

is abased in spirit and prostrated in soul before God ; he acknowledges himself a sinner and cries to God for mercy. Out of the depth of his need, from a desire to receive, he cries to God.

3. *True prayer will receive the divine regard.* "He shall pray unto God and he will be favorable unto him" (Job 33: 25). God has revealed himself as the hearer and answerer of prayer. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears are open to their cry." Though the Lord delay, yet he answers prayer. This is the experience of his people. God saw through the thin guise of the pharisee and Jespised his mockery and parade, while on the other hand he beheld the afflicted, contrite heart of the publican, he looked on him with compassion and delight. The mercy he sought was freely given. He retired rejoicing in the blessing of a merciful, prayer-hearing God.

4. *The great need of childhood—the blessing of Jesus.* These Jewish mothers knew something of Jesus, something of his wonderful teaching and his wonderful power. We are not at all surprised that they brought their children to him that they might receive his blessing. Is there not in this incident in the ministry of our Lord and in his treatment of the children, a very important lesson and a

very great encouragement? It sets before us that it is our duty to bring the children to the Lord by every possible means in our power, and have we not great encouragement when we remember his words and actions upon this occasion: "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

ADDED POINTS.

1. Prayer is one of man's greatest privileges.
2. We should cultivate the gift and habit of prayer.
3. He that needs much will pray much.
4. If we do not ask we shall not receive.
5. True prayer, like true piety, is always humble.
6. Man's true state and character, "a sinner."
7. His manifest need of mercy.
8. The hateful, ruinous nature of self-righteousness.
9. What a man gives thanks for is a good test of his character.
10. It is a blessed privilege to lead a child to Christ.
11. Jesus loves the children and bids them come to him.
12. The childlike characteristics of a true disciple: affection, trust, humility, teachableness, simplicity.

THE BLACKBOARD.

JESUS THE SAVIOUR

Teaching about TRUE SPIRIT OF PRAYER. (Catechism 98.)

"AS A LITTLE CHILD."

SPIRIT of Pharisee's UNANSWERED PRAYER.

PROUD, "I" "I"
 VAIN, "I"
 BOASTFUL, "I"
 UNCHARITABLE, "not even as this publican."
 SELF-SATISFIED, "I."

HE FELT NO NEED,—HE RECEIVED NO BLESSING.

SPIRIT of the Publican's ANSWERED PRAYER.

HUMBLE,
 EARNEST,
 PENITENT.

HE FELT GREAT NEED.—HE RECEIVED GREAT BLESSING.

"THE LORD LOOKETH ON THE HEART." (1 Sam. 16 : 7.)

"Suffer little children to come unto me."

Start out with the definition of PRAYER in the Catechism (Quest. 98.) and note each point in it. The TRUE SPIRIT OF PRAYER is "AS A LITTLE CHILD."

The prayers of the Pharisee and Publican are illustrations of the FALSE and TRUE spirit of prayer. Make the ATTITUDE of these two men clear ; and emphasize it by the words in the outline. Contrast the results ;—FELT NO NEED—RECEIVED NO BLESSING : CONFESSED GREAT NEED—RECEIVED GREAT BLESSING. Enforce the importance of having the heart right with God, for "THE LORD LOOKETH ON THE HEART." Close by showing the scholars,—especially those who are children—that, as Christ welcomes the Child Spirit, so He welcomes—INVITES EVEN LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO HIM.