

The Quiet Hour.

Jesus Calls Four Disciples.

S.S. LESSON—Luke 5: 1-11. Jan. 31, 1904.

GOLDEN TEXT—If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed—John 8: 31.

BY REV. C. MACKINNON, B.D., SYDNEY, N.S.

Pressed upon him to hear the word, v. 1. The gospel graciously and fully presented must always attract, because it is the only panacea for the aches of the heart. Like the miserable, emaciated victims of the appalling Indian famine, who stretched out their skinny hands and called, in the piercing accents of hunger, "Bread, bread," so the world stretches out its eager hand for the "Bread of Life," and presses upon Him to hear the word of God.

Launch out into the deep, v. 4. Too often do Christians in their work hug the shore and put down their nets in calm, transparent water, where there is little trouble and where also there are few fish. Let us be courageous, and, with firm faith in our gospel, go where the fish are. The eager joy with his rod and line, if he gets no fish off the bridge, stops not there all day, but tries a log, then a rock, then a raft, until he finds at last a sequestered spot, from which he lands them one after another. Thousands of souls pass along our streets; let us not only angle for them in church and Sabbath school, but follow them to their offices, their homes, it may be their unworthy haunts, and boldly let down our nets for a draught.

At thy word, v. 5. Noah builds his ark, Abraham leaves the home of his childhood; Moses stretches out his rod over the gloomy caverns of the Red Sea, Gideon shouts the battle cry, at the command of God. To us the obstacles may seem insuperable, but God bids it and that is enough. The dark carnalism of Aneiteum seemed a hopeless problem to civilization; nevertheless at God's word brave, trustful Geddie landed without human aid or protection, and left the island Christian. There can be no real failure when we are doing God's will.

Depart from me, v. 8. Issiah saw the glory of God, and he said, "I am a man of unclean lips." To know God is to feel our own sin and shame in a tenfold degree.

"Sin stained am I, and Thou art pure:
Oh, turn Thy steps some other way:
How shall I dare Thy gaze endure?
How in Thy sinless presence stay?"

The fishermen were gone out of them, v. 9. It is when we are at the point of despair and on the brink of failure that we oftentimes stand nearest to success; for then, mistrustful of ourselves, we are ready to follow the directions of our Lord. Let us welcome, then, even the difficulties and disappointments of life. They are not our foes but our friends. The Lord's messengers, indeed, they are, to summon us to a more perfect trust in His unerring guidance. There is no extremity in which He cannot deliver us. The greater our need, the better the opportunity for Him to manifest His divine wisdom.

Fear not, v. 10. How gracious are the words! Our sins give us good cause to fear. For they make us deserving of God's wrath. But in His mercy He covers our sin and removes our condemnation. He fills our hearts with peace and then sends us forth with the message of peace to others.

Catch men, v. 10. Men have to be "caught." Fishing needs patience and skill. Some fish are only caught when the tide is high and others when it is "slack"; some

under cloudy skies and others again in sunny weather. So with men; we must often bide our time, ever be patient, but never despair. But it has been well said: "As in fishing, so, as a rule with men, the best time to seek them is during the slack of the tide."

They forsake all, v. 11. To serve Christ, does not require of us all that we shall leave our homes or give up our possessions. But it does require us to place ourselves everything we have at His disposal. This is expected of every disciple. We are not all called to be apostles, but the spirit of the apostles should be shown by each of us.

FOR DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

The Old is Still Needed.

BY C. H. WETHERBE.

I have recently read statements by reputedly orthodox ministers that such preaching as prevailed in conservative pulpits forty or fifty years ago, will not be sanctioned by intelligent men and women today. It may be presumed that such writers have in mind a class of hearers who entertain liberal views like those held by themselves.

These exceedingly "intelligent" people are loudly advocating the glory of what they call "the new evangelism," and this seems to mean a diluted gospel, one in which the great truths of the cross of Christ are either left out or are explained away.

Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, in a recent sermon, and referring to what a distinguished author lately wrote, namely, "He who tries to reproduce Finney and Moody is a plagiarist, but not a prophet," says: "I believe Finney would startle some of us into action if he could come before us as he did before the people who used to live in Western New York, when, as they looked into his face, they became convicted of sin, and when they heard his voice they thought the judgment day had come. I am sure that Mr. Moody would move this world if he stood here in these days with the doors of opportunity wide open, and if he should come in the days of the old hippodrome meetings, when the Holy Ghost was upon him as truly as upon Paul." These are words of truth, and they need to be rung into the ears of all who are talking foolishly about "the twentieth century thought," as though, very suddenly, there had come into the brains of wiseacres a mass of wisdom which far exceeds God's wisdom, as revealed in His gospel. Verily, the old plan of salvation, and all of its related doctrines, is still needed. The natural man is still dead in sin, and nothing less than faith in Christ's atonement can bring him to life.

Launch Out!

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

"Launch out into the deep!" This was Christ's order to Simon Peter after a night of not very successful fishing. Accordingly Peter sets the bow of his little boat towards the deep water where the fish are and after the net has been cast, there is a prodigious haul that requires some extra effort to bring it to shore.

"Here is a motto for churches and pastors. 'Launch out!' Perhaps the past year has not been one of much success in winning souls to Christ. One reason probably was that there was not enough effort to reach the unconverted either by fervent preaching to

them in the pulpit, or by personal effort with them out of the pulpit. Plain, pointed, pungent sermons warmed with love and steeped in prayer are the minister's needed work on the Sabbath. But such arguments and appeals must be followed up. A pastor often accomplishes as much by an hour of close friendly conversation, as by any amount of pulpit appeal. The Sabbath school teacher can reach his or her scholars most effectively by a private visit, and a faithful talk with each member of his class. Personal work does the business; not all the fish are caught by the net; each fisher must drop his own hook and line baited with love.

At the beginning of a new year's work the first duty of faith is to make new ventures. "Launch out," and with the Holy Spirit's aid make the effort. I would not make too much of the word "deep," which in the New Testament incident had only a local significance in fishing. Still there must be a deep down faith in your hearts, and a deep down love of souls, and an insatiate desire for their salvation. Shallow interest, shallow feeling, shallow praying wins no souls for the Master. The minister who longs to convert souls must lay hold of the deep truths of God, and strive to penetrate the depths of the heart before him. It is down in those depths that lurk the depravity, the besetting sin or the unbelief that keeps the sinner from Jesus Christ. The truth must go far enough down to reach the roots in order to produce deep conversion. Spiritual peace, spiritual joy and spiritual power all depend on Christ's getting full possession of the heart.

It is well also to "launch out" beyond the regular church goers, and to strive to reach the outsiders—even those who may be regarded as "hard cases." As in fishing, the fish that bite readily are easily taken, so there are persons brought up under gospel influences that yield more readily to the truth. But the inveterate Sabbath breakers, the open scoffers, the hard drinkers, the profane and openly ungodly class are too often passed by as hopeless. Stul of Tarsus was not a very hopeful case;—cannot the same Divine Spirit that subdued and transformed him, convert the most impenitent and hardened sinner in your community? And when a conspicuously irreligious person in any place is converted, the effect is all the more powerful. Then, my dear friends, if the Master is on board with you—(is He was with Simon Peter)—launch out into the deep and according to your faith, your courage and your loving zeal will be your ingathering of converted souls.

At this season the ordinary greeting is: "I wish you a Happy New Year." Sanctities it is uttered in empty formality; it is often spoken to those who are making themselves wretchedly unhappy by their own sins and follies. Even Christians often make serious mistakes in their pursuit of happiness. Suppose that any of you should saunter off for a walk, saying to yourself, "now I will enjoy myself." The walk soon becomes wearisome; you are thinking only about yourself, and find no enjoyment. Suddenly you hear a scream of a child that had fallen into a neighboring river; you plunge in, rescue the little creature, and when you deliver it into the hands of its mother, you feel a thrill of exquisite delight.

That illustrates exactly the condition of many Christians both in the pulpits and pews. They try to become happier by thinking about it, and talking about it, they discuss "the higher life," and "twentieth century revivals," and it all ends in vapor. Let them launch out into practical efforts to awaken and save perishing souls; let them