

LESSON III.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

July 21, 1900.

(Gal. 1:11-17.)

“FOR I make known to you, brethren, as touching the Gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it; and I advanced in the Jews’ religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother’s womb, and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus.”

(NOTE.--A few questions are here appended merely to suggest to the student and teacher how he may question the text. It must be understood, however, that the living teacher should ask many more. This is the very simplest form of questioning. The live teacher will necessarily vary his questions according to his class, and will often ask the same question in various ways during the class exercise, in order to be sure that all have the text clearly in mind. The short notes that follow will suggest many questions on the text. Remember that the first and most important thing is to *know* just what the apostle says. The understanding will come from the inspired words. “Consider what I say; for the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things.” 2 Tim. 2:7. “For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” Prov. 2:6. It is not enough for a pupil to be able to repeat the text from memory; he may do that, and still know nothing about it. The text should be so thoroughly *considered* that, no matter on what part of it an intelligent question is asked, an intelligent answer can be given, with full knowledge of what precedes and follows. Let these lessons be learned the most thoroughly of any lessons you ever studied. The subject is worthy, and the lessons are short enough to admit of it.)

QUESTIONS.

Of what does the apostle assure the brethren?

“That the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man.”

Of whom did he not receive it?

“I neither received it of man.”

Who taught it to him?

“Neither was I taught it.”

How then did it come to him?

“By revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Of what had they heard?

“Ye have heard of my manner of life in time past.”

In what was he then living?

“In the Jews’ religion.”

What did he do at that time?

“I persecuted the church of God.”

To what extent did he persecute the church?

“Beyond measure.”

How did this persecution affect the church?

“Wasted it;” “made havoc of it.”

What was the apostle’s standing in the Jewish church?

“I advanced in the Jews’ religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen.”

In whose religion was he so proficient?

“In the *Jews’* religion,” not the religion of God.

What was the cause of his superior advancement in the Jews’ religion?

“Being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.”

Then in what did the Jews’ religion consist?

What change took place when Christ was revealed in Paul?

“I conferred not with flesh and blood.”

What did he not do?

“Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me.”

Where did he go?

“I went away into Arabia.”

And where then?

“Returned again unto Damascus.”

What does he say it was the good pleasure of God to do?

“To reveal His Son in me.”

Where was the Son revealed?

What for?

“That I might preach Him among the heathen.”

What then is necessary to the preaching of the Gospel?

From what time does the apostle say he was separated to this work?

“From my mother’s womb.”

Of what was his call, after so much resistance, a manifestation?

“God called me by His grace.”

NOTES.

1. Every man who receives the Gospel as truth, must receive it as the direct revelation of Jesus Christ, even though a human instrument be used. The Gospel is not of man, but wholly supernatural. "No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. 12:3.
2. Read Acts 7:57-60; 8:1-3; 9:1, 2; 22:4, 19, 20; 26:9-11, for a complete history of the persecution carried on by Paul before his conversion, and of the spirit that animated him. He certainly was not predisposed to Christianity.
3. Note that "the Jews' religion" was not the religion of God and Christ. It consisted in the traditions of the fathers. It was all of man. Compare Matt. 15:1-9; 23:1-5. The contrast between the false and the true is seen in that as soon as Paul saw the Lord he "conferred not with flesh and blood." *"Immediately"*--he lost no time; he did not stand parleying.
4. The revelation of Christ in man is necessary in order that, he may preach the Gospel; for the preaching of the Gospel consists not merely in uttering certain words and formulas or expressions of truth, but in the manifestation of the life of Jesus. Just to the extent that a man's life is unlike Christ will he preach himself, and not Christ.
5. From his birth Paul had been designed by God for the work which he did as an apostle. He was "a chosen vessel." See the cases of Samson and John the Baptist, and also of Jeremiah. Jer. 1:5. Were these men exceptional cases, or are their cases recorded to show that God has a purpose and a work for all men?
6. Compare the old and the new version on the sixteenth verse. In the one it says "heathen," and in the other, "Gentiles." The two words are used interchangeably in the Bible. A Gentile is a heathen. What do those say of themselves who think to excuse themselves from keeping God's commandments, by saying that they do not apply to the Gentiles?