

GOLDEN TEXT

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3: 16.

DAILY READINGS

M.—John 3: 1-10. / Jesus and Nicodemus.
T.—John 3: 11-21. /
W.—Num. 21: 4-9. The brazen serpent.
Th.—2 Cor. 5: 14-21. A new creature.
F.—Rom. 6: 1-7. The new life.
S.—Rom. 8: 1-11. In the Spirit.
S.—Rom. 5: 1-11. Wondrous love.

TIME

April, A.D. 27, near the time of the Passover, in the first year of our Lord's ministry.

PLACE

Jerusalem; in the house where Jesus was staying as guest.

CATECHISM

Q. 7. What are the decrees of God?
A. The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

LESSON PLAN

I. A Timid Inquirer, 1, 2.

Who came by night.

II. A Puzzling Answer, 3-13.

A new birth necessary, which a "master of Israel" ought to have understood, but did not.

III. The Way Made Plain, 14-18.

Through the Son of God's love, "lifted up" as the Savior of mankind.

LESSON HYMNS

16 (Ps. Sel.): 91; 129; 125; 131.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Juniors—Where does Jesus now go with His disciples?

1, 2 To what sect did Nicodemus belong? What position did he occupy? When did he come to Jesus? Why at that time? What did he say?

3-8 What did Jesus reply? What is meant by "the kingdom of God"? Why could not Nicodemus understand? What two agencies in the second birth? Who had baptized with water? "What is Baptism?" (Shorter Catechism, Q. 94.) To whom is the Holy Spirit given? (Luke 11: 13.) To whom does "ye" (v. 7) refer? What figure here used to express the new birth? How are the wind and the Spirit alike?

9-13 Why was Nicodemus puzzled? Why should he have known? Who included in "we"? (v. 11.) Who would not receive God's "witness"? How does Jesus speak of Himself? (vs. 12, 13.)

14-18 Describe the event recorded in Num. 21: 4-9. When was Christ lifted up? For whom? On what condition is eternal life given? To whom is the offer in v. 18 made? On whom are we to believe? What is the result of rejecting Christ?

Seniors—1, 2 On what three occasions do we read of Nicodemus? Who were the Pharisees? To what council did Nicodemus belong? What title of honor does he apply to Christ?

3-8 What is the truth here taught? (See also Matt. 18: 3.) How is the new birth effected? (James 1: 18; 1 Cor. 4: 15; 1 Pet. 1: 3.) How is it evidenced? (John 13: 35; 1 John 5: 18.) To what does "born of water" refer? "Born of the spirit"? Why should Nicodemus have understood these figures? What are the "works of the flesh"? (Gal. 5: 19-21.) What is "the fruit of the Spirit"? (Gal. 5: 22, 23.)

9-13 To what are some of the teachers compared? (Matt. 15: 14.) What is meant by "earthly things"? "Heavenly things"?

14-18 Give points of likeness between Christ and brazen serpent. Recite the Golden Text. (It is

called "the little Gospel.") Who included in "who-soever"? What response should we make to the love of God? (1 John 4: 19.)

Bible Side Lights—By Night—John 19: 39. Matt. 10: 23; John 12: 42.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD—Mark 10: 14, 15, 25; 12: 33, 34; Luke 9: 62.

FLESH AND SPIRIT—Gal. 5: 16-26; Rom. 7: 14-25; 8: 5-9.

BORN OF THE SPIRIT—1 John 5: 1, 4; 1 John 2: 29; 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19.

THE SON OF MAN—Dan. 7: 13; Matt. 8: 20; 9: 6; 13: 41; 25: 31.

Practical Points—1. It is best to go with our doubts to those who are in sympathy with the truth.

2. As in nature, so in grace, Christ works from within outward. There can be no real reformation in the individual or in society which does not start from within. Rules and laws are like iron pillars. A new heart like the growing trunk of the tree.

3. Like begets like. A man's character is known by his actions. If we have been born again, the fruits of the Spirit will be seen in our lives.

4. We can breathe the air without understanding how breathing maintains life. So we may enjoy the blessings of the Spirit, without understanding how it is.

5. Sin is a deadly serpent. Only Christ can heal. "So from the Savior on the Cross A healing virtue flows."

6. Love reaches its highest in the gift of Jesus, God's sending His own Son to die for men. We cannot tell its depth. We can only wonder and adore (vs. 16, 17).

7. How awful! men may be lost in spite of all that Christ has done!

FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. How only can we enter into the kingdom of God?

2. In what respects is the Spirit like the wind?

3. Explain "lifted up" in v. 14