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Sunday School Lesson

OBEDIENCE

Gen. 12:1-4, Matt. 7:16-29 John 14:21-24

"Ye are My Friends if ye do the things which I command you. John 15:14."—Golden Text.

The words of our lesson text were spoken by Jesus at the close of the Sermon on the Mount. He had given the people the principles on which His Kingdom on earth was to be founded and his final words were in effect this: You have heard the conditions of entering the Kingdom and the characteristics which entitle you to be a member; now obey the rules. Be ye doers of the word, not hearers only.

We have had several lessons upon Christian teaching; our lesson today is upon Christian doing. "I am now reading the Bible and behaving it," said a newly-converted Chinese servant.

God knows you by your fruits. He is the Gardener who has planted the orchard of this world, and he has planted his tree that he may have fruit. That is what he wishes to have and if he does not find it, he knows he has a poor tree. What kind of fruit does he want? St. Paul has told us nine "fruits of the Spirit." They are Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance. Very likely you do not see much fruit yet, when you look into your hearts. Such fruits as these take a long time to grow. They must grow slowly all your life in the sunshine of happiness, and the rain of trouble, and the frost of unkindness; and the Gardener is watching the fruit grow slowly but surely till it is ripe. He sees first the flower-bud, and then the blossom, and then the fruit before its season, but he sees its growing, and he knows his tree is not barren. The best we can do is poor enough, but in it God sees the promise of what we shall be here after, if only we are really and honestly doing our best. Within the folded seed God sees the flower, and in the will the deed.

—Herbert S. Seekings, in the "Expository Times."

Tall office buildings are erected in the City of New York. So tall are they that in order to withstand the wind pressure great iron rods called wind-anchors are put down into the solid rock far below the surface. Before there can be a great superstructure there must be a mighty substructure. We are all building, and our plans are not drafted for little, low structures, but for magnificent, tall buildings. (We must fasten anchors deep down in the foundation of our character, so that when storms of temptations come our superstructure will not fall. Every day we hear of some character-building that has collapsed. The wind-anchors were not put in. They can be put in only when the foundations are dug. They must be put in in youth.

Can Christ say to me, "Do this"? If as I think about some act which it is possible for me to do, there rise up about that act these three convictions. First, that it is right, that it is in harmony with that great, constant goodness which fills the world and comes from God; second, that that man in Palestine would have done it if it had offered itself to him there as it offers itself to me here; and third, that if I do it now, my own soul will be fed and strengthened—if these three convictions come and gather round that act, and take it up and lay it before my conscience and heart, then I know Christ is bidding me to do it. Is that clear? There is some act that you are questioning, about tomorrow or today. If Jesus were at hand you would go out and ask him, "Is it thy will that I should do it, oh, my Lord?" Can you not ask him now? Is the act right? Would he do it? Will it

THOSE TIRED FEET WHY DIDN'T GRANDMA HAVE THEM.

Tired feet! Everybody has them nowadays. Why is it? How is it that in our grandfathers' and grandmothers' time people did not complain of such things until they were old and rheumatic? Nowadays even school children are troubled with tired feet. Special doctors to treat them are in demand.

The theory has been advanced that the asphalt pavements and cement sidewalks are responsible for a great deal of the foot trouble. Then, too, there is more standing on the feet than there was in days of old. There are more counters to stand behind, more machines to stand before, more stairs to climb, telephone calls to answer, and many other new things that tax the feet.

Like a tired body, there is nothing better for tired feet than a good bathing and soaking. It will be found that warm water in which a little Snowflake Ammonia has been dissolved will make an ideal solution for bathing tired feet. It softens them and eases the burning and aching. For the bath it has the same soothing and softening power. Snowflake can be obtained from any grocer.—Adv't.

help your soul? It is not often that one really is in doubt who seriously wants to know the answer to any of these questions. And if the answer to them all is "Yes," then it is just as truly his command that you should do that act as if his gracious figure stood before your sight and his finger, visibly pointed to the task.

But let us not grow confused with many words. Turn to your own consciences. Is there nothing that Christ, as your friend, your Lord, your Saviour, wants you to do that you are leaving undone today? Do you doubt one instant that with his high and deep love for your soul, he wants to pray?—And do you pray? Do you doubt one instant that it is his wish that you should honor and help and bless all these about you who are his brethren?—And are you doing any thing like that? Do you doubt one instant that his will is that you should make life serious and lofty?—And are you making it frivolous and low? Do you doubt one instant that he wants you to be pure in deed and word and thought?—And are you pure? Do you doubt one instant that his command is for you openly to own him and declare that you are his servant before all the world?—And have you done it?—Condensed from the "Light of the World," by Phillips Brooks.

"Our house of life must be based upon obedience to Christ's principles of conduct. That life will stand. The ideal would be," as Dr. Alexander MacLaren writes, "that the whole of his sayings should enter into the whole of our lives, that no commandment of his should be left unobeyed, and that no action of ours should be unaffected by his known will. That is the ideal, and for us the task of wisdom is daily to draw nearer and nearer to that ideal, and to bring the whole of our lives more and more under the sway of the whole sum of Christ's precepts."

There are two motives for keeping commandments—one because they are commanded, and one because we love him that commands. The one is slavery; the other is liberty. The one is like the Arctic regions, cold and barren; the other is like tropical lands full of warmth and sunshine, glorious and glad fertility. The love that Christ stamps with his hall-mark and passes as genuine, is no mere emotion, however passionate, however sweet; no mere sentiment, however pure, however deep. The truest little rhymer that drives a mill, is better than a Niagara that rushes and foams and tumbles idly. Character and conduct are the true demonstrators of Christian love, and it is only love so attested that he accepts.

Walk in the way of obedience, and Christ will meet you with the unveiling of more and more of his love. "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him," says Jesus. Judas (not Iscariot) grasps at his last words about manifesting himself to certain persons; he rightly feels that he and his brethren possess the qualifications of love. He rightly understands that Jesus contemplates no public showing of himself, and that disappoints him. It was only a day or two ago that Jesus seemed to have begun to do what they had always wanted him to do, manifest himself to the world. And so he says, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?"

Jesus molds his words so as to meet both the clauses of Judas' foolish question. "To us, not to the world," and quietly tells them the positive conditions and the negative disqualifications for self-revelation, the crown of loving obedience in the possession of a fuller Christ, and the impassable barrier to his manifestation which unloving disobedience makes. "If a man"—anybody, not "you" only, but anybody—"he will keep my word." "Do not suppose that you Apostles have the monopoly. You may not even have a share in my self-manifestation. Anybody can have it. And there is no world, as you suppose, to which I do not show myself. Anybody may have the vision if he observes the conditions."—Dr. Alexander MacLaren, in "Expositions of Scripture."

SAVED HIS LIFE.

The conversation veered round to thrilling adventures. "You fellows," said Horatio Pribberley, "remind me of a little experience I had some time ago. I was riding a brakeless bicycle down a steep hill when suddenly the chain snapped and I careered down the rest of the hill quicker than a flash of lightning with the jim-jams. The road down the hill took a turn at direct right angles, and in the corner of the angle stood a thatched cottage.

"I was wondering what the verdict would be at the inquest, when I saw a man rest a plank of wood against the eaves of the cottage. I went straight for the plank, and soon I was on the roof. At the back of the house the cottager's wife and daughters were shaking carpets, and my machine and myself toppled into the midst of them and were caught in the outstretched carpet and gently lowered to the ground." A dead, dull silence descended on the company, and even the soda-water siphon wept.

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