

The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

Second Quarter.

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST.

Lesson XII.—June 18. Colossians 3:1-15.

May be used as a Temperance Lesson.

Read Eph. 4:17 to 5:24.

Commit Verses 1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts,
Col. 3:15.

EXPLANATORY.

I. CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST. THE OLD LIFE DEAD.—It has been wisely said that "to learn what to love and what to hate, what to honor and what to despise," is the purpose of education. It may be added that what one is alive to, and to what he is dead, are the test of character; so that he who loves what he ought to love and hates what is hateful to God, who honors what is honorable and despises what is unworthy, who fears to do wrong and delights in whatever is pure and holy, who is dead to sin and alive to righteousness,—he is "the perfect man in Christ Jesus," and is "made meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light," and has been translated by God "into the kingdom of his dear Son" (1:12, 13).

II. THE RESURRECTION WITH CHRIST TO A NEW LIFE.—Vs. 1-4. But he that is dead to sin is not a dead being. Thus Paul says of himself, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20. See also Rom. 6:4, 5, 9, 10; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:12).

1. IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, as typified by baptism (2:12). By believing in Christ, one partakes of his new life. He has been born again from above. Christ's resurrection is the power and the type of the new life. The believer has had implanted in him the life of heaven, the life of God. SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE. And let any one should imagine that "above" meant only a little ways above, he adds, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. Not only above the old life, as would be art and science, but as far above as heaven is, the perfect life, the ideal life which Christ is living in heaven. This characteristic is dwelt upon "with great fulness and beauty in Phil 3:12-16."

2. SET YOUR AFFECTION, R. V., "set your mind," expressing the inward impulse, as "seek" expresses the practical striving.

3. FOR YE ARE DEAD. "Ye died." YOUR LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST. The spiritual life is hidden, not exposed to the outward eye, but in the soul, its motives and affections; it is sustained by constant communion with God, like the water of eternal life springing up in the soul. Its impulses, its joys, its peace, its sources are hidden, but are real, for they are WITH CHRIST, the same as the life of Christ, who is unseen in heaven.

IN GOD. "As the infinite sphere of all your life, your love, your aspirations, your voluntary activities."

4. WHEN CHRIST . . . SHALL APPEAR, R. V., "shall be manifested," in this world by the coming of his kingdom, by the fruits of his life, and at last by his glorious coming in the clouds of glory. SHALL YE ALSO APPEAR WITH HIM IN GLORY. "This describes the last stage of the spiritual life—the glorification with Christ in heaven, manifesting what now is hidden, and perfecting what exists only in germ."

III. PUTTING OFF THE OLD MAN AND HIS DEEDS.—Vs. 5-9. "These verses contain the 'negative side' of Paul's appeal."

5. MORTIFY, Gr., "put to death," YOUR MEMBERS. "Perhaps suggested by our Lord's command to 'cut off the right hand' and 'pluck out the right eye' if they cause us to offend." WHICH ARE UPON THE EARTH. Rooted in the earthly passions. FORNICATION, UNCLEANNESS, etc. The strongest earthly passions and appetites under various names. INORDINATE, ungovernable, unrestrained AFFECTION, passions, CONSCIENCE, desires, all evil longings. "Paul wishes us to kill the various sins which once used our bodily powers as instruments of evil." COVERTOUSNESS, WHICH IS IDOLATRY, for it is the practical worship of wealth and material good, all the higher qualities of our nature being sacrificed and subordinated to them.

6. FOR WHICH THINGS SARE THE WRATH OF GOD, his intense hatred of these vile things, so repugnant to his holy nature, COMETH in the form of punishment.

7. WALKED . . . LIVED. These "two expressions involve two distinct ideas,

denoting the character of their actions, and the condition of their life."

8. ANGER . . . MALICE. Now follows a list of other sins which belong to the old nature, and which whoever is risen with Christ must put away. BLASPHEMY. Evil speaking, slander. FILTHY COMMUNICATION. The word means "filthy talking and foul abuse," one of the meanest, commonest, and most degrading of sins.

9. LIE NOT. Another very common sin. PUT OFF THE OLD MAN, the former nature, WITH HIS DEEDS, the natural expression of that nature. Put them off as one puts off his garments.

Intemperance is one of the worst and most typical manifestations of the old and worldly nature. It fosters all the evils spoken of above, as daintiness and darkness foster crawling insects and vermin. It is the hot house of crime. "When our judges tell us from the bench that nine-tenths of pauperism and crime are caused by drink, and our physicians that if only irregular tipping were abolished half the current sickness of the land would cease, and our statesmen that the ravages of strong drink are equal to those of the historical scourges of war, famine, and pestilence combined, surely to swallow such a glut of spoil 'the appetite of hell must have been still more enlarged, and the mouth of hell made yet wider.'"

IV. PUTTING ON THE NEW MAN AND HIS DEEDS.—Vs. 10-15. 10. AND HAVE PUT ON THE NEW MAN. The new nature, the new life, which makes such a change in one's character, motives, feelings and conduct that he becomes a new creature. WHICH IS RENEWED. Is being renewed; "a gradual renovation day by day of the new character which has once for all been put on." AFTER THE IMAGE OF HIM THAT CREATED HIM. Who made him into the new man. He is becoming like Christ and like God. IN KNOWLEDGE. "Spiritual growth is growth in intelligence."

11. WHERE. In this regenerate life. THERE IS NEITHER GREEK NOR JEW, etc. These mundane distinctions disappear. Whatever the nationality, or race, or culture, or outward circumstances, the new life is the same in all, a conformity to the image of Christ, a growth in his virtues.

12. PUT ON THEREFORE. As the necessary result of the new life. We speak of trees putting on their leaves, although the leaves grow out of the tree. So these graces should grow on all sides freely flourishing, till they form a beautiful garment. AS THE ERECT. The chosen ones of God, in whom he delights, for they are HOLY, consecrated in heart and life, thus belonging to God, and BELOVED of him as children are beloved of their parents. These two words describe the proof that one is chosen, and the love that accompanies the choice. BOWELS OF MERCIES. R. V., "a heart of compassion." The bowels then being considered to be the seat of pity and sympathy, as we now speak of the heart.

KINDNESS, from "his, kindness," having the feelings which befit a common nature. In the Greek the root of the word is "profitableness," that kindly disposition that would do good to others, profit them. HUMBLENESS OF MIND. Not in ignorance of one's powers, but absence of self-seeking and self-exaltation on account of them. MEEKNESS. Patience under injuries real or supposed; the opposite of revenge. The meek are not easily provoked or irritated. In order to be meek there must be LONGSUFFERING, patient endurance of the faults and disagreeable qualities of others. It is our business to be right and to do right, no matter what others do or say.

13. FORBEARING ONE ANOTHER. This is "meekness and longsuffering in exercise." Two words of household peace are the two "bears,"—"bear" and "forbear." To forbear is "to restrain and control one's self when provoked."

AND FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER, IF ANY MAN HAVE A QUARREL (R. V., "COMPLAIN," a cause of quarrel) AGAINST ANY. Such occasions are sure to rise, and there is only one way of treating them,—in the spirit of forgiveness. EVEN AS CHRIST FORGAVE YOU. We have been forgiven far greater offences than those which we must forgive.

14. AND ABOVE ALL THESE THINGS. Or over all as a bond or girdle; or as "the outer garment which holds the others in their places, the power which unites together all the graces which make up perfection." PUT ON CHARITY. LOVE. WHICH IS THE BOND OF PERFECTNESS. Not one of the other graces is perfect without love, and love binds all into one character, for love is a part of all, and produces all. It is the life of the tree that binds all the branches into one tree.

15. THE PEACE OF GOD. R. V., with the oldest MSS., reads "Christ." It is the peace which he gives (John 14:27): peace like his, peace with God, peace with men, peace of conscience, peace of forgiveness sin, peace from rest in God's love and care. TO THE WHICH (peace) ALSO



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WE ARE CALLED IN ONE BODY. The united church; the body of Christ. The one body must be at peace with itself, and accomplishes this through the spirit of peace in each member. This peace is as necessary in the family as in the church. AND BE YE THANKFUL. Thankfulness promotes peace and unity, and aids every virtue. Thank God for his peace "that passeth all understanding."

The New Brunswick University graduates this year a class of seven. "Science in New Brunswick in Relation to the University" was the title of the address in praise of the founders delivered by L. W. Bailey, professor of chemistry and natural science, at the encyclical exercises of the University.

A Stately Vessel.

See yonder stately vessel gliding
Majestic o'er the sparkling tide;
Her freight well stored, her sails unfurled,
By faith directed through the world;
She gayly speeds a gift to bear,
A priceless gift that all may share.

The Tribune Sunshine, clear and bright,
Whose tranquil beams of golden light,
Where'er our joy-crowned vessel goes,
Will shed a calm and sweet repose.

The lonely heart will catch its flame,
The toil-worn spirit bless its name—
The Tribune Sunshine, full of love,
Inspired and kindled from above.

Speed on, O vessel, o'er the wave,
No clouds to fear, no storms to brave;
For angel eyes a watch will keep,
And guide thee safely o'er the deep.

Speed on with steady course thy way,
While gentle zephyrs 'round thee play;
Speed on, thy precious freight to bear,
And scatter sunshine everywhere.

The Tribune Sunshine then shall rise,
And with the light that never dies
Its pure celestial radiance blend,
When earth shall cease and time shall end.

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