

Sabbath School Teacher.

LESSON XLIV.

November 2, 78. JESUS AND THE YOUNG. (Matt. xix. 13-21.)

COMMIT TO MEMORY, vs. 14, 15.

PARALLEL PASSAGES.—Mark x. 13-22; Luke xviii. 15-17.

With v. 18, read Luke xviii. 15; verses 14 and 16, read Matt. xviii. 8-5, and 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2; with verse, 16, Titus iii. 5-7; with verse 17, 1 John v. 11-13, with verses 19 and 20, Eph. vi. 1-3, and Rom. iii. 20-23; with verses 20 and 21, Luke xii. 38, 34, and 1 Tim. vi. 17-19.

GENERAL TRUTH.—Jesus saves the young.

INTERNATIONAL TEXT.—I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.—Prov. viii. 17.

The place in which these two striking incidents occurred, deserves notice. It was Perea—beyond Jordan, far from Jerusalem and in the dominions of Herod Antipas. It was a kind of refuge for Jesus, when opposition to him was strong in other quarters, as it was afterwards for the infant Church. Even here, Jesus was regarded with veneration; and even here the malice of the sect of the Pharisees followed him. John had been a sufferer from his faithfulness as to Herod. Perhaps the enemies of Christ sought to draw him into a like quarrel by the question of v. 3. But if they did, he defeated their plan.

From the treacherous cross-questioning of these enemies of Christ, one turns with interest to his dealing, first with parents regarding their children, and then with a young man regarding himself.

The lesson divides itself into two portions: the teachers of the younger pupils will dwell on the former, those of the more advanced, on the latter.

I. We have, in the first, eager parents, hasty disciples, and a patient and merciful Saviour.

1. The parents: for we infer it was the parents who brought the little ones ("infants," in Luke), though others are not excluded. Teachers and friends may stand in the place of, or along with, parents, in bringing children to Jesus. Whoever they were, they believed in the holy character of Christ. They were familiar with the laying on hands as a means of blessing, not only in wish but in effect. (See Gen. xlviii. 14; 2 Kings iv. 84.) They shared in the expectation of good through this great prophet; and if they did not clearly know his true dignity, at least they owned his worth and goodness. They were anxious for the good of their children. They set an example to all the friends of children in all time. Bring them to Jesus.

2. The hasty disciples. They showed their displeasure with the movement, and discouraged the approach of the children and of those who brought them. We need not be concerned to find out, whether they rebuked the children or their friends. They made it plain that they did not like the step, rebuking those that brought them, Mark x. 13. So the friends of the young have often been found fault with, for upsetting old ways, making trouble, disturbing the church, &c. Even good men, at first, looked coldly on Sunday-schools.

3. The patient and merciful Redeemer. He defends the step, lays down the principle that justifies it, and complies with the desire, "Suffer little children," &c., v. 14. Probably we should wrest this general statement of our Lord, if we used it to decide any disputes as to the Church's treatment of children, as if the Saviour were here making a rule. Probably we read it aright, if we understand Him to say, "It is neither improper or unbecoming in me to receive and bless the children; for children are not shut out of the kingdom, and indeed, all who will be in it must be of a childlike disposition." This last idea is made prominent in Mark (x. 16), and in Luke (xviii. 17), and is elsewhere dwelt upon by our Lord.

That no superstition influenced those who brought the little ones, as if a mere "touch" would necessarily do them good, is clear from Christ's compliance, v. 15. "He laid his hands on them." "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands on them, and blessed them." "Happy children!" one would say. But the same happiness may be enjoyed by all children that will come to Him.

We may learn from this, among many other lessons:

(a) That good men are expected to love the little ones.

(b) That it is not unworthy of the highest dignity to teach and bless the little ones.

(c) That they can receive blessing. They are usually confiding, simple, unaffected, as compared with the adult.

(d) And all who have the opportunity should seek to bring them to the Redeemer.

Now we pass from the infants to the young man, of whom we know that he was rich (v. 22), "he had great possessions;" that he was well-conducted, "all these have I kept from my youth up," v. 20; that he was a "ruler," (Luke xviii. 18) and that he respected the Saviour, v. 16. "Good Master, what good thing shall I do." All these things were in his favor, and an ordinary teacher would have encouraged his approach. But Jesus did not rely on numbers or appearances. He seeks quality more than quantity, in disciples. He would teach men to know themselves. He uses the law to bring them to feel the need of grace.

So he leads this young ruler to think, first as to the nature of God, v. 17; then as to the nature of real righteousness, v. 21; and thus in the third place as to the condition of his own heart, "Sell all that thou hast," &c., v. 21. He flattered himself that he was wholly devoted to spiritual things, but the Redeemer applies a test which he cannot endure. "He went away sorrowful," &c., v. 22.

From this interview (which we would fain hope was not the end of this young man's intercourse with Christ,) we may learn

1. That obedience to certain commandments does not save. One may have it, and yet lack the one thing needful.

2. Nor does it give peace. He was unhappy, yearning for a joy he had not. Jesus saw that, did not deny his assertion of integrity, but pitied and loved him.

3. Jesus did not invent a hard and special test for him, but applied to his particular case the general rule for all who will come to Christ. "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross." To part with his possessions, was the cross for this young ruler.

4. To put Christ and his cross away, does not make one happy. "He went away sorrowful."

5. We know our hearts but slightly. and the nearer we come to Christ, the more distinctly we see ourselves.

ILLUSTRATION.

PERILS OF THE RICH.—"I understand you are very dangerously situated," said Mr. Cecil to an occasional hearer. After a pause, the man replied, "I am not aware of it." "I thought it probable you were not," answered Mr. Cecil, "and therefore I called on you. I hear you are getting rich; take care, for it is the road by which the devil leads thousands to destruction."

A lady of wealth seeing the poor crowding to Christ, in the progress of a revival, cried aloud, "Is there no mercy for the rich?"

SUGGESTIVE TOPICS.

The place in which these incidents occurred—why Jesus went there—on what other occasions visited by him—who were brought to Christ—by whom—probable character of those parents—their estimate of Christ's character—the lesson to parents here taught—the act of the disciples—why they were displeased—Jesus' course—his invitation to the young—how he justifies this call—what all must become to gain heaven—the manner of blessing them—the dignity of teaching the little ones—the promise of blessings to them—what parents should do for their children—the young man's worldly circumstances—his respect for Christ—how shown—his question—the reply—his second question—how it proves his sincerity—Jesus' reply—the commandments the young man had kept—his lack—why fatal to salvation—how it affected him—why he was sorrowful—the lesson taught us of the deceitfulness of our hearts.

The Living Fire.

When night fell on Jerusalem, and the tide and hum of business had ceased, and one after another the lights were extinguished, and all the fires quenched in the sleeping city, one was kept alive—the fire that burned on God's holy altar. "It shall not be put out," said the Lord: "the fire shall ever be burning on the altar; it shall never go out." Fed by such logs as blazed on the hearths and roared in the chimneys of olden times, yet this had not been kindled by man's hands, or blown into flame by his breath. Like God's love of a lost world, or his wrath on the head of his dying Son, it had descended from the skies. "There came," it is said, when Aaron and his sons were offering their first sacrifice, "fire out from before the Lord, and consumed the burnt offering and the fat, which, when the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces." Whether slumbering in its ashes or flaming with the fat of sacrifices, this fire burned by night and day on the altar; nor was it till after the lapse of nearly a thousand years that it went out—quenched hissing in the blood of priests who fell in defence of the temple at the first captivity. Now in that old altar on which the sacred fire was always burning, but whose sacrifices were not always offering, we see the heart of a devout believer. He is not always praying; but within his bosom there is a heaven-kindled love, fires of desire, fervent longings, which make him always ready to pray and often engage him in prayer. And thus he who engages in devout meditations, and holds communion with God through his Word and also through his works, may in respect of his habitual, prevailing frame of mind, as well as of his frequent prayers, be said to "pray without ceasing," "always to pray;" he is like an Aeolian harp, on whose strings, by night or day, the wind has but to breathe to wake up sweet and plaintive music.

Not Unknown Nor Alone.

Under God's scrutiny passes all the world's suffering. He sees Rizpah weeping among the rocks, and Naomi mourning for Elimelech, and Jeremiah for Jerusalem, and John Oldcastle in London Tower, and Elliot among the savages, and Swartz among the Hindoos, and Cranmer in the fire. Jesus of the manger stands by every poor man's home. Jesus of the wayside defends the footsore pilgrim. Jesus of Pilate's Hall acquits the innocent prisoner. Jesus of the cross pities all the suffering; Jesus of the tomb watches over every sepulchre.

Not alone, thou child of poverty, goest thou to thy distant toil, or sittest in thy lonely cabin. Christ will go with thee, all along the road to Emmaus. Not alone, sick one, dost thou endure the pang, the suffocation, the heart-ache. He whose hands were riven, and whose brow was pierced, holds thee in his infinite sympathy. Not alone, victim of persecution, dost thou endure the scoff and the buffeting. Not alone, stricken heart, must thou bear thy sore bereavement—for, toll me, thou tomb of Lazarus, did not Jesus weep? Not alone, dying Christian, shalt thou go through the valley. The Shepherd gently leads his flock, and with his staff they shall be comforted. Oh, how this sweetens the bitter cup, and lightens the darkest night and smooths the roughest road, and calms the stormiest sea, and soothes the bitterest anguish, and soothes the pang of earthly disaster and despair with the glorious announcement, "I will never leave thee; I will never forsake thee." Then, if God thinks best, come poverty—Jesus was poor. Come slander—Jesus was abused. Come death—Jesus died. Come the grave—Jesus was buried. The record is kept on high.—Talmage.

Our Young Folks.

Make Straight Paths.

Young men, when they first go away from home, and young women, at their first entrance upon society, are very apt to incur needless risks to character and reputation from sheer foolishness. They do not intend to do wrong, but they wish to "use their freedom." They feel strong and are wise in their own conceit. They would like to do some daring deed and come out unscathed, just to falsify the predictions of older heads. We have known many youths to throw themselves in the way of wicked temptation, and to walk purposely on the edge of some fatal precipice for the mere purpose of showing their moral agility in escaping.

For such and for all who have any influence with such we have a message worth considering. "Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed."

Not even the Son of God would make a needless leap from the pinnacles of the temple. Angels will bear us up in every danger, so that no person doing his duty shall suffer bruising; but he who chooses the roughest and most dangerous paths without being called to tread them is tempting God to leave him to the natural results of his own weakness.

Kiss Your Mother Good-Night.

Here is a story which I want the boys and girls to remember. There was once a little boy he was not very little either, for he had grown quite large enough to manage a horse easily, and do a great many things, which made him feel almost a man who went up to his room one night, said his prayer very properly, and went to bed. But he could not sleep; he tossed from side to side, counting a hundred forward and backward, reciting to himself the multiplication table, hymns and long poems; but, try as he might, he could not go to sleep; he had neglected a duty; and it weighed so heavily upon his conscience that it was impossible for him to find rest. At last he got up, groped his way down stairs to his mother's room, and timidly knocked at the door.

"Who's there?" cried his father in rather an angry tone.

"It is I, pa."

"Well, who are you?"

He had several children, and upon first awakening could not distinguish the voice.

"It is Willie, pa; please let me come in."

"What do you want, Willie? Are you sick?"

"No sir; I am not sick; but I must see mother."

At this the mother got up in the darkness and unfastened the door. When the little boy found her he threw his arms around her neck and kissed her warmly. There were tears on his cheeks, and tears in his voice, when he cried:

"O mother! I went to bed without kissing you. I forgot it, mother: indeed I did; and I could not sleep when I thought of it."

You may be sure his mother was by this time in tears herself. They were tears of gratitude to God for having given her such an affectionate child. She drew him to her and kissed him and again and again, and with a blessing on him, dispatched him again to bed. The burden off his conscience, he soon fell asleep; and never again, until he left home a man, to battle with the great wicked world, did he forget to kiss mother good-night.—Children's Friend.

Be Slow to Accuse.

"Mother, I can't find my seventeen cents anywhere," said Arthur, coming into his mother's room with quite an anxious face. I put it right here in my overcoat-pocket. It had been hanging up in the hall all day, and I do believe that now girl has taken it out. She saw me have it last night and put it away."

"Look in your other pockets, Arthur. A little boy who is so apt to forget things must not be too positive that he put his money in his pocket-book. And never accuse anybody of stealing without a shadow of evidence. This is very sinful as well as unkind. What if Susan should lose her money and accuse you of stealing it? Remember the golden rule."

"But, mother, she looked very guilty when I said I had lost it, and that I knew that some one had taken it out of my pocket."

"But very likely she did look confused on hearing you make such an unkind speech. She knew very well there was no one in the house you could suspect of taking it but herself. You might as well have said so in plain words. An innocent person is more apt to look guilty when accused of a crime than one who is hardened in wrong-doing. The latter usually has a face ready made up to suit any occasion. A gentleman once said that the most guilty looking person he ever saw was a man arrested for stealing a horse which afterwards proved to be his own."

"But what has become of my money, mother? It is gone—that is certain."

"I believe you lost a fine top once, that it was supposed a little neighbor had stolen," said his mother with a smile.

"But I can't have left this in the grape-vine arbor this weather."

"But there are plenty of other losing places about. Did you have on that jacket last evening?"

"No mother, I believe I had on my gray one; but then I know I put it in my pocket-book."

"Don't say you know, my dear, for it may be an untruth. Please bring me your gray jacket."

Arthur walked slowly up to his room, but he walked slower still and looked very fool-

ish when he came into his mother's room again.

Mother comprehended it all at a glance, and smiled as she said:

"I wonder who looks guilty this time?" "O mother! I am so sorry, but I did not mean to accuse Susan so wrongly. I remember now just as plainly as can be, wrapping up these three five-cent pieces and two pennies in that bit of paper, and putting into my jacket-pocket."

"It is a very serious thing, Arthur, to make such charges as you did a moment ago against an innocent person. What if you had mentioned it among your school-mates? It would be told all about—Susan, at Mr. Reynolds's, steals. I wonder they keep her. If ever she wanted to get another place, it might be a difficult matter. Though you contradict the story afterward, it would never undo the mischief. Many will repeat an injurious story, who will never take the trouble to correct it. I will pray for you my dear boy, that you may learn to correct this sinful habit; and I hope you will pray with me. You will never improve a bad habit until you pray over it. Run, now, and tell Susan that you have found your money; and try to make some amends for your injustice by being more than usually thoughtful and obliging."—Selected.

Temperance.

A Striking Illustration.

A company of individuals united themselves together in a mutual benefit society. The blacksmith comes and says,—

"Gentlemen, I wish to become a member of your association."

"Well, what can you do?"

"O, I can shoe your horses, iron your carriages, and make all kinds of implements."

"Very well, come in, Mr. Blacksmith." The mason applies for admission into the society.

"And what can you do, sir?"

"O, I can build your barns and houses, stables and bridges."

"Very well, come in—we can't do without you."

Along comes the shoemaker and says,—

"I wish to become a member of your society."

"Well, what can you do?"

"I can make boots and shoes for you."

"Come in, Mr. Shoemaker, we must have you."

So in turn applied all the different trades and professions, till lastly an individual comes and wants to become a member.

"And what are you?"

"I am a rumseller."

"A rumseller! What can you do?"

"I can build jails, and prisons, and poor-houses."

"And is that all?"

"No; I can fill them; I can fill your jails with criminals, your prisons with convicts, and your poor-houses with paupers."

"And what else can you do?"

"I can bring the gray hairs of the aged to the grave with sorrow, I can break the heart of the wife, and blast the prospect of the friends of talent, and fill your land with more than the plagues of Egypt."

"Is that all you can do?"

"Good heavens!" cries the rumseller, "is not that enough?"

The Serpent of Appetite.

It is an old Eastern fable that a certain king once suffered the Evil One to kiss him on either shoulder. Immediately there sprang therefrom two serpents, who, furious with hunger, attacked the man, and strove to eat into his brain. The now terrified king strove to tear them away and cast them from him, when he found, to his horror, that they had become a part of himself.

Just so it is with every one who becomes a slave to his appetite. He may yield in what seems a very little thing at first; even when he finds himself attacked by the serpent that lurks in the glass, he may fancy he can cast him off. But, alas! he finds the thirst for strong drink has become a part of himself. It would be almost as easy to cut off his right hand. The poor poet Burns said that if a barrel of rum was placed in one corner of the room, and a loaded cannon in another, pointing toward him, ready to be fired if he approached the barrel, he had no choice but to go for the rum.

The person who first tempts you to take a glass may appear very friendly. It was not a dart that Satan aimed at the fated king. He only gave him a kiss. But the serpent that sprang from it was just as deadly, for all that.

O, be careful of letting this serpent of appetite get possession of you, for it will be a miracle of grace, indeed, if you are ever able again to shake him off.

Guard against every sin, dear children, however small; let it not gain a hold upon you. Pray to be kept from temptation in every form, and think not that in your own strength you can battle against it.—Youth's Temperance Banner.

The New York Times is authority for the assertion that there are 8,061 licensed rum shops in that city. The annual amount said to be spent for intoxicating liquors is \$25,000,000. If the population is 970,000, there are ample provisions made for the people—one grog-shop to each one hundred and twenty persons.

A temperance hospital will be opened in London next month for the non-alcoholic treatment of disease. Sir Walter Trevelyan is president. The annual outlay is estimated at from £1,500 to £2,000.

A Liverpool grocer was fined £30 and costs for exposing bottles of wine after eleven o'clock. Although he had refused to sell any of the wine, the penalty was imposed as a warning and exposition of the law.

Cost of Drink in England.

The Established Church of England is fast beginning to awaken to the fearful ravages of strong drink. England spent last year on drink, over \$625,000,000, or upwards of \$20 for every man, woman and child! We have heard much of late years respecting that conservation of forces whereby motion, for instance, is simply changed to heat, and heat may be changed back again unspent to motion. Alas! this conservation fails when it touches the rum traffic. Into what incalculable beggary, and vice, and crime, and family wretchedness, and broken hearts, and drunkards' graves, and ruined souls, are those \$625,000,000 yearly converted! But there is no conversion of this unutterable aggregate of misery back again to the astounding price paid for it. It is just so much annual waste of the national wealth. We are glad to see that the Church of England, becoming alarmed at this condition of things, is bestirring itself to arrest the evil, within its own limits at least. The Chester Courant says that "the bishops, archdeacons, rural deans, city and parochial clergy, synods, congresses, &c., have, at their meetings, discussed this question in relation to its bearings on the Church." A society has been formed in London, under the Presidency of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, which proposes to work diocese by diocese. It invites each clergyman to preach on "The Sin of Intemperance," form societies, &c. The Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of Exeter and Gloucester, have already given their sanction to the enterprise.

Random Readings.

Hard rubber chips are melted in a closed pot, poured on greased sheet iron to cool and pulverized, and then dissolved in benzole or turpentine.

A waterproof paper has been invented by a resident of New York city, which can be adapted to covering walls as well as book-binding and wrapping purposes. A building is to be erected at the old Five Points, New York, for the manufacture of this paper.

A Baptist paper in Ohio was sent for nine years to a subscriber who never paid a cent for it. The other day the newspaper was returned to the patient and long-suffering publisher with the affecting pencil note on its margin, "Gone to a better world." The editor is a very pious man, but it is reported that his faith is terribly shaken in regard to the accuracy of the information.

The German proverb says, "a man who takes soup with the devil, needs a long spoon." And this is especially true of those engaged in occupations which thrive upon the ruin of their fellow men. They dream of prosperity, and count up their present gains, and eventually find that their soup-spoon was too short, and while they get the soup, the devil gets them.

Oliver Cromwell found twelve great silver statues in York cathedral. Suddenly he asked, "Who are those expensive fellows up there?" The ecclesiastics told him they were the disciples of Christ. "Ah, very well," said the rough old Puritan, "let them come down and be melted up; then, like Christ, they will go about doing good!"

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.—The Tasmanian Legislature is now in session. An unofficial member has carried a measure to legalize marriage with a deceased wife's sister. The Assembly assented to this after a slight opposition on the part of four members only, and the bill has passed the second reading in the Council by a majority of twelve to two, although Bishop Bromly and clergy and some ladies petitioned strongly against it.—English Independent.

Right through all the tinsel splendours of royal position, right through all the meretricious adornments of fashion, right through all the factitious importances of wealth, this principal speaks for itself, and demands a new measurement of those men and women who have been calling themselves great. It asks—what are they doing for Christ and his cause, and his people? In the exalted name of the one Master, it utters the challenge—"Why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Our misfortunes are not often duplicates; we do not feel the second trial as we felt the first. The Spanish proverb says, "We ought not to give God the trouble to scourge us twice with the one stick." Be consoled; the troubles of this year can never happen to thee again. Every year bring its own winter, and all winters have not the same depth of snow. A stout heart conquers ill-luck; and if the shower falls, walk fast; and if you get wet through there is one consolation, that you cannot get any wetter.

John Ploughman once said:—"I never knew a good horse which had not some odd habit or other; and I never yet saw a minister worth his salt, who had not some crotchet or oddity. Now, these are the bits of cheese that cavillers snail out and nibble at; this man is too slow, and another too fast; the first is too flowery, and the second too dull. Dear me, if all God's creatures were judged in this way, we should wring the dove's neck for being too tame, shoot the robins for eating spiders, kill the cows for swinging their tails, and the hens for not giving us milk. When a man wants to beat a dog, he can soon find a stick; and at this rate any fool may have something to say against the best minister in England."

In the recent United Presbyterian Synod in Edinburgh, the Rev. Dr. Alexander MacEwen related that a friend of his, when lately in London, spent part of his Sabbath in the church of one of the most popular and well-known clergymen of the Broad-church school. When the sermon came to be preached, no text was taken, and no word of Scripture was read to the crowded congregation; but the preacher said:—"Having given you my views of Shelley's poetry lately, I shall now try to say something to interest you on Byron's to-day. He then took as his subject Byron's poem of 'Cain,' which he criticised at some length, being the part of the first murderer.