

in the universe, and those who take Him for their Saviour will be fitted to be kings and priests in the Kingdom of God. (Peloubet.)

"My disciples indeed." True discipleship does not depend on a mere outward following. Many who heard Christ hastened to follow Him, especially so long as they got the loaves and fishes; but they were *aliens in spirit*. When the testing time of opposition came, they deserted Him. They went from Him because they were not of Him. True discipleship depends on inward harmony, oneness of life and will and purpose, and only through such inward harmony will there be a real doing of Christ's will.

"The truth shall make you free." v. 32. If these Jews had listened to the truth as the prophets spoke it, they would never have been under the yoke of Babylon or of Rome. If, now, as a nation they had attended to the words of their Messiah, they would not have come into the terrible bondage of unbelief under which they still rest. All who hear Christ's voice and heed His words are thereby made free.

"The servant of sin," v. 34. The only real bondage to which men can be subjected is the bondage of sin. Sin makes men slaves to their lower nature. Outward bonds cannot make even slaves bondmen who rejoice in the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Many of the world's heroes have come under outward bonds. Paul before Felix was in chains, but what a magnificent freedom he possessed! The real slave on that occasion was the man who wore the judge's robes and sat in the judge's seat, and who trembled as Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come." There are thousands who never wore outward bonds, and who even glory in what they call their liberty, who are, in reality, the vilest of slaves, because they are led captive by their base desires and passions. They confound license with liberty.

"Free indeed," v. 36. The only real freedom is that of God's sons. The only true exercise of liberty

is in doing what God wishes us to do and doing it with joy, because we are possessed of the spirit of God. This is the perfection of liberty. When a man says, "I'll do as I like," and calls that liberty, he is misapplying terms. When he does what he likes he is giving way to license—not exercising liberty. This will be clear to us if we remember that only in God's character and acts have we the perfect exemplification of liberty; and God is, first of all, true and righteous and perfect in holiness. Only those who are the sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ and have become partakers of the divine nature by the indwelling of God's Spirit know what true freedom means.

Free men are the only true men, the men the world needs, the men fit for heaven when the time comes.

"The world wants *men*—large hearted, manly men,

Men who shall join its chorus and prolong

The psalm of labor and the psalm of love.

The age wants *heroes*—heroes who shall dare

To struggle in the solid ranks of truth:

To clutch the monster error by the throat;

To bear opinion to a loftier seat:

To blot the error of oppression out,

And lead a universal freedom in.

And heaven wants *souls*—fresh and capacious souls,

To taste its raptures, and expand, like flowers,  
Beneath the glory of its central sun.

It wants fresh souls—not lean and shrivelled ones.

It wants fresh souls, my brother—*give it thine*,

If thou indeed wilt be what scholars should;

If thou wilt be a hero, and wilt strive

To help thy fellow and exalt thyself,

Thy feet, at last, shall stand on jasper floors;

Thy heart, at last, shall seem a thousand hearts—

Each single heart with myriad raptures filled—

While thou shalt sit with princes and with kings,

Rich in the jewel of a ransomed soul."

#### TEACHING HINTS

"A hard lesson," because abstract in form, devoid of incident, and therefore not "catching." A vivid setting is all the more necessary.

I. Show the class the cut of the temple area,

or make a rough sketch of it on blackboard or scribbling pad. Point out where Jesus stood as He taught. Make the scene live, the crowds, the ceremonies, the procession with the water in