

BIBLE CHRISTIANITY

"THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET"

VOLUME I—NUMBER 2.

DALHOUSIE, N. B.

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War And Rumors Of War

It is heartbreaking to think that many nations are again on the verge of war. Many of the leading statesmen of the world are definite in their belief that war is inevitable. From the actions of nations this seems to be the truth. Nations are now frantically and hastily increasing their armaments. Before the debt of the last war is paid they are incurring a debt for the next war. Battleships, airplanes, tanks, guns, ammunition are in the process of being made. It is no wonder that with a touch of fear we glance at the daily papers dreading to see the announcement of war among other nations.

Can it be that the cruelties of the last world war are forgotten? The wounded, the scarred, the maimed, the blind, the gassed, the crazed, the demoralized, and the heart broken are still with us. Have the leaders of nations forgotten such?

The present war is an evidence that the League of Nations is not a god that can prevent wars. Yet there are those who have endowed it with the powers of God and have urged its worship. Without God the League of Nations is nothing. It becomes another tower of Babel. It is time for men and nations to turn to the true and living God. It is time to say with the Psalmist, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of Lord our God."

THE WAY OF PEACE

Many and devious are the ways which are suggested to bring about peace in the world. Some feel that the League of Nations rightly supported will bring about permanent peace. Others suggest disarmament. While others suggest increased armaments. Some suggest that all become pacifists and refuse to bear arms. The catch in that is that everyone will not enlist in the army of pacifists. And no doubt when the next war comes many pacifists will forget their vows of pacifism. Even now some of them would be willing to bear arms for the sake of enforcing the sanctions which the League of Nations permit. Others again suggest that we maintain a large army and navy. These things, they say, will maintain peace.

Strange to say the way to peace which God has proclaimed is forgotten by both church and state. It is forgotten, perhaps, because it is so simple. The Way to peace is through the proclamation of salvation through

faith in the crucified Saviour. It is only faith in the crucified Saviour that is able to change the heart of man. And it is useless to speak of peace unless the hearts of men are changed.

That truth the angels proclaimed at the birth of Christ. They sang, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth Peace, Good Will Toward Men" But before they sang of peace on earth an angel made this proclamation. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The message of Salvation through faith in Christ comes before the message of peace on earth.

Many people wonder why the angels' song has not been fulfilled. The reason is obvious. The world is ignorant to a great extent of salvation through faith in Christ. The church is concerned too much with secondary matters and has forgotten to emphasize the important matter. It is doing a lot of talking about good will and peace but the central message of Christ and Him crucified is forgotten.

If all preachers every where would say with Paul, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" we would soon behold a changed world. It is only by that proclamation that men become born again. It is only by that proclamation that men are changed. It is only by that proclamation that peace will come upon earth. It is THE WAY to peace.

Protestantism Bankrupt?

The religious world was rather shocked when a group of protestant episcopal clergymen and laymen issued the statement, "Protestantism, once the religion of by far the greater part of the American people, is bankrupt ethically, culturally, morally and religiously." For that reason they advocated the union of their church with that of the Roman Catholics.

This report on the part of that group brought on various reactions. A few agreed with them but a great many churches and preachers were sharp in their denial that Protestantism is bankrupt and that the remedy for such a situation was a return to the Roman Catholic Church.

We are, however, inclined to think that there is some truth in the statement that Protestantism is bankrupt ethically, culturally, morally and religiously. But the type of Protestantism that is in such a deplorable condition is not the Protestantism of the Reformers like Luther, Calvin, and John Knox. It is rather the Protestantism which goes by the

name of "Liberalism" or "Modernism". It is the Protestantism that has sought water in the broken cisterns of worldly wisdom rather than the Protestantism that has found living water in the well of Scripture.

We know the fact that the Protestantism of our Fathers brought forth men who maintained the ethics of Christ in their business. They could not be corrupted. Their culture, brought about by Christian discipline, would put the culture of the present world to shame. Morally they were among the best in the history of the world. Their religion was manifested by their communion with God, their knowledge of the Scriptures, and the altars in their homes.

The Protestantism that brought forth the best type of men and the greatest saints was that Protestantism which is built upon the Bible. It was the Protestantism that was not ashamed of the blood of Christ that brought forth men and women who could not be corrupted by the world and its temptations.

When the Protestant Church ceases to build its faith and its conduct on the Bible it will become bankrupt. In so far as it has left the doctrine and teachings of the Scriptures it is bankrupt now.

It is time indeed for Protestants to wake up. It is time to realize that it is selling its birthright for a mess of pottage. It is time to realize that all that goes by the name of Protestantism is not the Protestantism of the Reformers. Wolves have crept in and have dressed themselves in the garbs of Protestantism and are destroying the faith and morals of the people.

The Lost Bible

In the December issue of the Good Housekeeping magazine there is an interesting article on the Bible by Dr. Frederick K. Stamm. The title of the article is "The Lost Bible". In a very clear and convincing manner he discloses that the Bible is practically lost to the majority of the people in America. It is lost in the sense that it is unknown. He states, "The majority of Christians are lukewarm to the Bible, and those who do not claim Christianity for themselves do not read the Bible at all. The world is so indifferent to it that even its enemies do not bother to criticize it. Only a few abuse it. It is just ignored. Even theological students lay it aside for other books. A recent graduate of a prominent theological seminary told me that it is not unusual to find no Bible in a student's room."

MAN THE AUTHORITY

Unfortunately Dr. Stamm is one of the many ministers that does not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. He accepts only that

part of the Bible which appeals to his judgment and his experience. In other words he is of a higher authority than the Scriptures. He does not like much of what the Bible reveals of God. He would eliminate much of the Bible.

WHY PEOPLE IGNORE BIBLE

Now herein we have the cause why the Bible is lost today. There is a familiar proverb in the land today, "You can't have your cake and eat it too." In the same manner you can't destroy the Bible and have it too. The reason why the past generations read the Bible is because they felt it to be the very Word of God. They felt that they could trust their eternal welfare to its teachings. The reason why the Bible is not being read today is because preachers have caused people to distrust the Bible. They constantly tell people that it is filled with legends and that it gives an inferior revelation of God. The natural consequence is that people will discontinue reading it. You can't destroy the Bible for the people and have them read it too.

The amazing thing about such liberal preachers is that they still keep the Bible upon the pulpit. Surely if the Bible is as false and misleading as they state it to be, the first thing they should do is to sweep it off the pulpit. And then the next thing to do would be to place on the pulpit books of science and philosophy which they feel more trustworthy. But somehow they haven't the courage of their convictions.

NOT THE ATTITUDE OF CHRIST

This article of Dr. Stamm's should put Bible believing Christians on their guard. It is dangerous and represents the attitude of a great many preachers. But, praise God, it was not the attitude of Christ. He believed the Scriptures and expounded it in His teachings. And more than that He fulfilled it. Certainly the servants should not be greater than their Lord.

Christianity Or Evolution

Nova Scotia was much in the spotlight during last winter when men and women throughout all Canada were hearing and talking about the evolution in the text-books of the schools. The matter found its way into some of the presses of the U.S.A. It did not take long for an army to come out on either side, and very soon the text-books became the background and the truth or untruth of evolution was in the foreground. The supporters of evolution did not dare to brand Christianity as UNTRUE, but merely contented themselves to defend evolution, heaping invective

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Retrospect and Prospect

Eccles. 2:11; Phil. 4:13

A NEW YEAR'S SERMON

Rev. Claude E. Hayward

Our Lord told us that the children of this world are wise in their generation. It cannot be doubted that should the same care be put upon spiritual as upon temporal things, then few would be lost. The year that has gone has proved the truth of this once more. The coming of the New Year furnishes us with an excellent opportunity to take stock of our spiritual assets, and to determine how we have used them in the year just concluded. Then we can best look to the present; otherwise our future will be very much like our past.

In this retrospect and prospect, this look behind and ahead, we are not alone. Many are led at this season of the year to do likewise. Man has always, on occasion, done this. In a similar exercise the Preacher was struck with the futility of life, as sometimes all are, for his words strike a responsive chord in our hearts when he says: "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." How little we have employed those talents which God gave us to use! What a great debt of gratitude we owe to Him! How much He has done for us! Every day in those fifty-two weeks we had opportunity to serve Him, to speak for Him. If our bliss in heaven is measured by the work we have done for Him, then how little the amount of it will be! How meagre a supply some of us will have! The Sahara drinks greedily of the rain, but even that great desert has some green and fruitful places to show for the blessing. Have we? We must confess that we are less than unprofitable servants, for we have not done even that which was our duty to do. Love so amazing, so divine, demands our soul, our life, our all. Yet we have given Him very little of our time or ourselves. I think, in this retrospect, we are inclined to agree with the Preacher. No matter what our sphere of life, the work which our hands have wrought and the labour which we have laboured to do are as nothing—they are but vanity compared to the work which those other hands have wrought and the labour which that Blessed One laboured to do for us. From what great depths those hands have lifted us! How strong they are! Though nailed to the Cross, yet they could snatch a dying thief from the very brink of destruction and raise him to Paradise. Those are the hands in whose might we glory. There is the labour in which we boast. The passing years serve but to weaken our hands and impair our strength. But he is the same yesterday, today and forever. Behold, His hand is not shortened that it cannot save. One more year has shown what almost two millenniums have demonstrated: Jesus Christ is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. In looking back we find nothing in ourselves of which to glory.

Rather do we find many causes for humble and hearty repentance. If there is any boasting it is all of Christ, and God forbid that we should glory save in His Cross. So far as anything that we have done is concerned, it is all vanity and vexation of spirit, and there is no profit in it. But insofar as the Lord Jesus Christ lived in us and worked through us, then we accomplished something abiding; for in Christ Jesus God has created us unto good works.

What is the prospect? Few responsible people will hazard a guess as to what may transpire in the year that is before us. The prospect for the world is uncertain. Oh, there are some things which are monotonously certain to happen if the Lord tarry—sin will continue, wrong will oppress, hate, greed, malice, along with benovolence, charity and a certain amount of good-will shall remain. But of the issues of these, and of God's judgments upon them, none can prophesy with certainty.

Are we then troubled and dismayed as we look into the future? The believer is not. If others are not it is not because they have the right. It is because they are either indifferent to or ignorant of true conditions. The only one who has any reasonable or moral right to remain calm and serene in the face of this approaching year is the one who believes that the Throne of the "Majesty in the heavens" has never trembled nor been vacated. Can we not learn once more that simple lesson which Jesus taught? "Without me ye can do nothing." O the sublimity of its simplicity! This is no mere negative. It implies what other Scriptures teach: With Him we can do all things. That is the blessed truth of it.

But such is the perversity of our nature that we must also remind ourselves and insist upon the fact that without Christ we can do nothing. Without Him all is vanity and vexation of spirit, and there is no profit under the sun. But what a contrast is there between these two texts! One is of defeat; the other of victory. The one speaks of heavenly things; the other of those things which are "under the sun", of the earth. One speaks of dynamic, regenerated personality; the other speaks of weak, unaided humanity. In the light of this victorious fact, I wonder if we dare make a resolution something like this: By God's grace I am going to surrender myself to Christ so fully that it shall be no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me. So then all that I do this year shall be motivated and governed by this consideration. Did I ask if we dare make such a resolution? We must make such a resolution, for nothing less is expected of Christians. This is ever the Christian attitude. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. And everywhere the Word indicates this. When our hands are inclined to hang down, and we are tempted to say, Who is sufficient for these things? then the answer comes back, Our sufficiency is of God. We are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us.

If the Church of Christ should

adopt this attitude—and nothing else should characterize the Church of Christ—if she should adopt this attitude and maintain it throughout this year, nothing could stand before that advancing army. Even though she be equipped with nothing like the instruments of warfare used by her foes, even though it be only as David's smooth pebbles, yet these are sufficient if we go out in the name of the Lord of Hosts. There were mistakes in the year that is past by which we ought to profit, and there are thousands of reasons for rendering thanks to God. As for our future, it is as bright as the promises of God in His Word. All else is darkness, but here is marvelous light. The Sword of the Spirit only awaits a hand to grasp it.

CHRISTIANITY OR EVOLUTION

(Continued from page 1)

upon certain Christians whom they thought were blind to the real truth. Meanwhile they believed themselves to be in possession of a form of Christianity that could satisfactorily fit in with their evolution.

But Bible-believing Christians have always been tempted that way. By calling Christians names others have always tried to intimidate them. And many Christians have actually fallen prey to the idea that those who believe everything that is written in the Bible are wilfully blinded. But let us be fool's for Christ's sake; the day is coming soon when God will make foolish the wisdom of this world, "because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." 1 Co. 1.

And so, many questions are raised in your minds. Can we believe the whole Bible? Is Genesis really true? Is not there some way we can interpret Genesis so that we can still believe in it, and in evolution too? And after all, there are so many that believe in evolution, can they all be wrong? Are there any great writers and students who write on the Christian side of the questions?

"Be of good cheer," my Christian friends, we can believe the whole Bible. And we do not have to twist the meaning of Genesis to understand it. And though the world, especially the schools, have gone after the monster of evolution, there are great men who do not, after much study, believe in anything like it. The men who were once prolific writers in the field of evolution today are silent. Others are taking the field from the purely Christian standpoint. But let us not be deceived. There is still such a flood of teaching on evolution in our schools that we may well be concerned about our children and others.

Bible-believing Christians are agreed that we cannot believe in the Bible and Evolution at the same time. It is one or the other. In this case it is, "either—or"—and not, "both—and."

It becomes very serious when we go into it a little more deeply. The question always begins with the origin of the world and of man. But, my dear friends, it does not stop there, for you and me. To believe evolution is also to believe that no supernatural and momentary act has ever been performed in this world. If that is true, then Jesus is also not

supernatural in any sense in which the true church has always believed Him to be. Then Jesus was not conceived by the Holy Ghost and Matthew and Luke are wrong. Then He was only another man, probably better and more idealistic. Then also the gospel of John is wrong when it says, "these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." There can be no supernatural act of resurrection—and "if there be no resurrection from the dead then is your faith vain—ye are yet in your sins." Jesus Christ is still in the grave if evolution be true.

I am told that Simon Greenleaf is the greatest writer on Evidence known to American and English law. He is the author of "The Testimony of the Evangelists" which is a powerful proof of the correctness of the N. T. writers. Lord Lyttleton, formerly infidel, undertook to write a brief to disprove the conversion of St. Paul while his friend West attempted to disprove the resurrection of Christ. But when both brilliant lawyers investigated the evidence on both sides, they both wrote briefs on "the other side", proving the truth of Paul's conversion and Christ's resurrection.

To believe in Evolution therefore is to take away the whole foundation and structure of the Christian religion, and one cannot say with a glow of conviction, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Or with the apostle one cannot rise to the summit of devotion to say, "I know who I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." And how often do you hear from the lips of the professed evolutionist anything like a passion for Christ? They are not like Count Zinzendorf who when he was four years old, said, "Be thou mine, dear Saviour, and I will be thine." And his later motto was, "I have one passion, and it is He, only He."

Yes we can believe every word of the Scriptures. It bears all the marks of real history. It is not like the myths of Greece and Rome, and other countries, but it is sober, definite, clear, concrete, and free from human invention.

Pagan people have always imagined the world to be from mist, fire, water, or some kind of world-egg. Never have they believed in ONE ALMIGHTY GOD.

And why will not people believe in the record of the Bible today? They cannot afford to believe it. They cannot afford to believe it, because it demands something they are not ready to part with. They cannot part with themselves, the Lord wants them. They cannot afford to confess sinfulness, to humiliate themselves to repentance, and thence to rise above all, to be lost in Him. It is not their method of progress.

As far as the book of Genesis is concerned, God revealed it to men—the first men. God talked with Moses "face to face, as a man talketh with his friend." We may believe it, and be unreasonable in doing so. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! . . . For OF HIM, and THROUGH Him, and TO HIM are all things; to whom be the GLORY forever."

(to be continued).

The Family--It's Home

Every family has, of course, some place of habitation. But is a house necessarily a home? It is sometimes said that our word "Home," with its richness of meaning, is distinctly an English word,—that no other language has its equivalent. Perhaps something of the tenderness of the term does grow out of our English, Protestant, and even Puritan history. Certainly the hearing of the word does stir blessed memories. Dear recollections do cluster about the home of our childhood and youth. There we knew our happiest days, and the dearest fellowships of earth.

Now, what it is that really makes a home? A house, indeed, is implied, but surely, no standard of elegance can be set, either for the building, or for the furnishings within. A palace may be a home, but more often it is the humble cottage, with little in the way of luxury or convenience, that is to memory the dearest spot on earth. Any one can recall humble homes that come near to fulfilling our ideal.

There are certain things, such as neatness, orderliness, and the like, that are to be desired in every home, that add much to its attractiveness and comfort. But these are not to be stressed so as to defeat the best in home life.

The first essential for the making of a home is a family within. Does this seem an absurd remark to make? Surely, we may observe families attempting the impossible, namely, trying to maintain a home without living in it, with its members here and there, anywhere but at home, using the house but as an eating and lodging place. The father will be away at work all day, the children most of their waking hours at school, and the empty house cared for by a devoted but lonely mother. The evenings might appear to offer opportunity for knowing and cultivating the fellowship of those nearest and dearest, but what might be blessed hours at home are purloined by well-meaning but unthinking people who must be devising schemes to take people out of the household to promote social activities in the community. Even church people may become obsessed with the idea that they must occupy the evenings of young and old with forms of social life that have the fundamental defect that they take the members of the household from the environment intended for them, thus speeding the decay of the family life that so many mourn today. The remedy rather lies in the revival and uplift of the family life, the cultivation of a just sense of the opportunity of the home itself, the bringing in of all human and divine helps, and making all other social interests minister to the conservation of the basal family group.

The second essential to maintaining the home is the spirit of cooperation in all its members. This means simple unselfishness on the one hand, and simple thoughtfulness on the other. The solution of the problem of the home life of today, like the solution of many other social problems of our time, lies in the very simplest of means. The trouble with

these means is that they are familiar, and that they say to us each one, "Thou art the man," reminding us that the first step towards the cure lies with ourselves. Homes do fail of their best just by the selfish desires and habits of individuals, and what a world it would make if loving thought for others reigned in every heart. Unselfishness, considerateness, and cheerful sharing in the common tasks of the household will leave little in the way of problem to solve.

And, finally, our Blessed Lord must be sought to become the unseen member of every home. The presence of Him, who must have been, Himself, in His earthly life, the perfect Son and Brother will check the selfish impulse and move to kindly thought for others. Then there is that strange element of necessity that involves our families, one and all. There are the crippled, the sick, the feeble, the aging, all so in the providence of God there is sin and shame bringing pain to the innocent dear ones. A minister, in a single afternoon, visited ten homes, each one of which had its burden. In these things are the real trial of life, rather than in any lack of material blessings. To whom, then, should we go, but unto our Lord, with all our trouble, to find relief, and to obtain strength, not merely patiently to endure, but to bear as victors, more than conquerors, through Him that loved us."

No, the home is not lost in the welter of conditions of today, but can in one, unselfishly and lovingly doing be saved by each accepting his place his part, and, by the blessing of God, the prize is ours. "God setteth the solitary in families," "for His wondrous purposes of Divine grace for every member of every home.

Bible Questions--1

1. Which is the longest chapter in the Bible? Which the shortest?
2. Find the longest verse in the Bible. Find the shortest.
3. What verse contains all the letters of the alphabet, but one?
4. Who was sold for twenty pieces of silver? Who for thirty?
5. When was a rider's foot crushed against a wall?
6. What four little things are said to be exceeding wise, and why?
7. Who fell asleep during a sermon? What happened to him?
8. Whose friends sat with him for seven days and nights without speaking?
9. What apostle was bitten by a snake, where and when?
10. Who was overheard reading the Bible aloud?
11. Who killed a general with a hammer and nail?
12. When did prayer add fifteen years to a man's life?
13. Where are organs mentioned in the Bible?
14. Where did fire consume stones, dust, and water?

15. When did iron become lighter than water?

16. What prophet was let down by cords into a dungeon?

17. Who gave a feast that lasted one hundred and eighty days?

18. Where are boys and girls mentioned as playing in the streets?

19. Whose lives were saved by a scarlet thread?

20. When were men slain because they could not make the sound of "sh"?

Search your Bible, using a Concordance, if necessary.

Answers given next month.

John Christian-- George Atheist

John Christian is a store keeper in a small town. He is an elder of the church and is well versed in the Scriptures. George Atheist is a retired business man. He is a reader of infidel books and has no use for the Bible, the church, and members of the church. From month to month we will record some of their conversations. George Atheist frequently enters the store of John Christian for the sake of argument. And here he enters the store now.

"Well," says George Atheist as he enters the store, "I see that you are not busy. It isn't every store keeper that has time to read a book. But I suppose it is better than twiddling your thumbs while waiting for a customer."

"Perhaps you would rather have me twiddle my thumbs if you knew what I'm reading," replied John Christian with a twinkle in his eye. "You see, I'm reading the Sunday School lesson out of the Bible. I've some bright scholars in my class and I have to know the Scriptures pretty well to answer all their questions."

"Huh, you would be doing something like that. Wasting your time over nothing. Your scholars wouldn't have to be very bright to stump you on the Bible. The Bible is untrustworthy. It is filled with fables. It is filled with contradictions. It is—"

"Hold on now, George," interrupted John. "It is very well to give your old line about what a terrible book the Bible is. But it is one thing to say it and another to prove it."

"It is the easiest thing in the world to prove that the Bible is unreliable and filled with contradictory fables," argued George. "Take the very beginning of the Bible. According to it the first couple were Adam and Eve and everybody descended from them. And yet it states that their son Cain got his wife in the land of Nod. So it seems that there were some other people living then. You see, John, the author of Genesis was not very consistent with the claim that everyone is descended from Adam and Eve."

"Well now, George, you surprise me. You do know something about the Bible. How often have you read the book of Genesis?"

"Oh, once or twice."

"I thought so. Been better if you had read it three or four times. The peculiar thing is that the Bible does not say that Cain got his wife in the land of Nod. It merely states

that Cain went to Nod and there his wife bore him a son. Naturally, when he left his home he took his wife with him."

"Are you sure?"

"Here is the passage. The fourth chapter of Genesis, the sixteenth and seventeenth verses. Let me read it to you. 'And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch, and he builded a city, and calleth the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch'. So you see the Bible does not state that Cain got his wife in the land of Nod."

"Maybe you're right. But you know, John, that whole story of creation in Genesis is ridiculous in the light of evolution. It is a proved fact that man developed from a lower form. Biology proves it. Geology demonstrates it. Zoology—"

"Wait a minute George, before you go on with your 'ologies'. You said the other day that life came upon earth through two atoms meeting each other."

"That's right," replied George. "The fortuitous cancourse of atoms brought about the first forms of life."

"I looked up that word 'Fortuitous'. It means 'chance' doesn't it?"

"Yes."

"I got thinking about that the other day," continued John. "Two atoms came together by chance. They formed male life. Then another pair of atoms came together by chance and formed female life. That was some chance, now wasn't it? What if the second pair formed another male life? You and I wouldn't be here arguing, would we George?"

"Now don't be ridiculous," replied George.

"And what if there were all boys in the family of the first two pair. What a calamity that would have been for us. Just by chance it didn't happen that way, I suppose."

"Don't be silly, John."

"It seems to me that to believe your theory is being silly and ridiculous. I'm not what you call an educated man. But it appears to me more sensible that a wise and all powerful God created man and woman than to believe it all came about by chance."

Just at this point a customer entered the store. This interrupted the argument. But John Christian and George Atheist will meet again.

A MISSIONARY'S ADVICE TO A CONVERT

A young man who had just become a Christian was talking to the famous missionary to China, J. Hudson Taylor. He wanted to put off joining the church until he had learned more about Christ, and could be more sure of himself. "When you light a candle," asked Mr. Taylor, "do you do it to make the candle more comfortable?" "No," answered the young man, "but to get more light." Then Mr. Taylor went on to ask, "Does a candle become useful only after it has half burned down?" "No," was the reply, "just as soon as it is lighted." "Then," said Mr. Taylor, "imitate the candle, and let your light shine right at the start."

—Faithful Witness.

Bible Christianity

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Any one who desires to send in questions can do so by sending them to "Bible Christianity", Box 37, Dalhousie, N. B.)

Question: Is it certain that Christ was born on the twenty-fifth day of December?

Answer: It is by no means certain that Christ was born on the twenty-fifth day of December. The day and the month of the birth of Christ is nowhere stated in the Gospels. The following quotation from Philip Schaff's "History of the Christian Church" may serve to throw some light on its origination.

"We find the feast of Christmas first in Rome, in the time of the Bishop Liberius, who on the twenty-fifth of December, 360, consecrated Marcella, the sister of St. Ambrose, nun or bride of Christ, and addressed her with the words: "Thou seest what multitudes are come to the birth-festival of thy bridegroom." This passage implies that the festival was already existing and familiar.—The Christmas festival was probably the Christian transformation or regeneration of a series of kindred heathen festivals which were kept in Rome in the month of December, in commemoration of the golden age of universal freedom and equality, and in honor of the unconquered sun, and which were great holidays, especially for slaves and children. This connection accounts for many customs of the Christmas season, like the giving of presents to children and to the poor, the lighting of wax tapers, perhaps also the erection of Christmas trees, and gives the many excesses in which the un-

Religious News

By Rev. William Ooms

THE UNSHAKEN BIBLE

"Amid the many things that have fallen apart in the secular world and in the world of religious thought, the Bible stands unshaken. That word is still the 'lamp unto our feet and the light upon our path.' It is singular indeed that in a day of criticism against many expressions of religion, this Book of books is being read and studied with greater devotion by more people than ever before. Science, governments and culture have not kept the world from chaos, but the word of God abides forever. More criticism has been directed toward it in the past generation than against all other books of religion, but not one shred of truth has been found false. In the Book, God still speaks to man and man to God. Gibraltar may go down before the waves of an angry sea, but the 'Rock of Ages' has withstood every storm and stress. We may well still saturate our language with its vocabulary, our lives with its spirit, and our age with its teaching."

Rev. Joseph R. Sizoo.

IGNORANCE OF THE BIBLE

At Cornell University, a test was given recently to examine the knowledge of the students in regard to the Holy Scriptures. The following ten representative questions were asked:

1. Name the Trinity.
2. What is "original sin?"
3. What are the Beatitudes?
4. What person does the dove symbolize?
5. What is the Epiphany?
6. What is the first commandment?
7. Why did the children of Israel go to Egypt?
8. Who is the legendary author of The Proverbs?
9. Who visited the witch of Endor?
10. What is the Transfiguration?

The results of the test were made known by Dr. Morris G. Bishop, and these startling facts were revealed. The average grade of those University students was only 25.5%. In a class of 90, 13 made zero. Two students thought John, Paul and Peter were the Trinity. We would suggest that our readers take the test themselves and see how they grade.

WHAT HINDERS THE CHURCH

I came across this very interesting item the other day. A group of people went into a study of what makes the work of the church most difficult for those who are earnestly seeking to build up the kingdom of God. The following ten items were listed. Read them over carefully for

believing world indulges at this season, in wanton perversion of the true Christmas mirth."

Question:- How many wise men came to pay homage to Jesus?

Answer:- No one knows. The Bible does not state the number. According to tradition there were three. The number, however, is not known definitely.

yourselves, and decide if these things are hindering the life of your church. If so, what will you do to better conditions?

1. Failure of the pulpit to preach a vital gospel, and to bring messages applicable to the life of today and the community in which it is delivered.
2. Failure of the membership to co-operate enthusiastically and joyfully in an adequate evangelistic program.
3. Criticism of the preacher, of what he does, of what he does not do.
4. Absence of the church paper in the homes of the membership, though there is plenty of secular literature.
5. Wilful absence from God's house on the Lord's day and desecration of the Sabbath.
6. Forsaken prayer meetings.
7. Cliques.
8. Gossiping.
9. Miserly financial report.
10. Non-support or meager support of missions.

STILL GREAT NEED FOR MISSIONS

Once again during the past few days, I met a person who does not believe in bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. There are many people today who have that same idea. In fact that spirit is rampant in our land. A small view of Christ's redeeming work brings on such a belief. Let us face the issue squarely. Our ancestors carried out Christ's great commission to us, "Go ye into all the world—teach, preach, baptize," and because they were obedient, we today are living in a Christian land. Are we not indebted to them to carry out this command to others? Multitudes are waiting today for the good news about Christ. It is the only thing that satisfies the human heart. Why should we tarry with that blessed news when, "In none other is there salvation: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

And should we wait until Canada is Christianized? We shall find in no town or city or hamlet all people willing to receive the gospel. Paul and Barnabas were ministering in one of three largest cities of the then known world. They might have done home missionary work all their lives in Antioch, and still the work would not have been completed, but the Holy Spirit thought otherwise and said, "Separate me Paul and Barnabas to the gospel whereunto I have called them. That call was to foreign fields and they went where the gospel had not yet been named. They obeyed and the gospel has come Westward. We are reaping the benefits today. Can we dare to withhold the only Saviour of the world from the millions in far away lands, who know Him not? Can we wait until Canada is Christianized? Said the great preacher, Phillips Brooks, "We cannot believe in God for ourselves without believing in Him for the rest of the world." And if we really love the Lord Jesus

We shall do all in our power to bring Him to a lost world.

"A hundred thousand souls a day
Are passing one by one away
In Christless guilt and gloom;
Without one ray of light or hope,
With future dark as endless night,
They are passing to their doom."
What are you doing to lead them
to the only Saviour of the world?"

Bible Study

Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount

In this issue we are continuing our study on the Beatitudes. Would it not be a fine resolution to make for the coming year that we make an intense study of our Lord's Words. It does take effort to do so. But it is an effort which will repay us. More precious are His words than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

When we think of a person who is meek we are very apt to think of him as cowardly or spiritless. That, however, is not the meaning of the term "meek" in this beatitude. Christ who is our example of meekness was not a coward nor was He spiritless. He drove the money changers out of the temple. He denounced the Pharisees for their oppressions. To be meek does not mean to be a coward.

It means rather patience under suffering. One is meek who suffers the cruelties of life without bitterness or the feeling of revenge. It is one who can pay as Jesus, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." To be meek is to pay like Stephen as he was being stoned, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." To be meek requires a great deal of courage. In fact, it requires more. It requires grace.

But the meek are blessed. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." The earth will not belong to the proud, the vengeful, or the overbearing. The meek shall inherit the earth. God watches them and provides for them. They will fully come into their inheritance when God shall create the New Earth of which the book of Revelation speaks. And so the meek say with Paul, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

We must remember that the pre-supposition of the Sermon on the Mount is that the hearer is saved. That is, the Sermon on the Mount was delivered to believers. They had, of course, the righteousness of Christ by faith. By this we know that the righteousness of which this beatitude speaks is not the righteousness which we receive by faith in Christ. After a person has been saved there is an inward craving to be well pleasing in the sight of God. There is an intense desire to be obedient to the commandments of Christ. That is hungering and

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YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

Topic for January 5, 1936

Have I as a Christian Anything Unique to Offer People? John 3:1-21; John 14: 1-6.

Suggested Hymns:

1. "When I survey the wondrous cross."
2. "Take my life, and let it be."
3. "Oh Happy day, that fixed my choice."
4. "Jesus, keep me near the cross."

It is easy to gather from a study of the Scripture lessons that the greatest thing a Christian has to offer to others is a Saviour. Since a Christian is one who has been saved by Jesus Christ he desires others also to be saved by Jesus. Since he has heard the story of salvation he desires others to hear it also. There are a great many opportunities right within one's community to share the story of salvation. We do not have to go to the mission fields to become missionaries. Perhaps some of our friends are not saved or do not understand the story of salvation.

Wise and good though he was Nicodemus did not understand about the Kingdom of God. Jesus told him that the only way he could enter into the kingdom was through being born again. Nicodemus did not understand the new birth. So Jesus informed him that the only way that he could be born was by believing in the crucified Saviour. This Jesus states in John 3:14-16, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 3:16 contains the unique thing which a Christian offers to others. How many of us have told about that to others? How many of us have led another to the Christ?

In many circles they are ashamed of the simple story of salvation. They want to present Jesus as an ideal and as an example. But Jesus Himself stated in the lesson that He must be presented first of all as a Saviour. How can we follow Jesus as our ideal and example unless we are born again? And how can we be born again unless we believe in Christ and Him crucified?

The same truth is presented in the fourteenth chapter of John. Jesus tells about the Mansions that He would prepare in heaven. He informs His disciples that He was going to prepare a place for them. Then Thomas saith "Lord, we know not whither thou goest: and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." The only way a person can approach God is through Jesus. So Christians should do their best to present Christ to others.

Discussion Topics.

1. Is it more important to present Jesus as a Saviour or as an ideal?

2. What is the condition for entering the Kingdom of God?

3. How can a man approach God?

TOPIC FOR JANUARY 12

"Some characteristics of Presbyterianism" Romans 8:28-39. In connection with this topic may also be used the Study Book chapter IV.

Suggested Hymns:

1. Ps. 110, "I joyed when to the house of God."
2. "Faith of our fathers! living still"
3. "Stand up, stand up for Jesus".
4. "My faith looks up to Thee".

There are many characteristics of Presbyterianism and it is not possible to enumerate them all. It would be a good thing for young people to study the Westminster Confession of Faith. A great many who belong to the Presbyterian Church are ignorant of the doctrines which it teaches. We mention just a few:

1. It is characteristic of Presbyterianism that it builds its faith upon the Holy Scriptures. All its doctrines are taken from the Word of God. We believe that the Scriptures are inspired of God and for that reason are without error. It is our infallible guide in teaching. Presbyterians seek to present nothing but that is contained in the Bible. Its basis not only its faith upon the Word but also its life. Guidance for Christian living is found in the Word.

2. It is characteristic of Presbyterianism to believe and present the Sovereignty of God. The meaning of this is best presented by Paul, "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: to whom be the glory forever. Amen." We believe that all things come to pass according to His will. Even in regard to our salvation we do not give ourselves the glory but we give it to God because it has come about through His will.

3. It is characteristic of Presbyterianism to believe and present the total depravity of man. That is, we believe that man is dead in sin. He possesses no life within himself. Man is wholly inclined to all evil. Because of such a state of sin the wrath of God is upon him. His only hope is the grace of God.

4. It is characteristic of Presbyterianism to present Christ as our only Mediator. We believe that Christ is our Priest, Prophet, and King. We believe that Jesus took our place upon the cross. We believe that the only way we can directly approach God is through Christ our Mediator.

5. It is characteristic of Presbyterianism to believe and teach that the only way we can be justified before God is by Faith in Jesus Christ. By believing that Jesus took our place upon the cross we became justified before God.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

It would be interesting to discuss each characteristic presented. Then each member could state what he be-

lieved was characteristic of Presbyterianism.

TOPIC FOR JANUARY 19

Can I belong to the Kingdom as an Associate Member? Matt. 25:14-30.

Suggested Hymns:

1. "Take my life, and let it be".
2. "O Jesus I have promised to serve Thee to the end."
3. "I am Thine O Lord."
4. "Jesus, I my cross have taken".

There are no associate members in respect to the kingdom of God. By associate member we mean one who is admitted to some but not all the privileges and responsibilities of real membership of the kingdom. An associate member is something like an adherent in respect to the church. He is one who for various reasons does not want to take all the responsibilities that belong to active membership. Nor does he receive all the privileges such as partaking of the Lord's Supper.

But in respect to the Kingdom of God there are no associates or adherents. God wants all or nothing. Christ despises those who are lukewarm in His service. Christ urges a full surrender. The work of the Kingdom should come first in our lives. But how many of us can say truly and sincerely that the work of the Lord comes first? Does not often our selfish desires come first? Do we not place our pleasures before the work of the Kingdom?

Christ has given us various talents. He expects us to use those talents for His work. We are not to bury them into the ground. By our Scripture lesson we know that someday we have to give an account of what we have done with our talents. Surely we do not want the experience of the unfaithful servant to be ours.

It is up to the members of the society to rededicate themselves to the service of Christ. We should consecrate our talents for the work of His Kingdom. By the use of our talents we make others. And according to the use of our talents Christ will bless us.

If we have a talent for singing let us use it in His service. If we have a talent for speaking let us see it in His service. If we have a talent for friendliness let us use it to win others to Christ. By being friendly we can encourage others to attend the meetings of the society and also encourage them to attend the church. There are many ways in which we can use our talents.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. What are the privileges and responsibilities of the Kingdom?
2. How can we make a full surrender to Christ?
3. What talents can we use in the service of Christ?
4. How can we help the work of the church?

TOPIC FOR JANUARY 26

Why Prosecute Home Mission Work? Ps. 72:8; Prov. 14:34.

Suggested Hymns:

1. We've a story to tell to the nations."
2. "We have heard a joyful sound".
3. "O zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling".
4. "I love to tell the story".

One reason why we should prosecute Home Mission work is because Jesus commanded us to preach the Gospel to every creature. That included the heathen at home as well as those who are abroad. It is surprising how many people are not connected with any church in the home land. Many children do not attend the Sunday School and thus are growing up in ignorance of the story of salvation. We should spend as much effort at reaching them as we spend in reaching the children in heathen lands.

Everywhere in Canada there are foreign communities. Many who belong to such communities have not heard about Christ. For that reason our church sends missionaries to them. What a shame it would be to our land and to our Church if those coming from other nations did not hear the story of Christ. Canada is supposed to be a Christian nation. And surely those coming from heathen lands should be told about the salvation that is to be found by faith in Christ.

We should remember that if we do not Christianize others they will "heathenize" us. Evil influence from ungodly people is bound to leaven the life of the land. It is very evident that such evil influence is already at work. Therefore it is the duty of every Christian to do his or her best to convert the heathen at home.

The Young People's Society could do a great deal in this mission work. They could make an effort to help with the home mission work of their church. They could make it a special effort to pray for such work. And perhaps they could share in the expenses of such work.

Topics for Discussion

1. Are there any in our community who have not heard of Christ?
2. What foreigners are living in our community?
3. Are foreigners the only ones who are unsaved?
4. What can our society do to prosecute the Home Mission program of the Church?

BIBLE ARITHMETIC 1.

Take Adam's age at his death. Add the number of the sons of Gideon. Divide by the number of years Israel was in the wilderness. Add the number of deacons appointed by the early Church. Divide by the number of persons in Noah's family. Add the number of years Jacob served for Rachel. Add the number of Beautitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. Subtract the number of Stones David chose out of the brook. Multiply by the number of tablets of stone given to Moses, and get the age of Moses when he fled from the land of Egypt.

International Sunday School Lessons

LESSON FOR JANUARY 5

Developed by Quincy A. McDowell

A MOTHER'S SONG.

Lesson Print: Luke 1:46-58

Entire Lesson: Luke 1.

With this lesson we begin a study of the Gospel according to Luke. In his Gospel, Luke presents to us Christ the man. The key phrase of this Gospel is, 'Son of man'; and the key verse, 19:10, 'For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.'

This "Mother's Son" is surely an apt introduction to such a study of the manhood of the Master. There is nothing in the account of His birth, and certainly nothing in this song to suggest that the Virgin Mother regarded herself as a sinless, "immaculate" person. But there is much to the contrary. She used the language of one who has been taught by the grace of God to feel her own sins, and so far from being able to save others, requires a Savior for her own soul. Our Lord had a human mother, yet as we study her song of praise, we discover many characteristics of an ideal mother. Here is a lesson for every mother and parent.

1. First, there is her acquaintance with the Scriptures. As we read this Hymn of Praise, we are reminded of many expressions from the Psalms, and above all, of the song of Hannah in the book of Samuel. (1 Sam. 2:1-11) It is strikingly evident that her mind was well stored with Scripture. Someone has suggested that this song makes a perfect connecting link between our study of the Old Testament and the New, the language is so similar. When out of the abundance of her heart, her mouth spoke, she gave vent to her feelings in the language of the O. T. Scriptures.

This is a characteristic of first importance of the ideal Christian mother and parent. If the hand that rocks the cradle is to exert its noblest and highest influence in the world, a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures is necessary. I fear that this is just where our modern homes are failing. Robert Burns touches the secret of the power and influence for good of a multitude of Scottish Homes in his description of 'the Cotter's Saturday Night.' The Bible held a prominent place. But too many homes today are leaving the Christian training of their children to the Church and Sunday School. They have their responsibility, but nothing can take the place of the reading and the teaching of the Bible in the home. The mother of Moses teaches us that what is put into the first of life is put into all of life.

II. Second, we note her humility. She who was chosen to be the mother of the Messiah, speaks of her own 'low estate,' and acknowledges her own need of a 'Savior.' There is just the opposite of any claim to sinlessness in this song of hers. One might safely affirm that she herself would be the first to reprove the honor paid to the Virgin Mother by the Romish Church.

Humility is the highest grace

that can adorn the Christian character. An old divine has said, "A man has just as much Christianity as he has humility." It is the grace which is most becoming to our human nature. It is a grace within the reach of every converted person. All are not rich. All are not learned. All are not highly gifted. All are not preachers. But all children of God may be clothed with humility. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."

III. Again, we note her thankfulness to God. Her 'soul magnifies the Lord.' Her 'spirit rejoices in God.' "All generations shall call her blessed." "Great things have been done for her." In all of these expressions we note that her heart is full of gratitude and praise to God. She is so conscious of God and of His goodness.

What an essential characteristic this is in the ideal parent! When God and His goodness are recognized and praised by the parent, they are very likely to be by the child. But in how many homes, God is not recognized and thanked, not even as the family surround the family board.

IV. Note, lastly, her faith in the promises of God. She ends her hymn of praise by declaring that God has 'blessed Israel in remembrance of His mercy,' and that He has done 'as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and his seed forever.' These words show clearly that she remembered the old promise made to Abraham, 'in thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed.' And it is evident that in the approaching birth of her Son she regarded this promise as about to be fulfilled.

The promises of God are the daily manna, and the water of life to the Christian as he travels through the wilderness of this world. We see not yet all things put under us. We see not Christ, and heaven, and the book of life and the mansions prepared for us. We walk by faith, and this faith leans on promises. But on those promises we may lean confidently. We shall find one day that God keeps His word, and that what He has spoken, He will always perform in due time, even as Mary did. It is by standing on the promises of God that we have peace and power in our hearts and in our homes.

LESSON FOR JANUARY 12

Developed by J. M. Kik

A Prophetic Vision

Lesson: Luke 2:25-35, 40. Golden

Text: Luke 2:30, 31.

To many people God directly revealed the fact that the child born of Mary was the Messiah of prophecy. It was revealed first of all, of course to Mary and Joseph. The fact was impressed upon them that the child was to be the Saviour of His people. It was also revealed to Elizabeth the mother of John the Baptist. The angels revealed it to the shepherds. In some way God revealed it to the wise men from the East. And in today's lesson we discover that it was revealed to Simeon. Simeon dwelt in Jerusalem. He

was a just and devout man. Constantly he read the Scriptures. By a study of the Scriptures he was made acquainted with the Messiah of prophecy. He realized that One was coming who was to be a Deliverer like Moses. The Messiah was to be wounded for the transgression of His people. He was indeed to be the Passover Lamb.

The Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he had seen the Saviour for whom he was longing. How thrilled Simeon must have been. No doubt, every day he looked for Him who was to be the Saviour of mankind.

One day the Spirit led him into the temple. And there he beheld the child Jesus. Mary and Joseph had brought him to the temple to dedicate Him to the Lord. Simeon took him into his arms and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

How true it is that he who seeketh, findeth. Simeon sought the Lord and the Spirit revealed Him. And even so the Spirit will reveal the Christ to any one who seeks Him. And those who have found the Christ are ready even as Simeon to depart in peace. The peace which passeth all understanding is in the hearts of those who have seen their Saviour.

Simeon leaned on the promises of God as they were revealed in the Old Testament. He had perfect faith that the promises would be fulfilled. We, too, must rest upon the promises of God. We, as Simeon, should have perfect reliance on the Word of God.

The promise for which we should wait is the second coming of our Lord. We should watch for His coming even as Simeon await the first coming. The Spirit has revealed to us in the Holy Word that the coming will be soon. May we be as ready as Simeon when that promise will be revealed.

LESSON FOR JANUARY 19.

Developed by H. Wilson Sieber

Jesus Prepares for His Work

Lesson Luke 3:21, 22; 4:1-13

Entire Lesson Luke 3:1-4:15

Golden Text Luke 4:8

Additional Reading John 1:1-14

Hebrews 2:9-18.

Four ways are presented to us by which Jesus prepared for His work. Let us note them as seen in our lesson.

First we see Jesus being baptised. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, was sent to call Israel to repentance, being directed by God (Jn. 1:33) to administer baptism to those who accepted his message. Recipients of it thereby acknowledged their sins and professed their faith that through the coming Messiah they would be forgiven. Jesus sought this baptism (Mt. 3:13) partly to express His sympathy with John's work, partly to dedicate Himself to His own work, and partly to express His as-

sumption of the sins of man. He sought it before beginning His active ministry. Then in His parting instructions (Mt. 28:19), Christ made baptism the initiatory rite of His church, a sacrament to be observed by His followers. Thus baptism should be part of the preparation of every child for His life work and let us not be negligent in this respect.

Secondly we see Jesus in prayer. Jesus was praying as He was baptised (Lk. 3:21). We know very little about the boyhood of Jesus but judging from His later life, it would seem that He was a praying youth. A devout Christian is a praying Christian. A devout Jew of the day of Jesus was dutiful in the services of the temple and synagogue. Prayer was one of those duties. Joseph and Mary were devout Jews, hence it would seem to follow that they would teach Jesus to pray, and that He would be a praying youth. God has a work for each one of us to do in life. If we would truly serve Him, we must do His work. To find His work for us we need to search the Scriptures and we need to pray that God will interpret them to us and through them reveal thus our work. Thus prayer becomes one of the primary tasks in preparing for work.

Thirdly Jesus received the Holy Spirit. It descended upon Him (vs 22.) Then notice that almost immediately He began His work. Jesus as He walked up and down through Palestine was not only a man, was not only the second person of the Trinity, but He also had the Holy Spirit dwelling within Him. Jesus with the Holy Spirit dwelling within Him, accomplished all His marvelous works. It was prophesied (Isa 11:2) that the Spirit of the Lord would rest upon the Messiah and that is what happens when the dove descends. Christ did not begin His active work until He had received the Spirit. There seems to be a lesson here for each one of us and that is that we are not prepared for our work until we have received the Spirit. Someone might ask, "When or how may I receive the Holy Spirit?" People who are saved receive it when they are saved. Hence to receive it one must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Fourthly Jesus was the victorious Jesus. In 4:1-13 we have the description. Jesus was in the wilderness for forty days being tempted of the devil. After they were ended the devil placed three great temptations before Him but each time He remained true to His Father. Thus He was the victor over Satan. We do not have a sinful Saviour but a sinless one, and because He is sinless He really saves those who place their trust in Him.

LESSON FOR JAN. 26

Developed by John Nute

Luke 4:16-30.

This lesson records for us the first visit of our Lord Jesus Christ to His home village after his entrance upon his public ministry. John the Baptist had declared to the Jewish nation who He was and His purpose.

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International Sunday School Lessons

(Continued from page 6)

Satan had attempted to turn Him from the accomplishment of that purpose. And now after a time, we know not how long, Jesus himself declares His purpose to those who had been most closely associated with Him and knew His manner of life.

I. First let us notice that one characteristic of His manner of life was that He attended the means of grace. Scribes and Pharisees were the teachers at that time and their character is well known to us by the condemnation Jesus frequently pronounced upon them. Yet we find our Lord visiting a synagogue not once or twice, not one condition of favorable circumstance, no, He does not even raise the question "Shall I go?" but it was His custom to go. God's day was kept, God's word honored, and God's name respected so Jesus attended. Well might we follow His example.

This passage gives us a glimpse of the order of service of the synagogues. The central part of the service was the reading and preaching of the Word. The attendant gave to Jesus the scroll of parchment which He unrolled, read, and rolled up again and returned it to the attendant. Then He explained and applied the scripture He had read. The full exposition of the passage is held from us but this is probably the beginning of what our Lord said, the key-note of the sermon.

II Jesus' sermon was the message of good news to the world. He preached in the power of the Spirit (verse 14; John 3:34) and thus with authority. There is an infinite supply for every need but it is the poor who receive of it for they are they who realize their need and despise not His salvation. Likewise there is comfort and relief for the broken-hearted (II Cor. 1: 3-4), deliverance to those who are in bondage (John 8: 34; Sk. 13: 11-17, light to the souls dark with sin, liberty for those held captive by Satan. This is the "year of jubilee" which Jesus came to proclaim.

This passage was not a random selection by our Lord but was doubtless just what He wished to tell the people of His home synagogue. He proclaimed the true nature of His kingdom. They looked for a temporal king to deliver from the bondage of Rome and establish an earthly kingdom but He came to proclaim a spiritual reign over the hearts of men (John 18: 36-37.) and deliverance from sin.

III. The effects of our Lord's sermon reveal the true nature of the human heart. None could deny the truthfulness of what He said and they were filled with admiration at His words but because of their familiarity with Him they could see only a mere man. It takes the presence of the Spirit to hear the Gospel as well as to preach it. (Rm. 8:7; I Cor. 2:14.) God grant that we all shall never become so familiar with divine things that we shall seek to know them apart from the Holy Spirit.

Christ and the Bible

In our last issue we discussed the fact that the Bible is being attacked in a subtle way. This attack comes in the form of denying the verbal inspiration of the Bible. We also stated that it is our purpose in this column to show that Christ Himself believed and taught that the Bible is verbally inspired. We showed that Jesus in the very beginning of His ministry appealed to the WRITTEN WORD as the final authority in His controversy with the Devil. The Old Testament was quoted by Christ to justify His conduct in reference to the temptations. Evidently Christ thought a great deal of the morality of the Old Testament. And yet some preachers look upon the morality of the Old Testament with sneers and contempt. In so doing they are not following Christ. This month we quote several more passages to show Christ's attitude towards the written Word.

Matthew 5:17,18.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

To understand this passage we must know that the words "The Law or the Prophets" had reference to the Old Testament. The Old Testament is known among the Jews as the "Torah" which means "Law". The New Testament writers called the Old Testament "The Law, the Prophets and the Psalms"—or more briefly "the Law and the Prophets"—or briefer still "the Law." So when Jesus here refers to the Law and the Prophets He had reference to what we now call the Old Testament.

Another matter which may have to be explained are the terms "jot" and "tittle". The word "jot" or "yod" is the name of the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. "Tittle" is a dot above two Hebrew letters, "Sin" and "Shin". These two letters look exactly alike with the exception of the placement of a dot. One has a dot above the left part of the letter and the other has a dot above the right. To mix the dots would change the meaning of the Hebrew word. So the Jews were very careful in placing the dots above these letters. This dot is known in the Hebrew as the "tittle".

With this in mind we can note the following things:

1. Jesus did not come with the purpose of destroying the Old Testament. No doubt, there were those who accused Him of so doing. Jesus however, denies their accusation. The critics who so ruthlessly try to destroy faith in the Old Testament would do well to follow the example of Jesus.

2. Jesus came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets. The Old Testament was not something which was filled with fables and legends but with types and prophecies which Jesus came to fulfill.

3. Jesus in referring to the jot and tittle again referred to the WRITTEN WORD.

4. Jesus by this teaches that even the smallest detail in the Old Testament, even down to the smallest letter, is inspired of God. In speaking of this to one who did not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures he stated that this verse was an exaggeration. Did Christ exaggerate? "God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar."

5. The conclusion of the matter is that Christ has a high regard for the Old Testament and considered it inspired even to the jots and tittles. Why then do some preachers consider others as fools for believing in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures?

Mark 12:24

"And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?"

Here is another significant passage. The Sadducees believed that there was a resurrection. Jesus stated that if they had known the Scriptures they would have known that there is to be a resurrection. Christ manifested that the Scriptures were able to teach the truth about this life and the life to come. In fact, he who knows the Scriptures does not err. This is another evidence that Christ considered the Old Testament as the very Word of God. And surely no one will be so ignorant, so blind, so egotistical as to state the Christ erred in His regard of the Scriptures. If preachers knew the Scriptures there would not be the confusion, ignorance and here-say that is in the church today.

I HAVE GIVEN MY HEART TO THEE

I have opened the door, Lord Jesus,
The door of my heart, to Thee,
Remembering Thy gracious promise
To enter and stay with me;
I crave the food Thou are giving,
Thy presence can make me glad
When the shadows of earth are
pressing,

When the voices of earth are sad.

I have opened the door, Lord Jesus,
The door of my heart, to Thee;
I can find no words for telling
How precious Thou art to me;
No music has ever sounded,
Can come to human ear,
As sweet as Thy voice repeating
Thy promise of love and cheer.

I have opened the door, Lord Jesus,
I have given my heart to Thee,
Take it, oh, keep it forever,
For time and eternity;
The world may be drifting sinward,
Or, the trend may be Godward, to-
day;

Gladness in hearts Thou art keeping
Forever and ever shall stay.

—Mary Tash Lloyd, in The Presbyterian.

SERMONETTE

THE GREAT NECESSITY OF PRAYER

J. W. DAY

The apostle Paul, in chapter 6 and verse 14 of his letter to the Ephesian Church, he uses the words 'Hold your ground'. 'In every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving.' (Stand fast.) 'Tighten the belt of truth about your loins. Literally, this means: With your loins girt about with truth. The object of a belt or girdle was to hold the clothes well together and prevent them from interfering with movement, and in this sense TRUTH, (Perfect sincerity in word and deed) is compared to a girdle or belt. TRUTH holds together all other qualities and makes them effectual. 'The longer I live' said Charles Dickens, 'the more I find that without sincerity a man can do nothing.' 'A man whose life is perfectly upright has nothing to fear.' 'If God be for us who can be against us?' The Christian is assured of the care and the protection of Almighty God. 'Take the Spirit as your sword (That is the word of God.) Paul is here thinking chiefly of prayer. It is called the sword of the Spirit because the Spirit goes with it and gives it force. 'We know not how to pray aright, but the Spirit pleads for us; as we find it expressed in Rom. 8:26. We also have the same conception in Heb. 4:12: 'For the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than a two edged sword.'

'Praying at all times in the Spirit with all manner of prayer and entreaty . . . be alive to that, attend to it unceasingly, and interceding on behalf of all the saints, and on my behalf also, that I may be allowed to speak and open my lips in order to expound freely and fully that open secret of the gospel for the sake of which I am in custody as its envoy. Pray that I may have freedom to declare it as I should.'

Any Church where the members are not earnestly, and sincerely seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit on behalf of their Pastor, is a Church in decay. To that Church Christ has said 'Behold I will come quickly, and will remove your candle stick'. Jesus stands at the door and knocks, and unless He is allowed to come in and have His own way, that Church will die spiritually.

These two words, grace and peace, comprehend in them whatsoever belongeth to Christianity. Grace releaseth sin, and peace maketh the conscience quiet. The two fiends that torment us, are sin and conscience. But Christ hath vanquished these two monsters, and trodden them under foot, both in this world and the world to come. This the world doth not know, and therefore it can teach no certainty of the overcoming of sin, conscience, and death. Only Christians have this kind of doctrine, and are exercised and armed with it, to get victory against sin, despair, and everlasting death. And it is a kind of doctrine, neither proceeding of free-will, nor invented by the reason or wisdom of man, but given from above. Moreover, these two words, grace and peace, do contain in them the whole sum of Christianity. Grace containeth the remission of sins, peace, a quiet and joyful conscience. —Luther.

BIBLE STUDY

(Continued from page 4)

thirsting after righteousness.

If we hunger for food it is because we do not possess it. If we hunger for righteousness it is because we feel that we do not possess it. The greatest saints of the church have always been the ones to confess their lack of inward righteousness. They have always realized their shortcomings before the Lord. They are not satisfied with their state of righteousness. They are always hungering and thirsting to live more righteous before the Lord. To be perfect as Christ is perfect is the desire of their hearts and souls.

There are too many self-satisfied Christians in the church of today. They are satisfied with their conduct. They are satisfied with their prayers. They are satisfied with the service they render to the Lord. Such will miss the blessing of this beatitude. God fill us with a divine discontent!

What is gold and silver to those who are hungering for food and thirsting for water? Gold will not satisfy the pangs of hunger. Silver will not quench thirst. Even so gold and silver lose their attractions to the soul that is hungering and thirsting for true righteousness. Therein a true Christian should differ from one who is worldly. Gold and the things that gold can buy is the great desire of those who are of the world. Righteousness and the peace it brings is the desire of those who belong to Christ.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

If we have experienced salvation we know that God is merciful. Has not God forgiven all our sins? Christ wants His followers to be like God in this respect. But in being merciful Christians are often failures. They are unforgiving. They nurture spites. They hold other peoples sins up for public inspection. They forget to have mercy for others as God had mercy for them.

In the light of this beatitude we should all read the parable of the unmerciful servant as found in Matthew 18: 23-35. Although a king forgave a servant a debt of ten thousand talents yet this servant threw a fellow servant in jail for owing him a hundred pence. When the king heard that he naturally was angry and delivered that unmerciful servant to the tormentors. When God forgives our sin against Him He forgives an enormous debt. Surely we should forgive those who may have sinned against us.

May we say with our actions as well as with our lips, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Precious thought—my Father knoweth!

In His love I rest.

For whate'er my Father doeth

Must be always best.

Well I know the heart that planneth

Nought but good for me:

Joy and sorrow interwoven

Love is all I see. (Selected).

The First Church

So often we hear the claim that the Roman Catholic Church is the first apostolic church. She claims to be the mother and mistress of all churches. Many people have asked me whether this claim is true. Many Catholic friends have sent literature to prove this claim. But the truth of the matter is that this claim has to foundation of fact. It is the simplest thing in the world to prove that the Church of Rome was not the first established by Christ or by His Apostle Peter. All that one has to do is to follow the history of the Church in the book of Acts. The Roman Catholic Church acknowledges the book of Acts to be inspired and thus the true Word of God. So, of course, it cannot deny what is written in it. Let us briefly follow the history of the Church as it is contained in the book of Acts. It may be well to follow the story with our Bibles before us.

In the first chapter we learn that Christ told His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father. This promise was that they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

In the second chapter we discover that the promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. And we discover that St. Peter delivered the first sermon. The people were so pricked to heart with that sermon that they cried out, "What shall we do?" Strange to say Peter said nothing about becoming a member of a church at Rome. But he told them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. And we read in the 41st verse that three thousand were saved. Here at least is a record that it is possible to be saved outside of the Church of Rome. In the last verse of this chapter we read these significant words: "And the Lord added to the CHURCH daily as should be saved." This is clear evidence that the Church existed in Jerusalem long before it was even physically possible to establish a church at Rome.

In the third chapter of Acts Peter again delivers a sermon. Again he urges people to repent and be converted. No mention at all that it was necessary to be a member of a church at Rome in order to be saved.

In the fourth chapter Peter again has an opportunity to preach. Again he emphasizes that one can be saved only through the name of Jesus Christ. We read in that chapter that there were five thousand that were saved.

In the fifth chapter comes the affair of Ananias and Sapphira. Because they lied to God they died. We read in the 11th verse that "great fear came upon all the CHURCH". This shows again the church was first at Jerusalem.

In the sixth chapter we read that the church added deacons to its organization. Stephen was the first martyr.

At the beginning of the eighth chapter we read another significant

verse. "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem: and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, EXCEPT THE APOSTLES." The apostles remained in Jerusalem. St. Peter was still busy establishing the church in that city. A man by the name of Philip established the church in Samaria. And we read in the 14th verse: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John." Now I thought that St. Peter always did the directing. But here the other apostles send him and John to Samaria. Imagine the college of Cardinals sending the present Pope to preach the Gospel to some district! While St. Peter was in Samaria a man by the name of Simon tried to buy the gift of the Holy Ghost. Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou has thought the gift of God may be purchased with money." What if St. Peter were to repeat these words in the Roman Catholic Church today? The gift of God is eternal life. And yet the Roman Catholic Church is trying to sell that gift through masses and so forth. Even the thought of selling such a gift for money was abhorreth to Peter.

In the ninth chapter we read that after the conversion of Paul that the churches had rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria. And in the 32nd verse we read that Peter visited all these churches. It seems that we are going to have a hard time getting Peter to Rome. And it begins to look very much like the fact that Peter had a lot to do with establishing other churches long before it was possible for him to be in Rome. That makes the claim of the Roman Catholic Church look foolish.

It is in the tenth chapter that Peter has any connection with the salvation of Gentiles. There he was instrumental in bringing salvation to Cornelius, a centurion.

And would you believe it but the apostles and brethren took to task for going to the Gentiles. Imagine the members of the Roman Catholic Church today having freedom to express themselves about the actions of the Pope! Peter, however, explained that he had been directed by the Lord. In this eleventh chapter we read that the church was established in Antioch. Antioch became a very important church. And it is significant that it was established before the Church of Rome.

In the twelfth chapter we read that Herod places Peter in prison. Peter is still in Jerusalem. As yet he had had no opportunity to go to Rome.

In the next two chapters we read that Paul and Barnabas were sent out by the Church at Antioch on a missionary journey.

The fifteenth chapter is very significant. Because there was some

disagreement about circumcising the Gentiles a council was called in Jerusalem. Peter appears only as a spokesman in support of Paul. It is James that gives the directions. Isn't it strange that Peter never assumed the authority that is claimed for him? How different the present day Pope acts from Peter. Also in the first church every one had a right to express his opinion. As a matter of fact the present Roman Catholic Church does not resemble the first Church in organization or in teaching. And yet it has the arrogance to claim to be the first church.

Only in the last chapter of Acts do we read of the church at Rome. And then only in connection with the apostle Paul. That is very astonishing. The Church of Rome claims that only its members are saved. They are the vehicle of salvation on the road to heaven. And yet that fact is not mentioned in the Bible. Surely God would have revealed that fact to the holy men who wrote the Bible. If their claim is true then surely God would have revealed to the men who were inspired to write the Scriptures. It would have been prophesied even in the Old Testament. But absolute silence on that question meets us every where in the Bible.

From the book of Acts we see clearly that the Church was first established at Jerusalem. If any city can make a claim to be the mother church it is the church that was established by the apostles there. Then churches were established in other parts. Peter helped to establish such churches. So it is very evident that the claim of the Roman Catholic Church is absolutely false and can only be established on ignorance.

GOD'S ANVIL

1 Peter 1: 25.

Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then, with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

"And so," I thought, "The Anvil of God's Word
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon.
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone."

—Anonymous.

To walk before God means so to walk as to have the thought of God's presence and supervision constantly in mind, and to shape one's conduct accordingly. —Vos.

So much is salvation a matter of giving on God's part that its best subjects are those in whom His grace of giving can have its perfect work. —Vos.