

In Leigh Hunt's fine poem, *Abou Ben Adhem* awoke, we are told, one night from a dream of peace. In the moonlight that flooded his room, "making it rich and like a lily in bloom," he saw an angel writing in a book of gold. "What writest thou?" asked Ben Adhem of the angel. And the reply was: "The names of those who love the Lord." "And is mine one?" returned Abou. "Nay," replied the angel. "Then," said Abou, softly, but still cheerily: "Write me as one that loves his fellow men." The angel wrote as he was bidden and went away. The next night he came again, and "shown the names whom love of God had blessed, and lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

This love for our neighbor is an extremely practical thing. It labors to make real in his life the latent ideal. It serves others as it would be served by them. We know what brings us pleasure, and what pain, what comforts us, and what discourages. We know the nature of our own heart hunger. We know what kind of attitude to us on the part of others helps us to the true, good, loyal; and what kind only helps to pull us down and kill the manhood within. From our knowledge of what ministers unto our own welfare, of the things love covets for ourselves,

we know how to act towards others. "As thyself" is the touchstone of love's service to "thy neighbor."

In the widow's mite a fine example of the love Jesus commended is given. It brought her to the place of worship where, through prayer and praise and fellowship with God's people, she might be helped to know God better, and to be drawn closer to Him. But it also found expression in a practical form of service—in a gift of money. And that gift was exceedingly precious to God, not because of its intrinsic value, but because of the spirit that prompted it and the sacrifice it involved. "The other day, in walking down the street," says Henry Ward Beecher of himself, "a little beggar boy, having discovered that I loved flowers, put into my hand a little faded sprig which he had somewhere found. I looked at the scrawny, withered branch through the medium of the boy's heart, and, so looking, the shriveled stem seemed to me laden with blossoms of beauty." So Jesus judges our every gift and deed. He looks not at the gift alone, which may be very poor and imperfect, but at the love behind which prompts it and determines its true character.

THE LESSON GRADED

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of Bible Classes

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As this Lesson is made up of a series of questions, it is important that special attention be given to Jesus' answers, because He is nearing the close of His ministry with the scribes and Pharisees, and He eagerly embraces every opportunity of unfolding the heart of His teaching concerning the kingdom. Take up:

1. *The great commandment*, vs. 28-31. The scribe's question was an old debatable one in theological circles. Show that Jesus gave the customary answer as embodying the summary of human duties. Discuss it under two aspects—love to God, and love to man. Find its origin in Lev. 19:18 and Deut. 6:5. See Matt. 22:40 for Jesus' summary of Old

Testament teaching. See John 13:34; 15:12-17 for love as a new commandment, new in having Jesus as the standard and ideal of what love ultimately is. Take up vs. 32, 33 as a penetrating analysis of the relative value of inward character and outward ceremonial. Now take Jesus' criticism in v. 34. If this scribe was not in the kingdom, what was the value of what he had and what was necessary in order to enter? (See Rom. 3:19; 10:3-5; Gal. 3:10, 21-24.)

2. *The great teacher*, vs. 35-40. Call out the facts: (a) That Jesus repudiated the popular idea that Christ was to be the Son of David as a political ruler. (b) That Christ is supreme, and David and all others, even His enemies, will acknowledge His lordship. The Messiah is more than a Jewish, political king. Discuss this as the teaching, "Thus, again, Jesus makes a Jewish hope