

The Sunday-School.

FIRST QUARTER,
LESSON VI.—Feb. 7.

A SABBATH IN CAPERNAUM.

MARK 1:21-34.

The lesson includes Matt. 8:14-17; Mark 1:21-34; Luke 4:31-41.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*He laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.*—Luke 4:40.

HISTORICAL SETTING.—*Time.*—Spring of A. D. 28. Immediately following the last lesson.

Place.—The city of Capernaum. *Place in the Life of Christ.*—A specimen day's work of Jesus, showing his method of proclaiming the gospel, especially on the Sabbath.

Jesus having begun his work in Galilee, with Capernaum for a centre, by calling four disciples for training in his teachings and works, we have a picture of his work on the Sabbath day—a specimen of his labors and methods.

TEACHING THE WONDERFUL WORDS OF LIFE ON THE SABBATH.—Vs. 21-22. *And they went into Capernaum, from the seashore. And straightway, as soon as the service opened. On the Sabbath he entered into the synagogue. Equivalent to our church and its services. And taught. It was common to ask any suitable person to speak at the synagogue services, which were like our prayer-meetings or Sunday-school. They were astonished at his doctrine. What he taught and the manner and spirit of his teaching. For he taught them as one that had authority, and not like the scribes, who were mere interpreters; who dwelt on forms, incidents and details, and not on principles. 1. He was not an expounder of others' opinions. His teachings was independent and original.*

2. He spoke with the authority of one who knew. He knew the way to heaven, for he had been there; he knew the principles of the kingdom of God, for he was God.

3. His conduct and character gave Jesus great personal power.

4. He spoke with the authority of the Son of God, delivering a message from his Father to the children of men. All good teaching and preaching must have something of this quality of authority which characterized the teaching of Jesus. It must be the fruit of experience and knowledge.

PROVING HIS AUTHORITY AND ILLUSTRATING HIS TEACHING THROUGH MIRACLES OF MERCY.—Vs. 23-34. Here is recorded a group of miracles which Jesus performed on one Sabbath day.

1. They prove the authority of Jesus and his teaching.

2. They illustrate the spirit and the power of the gospel. Every miracle is a picture of the character of God, of the nature of the gospel, of the loving kindness of our Saviour, of his power to help, of the wonders of grace he can do in our hearts, of his power to deliver us from the diseases of sin.

3. HIS POWER OVER DEMONS.—Vs. 23-28. *There was in their synagogue. Among the audience to hear him in one of his quiet periods. A man with an unclean spirit. A man under the influence of an unclean spirit. Demons are called unclean because they are impure, unholy, defiling, and produce such effects both in the body*

and spirit of those whom they possess. The devil's characteristic work is to ruin both body and soul. *And he cried out, during the services, Let us alone. An exclamation of indignation. What have we to do with thee? Why do you trouble us? Jesus' preaching was contrary to their nature; everything he did and said tended to destroy their influence.*

Let us alone. The cry of wicked men is here illustrated. The mere presence of good men is an interference. All their efforts to save men, to put down bad practices, to enforce good laws, to overthrow intemperance, gambling, and all that panders to vice, seem to bad men like an unwarrantable interference. They bid ministers, churches, reformers attend to their own business and let them alone. *I know thee.* As a part of the principality of evil warring against God and good, he was aware of the massing of the divine forces at this time in the world. *The Holy One of God,* in contrast with the uncleanness of the demons. *And Jesus rebuked him, Hold thy peace. And when the unclean spirit had torn him.* Luke says that the demon threw the man down. Satan will not easily leave his prey. Evil habits show unusual power when we try to cast them off.

Came out of him. He had to obey, however unwillingly. *What thing is this? etc.* What new teaching! *With authority,* implying both the right and the power. *Immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Capernaum.*

HIS POWER OVER DISEASE. PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER.—Vs. 29-31. *And forthwith they entered into the house of Simon. Simon Peter and Andrew had settled in Capernaum, probably as a better place for the fishing business. But Simon's wife's mother. Peter was married, and makes it strange that the Roman Catholics should lay so much stress on the celibacy of the clergy. Sick of a fever, of a severe type. Took her by the hand. To make it evident that the miraculous cure came from him. Immediately the fever left her. Obedient to Jesus. And she ministered unto them.* Christ's immediate health and strength demonstrates the miraculous character of the cure.

MANY MIRACLES OF MANY KINDS.—Vs. 32-34. *And at even (the same Sabbath evening) when the sun did set, when the cool of the evening made it pleasanter to bring the sick. He healed many that were sick. He laid his hands on them as he did with Peter's mother-in-law. Of divers diseases. His power extended over every form of disease.*

The Contrast Between the Two Kingdoms. Satan's kingdom (1) is made up of demons and those filled with their spirit. (2) Its adherents are miserable themselves, and seek to make others so, (3) They tempt to sin. (4) They injure the body. (5) They ruin the mind and the soul.

Christ's kingdom is ever undoing the works of the devil. (1) Christ himself is the Holy One, and changes his disciples into his likeness. (2) He blesses the body, giving health and life. (3) He blesses the soul for this life and the life to come. (4) His true disciples are like him in labors and purpose.

Miracles were a Testimony to the Authority of Christ. They are God's

signature and seal to the words which his messengers speak.

Christ's miracles are worthy of him and of God. They are the expressions of God's character and examples of his good will to men.

Moral Miracles. "When a man declares to me, 'I cannot believe in miracles,' I reply, 'I can, because I have witnessed them.' 'When and where?' 'On a certain street in this city is a man who was a week ago given over to every form of vice and brutality, and who is now a good citizen, an honest workman, a kind husband, a loving father, a pure, upright man. Surely that is such a miracle as makes me forever believe in the possibility of miracles.'—*Drummond.*

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. The strongest proof to-day that Jesus is the Son of God, and our Saviour, lies in what he and his gospel are doing in this world. He promised his disciples that they should do greater things than he did in Palestine. And this promise has proved true, not only in the moral changes from sin to holiness, from the diseased to the healthy soul, but in the physical blessings which he is working through his disciples. Public and private institutions spring up everywhere under the influence of Christianity. They do not work miracles, but are better than the power of miracles, as the prolonged sunshine is better than a flash of lightning. Blind asylums have opened many eyes, and caused people to read and work even without sight. Hospitals have cured and cared for multitudes of sick and insane. The map of the world,—showing the conditions in lands with the gospel—is the proof of Christianity.

2. Christ's example shows the only true method of spreading the gospel. Like him, if we would succeed in saving men, we must (1) preach the Word of God with the authority of divine truth and of our experience; and (2) we must confirm the Word by good deeds, helping the poor, visiting the sick, cheering the despondent, aiding the unfortunate, comforting the lonely, looking out on every side for some one whom we can help, and whose burdens we can bear.

With Crick in the Back.

You are up against a whole lot of trouble unless you have a strong remedy like Nerviline to settle pain and dislodge stiffness from the muscles and joints. Just rub Nerviline on the painful spot—not much rubbing, because Nerviline has more power than ordinary remedies. You won't suffer long after Nerviline is applied for it relieves almost instantly. Mr. Phillip Adams, of Oakland, ca; s. "If I hadn't used Nerviline I guess my back would be stiff yet. A few applications of Nerviline took out all the soreness and stiffness. I can recommend Nerviline for any kind of muscular pain, also for rheumatism. Price 25c.

Bind together your spare hours by the cord of some definite purpose, and knowing not how much may be accomplished.—*Dr. William M. Taylor.*

So rapidly does lung irritation spread and deepen, that often in a few weeks a simple cough culminates in tubercular consumption. Give heed to a cough, there is always danger in delay; get a bottle of Bickle's Anti-consumptive Syrup, and cure yourself. It is a medicine unsurpassed for all throat and lung troubles. It is compounded from several herbs, each one of which stands at the head of the list as exerting a wonderful influence in curing consumption and all lung diseases.

Centre all your thoughts on self, and you will have abundance of misery. —*Charles Kingsley.*

Ayer's

For coughs, colds, bronchitis, asthma, weak throats, weak lungs, consumption, take Ayer's Cherry Pectoral.

Cherry Pectoral

Always keep a bottle of it in the house. We have been saying this for 60 years, and so have the doctors.

"I have used Ayer's Cherry Pectoral in my family for 40 years. It is the best medicine in the world, I know, for all throat and lung troubles."

MRS. J. K. NORCROSS, Waltham, Mass.

25c., 50c., \$1.00. J. C. AYER CO., Lowell, Mass.

The Lungs

Its action of the bowels is... Aid nature with Ayer's Pills.

The hand that takes the crown must ache with many a cross; Yet he who hath never a conflict hath never a victor's palm, And only the toilers know the sweetness of rest and calm.

—*Frances Ridley Havergal.*

Suffered Intense Pain.—Mrs. Chas. Miller, Bowling Green, Ont., says: "I have suffered greatly from Inflammatory Rheumatism for two years. My joints would swell and the pain was most severe. Could not get out of bed. Milburn's Rheumatic Pills have cured me."

Blessed are the workers, for theirs is training, service, and brotherhood.

A nagging cough drives sleep and comfort away. You can conquer it with Allen's Lung Balsam, which relieves hard breathing, pain in the chest and irritation of the throat. Give it freely to the children.

If you long for courage and self-control, choose to do hard things without telling of it.

A Pill for Generous Eaters.—There are many persons of healthy appetite and poor digestion who, after a hearty meal, are subject to much suffering. The food of which they have partaken lies like lead in their stomachs. Headache, depression, a smothering feeling follow. One so afflicted is unfit for business or work of any kind. In this condition Parmelee's Vegetable Pills will bring relief. They will assist the assimilation of the ailment, and used according to direction will restore healthy digestion.

Hope for the best, be ready for the worst, accept what God sends you.

Relieve those Inflamed Eyes!

Pond's Extract

Reduced one-half with pure soft water, applied frequently with a copper or eye cup, the congestion will be removed and the pain and inflammation instantly relieved.

CAUTION!—Avoid dangerous, irritating Witch Hazel preparations represented to be "the same as" Pond's Extract which easily cause and generally contain "wood alcohol," a deadly poison.