

Christ-likeness, gives dignity in God's kingdom, "will be chiefest—servant of all."

Ver. 45. "For even (REV. "verily") the Son of man: "He came not to seek honour or authority, but to serve—his life was one of service—"and to give His life:" the crowning act of His service, "a ransom:" not merely a redemption price, but a vicarious sacrifice; so, as has been well said, "the cardinal virtue of humility is based upon the cardinal doctrine of the atonement."

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

PREFATORY.—The truths in this portion are so clear and evident that it is scarcely needed to utter a word of caution. The teacher who gives the least attention to this portion will find the lessons rich and full, such as he cannot well mistake. The central thought is, what constitutes true greatness in Christ's kingdom, the teachings of the Saviour on the point, and the practical illustration of His teachings in His own life.

WHAT AND HOW TO TEACH.

Topical Analysis.—(1.) The third and fullest announcement by Jesus of His sufferings and death (32-34.) (2.) The ambitious request of James and John (35-37.) (3.) The Saviour's teachings on true greatness (38-45.)

On the *first* topic, show that Jesus with His company was on the way to Jerusalem to keep the passover, that one which was to be for ever memorable as the occasion on which the true Paschal Lamb was sacrificed. The mind of His disciples is seen in the next topic, and is in strong contrast to that of Jesus Himself. They were looking for a manifestation of His power and a setting up of His kingdom; He, knowing what was in their hearts, tells them, more clearly than before, of His coming passion—betrayed, first by one of themselves, to the Jews, and again by the Jews to the Gentiles, to suffer a Gentile death. Teach here how the Saviour ever kept the end before Him, and how calmly He went onward to His death, and this because by His death He was to bring salvation to the world.

On the *second* topic, show that while the face of the Master was towards the place of suffering and death, with the shadow of the cross already upon Him, the disciples were looking, as before, to honour, power, worldly greatness; they could see only a temporal kingdom, with Christ as King and they in the highest positions, and in this spirit the two sons of Zebedee came to Him asking that they might occupy special seats of honour in His "glory," His exaltation and power! Much as we marvel at their ignorance, we may show that there was belief in, and loyalty to, Jesus. They mistook the character of the kingdom entirely, and what its honours were; but their wish to be near the Master was a right one, and which, in the Christian spirit, not with their ambition, we may imitate. Point out that if we bring self in any shape into our religion we make the same mistake which these disciples did. Selfishness is the unclean spirit that can have no dwelling in the heart of the true disciple.

The third *topic* shows us, once more, the true spirit of the Gospel. It is not of this world. It has a different centre—Christ, not self; it has a different motive—"the love of Christ constraineth;" a different manifestation—service, not power; its duty, its privilege, is self-sacrifice; it looks up and around, asking, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Point out how this very spirit was manifested by Christ Himself, who "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many,"—the Divinely self-sacrifice the world has ever seen. Show your scholars that here all are equal; although the path of service may be widely different, yet all true service will be accepted, and leads to that honour which the Master will bestow upon His faithful servants in the day of His coming. The royal road to honour is through service.

"This is the path the Master trod."

"He humbled Himself—wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him," Phil. 2: 8, 9.

Incidental Lessons.—On the *first* topic, That Jesus leads us in the way in which we should go.

That where He leads we all should follow.

That companionship with Him in suffering leads to companionship with Him in glory.

On the *second* topic, That selfishness is the root of ambition and many evils.

That the most subtle and dangerous selfishness may be in our religious desires.

That human ignorance knows not what it asks.

On the *third* topic, That presumption is confident, humility is diffident.

That honour from God is determined by service.

That the greatness of Christ's kingdom is in service.

That true ministry is true service.

That in some way all may serve.

Main Lesson.—Christ an example of true greatness. Luke 22: 27; John 13: 13-16; Rom. 13: 3; 2 Cor. 8: 9; Phil. 2: 6.

July 23, {
1882. }

BLIND BARTIMEUS.

{ Mark x.
46-52. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The eyes of the blind shall be opened."—Isa. 35: 5.

TIME.—Late in March, A. D. 30; about a week before the crucifixion.

PLACE.—Jericho, on the road to Jerusalem.

PARALLEL.—Matt. 20: 29-34; Luke 18: 35-43.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 46. "Jericho:" the city of Palm Trees; find on map; get from scholars particulars of its history. Lying in the Jordan valley, not quite twenty miles "down" from Jerusalem; destroyed by Joshua; rebuilt; all along a place of importance and beauty, but to-day the site of a miserable little village. "Great number of people:" doubtless on their way to the Passover feast. "Blind Bartimeus:" the prefix 'Bar' means son, and occurs frequently in the New Testament; so he was the son of Timeus. Blindness prevails in the East. While in Northern Europe there is only one person blind in a thousand, in Egypt there is one in every hundred. The climate, the flies, and neglect, together produce this. As blindness, so begging very common. Bartimeus had chosen the best place for begging, "the highway:" the road to Jerusalem. Here is faith. The people spoke of Jesus as the Nazarene, the blind man cries to Him as the "Son of David:" amid all the opposition and hatred, how widespread was the seed of faith. "Have mercy:" he knew his misery and want, and believed that Christ could help him.

Ver. 48. "Many charged:" possibly the disciples among them. They had made a similar mistake not long before. They ordered him to "hold his peace;" "cried the more:" true perseverance. He knew that this was his only opportunity, now or never. "Thou Son of David:" again Jesus suffers Himself to be spoken of as the Messiah before all the people; the time of manifestation was nigh. "Have mercy:" a model prayer, short and to the point.