

Notes on the Bible Lessons

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, ON
THE INSTITUTE LEAFLETS.

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Trinity Sunday.

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BIBLE LESSON.

"The Holy Trinity."—Rev. iv. 1, 2.

We have a very solemn lesson to-day. Let us approach it in faith and humility. We saw last Sunday how essential a "right judgment" is, and our subject is one on which we can know nothing except what God tells us. That there are three persons in one God is a great mystery to us, we cannot understand it, but because God makes it known to us in His Word, we reverently believe it. We are reminded of the fact that God is three in one in all the services of the Church. The Prayerbook teaches us it, as often as we use it. After every psalm and canticle, "Glory be to, etc." In the creeds. In the Litany, see first petitions. At baptism we were baptised into the name of the Blessed Trinity, and at the end of the service we are dismissed with "the grace" etc., or the final blessing in the same Holy Name.

(1) *There are three Persons.*—In St. Matt. iii. 16, 17. We have first, the Father speaking, "This is My beloved Son." Second, the Son in the waters of Jordan, baptizeth by John. Third, the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove. In St. Matt. xxviii. 19, our blessed Lord Himself plainly mentions each Person. St. Paul too in 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Again, when God speaks, He sometimes says *Us*, not *I*. Of this we have had two instances in our present series, see Gen. i. 26. Gen. xi. 7. We worship each Person as God, "Such as the Father, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost." We have seen in a former lesson the special work of the Father, creation, Gen. i. 1. Of the Son Redemption, Rev. v. 9. Of the Holy Ghost, Sanctification, 2 Thess. ii. 13. Thus we see that there are three Persons.

(2) *They are one God.*—God is one. This is most undoubted, see Isaiah xlv. 6, xlv. 21, 22; St. Mark xii. 32; 1 Cor. viii. 4. Let us note that the same things are said of each Person. First, creation, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," Gen. i. 1. "By Him (*i.e.*, the Son), were all things created, Coloss. i. 16. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," Gen. i. 2. Second, Omniscient, (*i.e.*, Allseeing) (a) "known unto God in all his works from the beginning of the world," Acts xv. 18. (b) "And Jesus knowing all things" St. John xviii. 4. (c) "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God," 1 Cor. ii. 10. And so also we might see that Each is Almighty, Holy and Omniscient, and yet God is One. Then the Father is not the Son, "The Father loveth the Son," St. John iii. 35, see also St. Luke xxi. 42; Heb. vii. 25. The Father is not the Holy Ghost. "And I will pray the Father and He will give you another Comforter," St. John xiv. 16; Rom. viii. 26. The Son is not the Holy Ghost, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come," St. John xvi. 7; Heb. ix. 14. Here then we have, Father, Son, Holy Ghost, each separate from the other; each God; yet "not three Gods but one God." This is a great mystery to be received, with reverence and faith, even though we cannot understand it. *Three Persons in one God.* Seeing then how great God is, and far beyond our finite understanding; seeing also how much He has done for us, let us in all humility, believe what He has revealed of Himself "where reason fails let faith adore."

Let us make confession of this true faith. If not ashamed of our faith now, the Lord Jesus will not be ashamed of us hereafter, St. Matt. x. 33.

Let us worship this Triune God. Let this "worship" be our delight, and we may be sure that He who has given us this faith will "keep us steadfast" in it, and "evermore defend us from all adversities" here below. And let us not forget our

high privilege in belonging to a church which in all its services, keeps this "true faith" prominent. So while the church in heaven "rests not day and night" Rev. iv. 8, in saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," we also on earth continually cry, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," and even in the very words spoken in heaven, when we join in the Sanctus in the Communion Service.

Holy Father, Holy Son,
Holy Spirit, Three in One,
Hallelujahs round Thy throne
Rise eternally—Amen.

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WHIT-SUNDAY.

Whit Sunday, or the feast of Pentecost, is so called partly from the light and truth which were shed abroad this day to enlighten the world; and partly from the white garments which were worn by the baptized. In ancient times the holy sacrament of baptism was ordinarily administered on the two great festivals of Easter and Whit-Sunday. And the white robes, or chryssoms, which were put upon the Christians at their baptism, were laid up in the churches, and produced in evidence against them, if they should afterwards violate or deny the faith they had professed. The commemoration of this day must ever be one of deep interest to the Christian. It reminds us of the first great outpouring of the Holy Ghost, and teaches us most blessed truths about the Person and work of Him Who from that time forward became the life giving Spirit of Christ's Body the Church. It's through Him we are brought into union with our Divine Lord and Saviour. Through Him we are able to abide in Christ as His living members. Through Him the sacraments receive their efficacy. By Him our hearts are opened to see and know the truth, and all needful grace is given to enable us to fulfil the duties of life in a Christian way. By Him the whole work of Christ in the world is made efficacious, and we are prepared in body and soul for the blindness of those who prove faithful to the end.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

In the ancient Liturgies, this day was looked upon as the Octave of Pentecost. Later on, "the Church," says Bishop Sparrow, "thought it meet that such a mystery as the Trinity, though part of the meditation of each day, should be the chief subject of one, and this to be the day. For no sooner had our Lord ascended into heaven, and God's Holy Spirit descended upon the Church, but there ensued the notice of the glorious and incomprehensible Trinity, which before that time was not so clearly known. The Church, therefore, having solemnized in an excellent order all the high feasts of our Lord, and after, that of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, thought it a thing most seasonable to conclude these great solemnities with a festival of full, special, and express service to the Holy and Blessed Trinity."

THE TRUE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

It must never be forgotten that the Church of Christ is a temperance society instituted by God Himself, and that to it all other temperance societies must be auxiliary. St. Paul gives us the true key when he tells us that temperance is one of the fruits of the Spirit—that is, a Christian grace or virtue. Religion alone can furnish the strength to resist temptation, and save from falling. When men realize this, if they can be brought to repentance and prayer, there may be hope of real reform. Human law and its restraints may be valuable as a help, to a certain extent, the vicious may stand in fear of it, but it does not strike at the root of the evil, it does not reach the heart. No man was ever made better, no man was ever christianized by law. If the great evil of intemperance is ever to be done away with, it is by the preaching of the Gospel, by the spread of its principles, by touching the heart, by the divine law of love, which, while

it denounces drunkenness as sin, is still full of pitying tenderness, knowing that it is human to err and God-like to forgive.

(Churchman.)

OUR ABSENT ONES.

"The angel of the Lord campeth round about them that fear Him."

"He who keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

Round the evening board we gather,
Softly fades the waning light;
Where are they, our best beloved?
Far from us they'll rest to-night;
Far from home and far from kindred,
Rude their soldier couch is spread,
Angels! take them to your keeping!
Saviour! shield each slumbering head.

Let Thy pitying eye behold them,
Strangers in a stranger land;
Snarers and perils thick beset them,
Keep them with Thy mighty hand.
Deeper, deeper, fall the shadows—
Now the weary day is done—
Light of Lights! shine through their darkness,
Day and night to Thee are one.

While Thine angel campeth round them,
They can lay them down secure,
Sink to rest and fear no evil,
All their tents are guarded sure;
Wherefore are our spirits troubled
While their sentry is the Lord?
While the eye that never closes,
Round their camp keeps watch and ward.

Though the foe may hover nigh them,
Though the wild winds o'er them sweep,
He who keepeth Israel's armies,
Shall not slumber, shall not sleep;
Let not, then, our hearts be burdened!
What can hide them from his sight?
Saviour! take them to Thy keeping—
Far from us they'll rest to night.

THE CHURCH CATECHISM.

I did it ever strike you that the simple, noble, old Church Catechism, without one word about rewards and punishments, heaven or hell, begins to talk to the child like a true English Catechism, as it is, about that glorious old English key word, *Duty*? It calls on the child to confess its own duty, and teaches it that its duty is something, most human, simple, every day. *Commonplace* if you wish to call it so. And I rejoice in the thought that the Church Catechism teaches that the child's duty is commonplace. I rejoice that in what it says about our duty to God and our neighbour, it says not one word about counsels of perfection, or those frames and feelings which depend, believe me, principally on the state of people's bodily health, or the constitution of their nerves and the temper of their brain; but that it requires nothing except what a little child can do as well as a grown person, a labouring man as well as a divine, a plain farmer as well as the most refined, devout, imaginative lady.—*Kingsley.*

—The queer answers given by school children in their examinations, affords the papers much amusement. This is given as a genuine extract from an examination in the Bible. "What do you know of 'lepers' from the Old Testament?" A. "One was David, when he leapt before the Ark. The other was the gentleman, who, with the help of his God, leapt over the wall."

COMFORTING NEWS.—What a comfort and how very convenient to be able to have a Closet indoors, it being neither offensive nor unhealthy. "Heap's Patent" Dry Earth or Ashes Closets are perfectly inodorous. The commodes with urine separators, can be kept in a bedroom, and are invaluable in any house during the winter season, or in case of sickness; they are a well finished piece of furniture. Factory, Owen Sound Ont.