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Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

FROM PELOUBETS' SELECT NOTES.

First Quarter. Lesson 12.—March 23. 3 Thess. 3: 1-18.

CHRISTIAN DILIGENCE.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Be not weary in well doing.—2 Thess. 3: 13.

1. Pray for us. St. Chrysostom remarks: "Himself had prayed for them; now he asks them to pray for him."

2. Unreasonable (perverse) and wicked men. "Unreasonable" means here perverse, out of place, one who sets himself against divine or human laws.

3. But the Lord is faithful. Faithful to his purpose, to his promise, to every hope that rests on his promise.

4. We have confidence. The Lord's care, and love, and wisdom, and power, are the ground of Paul's confidence that they would be true and obedient disciples.

5. And the Lord direct your hearts. Paul still calls their attention to the great source of all good. Christ directs us into the love of God (1) by the love of God to us he manifests; (2) by his own personal character which awakens love; (3) by the gift of the Holy Spirit which sheds that love abroad in our hearts.

6. Now we command you. In v. 4 he had expressed confidence that they would obey his commands. Now he gives them a special command, which will test their obedience. In the name of our Lord. This implies (1) that he knew it was the Lord's will; (2) Paul was the official representative of Christ, and the command came therefore with divine authority, and was not a mere opinion of the apostle. Withdraw yourselves. This must not be understood to mean that he was forthwith to be excommunicated without any further attempt to reclaim him from his error.

7, 8. Follow, imitate, do as He did. Eat any man's bread. Greek, "eat bread from any man," i. e., live at any one's expense. Contrast v. 12, "Eat their own bread." Labor and travail. "Toil and hardship" (see 1 Thess. 2: 9). Many Thessalonians, doubtless, would have felt it a privilege to contribute, but as he saw some idlers among them who would have made a pretext of

his example to justify themselves, he waived his right.

9. Not because we have not power (rather authority), which is power plus the legitimacy. He did this of his own choice under the circumstances. At others times and in other circumstances, he received support from the churches. An example. The same word as in 1 Thess. 1: 7. Literally, a model.

10. If any would not work. The word "would" stands for "is not willing," "refuses." The Thessalonians are not to be misled into a false charity: giving food in Christ's name to persons who are capable of working and able to get work, and are too indolent to do.

11. For we hear. Explaining how St. Paul came to speak upon the topic at all. Hitherto he has only been giving directions without saying why. News had been brought back no doubt, by the bearers of the first Epistle. Disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. This is what the disorderliness consists in, as we should have seen from verse 10.

12. We command and exhort. Use both authority and persuasion, both the ought and the reason. By (or in) our Lord. Under his direction. Work and eat their own bread. Christianity would have every man at work,—at work of some kind,—and every man at his own work.

13. Be not weary in well doing. All kinds of right living,—diligent working, doing good to others, serving God, enduring hardship. Let not the fact that your charity has been so long abused by these men, discourage altogether the practice of beneficence to other and more deserving objects.

14. Note that man. The inflexive voice of the verb implies mutual warning against him: "Agree to set a mark upon him, to make a marked man of him." That he may be ashamed. Greek, "made to turn and look into himself, and so be put to shame." Feeling himself shunned by godly brethren, he may become ashamed of his course. The reason is the same as noted under verse 6.

15. Yet. The original is simply And, which is much more beautiful, implying that this very withdrawal from brotherly intercourse was an act of brotherly kindness. But admonish him as a brother. An erring brother indeed, but still a brother; one called with the same holy calling, and bearing the same name as yourselves.

16. The Lord of peace. He who is its author, and the source from which it flows. He alone controls all the elements which can make or mar our peace. Peace must be understood here of peace in general, outward and inward, here and hereafter, as in Rom. 14 and 15. The Lord be with you all. Paul has spoken with strong censure of some; but he wishes to show that he bears no ill-will to any; and to leave off by blessing all, as he began by giving thanks for all (ch. 1: 3).

17. The salutation of Paul. The whole of verses 17, 18, not merely the benediction, are included in the term the salutation, as written by his own hand. With mine own hand. The Epistle was written by an amanuensis (perhaps Silas or Timothy), and only the closing salutation written by Paul's "own hand." Which. Which autograph salutation. The token. To distinguish genuine epistles from spurious ones put forth in my name (ch. 2: 2). So I write. This is a specimen of my handwriting, by which you may distinguish my genuine letters from forgeries.

18. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. This is a prayer for the favor and aid of Christ, and of course is an act of worship, and a recognition of the Saviour's divinity.

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