

Sunday School Advocate.

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THE HOUSE OF PRAYER.

"My house is a house of prayer."—LUKE XIX. 46.

Now, little ones, these words you have just read are in the Old Testament; but can you tell me who speaks it in the New?—(Jesus Christ.) Yes; we are going to talk about the time when He spoke them. He had been staying all night at a village called Bethany with three friends whom he dearly loved. Only think how sweet, to be somebody Jesus loved! Should not you like to be one? Well, you may, for he wishes the little children to come to Him, and loves them all. But we are not going to talk of this to-day.

In the morning he set off from—where? With whom had He been staying all night? He was going to Jerusalem, and the road led over the mountain called the Mount of Olives. Bethany was on one side, and the path went up the hill, and over the ridge, and down the other side to a little brook at the bottom, and Jerusalem was just over this little brook. You could see it a long, long way below you, very soon after you got over the top.—Jesus saw it, and He stopped a little, and He wept because the people were so wicked, they would not believe Him nor love Him.

What made Jesus cry? Do you treat Him so? Do you make Him sorry? Oh, don't any more.—Come to Him now, and tell Him you want to love Him, and beg Him to give you His Holy Spirit to turn you to love Him.

Well, would not you have been very sorry to see that, and would not you have run to Him at once? You can't do this now with your feet any more than you can see Him with your eyes, or hear Him with your ears; but you can go to Him in your hearts whenever you pray to Him or think of Him. He is here now, and He sees which little hearts love Him, and which are like the naughty ones in that great city.

There were some little children that day on the road, who seemed to love Him, for they came running along just before Him, and singing glad praises to Him.

Soon Jesus and all the people with Him got down the hill, and crossed the little brook, and went into the city. The grand temple where the Jews worshipped God was on that side of the town, very near the brook; so Jesus went directly to it. But when he got there, He saw oh! such a sad sight. There, where people ought to have gone to worship God, He saw some buying and some selling, and some ready to give change to those who wanted it. Minding their worldly work in God's house—in His house of prayer. Then that gentle, loving Lord Jesus was greatly shocked, and would not suffer them to go on doing so wickedly. He made a scourge—what is a scourge?—and drove them all out, saying those words we read. Yes; He said, "It is written"—that is, in the Old Testament, which was all the Bible they had in those days—"My house shall be called a house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves."

You see, then, how angry and sorry Jesus was when he saw people doing things in God's house which they ought not to have done. Now tell me have we any places where we ought to go to worship God, and where we ought never to do any other things? Yes, and I dare say you think how shocking it would be to find people buying and

selling at church, as, indeed, it would be. And you think nobody now would do such dreadful things. But remember, when we come to God's house of prayer, that if we think and talk about other things, we are just doing the very same wickedness which these people were doing.

In God's house we should pray to Him, and thank Him for all His goodness; we should sing hymns of praise to Him; we should listen to His word, and think about him, and not about anything else; for if we do, Jesus, who is there, and can see all that is going on, will be angry with us, too, and bid us remember we are in God's house.

Now think, dear little ones; do you never offend Jesus thus? What was all that clatter of tongues heard last Sunday when you first came into church? What was all that pushing on out of your proper places as you went up the aisle? Were you remembering then, "This is God's house of prayer I am going into; Jesus will be grieved and angry if I do anything here but worship God?" Indeed, indeed, dear children, I fear very many of you had not one thought about God and your Saviour Jesus. Oh, if He had then appeared plain-out among you, as He did in that temple at Jerusalem, how many of you would He have driven out, and said to you, "Make not My Father's house a house of play, and talk, and struggle for places?" Dear children, will you earnestly beg of Him to forgive you, and to make you very sorry for so forgetting what we ought to come to His house for? and to enable you never, never to do so any more, but always to remember when you are going in, "Ah, now this is God's house of prayer. Lord Jesus, keep me from talking, and laughing, and forgetting about God, lest Thou shouldest have to drive me out, and never let me come in again, either here or into Thy happy, happy home in heaven,—

"Where the dear little children of every clime
Shall crowd to his arms and be blest."

THE SWEET TEMPER.

No trait of character is more valuable in a female than the possession of a sweet temper. Home can never be made happy without it. It is like the flowers that spring up in our pathway, reviving and cheering us. Let a man go home at night, wearied and worn out by the toils of the day, and how soothing is a word dictated by a good disposition! It is sunshine falling upon the heart. He is happy, and the cares of life are forgotten. A sweet temper has a soothing influence over the minds of the whole family. Where it is found in the wife and mother, you observe kindness and love predominating over the natural feelings of a bad heart. Smiles, kind words and looks characterize the children, and peace and love have their dwelling there. Study, then, to acquire and retain a sweet temper. It is more valuable than gold, and captivates more than beauty, and to the close of life retains all its powers.

THE MINISTER AND A LITTLE GIRL.

A minister once went to preach in a western village where there was no house of God. He preached in the school house. A few people came, who did not seem to care much about God or his word. He preached a good many times; "and I had but one thing to encourage me," said the gentleman.

"What was it?"

"It was the attention of one little girl, who kept her eyes fixed on me, and seemed trying to understand every word I said," answered the gentleman. "She was a great help to me."

What! can a little child be a great help to a minister? Yes, O yes, How? By paying attention.

Think of that, my little ones, and when you go to church, fix your eye on the minister, and try to understand what he says, for he is speaking to you as well as grown-up people. He is telling about the Lord Jesus, who loves the little ones and said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

LITTLE FOLKS, DO YOU TEASE.

Tease your parents and friends? "May I do this!" or, "May I do that!" or, calling "Mother! mother! mother!" till even her ears are weary of your voices.

Some troublesome girls and boys always interrupt older persons when they are talking. They ask questions or make remarks, so that their elders cannot hear what is said. This is very rude and annoying.

Other troublesome ones are always complaining, "It is so hot, I'm almost melted," or else, "O, dear how my feet ache with the cold!" or "I've cut my finger; and how it aches!" and a thousand other complaints. Think a minute, little grumblers. If you live to grow up, you will have, probably, very serious pain to bear. You will very likely be obliged to endure more burning heat and sharper colds. If you complain now, what will become of you then? You need not say that you will be older then, and better able to bear these things. You will not be better able, unless you accustom yourselves to patience now.

Troublesome boys and girls may be amiable, generous, and obedient, and yet have very few friends, because their disagreeable ways will make them appear unlovely.

A little leaven of folly and discontent is sure to leaven the whole lump.

WANTING FRIENDS.

"I wish that I had some good friends to help me on in life!" cried lazy Dennis with a yawn.

"Good friends! why, you have ten!" replied his master.

"I'm sure I haven't half so many, and those I have are too poor to help me."

"Count your fingers, my boy," said his master.

Dennis looked down at his big, strong hands.

"Count thumbs and all," added the master.

"I have—there are ten," said the lad.

"Then, never say you have not ten good friends. able to help you on in life. Try what those true friends can do before you go to grumbling and fretting because you do not get help from others."

BAD BOOKS.

Do not read bad books, for the same reason that you would not associate with bad men. They will corrupt you. For the same reason, do not permit your children to use them. How many do this, when they would not suffer them to associate with the profane, intemperate and obscene! and yet the former is the more dangerous. Your children or yourself might be disgusted with the latter, and be put on their guard against corruption, while in the case of the former the evil is accomplished inadvertently and unawares. As good company and good good books will improve your manners and your morals, so bad company and bad books will impair and ruin them. A single volume may contaminate and lead to ruin; it may be the starting-point of departure from rectitude; it may place the reader beyond recovery.