THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Lesson VIII.—First Quarter, For Feb. 20, 1910.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Text of the Lesson, Matt. vii, 1-12. Memory Verses, 7, 8—Golden Text, Matt. vii, 12—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

When any truth is brought home to us by the Spirit how prone we are to ask: Does any one do it? What about such a one who makes a great profession of having no anxious care? Do you know if they really practice it at home? Do you think that the preacher himself lives that way? So it goes, and instead of seeing Jesus only we are prone to see everybody but Jesus. Hence the admonition of our lesson, "Judge not that ye be not judged," or, as it is elsewhere, "Let us not therefore judge one another any more" (Rom. xiv, 13). Because, as in the context, all believers shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ and every one of us shall give account of himself to God. We are so peculiar that it is generally easier to see the mote in another's eye than the beam that is in our own eye, whereas if we ourselves were right with God we would have only love for all others, and, being very conscious of our own infirmities, we would have only prayerful compassion for those of others. Christ for us in our stead on the cross obtained for us eternal redemption; Christ for us in heaven at the right hand of the Father makes victory over sin our privilege, but because we do not know as we should the power of Christ in us by His Spirit we are more often stumbling blocks than samples of what the life of Christ really is. Yet the one thing we are here for is so to live that the world may know and believe that Jesus lives.

In our last year's studies in the Acts of the Apostles some of us were much impressed by the words "Jesus shewed Himself alive" in connection with those other resurrection words, "Jesus shewed Himself" (Acts i, 3; John xxi, 1, 14). His own testimony was that He came not to condemn, but to save. To one sinner He said, "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more." To another, "Thy sins are forgiven" (John iii, 17; viii, 11; Luke vii, 48). He did condemn the self righteous, fault finding, hypocritical Pharisees, but He never had even a seemingly harsh word for the penitent sinners or for any truly desirous to be His disciples. Such love as His is heavenly; all else is from the pit. In us it is either Christ or self.

The Spirit through Peter speaks of those who knew the way of righteousness, but did not walk therein, though professing to do so, as dogs and swine (II Pet. iii, 21, 22). See also Prov. xxvi, 11, 12. If one cannot speak even to many among the redeemed of the deep things of God (see I Cor. iii, 1, 2; Heb. v, 12, 13), how much less should we think of talking spiritual things to natural people to whom they are only foolishness. Such are spoken of finally as being "without," having no right to the tree of life (Rev. xxii, 14, 15), but if those who are "in Christ" would walk honestly toward them that are without, without Christ and without God (I Thess. iv, 12; Eph. ii, 12), who can tell how many who are now "without" might become "within" by His grace.

This life which will commend Christ to others can only be by the Spirit of God, by a wisdom which is not of this world, but, in verse 11, along with Luke xi, 13, we learn that God is more willing to give us His Spirit, the fullness of His Spirit, than parents are to give good things to their children. In Jas. i, 5, 6, we learn that this wisdom is to be had for the asking, but it must be an asking in faith and, according to Jas. iv, 3, with nothing of self seeking, but wholly for the glory of God, that the life of Jesus may be made manifest. The asking, seeking, knocking, with that end in view will surely find an abundant response. We must remember that asking so as to receive means that we are abiding, keeping His commandments and doing the things that are pleasing in His sight (John xv, 7; I John iii, 22). The seeking that finds is explained in Jer. xxix, 13. "Ye shall seek Me and find Me when ye search for Me with all your heart." As to knocking, consider Rev. iii, 20, and Luke xii, 36, and tremble at the possibility of our keeping Him knocking at our door when He so longs to take full possession of us and lavish upon us the wealth of His love. Too many are like the elder brother, unhappy and blaming the father for it, when all the time the father is saying, "All that I have is thine;" "All things are yours."

In reference to the last verse (12), which is also the golden text, note that it is, like all the rest, a message for believers or those who profess to be such that they may prove the reality of their faith. For unsaved people to take this verse and call it their religion is simply a going about to establish their own righteousness without submitting themselves to the righteousness of God (Rom. x, 3). We must be righteous before we can do righteously, but, having believed the love of God to us and received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, then it becomes us to manifest Christ by loving our neighbor as ourselves (Lev. xix, 18; Gal. vi, 14). No condemnation in Christ is the blood bought standing of every believer, but it is in order that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us.

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MATHEMATICAL SIGNS.

Origin of Plus, Minus, Multiplication and Division Symbols.

The sign of addition is derived from the initial letter of the word "plus." In making the capital letter it was made more and more carelessly until the top part of the "p" was finally placed near the center; hence the plus sign as we know it was gradually reached.

The sign of subtraction was derived from the word "minus." The word was first contracted in m. n. s., with a horizontal line above to indicate that some of the letters had been left out. At last the letters were omitted altogether, leaving only the shore line.

The multiplication sign was obtained by changing the plus sign into the letter "x." This was done because multiplication is but a shorter form of addition.

Division was formerly indicated by placing the dividend above a horizontal line and the divisor below. In order to save space in printing, the dividend was placed to the left and the divisor to the right. After years of "evolution" the two "d's" were omitted altogether and simple dots set in the place of each. As with the others, the radical sign was derived from the initial letter of the word "radix."

The sign of equality was first used in the year 1557 by a sharp mathematician, who substituted it to avoid frequently repeating the words "equal to."—St. James' Gazette.

UNCLE SAM.

The Way Our Nickname Is Said to Have Originated.

This familiar nickname for the United States is said to have come about in the following manner:

During the war of 1812 the United States government entered into a contract with Elbert Anderson to furnish supplies to the army. Whenever the United States buys anything from a contractor it appoints an inspector to see that the goods are up to the specifications. In this case the government appointed a man by the name of Samuel Wilson. He was a jolly, whole souled man and was familiarly known as Uncle Sam.

It was his duty to inspect every box and cask that came from Elbert Anderson, the contractor, and if the contents were all right the cargo was marked with the letters "E. A.—U. S." the initials of the contractor and of the United States.

The man whose duty it was to do this marking was something of a joker, and when somebody asked him one day what these letters stood for he said that they meant Elbert Anderson and Uncle Sam.

Everybody, including Uncle Sam himself, thought this a very good joke, and by and by it got into print, and before the end of the war it was known all over the country, and that is how the United States received the name of Uncle Sam.—Des Moines Register and Leader.

Worshiping a Turtle.

At a place called Kotron, on the French Ivory Coast, the natives believe that to eat or destroy a turtle would mean death to the guilty one or sickness among the family. The fetich men, of which there are plenty, declare that years ago a man went to sea fishing. In the night his canoe was thrown upon the beach empty. Three days afterward a turtle came ashore at the same place with the man on its back alive and well. Since that time they have never eaten or destroyed one of that species, although they enjoy other species.

If one happens now to be washed ashore there is a great commotion in the town. First the women sit down and start singing and beating sticks; next a small piece of white cloth (color must be white) is placed on the turtle's back. Food is then prepared and placed on the cloth, generally plantains, rice and palm oil. Then, amid a lot more singing, dancing and antics of the fetich people, it is carried back into the sea and goes on its way rejoicing.

Too Much Expense.

"Yes," said Mr. Tyte-Phist, "I was just stepping on the car when the conductor gave the motorman the signal to go ahead, and the car started. My foot went out from under me, and I sat down on the muddy crossing, ruining a twenty-two dollar suit of clothes."

"Then you sat there, swore like a trooper and gnashed your teeth in rage, I suppose," remarked the sympathizing listener.

"No," said Mr. Tyte-Phist. "I may have sworn a little, but I didn't do any gnashing. My teeth are new and cost me $30."—Chicago Tribune.

Extreme Absentmindedness.

"The queerest case of absentmindedness that I have ever known of," remarked the night clerk of a certain hotel, "was that which happened at this hotel early yesterday morning. Two fellow boarders, one Jones by name and the other whose name is Brown, occupied a room on the third floor.

"Well, Brown requested me to have him wakened at 3 o'clock so as to allow him to catch the 4 o'clock train. He was awakened at the requested time, and in his hurry to dress himself he put on Jones' clothes by mistake. He did not discover his mistake until he reached the depot, and, would you believe it"—here the speaker paused—"when he found out that he was wearing some one else's clothes he immediately returned to the hotel and went right to bed."

"I don't see any absentmindedness about that," broke in one of the listeners.

"You don't? Why, he thought that I had awakened the wrong man."

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Liberty, that dear possession of our land and race, is lightly treated by some, but its cost was struggle and tears and blood.—Rev. Joseph L. Walker, Methodist, Aurora, Ill.

Religion Like Water.

Religion is as free today as it was at the time our Lord was in person on earth; but, like water, it costs something for its conveniences.—Rev. L. M. Zimmerman, Lutheran, Baltimore.

The Sin and the Cure.

There is but one prime cause for all social disorder. That is sin against God and humanity. There is one and only one cure. That is the applied gospel of Christ.—Rev. Frank W. Luce, Methodist-Episcopal, Cleveland.

Work as Did the Master.

Let us work with all our might, as the Master worked, as God works, and success will surely come. Only we must be sure the work is what God wishes us to do, and we must look to him for strength and a blessing.—Rev. Floyd W. Tomkins, Presbyterian, Philadelphia.

Progress Is Slow.

Human minds pass over the same intellectual paths made by their forefathers long ago, and when any new idea comes to uproot the dead one it will first have to break through the crust of human indifference.—Rev. Herbert S. Bigelow, People's Church, Cincinnati.

Christ in a Man's Life.

If the Christ stands in a man's life for anything, it is that he is able to make men here and now more buoyant and cheerful, radiant and hopeful, amiable and sweet, joyous and sanguine, than they could otherwise possibly hope to be.—Rev. Arthur J. Francis, Congregationalist, Chicago.

Church Unity.

We have made mistakes in the past, but we need not repeat or perpetuate them. A comic paper offered advice which the church might well follow, "Competitors for goodness who at each other thrust should imitate the plutocrats and organize a trust."—Rev. A. H. Thompson, Methodist Episcopal Washington.

Homespun Religion.

The religion of today lacks durability, just as the clothes of today lack the wearing quality of the old fashioned homespun. We are inclined to dwell too lightly on things that are sacred. The reverence of our Puritan ancestors for the church, for the Bible and sacred things in general would be a fine example to the modern church.—Rev. John F. Herget, Baptist, Cincinnati.

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