

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1879.

SUNDAY, August 10th, 1879.—The Fruit of the Spirit.—Galatians v. 22-26.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 22-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—Gal. vi. 7.

DAILY READINGS.—Monday, Galatians i. Tuesday, Galatians ii. Wednesday, Galatians iii. Thursday, Galatians iv. Friday, Galatians v. Saturday, Galatians vi. Sunday, Revelation xxii.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Fruits of the Spirit. Vss. 22-26. II. Forbearance. Vs. 1. III. Burden-bearing. Vss. 2-5. IV. Exhortation. Vss. 6-9.

QUESTIONS.—Of whom was the church in Galatia composed? What great contrast is shown in the lesson?

I. Vss. 22-26.—What are the fruits of the Spirit? Of what is all holiness a fruit? Comp. Eph. v. 9. Among these fruits, as cited, what is meant by "faith"? In what respects is the modern word "temperance" smaller than the ancient one?

II. Vs. 1.—What good counsel does Paul now give? To whom would he entrust church discipline?

III. Vss. 2-5.—Of what two burdens does Paul now speak? What responsibility in spite of everything, is personal? See Rom. ii. 6.

IV. Vss. 6-9.—What is the inevitable law of moral correspondences? Does Paul intimate that the final moral bias of life will ever be changed? What makes this instruction serious to us all?

EXPOSITION.—I. General Summary. Verses 22-25.

Verses 22.—But—marking contrast—the fruit of the Spirit.—"The Spirit" is here God's Holy Spirit, third Person of the Trinity. He is the author of regeneration, in which begins our holy fellowship with God in Christ our Lord and Saviour. John i. 13; iii. 5; 1 John i. 3. "The fruit of the Spirit" is thus a very natural term by which to designate the various virtues of the Christian life. In love, joy, peace, etc.—One fruit, but many virtues. The virtues are distinct, for the names are not mere synonyms, yet, though distinct, they have all one life, and so are one fruit—one great, rich cluster. "Love" is here put first in order, as it is first in value. 1 Cor. xiii. 13. To love God is to be conscious of God's love to us, and this wakens a deep, sweet, holy "joy," as the conscious gratification of our highest wants. "Peace" is conscious harmony with God, with self, with God's universe, with everything but sin. "Long suffering" is persistence in this harmony, despite trial. "Gentleness," such as God's (Rom. ii. 4), whose Spirit conforms us to him. "Goodness," here, is the spirit of helpfulness, beneficence. "Faith" is here, faithfulness and consequent trustworthiness.

Verses 23.—"Meekness"—such as Christ's, "who, when reviled, reviled not again." "Temperance"—is the general virtue of self-control, self-government, in the face of all temptations. Against such [things as these virtues] there is no law. The word "such" suggests that the list is not complete, but only gives samples. God has only one law, and these virtues fulfill it; hence there is no law of God "against" these.

Verses 24.—And they that are Christ's.—The Christ party—those who draw from him their life, according to his own figure of the vine and its branches (John xv. 1-5), united to him by a living faith. Have crucified the flesh with the affections and [the] lusts. "The flesh" here, as usually where it has a moral meaning, stands for the whole unrenowned state of man before regeneration. Here is reference to Christ's atoning death and his resurrection, by virtue of which he has become the living Head of the Sons of God. The sinful principle is crucified, and so are crucified its works. Mark the difference between regeneration and reformation.

Verses 25.—If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit.—Let us not deny in conduct what we affirm in faith. Let the good tree bear its good fruits. And mark well, that as the fruits of the Spirit are produced in free men, such exhortation is in place, as it would not be if men were trees and not men.

II. Mutual Burden-bearing. Vss. 26, 1-6. How skillfully the Apostle passes from

a general doctrine or principle to its special, practical application to the case of his hearers or readers.

Verses 26.—Let us not be desirous, etc. The good opinion of men, earned by something else than true goodness of heart and life, is a vain—that is—empty glory, as contrasted with the approving judgment of God, given for true godliness of character.

Verses 1.—Brethren.—If a man be overtaken in a fault [any lapse.] "Overtaken," in distinction from the deliberate, determined, cold-blooded transgressor, for whom expulsion rather than restoration would have been commended. Ye which are [ye the] spiritual, restore, etc.—Ambition for vain glory would rather exult at another's downfall, or else treat him with haughtiness or severity. Considering thyself, etc.—A thing which selfish pride is sure not to do, but which is natural to a truly Christian spirit.

Verses 2.—Burdens.—Here the original means weights pressing down, such as sickness, destitution, etc. For example, the cargo of a ship, the requirements of a law, etc. Every one shall give account of himself to God; every one is alone, and must be, as though he and his God were the only two in existence.

Verses 3, 4.—The man who performs no service is before God of no account.

Verses 6.—Thus far the Apostle had spoken of the relation of the members of a Christian body simply as members. Here he recognizes official relation. The teacher's (or minister's) "burden" or duty [vs. 5] is to teach. To this he is to give himself, as a rule, devoting all his time and energy to the great work. The "burden," duty of the members taught, is to support him fairly, adequately. All good things—that is, in all the necessities of life, or in money—a salary by which he can procure these necessities. The churches still need this exhortation and command from God.

III. Sowing and Reaping. Verses 7-9.

God's grace does not interfere with man's responsibility, but recognizes and conforms to it.

Verses 7.—Be not deceived.—See iii. 1. Plausible men were trying to draw these Christians away from Christ. God is not mocked. Not with impunity. He cares for his honor, his word, his church, his Son. Whatsoever a man soweth, etc. As true, more infallibly and awfully true, in the sphere of character than anywhere else. "Shall reap"—"that" the same in kind, "he" himself also. Even as he sowed.

Verses 8.—Only two kinds of seed sown; only two kinds of harvest to be gathered—the flesh, the spirit—corruption, eternal life.

Verses 9.—To begin right is not enough. The crown is to him that endures. Faint not.

TOPICS.—Where the Spirit is present, there will presently be "fruit"; and this fruit hangs in a glorious cluster, such as is represented in the first two verses of our lesson. They are grouped in three triads. The first three are among the soul's earliest experiences in the new life—"love, joy, peace." They come to the soul when it begins to look up in faith, and feels that God is reconciled, and heaven is its home. The second three—"long-suffering, gentleness, goodness"—have reference to our relations to our fellow-creatures, embracing both passive endurance of their ill-doing, and active endeavor for their well-being. The third three—"faith, meekness, temperance"—give us a glimpse of character crystallized in its highest forms—trustfulness, submission, and well-balanced self-control. These are in the sight of God, of great price.

The consciousness of our own sins and disabilities ought to prompt us to be charitable and sympathetic towards our brethren in the flesh, and to make allowance for them when they fall—helping them up, steadying them in their going, and, by all modes of beautiful ministering, seeking to cheer and strengthen them. In this way we can "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, August 17th, 1879.—The Christian Armor.—Ephesians vi. 10-20.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."—Ephesians vi. 11.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Have ready a basket of different kinds of fruit, some leaves of the same; different seeds. Illustrate by asking, if you saw a tree full of apples, would you know what sort of tree it was? Which is best, a tree with nothing but leaves, or one with fruit?

Just as you know a tree by its—fruit, so you know whether a child has the love of Jesus in his heart, by what he—does. Christ-like ways are called fruits of the Spirit, which mean, the fruits which the Holy Spirit helps us to bear.

Show that the root, from which the tree grows, which bears the fruit of the Spirit, is planted in a child's heart, and is called Love. You do not see the root, but you do see the tree and the fruit.

If you want to bear fruit of the Spirit, you must sow good seed. These seeds are thoughts, wishes, and feelings; they grow into a harvest of actions. What will seeds of anger grow into? Blows, bruises, fights, perhaps murder. Using bad words grows into swearing. Taking little things, into thieving. Sow seeds of love, kindness, goodness, if you want to bear that kind of fruit. "Love from love is sure to ripen."

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

- No. 31. "A PRECIOUS CORNER STONE."—Isaiah xxviii. 16. 1. A row.....2 Kings ix. 24. 2. P israh.....Num. xxiii. 14. 3. R abbah.....2 Sam. xii. 26-31. 4. E ars.....Mark ii. 23. 5. C yrus.....Isa. xlv. 1. 6. I ce.....Psa. cxlvii. 17. 7. O blation.....Dan. ii. 46. 8. U nderstanding.....Psa. xxxii. 9. 9. S ceva.....Acts xix. 14. 10. C lay ground.....2 Chron. iv. 17. 11. O ccupy.....Luke xix. 13. 12. R abbi.....Matt. xxiii. 8. 13. N icolaitanes.....Rev. ii. 6. 14. E nrogel.....2 Sam. xvii. 17. 15. R oe.....2 Sam. ii. 18. 16. S choolmaster.....Gal. iii. 24. 17. T admor.....2 Chron. viii. 4. 18. O rnement.....1 Peter iii. 4. 19. N arrow.....Matt. vii. 14. 20. E leventh.....Matt. xx. 6.

Scripture Enigma.

- No. 32. 1. A church to which the Lord, a message sent, And called upon its members to repent. 2. A man who treacherously slew his king, And did on Israel's land much sorrow bring. 3. A beauteous type of future glorious days, When all mankind shall sing their Maker's praise. 4. Where were the tribes of Israel long delayed Because the Lord their God they disobeyed? 5. To what did Job his fickle friends compare, When he his heavy sorrow had to bear? 6. One who for gain dwelt 'mid a wicked race, Because it was a rich and fruitful place. 7. Whose son became a preacher full of grace, And was the sire of all earth's future race? 8. A kingdom which o'er all the earth bore sway; But for its wickedness was swept away. 9. Where did our Saviour for a time retreat, And with his friends He held communion sweet? 10. Near to what town was seen a glorious sight; And he who saw received the gospel light? 11. The pious servant of a tyrant king, Who to the saints of God did succour bring. 12. A humble spot, where by our gracious Lord, A youth from death was unto life restored. 13. A city that was sunk in heathen night. Till Paul arose, and brought the gospel light. If these initials side by side are brought, You'll find a prayer; by our Redeemer taught, A prayer the Lord Himself in sorrow prayed, When He for us the will of God obeyed; Lord, grant, that 'mid all earthly grief and care We from our hearts may truly pray this prayer.

The world may boast of its power, but it can never take from us what nature bestows, or bestow on us what nature denies.

Boys' Department.

A Little Fraud.

A little trembling hand, blue with cold, was extended to passers-by in mute appeal for charity. It was not an uncommon sight, and was unheeded by the gay, warmly clad throng who hastened towards bright, comfortable homes, or places of amusement or worship, in the City of Brotherly Love.

"Little fraud! I think the police should see that respectable people are not annoyed by such characters."

This thoughtless remark was made by a young lad who was acting as escort to Alice Whitney and Mabel French on their way to an informal party given by a young acquaintance.

Young people are apt to be thoughtless without intending to be rude or heartless, and it is quite possible that Will Harding, when making the above remark, was at a loss for some means of continuing the conversation, which had begun to lag.

However that may be, it aroused the owner of the little cold hand to indignation.

"I ain't a 'fraud,' and I ain't a beggar, neither; but I left mother at home sick, and baby sister too, and none of us has had nothin' to eat all day long. We hain't got fine clothes like you, and a nice house to live in, but we are just as good for all that—so there now!"

"The same story with a new way of telling it," exclaimed Will, laughing, and glancing at his companions for an echoing approval.

It was a little awkward for the young man, for both Alice and Mabel were directing their attention to the tiny girl who had unexpectedly shown so much spirit.

"Wait a moment, Will, it may be that this little girl is truly in distress. Father was saying at the breakfast-table this morning that there was terrible suffering among the poor just now;" then turning to the child Alice inquired:

"What is your name, and where do you live?"

"My name is Edith Ward; we live in a room on — street, No. 1909."

Edith was putting, and kicking the pavement sullenly with her poor, worn-out shoe, but she hung her head and replied in a respected manner as she heard kind words in a sympathizing tone addressed to her.

At first she had drawn her little ill-clad form up to its fullest height, expecting the pretty, well-dressed girls would join with the boy in ridicule; and their failure to do so was a matter of surprise to Edith, at it had been to Will.

This one day of begging had given the little girl of ten cause to expect of human nature only such treatment.

"No, I shall remember that address, and call there to-morrow, and if"—Alice should have made a full stop at "to-morrow," and not at "if."

"I ain't lying to you, Miss; mother hain't had nothing to eat but half a cracker since yesterday," spoke up Edith in the same indignant manner as before.

"Young ladies, if you take my advice you will leave this impudent street-beggar to apply to the proper place for such relief, and if she is worthy she will be assisted," spoke up Master Will.

"Where is the proper place?" asked Mabel.

"Why—I—let me see—I don't exactly know—but"

"How do you suppose this poor little girl can know, and quite likely she is a stranger in the city. I don't think we ought to wait until to-morrow, but should do what we can for this poor family at once, if we find Edith's story to be true," said Mabel.

"I agree with you, Mabel, let's go to the poor child's home; it will not be much out of our way, and we shall enjoy the party all the better if we succeed in doing a little good on the way there," said Alice with enthusiasm.

Will was again in the minority, but yielded as gracefully as possible under the circumstances. He thought an investigation would prove to the young ladies his superior wisdom, but said:

"As you wish; no one will attend a call of distress, if real, sooner than myself I am quite at your service."

"One thing is certain, this child has not the method of common beggars," said Alice.

So it was declared that they should take Edith for their pilot, and seek the home of poverty before proceeding to the brilliant parlors where their coming was awaited by a happy host of merry-makers.

On hearing their decision Edith walked rapidly and cheerfully before the young people until they were brought face to face with a room where a poor mother dwelt with her children in squalid poverty.

There seemed a lack of everything to produce comfort.

On a rude couch lay a woman whose face was pinched and pale for want of proper food and much-needed attention. The invalid looked up in surprise when she saw her visitors.

"My prayers are answered; God has sent you here, surely," she said.

"We met your little daughter," said Alice, "and she told us how you were situated. We came to see what you need to make you comfortable."

"You are very kind and I will tell you candidly: we have suffered within the past few days for food and fire—in fact for everything," said the poor woman earnestly.

The truth of her words was evident.

"You are a stranger in the city, I presume," said Mabel.

"No, I am not a stranger here, for I know that your name is Mabel French; and I have other acquaintances, but pride has prevented my making known to them my destitute condition. You do not recognise me, and I don't wonder I hardly know myself."

"Your name is Mrs. Ward?" asked Mabel.

"Yes, but when I knew you I was Miss Evans, that was five years ago; since then I married Mr. Ward."

"Then you were my music-teacher?" "Yes, I gave you your first instruction in music."

"Why Miss Evans, I should never have recognized you in the world! How glad I am that we were directed to you!" said Mabel, as she took the sick woman's hand and gently pressed it.

"Thank God!" responded the invalid.

During this conversation Alice had been developing a plan for speedy relief. She whispered a few words to Mabel, to which the latter replied, "Splendid!" then, turning to Mrs. Ward:

"You will hear from us very soon in a substantial manner."

The young people then departed towards the scene of the evenings' enjoyment.

It was subsequently ascertained that when Miss Evans married Mr. Ward he was a musician of some prominence. Little Edith was his daughter by a former marriage, but a bond of enduring affection existed between the new mother and the little orphan.

Mr. Ward had prospered for a time, but ill health deprived him of his voice, and at last came grim poverty and unrelenting death.

Merry greeting by twosome of happy acquaintances welcomed Alice, Mabel, and Will on their somewhat late arrival at the party.

"Why didn't you come earlier?" questioned several in a breath.

"And what makes you look so sober, Mabel?" queried one observing Miss.

"Get all the company together, I have something to relate that I want you all to hear," remarked Alice before Mabel could reply.

"A speech from the celebrated orator, Miss Alice Whitney, listen!" was repeated in great glee.

All were curious to know what the young lady had to offer, and she soon found a listening audience.

"It is a sad story," began Alice, "but I am sure you will be glad to have me relate it, for it will give you an opportunity to make others, as well as yourselves, happier."

She then briefly related the circumstances of the visit to Mrs. Ward's poor dwelling, only omitting the unfortunate words Will Harding had uttered, and of which he had long since repented.

"Now I have a plan to offer," said Alice in conclusion. "This poor family need immediate aid, and I propose that six girls and as many boys who live near by go home, and each bring something for the relief of the Wards for to-night. Who will volunteer? It is not far, and we can return in an hour at most."