



LESSON XII.—JUNE 17, 1906.

The Transfiguration.

Luke ix. 28-36.

Golden Text.

This is my beloved Son: hear Him.—Luke ix. 35.

Home Readings.

Monday, June 11.—Luke ix. 28-36.
 Tuesday, June 12.—Luke ix. 37-45.
 Wednesday, June 13.—Matt. xvii. 1-13.
 Thursday, June 14.—Matt. xvii. 14-23.
 Friday, June 15.—Rev. i. 10-20.
 Saturday June 16.—Mark ix. 1-13.
 Sunday June 17.—Mark ix. 14-32.

(By Davis W. Clark.)

The setting suited the gem. The dazzling whiteness of everlasting snow; the immovable might of rocky barricade; the solemn arch of night—a more appropriate environment for the most lovely and majestic of scenes can not be imagined. Purity, power, solemnity, were in the face of nature as she beheld her Creator's deification. . . . It was a week after Peter's confession of the Messiah's divinity and Jesus' revelation of the suffering in store for Him—a week spent in the same locality, and crowded with converse about these matters—that the Master went up at night into one of nature's oratories, some spur of Mt. Hermon. He took with Him the three most advanced of His disciples, the dominant spirits of the apostolic college—the Rock-man and the Sons of Thunder. . . . Lifted toward heaven and above the possibility of intrusion, the four bowed in prayer. Then, as afterward in Gethsemane, the Saviour went apart for a season of personal communion with His Father, and the apostles wrapped themselves in their outer robes and fell asleep. Possibly in that darkest hour just before the dawn they awakened with an intuitive apprehension of something preternatural transpiring. They saw a sight of fadeless splendor. A third of a century afterward Peter wrote of it as if it had transpired the day before.

. . . The form of the servant, in which Jesus had condescended to cloth Himself thirty-three years before, was now dissolving. The fulness of the Godhead was unveiled. He shone, not like Moses, with a reflected light; like the sun, his radiance was self-derived. His seamless robe became a web and woof of electric light, His countenance like snow on which the sun is shining, or like the sun itself in meridian. But language of earth is bankrupt in effort to describe that scene. . . . The etherealized body of Jesus rises, and two holy ones come from glory to meet Him in the air. The souls of the apostles, keyed up to the occasion, recognize the visitants as the one the man of Sinai; the other the man of Carmel—the founder and the restorer of Israel. The subject of their conversation is the same as that which Jesus had had with His disciples at the base of that very mountain—the cup He was so soon to drink, the baptism He was to be baptized with, the exodus He was soon to make. . . . Peter, in the ecstasy of his joy, burst in upon the conversation of the immortals. The woody slopes, with their wealth of cedar boughs, suggest the improvising of hasty shelters after the manner of the Tabernacle feast-time. He will fain prolong this scene until all Israel can be summoned to that mount and behold Moses and Elijah, the law and the prophets humbly paying court to the glori-

fied Messiah. That will end all opposition. The nation will no longer be faithless or unbelieving. . . . Ineffably glorious as the scene has been already, it has not yet reached its climax. That cloud-shaped splendor that appeared to patriarchs and prophets, and rested on the golden wings of the cherubim, appears once more in these latter days. Moses, Elijah, Christ, law, prophecy, atonement, are all wrapped in one. But the superiority of Christ and His atonement is avouched for by the voice of the Father. If the law-giver and the prophet have such an exalted glory, what must be the divine majesty of the One in whose train they follow! He hath on His vesture a name written—'King of kings and Lord of lords.' In the supernal radiance of the transfiguration mount we worship thee O Christ! We acknowledge thee to be the Lord!

THE TEACHER'S LANTERN.

The transfiguration is the heavenly Amen to the earthly confession of the divinity and Messiahship of Jesus. Hardly had that comprehensive creed framed itself on Peter's lips, and been consented to by the apostles than they were all shaken by the revelation of the ignominious death in store for the Messiah. That ineffable scene on Hermon fixed and settled a faith that was tottering to its fall. It averted them for Gethsemane and Calvary. It was fitting that they should see the celestial evidences of His eternal Godhead and glory on the hither side of the cross. Before they saw His visaged marred; they were privileged to see it transfigured. . . . That scene had its merciful ministration for Jesus' self as well as His apostles. It was not merely scenic and pictorial; it was of substantial comfort to Him who was touched with a feeling of infirmity and tempted. . . . Well says Stier: 'He who for us is to enter by a voluntary death into glorification must first learn and actually experience in regard to himself, otherwise than by the knowledge arising from faith, that the glory of light and life is already present in his humanity; that it can break forth in him, and radiate from him, even without his passing through death.' . . . The descent from the Mount of Transfiguration was like a second descent from heaven—Jesus' earthly life in miniature. We see whence He came, what glory. He laid aside when he humbled Himself and took the form of a servant. . . . We have an example of the honor and joy of the ministering spirits sent forth to minister. Indescribable bliss, unapproaching dignity to hold high converse with the Man of Galilee and soothe and fortify Him as He approached His crucial experience! . . . These ministrants came from the grave, but from the grave conquered. Elijah experienced the 'change' which those who are alive at Jesus' second coming shall undergo. Moses died, but his body was probably immediately raised alive again. So the two are samples of the paradisaic form and appearance.

C. E. Topic.

Sunday, June 17.—Topic—The glorified life. John xvii. 1-10, 22-24.

Junior C. E. Topic.

A FATHER'S ADVICE.

Monday June 11.—Solomon anointed. I Kings i. 32-37.
 Tuesday, June 12.—'God save the king.' Kings i. 38-40.
 Wednesday, June 13.—His father's advice. I Kings ii. 1, 2.
 Thursday, June 14.—What Solomon wrote. Prov. iv. 1-5.
 Friday, June 15.—Hear thy father. Prov. i. 8, 9.
 Saturday, June 16.—Keep thy father's commandments. Prov. iv. 20.
 Sunday, June 17.—Topic—A father's advice to his son. I Kings ii. 1-3.

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. It is easy in solitude to live after our own opinions; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.—Emerson.

The Conversion of the Young

(James Small, in the 'Morning Star'.)

No one can estimate the influence of a mother's care and love and labors. I shall thank God in life, and perhaps in eternity, for a mother who did what she could to obey that Scripture which saith: 'And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up.' To be sure it required work and patience, but what is gained without sacrifice? And children thus taught in the home and in the Sunday school will, as a rule, open their young hearts to the Saviour, as the shut rose opens to the smile of the morning sun.

More and more, I think, the salvation of the young should be sought and prayed for. If they come early to Christ it will save them from many a sin and evil habit. It is a known maxim, that it is much more difficult to throw out than to let in. Every commission of sin introduces into the soul a certain degree of hardness, an aptness to continue in that sin. Every degree of entrance is a degree of possession. Sin is like heat—the second, third, and fourth degrees are more easily introduced than the first.

An English officer in explaining the power of England made this remark to an American general: 'England's policy has been never to allow an enemy to land.' Blessed and strong is the young soul that never allows an enemy to land. It is well known, by many a Christian, that the awful habit of sin, acquired before turning to Christ, itself constitutes a danger. How many mature Christians feel this keenly! Although they are strong in the Christian virtues, they bitterly lament their weakness in resisting the evil tendencies that the old habits of sin set in motion. So true is that, that a wise preacher has said, 'that if a man falls away from Christ it will generally be through his old besetting sin.' The old life still clings to the Christian. The ragged ends are still there. It is well for us to realize, then, that those who seek the Lord early will be saved many bitter and unavailing regrets.

Another mistake is made in regard to the conversion of the young. We expect too much of them. Wisely it has been said: 'Do not let us measure their qualifications by our bushel. We ought not to look for a gravity and deep appreciation of eternal things such as we find in grown persons. We have seen old sheep in the pasture field look anxious and troubled because the lambs would frisk. No doubt the children that were lifted by their mothers into Christ's arms and got his blessing, five minutes after he set them down, were as full of romp and play as before they came to him. We ought not to set the life of the young Christian to the time of "Old Hundred."'

It is told of an old Scotch minister, who proposed to keep back from the Lord's table a young woman whose knowledge he found very defective. Rising to go the girl burst into tears. 'It's true, sir, I canna speak for Him, but I think I could die for Him.' The poor girl knew the Saviour's love just as well, perhaps, as the under shepherd. And there are many children who cannot tell everything about faith or salvation, but, like the Scotch lassie, love him well enough to 'die for him.'

Spurgeon, not many years before his death, is reported to have said: 'I have, during the past year, received forty or fifty children into church membership. Among those I have had at any time to exclude from church fellowship, out of a church of twenty-seven hundred members I have never had to exclude a single one who was received while yet young.'

Any church will show, if a test is made that the great majority of its very best members were brought to Christ when young. Life has but one summer, and this wasted, all is gone forever; and let the young gladly and faithfully then remember their Creator in the days of their youth.