



LESSON IX.—NOVEMBER 28.

Salutary Warnings.

I. Peter iv., 1-8. Read the whole of I. Peter. Commit verses 7, 8. (May be used as a temperance lesson.)

International Temperance Sunday.

GOLDEN TEXT.

'Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.' (I. Pet. iv., 7.)

Home Readings.

- M. I. Pet. i., 1-25.—Exhortation to godliness.
- T. I. Pet. ii., 1-25.—Warning against fleshly lusts.
- W. I. Pet. iii., 1-22.—Exhorting to unity and love.
- Th. I. Pet. iv., 1-19.—Salutary warnings.
- F. I. Pet. v., 1-14.—'Be sober, be vigilant.'
- S. Titus ii., 1-15.—'Live soberly, righteously, and godly.'
- S. Heb. xiii., 1-25.—'Let brotherly love continue.'

Lesson Story.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, was writing to Christians scattered throughout different parts of Asia Minor. His letter would be read by one church, and then sent on to another city, when one of the members of the church was going. He writes chiefly to encourage those who are in danger of persecution, and who constantly met with difficulties of one kind or another from their heathen neighbors. He also exhorts them with regard to many duties of daily life, and both in the encouragement and in the exhortations he refers repeatedly to the great fact that gives Christianity its power to comfort and to move to action: 'Christ hath suffered for us.' In this chapter he turns the thought, as St. Paul sometimes did. We are to have the mind of Christ, and as he died, so we must be in a certain sense dead to the world. That is, we are no longer to be swayed by the foolish desires and ungovernable impulses that make for some people so large a part of their 'life,' but we must live the rest of 'our time in the flesh,' in a straight line, with one fixed purpose, to do and suffer the glorious will of God. 'Surely,' says the apostle in effect, 'you have followed the will of heathenism long enough.' And he enumerates the things that a large part of the world still follows as its life and its will. 'Others think it strange that you run not with them to the same eager self-destruction, but while they scoff at you, they must account to God for their own actions.' And in view of this judgment which is universal and comes soon to each of us, Peter warns even those who are Christians that they must, so to speak, keep their wits about them,—never let the mind be muddled with wine or unbalanced by unworthy excitements, but be always sane enough to act rightly, and calm enough to pray. Do some think this a cold, negative, uninteresting ideal of life? The apostle adds that the most important thing of all is to have charity. Not 'cold charity,' but charity that is fervent, i.e., warm, intense, positive. Our religious life may have many imperfections, but if one of its chief characteristics is a hearty love for other Christians, it will surely be pleasing to God. It will also commend itself to the unconverted, and our interest in other lives will greatly brighten our own path.

Lesson Hymns.

O, brother, life's journey beginning,  
With courage and firmness arise!  
Look well to the course thou art choosing;  
Be earnest, be watchful, and wise!  
Remember, two paths are before thee,  
And both thy attention invite;  
But one leadeth on to destruction,—  
The other to joy and delight.

O, brother yield not to the tempter,  
No matter what others may do;  
Stand firm in the strength of the Master,  
Be loyal, be faithful, and true!  
Each trial will make you the stronger,  
If you, in the name of the Lord,  
Fight manfully under your Leader,  
Obeying the voice of his word.

O, brother, the Saviour is calling!  
Beware of the dangers of sin;  
Resist not the voice of the Spirit,  
That whispers, so gently within.  
God calls you to enter his service—  
To live for him here, day by day;  
And share by and by in the glory,  
That never shall vanish away.

Lesson Hints.

Verse iii., 'Banquetings.' Revised version, 'Carousings,' refers to drinking bouts. The 'abominable idolatries,' were rites of idol worship of a vicious character, associated with festivals in which intoxicants were freely indulged in. We know that drink is responsible for a very large proportion of the crimes for which people are put in prison, but who can say how much more sin and vice, unpunished by law, is due directly to the action of alcohol in reducing man's self-control and sense of honor?

Verse vi., A puzzling passage, often explained by reference to chapter iii., 18, 19, 20, and the belief of the early Church that Christ descended into Hades.

Primary Lesson.

Did you ever see a rat-trap, one of those cruel, iron-toothed springs? Small chance for a rat to escape if once he tries for the bait in that trap.

Do you know that some cruel boys set traps for all sorts of harmless little animals in the woods. They spread some kind of tempting bait around the trap, and cleverly hide the spring or catch. There are many kinds of traps, some to catch animals, some to catch birds and some to catch children.

Satan lays traps to catch boys and girls—traps of every kind, and surrounded by the most tempting baits. One of these traps is the saloon. Just as the little squirrel walks unsuspectingly into the trap set for it, so a boy often walks into a saloon without seeing what a dangerous trap it is. The saloon is a trap far more cruel and strong than the worst-looking rat-trap, and it catches thousands of boys every year. After a few years of what may seem to them pleasure, they suddenly find themselves poor, miserable drunkards, hopeless slaves to their own unholy appetites. Did you ever notice a fly-paper, with dead flies around it? The other flies can see the warning of death, yet they try the paper for themselves with the same result. Silly flies, to go into danger with their eyes open—yet no more silly than the boy who sees the old drunkard on the street and thus warned, goes into the same danger himself.

Boys, beware of Satan's traps!

Search Questions.

Give six texts on resisting temptation.

SUGGESTED HYMNS.

'Yield not to Temptation,' 'Have courage, my boy, to say, No,' 'Stand up, stand up for Jesus,' 'O, Jesus, I have promised to serve Thee to the end,' 'Watch and pray.'

Practical Points.

November 28, 1897.

I. Peter iv., 1-8.

Again and again in this epistle Peter speaks of the sufferings of Christ. He could not forget how he had increased the sufferings of his Master. Verse 1. Also Luke xxii., 61.

Recollections of past sins should not act like a damper to check the fire of grace in the heart of the Christian. Rather should they cause a bitter hatred of all sin, and prepare the heart to beat with more love to Christ. Verses 2, 3.

The natural man cannot discuss spiritual things, and therefore wonders why the Christian hates what the worldling loves. But the believer remembers that his Saviour will also be his judge. Verses 4, 5.

Those dead in sin are to have the gospel preached to them. If they reject it, they are condemned only for their own act of re-

jection. If they accept it, the New Testament is to be their rule of life. Verse 6.

Love and fervent prayerfulness go a long way towards preserving a sound mind. Verses 7, 8.

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Christian Endeavor Topic.

Nov. 28.—How can we consecrate ourselves to the temperance and similar reforms?—Luke i., 5-17. (International Temperance Sunday.)

Junior Prayer-Meeting Topic.

Nov. 28.—What do you want to do for the temperance cause? Luke i., 5-17. (International Temperance Sunday.)

Open Arms.

'We know that a child can be captured for sin very early in life, and can enter into the wrong so deliberately in life's morning that we find young children in workhouses and other houses of correction. But can the child not learn the right as soon as it knows the wrong? Can it not be captured to obey the teachings of heaven as soon as it obeys the temptations of sin? The world is ever astir to place these temptations before our youth. Children that were considered disturbers and too small to be brought to church are never ordered away from a saloon or other branch offices of hell. They are welcomed there with open arms. Let us learn a lesson here. Let us also stand with open arms to welcome the children into our churches, Sunday-schools and places of entertainment that are surrounded by Christian influences and wholesome attractions. Let us endeavor to capture the children in their earliest years and attract their attention to the side of truth, and pre-occupy the field before the devil's legions have captured the soul and obtained the first advantage of possession.

Another reason why we should capture the child thus early for God and the Church is, that we can do it much easier now than afterwards. It is not necessary that children should become criminals at an early age in order to furnish a cause for the Church to appeal to them afterwards to become converted. And let us consider that if we take a child in his early years and get his influence for the right, we shall keep him when he is grown to be a man. This subject appeals especially to the hearts and responsibility of parents, ministers of the gospel and Sunday-school teachers.—Bishop William Horn.

The Harvest.

The Baptist Board of Missions got tired of waiting for the seed to germinate in the Telugu soil of India, and were ready to give up the work and withdraw. But a few patient, faithful workers refused to withdraw, and soon after, ten thousand were baptised in one year! The Lord's patience is great. If he can wait for the harvest his servants can.—'Regions Beyond.'

Every Sunday-school should have a magnetism of its own. Personal contact of officers and teachers with members of the school is needed to arouse their moral energy, and inspire them to lofty achievement. Live, energetic teaching, good music, and a spirit of harmony pervading the whole, will cultivate in each scholar a desire to be present regularly, and, what is better, a liking for bible study. Often the enthusiasm of the school will leap the barriers of established precedent, and demand something new. To satisfy this longing and sustain the interest in the school requires much painstaking labor and a careful study of best methods. But resolutely and earnestly always means successfully, and this is especially true of Christian service. Consecrated devotion to the best interests of the school will reap an ample reward in seeing this band go forth each succeeding Sabbath with broader ideas of life and nobler conceptions of their own usefulness.—H. A. Lane.

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