

Sunday School Lesson.

Y. P. C. A.

LESSON X March 5th, 1899.

Christ freeing from sin. John 8: 12, 31-36

GOLDEN TEXT. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. John 8: 36.

TIME.—Oct A. D. 29.

PLACE.—The temple at Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Christ. The believing Jews.

1. *The freedom from sin Christ gives.*

The officers had attempted, but failed to take Jesus. Christ was out for the night likely at Bethany, at Lazarus home. He returned to Jerusalem in the morning, and entered the temple again to teach the people. Christ was adumbrated by the water coming from the rock and had proclaimed himself under this figure of water, previously. He was also typified by the light that went before them at night in the pillar of fire. So now he proclaims himself as the light of the world. Light is that which brings objects to view as they are, makes them visible. "Whatsoever maketh manifest is light." Jesus presented truth as it is, and to know and obey the truth is the desirable object. Those following Christ shall not walk in darkness, they shall have the light of life. Jesus said to the Jews who believed on him that if they should remain steadfast in his word they should be his disciples, indeed, they should know the truth and the truth would make them free. They replied that they were Abrahams seed and were never in bondage to any man. And inquired in what sense they should be free. But Abraham had decedents both of the bondwoman and of the free. Jesus most logically explained to them that, whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin, and the servant was not entitled to abide in the house, but the Son was entitled to this privilege. If the Son shall make us free, we shall be free in very deed. Churches might make us free and we might still be in bondage. None but Jesus can make us free indeed. The one liberated by Jesus is free in spirit, free from condemnation, and shall never be condemned.

REMARKS.

1. We can never have moral light until we are illuminated by Jesus.
2. We must continue in Christs teachings to be free and remain so.
3. Many think they are free when they are not.
4. The man who commits sin is the servant of sin, in bondage thereto.
5. We are free indeed in Christ.

"The Risen Christ" is the title of our Easter service. Everything in it especially prepared for the occasion. Be sure and have an Easter entertainment. See ad. elsewhere.

Topic for the Week Beginning March 5th —
Comment by Rev. S. H. Doyle.

TOPIC.—*The Gates of Zion.*—Ps. lxxxvii, 1-7; c, 1-5.

The striking characteristics of both these psalms is the absence of exclusiveness from them. The Jewish church as well as the Jewish nation was restricted and exclusive. It was not a missionary church. It did no missionary work. It looked upon the other nations of the world as enemies of God, who were to be overcome and destroyed by Jehovah. But in these psalms a different spirit prevails. There are no restrictions, no exclusiveness. In the one the nations of the world are pictured as voluntarily and submissively coming to Zion, and in the other the whole earth is called upon to glorify God and to serve God as the common creator and father of man. These psalms are Messianic, and their prophecies have been and are being fulfilled.

The gates of Zion, because of their prominence, stand for Zion itself, and Zion, the holy hill of Jerusalem, for the church of God and now the church of Christ.

1. The love of God for Christ's church is here emphasized. "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." He loves it not only above the dwellings of the heathen nations, but the other dwellings of Israel. God's love for His church is constantly recognized in the Scriptures. The love of Christ for the church is also emphasized in His word. The regard of God and of Christ for the church needs to be made emphatic today. The world at one time deified the church. It exalted it above and beyond its true character. Today it tends to the opposite extreme. The tendency is to belittle the church. Men have the idea that God can be worshiped and Christ can be served equally well while the church is ignored. God's love for the church shows this to be impossible. We cannot ignore and neglect that which God loves without offending him. If the church is worthy of God's best love, it is worthy of our best love and service.

2. The worldwide character of the church is here maintained. Heathen nations come to Zion and find in her a new birth and a new life. Christ's church is a worldwide church. It has a place within its doors for Jew and gentile, Greek and barbarian, wise and unwise, bond and free. Its cords are to be lengthened until the whole earth is enclosed. It is our business to assist in the glorious work, and it is not to be abated until the whole earth is filled with the glory of the Lord.

3. The importance, character and

cause of worshiping God in His house are suggested. We are commanded to "enter His gates with thanksgiving," to worship Him cheerfully and gladly for His goodness, His mercy and His truth. Christ's church should be the pride and joy of our lives. For Christ's sake, for the church's own sake and for our own good we should be faithful to the church and do our best to extend it throughout the world.

Bible Readings.—Ps. lxvi, 1-15; lxxxiv, 1-12; cxvi, 17-19; cxxii, 1-9; cxxxv, 1-5; cxxxvii, 1-6; Math. xiii, 16-20; Acts ii, 42-47; xx, 28; Eph. v, 25, 29; Heb. x, 23-25.

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