

4. **Loyal.** "Ye would love me," v. 42.  
 "Love of Christ constraineth." 2 Cor. 5. 14.  
 "Love me....keep my words." John 14. 23.

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### Believers and Unbelievers.

There are two classes of people, and only two, according to God's estimate: those who accept Christ, and those who reject him. It is very important for every person to decide to which of these two classes he belongs (verse 31).

1. *Those who believe in Christ receive his word*, know the truth, and have all that the truth brings to them; while those who reject Christ are in blindness, ignorance, and darkness. How utterly these Jews misapprehended spiritual truth, because they would not accept Christ, who is the truth (verse 32).

2. *Those who believe have liberty*, while those who believe not are in slavery. Compare the saint with the sinner—which enjoys the greater freedom? (Verses 33-36.)

3. *Those who believe are children of God*; those who believe not are children of Satan. To the one there is a likeness to God; to the other, a likeness in deed and character to their master (verses 37-44).

4. *Those who believe honor God*; those who believe not dishonor him in the person of his Son (verses 45-50).

5. *Those who believe have eternal life*; those who believe not have eternal death (verse 51).

### Lesson Word-Pictures.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

Still teaching in the temple, his voice rising and falling in waves of sound, breaking, alas, on a too often cold and unsympathetic shore. There are some responsive and believing hearts before the Saviour, though. There is Nathan. Can't you pick him out, the one at the very feet of Jesus, getting up as close to him as possible?

You look down into his face and catch the expression of a simple, frank, ingenuous nature. To-day there is a happy light in those clear, trusting, shining eyes. He has lately accepted and is implicitly following the word of Jesus. He did have a great, unsatisfied hunger for God and for the truth. Where could he get the bread he craved? He has seen the manifestation of God in Jesus. He saw it one day at the Bethesda pool, when hungering for proof that God took notice of human pain. He saw compassionate eyes fastened on a bed-ridden form, and with the compassion went a voice of divine power, and the man went away, his bed on his back. "That is God," murmured Nathan, "stooping down to beds of pain."

He saw, too, a rough crowd hustling an erring woman before Jesus one day when Nathan was himself hungry for forgiveness. He saw the same crowd, conscience-smitten, stealing away from the presence of the Prophet and heard a voice of pity say to the woman: "Neither do I condemn thee." The voice thrilled the soul of Nathan, and he said: "That is God forgiving my sin."

Then Nathan heard Jesus that last great day of the feast calling to the fountain every thirsty soul. Nathan was one who drank. He received to his soul a new idea of God's mercy and God's accessibility. It has been like a coming out of bondage. There has been in his ear a sound of falling chains. He has come into the liberty of the truth as it is in Jesus. Blessed freedom, a new life with wide, open, far-reaching spaces! There he is at the feet of Jesus, with happy, trusting, glowing eyes! He cannot tell his joy, only look it. But who is that other man in the temple crowd also pressing up to Jesus, but for a different reason? He looks as if he would clutch at Jesus and pull him down and drag him out of the temple-courts even as a polluted thing. He has a scowl on his face, and his black eyes are two small thunder-clouds, out of which flash the fires of hatred and pride. It is Ben-Issachar, the very man, though, that in prayer-time will swell with phylacteries, the worshiper, too, in the synagogue who not only has a front seat, but spreads himself out over two of them. Above all, it is his boast, he is a son of Abraham! Only this morning he went down the long dusty ancestral line, fumbling over the links till he came to the biggest of them all, Ben-Issachar! And now, he says, this upstart from Galilee is talking about the freedom of the truth! Is not a descendant of Abraham free?

Hark! It is Ben-Issachar with others snarling out, "We be Abraham's seed!"

Abraham's seed!

Jesus, looking down through the thunder-clouds in Ben-Issachar's eyes, sees murder underneath!

Is that Abrahamic? The soul committing sin is the servant of sin, Jesus says.

Again Ben-Issachar's voice is in the chorus angrily shouting, "Abraham is our father!"

Abraham is Ben-Issachar's father?

Then he will do Abraham's works. The works of Abraham! Beautiful scene of trust—Abraham in some rapt hour of meditation looking up to the stars and believing God's word that Abraham's seed shall be as numerous. Beautiful spirit of self-renunciation and obedience—Abraham journeying day by day, following the call of the strange, mysterious voice of God! Blessed, too, the faith that, looking away, sees the day of Jesus, light beyond the shadow, dawn after the night!

Does Ben-Issachar, child of Abraham, thus trust and believe and accept the Lord's anointed?