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QUICKLY CURED.

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off clothes off at night.

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Don't neglect the children's Coughs
Colds—might end in Croup—and
be cold and fatally weaken the lungs.

Let mothers now give their children
Wood's Norway Pine Syrup.
A nice to take, and cures all kinds
of Coughs and Colds more quickly and
safely than any remedy known.

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The Sabbath-School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Second Quarter, Lesson 9, May 7, 1899.

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES.—JOHN 15: 1-11.

Compare John 16: 16, Matthew 16: 16-20.

Commit Verses 6-8.

Golden Text.—I am the vine, ye are the branches.—JOHN 15: 15.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—Thursday eve, April 6, A. D. 30.

Place.—An upper room in Jerusalem.

PLACE IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

Passion Week.—The night before the crucifixion. Discourse at the institution of the Lord's Supper.

It is uncertain where this chapter and 16 and 17 were spoken. It is probable that at the close of chap. 14 they arose from the table and prepared to leave, but before they actually went out of the room, and while standing, the remainder of the discourse was spoken. There was no need of anything outward to suggest the figure or metaphor of the vine and its branches. The natural vine and its branches were an almost daily sight in that country.

THE TRUE VINE IS CHRIST.—Vs. 1, 5. I am the true vine. He is the one who can fulfil to them the perfect relation of a vine to its branches, in distinction from a natural vine; and from every other who has been called a vine; and from all things that might seem to be the source of Christian's life and power.

As the vine supports the branches, and its life flows through them all and is their life, so Jesus is the sustaining power of the Christian kingdom, and the source of the life in all his disciples. Take Christ away from the church and it is dead, a separated branch, a house without a foundation.

THE OWNER IS GOD.—Vs. 1, My Father is the husbandman. Not the hired laborer, the vine-dresser, but the owner of the vineyard, the original planter, possessor, and cultivator of the vine. The whole scheme of redemption had its source in the love and wisdom of the God head. All the wisdom, love, and power of God still protect and cherish his vineyard. He cares for the vine, plans for it, nourishes it, gives it the sunshine of his love, and the gentle rain of his grace, he prunes it, he cleanses it, he does all he can that it may bring forth fruit.

THE BRANCHES ARE TRUE CHRISTIANS.—V. 1, 5. Every branch that is in me, and bears fruit, he prunes it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Every true Christian is a branch of Christ, and connected with him in the most vital manner. The life of Christ flows through his soul. The spirit of Christ fills his spirit. Each Christian is a branch growing on the Tree of Life.

What a beautiful and appropriate type does the vine afford of the mystical body of Christ. Each member has his own personality, his own individual existence; and yet, living or dead, he is regarded as a scion, or branch, of one common stock, a component and integral part of one tree. The same bond unites each to all; the same sap pervades all; the same life animates them all. Christ is not the trunk, nor the branches, but the whole vine; they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

From time immemorial men have covenanted with one another by drinking together from a common cup of the blood of the grape, or the fruit of the vine. "The fruit of the vine is more than wine, it is the symbol of outpoured life."

THE FRUITLESS BRANCHES.—Vs. 2, 6. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit. These are the external professors, the merely baptized members, who had no life and never had, though they belong to the outward connection. It includes those who are joined to Christ by intellectual conviction, who accept of him and his teachings with their minds, but do not obey him nor love him. Judas was one example, Simon Magus another. He taketh away. Because their presence injures the other branches and their remaining is of no benefit to themselves. As long as there is hope of their bearing fruit they are permitted to remain, and are pruned and cared for. (See Luke 14: 69.)

I this is of no avail, they are taken away, by the natural withering away of those who draw no nourishment from the true vine. And they are burned. Because "no better use can be made of the vine wood; it is absolutely worthless (Ezek. 14). It is soft and yielding.

The branches cut off are first withered and then burned. The force of nature, in action are forever working to the removal of decay, of what is dead, of a

dead branch, a dead arm, a dead plant. The rain and sunshine that make it flourish when alive destroy it when dead.

This applies to churches and to individuals. God does not desire to have fruitless churches large and prosperous. He lets them wither away. The churches that keep nearest to Christ will grow the fastest. The Christian that neglects his union with Christ will find that his religion and moral life wither away, in time.

PRUNING THE FRUIT BEARING BRANCHES.—Vs. 2, 3. Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it. Cleanseth it. "In the East dressers wash the leaves and shoots and tendrils and clusters, each by itself in turn, so as to clear off the dust and mold." But the principal method of purging is by pruning. There is no tree that requires so much pruning as the vine. In the fall nearly all the branches are cut off, either close to the stump, or to the main branches.

Vines are pruned because they are of value, and have greater possibilities than they have realized. The artist sees greater perfection possible to his best picture. "It fares exactly so with God and some of his elect servants. Men seeing their graces, which so far exceed the graces of common men, wonder sometimes why they should suffer still. But he sees in them—what no other eye can perceive—the grace which is capable of becoming more gracious still; and in his far-seeing love for his own, he will not suffer them to stop short of the best whereof they are capable. They are fruit bearing branches, and just because they are so he prunes them, that they may bring forth more fruit."

Thinning fruit aids perfection of fruit. Men sometimes try to bear more kinds of fruit than they are able to bear, and are tempted to prop the tree with tonics. "They are overworked, overburdened, overtaxed." They try to do too many things. The cleansing and pruning are the work of the Holy Spirit, through the discipline of life, through the Word of God. All the discipline of life is a pruning of the exuberant growth of the will, the feelings, the passions, the desires, all the motive forces of our natures. Now ye are clean. The same word as "prune" in v. 2. Through the word. All Jesus' teaching and training for three years had been cleansing and pruning the disciples. Imperfect as they were, they were bearing good fruit and were prepared to bring forth a great deal more and a great deal better fruit, as we see in the Acts.

THE FRUIT. The fruit is the faith, love, and obedience referred to so often in our last lesson. It includes all labors for the conversion of souls and for blessing of mankind.

ABIDING IN CHRIST THE MEANS OF BEARING FRUIT.—Vs. 4, 6. Abide in me, and I in you. Continue your connection with me by trusting, loving, and obeying me. After I am gone still continue in me as you have done so far. Let all your strength, your wisdom, your plans, your hopes depend on me, as soul-growth by contact with other souls. Life kindles life, love awakens love, courage arouses courage, self-devotion, inspires self-devotion, thought quickens thought. So that there is nothing in the universe like abiding in Christ to promote the growth of our souls in every good. How may we abide in him? By faith; by communion with him; by doing his will; by doing all with right motives for his sake; by loving him; by the means of grace, the Word of God, prayer, the Sabbath.

Then will I abide in you. My power, knowledge, influence, guidance, will flow through you and produce the fruit you are to bear in building up the kingdom of God. Except ye abide in me. Jesus emphasizes the only means by which they can carry on his kingdom to success. The same branch that beareth much fruit. No man can make things grow. He can get them to grow by arranging all the conditions, but the growing is the work of God.

The free flow of the sap, the nature of the soil, the wealth of sunshine, the carefulness of the culture, all have to do with the quantity and quality of the fruit. For without me. Apart from me, a branch separated from the vine.

Illustration. The famous grape-vine at Hampton Court, England, is probably the largest in the world. As the keeper was telling how many thousands clusters it bore, I said to him that the grapes seemed very small for Black Hamburgs. "Yes," he said; "an old vine cannot bear as large grapes and clusters as a younger one; but the grapes are sweeter and finer flavor. They are kept for the queen's use." It is true, and it is a comfort, that with the lesser quantities of fruit old age can bear for the Lord, the quality of the fruit may be better, and the flavor more heavenly.

SOME BLESSINGS THAT COME FROM ABIDING IN CHRIST, AND BEARING FRUIT.—Vs. 7, 11.

The Answer to Prayer. And my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Because such are so imbued with God's will that they will ask what is God's will to give, for God's glory, in submission to his wisdom and love. "Every true Christian will aim at great things, and expect great things."

The Glory of God. Herein, in the abundance of the fruit they bear, is my Father glorified. So shall ye be my disciples. Learners in the school of Christ, followers of his teachings, enjoying his rewards. The branches are the means through which God bestows his choice fruits upon men. The branches are the conductors of God's life and blessing.

The Love of Christ. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you. This is a marvelous statement of the measure and the quality of Christ's love for us. It is true, warm, personal, seeking our best good, unfeigned. When we wish to know how much Jesus loves us, let us remember how much the Father loves his only begotten Son. Continue Abide. If ye keep my commandments... even as I have kept, etc. Even for Christ there was only one way to continue in the love of the Father. They could see, therefore, that it was the only way for them.

Fulness of Joy. These things have I spoken unto you. One object of all this teaching was true joy because joy is the flower and fragrance of a true life. It is a great joy to be the conductors of God's blessings to others. That my joy. The same kind of joy that I have, and to be obtained in the same way. This joy is the joy of a free activity in doing right, like the joy of motion in health, like the song of a bird in the morning. Might remain in you. Be a permanent possession, not a mere glimpse, a passing emotion. And that your joy might be full. Or fulfilled; grow more perfect; increase in quality and abundance, till you are full of joy, having your all nature can contain.

Sunday-School Teachers' Meetings.

BY PROF. A. W. ANTHONY, IN MORNING STAR.

Good teaching does not come from simply putting on a Sunday coat or pinning on a Sunday hat. There must be careful preparation. The day schools require more and more both trained instruction and competent supervision. They recognize the great advances which have been made in methods, arising from the better understanding of the child mind and the laws of mental growth and development; and the day schools arrange for their teachers frequent conventions and meetings at which these new methods are explained, discussed and tested. At these gatherings the attendance of teachers is usually required; school itself is suspended, and the teachers' pay goes on as though actually at work in the school room.

Some similar means of imparting new ideas, discussing methods new and old, exchanging experiences, and receiving inspiration should be utilized by the Sunday school. Now and then a teacher may teach well who studies the lesson and carries on the work without contact with other teachers. But this is exceptional. No school will have uniformly good teaching without a teachers' meeting, or some equivalent.

It is worth while to specify in detail some of the advantages of a teachers' meeting:

1. The lesson itself will be better understood. Hard texts, obscure allusions, cross references, practical applications and helpful illustrations will be dealt with from many points of view, by many minds and to mutual benefit.

2. The teachers' meeting is a natural breeding place for that essential zeal and enthusiasm, esprit de corps. Here it may start and hence spread.

3. In smaller schools questions of management and general policy, which the superintendent or other officers would not wish to settle upon individual responsibility, naturally come up for discussion, suggestion, and decision.

4. The matter of discipline, too, so important, yet so difficult to deal with in many schools, gets an airing in the teachers' meeting. Some teachers by the help of their co-workers will be rendered more patient and more tactful in these trying affairs.

5. Special features of attraction in the Sunday school will come to a focus and expression in the meeting.

6. The main object of the Sunday school, sometimes lost sight of in the midst of topics concerning sacred geography, biblical history, proof texts, denominational orthodoxy, an unpopular subject, will be recovered and kept prominent. The great object of bringing pupils to

Christ is sometimes buried up by the very means which are employed for it is end.

7. The teachers' meeting imparts courage. How often, perplexed with difficulties, disheartened by apparent lack of success, and sometimes sore because of rebuff or criticism, a teacher decides to give up the class and withdraw from Sunday-school work! Then it is that a gathering of teachers, who are acquainted with the same trials, can out of quick sympathy allay the smart of wounded feelings, restore lost courage, and arouse anew the determination to sow seed patiently, though the harvest be long deferred. One such gift of encouragement would justify the existence of a teachers' meeting many long months, even though no other good were seen to come from it.

8. The teachers' meeting cannot help, then, making the lives of the teachers more patient, more earnest, more resourceful, more efficient, more noble, and—is it too much to say!—more Christian.

Practical suggestions for the conduct of a teachers' meeting may be given:

1. As to time and place: Perhaps this is the chief difficulty to confront a body of teachers. All are busy. The Sunday is full; week day evenings are occupied. I can simply urge that, if the teachers are resolved to having a meeting, some compromises can be made by which the time and place can be found. Perhaps a half-hour or more can be given directly preceding the regular week day prayer meeting of the church. This serves in some instances. Perhaps the meeting can be held one evening in this week, directly after supper and before other work or engagements of the evening, and at the home of the superintendent or pastor. Surely a time and place can be found if a few are determined.

2. The leader may be pastor, superintendent, some teacher, or even a person from outside; but usually it is better to put up with a poor leader who is an active worker within the Sunday school than to obtain the best instruction from one unacquainted with the special school and its conditions. Having a home teacher with occasional talks and suggestions from outside helpers, pastors, and others of the town and vicinity, would be a good plan to follow.

3. Those who need the teachers' meetings the least are yet the ones who should attend most constantly and faithfully. They can impart the most. The grade of instruction in the whole school should be brought up to their level. They should attend, therefore, not for the sake of getting so much as giving inspiration. To create and maintain the esprit de corps of the school all must be present, from the highest to the lowest; and for the consideration and discussion of the many hundreds of topics that will arise, whether concerning the lessons or the general interests of the school, the presence and help of all are needed.

4. The proportion of time to be given to the lesson and to other matters should be watched and regulated with great care. Mere talk, a kind of discussion which simply states opinions without real suggestiveness, is time thrown away. Indeed, it may be worse, for it may disgust some with the whole proceeding and drive them from the meetings. But along with the lessons some place, I am convinced, should be allowed to general matters relating to the school. This will arouse interest in some who may not care particularly for mere exposition and scholarship, and will certainly always tend to keep the work of instruction practical, with a constant reference to actual conditions and needs in the school.

I do not pretend to say that a teachers' meeting is a cure-all for Sunday school ills, either of instruction or management, but I am satisfied that it may be a real help to Sunday schools, whether small or large, much more than is generally realized.

5. Aside from the regular lesson and its helps, with which all Sunday-school workers are or should be familiar, I wish to mention a course of study of great practical value to teachers. It is known as the Legion of Honor Normal Bible and Training Lessons, prepared by Prof. H. M. Hamill, superintendent of the normal department of the Illinois State Sunday School Association. It is published in two small pamphlets, at slight cost, by W. B. Jacobs, Chicago. There are two series, each of twenty-four lessons, covering Bible topics and training topics. By the latter are meant subjects relating to the Sunday-school itself.

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