

January 1933

THE WORD AND WORK

TWO GOLDEN DAYS

86.

There are Two Golden Days in the week upon which and about which I never worry—two care-free days, kept sacredly free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is Yesterday. Yesterday, with its cares and frets; and all its pains and aches; all its faults, its mistakes and blunders, has passed forever beyond recall. I cannot undo an act that I wrought, I cannot unsay a word that I said. All that it holds of my life, of wrong, regret and sorrow, is in the hands of the Mighty Love that can bring honey out of the rock, and sweetest water out of the bitterest desert. The Love that can turn weeping into laughter; that can give beauty for ashes; the Garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; joy of the morning for the woe of the night.

Save for the beautiful memories, sweet and tender, that linger like the perfume of roses in the heart of the day that is gone, I have nothing to do with yesterday.

And the other day that I do not worry about is tomorrow. Tomorrow with all its possible adversities, its burdens, its perils, its large promise and poor performance, its failures and mistakes, is as far beyond my mastery as is its dead sister, Yesterday. It is a day of God's. Its sun will rise in roseate splendor, or behind a mask of weeping clouds—but it will rise.

Until then, the same love and patience that held Yesterday, holds Tomorrow. Save for the Star of Hope that gleams forever on the brow of Tomorrow, shining with tender promise into the heart of Today, I have no possession in that unborn day of grace. All else is in the safe keeping of the Infinite Love that is higher than the stars, wider than the skies, deeper than the seas. Tomorrow is God's day. It will be mine.

There is left for myself then, but One Day in the week—Today. Any man can fight the battle of Today. Any woman can carry the burdens of just One Day. Any man can resist the temptations of Today. O, friends, it is only when we wilfully add the burden of those two awful eternities—Yesterday and Tomorrow—such burdens as only the Mighty God can sustain—that we break down. It isn't the experiences of Today that drive men mad. It is the remorse for something that happened Yesterday, and the dread of what Tomorrow may disclose.

These are God's days, leave them with Him!

Therefore, I think and I do, and I journey but one day at a time. That is the easy way. That is man's day. Dutifully I run my course and work my appointed task on the Day of Ours. God, the All-Mighty and the All-Loving takes care of Yesterday and Tomorrow.—Robert F. Burdette.

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

WHAT THE BIBLE MEANS

"It is sometimes said," writes a noted preacher, "that 'you can make the Bible mean almost anything.' Yes, you can, but the question is not what you can make it mean, but what God intended it to mean, and that is easy enough to find out provided you wish to find out and will get right down to hard, honest, earnest investigation."

That tells an evident fact. It also explains some things. Yes, that preacher was right—men can make the Bible mean almost anything; yet, after all, the firm foundation of the Lord standeth. It is not what men can make it mean, but what God intended it to mean, and that can always be ascertained by earnest, honest souls. There is probably not a statement of scripture to which a contradiction may not be contrived. There is not a book or chapter that could not be apparently confuted and riddled by subjective criticism. Nevertheless the truth is the truth for a' that, and those who seek it can find it.

THE SINGLE EYE

We see what we are looking for. This is the awful fact that accounts more than any other for the differences of opinion among Bible students. That is why "smart men" cannot agree, and why common people look on the Bible as a curious puzzle which some one else must solve for them. The place-seeker finds popular doctrine; the partisan, argument for his sect; the false prophet finds a text from which to preach "Peace, peace," when there is no peace; the sluggard finds release from responsibility; the man of doubtful practices finds justification of his way; the scoffer sees myth and falsehood; the sensualist sees license. But the wise man finds true wisdom, and the poor in spirit and God-fearing find the mind of God. How we should search ourselves and cleanse our hands when we approach that wonderful Book! How we ought to divest ourselves of every false motive and evil desire and come surrendered to the will of God, that so the Word may be to us a savor of life unto life and not of death unto death!

THE DISCOUNTING OF GOD

Unbelievers of all kinds agree in this characteristic set forth by Isaiah: "They regard not the work of Jehovah, neither have they considered the operation of his hands." (Isa. 5:12.) They wholly discount God and any possible interference on his part when they go to laying their plots and plans. He is no factor in the case. He is not going to do anything good or bad. They build by architecture and work by science and manage by diplomacy. They make out their own bills and the host has no part or lot in the procedure.

They do as they please, and beyond the laws of cause and effect they consult nobody and nothing. God is away above out of sight. They say, "How doth God know?" and, "Doth the Holy one of Israel consider?"—implying thereby that God pays no attention nor knows nor cares. They taunt those that put their trust in him, saying: "Where is now your God?" Beyond the machinery of natural law they have practically no God. Such a man was Pharaoh. It never entered into his calculation of possible contingencies, when he planned to kill out the brood of Israelitish slaves, that their God might have a word to say in the matter; and throughout the ten plagues he seemed never quite to realize the fact, but denied it to his own soul and sought for other explanations. Pharaoh had difficulty believing even the testimony of his own eyes and ears that God could or would do anything. And there are those today, not all of them professed infidels, in whom the god of this world blinded the eyes that they see not.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GOD

To his humble people God is a living, constant, ever-present Reality, a Father whose hand is in all things for good. They call upon him, he answers. He chooses their changes for them. They say: "Thou art my God; my times are in thy hands." They trust in him and lean not upon their own understanding. They believe his word and not their eyes. And when he hideth his face, they wait for him. They believe that his angels encamp round about them, and that the Father has numbered the hairs of their head, and makes all things work together for good to His called ones. It is He who sends them afflictions; it is He again who comforts them. It is from His hand they receive their meat, their food, blessings, joys, and also difficulties and sorrows. He is the Shepherd that makes them lie down in green pastures, and whose rod sustains them in the dark valley; whose loving-kindness and tender mercy shadows them all the days of their life, and in whose house they shall dwell forever. This faith, which is more than an opinion, produces a high and godly life, and brings even in this life the sweet reward of true blessing and the peace which passeth all understanding.

FOR WHOM ARE YOU WORKING

"Who does God's work will get God's pay" Certainly; for why should God recognize and reward work which is not His? Men can do (and do do) all sorts of great work, religious, benevolent, and other, pretendedly for Him, but in reality in the service and the interest of self, for worldly gain or human glory. Why should God reward such work as that? Men can preach, teach, sing, publish religious literature, even go as foreign missionaries, and what not, yet none of it for God. But those who do God's work shall get God's pay. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him."

THE WORD AND WORK

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE SET TO DECLARE THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD.

R. H. Boll, Editor-in-Chief

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NEWS AND NOTES

Nearly a thousand subscriptions to *The Word and Work* are now due and renewable. Speaking after the manner of men, the fate of the magazine is in the hands of these readers. Every renewal is **needed** and every cancellation **hurts**. Please do not cancel or neglect: better than that, send a 25c piece once a quarter this year. Currency or coin is safe at our risk.

"Spent 13 days at Red Bridge in a mission meeting. We found 7 disciples in that district, and set the Lord's Table there. Bro. McIntosh agreed to keep it set each Lord's Day. On November 29 I began at Omagh and continued until Dec. 11, with fine interest, six baptisms and the brethren much encouraged.

"Please change my address from Newmarket to Oakville. We will work for the church at Omagh for the winter."—Chas. W. Petch.

This issue goes to all whose subscriptions have expired recently, in hope that **all** will renew. Stand by us this year! We give time and money to the work—and value received to you!

Last month's "Words in Season" ("Thief on the Cross"), now ready in tract form, 2½c each, any quantity. Pass these precious words to sinners, to the hopeless and discouraged.

From Gary, Ind.: "We had good services at Central Church, Dec. 25. There was one addition. We had a special broadcast Sunday, Dec. 18, from our local station."—L. H. Albright.

From Dallas: "The work at Mt. Auburn continues with good interest. Four or five have placed membership with us recently. We are planning to enlarge the house to accommodate the audiences at regular services, especially Sunday mornings. Several in the congregation are out of work but the Lord is our helper and we rejoice in His faithfulness."—Frank Mullins.

From Muskogee, Okla.: "This is to express my gratitude for the De Luxe copy of 'Great Songs of The Church.' It certainly is beautiful, and to say I am delighted states it mildly.

"The order for 300 copies came in due time. The church is highly pleased in every way."—Coleman Overby.

From Trinity, Tex.: "Our work continues to go forward in a good way. We have a number of young men who are able and willing to take a leading part in the work. Bro. Walter Leamons is assisting us in spreading the gospel in these parts and he has been very successful. He will continue to labor with us and to hold occasional meetings."—Elders.

The Neal-Wallace discussion occurred at Winchester, Ky., Jan. 2-6, as scheduled. Inasmuch as *The Gospel Advocate* Co. is to publish it in full, no notice is necessary here. It is so unusual to find just reports of such discussions in religious papers that we prefer to have the disputants speak for themselves in the full stenographic report.

The tract "The Church I found and How I Found It" is again in stock. Also "Why Not Be Just a Christian?", "How to Understand and Apply the Bible," "Isaiah," "Jeremiah," "The Revelation," and "Kingdom." Send a quarter or a dollar bill for assorted supply.

From Basil, Kan.: "The church at Trenton has accomplished much this year, considering all things. Held two short meetings in which much good was done. Sent over \$60 to foreign missions, most of which went to Bro. Virgil Smith and his co-workers in South America. Held a two-weeks' summer Bible school, with enrollment of over 90, average attendance of 60. Had preaching in our home congregation every Lord's day except one, our young talent doing most of this preaching, which was fine development for them. Bro. J. F. Smith's work in this church is still bearing fruit, even though we were unable to retain him as our regular preacher on account of general conditions. Brother Smith's efforts for the past several months have been given to building up a congregation at Eagle. Good will be done there."—I. R. Blake.

From Cynthia, Ky.: "On first Lord's Day of the year, we had a successful morning service at Bohon church, one lady from Christian church coming for membership, and her daughter coming to make the good confession, and to be baptized the same day. Yesterday, at Salem church, the attendance was good, considering the sickness in the community."—Wilson Burks.

"The Church of Christ at Linton, Ind., looks back over a good work done last year. The church did charity work, contributed regularly to missions, supported a minister and carried on a revival meeting. There were a number of baptisms during the year and in a general way the church has held its own. We desire to do better and greater things for God this year. Let us pray one for the other."—Edward E. Kranz.

Wallace Cauble begins a protracted meeting at Parkland church, Louisville, Sunday night, Jan. 22. Let's all help!

Daniel Sommer, Editor of the Apostolic Review, setting out on a visit to southern churches, spent three days in Louisville. Old and full of years, yet well and strong, his addresses at Highlands and Ormsby Ave., were enjoyable and edifying.

"It is with very great pleasure that I acknowledge the copy of 'Great Songs of The Church'. You are deserving of great credit for the alphabetical arrangement of songs. In view of the fact that no one during the centuries before you conceived the idea of doing this, your work is most distinctive. Furthermore I have never seen a more complete indexing system than you have introduced in this one volume."

H. M. King, Architect-Secretary, Board of Church Extension, M. E. Church, South.

Urquhart's great book, "Wonders of Prophecy" has been reissued. The price is now \$1.50.

"We want to make all our days seasons of praises to Him whom we delight to honor, our blessed Lord."—H. N. Rutherford.

"I have recently spent ten days in meetings with the Trenton church, Basil, Kan."—Earl C. Smith.

Brethren in Ohio and W. Va. will broadcast another special radio service from Fairmont, W. Va., (WM MN) on Jan. 23, two to seven o'clock a. m. Locate the station at 890 Kilocycles, 336.6 meters.

D. H. Friend reports large attendance and a fine beginning on New Year's Sunday at M Street church, Louisville.

Brother Boll's class, meeting in Highland Branch Library 10 o'clock Thursdays, started with full house on January 12.

"My meeting at Windsor, Ont., with the Campbell and College St. church in September, resulted in four baptisms and one restoration. Following this, I was at the Fall Meeting at St. Catherines, which was well attended. I preached a week at each of the two meeting places there. The brethren of both congregations cooperated in these meetings. The interest was good and one man was baptized.

"THE CHURCH VISIBLE"

R. H. B.

By "the church visible" we mean the church as it is existing on the earth, in its present, outward aspect. In the strict and ideal sense, the church consists only of those individuals who are truly Christ's, the names and number of whom are known to God alone ("The Lord knoweth them that are his"); for which reason men sometimes call it "the invisible church."

The visible church is the whole professing membership everywhere, or in any given place; the congregation (as for example the church at Corinth, at Rome, at Ephesus) or in the universal sense, the sum of all the known congregations and professing members in the world. It is of this visible church we are speaking.

Concerning "the church visible" let us note two outstanding facts:

I. That its membership is made up of all sorts of professing Christians, good, bad, and indifferent.

II. That God deals with the church visible according to its profession.

The first fact—that in the church visible is found a promiscuous aggregation of folk, representing a mixture of good and bad, sometimes the one predominating, sometimes the other—can be verified by observation, as well as by God's word. In this outward, professing body are all sorts of professing Christians, strong and weak, babes and mature, carnal and spiritual, false and true, children of God and sons of the devil—the latter sometimes in very thin disguise. That this condition would exist is told us in various parts of the New Testament. In the kingdom-parables of the 13th chapter of Matthew, for example, in the parable of the Sower, we find (omitting the "wayside" hearers) three sorts:—rocky-ground hearers, who though they believe, do not believe very deeply, and who in trial promptly desert their Lord; thorny-ground Christians, the kind whose hearts are pre-occupied by worldly lusts and cares, and who bring forth no fruit to perfection; then those also who are represented by the good ground, who receive the word in good and honest hearts, hold it fast, and bring forth the fruit thereof with patience, "some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty." All these spring from the good seed and represent a genuine growth. They do at least owe their inception to the word. But in the parable of the Tares yet a different kind appears, which in no sense originated from the word, but sprang from a different source. These are not feeble, insufficient Christians—they are intruders, really not Christians at all, but a foreign element, yet not often distinguishable to human eyes. In this parable the household-er sows the good seed in his field, but while men sleep an enemy sows tares among the wheat. Much needless question has

been raised as to whether the field is the church or the world. The field in which the man sows his good seed is of course the world, not the church; but wherever in the world the good seed is sown the wheat springs up, and *that is the church*. Now it is in the wheat-patch that the enemy does his secret mischief. It is not said that the good seed is sown among the thorns and weeds that were already in the world. That would not explain the question the servants asked. Noticing the tares among the wheat they said, "Lord didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? Whence then hath it tares?" The tares were introduced into the midst of the wheat after the latter had been sown. Nor are these tares just common weeds, such as the thorns and thistles of the world:—the tares are of a special sort. They are a *counterfeit wheat*, closely resembling the genuine, but utterly different in nature from the true. Their presence is not detected until the fruitage season. When the wheat heads out then appear the tares. These are "sons of the evil one," offspring of evil seed, but mingled among the sons of the kingdom, the offspring of the good seed. This bad admixture continues in the midst of the wheat until the finish which is the end of the age.

Thus in the professing church there is a *mixture* of strong and weak Christians; and an *admixture* of some who are not Christ's at all, and never were. There were in the apostolic days, for instance, some members, on the one hand, whose custom it was to neglect the assembling (Heb. 10:25) whom the apostle solemnly warns; some, on the other hand, of whom Paul tells us weeping that they are really enemies of the cross, whose end is perdition (Phil. 3:19), false brethren also, brought in unawares; heretics and false teachers, some of whom "crept in" and some that "went out" (Jude 4; 1 John 2:19), selfish, ambitious, domineering men like Diotrephes (3 John 9); world-lovers and self-seekers like Demas (2 Tim. 4:10)—in fact all stripes and sorts. Such was the composition of the church then. Some churches were relatively pure and on a high level, as Smyrna, Philadelphia, Philippi, Thessalonica; some on a much lower level, as Corinth, or the churches of Galatia or of Crete. Some again, in whom the faithful contingent had become a mere remnant, as in Sardis, for example (Rev. 3), "Now in a great house [the professing church of God] there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto honor, and some unto dishonor."

But it is not said or meant that Christians should simply submit to that state of affairs. This condition of things is in fact the occasion of our Christian conflict and warfare, and affords the very finest test, discipline, and training for those who would live godly in Christ Jesus. The church must exercise discipline against open evil in its ranks, both to save itself, and to vindicate the good name of Christ; always with

a view to saving the offender if possible. They are told, for example, to "put away the wicked person from among themselves," and again to withdraw themselves, or to "note" certain wrongdoers and to "have no company with them." The individual Christian also is bidden to "purge himself from these," and "from such turn away," and to "follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, *with them that call upon the name of the Lord out of a pure heart.*" In regard to the weak and erring we are enjoined to be helpful, patient, kind, to admonish, exhort, bear and forbear one another in love. (1 Thess. 5:13.) So the "church visible" must ever strive for the standard of perfect purity before the Lord. There will, however, always be adverse elements that can not be dealt with, individuals and conditions that cannot be reached. There will always be Corinths and Pergamums; dead churches like Sardis, and lukewarm Laodiceas which the Lord at last must spew out of His mouth; wrong-hearted individuals also, in every congregation.

Such is the quality and consistency of the "church visible." Now the second fact is in its way a very wonderful one:

II. THE LORD DEALS WITH ALL THE PROFESSING CHURCH ACCORDING TO ITS NAME AND PROFESSION

He accepts them for the present and deals with them on the basis of their profession. They constitute His visible people on the earth. He takes them up on the name and standing they profess. They have a share in the privileges—nurture, warning, exhortation, and training which He bestows on His own. His rich blessings are available to them all. However unworthy they be, He does not repudiate them nor cast them off. To be sure there comes a time when He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing floor, and when "the Lord will judge His people." But in the meanwhile all his dealings with them are in loving faithfulness, in grace and truth.

We see this illustrated in His dealings with Israel. It was always true in every stage of Israel's history, that "they are not all Israel which are of Israel," and that he was not a Jew who was one merely outwardly, neither that circumcision which was only outward in the flesh. In the end the fact certainly became manifest. Nevertheless in the meanwhile and up to the final crisis God deals with them all as His bona fide, people. When Israel came up out of Egypt a great "mixed multitude" went up with them, who did not really belong there, and who stirred up much trouble in the course of time, (Numb. 11:4.) But these were permitted to share the deliverance along with the others; and they as well as the rest, "were all baptized unto Moses . . . and all ate the same spiritual food and drank of the same spiritual drink." Indeed the entire nation which came up out of Egypt sinned and failed. How oft they provoked Him in the wilderness! But though at

last He shut them out of the Land because of their unbelief, He did not even then repudiate them: His pillar of cloud went before them, and the pillar of fire by night, and every morning in never-failing lovingkindness He gave them bread out of heaven to eat. Moreover His tabernacle was in the midst of them and He did not leave them nor forsake them all the forty years when they wandered in the wilderness. Nor during the strangely changeful scenes of their subsequent history in the Land did He abandon them; despite all the grave irregularities and the serious disorders and disobediences He did not forsake and disown them. Their very chastisements were the mark of His love. Not until they had utterly and irrevocably repudiated Him did He give them up and called them "Lo-Ammi" ("Not-my-People")—and then only with a prospect of the better day when the nation would emerge out of His judgments and He would again call them "Ammi"—"My People."

Truly it is an incalculable advantage to belong to His people even if only nominally. It involves great blessing and opportunity; but also a solemn responsibility.

The same situation repeats itself in the professing church. There comes at last a day when the church shall be purified, and when the Lord shall present it to Himself "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing," and "without blemish in exceeding joy." But in the meanwhile He deals with the "church visible," as it is; in patience, in longsufferings, in testings, in discipline, in loving watchcare, in mercies, in judgments; gradually separating the true from the false, the Harlot from the Bride; purging the latter also of their dross "by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning," until at last they appear before Him, unproveable in holiness and love.

DAVID LIPSCOMB'S ATTITUDE

If question has been raised as to Brother Lipscomb's attitude toward R. H. Boll and his teaching, here Brother Boll himself states the matter:

"Twice in my contact with David Lipscomb did he speak to me about my teaching and preaching; and each time it was by way of encouragement and commendation. On one occasion, while I was conducting a meeting at David Lipscomb College (then the 'Nashville Bible School') he said to me, 'You are on the right track. If I had to begin over again I would pursue just the same course you are taking. In my day it was necessary to do much fighting, and to press 'first principles' above everything. What is needed most now is spiritual teaching calculated to build up the church and to promote devotion and piety among the members.'" On another occasion, as I rode to town with him in his buggy, discussing a sermon I had preached in his hearing on the Restoration of Israel, he said, "Brother Boll, your views on prophecy are not so much different from mine. I think I could apply all the prophecies concerning Israel spiritually to the church **except the land promise**. That is so plain and definite that I don't see any other possibility but that it will have to be fulfilled just as it reads in the Bible."

WASHINGTON'S BAPTISM



When he was almost two months old, Washington was sprinkled in the "orthodox Episcopal manner." At 33 he took oath to conform to the doctrine of the Church of England "as by law established." Throughout his life he was seen regularly in church though he did not often kneel in prayer or partake of the communion. Washington's reputation, like that of such Deists as Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin, is one of coolness and moderation in religion. But through his time swept a hot blast

of evangelism, chiefly in the Methodist and Baptist faiths. General Washington one day went to Rev. John Gano, chaplain in the Continental Army, and exclaimed: "I have been investigating the Scripture, and I believe immersion to be the baptism taught in the word of God, and I demand it at your hands. I do not wish any parade made or the army called out, but simply a quiet demonstration of the ordinance." In the presence of 42 witnesses George Washington was immersed in the Potomac; but he did not give "personal testimony" which would have made him a member of the Baptist Church.—Courtesy of *Time* (Sept. 5, 1932).

A HIGH IDEAL

If God will for me to be here on earth through 1933, I hope I may never draw one breath of intentional disloyalty to him; that I may never even hurt my own heart by any sort of unfairness toward any one; that I may know more perfectly how to "love the lowest because of the Highest," that I may give due recognition to the influence of uncensurable misunderstanding, and all lack of understanding; that I may renew my endeavor to rightly understand both myself and others, and all this in the light of God's word; that patience may in me "have her perfect work"; that I may, though I fill the humblest station, compel those who behold me to see that I have "been with Jesus"; that, in all men, there may be a knowing and loving of God. I commend us all to God's pity.—Ben J. Elston, in *Christian Leader*.

MODERN GODS

One of the modern gods is Pleasure. Pleasure is not wrong within itself; indeed it is a good, a necessity of human life. But it often happens that the abuse of a "good" makes a "bad" of it.

America seems to be a worshipper of frivolity. Even sacred things are treated in a light, flippant manner. Jazzy songs, silly music, the light fantastic, the alluring dance, the eclipse of work by sports; the view that workers in school are old "grinds" and that the really worthwhile thing is being the best "all-round" (?); the worship of the athletic hero, and the craze for the "good time," are straws which declare unmistakably what is in the wind. A few instances of the thousands which could be given show this.

The city of Austin, Texas, is striving to raise \$60,000.00 or \$70,000.00 for the Community Chest in order to relieve suffering in the city this winter. It is an uphill task, yet Saturday, October 30, a football game between Texas University and Southern Methodist University drew a 20,000 gate at \$2.50 each. Many came from a distance at the cost of \$5.00 to \$15.00 per person, though of course the majority of the crowd was probably local, yet it is conservatively estimated that the crowd spent \$100,000.00 on the game—more by \$30,000.00 or \$40,000.00 than is being attempted for the city's poor relief.

At the same time in the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 55,000 spectators shivered in the cold to watch the Pitt-Notre Dame game to the tune of one million "bucks", to use the jargon of the game, and these are but two of the hundreds of universities and colleges in the United States whose chief glory is their football and the colleges represent only a fraction of the football since the thousands of high schools are busily engaged in the noble production of more and better "backs" and "ends," "tackles," "guards" and "centers"!

At a time when the nation is hungry, when every church is curtailing its mission activity, when plain churches of Christ are cutting out preaching, and doing practically no mission work, football, baseball, tennis and golf, if not so prosperous as a year or so ago, certainly seem not to have heard of the depression. An Isaiah is needed to call us back with this, "Why spend your money for that which is not bread and your strength for that which satisfieth not?"

Verily we are a people sold unto idols. "Renew a new heart within us, O Lord." "Heal our backslidings" and help us to know Thee truly through Jesus Christ our Lord.—T. H. Etheridge in *Firm Foundation*.

OUR SONG BOOK WASTE

Half of our song books are not half used. Why do we commercialize our song service to the extent that we keep printing new song books that are not needed and pleading with congregations to buy new books when they do not know the songs on many of the pages in the ones they have? If the money spent unnecessarily on song books would be spent teaching the singers to sing it would mean more to the worship of God in that community. Then I wonder if anyone who reads this can point out a congregation where the song service has been turned into something far from worship by singing songs that teach practically nothing and admonish very little to a tune better suited to a barn dance, because of the adoption of some book printed to make a "hit" in singing conventions to increase the sale of the book for the publishers.—*The Silent Worker*.

C. J. HOWARD

Brother Howard passed away shortly before Christmas, and I suppose that hardly could there have been another man not in public life who would have been so widely known throughout all his vicinity, nor another whose departure would have been more generally and sincerely mourned. He was a man greatly beloved, and justly so. His life was as clean as the snowdrift, and as gentle and kind as the soft breath of spring. He was like unto a little child in purity of heart, in simplicity, and humility. As a member of the little Celtic church, a country congregation about ten miles east of Sherman, Texas, since that congregation was first formed, now more than thirty years ago, and all along, to the day of his death, he served God as an elder and teacher. He was a credit and honor to the Lord whom he loved, and a blessing to all men round about. Brother Howard's lot was cast in a lowly place. He was simply a hardworking, humble farmer. But if it had been in God's plan to set him into some place of public service I doubt not the world would have heard of him. For he was a man of transcendent talent and ability. The visitor at Celtic church would suddenly be startled by a voice lifted in prayer to God, or by a wonderful word of exhortation. Never did I hear such natural eloquence from the lips of any man. When his heart was stirred, his words came, now rippling like silvery streams, now rushing with the force of a tempest, now melodious like sweet strains of music, now flashing and thundering, now breathing the gentle comfort and peace of God. He was a prose poet, a man of burning thoughts and words, who could set common things aglow with the light of heaven. But of this he did not seem to be conscious. No simpler, humbler, more loving heart than Brother Howard's could be found. He was kind and good to the very beasts on his place. I heard one of his neighbors half-seriously remark, "If I could not be a human being I would rather be Cordie Howard's cow." With all this he was the soul of honor and uprightness. He brought up his children (two sons and one daughter) in the fear and love of God; he discharged the obligations of life manfully; he did his duty in every matter. So he was greatly respected and honored by all that knew him (as well he might be) and more than that—deeply and tenderly loved by many. Of those who loved him I am one. And I am joined with Sister Howard and all the family, and with all the hearts in the little Celtic church in the hope of meeting Brother Howard again at that day in the presence of the Lord.—R. H. B.

ON FOREIGN FIELDS

MISSIONARY NOTES

DON CARLOS JANES

Here we are, well started in the new year. The old year was not so bad for missions. When all is reckoned up, there's encouragement. * * Bro. Cassell is eagerly desiring the coming of a co-laborer to his field. * * Last year, Roy Whitfield, Lowell Davis, Elizabeth Bernard and her mother sailed for China. Thank the Lord.

One of the most important things of the 1933 endeavors was the progress made on the idea of bringing the native churches to the self-supporting basis. * * That stirring servant, B. D. Morehead, announces receipts for various persons and purposes in December were \$520.26. * * "Mrs. Cassell has been terribly nervous for some time now."—*H. G. Cassell*. * * Bro. Dong reports baptizing 31 people at a new place and starting the third congregation of his work in Korea. But oh, how he needs a co-worker. * * Save in your spending and give the extra to God. * * There is a dearth of word from the workers in Brazil. We know the mail service there is very inferior, but something more than that may have delayed word from those faithful men. Pray.

Let us press on in this year with high purposes, working and praying for "Greater Things for God" in the missionary line. * * Bro. O. T. Rodman is willing to give up his position as a teacher and go to the Philippines in February if the means to live are supplied. Any one who can raise even a dollar (or less) though it should come in ten-cent gifts from various persons, may have a part in getting him away promptly. * * The Christian religion is a religion of sacrifice—a religion of giving up for the good of others. When we establish this principle in our hearts we shall find more money in our purses for missionaries. * * In December, Sister Nellie Morehead sent to Japan for various missionaries over \$30. * * More people can give to missions and more will give when somebody patiently and clearly lays it on their hearts as a part of true, full service to God. * * Bernard Wright, North China, sees clearly that the local Christians on the foreign field should bear the local expenses. * * In vivid terms, Sister Rhodes describes a violent storm in Japan. * * "Last month our expenses were nearly double our income."—*Dewitt Garrett*. * * And missionaries have unexpected and unavoidable expenses to come upon them as when a man has to take his wife quickly to a distant hospital to save her life or relieve great suffering. * * Were the whole church made up of poor and almost pauperized members (which is far from the case) and all sacrificed and gave a penny a day, they could rejoice over supplying support for 1,000 or 2,000 missionaries.

THE HEATHEN AND YOU

N. B. Wright

A large number of congregations are very active in their desires to reach the heathen. To this end they pray and sacrifice. With them it is a matter of conscience plus love. Other congregations are indifferent. Not a few are hostile to such work. Because of this great difference of opinion, when all have the same Bible, I am led to ask a question:

Do the heathen have Scriptural claims upon your attention? Are you, as a believer or follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, under a Scriptural obligation to those who do not have the gospel you possess?

The Golden Verse

I would call the attention of the honest heart to John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHO-SOEVER believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Here are the facts. God loved (and loves) the world. Only those who believe on Him whom God sent have eternal life. All the rest, regardless of who they are or where they are, must perish. This one verse is sufficient to those who bow to the authority of Scripture.

Matthew 28

The apostles, who had accepted the Lordship of Christ, were told to go and make disciples of all the nations. "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This period of time is the church age, the dispensation of grace in which God is calling out His people. The promise, therefore, makes the commission hold good and binding during the whole church age. (This text is still used as authority for baptism!)

Paul

The apostle to the Gentiles, although he was a Jew, said he was a debtor to all men. He certainly had an understanding, yea, a revelation, of the Gospel. He and others were zealous in evangelizing all men. We have no record of his saying, "Brethren, when we apostles are gone, you may cease your missionary activity among the nations. You would no longer be loyal should you keep it up."

The Propitiation

"Christ is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." 1 Jno. 2:2. How, then can any sinner who has not come the Christ-way be clean before God?

"Unto Him who loveth us and loosed us from our sins by His blood." Rev. 1:5. The distinction is clear. Only those who have come the blood-way are loosed from their sins. The rest are in their sins. And sin must be reckoned with. There is only one way out. "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." Acts 4:12.

Men of Every Tribe, and Tongue, and People, and Nation

John the beloved heard a new song as it resounded from the presence of the Lamb. "For thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation." Do you hear any mention of those from the tribes and tongues and peoples and nations who were not purchased by the blood? All tribes are not there, but men of the tribes, and tongues and peoples and nations. Those not under the blood (would that we could say it in tears) are not there.

Without the Blessed City

The dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolators, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie are without. (Rev. 22:15.) In other words, here are sinners who have not been cleansed by the blood of Christ. Our Lord loved these, and died for them just as He did for us. Furthermore, he has commanded us to spread out over the face of the earth and preach the good news of salvation through His blood, that all who believe may not be condemned to

hell but rather enter that blessed city where He will be. The more we disobey and excuse ourselves, the more souls will be "without." The more we submit to His Lordship, the more souls will be "Within."

A true understanding and appreciation for the Gospel would alone be sufficient to move us to seek the lost wherever they may be. How much more when it is a command?

Ningtsinhhsien, Hopei, North China.

KIMBERLEY REPORT

We are here in Rhodesia now with our people (relatives), and endeavoring to carry on by correspondence. We have visited three outstation day schools around Bulawayo and enjoyed the experience. It is beautiful to see the children of this dark land coming to a knowledge of the truth and being taught to read and understand the Word of God for themselves. God be with the teachers of these schools.

On our way up from Kimberley we had the joy of seeing our brother Joseph Daniels installed in his first field of labor, Klerksdorp. He is young in Christ, and he needs your prayers.

From Cradock we received the joyful news that our Brother Mban-gela has succeeded in rebuilding the disintegrated church, which had been without a shepherd for so long that it had all but disappeared. Thank God for such work and such workers.

We feel heartsore about being so far away from our work. The Lord grant this terrible depression may lift and enable all workers in His vineyard to do more and better work, and us to get back to the scene of labor.

Additions for September and October number 84, losses subtracted.

Bulawayo, S. Rhodesia, South Africa.

J. W. Claassen.

FROM W. N. SHORT

We are here with Bro. Garretts for a little while as children have measles. Brother Garrett asked us to stay a little longer when we came in, but we thought we could not. We did however. Have been here two weeks, and will likely be here two more. Foy is up again and two are in bed, with one of the girls yet to take. Pray with us that they continue with no complications. And pray that the Lord's work may ever go on.

Salisbury, South Africa.

MATTLEY REPORT

I am now getting ready for a trip to Kwong Sai and am expecting to stay until after the new year festivities by the old calendar are passed. Have succeeded in locating another preacher whom I think will be satisfactory and am taking him up with me. He has gone to his country village to get his wife and a young nephew whom they are raising. They have no children of their own. He is thirty years old and has had quite a bit of experience. Pray for him.

The Shamshuipo congregation have moved into their new quarters and it surely is a nice building and in a very good neighborhood. They will miss the street opportunity they had in the other place but can open other work. Mr. and Mrs. Lam are not of the lazy kind.

Box 192, Hong Kong, China.

Ethel Mattley.

OLDHAM REPORT

We wish to raise a bit over a hundred dollars now to put out a short book on the "Christian System, or the New Testament church" which I had in Chinese manuscript before leaving China. Then another hundred to use in getting out some other material and reprinting some exhausted lines. It is time to reprint "Is There Really a God?" in the Chinese edition. The present Chinese edition of more than 2,000 is gone.

Morrilton, Arkansas.

Lewis T. Oldham.

FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JANUARY

Lesson 1.

January 1, 1933.

JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS

Golden Text: Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight.—Mark. 1:3.

Lesson Text: Mark 1:1-11.

- 1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
 2 Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet,
 Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,
 Who shall prepare thy way;
 3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
 Make ye ready the way of the Lord,
 Make his paths straight;
 4 John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins.
 5 And there went out unto him all the country of Judæa, and all they of Jerusalem; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.
 6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins, and did eat locusts and wild honey.
 7 And he preached, saying, There cometh after me he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.
 8 I baptized you in water; but he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit.
 9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan.
 10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him:
 11 and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

Verse 9. Who came, and for what? How far did He come? (About 60 miles.)

Verse 10. What did Jesus see as He came up out of the water? Did John see that? (John 1:32-34.)

Verse 11. What did the Voice say? Where did the voice come from? What part had the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in this?

Study Questions

Verse 1. This is the superscription to all of "Mark." What is a **gospel**? (Good news.) What is the **great Subject** of this gospel? What is He called here? (Comp v. 11.)

Verses 2-4. Read (omitting the quotation)—"Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet . . . John came." By what name is he called in Mark 8:28? Why is he called "the Baptist"? (See Mark. 6:14.) Who had foretold John's coming? (Isa. 40:3.) How long before? (About 750 years.) From whose prophecy is the other part of the quotation taken? (Mal. 3:1.) According to these prophecies, what work was John to do?

Verse 4. How did John fulfil this mission? Where did he baptize? (See v. 5.) What did he preach? What is meant by "the baptism of repentance"? (The baptism that expressed, or betokened, repentance on part of the ones baptized.) What was this baptism for? (Comp Acts 2:38.)

Verse 5. Did John's preaching stir up wide interest? Who came? Where and how were they baptized?
Verse 6. How was John clothed? (Very rude and simple.) Who wore the same sort of clothing? (See 2 Kings 1:8.) In what other respect was John like Elijah? (Luke 1:17.) What was his food? (Such as he could procure for himself in the wilderness.)

Verse 7. In his preaching, what did John foretell? What did John say of this One? How much greater than John was He? How great was John? (Matt. 11:11.)

Verse 8. What greater thing than which John was doing, could this great Coming One do?

Verse 9. How far did He come? (About 60 miles.)

Verse 10. What did Jesus see as He came up out of the water? Did John see that? (John 1:32-34.)

Verse 11. What did the Voice say? Where did the voice come from? What part had the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in this?

NOTES ON LESSON 1.

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Although the writer of this gospel never mentions himself by name nor tells us anything about himself we know from indubitable ancient testimony that he is Mark—the John Mark of Acts 12:12, the cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10); co-worker with Paul (Phm. 24); the son in the gospel and companion of the apostle Peter (1 Pet. 5:13)—and that in his gospel he really presents Peter's testimony and teaching concerning Christ's life and work.

Mark's gospel is generally regarded as the oldest, as it is also the briefest of the four gospels. It concerns itself more with the works and actions rather than the discourses and teachings of our Lord. Its style is strong, terse, pointed, and vivid. In it, as in the three other gospels, we behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18); and like John's gospel (John 20:31) so this also was "written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life through his name." Throughout this quarter and the next we shall behold the Savior in the testimony of Mark's gospel. May we come to know Him and trust Him!

TEACHING POINTS

John the Baptist. Who was he? (John 1:6.) What did he come for? In Luke 1:18-20 we have the announcement of his birth and purpose of his mission. Consider (1) **the nature of his work** as foretold by the prophets (see vs. 2, 3 of our lesson). How did he prepare the people for the Lord? What did he preach? (2) **John's testimony to Christ.** (Vs. 7, 8.)

The Greatness of Jesus. John was "great in the sight of the Lord." (Luke 1:15.) Christ Himself said that "among them that are born of woman there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." (Matt. 11:11.) Yet so far was the Lord Jesus above John, that he, the greatest of men, was not worthy to stoop down and unloose the latchet of His shoes. Like a morning-star John the herald of the Sun of righteousness, was destined to fade away before His surpassing glory. "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:30.)

John's Baptism. It was a new and unheard-of thing, brought in by John, hence called John's baptism. The leaders of Jerusalem sent to inquire John's authority for doing such a thing. (John 1:19-27.) John's baptism was in token of repentance, accompanied by confession of sin, and "unto the remission of sins." It looked forward to the One who was yet to come. (Acts 19:4.) Those who refused it rejected the counsel of God against themselves. (Luke 7:29.)

Christ's Baptism. The Great One who was to come after him (John said) would baptize with a baptism which no earthly man could administer: the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (Comp. John 1:33.) This was openly fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 2:33) and again in the case of the first Gentiles (Acts 10.) Every one then and since, who is "in Christ," has entered into the **abiding benefit** of that original baptism of the Spirit. (Tit. 3:6; 1 Cor. 12:13.) **But note two things:** (1) Christ Himself commanded baptism in water. (Matt. 28:18, 19.) (2) The baptism of the Spirit did not nullify that command and necessity. (Acts 10:47, 48.)

The Baptism of Jesus. How far did he come to be baptized? Note what He answered to John's objection, Matt. 3:14, 15. What demonstration took place after His baptism? How was the Father the Son, and the Holy Spirit conjoined in this event? What did that mean to wondering John? (John 1:32-34.)

This is a good time to read Charles Neal's book on prophecy, "Light in a Dark Place." It is free to those who request it, for one new subscription to Word and Work.

SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JANUARY

Lesson 2.

January 8, 1933.

JESUS BEGINS HIS WORK

Golden Text: The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel.—Mark 1:15.

Lesson Text: Mark 1:12-20.

12 And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness.

13 And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and he was with the wild beasts and the angels ministered unto him.

14 Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God,

15 and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel.

16 And passing along by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18. And straightway they left the nets, and followed him.

19 And going on a little further, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending the nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him.

Study Questions

Verses 12, 13. The Temptation of Jesus. Compare Mark's very brief record with that of Matthew (4:1-11). Under whose direction did Jesus go into the wilderness? How long was He there? Was the temptation only at the end of, or during, the 40 days? (See Luke 8:2.) When did the angels minister to Him? (Matt. 4:11.)

Verse 14. Beginning of the Galilean Ministry. To what point does the story go now? (John's imprisonment.) Where did Jesus go when that happened? What did Jesus preach? What gospel was that? (v. 15. Comp. Matt. 4:17, 23.) Is that the same as that of 1 Cor. 15:1-4?

Verse 15. What time was fulfilled? Luke 16:16; Gal. 4:4. Was that John's message? (Matt. 3:1; 4:17.) What gospel was this? (See on v. 14 above—the good tidings that the kingdom was at hand.)

Verses 16-20. The first four disciples. What were Simon and Andrew doing when Jesus saw them? Had they met Him before? (John 1:35-42.) What did He bid them do? What prospect did He hold out to them? On what condition? Comp. John 12:26. Did they respond?

Slowly, unwillingly, or promptly and gladly? Who were the other two brothers whom Jesus called? What did they leave?

NOTES ON LESSON 2.

THE TITLE OF THE LESSON

"Jesus begins His work." That is so far as Mark's gospel is concerned; for, like Matthew and Luke, Mark begins the story of Christ's work with His Galilean ministry. However, the Lord Jesus had done a big piece of work in and around Jerusalem and some in Galilee, before this. (See John 1-4.) But when He learned of John's imprisonment, Jesus withdrew to northern Galilee and after a visit to Nazareth, settled down in Capernaum, which came to be known as "his own city." (Matt. 4:12, 13; and 9:1.)

The Lord Jesus did a vast amount of work in Galilee, often passed by with a few words, as for example in Mark 1:39.

The lesson as a whole contains three main parts:

1. The Temptation. (On this use the fuller account in Matt. 4:1-11.)
2. The Beginning of Christ's Preaching in Galilee.
3. The Call of Four Disciples.

it was spent in the synagogue at Capernaum, where Jesus taught and healed a man who was possessed of an unclean spirit. The second part was at the home of the two fishermen, the brothers Simon (Peter) and Andrew. There He healed Simon's wife's mother of a fever. The word of this (and also of the miracle in the synagogue) got out in the town, and just as soon as the legal Sabbath ended (which was at sunset) they came bringing all the sick and demon-possessed; and the whole population was gathered at the door. It must have been late in the night before the Lord finished dealing with and helping this great concourse of people. Nevertheless very early next morning, "a great while before day," He was up and out in the desert, alone with God, engaged in prayer.

THE LORD JESUS AT WORK

"We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work," said the Lord Jesus to His disciples (John 9:4) and Himself set the example of faithful, unremitting toil in His Father's business. It was the one chief concern of His life. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." (John 4:34.) For this cause at the close of His ministry He was able to say, "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do." (John 17:4.)

THE GOSPEL OF THE "SERVANT"

Of the four gospels, the one we are now studying, the gospel of Mark, portrays the Lord Jesus more especially as God's Servant—always doing, giving, working, according to His Father's will. We shall notice in every chapter His constant tireless work for God. Twice it is said that He and His disciples "had no leisure so much as to eat." Mark 3:20; 6:31.) But as we see in our present lesson, He had time to pray. With us it is likely to be the other way: we find leisure to eat, and for other things; but we find little or no time to pray. Jesus found time to pray because He made time for it. No man can be a true, efficient servant and worker for God unless he takes time to pray.

TEACHING POINTS

Jesus going to Capernaum. After being rejected at Nazareth, (See Luke 4:28-31) Capernaum is thenceforth "His own city." (Comp. Matt. 9:1, etc., with Mark 2:1, etc.) His moving up to Capernaum fulfilled a prophecy. (Matt. 4:12-16.) The light shone bright in Capernaum—but, alas, how little it was appreciated! (Matt. 11:23.)

Jesus teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. Wonder what He taught? We have a sample of how He taught in synagogues in Luke 4:16-27. Also in His other teaching to the multitudes.

Jesus and the demons. There were many demon-possessed persons. Demon-possession was distinguished from insanity or epilepsy and other mere nervous troubles. The demoniac always appeared to have come under the power of another, a super-natural personality. Note that Jesus never addressed the man so afflicted, but always spoke to the demon. Demons belong to the kingdom of Satan. (Matt. 12:24-26.) The demons knew who He was; but Jesus would not let them speak. He accepted no testimony or endorsement from such a source.

Simon's wife's mother. All three of the "synoptic" gospels (Matt. Mark, Luke) tell us of this cure; which implies that there must be something extraordinarily important about it. The miracles of healing (as all the other miracles) were intended to teach spiritual truth. Not till Christ delivers us from the fevers of evil passions and ambitions, can we rise up to serve Him.

The healings after sunset. Why did they wait till after sunset to bring their sick? (See question on verse 32.) In the light of Matt. 12:10-12, would it have been wrong for them to bring them on the Sabbath, or for Him to heal them on the Sabbath? There is a beautiful old hymn on this, of which the first stanza runs thus:

USE STUDY QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JANUARY

Lesson 3.

January 15, 1933.

JESUS AT WORK

Golden Text: My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.—John 5:17.**Lesson Text:** Mark 1:21-35.

21 And they go into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught.

22 And they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, inasmuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching! with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

28 And the report of him went out straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about.

29 And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her:

31 and he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that

Study Questions

Verses 21, 22. Who are "they"? (Christ and the four He had called. See vs. 16-20.) What did He "straightway" do? How were the people impressed by His teaching? Why?

Verses 23, 24. What kind of man was in the synagogue? What is meant by the expression, "What have we to do with thee"? ("Let us alone.") What did the evil spirit say he knew? Who did the demon say Jesus was? Was that true?

Verses 25, 26. Did the evil spirit have to obey Christ's word? How did he show his hate and rebellion?

Verses 27, 28. How did this act of power affect the people who saw it? What did they say? How far did the report of Christ's great work spread?

Verses 29-31. In whose home did Jesus (with James and John) find hospitality? Who lay sick there? How was this brought to Jesus' attention? What happened when Jesus took her by the hand? What did she do as soon as she was healed?

Verses 32-34. When did they bring all their sick and afflicted? Why wait till sunset? (It was sabbath.) Who were gathered at the door? Did the Lord Jesus do for them as they had hoped? What special thing is said about the demons?

Verse 35. What did the Lord Jesus do early next morning? Why did He go out and into a desert place? (Comp. Mark 6:46; Matt. 6:6.)

were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed.

NOTES ON LESSON 3.

A BUSY DAY

In this lesson we have the record of a single day's work—a sample out of many, as busy days or busier. It was a sabbath. The first part of

FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JANUARY

Lesson 4.

January 22, 1933.

JESUS FORGIVING SINS

Golden Text: The Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins.—Mark 2:10.

Lesson Text: Mark 2:1-12.

1 And when he entered again into Capernaum after some days, it was noised that he was in the house.

2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, no, not even about the door: and he spake the word unto them.

3 And they come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy, borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay.

5 And Jesus seeing their faith saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this man thus speak? he blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, even God?

8 And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 Which is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy),

11 I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.

12 And he arose, and straightway took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, we never saw it on this fashion.

Study Questions

Verse 1. Where did Jesus now go again? Where had He been? (See 1:30, 45.) Was His presence long a secret?

Verse 2. When the people found out He was there, what did they do? How great was the throng?

Verses 3, 4. Who came? Whom were they bringing? How many were bearing him? To what extreme did they go in their determination to get the sick man to Jesus?

Verse 5. How could Jesus see their faith? How can faith be seen now? Whose faith did Jesus see—only the faith of the four carriers, or that of the sick man also? What astonishing thing did He say to the sick man?

Verses 6, 7. What did the scribes reason in their hearts? Why did they think it was blaspheming? If Jesus had not been who He was, would the scribes' judgment have been just?

Verses 8, 9. How did Jesus know they reasoned so? What question did He ask them? Which would be the easier? (For an imposter it would have been easy to say, "Thy sins are forgiven"; nobody could check up on that; whereas to say, "Arise and take up thy bed and walk," would demand an evidence of power. But for Jesus to say "Thy sins are forgiven," was a far costlier and more difficult thing than to say the other.)

Verses 10, 11. For what purpose did the Lord Jesus work this miracle? How did that prove that He had authority on earth to forgive sins? (See John 3:2; Acts 2:22.)

Verse 12. Did Christ's word have power? What happened when He spoke? How were the people impressed?

NOTES ON LESSON 4.

"JESUS FORGIVING SINS"

This is the lesson-title. Here we see Jesus exercising His sovereign right to forgive sins. Only one other time did He use those words. (Luke

7:48.) No one else ever could or did speak thus. True, after His resurrection, He said to His disciples, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit: whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. (John 20:21-23.) But this power was never to be exercised by them arbitrarily, nor directly. Never did they say to any person, "Thy sins be forgiven," as though at their word the forgiveness took place. The only way they ever forgave sins was by laying down to men the Divine terms of forgiveness, as in Acts 2:38 and 3:19 and 16:31. Even in the case of an erring Christian the apostles did not take the matter into their own hands nor say "We forgive thee"; nor did they tell him that he had to come to them for forgiveness and "absolution." Instead, they pointed him to Christ and directed him to repent and pray to the Lord. (Acts 8:22.) All the church could forgive an offending, penitent brother; and, in so far as their action was in accord with God's word and teaching, God would endorse it. (See Matt. 18:17-20, and 2 Cor. 2:5-11.) But the Lord Jesus forgave men on His own authority, as He saw good (always, of course, as in all else that He did, in harmony with the Father), and at His word the sins were remitted. No other man ever did or could forgive in such sovereign fashion. Those scribes were right so far: if Jesus had not been the Christ, the Son of God, it would have been blasphemy in Him to have said to any person, "Thy sins be forgiven thee."

Faith that can be seen. Faith is not a mere state of mind and thought: it is a working principle. It always breaks out in appropriate action. The sinner's faith expresses itself in repentance and baptism. (Acts 2:38.) The Christian's faith in works of love. (Gal. 5:6.) The Lord still wants to see our faith.

Faith and Action. Weak faith, feeble action, easily discouraged. Strong faith, energetic action, that will not be stopped. Can the faith of Christians be gauged by this principle?

"Thy Sins be Forgiven." Twice He said that: here and in Luke 7:48-50. In each case it raised an objection in the minds of those who heard it. Why? Were they correct in thinking that the forgiving of sins was God's exclusive right? If Jesus had not been God's own Son, wielding His Father's authority, would it not have been blasphemy if He had presumed to forgive sins?—See first paragraph in the Notes.

The Purpose of Miracles. Note carefully the reason given for this miracle of healing, in v. 10. If His word had such authority in the physical realms would it not have the same in the spiritual? What is the stated purpose of His miracles in John 3:2; Acts 2:22? Compare also 2 Cor. 12:12.

USE STUDY QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

FIFTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JANUARY

Lesson 5.

January 29, 1933.

JESUS AND THE SABBATH

Golden Text: The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath.—Mark 2:27-28.

Lesson Text: Mark 2:23 to 3:6.

23 And it came to pass, that he was going on the sabbath day through the grainfields; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not law-

Study Questions

Verses 23, 24. Was it wrong to pluck ears in someone else's field? (No. See Deut. 23:25.) What was the Pharisees' objection then?

Verses 25, 26. Why did the disciples pluck the ears? (They had need and were hungry.) What did David

ful?

25 And he said unto them, Did ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was hungry, he, and they that were with him?

26 How he entered into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat save for the priests, and gave also to them that were with him?

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

28 so that the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath.

Chap. 3:1 And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there who had his hand withered.

2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

3 And he said unto the man that had his hand withered, Stand forth.

4 And he said unto them, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored.

and his companions do in a similar situation? Was David condemned for doing that?

Verses 27, 28. What did the Lord Jesus state concerning the relation of the sabbath to man? What right therefore does the Son of man have concerning the sabbath?

Chap. 3:1. Did Jesus usually go into the synagogue on the sabbath? (Luke 4:16.) What case of affliction was there this time?

Verse 2. What was the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees? What purpose did they have in watching Him?

Verse 3. What did the Lord Jesus command the man? What did he say to those enemies? What was their answer? Was it right to do good and to save a life on the sabbath? (Matt. 12:11.)

Verse 5. What emotions filled the heart of Jesus? (Anger, grief.) Why? Was this hardening due to their own sin and fault? What did He command the man to do? What happened as the man obeyed the command of Jesus?

Verse 6. What did the Pharisees consult to do? With whom did they go into partnership in this? Were the Pharisees and the Herodians on friendly terms ordinarily? (No.) Note their frame of mind, Luke 6:11.

6 And the Pharisees went out, and straightway with the Herodians took counsel against him, how they might destroy him.

NOTES ON LESSON 5.

CRASHES ABOUT SABBATH-KEEPING

One of the grievances the Pharisees had against the Lord was that He did not observe their sabbath-regulations. Of course He did not violate God's law or will in the matter of the sabbath-commandment; but He did run counter to the blind Pharisees' interpretations and regulations concerning it. There were always certain exceptions to the sabbath law. Even a dumb beast must not be permitted to suffer because of sabbath restrictions: if an ass or ox had fallen into a ditch, though it required hard labor to pull them out, it was not considered anything but right that this should be done, even on a sabbath day. It was also known to be proper and right to loose the ox or ass from the stall and water them on the sabbath. (Luke 13:15; 14:5.) How much more then was it right to attend to the needs and sufferings of human beings on the sabbath!

There was, however, another proviso as to sabbath keeping: the priests did "profane the sabbath" in the temple-service (the offering of the sacrifices was often heavy labor)—yet were guiltless. (Matt. 12:5.) Why? The temple service had the right of way over the sabbath precept, for it was more important. Well then—One greater than the tem-

ple was here. (Matt. 12:6.) In Him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead, not in type or figure, but in reality, as never it did in any temple made by hands. (Col. 2:9.) No sabbath commandment could stand where He controlled, nor could it be applied against His servants in His presence. Finally, since the sabbath was designed for man's well-being, man must not be sacrificed to it, but, when necessary, the sabbath must be sacrificed to man's true interest. Jesus, moreover, being the Son of man, Lord supreme, therefore, in all matters that pertain to humanity, had authority over the sabbath, to order and adapt it to human needs and to rule concerning it, according to His sovereign will.

THE BLINDNESS OF SEVENTH-DAYISTS

None of that did the blind Pharisees see. Nor do the Seventh-Dayists of our time yet see it. They still contend that the sabbath-commandment is "moral law," a thing eternally right in itself; and they cannot see that if that were true none of those exceptions and those puttings-aside of it above referred to, could possibly have been ordained. Imagine, for example, God making provision that in certain cases a man might lie! Or, imagine an apostle saying, "One man thinks it right to be honest, another believes that it is right to steal; let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." But that is the sort of language used with reference to the keeping of days. (Rom. 14:5.) Even in the Law dispensation, therefore the sabbath was a ceremonial, not a moral commandment, notwithstanding the fact that it is found in the decalog. It was the kind of command that could be set aside, and on occasion was so set aside, even under the Old Covenant. But in the New Covenant it has no place whatever. (Col. 2:16.)

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS

1. On what point did the Lord Jesus clash with the Pharisees?
2. How many such clashes in this lesson?
3. What was the occasion of the first clash?
4. Why did the disciples pluck and eat grain in the field?
5. Was that wrong in itself? (Deut. 23:25.)
6. Why did the Pharisees object?
7. To what Old Testament incident did Jesus refer?
8. Was it according to rule for David and his company to eat that bread?
9. On what ground was it excused?
10. Which was made for the other, man for the sabbath, or the sabbath for man?
11. Who has authority over the sabbath?
12. Where and when was the second clash?
13. Who was there, in need of healing?
14. Why did they watch Him?
15. What question did Jesus put up to them?
16. What did they answer?
17. Why was He angry and grieved?
18. How did He heal the man?
19. What was the effect on them?
20. What new move did His enemies now make?
21. Which command of the decalog concerns the sabbath?
22. Was it an absolute command, or were there exceptions? (See Notes.)
23. What were some of the exceptions? (Notes.)
24. Could it be set aside in kindness to beasts?
25. Should it have been set aside in kindness to man? (Notes.)
26. What is the Golden Text?

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