

**INTERNATIONAL
SUNDAY SCHOOL
LESSON**

The Christian's Hope.

In my Father's house are many mansions.

Moving Day.

1. The phrase, "my Father's house" is full of meaning. It indicates what Jesus thought of the universe in which we live. It implies that we should be at home in this world or in the next, for it is all a part of our Father's dwelling place. When we leave the earthly house of our habitation we simply move into one of many mansions. Perhaps it will be like moving from an old home into a new house. The old house is crowded with memories and associations; we naturally hesitate to leave it. It has sheltered us for many years. We are familiar with its every nook and corner. But, after all, the floors are warped, the beams are sagging, the windows are cracked and broken by the heating storms of many winters. It will be good to move into the other house, where all things are new and fresh and beautiful.

2. It will not be like moving into a strange environment, where everything is unfamiliar. It will be a prepared place. Some of us know what it is to return home from school or college after a prolonged absence to find the house prepared for us by the mother who understands us best of all. The flowers we like are on the table, the books we enjoy are ready for use, the meals are planned to fit our taste. Everything is made ready for our welcome by one whose love is comprehensive and understanding.

3. One of Frederick Faber's poems is entitled "The Shore of Eternity," in which occurs this stanza:

"Alone! To land alone upon that shore,
To begin alone to live forevermore,
To have no one to teach
The manners or the speech
Of that new life or put us at our ease—
Oh that we might die in pairs or companies!"

The word of Jesus to his disciples in the eve of his departure from them seems intended to remove the acute fears expressed in Faber's stanza. For the new experience of life hereafter is to be filled with the presence and the preparation of one who knows and understands us better than any other, and with whom we can scarcely feel otherwise than at home.

The Gospel of John carries the Christian message over from a world of outward, and historic fact to a realm of inward spiritual experience. The appeal that the memory of the immediate presence of Christ must have made to the first disciples was to give way now to spiritual fellowship. They could no longer walk with Him over the hills or hear the tones of His voice as He taught them. The opportunity for this kind of immediate contact is gone. That the gospel, separated from its historical beginning, was able to continue as a living faith is due mainly to the message of this book. The author ensured for all time that the Christ of inward experience should be no ideal abstraction or vague figure of the historic past, but the living Master, an immediate spiritual presence here and hereafter. In this world and in the world to come.

A French materialist tells us that he visited an almshouse where an aged relative was being cared for. As he walked with her through the courtyard he tried to think of something he might say to comfort her; for tears were in her eyes and memory was busy with the past. He could not soothe her with words and health and beauty again. Even as he mused upon the futility of any words of consolation, the chaplain crossed the quadrangle and, catching the eye of the aged woman, simply pointed upward. Immediately the tears were dried. A smile of peace appeared upon her countenance. By a mere gesture of the hand, expressive of the Christian hope, the priest had been able to do what all the philosophy

and wisdom of the scholar could not possibly suggest.

**The Christian View of
Eternity.**

1. How appropriate that on the last Sunday of the year we have a lesson on immortality! Of course, we can say that the end of the year is only an arbitrary and superficial arrangement of the calendar; yet it is true that as one year ends, and another begins, we turn our minds more than at any other season of the year to the passage of time, to the realization that we have only a limited number of years. And then we think, even if only fleetingly, of the long tomorrow after death.

2. In that mood, then, let us look at the Christian view of immortality. It may be worth while to begin with the strong affirmation of faith in personal immortality as an inseparable part of Christian teaching. There was a time when such a reminder was not necessary. It is necessary today with large numbers of people. The emphasis on the future life beyond the grave has swung from one extreme to another. There have been long periods of time when the chief Christian emphasis was otherworldliness. Attention was deflected away from this life to the life that was to come. One reason, perhaps, was that for vast numbers of men life was a terribly hard and difficult struggle. They regarded this world as a sort of unpleasant prison house, from which escape was desirable. Even in the memory of people now living a chief emphasis in the churches was on heaven rather than earth.

3. Today the situation is very different. The emphasis on this world and its goods, the influence of science in making the world more comfortable, the preoccupation of people in material advantage, has caused a swing to the opposite extreme. Immortality does not bulk large in people's minds. It is often kept in reserve, even among Christians, as a consolation for the mourner and even then is often handled timidly. The result is that the Christian religion has become what is called secularized. It is made to be largely a matter of this life, and the hope of eternal life is put into a place in the background. But there can be no complete Christian faith about God and man without the doctrine of eternal life. When the first evangelists went out to spread the Christian gospel, we are told in the Acts, that what they preached was the gospel of Jesus and the Resurrection. Our gospel is still the gospel of Jesus and the Resurrection. The hope of eternal life is centered in the Christian faith. That hope, in simple terms, is the faith that human personality is eternal, that life is carried on in an eternal world. This faith is not to be confused with any elaboration of details of what the future life is like. The New Testament does not encourage us to go into details about the world beyond. True, there are symbolic figures of speech in the book of Revelation. But very evidently, these are from the nature of the writing, symbols by which profound spiritual truth can be pictured.

4. What are some of the grounds of Christian eternal life?

(1) The first ground is belief in God. If we believe in a God who is like Jesus, who loves each child he has created, and who cherishes, above all things, truth and love and righteousness, then we must believe that God preserves the children and allows he has created. For how could a God of love fling into nothingness the children that he loves?

**Sophomores Win In
Debate Over Freshmen**

After a heated discussion on the question, Resolved: "That Negro Colleges are Superior to Inter-Racial Institutions in Developing Race Leaders," the Sophomores of A. and T. College, who defended the question for the affirmative, picked up points in the rebuttal to gain a decision over the Freshman representatives. In a closely fought debate held in the auditorium of the Dudley Building last Monday.

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