

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

A.D. 62, 63.] LESSON VII. [May 17.

PHILIPPIAN CONTENTMENT.

Phil. 3. 1-14. Commit to mem. vs. 1-7.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The God of peace shall be with you. —Phil. 4. 9.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Joy, contentment, peace, repose in God, are lessons learned in the school of Christ.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Phil. 3. 1-11. Th. Matt. 6. 19-34.
T. Phil. 3. 12-21. F. Ps. 103. 1-22.
W. Phil. 4. 1-23. Sa. Ps. 107. 1-15.
Su. 1 Tim. 6. 6-19.

TUNE, etc.—See last lesson.

INTRODUCTION.—The Philippian Church were exposed to three trials, (1) from persecutors; (2) from poverty; (3) from some quarrelsome members, besides the usual trials of life. Paul comforts and exhorts them how to bear these trials. And the exhortation to joy and contentment comes with peculiar grace from one who was in prison, and liable any moment to martyrdom, and yet was full of joy and content.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—5. *Your moderation*—Your forbearance; that yieldingness which urges not its own rights to the uttermost. 6. *Be careful*—Anxious, distracted with care. 7. *The peace of God*—Peace which is like God's; peace which God gives; peace with God, with nature, with ourselves, with others. 8. *Honest*—Honourable. 9. *Your care hath flourished again*—As the trees flourish and revive in the spring, after the deadness of winter. 11. *To be content*—Contentment is not the stupidity which desires no more; nor indifference; nor laziness; nor fatalism; but repose in God's love and care. Making the most of all God gives us, using every opportunity for bettering our condition without murmuring over what we cannot help; and trusting God perfectly in it. 12. *I am instructed*—I have learned the secret.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—Christian joy, its source and its usefulness.—"Careful," the change of meaning in the word.—Christian contentment.—The peace of God.—Thinking on noble things.—Paul's school, and what he learned in it.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—To what trials was the Philippian Church exposed? How might these tend to make them discontented? Where was Paul when he wrote this Epistle? Had he learned the lesson of contentment? How would this fit him to give this advice to the Philippians?

SUBJECT: THE ELEMENTS AND MEANS OF CHRISTIAN CONTENTMENT.

I. JOY (v. 4).—Ought the Christian to be the happiest of men? Why? How does Christian joy differ from pleasure? From a disposition to look on the bright side of things? What is it to rejoice in the Lord? Whose joy is the Christian's like? (John 15. 11.) What were the elements of Christ's joy? Why is a happy Christian the most useful Christian?

II. FORBEARANCE (v. 5).—What is meant by "moderation" in this verse? How does Paul explain it in two other epistles written about this time? (Eph. 4. 2; Col. 3. 13.) How will this forbearing love help us to be contented? What motive does he give for this virtue?

III. PRAYER OF FAITH (v. 6).—Meaning of "careful" here? How may we avoid undue anxiety? What three elements of prayer are noted in this verse? About what things are we here taught to pray? How does believing prayer help us to be contented? (1 Pet. 5. 7; Heb. 4. 15, 16; Matt. 7. 7-11.)

IV. THE PEACE OF GOD (v. 7).—What is the peace of God? (John 14. 27.) How does Paul describe it? How may it be obtained? (Gal. 5. 22; John 16. 33.) How does faith in God give us peace?

V. THINKING ON NOBLE THINGS (v. 8).—On what does Paul bid us think? Why on what things are true? Just? Honourable? Pure? Lovely? Of good report? Virtuous? Praiseworthy? How will thinking on these things help us to overcome evil thoughts? How will such thoughts make us good?

VI. DOING THEM (v. 9).—Whose example and teaching does Paul exhort them to "follow"? Will thinking on good things help us to do them? Will doing them help us to think upon them? Is either one enough when alone?

VII. MAKING OTHERS HAPPY (v. 10).—What had the Philippians done for Paul? (14.) Had they helped him before? (Phil. 4. 15; 2 Cor. 11. 9.) What can we do to make others happy? How will this help us to be contented?

VIII. THE SCHOOL OF CONTENTMENT (vs. 11-13).—What is true contentment? Is it a hindrance or a help to progress? Where did Paul learn to be contented? Who helped him to be right and feel right in all these troubles?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. The happy Christian shows to the world how good a master he serves.
2. The Christian cannot avoid having enemies, but he can make them help him show to the world a Christian and forbearing spirit.
3. Repose in God and believing prayer are great aids to contentment.
4. We should cherish all the virtues, and be complete in character.
5. By thinking on noble things we become noble ourselves.
6. Paul was a learner in the school of life with its various experiences, and Christ for his teacher.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in concert.)

13. To what privileges and duties does Paul invite us in this lesson? **ANS.** Joy, peace, contentment. 14. How may we attain them? (Repeat v. 6.) 15. What will be the answer? (Repeat v. 7.) 16. On what things should we love to think? (Repeat v. 8.)

A.D. 64, 65.] LESSON VIII. [May 24.

THE FAITHFUL SAYING.

1 Tim. 1. 15-20, and 2. 1-6. Commit to mem. vs. 15-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.—1 Tim. 1. 15.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Jesus Christ is the one Saviour for all men.

DAILY READINGS.

M. 1 Tim. 1. 1-20. Th. 1 Tim. 4. 1-16.
T. 1 Tim. 2. 1-15. F. 1 Tim. 5. 1-25.
W. 1 Tim. 3. 1-13. Sa. 1 Tim. 6. 1-11.
Su. 1 Tim. 6. 12-21.

DATE.—The First Epistle to Timothy was probably written A.D. 64 or 65, a year or two after Paul's release from prison at Rome.

PLACE.—Probably from Corinth, to Timothy at Ephesus, of whose church he was pastor.

AUTHOR.—St. Paul, aged 62 or 63. He was released from prison March, A.D. 63, not long after he had written the Epistle to the Philippians. From Rome he went to Antioch, Colosse, Ephesus, Crete, Greece, and perhaps to Spain.

TIMOTHY.—Born at Lystra, in Lyconia, Asia Minor, about A.D. 30. His father was a Greek and a heathen; his mother Lois, and grandmother Eunice, were Jewesses, and became Christians during Paul's first missionary journey, A.D. 51. On his second journey Paul associated Timothy with him, and he was Paul's almost constant companion till this time, A.D. 64, when Paul sent him to preside over the church at Ephesus. He died a martyr, probably about A.D. 96.

INTRODUCTION.—Paul, having left Timothy for a time, writes him a long letter full of the wisest advice.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—15. *A faithful saying*—One worthy of being believed. *Of whom I am chief*—In the light of his present experience of goodness, his past sins seem exceedingly great. Only God's love is greater. 16. *In me first*—Not in point of time, but the chief. *A pattern*—An example of how God's love can change the greatest sinners. 17. *Amen*—A Hebrew word meaning "truth," "so let it be." 18. *Son Timothy*—Not his natural but his spiritual son. Timothy had acted like a son to the older Paul, and was loved as a son. *The prophecies*—The things foretold in his early life, and at his ordination, that he should do. He was a young man of promise. *By them*—As an aid. 20. *Hymeneus*—Probably the

false teacher of 2 Tim. 2. 17. *Alexander*—The copper-smith 2 Tim. 4. 14.) These were examples in Ephesus of the truth just spoken. *Whom I am chief*—Excommunicated from the church, and perhaps allowed Satan to afflict their bodies and torment their souls with remorse. 4. *Who will have all men saved*—God wishes men all to be saved. He has prepared salvation for all, invites all, loves all, has sent his Spirit upon all. If any fail, it is because they refuse to be saved. 5. *One God*—For all men, one Saviour for all, one God seeking the salvation of all; therefore we should pray for all, and seek the salvation of all.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—Paul's life after he was released from prison.—Timothy—His position at the time of this letter.—The First Epistle to Timothy.—Paul the chief of sinners.—The good warfare.—Faith and a good conscience.—Prayer for all men.—God's desire that all be saved.—Christianity as the universal religion.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Where did Paul go after he was released from prison at Rome? From what place did he write this letter? To whom? What can you tell about Timothy? Where was he at this time? What doing?

SUBJECT: SALVATION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

I. THE SAVIOUR (vs. 15, 5, 6).—What was a faithful saying? Why is it worthy of being believed? How could Jesus come into the world? Why did he come? What did he do that sinners might be saved? What is meant by his being a Mediator? A ransom? Could not God have saved sinners without the atonement of Christ? (Acts 4. 12; Heb. 9. 22.) Give your idea of how salvation comes through Jesus Christ.

II. AN EXAMPLE OF THIS SALVATION (vs. 15, 16).—What did Paul call himself? Why? (1 Tim. 1. 13.) What had he thought of himself formerly? (Acts 26. 5, 9.) Why did he obtain mercy? Of what was he an example? How is this an encouragement to believe, and to labour for others?

III. PRAISE FOR THE SALVATION (v. 17).—By what words does Paul represent God? How does salvation by Jesus honour and glorify God?

IV. THE HUMAN SIDE OF SALVATION (vs. 18-20).—What charge did Paul lay upon Timothy? What is meant by "the prophecies that went before on him"? What warfare is referred to? What two things are mentioned as necessary to success in it? What is it to "hold fast"? What is a good conscience? Why must the two go together? What is the result of putting away a good conscience? Who had done it? What befell them for it? Meaning of "delivered unto Satan." What was the object of this punishment?

V. PRAYERS FOR THE PROGRESS OF SALVATION (vs. 1-3).—What four kinds of prayer are here named? Why should we pray for all men? Why especially for our rulers? Are we ever selfish even in our prayers? Under what circumstances will Christianity make most progress?

VI. GOD'S DESIRE FOR THE SALVATION OF ALL MEN (vs. 4-6).—What does God desire for all men? Name some other Scriptures that express this feeling? (Ezek. 18. 31, 32; 33. 11; 2 Pet. 3. 9.) What has God done to show this desire? What must men do to be saved? What argument in vs. 4, 5 why we should pray for all men and seek their salvation.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. Jesus Christ is the one great Saviour of all men.
2. The more holy any one grows the worse does sin appear in his eyes.
3. The Christian life is a warfare against sin in the heart and in the world.
4. No one can keep the Christian faith unless he lives the Christian life.
5. God desires the salvation of all men.
6. If any are not saved, it is because they refuse the salvation God has prepared for them.
7. We should pray and labour for the salvation of all men.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in concert.)

17. Who is the one Saviour of men? (Repeat the Golden Text.) 18. Give an example of his salvation. **ANS.** Saul, the persecutor, changed into Paul the apostle. 19. What must we do in this salvation? **ANS.** "Holding fast and a good conscience." 20. What does God desire for all men? (Repeat v. 4.) 21. What should we do? **ANS.** Labour and pray that all men may be brought into the kingdom of God.

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