upon the beauties before him. There he lingers until the place becomes a perpetual memory to him. So, in reading his Bible, he does not open it at random, nor does he imagine that any place that he may happen on is most profitable, but he searches until he finds a passage that suits his soul's need, and there on that helpful page he lingers until its refreshing truth has taken full possession of his mind.

Thou shalt love, v. 27. For centuries upon centuries the mighty cataract of Niagara poured itself in a majestic stream into the huge chasm cut by God's hand through the solid rock. But the day came when the genius of man devised a means of transforming the force of that mass of waters into an electric current of tremendous power. More than this, a highway has been provided to convey this power to distant cities. And now Niagara is the beneficent giant which turns the wheels of industry in places far away from its awe-inspiring roar and fall. The Niagara of the human heart is love. This is the power that reveals itself in all holy, helpful living.

*S.S. Lesson, July 15, 1906, Luke 10: 25-37. Commit to memory vs. 33, 34. Read Matthew 25: 31-46; Luke 10: 1-24. Golden Text—Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.—Matthew 5:7.

From Jerusalem to Jericho, v. 30. This dangerous road was well termed in ancient times "the bloody way." Leading through wild, dreary and mountainous solitudes, it was the very home of thieves and highwaymen. Without a guard, it was not easy to make the journey in security. There are roads today of not less peril. Standing at the centre of a modern town and pointing down the street, with its hotel bars, its pool rooms, its gambling dens, "There," said the earnest reformer, "lies the Jericho road. Alas! how many a poor victim has been seized, stabbed, robbed, ruined and heartlessly left by the wayside to perish, through the greed and selfishness of those engaged in such bad business. Every traveler on life's way needs to be on his guard against these dangers.

When he saw him, v. 31. Different people see different things. Doubtless the priest and Levite at the journey's end would say, "Yes, we passed a miserable wretch on the way, who had been drinking and quarreling and got himself into a bad mess. But charity is wasted on that class. It only encourages them in their broils. We found the road perfectly safe." The Samaritan would say, "I saw an unknown neighbor in distress, and I helped him." When the eye is hard with selfishness, it only sees things to reprehend in others and reasons why they should be left alone. When the light of love sparkles in the eye, it overlooks the blame in its compassion, it sees in every gaping wound a tongue calling for help. May it be ours to cultivate the clear vision of love and to remove the beam of selfishness from our sights!

Go, and do thou likewise, v. 37. Thomas Fuller tells of a Knight who received twenty-six wounds at the battle of Edgehill. When found the next day, the body was not quite cold. His son used every possible restorative, and, to his joy, brought back again his father to consciousness, and added ten years to his life, from the very brink of the grave. There are many wounded souls around us. Some, to ordinary vision, are hopelessly destroyed. But we possess in the oil and wine of the gospel a medicine that can save to the uttermost. Let us eagerly search for the perishing ones, have love to administer to them this gospel, confidence to believe it will cure them, and thereby save from more than temporal destruction many a precious life.

Go, and do, v. 37. It was only a couple of months ago, that the buds began to appear on the trees. The genial springtime came, and the promise of the leaves was seen, to be followed, in due time, by its fulfilment in the glorious foliage. But back of the buds was the life in the tree. And back of all kind and loving deeds that please God, there must be the life that He gives through His Son, Jesus Christ. We must first believe in Him, and then in the power He gives, go forth and do His will. Faith supplies the dynamic for good works.

Theories of religion and speculations in regard to divine truth are the poorest kind of pillows on which to rest one's head when the final twilight shuts down and life goes out with the sun. It is then that the human soul wants something definite, something that has the rock under it and a substantial hope to cling to.

Good men are more to a nation than railways and factories; they are more than armies and battleships. When manhood decays, when love of virtue and honesty have departed Tekek is written on her palace walls and Ichabod over all her vanished greatness.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

(By Rev. James Ross, D.D.)

Samaritan—After the destruction of Samaria by the Assyrians in the eighth century B.C., the territory was settled with colonists from Assyria, who intermingled with the Israelites left in the land, and they got a priest sent back from the captivity to teach them the old law. When the Jews returned from captivity, they rejected the offer of the Samaritans to help them with the temple; and thus the two became religious rivals, and very bitter against one another. The Samaritans built a temple of their own on Mount Gerizim, which was destroyed by John Hyrcanus. They began a persecution of the Christians in the sixth century, but Justinian sent an army against them which nearly exterminated them. In the twelfth century there were about a thousand of them; now there are only about a hundred and fifty persons and nearly all the children are boys. The Aaronic line became extinct in 1624; but the present high priest is a descendant of the tribe of Levi. They abhor all images, and all ascription of human attributes to God. They expect the Messiah to appear 6,000 years after the creation of the world. Bigamy is permitted if the first wife is childless. When a man dies, his nearest relative but not his brother, marries the widow.

GOD, OUR GUIDE.

God's people were not led by a road already made and used, and which they could have studied from beginning to end on a map before starting; but they were led day by day, and step by step, by a living Guide, who chose a route never before trodden. In the morning they did not know whether they were to go forward or back, or to stay where they were.

Our passage through life is similar. It is not a chart we are promised, but a guide. We cannot tell where next year or next month may be spent. We are not informed of any part of our future, and have no means of ascertaining the emergencies which may try us, the new ingredients which may suddenly be thrown into our life, and reveal in us what till now has lain hidden and dormant. We cannot tell by what kind of path we shall be led onward to our end; and our security from day to day consists not at all in this, that we can penetrate the future, and see no danger in it, but our security is that we shall always be guided by infallible and loving wisdom.—A. MacLaren, D.D.

DESIGNEDLY "STRAIGHT."

Men who want to carry the world on their shoulders always complain of the narrowness and bigotry of Christianity. They have no objection to going to heaven, but they want to carry their bundles along. They would like to have the straight and narrow way broadened so that they could drive a load of hay over it or run their automobiles over it either double or tandem. Christianity had nothing to do with laying down the road that leads to the celestial city. That was done by the King of the land. And if the way is narrow it is made so not merely to keep out those who are worthy but to keep out those who have little or nothing of the heaven nature in them. The way is purposely narrow. The broad road leads in the opposite direction. Selected.

"The fool hath said in his heart there is no God," but even a fool when he comes down to the dark river will want a ferry, not a theory. Negations are poor things with which to face the bar of judgment.