



LESSON III.—July 15, 1906.

## The Good Samaritan.

Luke x., 25-37.

### Golden Text.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.—Matt. v., 7.

### Home Readings.

Monday, July 9.—Luke x., 25-37.  
 Tuesday, July 10.—Luke x., 1-24.  
 Wednesday, July 11.—Matt. xxv., 31-46.  
 Thursday, July 12.—II. Kings vii., 24-35.  
 Friday, July 13.—John iv., 9-24.  
 Saturday, July 14.—James ii., 14-26.  
 Sunday, July 15.—James ii., 14-26.

(By Davis W. Clark.)

Another pearl in the lovely and priceless strand of our Lord's thirty-three parables, one of unusual size, weight, and lustre, claims our attention.

It is hard for us Occidentals to appreciate the license taken by Oriental audiences in the midst of public discourse. They express their approval or dissent not only by facial and manual gesture, but by audible word. Discussions spring up among the auditors, and the speaker often has a running accompaniment of comment. So it was no novel thing that in the midst of Jesus' discourse the voice of a teacher of the Jewish law rang out, 'Rabbi, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?'

It was a mere dialectic gauntlet tossed at Jesus' feet. The schoolman would fain convert that Perea road into an arena where he could display his hardihood and skill with his logical lance. He should at least be given the benefit of a doubt of having any special animosity against Jesus. Sacred things to him had lost their sacredness. Law and prophets were only an armory for wit and subtlety.

The Master takes him upon his own ground. 'Thou art versed in the law. Mayhap you have an answer in the text-box of your own phylactery?' The lawyer's response is quick and apposite. As in a flash one sees how superior the religion of the old covenant was to the current religion of Judaism. They had ceased to be identical. The religion of God was love, but the religion of Pharisaism was a narrow and cold system of dialectics.

The lawyer, conscious of his inability to keep the law in its full breadth, would fain enter his Pharisaical refinement upon it in the question, 'Who is my neighbor?' Jesus has driven the matter home to his heart, but he will dexterously fend it off with its dialectic. Jesus finds the pledge of eternal life in the subjective state; this religious dodger begs to know the objective status of those toward whom he is to exercise himself. If they are Jews and friends he will love them. More than that the paraphrases, targums, and what-nots of Pharisaism do not require of him.

At this point the wideness and purity of the love which God instills in the penitent and trustful soul is flashed out in one of the most incomparable parables that ever dropped even from the lips of Him who spake as never man did.

The site of the story was notable, not to say notorious; the personae, a wounded traveller, a priest, a Levite, a Samaritan. The priest and Levite show us how not to do it. They palliate and excuse themselves. The sufferer may not be a Jew; if so, the law, as they interpret it, makes no demand upon them. Even if a Jew, he might die while

they were binding up his wounds; and if he did, they would be ceremonially polluted and disqualified from temple service. Ah! how they had failed to learn that, if God could not have both mercy and the ceremony of sacrifice, he would choose mercy always.

The Samaritan does not stop to parley; he just neighbors the unfortunate man, and that is the end of it. He does it heartily and thoroughly. That naked and ensanguined form makes its own plea to him, and makes it not in vain as to the others. He opens both heart and pocket. The commercial traveller is transformed into the trained nurse as he sits the night watches through by the sufferer's side. Only, when he reached the boundary of another duty did he leave him. Even then he projected his aid into the future by the deposit he made, and the pledge he left.

Again, and this time beyond appeal, Jesus casts the matter back into the heart of his interlocutor, where it belonged, saying: 'Who neighbored the unfortunate man?' To this, of course, there could be but one answer: 'He who, rid of all racial prejudice and all selfishness, loved his fellow, and that, too, in none of the sentimentalism which etherealized in sighs and tears and flourish of lavender-scented cambric, but materialized in wine, oil, and pence, a saddle and a couch.'

Any Christianity which falls short in this test is unworthy of the name of Him who said, 'Do thou likewise.'

### ANALYSIS AND KEY.

1. A pearl of a parable.  
Greatest in the strand in some respects.
2. Circumstances under which spoken  
Freedom of Oriental audiences.
3. A question interjected.  
Only a dialectic gauntlet.
4. Jesus' skill. Takes man on his own ground.  
Has him answer his own question.  
Decline of practical religion revealed.  
Love vs. Dialectics.
5. Dialectical refinement upon 'neighbor' attempted.
6. Jesus responds with the incomparable parable.  
Term neighbor not defined.  
Subjective state which makes a man neighbor to every one illustrated.
7. Terse application.  
'Do thou likewise!'

### THE TEACHER'S LANTERN.

To this day a public speaker in the East needs to be ready at repartee. He is a target for questions which, if he can not answer or foil, he instantly loses prestige with his auditors. A missionary in the streets of Bombay was getting on famously with his hearers until a pundit passing called out contemptuously: 'The man who invented illuminating gas did more for the world than your Jesus!' The missionary retorted: 'When the man comes to die he'll send for a gas-fitter, I suppose.' The speaker more than regained his audience.

The lawyer saw an opportunity to air his erudition—to tempt this influential rabbi into the mazes of cunning dialectics and subtle casuistry, in which he hoped to snare him, and thus elevate himself in public esteem.

Do to inherit: The question is based on the false notion that eternal life is of works. There is no consciousness of human inability and guilt. The lawyer would not have known what that means—

'Lay your deadly doing down,  
All down at Jesus' feet.'

But the lawyer finds the way of legality as hard and forbidding as Bunyan's pilgrim. He hedges right away. He can love his neighbor, if he is allowed to define the term neighbor.

Jesus does not Himself define the term neighbor; but by an example, irresistible in its charm, He shows that subjective state

of heart which makes a man neighbor to all his fellows.

Divine religion has its mark in that it is epitomized with extraordinary facility. The scribes heaped up great caustical burdens for men's backs. Their prohibitions and positive precepts were fairly bewildering and interminable. But Jesus sweeps them all aside, puts instead of them one word—Love.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way—better by concurrence. A better definition could not be given; not, indeed, by providence, which is a heathen abstraction for which the Bible has no equivalent, but for the concrete reality of God's providing. He provides through a concurrence of circumstances, all in themselves natural and in the succession of ordinary causation (and this distinguishes it from the miracle), but the concurring of which is directed and overruled by him. And this helps us to put aside those coarse tests of the reality of prayer and of the direct rule of God which men some time propose. Such stately ships ride not in such shallow waters. Luke x (Edersheim II., 238.)

### C. E. Topic.

Sunday, July 15.—Topic—How can I be a true friend? Prov. xvii., 17, 18, 24, 27; ix., 17, 19; Eccl. iv., 9, 10.

### Junior C. E. Topic.

#### OUR ADVISERS.

Monday, July 9.—Rehoboam the king.  
Kings xi., 43.  
 Tuesday, July 10.—The people's request.  
I. Kings xii., 1-5.  
 Wednesday, July 11.—The old men's advice.  
II. Chron. x., 6, 7.  
 Thursday, July 12.—The young men's advice.  
II. Chron. x., 8-11.  
 Friday, July 13.—Results of bad advice.  
I. Kings xii., 13-30.  
 Saturday, July 14.—Solomon's advice.  
Prov. xxii., 16-23.  
 Sunday, July 15.—Topic—Good advisers and bad ones.  
I. Kings xii., 6-11.

### Good Singing.

'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord.' We might add that it be as general and harmonious as possible. Good singing is one of the necessities in a good Sunday school. 'Let all the people praise thee.' How often have we gone into schools where there was only a piece of a book for about four or five persons. Where the books are few and what there are, are old and torn, you can set it down that everything else is on the ragged edge. Young life delights in variety. Let that variety be well selected. We must not despise these things. It would be the beginning of a revival if some schools we know of would make a contribution to the rubbish pile and stock up. The best evidence of life is life. It will only show itself where it exists. It can't exist very long where the spirit and desire for better things are lacking. Sing up! The world moves. This grace is progressive.—'Evangelical.'

### Give the Best.

You owe it to your class and to your Lord to give the best you have at every opportunity. Thorough preparation is one of the essentials. You must have it to do your best. One of the best ways is a teachers' meeting. This should be more than a place for the mere study of the lesson. It should throw light on the hard problems of study and government and give spiritual inspiration and renewal of strength. If there is no general teachers' meeting, two or three teachers might have one of their own, taking an hour each week for it. Bible-hungry and soul-loving teachers can find some way to perfect their preparation.—'Evangelical.'