

in despair, he sees a light shining some distance away, and hastens in its direction. The door stands wide open and beautiful angels meet him with welcomes of joy. It is the house of Mercy and he is taken in and finds refuge from the storm and is hospitably entertained.

"None of us can ever find refuge at any door save at the door of Mercy. But here the vilest sinner can find eternal shelter; and not mere cold shelter only, for God's mercy is tender. We flee for refuge and we find it. Strong walls shut out all pursuing enemies and cover us from all storms. Then,

as we begin to rejoice in our security, we learn that we are in a sweet home, and not merely in a place of shelter. Our refuge is in the very heart of God; and no mother's bosom was ever so warm a nest for her child as is the divine mercy for all who find refuge in it."—Miller.

"I say to thee, do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet
In lane, highway, or open street,
That we and all men move
Under a canopy of love
As broad as heaven above."

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

FAITH WINNING may be taken as the topic. Begin with a conversation about winners—those who aim for and obtain the really great things of life, and some of the qualities by which such winners are marked.

We have in the case of Bartimæus

1. *Faith asking*, vs. 46, 47. How the blind man came to know about Jesus we can only conjecture. He had evidently heard enough of Him to rouse expectation of a cure; the Spirit of God, without whom there can be no faith, had led him to believe that the merciful miracle-worker could and would help him. And so, in faith, he cries out for mercy. Here is faith in its beginnings. His cry is like the cry of a child who is only learning to speak. But beginnings are not to be despised. It is first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. The main thing is that faith be not allowed to die for want of exercise.

2. *Faith persevering*, v. 48. The very fact of his having put his faith in exercise makes it stronger. And, moreover, the opposition it encountered added to its strength. It is of the very nature of true faith to flourish on opposition, as the roots of a tree are strengthened by the strong winds. Mark, too, that it is only a faith that perseveres that wins its point. God has His own reasons for not always granting our prayers just at once. (Luke 18: 1-8.)

3. *Faith-triumphing*, vs. 49-52. It is an invariable rule that the prayer of sincerity

and trust is answered. (Matt. 7: 7, 8; 21: 22.) This man's faith, though sorely tried by Jesus' apparent indifference and the rude treatment of the crowd (v. 48), has speedy reward; Jesus places His almighty power at the poor blind man's call (v. 51). Note how quickly his faith has grown, as evidenced by his prompt, direct request (v. 51); and note, too, how simply, and graciously, and abundantly it is rewarded, (v. 52.) Faith has won. It triumphs, too, in the man's at once leaving honor, friends and what little comforts he may have had, and following Jesus.

Questions for Juniors—46, 47. To what feast was Jesus going? What river crossed? What city reached? Who went with him? Whom did they meet? In what condition? What did Bartimæus hear? How did he address Jesus? For what did he ask?

48. Who rebuked him? Why? How had the people spoken of Christ? How is mercy described? (Ps. 86: 5; 145: 9; 1 Pet. 1: 3.)

49. What command given by Jesus? What do the crowd now say? What had caused the change in the multitude? Of what is Christ's call always full? To what is it a call?

50. How was the command obeyed? What promise made to those who come? (Luke 11: 9.)

51. What question asked by Jesus? What one blessing desired? What made