

The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

First Quarter.

THE BEATITUDES.

Lesson IV. Jan. 23.—Matt. 5: 1-12.

Study the whole chapter. Commit verses 3-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Ye are the light of the world, Matt. 5:14.

I. AND SEEING THE MULTITUDES. They proved that he had awakened sufficient interest for him to make a forward movement in his instruction. Wherever there are those willing to be taught the true teacher burns to teach. HE WENT UP. From the level place on the mountain (Luke 6:12, 17), where the people were gathered, to a higher point, from which he could more easily be seen and heard by them. INTO A MOUNTAIN. The mountain, a well-known place. WHEN HE WAS SEEN. This was the custom of the Jewish doctors, who taught sitting in token of their authority.—JACOBUS. HIS DISCIPLES CAME UNTO HIM. They gathered close to him, while the multitude were farther off, but within hearing.

First Beatitude.—V. 3. BLESSED. This word means far more than "happy," that which happens, by chance, from without. Blessedness "is the express symbol of a happiness identified with character." "The Christian word blessed is full of the light of heaven." "It emphasizes something which thrives on trial and persecution, which glories in tribulation, which not only endures, but conquers the world and expects its crown in heaven."

ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT. The original for poor expresses utter destitution. Hence a consciousness of spiritual want whose supply can come only from God. It is the opposite of pride, self-righteousness, self-conceit. It is the same spirit that is required when we are told that we must become as little children, if we would enter the kingdom; willing and anxious to learn, to ask, to seek.

FOR THERE IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. (See last lesson.) For they have the spirit which makes heaven; they have the qualities without which there can be no heaven begun on earth. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not (cannot) enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3). Pride, conceit, self-esteem, selfishness, lock and bar the door to heaven and heavenly blessedness.

Second Beatitude.—V. 4. BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN. (1) This is an absolute promise to all those who in the kingdom of heaven are brought into the experience of mourning, and is to be interpreted by such passages as Rom. 5:3-5, Heb. 12:11, and Rev. 7:14. (2) But chiefly the blessing refers to those who mourn over ignorance and sin, both in themselves and in others, who feel the sorrows of others, who realize the sins and needs of the world lying in wickedness. FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED. (See Isa. 61:1-3.) The Greek word for comfort means called to one's side for aid, strength, encouragement, consolation. It is the word from which one title of the Holy Spirit is derived, "The Comforter." Our word comfort is derived from two Latin words, con, together, and fortis, strong, made strong together. It is not the taking away altogether of sorrow, but transforming and transfiguring it, and compelling it to bestow blessings otherwise impossible.

The rainbow can be painted only on a storm. The most beautiful radiance of the sunset is reflected only from the clouds.

Third Beatitude.—V. 5. BLESSED ARE THE MEAK. Compare Psa. 37:11. "Meekness has, and must have for one of its accompaniments, a temper which is not easily provoked; a serenity which is not easily disturbed; an indisposition to retaliate injuries. These signs of meekness—which may also be symptoms of weakness—have been mistaken for the quality itself," as the hands of a clock have been mistaken for its mainspring; or iron pyrites has been mistaken for gold, because it has the yellow glitter of gold."

FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH. This earth. (1) They get the most out of the world and all its good things. Passion and revenge are unhappy feelings. Trust in God, control of temper, shed peace and happiness over everything. Every earthly blessing has a heavenly flavor. (2) The meek have a surer title to their earthly possessions; they are less likely to be dispossessed by enemies; they are apt to live longer than the passionate and revengeful. (3) Christ's kingdom, whose members are characterized by meekness, is yet to possess the whole earth. The final and lasting conquest of the earth will be not by force of arms, nor through worldly conquerors, not by force of intellect, nor by political shrewdness, but by the spiritual power of the meek, by the gospel of the meek and lowly Jesus. Apply vs. 38-41.

Fourth Beatitude.—V. 6. BLESSED ARE

THEY THAT DO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS. "Hunger and thirst are the sharpest spurs an animal can feel. Hunger has made civilized men cannibals, and thirst has made them maniacs. When the Master said, 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled,' he declared in a figure that those whose strongest desires are for goodness shall be satisfied." FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED. Not with power, or prosperity, but with the righteousness for which they hungered; and this really includes every lesser good. The whole soul is satisfied. And nothing else can satisfy the soul. All worldly things are vain to satisfy. They are like the salt waters of the sea, the more you drink the thirstier you are. Alexander conquered the world, and then wept for more worlds to conquer. God never made a human soul so small that this whole world could satisfy it.

Fifth Beatitude.—V. 7. BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL. Those who pity, sympathize with, and help to relieve, all misery and suffering. This is the natural outward expression of the inner hungering after righteousness. Mercy is near of kin to love. It is love to the needy, the troubled, the sinful, even those who have wronged us. It relieves spiritual want and darkness, as well as temporal; would give the gospel to the heathen, as well as food to the hungry.

FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY. From man and from God. Like begets like. The echo is like the original voice. But most of all do we need God's mercy. And showing mercy to others proves that we have a state of heart which makes it safe for God to forgive us. For him to forgive the unmerciful would be to multiply sins and wrongs.

Sixth Beatitude.—V. 8. BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART. Pure, sincere, un-mixed with evil or imperfection in motive, purpose and love. Trench makes it correspond with "simple" in its original meaning of simplex, *sine plica*, without fold. It is also "sincere," *i. e.*, *sine cera*, without wax, honey pure without any particles of wax; or as most modern etymologists derive *sin* from *sim* (Latin *simul*), altogether, and *cerus* from the same root as the English *sheer*, pure, clear; hence wholly, altogether clear.

FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD. There must be a likeness of nature and feeling, in order to understand another. So only the pure can see a pure God. The impure, the bad, cannot even see him, much less enjoy him. They do not understand his nature. They do not know the meaning of his character. They are color-blind. The selfish do not believe that unselfish love exists. The vile do not believe there is real purity.

When do we see God? Not only in heaven, but here and now. Just as far as any one is pure he sees God. What a privilege this is, to see God, his goodness, his glory, his love! How it enlarges the vision, widens the horizon, and expands the soul! What an ideal it sets before us! "The words of the dying Kinglessy," says Dr. Tait, "funds an echo in every Christian heart, 'How beautiful is God!'"

Seventh Beatitude.—V. 9. BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS. "The founders and promoters of peace." The exact opposite of the quarrelsome, the passionate, the fighters, the faultfinders, the murmurers; and also those who are indifferent whether there is peace or not. (1) Those who try to reconcile men at variance. (2) Those who try to bring peace to the restless and troubled. (3) Those who, from this same disposition, seek, like their Master, to reconcile men to God; to bring divine peace into sinful souls, by leading them to the Prince of Peace.

FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD. Because they are like him. They inherit his nature from their Father. The gospel ever brings peace, restoring the lost harmony of the soul with God and with nature and with itself.

IO, II. BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH ARE PERSECUTED. Who arouse the opposition and hate of bad men. The way this is manifested is described in v. 11.

Note that there are two conditions. (1) It must be FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE, FOR MY (Christ's) SAKE. So far as we use bad methods, or censorious language, or passion, or false denunciations, we lose the blessing. Many a person has been persecuted more for his un-Christly way of reform than for the reform itself. (2) It must be FALSELY. Persecution and suffering in themselves do not inherit the blessing.

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There will be sold at public auction on Saturday, the 29th day of January next, at 12 o'clock noon, at Chubb's Corner (so called) in the City of St. John pursuant to the directions of a certain decretal order of the Supreme Court in Equity made on the nineteenth day of October, A. D. 1897, in a certain cause therein pending wherein Mary Blanche Williams is Plaintiff and William Holman is Defendant, with the approbation of the undersigned Referee in Equity, the land and premises mentioned in the said Plaintiff's bill and in the said decretal order, and therein described as follows: All the right, title and interest of the Defendant in and to a certain Indenture of Lease bearing date the first day of March, A. D. 1887, and made between the Rector, Church Wardens and Vestry of Trinity Church, in the Parish of St. John, of the first part, and William Holman, Junior, of the second part, and by the said William Holman assigned to John M. Robinson (which said Indenture of Lease by certain assignments and the land thereby demised and all the buildings thereon have become vested in the defendant) and in the Plaintiff's bill described as "all that certain lot, piece and parcel of land situate, lying and being in Duke's Ward, in the City of St. John, bounded as follows, namely, beginning at the South Eastern corner of a lot of ground, formerly leased by the said Rector, Church Wardens and Vestry to one, Caleb Radcliffe, the said corner being on the western side of Charlotte Street, thence running along the southern boundary line of said Radcliffe lot the extent thereof eighty feet, thence southerly on a line parallel with the said street thirty-three feet four inches, thence easterly on a line parallel with the said Radcliffe southern boundary eighty feet to the said street and thence northerly on the line of the said street to the place of beginning with all the privileges and appurtenances to the same belonging. For terms of sale and other particulars apply to the Plaintiff's Solicitor or the undersigned Referee.

Dated at the City of St. John this 16th day of November, A. D. 1897. E. H. McALLINE, Referee in Equity. Plaintiff's Solicitor. W. A. LOCKHART, Auctioneer.

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