

Dec. 25. A CHRISTMAS LESSON.

Lesson, Luke 2 : 8-20. Golden Text, Luke 2 : 10.
Memory verses. Catechism Q. 22.

We usually speak of dating our time from the birth of Christ. The fact is we date it from four years before that time. An old monk, who in 526 A.D., first made the calculation, made a mistake of four years, and the mistake cannot now be well changed. It is only 1,888 years since the birth of Christ, though we date our letters 1892.

I. The Shepherds, v. 8.

II. The Angel's message, vs. 9-14.

III. Finding the Saviour, vs. 15-16.

IV. Telling the glad news, vs. 18-20.

I. V. 8. *Keeping Watch*.—What a watch and what a reward for it; Sights and sounds such as the world never saw before or since. They were at the post of duty, and watching, not sleeping, and thus the blessing came. If we are faithful where duty calls, to us also will the blessing come.

II. Vs. 9-14. *An Angel*.—A messenger from God to men. *Glory*.—Unearthly splendor and brightness, a visible symbol of God's presence. *Afraid*.—Conscious guilt in men makes them tremble in God's presence. When all sin is taken away that glory will be our eternal joy. *Fear not*.—As said Christ on the sea of Galilee. *Good tidings*.—The best the world had ever known, what it had long sought for. *To all people*.—Gentiles as well as Jews. But eighteen centuries have passed, and two thirds of the human race are ignorant of those tidings. *Saviour*.—The word "Jesus" means Saviour. "Christ" the Christos or the anointed one.

Suddenly.—Not as seen coming from afar, but, as if there all the time, they had suddenly sprung into visibility. Thus it was with Elisha's servant and the mountain full of chariots and horses. Thus it was with Christ when He stood among His disciples. May not these angel hosts be about us on every hand guarding and keeping us?

Glory to God in Heaven,

Peace, good will—to men—on earth.

Glory.—May be taken in different ways. *c. g.* He is glorious in character, in surroundings. He is worthy of being glorified for what He has done. Give ye glory and praise to Him. *Highest*.—In the highest heavens. In the highest degree.

Peace.—Between man and God, between man and himself, between man and his fellow man. Heaven is eternal peace, and so is earth in proportion as it becomes heavenly. *Good will*.—The world's idea of God was of one who was angry. A God who loved a sinful helpless world was indeed glad tidings.

III. Vs. 15-16. *Now go*.—At once they seek Him of whom they have heard. *Haste*.—No delay. *Found*.—Those who go on such an errand always find. *Manger*.—A stall or space in the court yard of the Khan or inn.

IV. Vs. 17-20. *Abroad*.—Men finding a gold mine oft try to keep it secret. Those finding Christ have their joy in telling others what they have found. *Wondered*.—So strange, so good was the news. *Pondered*.—Deep and wonderful were the truths that had come to her.

Returned.—At the post of duty when they received the wondrous message, they return faithfully to the duties of common life now that it has come. *Praising*.—Praising God with glad heart and pure life while doing the work appointed us is God's way of doing Him best service.

1. Christ's coming, the gladdest tidings the world ever heard.

2. Our blessings come where we are faithfully doing our duty.

3. God's favors come to the humble in heart, no matter what their station in life.

4. If angels rejoiced over Christ's coming, how much more should we.

5. Our duty to spread the knowledge of these glad tidings.

6. What is that Christ to you?

QUARTERLY TEMPERANCE LESSON

Dec. 25. A choice of lessons for to-day.

Lesson, Ro. 14 : 12-23. Gold. Text, Ro. 15 : 1.
Memory vs. 15-20.

Grieved.—Though the thing is right itself, yet if indulgence in it be injurious to others, that indulgence is a violation of the law of love. *Christ died*.—If Christ so loved him as to die for him, how base in you not to submit to the smallest self-denial for his welfare! *Not meat*.—Another reason for forbearance; no principle of duty is to be sacrificed. *Destroy not*.—Do not, for the sake of indulgence in certain kinds of food, injure the cause of true religion. *Eat flesh, etc.*.—That is, abstaining from flesh, wine, or anything else which is injurious to others, is right, that is, morally obligatory. *Is damned*.—Is condemned. If a man thinks a thing to be wrong, to him it is wrong. *Whatever*.—Whatever we do which we are not sure is right, is wrong.

Introductory.—What is the title of this lesson? Golden Text? Lesson Plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. *Things that Make Others Stumble*, vs. 12-15.—To whom shall we all give account? What is therefore our duty? Of what was the apostle persuaded? Meaning of the last clause of verse 14? What general principle of duty is here taught? What reason is assigned for the duty enjoined? How may this apply to wine-drinking and the general use of intoxicating drinks?

II. *Things that Make for Peace*, vs. 16-19.—What reason is given for thus regarding the welfare of others? In what does true religion consist? How does this passage bear upon the apostle's object? Meaning of verse 18. What is therefore our duty?

III. *Things that We had Better not Do*, vs. 20-23.—By what rule is the exercise of Christian liberty to be regulated? Vs. 15, 20, 21. What important principle of morals is taught in verse 23? Under what circumstances is abstinence from meat, wine and other things here said to be duty? How does this apply to wine-drinking in our day? On what other grounds would you enforce the duty of total abstinence?

1. It is often morally wrong to do what, in itself considered, may be innocent.

2. It is wrong to do anything which we think to be wrong, but it is not always right to do what we think to be right.

3. We should be willing to give up our own ease or pleasure or gratification for the good of others.

4. Regard for the evil influence of our example on others, to say nothing of other and higher grounds of obligation, should lead us to abstain from the use of intoxicants as a beverage.—*Westminster Question Book*.