

bas and Saul were sent by the Holy Spirit.

(1) They *gave themselves willingly*. They knew full well that the work before them was difficult and dangerous, but not for a moment did they hesitate. With great courage and gladness they went away. Even so all of us should offer ourselves willingly for the Lord's work. Whatever we are called to do, we should do it cheerfully.

(3) They preached the *Word of God*. They had no doubt as to its inspiration and Divine authority. They spent no time in "Higher Criticism" and in correcting its supposed errors. They believed in its infallibility. They accepted the Scriptures of the Old Testament as the *Word of God*. And they preached it, not philosophy, science, politics, or anything else. All true missionaries and teachers must have *faith* in the Bible. The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit, and it must be wielded if the world is to be won to Christ. Preach the word!

(4) They were *unwearied in their efforts*. They went from place to place telling of Jesus and His love. They did not give up, because they did not at once meet great success. Judson laboured for years before he had a single Karen inquirer. Asked what his prospects were, he replied—"As bright as the promises of God." Barnabas and Saul met with much opposition and many dangers, but they never thought of giving up their work. Like them, we must never weary in well-doing.

III. We have a picture of a *wise official*. The governor of Cyprus was evidently well fitted for his post. It is all-important that only capable men be put into power.

(1) He was *prudent*. He was endowed with common sense and good judgment. Ignorant, rash and imprudent men should never receive important offices.

(2) He was *thoughtful*—Probably dissatisfied with the Roman religion he hoped to get light and help from Elymas. Disappointed in him, he desired to hear the Word of God from Saul. He was an anxious inquirer.

(2) He became a *believer*. Faith came by hearing. The gospel suited his case and at once he accepted it. It is always the power

of God unto salvation. Pearls are got from the deep caves of ocean—and grand trophies of divine grace are secured from the lowest depths of sin and misery—

IV. We have a picture of a *great sinner*. Elymas was a reprobate Jew. How sad such degeneracy!

(1) He was prompted by the devil. He was called "Bar-Jesus"—or "son of Jesus," but names do not always reveal character. He was a child of satan. To what family do we belong?

(2) He sought *personal gain* only—Self-interest made him a sorcerer. It made him fasten himself on Sergius Paulus. It made him oppose Saul. It is terrible to do wrong in order to gain money or power.

(3) He tried to keep the *deputy from believing*. It is a grievous sin to keep away from Christ ourselves, but it is worse to keep others away from Him. The vessel *wreckers* of former days were guilty of a great crime; but it is infinitely worse to be *soul-wreckers*.

(4) He *suffered severely* for his sin. His sin did not pay. Saul denounced him in scathing terms. Righteous indignation against wrong doing is a duty. The judgment of blindness fell upon Elymas. Ah! sin never pays. It is not only wrong, it is foolish.

V. We have a picture of a *feeble saint*. Mark was a good man—and had an important work to do. He was assistant to Saul and Barnabas. In various ways Christ is to be served.

Mark returned to Jerusalem from Perga, having given up his work. No reason is given for the step he took—but evidently Paul was not satisfied with his conduct (15: 37, 38). Probably he was *discouraged* because of the difficulties and dangers of the work. He was not of a heroic character. He lacked firmness, courage and determination. All christian workers should be strong and of a good courage. In our day, as in apostolic days, we need manly christians, men and women, who, having put their hand to the plough, will not look back, who will hold on their way and hold fast to the end, who will be faithful even unto death!

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

Our lesson contains the story of the first foreign mission. It was instituted by the Holy Spirit Himself. He is still sending forth the Heralds of the cross. Whenever he puts into any