

WORD AND WORK

THE WORD AND WORK WEEKLY?

Since the announcement in our December issue of the unsolicited and unexpected gift of \$100 toward making the Word and Work weekly, we have heard from a number of parties who seem to share enthusiastically in the proposition. We print herewith statements from six or seven letters, representing about that many different states, and characteristic of the sentiment expressed also by others:

"How splendid if the Word and Work could become a weekly!"

"Here is my hand with the promise of \$5 a month as long as you need it, the Lord willing. Nothing would rejoice me more than to see the paper fifty- two times in 1918."

"I cannot send you a check for \$100, but I would like to have Word and Work once a week."

Is it not possible that the present subscribers for the monthly who wish to have a part in furthering Bible truth would each be glad to advance say \$2 at once? This is only a wild suggestion by one who is exceedingly anxious that Word and Work shall soon become a weekly visitor. Certainly I will be glad to advance the \$2 at any time in order to accomplish this end."

"I consider it the best paper I ever saw. Make it a weekly if you can."

"I trust that you may succeed in turning the monthly into a weekly, beginning with the next issue. It certainly deserves support of the brotherhood if the December issue is a fair sample of its predecessors and prospective successors."

Along with other letters came these sentiments from two of our staunchest friends:

"I tremble at the thought of the little Magazine being changed to a weekly—it is so good as it is; and we need such a paper to keep us humble."

"I want to help Word and Work some along whether you make it a weekly or not. . . . I wonder if people would read it as well coming more often?"

We greatly appreciate all these expressions. We are not ambitious to have a weekly—certainly not, if with the larger paper there should come a tendency to pride and ecclesiastic tyranny. The suggestion to make the Word and Work a weekly came, as it should have come, not from us but from outside of our editorial staff. We have never so far attempted to establish a weekly; nor can we say that our minds are fully made up now. We still seek the judgment and suggestions of our reader-friends, as well as any definite offer to help us finance the proposed weekly. Above all we desire God's guidance. The Word and Work belongs to Him, and for Him we are conducting it. We do not wish to run ahead of his leading, nor yet lag behind. We have prayed that if it be His will that fifty brethren pledge five dollars a month; or else, the way be opened in some manner. But as for our part, within our ability, what shall we say?

SHALL WE MAKE WORD AND WORK A WEEKLY?

WORDS IN SEASON.

R. H. B.

CHRISTIANS RELATION TO RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS.

In these days of wide-spread need and distress there come many calls, appeals, demands for help—especially for assistance in various relief organizations, whose object is to furnish comforts, food, medical and surgical aid, to soldiers, and to suffering civilian populations in war-stricken countries. These appeals are put up to the church of God with peculiar emphasis, for the world expects of it a special readiness to engage in such service. And indeed the Lord has enjoined upon the members of the Body of Christ, that, as they have opportunity they should do good unto all men. (Gal. 6:10). Nevertheless brethren feel perplexed and are enquiring concerning the Christian's place and duty in these matters. Their difficulties are along the following lines: They have been taught that it is always lawful to do good; but they have also learned that whatsoever they do in word or in deed, is to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, so that the credit of it will go to God through Christ and through the church. (Col. 3:17; Eph. 3:21). These relief organizations do not seem to them to be the channel through which to do the Lord's work. It does not seem good to some of these Christians to join in God's service with *the world* of whom Jesus says that its works are evil (John 7:7), and that though we are in it we are not of it; and of which the New Testament declares that the whole of it "lieth in the evil one." 1 John 5:19. It does not seem to them just the thing to be yoked up in organizations which represent all shades of unbelief and opposition to God, in the face of such passages as 2 Cor. 6:14-18. Moreover it is not clear to them that the glory and credit of the work so done goes to the Lord Jesus Christ at all, and they are not satisfied that the work really furthers the object and interests of the Lord Jesus, which in His earthly ministry, and no less today, reached beyond the mere work of bodily relief and physical help. On the other hand their hearts prompt them strongly to do their bit and more, to alleviate the misery and distress which are in the world, and they would gladly lend a hand in the service. What should they do? Such are the questions that are asked Christian teachers today. Shall we shirk the answer? Or, in answering, shall we speak according to faith, or sight; according to our fleshly judgment or as the oracles of God? Shall we speak "As of the world" (1 John 4:5), that the world may hear us; or seek and teach the will of God even if it clash with man's ideas?

UNIMPORTANT AND YET IMPORTANT.

The question is not so important so far as the world is concerned. The church of God (for I am not speaking of Christendom in general), is in reality a very little flock, and the Chris-

tians who feel such concerns as those above expressed do not comprise all of even its membership. If every one of them should decide that they could not participate in these relief-movements, the difference would not be noticeable in the sum total of the world's benevolences. Furthermore these Christians, even if not themselves participating, would be far from taking an antagonistic attitude toward the relief-movements in question, and still less would they try to influence the world against this needed and kindly work, or do it an injury. It is to them merely a matter of personal Christian responsibility which concerns the Lord's own people alone. But while their attitude would not make much difference to the world, the question is of the more serious importance to the small contingent of God's people. If their little flock alone is God's direct instrumentality for the doing of His *specific* work—how important that *they* should not be deflected from that particular work into other enterprises which can be carried on by the world just as successfully as by the church. God's people can do a work which the world cannot do. God has appointed them a specific task. It is therefore the more necessary that they, because they are few, and because the *real* blessing of the world ultimately hinges on them, should fill their assigned place in God's plan.

THE CHURCH'S WORK.

The one great, specific task Jesus left with His people is this: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them . . . and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." (Matt. 28:18-20). This is not one of several things the Lord has enjoined upon us, it is *the* thing, and the condition of His continuance with us. To this all else is subservient and contributory, and all works of kindness and mercy; all gifts, all service, are comprised in it. It is not the church's specific mission to engage in "charity." The world can and does do that, and on a scale that eclipses the church's humble ability. The church does "charity," but not merely for charity's sake. The Lord Jesus did not feed the 5,000 merely to appease their hunger, nor heal the lame and blind for the healing's sake, but in each case for a testimony that men might believe and be saved. (John 20:30, 31). The relief of temporal distress was employed to the much greater purpose of ministering an eternal benefit. This, too, is the principle on which the church's good works are done. It was not designed merely to relieve suffering—for if all the suffering of the world could be stopped in an instant, it would be of doubtful benefit to poor, sinstricken humanity. God goes deeper. His people "do charity" with a design, namely, for a testimony to Him who loved us and bought us with His blood. Their good works are designed to be the vehicle of God's grace.

FRUIT THAT ABIDES, AND LABOR NOT IN VAIN.

In order that the good works of God's church may accomplish their proper end, it is necessary that they should be done in the

name of Jesus Christ, that is, in such a way that the credit will be seen to be due to Him, and through Him to God. "Even so let all your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matt. 5:16). "Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God even the Father through him." (Col. 3:17). "If any man ministereth, ministering as of the strength which God supplieth: *that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ:*" (1 Pet. 4:11). "Unto him be the glory *in the church and in Christ Jesus* unto all generations." (Eph. 3:21). For the glory of God inevitably works out in eternal blessings to men. Moreover the works of the Christians must be *fruit*, borne through Christ, possible only by real, vital union with Him (John 15:5)—even "fruits of righteousness which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Phil. 1:11). This fruit the world can not possibly produce (John 15:5). It devolves on God's church to bear it.

BY-PRODUCTS OF THE GOSPEL.

It will be said, however, that the credit for the work of such organizations is itself due to Christianity. This is true. The philanthropic schemes and works of the world today are the by-product of Christianity—and the humanizing movements and reforms of the last half century and longer, are due to the influence of the gospel in the raising of the standard of public opinion and sentiment. Nevertheless the credit does not go to Christ nor His church. In fact, it is quite as frequently set up to the disparagement of the church and of the true faith of the gospel. The pernicious doctrine that "It does not matter what you believe so long as you do good," is blinding and falsely satisfying many condemned souls today; and not a few lost men and women think themselves saved because the society, or lodge, or otherwise human organization to which they belong, compares favorably with the church so far as accomplishment of work and deeds of kindness are concerned. This is fatal to both the doers and often to the recipients of those acts of kindness, in that it holds out a false basis of hope. The word of God states distinctly that "*by grace* have ye been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; *not* of works, that no man may glory." Nor can any man or set of men who are not first saved, do the works that glorify God.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

The conclusion now is easily drawn; but not so easily followed. It may make us appear as cranks in the eyes of the world; and even some fellow Christians may count us as perverse, and as taking a Pharisaical "holier-than-thou" attitude. But if we cannot bear that sort of thing, what is the good of us? It remains to be observed however, that some of these children of God, eager to help in the great distress, have found ways to do so in harmony with God's will. A certain congregation

sent a goodly gift direct to a missionary in an afflicted country; who converted the amount into food-stuff and distributed freely, making it all count for the Lord Jesus Christ. Again a certain church of Christ recently sent a donation (large, considering their poverty) to the suffering American children. They forwarded it through the Christian Herald (N. Y.) with the particular request that it go not as from any sect, lodge, society, or human organization whatsoever, but as from a church of Christ, in the Name of Christ. Again, it may be possible to do a work in the Lord for the good of soldiers in our camps, or in France, through the mediation of some true Christian man who has access to them and can minister to them in the name of the Lord—as for example, Brother John E. Dunn (whose address appears elsewhere in this issue) if he can do the work (which I suppose he can) as a simple Christian, and not in the name of the interdenominational, semi-worldly institution through which he was obliged to obtain this access. Nevertheless, let us not forget that *the one aim* of all our labor in the Lord is the furtherance of the gospel of Jesus Christ at home and abroad. "Little children, it is the last hour." The King's business requireth haste. The door may be closing faster than we dream.

ON BEHALF OF OUR APPROVED SERVANT.

For some years has Brother Don Carlos Janes unremittingly, tirelessly, disinterestedly, toiled in furthering God's missionary enterprise. He has corresponded with the missionaries in the field, with prospective missionaries at home, has stirred up the brethren everywhere to this, the greatest and first work of the church; has with much labor and expense to himself (and never a cent of remuneration) printed and sent forth free literature to further this work; has handled and forwarded funds in a way systematic and accurate (and that, of course, without taking toll)—in fact, he has made possible a New-Testament co-operation of brethren and churches to carry on the Lord's program in foreign lands. At this, he is a poor man who must manage very closely to get through—although his energy and business-ability would command him an easy living if he turned his attention to money-making. It is hard to express adequate appreciation for a work so faithful, efficient and unselfish. I note a well-taken suggestion from Brother McCaleb that Brother Janes, having thus commended himself by his earnest labors, should be supported by the brotherhood—by those at least, who have the Lord's great work at heart; and that should be everyone. The work he does is most necessary; Brother Janes has proved his fitness and ability for it, and has made himself indispensable, both to the churches and the missionaries, as an intermediary on behalf of all. Let us give him means both for his own support and to enlarge his activities in stirring up and sustaining the missionary work in these important days. Address your response care of Word and Work.

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A MONTHLY MAGAZINE WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO DECLARE THE
WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD.

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R. H. BOLL, *Editor-in-chief.*

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No. 1.

NEWS AND NOTES.

H. L. Richardson of the Hamilton Church, Ont., reports the good work of H. A. Rogers, in Western Canada. Fifty or more have been baptized in the last two years—a good showing for that neglected field.

Our book business for December was very satisfactory. In fact, the best month we ever had. Transportation facilities were considerably below normal. For instance, a letter properly addressed, stamped and posted 500 miles away was twelve days in reaching us. Complaints however about delay in delivery were very few. We desire to know if any one ordering anything did not receive it. We are as anxious as you are to make it right.

"I am giving all my time to the preaching of our dear Lord's Gospel and He has blessed my feeble efforts. To His matchless name be all the praise."—J. W. Dollison.

A good report comes from the church at Brinkley, Ark., through Porter Shults: They are developing the talent in the church by means of social meetings.

The Highland Church, Louisville, has averaged about one addition each Sunday for the last two months.

Our full page advertisement which begins. "\$2.95 does the work of \$4.00," is a very unusual one. Be sure to read it. If this Bible can be had at any place else for less than \$3.25 we do not know the place. But our price is \$2.95 with a year's subscription to the Word and Work besides! The offer is purely a subscription-puller, and applies to new subscriptions only.

"I have moved from Trenton to Macon and have taken up work with the church where Brother Morgan H. Carter has been laboring. Hugh A. Price, Jr., is to work in the mission field in Northwest Georgia where I labored two years. Brother Carter has done good work here and there is yet much to be done in this growing city of about sixty thousand souls. Pray for us."—C. E. Coleman.

H. J. Sudbury is preaching at Knoxville—along with his school work at present.

"Since thousands of our boys—the flower of the country—are drafted into the army, and mothers and churches have appealed to me to go to the army camps, I have decided it to be my duty to go by the grace of God. I have been assigned to Camp Sevier, Greenville, S. C., by the National War Work Council Y. M. C. A., as Camp Secretary of Religious Work. I go as a volunteer religious worker, supported by some of the churches. Cookeville, Tenn., church agrees to support my family. I leave on the 26th for Camp Sevier. I desire the love and prayers of all of God's people."—John E. Dunn.

Augustus Shanks is located at Stanford, Ky., laboring with and for churches in and about there. He writes that he is busy in the Lord's work.

We can still start all new subscriptions with January where desired. This will put the entire volume for 1918 in your hands; and will enable you to get the editor's studies in Isaiah complete.

We have bought all copies of Popular Hymns No. 2, both limp and boards, that remained in print at the publishing house of that good song book; and at such a figure too that we can supply them while they last at considerable saving. Ask for prices.

"The church at Allensville, Ky., had with them the fifth Lord's day of December, Brother D. H. Friend. Let me add that he is one of our best preachers."—D. H. Neil.

"The Potter Home family have had a happy Christmas."—W. M. Oakley, Supt.

Brother John E. Dunn gives his address at, "Army Y. M. C. A., Camp Sevier, Greenville, S. C.

A communication from Brother R. Green, Russell Schoolhouse, Ky., speaks in the very highest terms of the able and faithful work done there by J. S. Greer. Such reports concerning Brother Greer's work are not rare.

Have you considered the advisability of introducing our lesson helps, or of adding them to those you already have, with the first of the year? Other helps may elaborate more on the lesson, but when it comes to bringing out the spiritual truth of the

Word, we believe our helps are unsurpassed. In fact, our helps are different, and this is the difference; the questions asked are not usually answered in the notes but only in the text of the Bible itself; thus, instead of supplanting the Bible in the class, they simply drive the student to it. We do not ask you to supplant your present help with ours necessarily, but to supplement them. The Word and Work Lesson Monthly costs 1c each in any quantity.

I. B. Henthorn, 4405 Xerxes Ave., Minneapolis, Minn., sends a detailed report of funds received and expended in the mission work there. We take the liberty of condensing the report. In fact, if all donors knew him as we do, they would require no report at all, as it was in the days of Joash: "They reckoned not with the men into whose hands they delivered the money to give to them that did the work; for they dealt faithfully."

Our brother's report shows receipts for the last quarter of 1917, \$82.60. Of this amount, Minneapolis brethren gave \$29.60. After the payment of bills for tracts, advertising and song books, and after remunerating Brother Jarrett Smith for his gospel work there, a balance of \$19.11 remained. Brother Henthorn attaches this note:

"Bro. Smith found the extremely cold weather of the first part of December too much for his southern blood and clothing, and returned south on December 13; \$20.00 of the receipts above were received after he left. We continue our home meetings, and hope to have public meetings soon.. We rejoiced to discover two more loyal Christian families last Sunday. Bro. F. S. Taylor, his wife, son and son's wife. We will be glad to know of any true and loyal evangelist coming this way as we hope to be able to arrange some special meetings for any one who could stop long enough to hold some mission meetings."

In renewing, it is well simply to enclose in an envelope one of our wrappers with the word written upon it "Renew." Call attention to any errors in the address.

Why not use the Word and Work Lesson Monthly in your Bible classes through 1918? The Monthly costs 1c each per month; shall we send you a sample?

WE OWE AN APOLOGY to our readers for the belated appearance of this month's Word and Work. The delay was caused by the simultaneous illness of the two resident editors.

Pray for the Word and Work. It is God's work, it is your work; it is our work. Pray that He may give it an open door and a wide hearing.

"In the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money. . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof: from these also turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

SCRIPTURAL SYSTEM FOR CHRISTIAN STEWARDS.

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

God's steward, of whom is required faithfulness, must ever be in readiness to render an account of his stewardship. This he will not be able to do who has no system and keeps no books on himself. He who does not then check himself up certainly has little realization of a steward's responsibility. Think of a treasurer of any worldly concern keeping no books! Could he hope to continue in such a position or to hear, "Well done, thou good and faithful?" He could not get an honorable discharge. Is God's standard of faithfulness lower than man's? Will He ever say, "Thou good and faithful" to one who has not been faithful? Does any one dare to presume that God will place a false label upon a servant?

How, then, will it fare with the many careless, neglectful, irregular, unsystematic, slothful stewards who have no idea what ratio their contributions bear to their income! It will not avail to be found hiding behind "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." Jesus was not condemning systematic giving, but ostentatious giving, and not till you begin or feel like beginning to boast of your gifts, do you need to apply that Scripture. It will serve you then if you will allow, and serve you well. When Jesus found certain ones systematically tithing even to mint, anise and cummin, he not only did not condemn it, but approved it. "This ye ought to have done and not to have left the other undone." If on the other hand, the Lord has ever approved irregular, unsystematic or slipshod work I have no knowledge of it. "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." That is His way. "God is a God of order," and He seeks the same characteristic in His servant.

What system will be pursued by those serving in the capacity of God's steward? Men working on the modern "Church Finance" problem have included this question and have given various answers to it. Empty treasuries, continual deficits and unpaid bills are terrible things, to overcome which, unscriptural and shameful merchandising has been resorted to to support the Lord's work! This is an unfaithful shirking of the stewardship question as well as dishonoring to the Lord. "From such turn away." Again the question is shirked in allowing every one to do "that which is right in his own eyes" with a feeling that it is "nobody's business." People like this plan generally, and it is the practice of many churches. The covetous especially like it whose class it has a great tendency to increase. That is enough to condemn it. But it requires little effort to run such a system (non-system), likewise little cash, little is purposed or planned, and as little done, and so one who undertakes to change such an order of things has a job on his hands. Where such is the order few are to be found who are not unmissionary and un-

spiritual, that is unfaithful. If, however, a few be found in whom is developed the grace of liberality and a sense of responsibility to the Lord and His cause, the rest are willing for them to bear the burden of whatever work is undertaken. They shirk in everything but the kicking. Many kick in order to save the pocketbook.

Is there not a more excellent way? I believe there is and that the Bible points out that way. First, let churches conform to the New Testament pattern. Let there be overseers of the Holy Spirit's making. Let such overseers tend the flock, conferring with the members as to the duty of giving as well as to other duties. Let each member inform said spiritual overseers, after such conference, receiving the fatherly counsel of his spiritual adviser, the amount he may ordinarily be depended on for each week. These men "watch in behalf of our souls as they shall give an account." Theirs is a grave responsibility on behalf of the Lord's work. It is theirs to count the cost of building the tower or meeting the enemy host and determine what shall be undertaken. But how can they plan if they have no data as to resources? Shall they trust to chance? Can they trust careless, neglectful or covetous members? Not to do great things for God. It is plainly the duty of the members to inform those in such responsible position as to how much they can give in order that they may count the cost and the resources and determine as to what sized tower to undertake. Then let each one put his contribution in an envelope with his name signed that the overseers may know that each is doing his duty or if any "falls down" who it is. The cause thereof can then be learned and help given to remove it, whether it be of a spiritual or physical nature. It is somebody's business whether you do your duty in giving just as in any other matter. How else can the covetous be detected and dealt with?

And what shall be the measure of our giving? What amount shall I give? Some answer, "All you can spare." But that is an unhealthy doctrine, leading to an unhealthy practice, that is, to spare *giving*. Have an aim. Purpose something. Set a goal and work to it. Have a standard and regularly and systematically measure up to it. That is, purpose in your heart to give cheerfully and bountifully the Scriptural portion as God has prospered you. Inform the overseers of your purpose and then "keep tab" to see that you do as you have purposed. The Scriptural portion is no less than the tenth. Nothing less could be considered bountiful and he who gave less could scarcely be called a cheerful giver. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. The Jews paid tithes to the Levites. Are not these things written for our examples? "This ye ought to have done." God blesses the tither today and verifies His promises of old. This every tither knows right well, and will testify that nine-tenths with God's blessing far exceeds the ten-tenths without such blessing, so great is that blessing.

ABRAHAM.

H. L. OLMSTEAD.

From a religious point of view Abraham appears, after the lapse of centuries, as one of the greatest characters of antiquity. He is the religious father of those nations who believe in one supreme God, whose all-wise providence rules over all things animate and inanimate, natural and supernatural, on earth and in heaven—the God whom all should worship and obey. Living in an age when the darkness of idolatrous superstition had almost, if not quite, eclipsed the true light of religious faith, he became the founder of a nation which has given to the world all its ideas of monotheism. How are we to account for this wonderful fact unless we accept at its full value the record of his supernatural “call” given in the book of Genesis?

The greatness of Abraham does not rest upon the subsequent political or material expansion of the Hebrew nation. These were mere accidents of their national life. They left no works of art and their literary efforts were confined to the one subject of religion. As Israel's greatness was spiritual rather than political, so Abraham's greatness was that of faith rather than of intellect. At the call of God, faith rose above former training, severed all previous connections whether of family or friendships, and without questioning followed the voice of God. Again it rose above reason and believed even against the well established laws of nature that he and Sarah should have a son in their old age. The third great test of his faith shows the triumph of the principles of faith over reason, over nature, and over paternal love. Without hesitancy, without murmuring, and without questioning either the wisdom, power or goodness of God he deliberately set out to obey the voice of his Sovereign.

How wonderful this all appears when we remember that Abraham was seventy-five years old when he first heard the voice of God, and had spent these years among a people who worshipped the heavenly bodies, animals, their dead heroes, and their ancestors. There were but few and feeble remains of the primitive revelation which had been handed down by Noah and his sons. Yet regardless of the dearth of true faith and spiritual decline, there existed a remarkable material civilization. In Egypt, in Babylon, and in Palestine, there are signs of civilization which in some respects will rival and even surpass that of the present day. The pyramids had been built, the use of metals, of weights and measures, and of textile fabrics was known. There were also cities and fortresses, cornfields and vineyards, agricultural implements and weapons of war, commerce and arts, musical instruments, golden vessels, ornaments for the person, purple dyes, spices, handmade pottery, stone engravings, sundials, and glass work and even the use of letters. With all this material progress, however, there had been a steady decline in spiritual religion and in morals. Men left to themselves

without the aid of supernatural influences and revelation, constantly decline in those virtues on which the strength of mankind is built. The grandest civilization in its material aspects may coexist with the most debased morals. The triumphs of intellect avail nothing without this. If art, science, philosophy, and literature could save a nation from degeneracy, why did the nations of antiquity so soon sink to such depths of moral degradation? Why did gross superstition so speedily obscure the intellect and tradition fail to keep alive the knowledge of God? When will men learn that material progress is not the foundation of virtue, and when will they confess that the "necessary progress" of mankind is entirely disconnected with virtue?

Such was the civilization of Abraham's time—grown old in the pursuit of its own greatness unaided by God. From it he turned away to become the friend of God, the father of the faithful, to seek "a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God." Consequently he wore very loosely the robe of this earthly life. True, he loved the land and improved it, dug wells and pastured his sheep and was hospitable and "neighborly," but beyond the shifting scenes of time he had caught a vision of the unchangeable glory of God. The city of Hebron was dear to him and he enjoyed the shade of the oak at Mamre but beyond all that he desired a "better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore GOD is not ashamed to be called their God, for He prepared for them a city." Heb. 10:16. Such an outlook brightens and irradiates the present life while beyond the wreck and change of moral existence, it sees everlasting stability and the "joy of the Lord." One day as David, by the eye of faith, caught view of himself in eternity his fingers swept the strings and he sang, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

I began a meeting with the church of Christ at ——. While here I heard a doctrine preached I had not met with outside the "Koran" of Mohammed—that "all who die fighting on the battlefield, no matter what their past record has been, go direct to heaven." If this doctrine be true, this war now raging is the mightiest missionary movement of the centuries and the one who started it is the greatest missionary since Paul. But if this doctrine is not true, this war is the greatest obstacle to Christianity flung across its shining pathway down the ages, and the one who set the war going is an archenemy of souls and a very anti-christ. Christ, the Savior of the world, says: "I came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; I came not to judge the world, but to save the world; and if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (See Matt. 16:24; Luke 9:54-56; John 12:47; 1 Pet. 2:21).—
J. Madison Wright, in Gospel Advocate.

IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE STUDY.

H. N. RUTHERFORD.

There is nothing more important for the Christian than Bible study. It is fundamental to every good work and word. Effectual prayer, holy living, and earnest and efficient work are the fruits of reverent and diligent study of the word of God. I find language an inadequate vehicle to convey to those who read or hear, the superlative importance of daily, prayerful Bible study. It is important for the Christian and the one who is not a Christian. It will more than serve my purpose if I shall be able to awaken slumbering Christians to the great importance of Bible study for the promotion of growth in Christian character, for production and development of faith, as a safeguard against sin, as filling the heart with joy, as a safeguard against error, important to make one wise, and as an equipment for Christian service.

Important is Bible Study as a means of intellectual development. No other study offers the material for such an all-round development of the mental powers as the study of the Bible. First, the Bible is the profoundest book that was ever written. Newton said, "I count the Scriptures of God to be the most profound philosophy."

The Bible is the Book of inexhaustible depth. There are places in the book so deep that no scholar's plummet has ever yet struck bottom. "O, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen."

The great Webster said after many years of profound study of God's word, "I am but a little child picking up pebbles by the seashore, and the whole ocean of truth lies before me."

The Bible gives a wider scope for the legitimate use of the imagination and fancy than any other book, or all other books. It goes back to the eternal past; it looks forward into eternal future. The greatest masters of literature have allowed their fancy to drink in its highest inspiration at the Bible fountain. John Milton would sit listening to his daughters read from God's word. As a result he received the inspiration for "Paradise Lost." The Bible is the world's greatest masterpiece of style. It is the world's marvel of condensed thought.

There are whole volumes of meaning packed into a single and apparently simple verse. "If a man were to read industriously from dawn to dark for sixty years, he would die in the first all-come," said Emerson of the 8,500,000 volumes in the Imperial Library of Paris. If these books contain anything good, and all of them do at least contain something good, it all can be found

in the Bible, and more besides. "It is the peerless model of simple, chaste, strong, Anglo-Saxon. It is absolutely unrivaled in its power of terse and incisive statements. It has a power that no other book possesses of saying things in a way that so penetrates the mind and fastens itself in the memory, that they can not be forgotten. Any man or woman who desires to write well, or speak well, should study the Bible above all other books. Alone it has civilized whole nations. It is the one book that can fully lead forth the richest and deepest and sweetest things in man's nature. Read all other books, philosophy, poetry, history, fiction; but if you want to refine the judgment, fertilize the reason, wing the imagination, attain unto the finest womanhood or the sturdiest manhood, read this book reverently and prayerfully, until its truths have dissolved like iron in the blood. If you have no time, make time and read the Book Daniel Webster placed under his pillow when dying, is the Book all should carry in hand while living."—Newell Dwight Hillis.

Bible study is of the highest importance for the promotion of growth in Christian character. "As newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." (1 Pet. 2:2). If the study of God's word fills one with points, arguments and sermons, you are not getting benefits you should. Sheep eat grass and grow wool and flesh. You don't expect grass to grow where wool should. So you feed upon the word of God by mental application and thus being masticated and assimilated, "we attain unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." What digestion is to food, assimilating it with our bodies, that devout and loving meditation on the words and life and work of Jesus is to our spirits. "My flesh is meat indeed. . . . he that eateth this bread shall live forever." John 6:33, 38.

Bible study is important for the production and development of faith. "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." Rom. 10:17. Faith is opposed to unbelief. The besetting sin of the church of Jesus is unbelief. God is no more in their affairs and will not do good, neither will He do evil. In fact, in the most of our lives God is figured out wholly or in part. God is the living God; "His name is Jehovah." The purpose of John's gospel is that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ and have life in His name. God's word is important for the production and development of faith that prevails in prayer. If our prayers are heard and answered, they must be intelligent in God's will (1 John 5:14). Elijah's prayer was for something God had promised, or had stimulated him to ask for. "Let it be known. . . . that I have asked these things at thy word." It was a mighty prayer, this of Elijah's. "Then the fire of Jehovah fell." (1 Kings 18:36, 38). Bible study is important for the production and development of the faith that saves. "But we are not of them that shrink back unto perdition, but of them that have faith unto the saving of the soul." Moreover, by the knowl-

edge of God's word we are warned concerning things not seen as yet, and are stirred to prepare ourselves against times to come.

Bible study is important as a safeguard against sin. "Thy word have I laid up in my heart that I might not sin against thee," said David.

Bible study is important as filling the heart with joy. "And thy words were unto me a joy and the rejoicing of my heart." (Jer. 15:16). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," said Paul, in connection with singing praise. James admonishes the cheerful to sing praise. The word of God fills your heart with cheer.

Bible study is important as the equipment for Christian service. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). God honors His word in the Christian's service.

THE BIBLE AND THE COMMON PEOPLE.

Some years ago it was the fashion to speak of New Testament Greek as a separate and peculiar language especially created for the purpose of conveying the oracles of God to the human mind. Our New Testament lexicons contained a large number of words which could not be found in any of the writings of the classical Greek authors. Hence arose the common distinction between New Testament and classical Greek. Many of the historical arguments with regard to the action of baptism were based upon this distinction.

During the last ten or more years, as a result of the discoveries of Deissman, Ramsay and others, we have found out that New Testament Greek, instead of being a peculiar and separate and divinely created language, was in reality nothing more than the every-day vernacular of the common people of the Roman Empire two thousand years ago. The classical Greek authorities did not use it because it was too common, or, as we would say today, it contained too much "slang." But when the clerk wrote to the trader, or the merchant cast up his accounts, or the soldier wrote home to his mother two thousand years ago, the language used was New Testament Greek. We know that this is true because we have discovered thousands of samples of this every-day writing in Egypt and elsewhere, and from these samples we have been able to reproduce practically the entire New Testament Greek Lexicon.

The Bible was, from the beginning, the book of the common people. It was not the book of the intellectual, of the literary critic or the noble. It was written for and read by the great, struggling mass of the world's population. It is for this reason that the critics of all ages have so often missed its meaning, while the peasant and the laborer have drawn comfort and life from its pages.—*Christian Standard*.

LONGING FOR THE FLESHPOTS.

J. N. GARDNER.

When one becomes a Christian he at once receives pardon for his past sins, but he does not immediately lose all the sinful desires of the flesh. That can only come from training and discipline. And here is a great danger. When one renounces sin he renounces no small amount of crude pleasure. And there is danger lest when the Christian discipline is irksome, his mind will fly back to those pleasures which he enjoyed before he became a Christian and he will at least in heart turn back to sin.

The Israelite pilgrims are examples of this. When difficulties arise they would say to Moses, "Would that we had died by the hand of Jehovah when we sat by the fleshpots, when we did eat bread to the full." It is so very easy for human beings to forget what they should remember, and to remember what they should forget. Those Israelites forgot the hard toil which made their lives bitter. They only remembered they had plenty of a certain kind of food.

Now the children of Israel really had plenty of food in the wilderness. God Himself fed them from heaven. And we can be sure this was the very food needed to keep them in health and strength. Moreover it was very palatable. "And the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." But for some reason these people did not appreciate the flavor. They said, "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the flesh which we did eat in Egypt for naught; the cucumbers, the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlics; but now our soul is dried away. There is nothing at all save this manna to look upon. We notice that almost all of the foods which these people so ardently desired were very indigestible. But their tastes were so depraved that they preferred these to the delicious, healthful, heaven-given manna. God gave them their desires. He said to them, "Ye have wept in the ears of Jehovah saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt; therefore Jehovah shall give you flesh to eat, and ye shall eat not one day nor two days nor five days, neither ten days nor twenty days, but a whole month until it come out of your nostrils and it be loathsome to you."

To spend much time in making the application is not necessary. It has already been indicated, to become a Christian is to renounce certain pleasures. It is true that these pleasures are like garlics and onions, of a bad odor and injurious to the health, but they are pleasures which appeal to the carnal mind. It is also true that

"The hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets."

"Before we reach the heavenly fields and walk the golden streets,"

But there must be a certain amount of cultivation before one can greatly appreciate these sweets. In other words the

Christian life has pleasures far superior to the life of sin, but they are not such as the natural man can appreciate. That is why professed Christians often desire to engage in the same pleasures which their worldly neighbors enjoy. So often the desire is so strong that they go back to the fleshpots of the world.

They should remember that these pleasures, although they may satisfy for a season, will in the end prove loathsome and disgusting.

This suggests another line of thought of a slightly different nature. Of late years religious people have conceived the idea of increasing the attendance at church by introducing worldly elements into the work and worship. This apparently works well for a time. But in the end it aggravates instead of benefiting the evil. It fails to satisfy. Like all other artificial stimulants the dose has to be increased and still more worldly elements introduced. In spite of these things (may we not say) because of them these churches have largely been emptied. The churches should provide heavenly manna, not worldly cucumbers.

GREATER THINGS FOR GOD.

F. E. DENNIS.

In order to accomplish greater things for God, Christ, and the Church, there are some things we consider of paramount importance: (1) more efficient elders; (2) better educated preachers; (3) more missionary spirit; (4) more liberal and systematic giving; (5) studying and teaching the Word; (6) Christian homes.

The things we have enumerated all will agree are of great importance. There may be others just as important, but space will only allow us to briefly consider the ones we have named. We will take up each of the above in the order named.

1. The Church today has some grand, good men who are serving as elders. There are others who are utterly unfit for the office. No congregation can be in a healthy condition when it is ruled by inefficient elders. God has made no mistake in laying down the qualifications of elders. We learn in the New Testament that elders must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; a good ruler of his own house; not a novice; must have a god report of them which are without (1 Tim. 1). When men fall short of these qualifications they are too short for the office of elder. Brethren, we should select elders who measure up to the divine requirements.

2. Our preachers should be well educated. This is not meant

to discourage any poor boy who may have lacked educational opportunities. God forbid. We need more of the right kind of preachers. The young man who has a burning desire to save souls will win in the face of obstacles. His power over men will be increased many fold if he is educated. There are many ways to improve in educational attainments. One good way is by closely observing your superiors. (Do not forget you always have superiors). There is no danger of reading and meditating over too many good books. Here is a maxim well worth considering: "Whatever you can do, or dream you can do, *begin* it. Action has power, genius, and magic in it."

3. The apostles were told to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. We are under obligations to carry the gospel to the remotest regions of the world. Our missionaries in foreign fields are such a pitiful few compared to the heathens who should have an opportunity to hear and obey the Gospel. God help us to awaken to our duty. We should support the faithful men and women who are now laboring in foreign fields, and ever be on the lookout for new ones to go. If the ones now in the field were systematically supported others would be more willing to go. We are drifting to eternity as rapidly as time can bear us on. Let us do all we can to help our fellow-man to enter Heaven.

4. We are commanded to give as we are prospered. If we would all follow this command the Church would be able to support preachers at home and abroad, build meeting houses, take care of those who should be taken care of, and do every good work. "Will a man rob God?" We should give liberally and systematically. God has intrusted to our care what we have, and it is our duty to invest it in the salvation of souls. Heaven is for those who prepare. God grant that we will not let money so obstruct our vision that we are blind to the needs of the Church.

5. Our first duty is to study the Bible for ourselves, and then be anxious to teach and have it taught to others. When we remember the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation it behooves us to study it. We cannot keep up the physical body without nutritious food, and it follows we cannot build a spiritual body without partaking of spiritual food. How many of us read and study the grand old Book daily?

6. A Christian home is one of the grandest things on this earth. A home where love reigns supreme; a home free from jars and discords; a home where prayers are daily offered to the Provider of all our needs; a home where children are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; in short, a home where the spirit of Christ seems to pervade the atmosphere. Brother, does your home measure up to this? If it does not, with the help of God, try to bring it up to this standard. It is not too high.

CHURCH AMUSEMENTS.

D. M. PANTON

"A grave situation," says a Baptist minister of Halifax, writing in the *British Weekly*, "has been created in the church-life of our country." Church amusements drove this godly minister from his church. After card-playing, and other 'attractions' equally objectionable, had been introduced into his vestry, "at last," he says, "the members of the choir arranged for an *At Home* at which was to appear a *Star Pierrot Troupe*. The deacons of the church supported this arrangement in the face of my repeated protests; and I resigned in order to give the church an opportunity of expressing her relation to the matter, which she did when she supported the deacons." He concludes: "My brothers in the ministry, I count my sacrifice of 250 pounds a year a matter of no moment as compared with my obligation to be loyal to my Master; "but," he adds, "what concerns me most is the attitude of the National Free Church Council. The probability is, that if my action were submitted to the Council for judgment they would decide against me; nor am I without reason for saying this."

It is a grave situation, and one fraught with perils to the Church of God. For it betrays a changed conception of the very nature of a church. Apart from the taint that attaches to doubtful amusements, the home, and not the church, is the sphere where Christian recreation ought to be found. The sphere of the church it to be a sphere of ceaseless toil, ceaseless worship, ceaseless prayer; and the idea that the Assembly of God is to cater for anyone's amusement is not only foreign to the New Testament, but also profoundly beneath the dignity of a revelation of God. Dr. Gordon, of Boston, after enumerating a catalogue of rainbow teas, chocolate drills, operettas, bazaars, minstrel shows, and oyster suppers, says: "Certain insects conceal their presence assuming the color of the tree or leaf on which they prey. Church amusements are simply parasites hiding under a religious exterior, while they eat out the life of Christianity." But the error is far graver than a misconception of the nature of a church, grave as such a misconception is. If the theatre is brought into the church, God's people will go from the church to the theatre: the church will become the crowded vestibule of the world. "A woman," says Mr. Clement Scott, "who endeavors to keep her purity (on the stage) is almost of necessity foredoomed to failure. It is an awful thing to say, and it is still more terrible that it is true, but no one who knows the life of the green-room will dare deny it." Every kindly heart will hope that a criticism so drastic is a gross exaggeration: nevertheless it is the solemn assertion of an acute worldling, and a foremost dramatic critic of our generation. Since it was uttered an English Bishop has said: "The motto for everyone in the actor's profession should be 'I play for Jesus Christ'"; and London's leading Noncon-

formist Doctor of Divinity, on the death of Sir Henry Irving, said, "I should have enjoyed going to the theater. *I have no doubt that I should have benefited by it.*" Eight hundred seats at the "Sign of the Cross" were occupied by the clergy, and four thousand clergy and ministers were present (Jan. 19, 1912) at the Miracle Play at Olympia. It is extraordinary that men of the world should warn of a peril which God's shepherds cannot see. "None of my children," said the actor Macready, "shall ever enter a theater with my consent." Dumas, himself a playwright, wrote to a friend, "You do not take your daughter to see my play? You are right. Let me say at once that you must never take a child of yours within these walls." "One theatre," said an eminent English judge, speaking from the bench, "destroys more souls than a hundred churches can save." For what are the dregs in this cup of pleasure? A dying girl recently exclaimed to a London preacher: "For God's sake, raise your voice, and if you can save but one girl from the state I am in you will have done much; for I am in the misery and agony of hell."

Pleasure is peculiarly a temptation of youth: and youthful disciples, whose fresh, sweet, joyous heart-life we love, and only desire to keep it fresh, and sweet, and joyous, would do well to ponder certain facts. (1) Sin is always deadly in its nature; and pleasure which has a taint of sin in it, however slight the sin, produces a spiritual swoon. It is a law of the spiritual life. "Though I have never seen a sinner saved," says Mr. Archibald Brown, "I have seen any number of back-sliders manufactured by this new departure." The death-plant of Java exhales from its blossoms a perfume so powerful as to overcome a strong man, and to destroy all insect life that comes under its aroma; and orange-blossom pickers often fall prostrate through syncope. This does not happen often with sin's sweet deadly blooms, it happens *always*. (2) Pleasure which has a taint of sin in it *never stops with the first sin*. Sin spreads like a leprosy. It grows with the rapidity of a fungus. If unhindered and unfor-given it runs its course like a fever, and the fever ends in death. "The lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is full grown, *bringeth forth death.*" (Jas. 1:15). An actress in Munich was given a casket of exquisite workmanship. She delayed to open it till the last act, when, as she did so, out sprang a viper. The box is sin; the viper is death; and the viper never fails to spring out of the box *at the last act*. "*Fools make a mock of sin*" (Prov. 14:9); but the wise know that to toy with it is death. (3) Pleasure with a taint of sin in it mars our fellowship with God, and our work for God. "This little hand," said Whitefield, "can hide the sun"; a little crack in a bell will spoil the silver tone; a little sin can grieve the Spirit and ruin a discipleship. At a convention of gamblers held in America, the chairman rose and said, "Gentlemen, I appeal to you to do all you can to encourage card-playing in the homes of our land."

When his son, by singing, won the applause of a doubtful au-

dience, Philip of Macedon turned to him with the stinging rebuke, "*Are you not ashamed to sing so well?*" A son of God is endowed with a dignity which ought to be absorbed in the highest: to step down to the level of the world is to lose the power of God. Here is a fragment of an actual conversation: "Why won't Mary come to the dance tonight?" "She has been converted, and is going to join the church next Sunday. *She will come when the meetings are over.*" What will her unconverted lover think of her conversion? *No Belshazzars of the world will, in their death-hour, call in the Daniels who feasted with them in the hall of doom.* "From the depths of my heart," a correspondent wrote to Dr. Pierson, after an appeal for no compromise with worldly pleasures, "I thank you for your faithful words. God's Word showed me that it has been just those things about which I have had doubt that have hindered and paralysed my spiritual life within. God's word has burned in my heart like a fire ever since, and although I have been an earnest Christian for ten years, yet at times my life has been agony and torture with the awful unrest and dissatisfaction within. Definitely God placed His finger on each doubtful thing, and in each one He has given me grace to yield to Him; and I know I have deliverance as never before."

It is not that all pleasure is sinful, or always inexpedient; but each youthful heart must learn *from God* in what pleasures it may indulge without sin. "All my springs are *in Thee.*" (Ps. 87:7): the one supreme fact is that the young heart, as the old, is kept fresh, and sweet, and tender, by *dwelling in God.* "Train the young women to be *soberminded*: the younger men likewise exhort to be *soberminded.*" Titus 2:4):—joyousness without levity, gravity without gloom. For "life" (so-called) is not found in drinking saloon and theatre: the pleasure-grounds of the world are the haunts of *death.*

"I never thought of going to the theatre," said a young man to Mr. Archibald Brown, in great agony of soul, "until my minister put it into my head by preaching that there was no harm in it. I went, and it has led me from bad to worse, and now I am a miserable backslider; and he is responsible for it." "She that giveth herself to pleasure *is dead* while she liveth." (1 Tim. 5:6). Frau Hedwig Wangel, a leading actress of Germany, after her last appearance in "Faust," exclaimed, "I leave this stage never again to enter the temple of my art, for henceforth I consecrate myself wholly to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." In her farewell letter to her colleagues of the theater—"the theatre which fouled my soul and body"—she wrote: "Goodbye, dear colleagues and friends, friends and colleagues of my shameful vocation. I know that in every heart there is a cry for deliverance from the chains of error and sin; side by side with that, there is a prayer for salvation from judgment and the power of besetting sin, help in sickness and earthly trials, comfort and consolation at the close of life, and an assurance of a glorious resurrec-

rection. *These are only to be found in God's gift of His Son Jesus Christ to the believing soul.* Do not my friends and colleagues share these sentiments? I know they do, and I plead that my example and experience may lead them to seek the better life. My last words as an actress are these: "Commit your soul to the mercy of God, or you will heap condemnation upon yourselves."

Every hour spent in levity is an hour lost to eternity. The Law said, "Thou shalt not"; the gospel says, "If thou lovest Me, thou wilt not": Christ summons us to sacrifice the not unlawful for the incomparable best. Youth has got to meet the same God as the oldest saint, live for the same eternity, glorify the same grace, agonize for the same crown, and be gathered at any moment to the same Lord. Therefore live in God, live for God, live with God. A deeper prayer-life, a more tender wooing of the lost, a grace toward all, more patient, a more powerful mastery of the word of God, a purity in which the Holy Ghost shall delight to dwell—the blameless walk, the lowly mind, the Christ-like love—*whatever assists to these, that indulge in, and that do.*

How remarkable that a daily newspaper (*Daily Telegraph*, April 30, 1908) should utter the truth which ought to be issuing like a trumpet-blast from the lips of the church! "There is an infinitely more serious matter. The things of eternity are not to be dealt with by the methods which tickle the fancy of the moment. All thinking men are alarmed by the appalling frivolity which goes with the increasing luxury of the age. Religion is the only serious and solemn influence we have left. If there are growing myriads who know nothing of its deepening and calming ministrations, or of the power of silence and contemplation to refresh the soul and renew every spiritual and mental faculty, so much the worse for them. But if religion, too, is to be cheapened, bedizened, and degraded, to be turned into a thing of tinsel garments, and tinkling bells, and meretricious enticements, then it will be the churches that will fall, and not mankind that will rise. The offices of divine worship must be stern and tender; they must be troubling, searching and sublime."

Go not far from me, O my Strength,
Whom all my times obey;
Take from me anything thou wilt,
But go not thou away;
And let the storm that does thy work
Deal with me as it may.

On thy compassions I repose
In weakness and distress,
I will not ask for greater ease
Lest I should love thee less.
Oh, 'tis a blessed thing for me
To need thy tenderness!

BIBLE STUDY COURSE

R. H. B.

BEGINNING THE STUDY OF THE PROPHETS.

THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH.

FIRST DAY.—Open your Bible at Isaiah 1 and read verse 1. This is evidently a general heading for the whole book. One fact is told us about Isaiah himself. The times during which he prophesied are dated by the names of the kings who reigned in Judah, four being mentioned. Today read that part of Israel's history in 2 Chronicles, chapters 26-28 (if time permits, through 32.) Note the length and prosperity of Uzziah's reign. Isaiah began not long before Uzziah's death (Isa. 6:1). What was the character of Jotham's reign? Ahaz is one of the most striking examples of faithlessness, Hezekiah of faithfulness.

SECOND DAY.—*"The Great Arraignment."* Isa. 1. Note verse 2. What does Isaiah claim for the prophecy he is pronouncing? Note same in vs. 20, 24. (Consider 2 Pet. 1:21). Concerning whom this prophecy? v. 1. Whom does God call to witness in v. 2? Comp. Ps. 50:4; Jer. 22:29. Does the word of God deserve the attention of all heaven and earth? God's grief is stated in v. 2. In what way was ungrateful Israel more irrational than brute beasts? v. 3. Note what they had done and how they had suffered for it, vs. 4-8. Why? Amos 3:2. What only saved them from the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah? See Gen. 18:6, 26, 32. Will God ever wipe out Israel as He did Sodom? (Jer. 30:11). Why not? (There will always be a faithful Remnant. Rom. 11:5). The section from vs. 10-20 shows that no worship or service or sacrifice is accepted at the hands of those who will not do right. What is the "faithful city" in v. 21? (See v. 1). Will Jehovah always leave Jerusalem in such a condition? Vs. 24-26. Compare Isa. 4:3, 4. What makes it absolutely certain that it will be just that way? v. 2; Jer. 1:12.

THIRD DAY.—*Jerusalem restored through Judgment.* Isa. 2-4. Concerning whom is this prophecy? v. 1. What is meant by the mountain of Jehovah's house? Comp. Micah 3:12 and 4:1. When will this mountain be exalted and honored above every other mountain in the world? Why will it become the center of all the world's interest to which all nations shall make their pilgrimage? vs. 2, 3. What will Jehovah do here for all the nations that resort thither? v. 4. Comp. Isa. 25:6, 7. Has the word and law of God ever gone out from Zion and Jerusalem since this was uttered? Luke 24:47; Acts 2. Has the rest of the prophecy been fulfilled? Look and think carefully as to this. If not, will it be? Why? *The condition of Jacob:* Isa. 2:5-9. This raises before the prophet's eye the vision of *the Day of the Lord.* Vs. 11-21. See what sort of Day that is. Zeph. 1:14-18. Upon what will its terrific force especially strike? What effect? vs. 11, 17-21. Comp. Ps. 46:8-10. What counsel does God give us, seeing that all human power and glory must come to such an end as this? v. 22. Cp. Ps. 146:3; Jer. 17:5-8.

FOURTH DAY.—*Judgment denounced upon Judah and Jerusalem.* Isa. 3. This continues the prophecy of Isa. 2-4. First by what means: God would cut off the national sustenance, the able and mighty statesmen, military and religious leader, and even the helpers of minor rank (vs. 2, 3); and would give the directing of the state into the hands of incompetents. (v. 4). The result is seen in v. 5. Consider this verse as a picture of our times; mutual oppression, of labor by capital, for example, and vice versa; failure of respect and reverence for age, authority, dignity. (Comp. Jude 8, 9). Vs. 6, 7 pictures a national decay and dissolution, so hopeless that no one would care to be king. The reason is stated in vs. 8, 9. But in the midst of all impending judgment the righteous are reassured; vs. 10, 11—two verses good to think on in every time of trouble. With verse 14 compare 1:23; with v. 15, Ps. 14:4. The effeminacy of the daughters of Zion comes in for judgment in vs. 16 to 4:1. What does the Lord think of the vanity and extravagance, not to say indecency, of dress of Christian women?

FIFTH DAY.—*Jerusalem's glorious Restoration.* Isa. 4. This is the last portion of the prophecy begun at chapt. 2:1. 4:1 belongs to the preceding paragraph, as the Revised Version shows. The point is that by the losses of war the number of men would be so diminished that to avoid an unmarried estate (which to the Jewish woman seemed a reproach) seven women would besiege one man, petitioning for even a nominal marriage. The prophecy of the restoration begins with v. 2. Recall 1:24-26. Jerusalem stands distinguished as the city which has a glorious future secured to her by the word of God. V. 2 speaks of a remnant who shall eat the blessings of the land, and to whom *the Branch of Jehovah* shall be precious (Jer. 23:5-8). Jerusalem and all her inhabitants shall be holy (Joel 3:17) when the Lord shall have cleansed her. The "pillar of cloud" witness of Jehovah's presence, has now become a canopy over the city. Jerusalem is yet to be the Lord's glorious resting place. (Is. 11:10; Ps. 132:13, 14.)

SIXTH DAY.—*The Song of the Vineyard.* Isa. 5. This chapter forms a complete prophecy. The parable of the vineyard, vs. 1-7, needs no comment. It is in proportion to our advantages that God holds reckoning with us. How severe His judgment on fruitlessness! (John 15:1, 2; Luke 13:6, 9; Matt. 21:18-22; Heb. 6:7, 8). Vs. 5, 6 mark the decreed desolation of Israel. Comp. Ps. 80. *Six Woes*, vs. 8-30. (1) Land-greed. Particularly condemnable in Israel, vs. 8-10 (Lev. 25:23-28). (2) Upon the revellers and profligates—practical (if not avowed) infidels, vs. 11-17; Amos 6:5, 6. Cp. v. 12 with Ps. 28:5. Vs. 13, 14 shows how the thoughtless throng go down to Sheol. V. 17 a view of the desolated land. (3) Defiant evildoers, vs. 18, 19. They dare God to fulfil His threats. Compare Amos 5:18-20. (4) Perverters of truth, who try to confuse and obliterate the distinction between good and evil, v. 20. (5) The self-conceited scholars, philosophers, counsellors, v. 21. (6) The drunken judges, vs. 22,

23. Verses 24-30 declares the retribution upon all these. Note last sentence of v. 25: we shall see it recur five times. The prophet sees a great army coming swiftly from afar to execute God's sentence upon the guilty people, fulfilled in Assyria, Babylon, Rome. V. 30 uses a figure not uncommon to describe vast multitudes in commotion; comp. 17:12.

SEVENTH DAY.—*Isaiah's Call and Commission.* Isa. 6. Some time after Isaiah's actual ministry as prophet had begun, for see 1:1. A king had died; but Isaiah now has the vision of *the King* (v. 5). He sees the King's holiness and stands confounded. (Comp. Job 42:5, 6). The symbolic action of vs. 6, 7 portrays atonement and cleansing. (Cp. Ps. 51:2, 7). Then (and not until then) he is able to offer himself to God for service. Is it not so today? True service follows after conviction and cleansing. (Tit. 2:14). Let all who think to do acceptable works before being cleansed take note of this. The mission of Isaiah is to harden rather than to save, vs. 9, 10. (Comp. 2 Cor. 2:15, 16). The prophet in dismay asks how long. The answer is "Until the Nation is wholly destroyed" (for so is the doom)—all except that remnant (cp. 1:9). That is the stock (the stump) that remains after the tree is felled. On the symbolism of the stump consult Dan. 4:15, 26; comp. also Job 14:7-9. This passage (vs. 9, 10) is quoted three times in the New Testament, each time in connection with an important crisis. (Matt. 13:14, 15 and parallels; John 12:39-41; Acts 28:26-28). Note how in John 12:41 it is declared that it was the Lord Jesus Christ's glory Isaiah saw on this occasion. Isaiah never got over the vision of God's awful holiness. Blessed the preacher who starts out with a sound conception of God's terrible holiness and mercy. This only is the secret of earnestness and faithfulness and effectiveness.

EIGHTH DAY.—*The "Book of Immanuel."* Isa. 7-12. This is a new section—a continuous and connected strain of prophecy, extending over six chapters. Today's lesson is chapt. 7. Read 2 Chron. 28:1-7, 19 for a sketch of the times. The present occasion of distress is stated in Isa. 7:2. Isaiah is sent with a message from Jehovah to meet Ahaz at a designated place. The message: (1) A command: "Take heed, be quiet, fear not, neither let thy heart faint." Cp. v. 2. (2) An assurance from Jehovah: The purpose of the enemies "shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass." (3) A warning: "If ye shall not believe, surely ye shall not be established." (4) The offer of a sign from God to confirm Isaiah's message. This latter Ahaz refused under hypocritical pretense, lest by accepting he might be under obligation to Jehovah. Then Jehovah gives a sign: v. 14, one of the important prophecies of Christ; see Matt. 1:23. Note that the sign is not to Ahaz personally but to "you" (plural), that is, the "house of David." A virgin should conceive and bear a son, and call His name "God-With-Us." Whatever near and typical and preliminary fulfillment this passage may have had in that generation (and it may have had some imperfect accomplishment then) it becomes evident that the prophecy reaches much further, unto a

perfect and glorious fulfillment. For the child Immanuel of 7:14 is certainly the child of 9:6, 7, and therefore also the "shoot" and "branch" of Jesse's stock in 11:1-5. This could be none other than the promised Messiah. "Butter and honey"—that is wilderness food (cp. v. 22) for the land should be desolate. The two kings of v. 16 are Rezin and Pekah. Soon after (in Hezekiah's days, 2 Kings 17) the king of Assyria devastated those two countries. The Messiah also was reared some six centuries later in that territory, which even then had never regained its glory. With v. 17 consider Ahaz' alliance, 2 Chron. 28:20, 21. The rest of the chapter describes the resulting desolation.

NINTH DAY.—*The "Book of Immanuel"* continued. Isa. 8. "Maher-shalal-hash-baz" may be the typical fulfillment of 7:14; but only if the "prophetess" of v. 3 was not "Shear-jashub's" mother (7:3); else she could not have been called a "virgin" even in the accommodated sense that this was her first-born. V. 4. The desolation came soon (v. 4) though not fully accomplished till some years later. Vs. 5-8 is against *Israel*, i. e., the northern, the ten-tribe kingdom, who had gone into alliance with Rezin of Syria, against Judah (7:1, 2). Immanuel mentioned again in v. 8: the land is *His* land. The defeat of Jerusalem's enemies in the nearer emergency—and, after the prophetic manner, Jerusalem's deliverance in her last and greatest extremity yet future—foreseen in vs. 9-22. The nations muster and gather and roar against her only to be broken to pieces (cp. Dan. 2:35; Ps. 83:13). This is one of the most frequent prophetic pictures. Read Joel 3:9-17; Zech. 14:1-9; Isa. 17:12-14; 29:1-8. On v. 10 see Ps. 2; Ps. 33:10, 11; Prov. 21:30. Here is God's counsel for times of panic, vs. 11-15; cp. 7:4 and 1 Pet. 3:14, 15. Christians may need this again ere long. The "they" of v. 19 are "this people," the panicky unbelievers of vs. 11, 12; here they turn to "Spiritualism" and consulting with demons for comfort; much of that going on today. Their end is described in vs. 21, 22, God's word is enough for God's true people: they will not resort to fortune tellers and soothsayers and "mediums."

TENTH DAY.—*The "Book of Immanuel,"* continued. Isa. 9 to 10:4. No gloom to the sort of people spoken to in vs. 12, 13. For them is light. A preliminary fulfillment of vs. 1, 2 in Matt. 4:15, 16. With v. 3 compare Jer. 30:18, 19. In the days of Jerusalem's greatest extremity she will be completely and forever freed from the stranger's dominion. Jer. 30:8; cp. Luke 21:24. Thenceforth no more war or conflict for her. This blessed outcome due to the Divine child that shall be born to reign on David's throne. V. 8 begins a new strain: judgment upon "Ephraim"—the northern kingdom. Note refrain in vs. 12, 17, 21 and 10:4. Cp. 5:25. V. 13 shows that the true design of God's chastening is. With v. 16 cp. Matt. 15:14. V. 18 shows that sin consumes men without respect of persons. In 10:1-4 another Woe, which added to the six of chapter 5 makes a seventh; on wicked legislators who make laws to the detriment of the poor and helpless. "What will ye do in the day of visitation?"

ON FOREIGN FIELDS.

MISSIONARY NOTES.

DON CARLOS JANES.

"There are 18,000,000 South American Indians living as they lived before the Christian Church knew that America existed." We could do something for them. ** "There are many ways by which help may be given to the medical mission work, not the least of which is the gift of medicines."

Sister Dr. Armstrong-Hopkins, of India, could use funds for the purchase of drugs needed in her work, and Miss Nellie Straiton, 1030 So. Lake street, Fort Worth, Texas (or the writer), will readily forward the money. ** Sister Lillie Cypert sailed from Vancouver October 5 and arrived in Japan on the 25th of the month. "I am so grateful to have Miss Andrews here," she writes. "I don't see how I could get along without her."

There is a church in West Africa that is now supporting over 200 workers from its own membership. On one Sunday its offerings were \$200.00 and in a year they gave \$5,000.00. ** Brother and Sister Martin are at Satara, in India. Will you help either in his personal support or be one of five to give a dollar a month for a native helper? Possibly your home congregation would give the whole \$5.00. Will you see about this?

A missionary reports the receipts of a gift of \$2.50 with which a hypodermic syringe was bought. Over 700 people were inoculated with that instrument against bubonic plague and not one of them died of the plague. Have you a gift for drugs, native helpers, free literature, or personal support of a missionary? Why? ** Bro. McCaleb reports 1,169 killed by a great storm in Japan the last of September. ** The Foreign Christian Missionary Society received \$9,691.79 for the month of October. We don't believe there should be any missionary societies except the Church of God. Are you a member of that Church? Are you meeting your missionary obligations to the satisfaction of the Head of the Church?

Bro. McHenry still has a deficit. If you feel able to give something for removing this deficit, please send at once. ** Some good young people are intending to go to the mission field. Is there some one to volunteer for South Africa? And another for Japan? ** Our mission work is greatly in need of friends, teacher friends. It needs friends who will not only give money and prayers, but will also instruct the churches so they will do more. And *they will do more when they are taught more*. There is an obligation upon the teachers of the Church. ** Bro. Armstrong-Hopkins whose physical strength is not great could use a helper. What church will respond promptly with the \$5.00 a month?

Buechel, Ky.

SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JANUARY.

Lesson 2.

January 13, 1918.

JESUS BEGINS HIS WORK.

Golden Text: "Repent ye and believe in the gospel." Mark 1:15.

Lesson Text:* Mark 1:12-20. Read Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13.

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 Siomn and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishers. 17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye 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 their nets. 20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after him.

Verse 12. Under whose impulse did Jesus go into the wilderness? Was the temptation one of His own seeking, or was it ordered for Him of God? Recall what had happened just before this. Did Satan leave Him alone because God had acknowledged Him? How do we become sons? Gal. 3:26, 27. When do we receive the Spirit? Gal. 4:6; Acts 2:38. Does Satan leave us in peace after that? But what has God promised? 1 Cor. 10:13.

Verse 13. Was this the only temptation, or only the last great effort of a long season of temptation? (On the three temptations recorded by Matthew and Luke, see below). Was this the last time the devil undertook to tempt him? Luke 4:13.

Verses 14, 15. See from what time and place Peter dates the beginning of the gospel: Acts 10:37, 38. What was this "gospel of God" Jesus preached? Who had preached the selfsame message before? Matt. 3:1, 2. Why does Jesus take up John's message now? Is this gospel identical with that preached on Pentecost and after? See 1 Cor 15:1-4; read Acts 2:22-43.

Vers. 16, 17. See how elsewhere God took busy men from their daily work: 1 Kings 19:19-21; Amos 7:14, 15; Ps. 78:70, 71. Who only can make us true fishers of men? On what condition only will He do it? What does "coming after" Jesus involve? Matt. 16:24.

Verses 18-20. Did they hesitate to obey Jesus' call? Comp. Matt. 9:9. What indication that Zebedee and his sons were well-to-do? What recompense did the Lord promise for earthly sacrifice? Matt. 19:27-29.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.

Jesus did not seek the temptation. What was Joseph doing when his test came? Gen. 39:11, 12. When we unnecessarily expose ourselves to temptation, are we not already defeated? If we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," and then (as much as in us lies) watch to avoid it is not a victory beforehand, and are we not the better prepared to meet the unavoidable tests? "Keep thyself from opportunity and God will keep thee from sin," says man's proverb. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation," says the word of the Lord.

THE TEMPTATION AS GIVEN IN MATTHEW.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered. 3 And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5 Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and, On their hands they shall bear thee up, Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God. 8. Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him. (Matt. 4:1-11).

NOTES ON LESSON 2.

Jesus is the second Adam. Compare His temptation with that of Adam and Eve. (Gen. 3). Which was severer?

Did Jesus meet these temptations with miraculous power, or simply as a man?

With what weapon did Jesus meet Satan's assaults?

Can the devil quote Scripture to his purpose? Did Jesus deny or repudiate the Scripture the devil had quoted?

With verses 8 and 9 compare this from Luke: "And the devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them; for it hath been delivered unto me; and whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine." Luke 4:6, 7). Did Jesus accept it? Another is coming (very soon perhaps) who will not refuse this offer. Rev. 13:1-7. When will Jesus assert His power and authority? Rev. 11:15; Dan. 7:23-27. Who has it now? John 14:30; 1 Cor. 4:4. Do you wonder at the conditions today?

SOME SCRIPTURES REFERRED TO ABOVE.

How we become sons: Gal. 3:26, 27. "For ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."

When we receive the Spirit: Acts 2:38. "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Gal. 4:6. "And because ye are the sons God sent forth the Spirit into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

God controls our temptations: 1 Cor. 10:13. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear; but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it."

The Fundamental Facts of the Gospel: 1 Cor. 15:1-4. "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures."

THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JANUARY.

Lesson 3.

January 20, 1918.

JESUS AT WORK.

Golden Text: "We must work the works of him that sent me while it is day." John 9:4.

Lesson Text: Mark 1:21-24. (Read Luke 4:16-44).

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

very busy one? Were there many no time to do? Mark 3:20; 6:31. Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12.

Verse 21. In what respect was Capernaum highly favored? Matt. 4:13-16; 9:1. Did this light become blessing or judgment to this city? Matt. 11:23. What was Jesus' custom in his home town? Luke 4:16.

Verse 22. Why astonishment? Cp. Matt. 7:28. What was the defect of the scribes' teaching? Mark 7:1-9. How did Jesus teach? John 12:49, 50. How ought God's servants to teach? 2 Tim. 4:1, 2; Tit. 2:12; 1 Pet. 4:11. Verses 23, 24. What were these "unclean spirits?" Matt. 8:16. To whose Kingdom do they belong? Matt. 12:25-29. Did the demons know Jesus? What were they afraid of? Matt. 8:29. What is their final destiny? Matt. 25:41. What did this demon call Jesus? Compare this with Acts 2:27, and James 2:19.

Verses 25, 26. Did Jesus accept the testimony of these spirits? V. 34; Luke 4:41. Did the apostles accept that kind of endorsement? Acts 16:16-18. What compelled the demon to depart?

Verses 27, 28. What caused the amazement? Had they ever seen such a manifestation of power? Comp. Matt. 8:27.

Verses 29-31. How did Jesus show his power over disease? How was Jesus' help procured in this case? Is it a good thing to tell Jesus of our friends who in any way need help? Are we fit to minister unto the Lord until we are freed from the fever of passion and sin?

Verses 32-34. Why did the people of Capernaum go to all this trouble? Was it worth the while and the effort? Is it worth our time and energy to bring people to Jesus for spiritual help? (Cp. John 1:41, 42). What difference do you see between the kind of healings Jesus performed and the alleged miracles of healing in our days? Was this day (vs. 21-32) a such days? What did he often have

JESUS' WORK.

The principle on which a man works, and the motive that impels him are as important (and more so) as the work itself. As to Jesus' work note this:

1. It was all a work of love. Had it not been what would it have been worth? (1 Cor. 13:1-3). He was the One Israelite who loved God with all His heart, mind, soul, and strength. It was His life's absorbing passion, (His meat and His drink), to do the will of the Father and to accomplish His work. John 4:34

2. Jesus did exactly what the Father wanted Him to do, and nothing else. At the close of His ministry He said to God, "I have glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do." John 17:4. There are many today who enter every worldly scheme for betterment and think that anything that looks like "doing good" is doing God's work. Not so. The Christian has a specific work to do which the world cannot perform. (Matt. 28:18-20). Mere "charity" the world can and does do. Christians must take heed to do their good work in Jesus' name, so that God may be glorified in the church and in Christ Jesus. (Col. 3:17; Eph. 3:21). All our work must be of the sort described in Phil. 1:11 (See John 15:1-14), if it is to count for eternity.

THE REST OF THIS CHAPTER, (Mark 1.)

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. 36 And Simon and they that were with him followed after him 37 and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee. 38 And he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth. 39 And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out demons. 40 And there cometh to him a leper, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 41 And being moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou made clean. 42 And straightway the leprosy departed from him, and he was made clean. 43 And he strictly charged him, and straightway sent him out, 44 and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing the things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. 45 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

NOTE THAT:

Jesus is not too busy or too tired to pray. He cannot get along or do His work without this communion with His Father. Can we? Are we attempting to?

Jesus must go on in order to finish His work. (v. 38. See John 9:4). Such verses as 39 cover a vast amount of labor.

The leper came to Jesus with the kind of faith the Lord delights to find. One of the great things we need to learn is that Christ can. Rom. 4:21; Eph. 3:20. Why could not this leper keep still? He must have had something tremendous to tell. Why do some Christians keep so still? Can it be that there is nothing much to tell in their case?

SOME SCRIPTURES REFERRED TO ABOVE.

How Capernaum was favored. To her a great Light sprang up. Matt. 4:13, 14, 16. "And leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt in Capernaum. . . . that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, The people that sat in darkness saw a great light." Capernaum was called Jesus' own city. (Matt. 9:1; Compare with Mark 2:1, etc.) What did Capernaum do with her light? Matt. 11:23.

FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF JANUARY.

Lesson 4.

January 27, 1918.

JESUS FORGIVING SIN.

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

Lesson Text: Mark 2:1-12. Read Luke 15:11-24; Ps. 32.

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; inasmuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

Verse 1. When had He been in Capernaum before? Mark 1:21. Where had He been in the meanwhile? 1:38, 39.

Verse 2. What use did Jesus make of this opportunity? Whose word did He speak? Whose glory therefore did He seek? Think carefully on John 16:14 and 7:18.

Verses 3, 4. How was Jesus' sermon interrupted? Did Jesus seem to be impatient and irritated because of the interruption? Why was He not?

Verse 5. How could Jesus see their faith? How is faith always seen and known? Rom. 1:5; see Heb. 11:14, 5, 7, 8, etc. On what ground did Jesus forgive this man's sins? Acts 10:43. Was it the man's own faith, or the faith of the four who carried him? Is it not most likely that the sick man's faith stirred and kindled that of his four carriers? When Jesus pronounced him forgiven, was he forgiven?

Verses 6, 7. Not knowing who Jesus was, was their reasoning wrong? But who was Jesus? (John 3:35).

Verse 9. Which would be easier for an impostor to say? If an impostor should say, "Thy sins are forgiven"—would the people have any way of testing or verifying it? But if he should say "Rise up and walk," to an invalid—could the people tell whether there was power in that word or not?

Verses 10, 11. What test then did Jesus give to the people? For what purpose did He make the palsied man whole? Did Jesus heal just to be healing, or did He have a deeper purpose? (John 5:36). Which is more important and necessary—the healing

of the body, or to produce faith in Jesus? (John 20:30, 31).

Verse 12. What effect did this sign have on the onlookers? Whom did they glorify for it? (Matt. 9:8). How are we to do all our good work? Matt. 5:16; Eph. 3:21.

ADDITIONAL LESSON: Mark 2:13-23.

13. And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. 14 And as he passed by, he saw

Levi the son of Alphæus sitting at the place of toll, and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. 15 And it came to pass, that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. 16 And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? 17 And when Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. 18 And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting: and they come and say unto him, Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? 19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then will they fast in that day. 21 No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth on an old garment: else that which should fill it up taketh from it, the new from the old, and a worse rent is made. 22 And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins; else the wine will burst the skins, and the wine perisheth, and the skins: but they put new wine into fresh wine-skins.

WHICH IS EASIER?

The doubters who had heard Jesus say, "Thy sins are forgiven," might have said: "That is easy to say: any man can say that, and nobody would be the wiser. How do we know that those sins were actually forgiven?" But to have said to the sick of the palsy, Rise up and walk, would have seemed like a much weightier matter to them. But it was much easier for Jesus to say the latter. To His Divine power such an act as healing a palsied man was a little thing. But to say, "Thy sins are forgiven"—that involved the cross for Jesus. Had He not taken our sins upon Himself and borne them on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24) He could never have forgiven. In Him "we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses." Eph. 1:7.

NOTES ON MARK 1:13-22.

How many apostles has Jesus by now? (v. 14).

On what principle and for what purpose did Jesus associate with sinners? (v. 17). Who else did this? 1 Cor. 9:20-22.

When was the bridegroom taken away? (v. 20) Have Jesus' followers had occasion to fast since?

Was Jesus intending to patch up and reform the old worn out religion of the scribes? Was He trying to commit the powerful new wine of His teaching into the old, brittle wineskin of Jewish forms and ritual?

SOME SCRIPTURES REFERRED TO ABOVE.

How the Spirit glorifies Jesus: John 16:14. "He shall glorify me; for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you." Who glorifies himself? John 7:18—"He that speaketh from himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him the same is true. . . ." Jesus used the opportunity open to Him at that large gathering to glorify His Father by speaking the Father's word faithfully.

FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF FEBRUARY.

Lesson 5.

February 5, 1918.

JESUS LORD OF THE SABBATH.

Golden Text: "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Mark 2:28.

Lesson Text: Mark 2:23-3:5. Read Matt. 12:1-8.

The Scripture Text used in these lessons is the American Standard Revised Version, Copyright, Nelson & Sons.

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 lawful? 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 it 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. 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 saith unto the man that had his hand withered, Stand forth. And he saith 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 saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored.

Chapter 3, Verses 1, 2. What was Jesus' custom? Luke 4:16. What were the Pharisees doing again? Cp. Luke 14:1. What was their object in so watching him?

Verses 3, 4. Look over the whole account and see whether anything that Jesus did, or told the man to do, could be called "Sabbath-breaking." What kind of work was always in order on the Sabbath? (Matt. 12:11, 12; John 5:17). Why did they keep still? Cp. Matt. 21:24-27.

Verse 5. Does Love ever have anger? Why was Jesus angry? What other emotion filled His heart and why? Cp. Eph. 4:30. What caution does God give us respecting anger? Eph. 4:26-31. Why? Jas. 1:19, 20. How

Verse 23. Did the disciples have a right to eat grain out of other men's fields? Deut. 23:25. Matthew 12:1 tells us why they did it. Think on that. **Verse 24.** Why did the Pharisees note this so quickly? (See Isa. 29:20, 21). What did they think was unlawful?

Verse 25. Could Jesus have answered them scathingly, and exposed their hypocrisy with sharp words? Why did He not? To what Old Testament incident does He refer them? Read the account. 1 Sam. 21:1-6.

Verse 26. Was David's deed "lawful?" Had the Pharisees ever dared to condemn David (the Lord's anointed king) for the illegality of his action? If then in that case the dignity of David's person and position put David beyond their criticism, was not the Son of God due a like respect? (John 8:49). But after all was the action of His disciples really wrong and unlawful? On what other ground does Jesus defend the action of His disciples even if it had been a case of Sabbath-breaking? See Matt. 12:5, 6.

Verse 27. Was the Sabbath-law intended to bring misery and distress to men, or was it designed for their benefit? Cp. Matt. 12:7.

Verse 28. Has the Son of man jurisdiction over the Sabbath also, to regulate it or do with it as He pleased? What is the force of the expression, "even of the Sabbath?" (A. V., "also of the Sabbath.") Is He Lord of every other day and thing likewise?

could Jesus ask a man to stretch forth a paralyzed hand? When Jesus commands anything does His power go with the command, to enable us to fulfill it? Cp. Mat. 14:29.

NOTES ON LESSON 5.

THEY WERE HUNGRY.

Matthew 12:1-8 should be studied alongside of this lesson. The disciples who walked with Jesus got hungry once in awhile. The Lord Himself surely also. Is it a great thing if His faithful servants today should sometimes feel the pinch? Nevertheless they never really lacked anything. (Luke 22:35). God gave them all they needed as they needed it. They had no right to be anxious. (Matt. 6:25-34). Neither have we. (Phil. 4:6, 7). "No good thing"—no thing that is really good for us at any time—"will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Ps. 84:11.

MERCY, NOT SACRIFICE.

God had not made the Sabbath-law to add to the burden and the sufferings of human beings, but (as in all His ordinances) to alleviate their lot and bless them. In the exceptions He had made on behalf of even suffering beasts, God showed that it was not the misery of either beast or man that He desired. "I have desired mercy and not sacrifice." When sacrifice means needless distress, God prefers mercy.

THE SABBATH CEREMONIAL.

The distinction is sometimes made between "moral" and "ceremonial" commandments: the "moral" requirements being those which are in themselves right, and which can never be abrogated; the "ceremonial" on the other hand, relating to forms and outward arbitrary commands and observances as for example animal-sacrifices, washings, regulations of clean and unclean meats, etc., which can be abolished in the change of dispensations. Such a distinction of course exists. But we are told further that the Ten Commandments constitute the unalterable moral law; while all the rest of the Old Covenant requirements are "ceremonial;" and that the latter passed away, but the Ten Commandments remain forever. This is not true. For on the one hand the rest of the old Law contained many precepts which would have to be classed as "moral," although not found in the Ten Commandments. (See, for example, in Exod. 21-23; Lev. 18-22). On the other hand the Sabbath law found among the Ten is clearly ceremonial. A "moral requirement" may, in a new dispensation, be enforced upon a different ground, and on new authority, but could never be set aside at any time, not even for a single instance. It would not be possible, for example, that in any dispensation, or in any special case, or at any time God could authorize lying. Only a ceremonial requirement can be set aside. Now the Sabbath-commandment was set aside.

1. The priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless. Matt. 12:5. If such an exception could be made because of the Temple and the Temple-service, Jesus reasons, then His own august presence can much more authorize a similar setting aside of Sabbath regulation.

2. For the sake of mercy, in the case of suffering beasts (and, of course, much more in the case of needy and suffering men) the Sabbath-law can, yea, ought to be, set aside, and labor of relief be performed. (Matt. 12:11, 12).

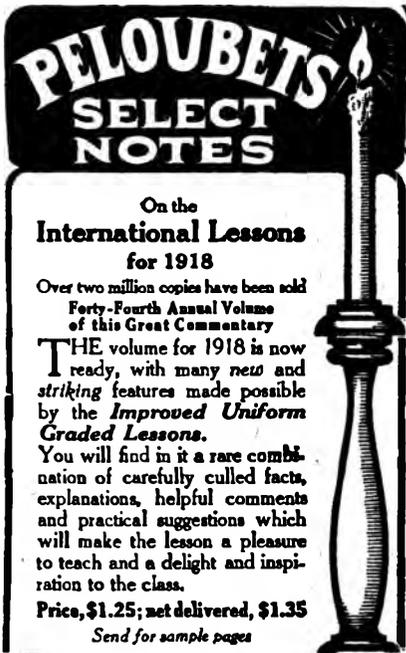
Therefore the Son of man, being Lord even of the Sabbath, could and did set it aside when and as He pleased. He did finally take it entirely out of the way, nailing it to His cross; and never from Pentecost on do we find the requirement of the Sabbath imposed upon Christians, nor a (distinctively) Christian assembly taking place on the Sabbath. The only time Paul in all his fourteen epistles mentions the Sabbath is when he says in the Holy Spirit; "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or or a sabbath day," that is, any sort of sabbath-day required under the Old Dispensation. Col. 2:14-17. Of the false teachers who tried to bind the Law upon Christians, the New Testament speaks very harshly, Acts 15:24; Gal. 5:12. The day mentioned as the day of Christian assembly is the first day of the week. Acts 20:7.

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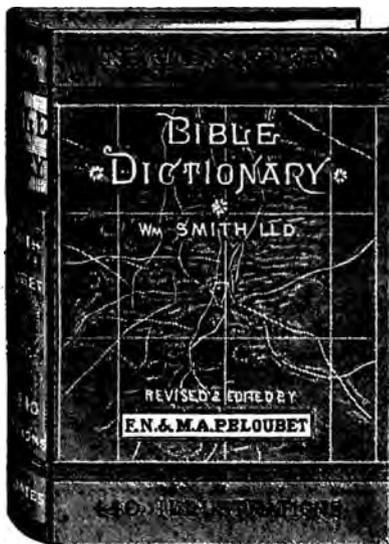
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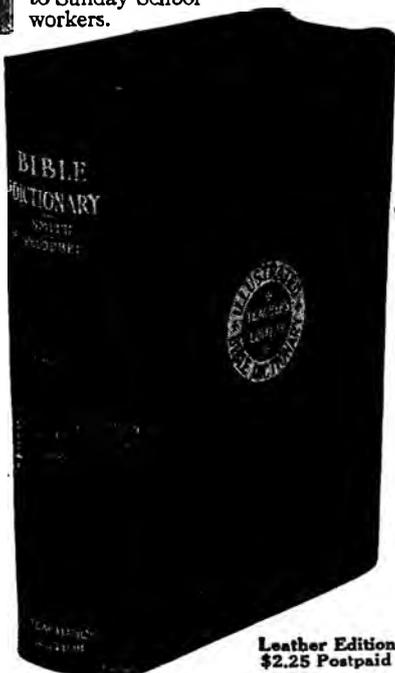
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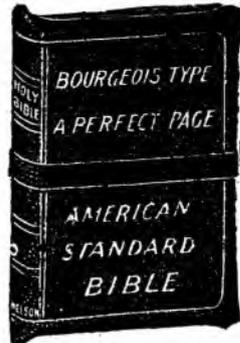
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18 ⁶And it came to pass after

17. 31. 30
 ver. 32, 47;
 Dt. 32. 4;
 37; 18. 2.
 2; Ps. 31.
 3; 71. 3
 Ps. 91. 2;
 151. 2
 Gen. 15. 1;
 Dt. 33. 29
 Dt. 33. 17;
 Lk. 1. 69
 Ps. 9. 9; 14.
 6; 40. 7; 11;
 71. 7; Jer.
 16. 19
 Ps. 43. 1;
 60. 4
 Ps. 93. 4;
 Jon. 2. 9
 Pa. 60. 14,
 15
 Ps. 110. 3
 Pa. 110. 4;



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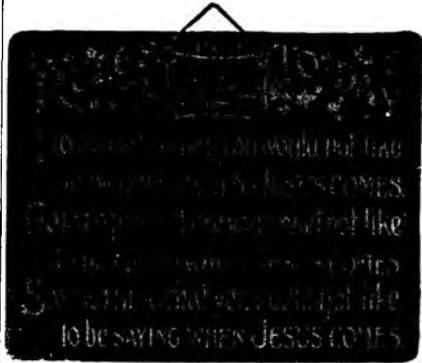
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