

to cease from serving Christ, or be misled in their approaches to Him. "Millstone:" not a Jewish mode of punishment, so the more vividly picturing a violent and shameful death. Death in any way is less terrible than sin.

Vers. 43, 45, 47. "If thy hand," lit. cause thee to "offend." Here again Rev. has "stumble." The idea in these three verses is, of course, the same. The hand, the foot, the eye; hand, to do what is wrong; foot, to go into wrong; eye, to desire what is wrong, lust for, covet. Let nothing stand between you and life,—not the dearest thing, the most useful. If this is the only way to avoid sin and hell, take it. We are not to suppose that there are maimed persons in heaven, the place of the spiritual body, but that it is better—ininitely better—for us to suffer any sacrifice here, and to become partakers of eternal life, than to retain the good here, and have the portion of eternal death, "Hell;" Gehenna, the place of punishment; not here Hades, the place of the dead. "Fire—never—quenched:" certain, fearful, hopeless punishment.

Vers. 44, 46, 48. The first two of these verses are omitted in Rev. "Worm" of the body, "fire" of the soul. The reference is to Isa. 66: 24. The terrible meaning of these words we cannot understand in their fullness; but we read there, utter and eternal hopelessness.

Vers. 49, 50. A difficult passage, with many interpretations. The most likely meaning is, "The salt is the Divine teaching which leads us to denial of self, to peace and concord with others; those who evade this are salted by a sterner discipline of God;" or, "The same fire of God's holiness (love) which must forever consume the unclean and the dead, must salt all it touches by destroying all in it that is worthy of death."—*Sister*. Remember in your explanations that "salt" is the symbol of preservation, "fire" of purification; "lost his (its) saltiness;" the self-sacrificing spirit of Christ. "Have salt—have peace:" keep this spirit of Christ, then there will be no questions as to "who should be the greatest."

#### HINTS TO TEACHERS.

**Cautions.**—It will be simply impossible to do justice to this very full portion of Scripture. We have here taught humility, or child-likeness; toleration, or rather a rejoicing in good done, no matter by whom; self-denial, with the solemn lessons of the last two verses. Choose thoughtfully how much you will teach and do it thoroughly. A good plan in making a choice is to see if you have already, in this series of lessons, had any of these topics, or if they are in lessons to come, and select those points to teach which have not arisen and do not arise in the near future. Beware of dwelling too much on what you know nothing of—hell fire. A teacher was recently telling the writer how, when she was a child in a class, her teacher drew, from a strong imagination, a vivid picture of the details of the torments of the lost, producing terror, frightful dreams, and well-nigh insanity. The words of the Saviour are solemn; seek not to raise the veil. He has mercifully let fall over the details.

#### WHAT AND HOW TO TEACH.

**Topical Analysis.**—(1.) Jesus teaches humility and a child-like spirit (vers. 33-37). (2.) Jesus teaches the unity of all who work for Him (38-42). (3.) Jesus teaches that any earthly loss is nothing to eternal loss (43-50).

On the *first* topic we may show how Jesus condemns the spirit of strife and worldly ambition among His followers. These disciples—strangely, marvellously as it appears to us—ignoring all that the Master had said respecting His sufferings and death, or possibly looking upon the resurrection of which He spoke as a return to seize supreme power, had debated among themselves who should be greatest—have the post of honour in His kingdom! Christ knew their folly, and when He asked them as to their dispute, they were ashamed and "held their peace." Then, as an object lesson, He

took a little child, and taught them that unless they became as little children they could not even enter His kingdom; that pre-eminence there came from service; and that the path to honour lay through the valley of humiliation. We must therefore teach that all *self-seeking, pride and ambition* are utterly opposed to the spirit of Christ's religion; each must esteem others better than himself, and be willing to become the servant of all. This may be "a hard saying," but it is the truth of God. It is he, and he only, who "shall humble himself as this little child" who shall have a place—the greatest place—in the kingdom of heaven. Then how Jesus Himself illustrated this truth: "He made Himself of no reputation;" "He humbled Himself;" He washed His disciples' feet. Humility is the foundation grace of the Christian character.

On the *second* topic show how Jesus condemned *intolerance and exclusiveness*. There is a tinge of Pharisaism in John's report of what happened. Were they jealous because this man could do that which they had failed to do (see last week's lesson)? And our Saviour's words are a rebuke to every manifestation of such a spirit. It is a matter of thankfulness that the spirit of the age is broadening in its charity, and that there is a more earnest desire to love all who love the Lord Jesus. Encourage this by your teaching, and point out that as we all draw nearer to Christ we draw nearer to each other. We must, however, be careful to guard this—the rule of ver. 39 must be our guide, and we must remember that "the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable."—James 3: 17.

In the *third* topic we have an intensified re-statement of the truths contained in the lesson for May 28th, which see. It is *loss and gain*. There, the denial of self; here, cutting away, so to speak, of self, that if anything hinders our service of Christ, be it as important to us as a hand, a foot, an eye, it is to be sacrificed without hesitation. Teach here that no sacrifice is too great that we may at the last "enter into life."

**Incidental Lessons.**—On the *first* topic—That power and pre-eminence are not to be sought in Christ's kingdom.

That the ambition the world applauds is a crime in the Kingdom.

That the standard of exaltation in the Kingdom is a child-like spirit.

That all believers will be exalted in the Kingdom above.—2 Tim. 2: 12; Rev. 20: 6.

That disputes sometimes arise about what may never happen.

That there is a true way of greatness.

Man's idea of greatness—ruling; God's—serving.

That true greatness consists in perfect lowliness.

On the *second* topic—That the Master welcomes as His all who sincerely work for Him.

That every true worker for Christ should be welcomed by the servants of Jesus.

That humility and service go hand in hand.

That we should rejoice in the success of the Gospel by whomsoever preached.

That the humblest service done for a believer is done for Christ.

That we should throw no stumbling-block in the way of the humblest worker.

On the *third* topic—That all earthly loss for eternal life is infinite gain.

**Main Lessons.**—The *danger* of (1) pride; (2) intolerance; (3) opposition to the work of the Gospel. (1) Gal. 6: 3; James 4: 5. (2) Jer. 4: 7; Luke 9: 55. (3) Psa. 2: 1-12; Luke 17: 1.

The duty of (1) humility; (2) large-heartedness; and (3) self-sacrifice. (1) 2 Sam. 7: 18; 1 Cor. 15: 10. (2) Num. 11: 29; Phil. 1: 18. (3) Luke 14: 26, 27, 33; Phil. 3: 7, 8.