

B. V. P. U.

The mission of the Baptist young people has been... their attention to Christian service...

For the week beginning Dec. 17.

TOPIC: "Windows of heaven opened."

SCRIPTURE, Matt. 9:10. Why are the windows of heaven shut? You will have to read the whole text carefully...

(a) Israel was saying: "Behold I what a wilderness is this!" There you have the secret. Worship is a living exercise...

(b) They offered in sacrifice the sick and the lame... the blind... the deaf... the dumb...

(c) They kept back from God His portion. You can shut the windows of heaven by the sinfulness of your service...

(d) The young people of Parrboro are awake. We hope to hear of a good Union there soon.

Has any one of our members ventured this month upon a sermon and social? Tell us about it if you have.

President Williams, of St. Martins, has been seriously ill. The readers of this column will be rejoiced to learn that he is recovering.

The Baptist churches of St. John and Ferris are engaged in union evangelistic services. The young people of all the churches but one have merged their meeting into the one general meeting of the church each week...

Rev. E. B. Swarth, agent for Grande Ligne, whom many of us heard during the summer, is stirring up the young Baptists of Chicago and vicinity on the evangelisation of Quebec.

Christmas is coming! We can make it mean more than it ever has before. The young people can plan and do many kindly things where their presence and sympathy will be fully appreciated.

Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER.

Lesson XIII. Dec. 24. Matt. 2: 1-11.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

A CHRISTMAS LESSON.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."—Matt. 1: 21.

EXPLANATORY.

1. Now when Jesus was born. Not at the exact time, but after He was born, and before He had left Bethlehem. Probably it was soon after the presentation at the temple, or the latter part of February. In the days of Herod the king, Herod the Great, founder of the Herodian family. He rebuilt the temple in great magnificence in Jerusalem, which is consequently known in history as Herod's temple, to distinguish it from Solomon's temple. He died miserably in the 70th year of his age, and the 38th of his reign. The king. The title of king distinguishes him from the other Herods named in the gospels.

There came wise men (Greek, Magi, magos). The original name of priests among the Persians and Medes, who formed the king's privy council, and who cultivated astrology, medicine and occult natural science. They are frequently referred to by ancient authors. Herodotus speaks of them as a priestly caste of the Medes, and as interpreters of dreams. Afterwards the name was applied to all Eastern philosophers. From the east. This is a different form, and used in a different sense, from the word "east" in ver. 2. Here it is shown by the text that "the far east," and in ver. 2, the star "in the east." "The far east" refers to Persia, where the wise men belonged, and "the east" is Babylonia or Chaldea, or the districts in which they saw the star. From "The Wise Men of the East." To Jerusalem as the capital and religious centre of the Jews.

2. Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? This inquiry, more literally translated, is, "Where is the born King?" that is, the newly born King of the Jews. The Magi, especially, do not doubt, to find Him in the capital city and in the royal palace.

THE EXPECTATION OF THE MESSIAH IN THE WORLD. We are reminded by Luke, by the names, and by the plan, that there prevailed throughout the world, at this time, an intense conviction, derived from ancient prophecies, that ere long a powerful monarch would arise in Judaea, and gain dominion over the world.

10. When they saw the star, guiding them, and pointing out the way, they rejoiced. Because their journey was now ended, their search was successful. Their joy would be all the greater because of their failure at Jerusalem, and the suspicions and doubts excited by the manner of Herod's search.

11. When they were come into the house. This could scarcely have been the stable where our Lord was born. Joseph and Mary remained for forty days in Bethlehem, and would find temporary lodgings near it, over the house, as implied by ver. 11, not merely over the village of Bethlehem. The conjunction of stars spoken of above could not indicate the place, for that of the Magi was in the eastern sky, at an altitude of 57°, but a star at an altitude of 67° could appear to stand over no house or field in the immediate neighborhood of the observer.

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able to follow that of his brother. But, second, the case of Andrew suggests the field in which we can best operate. You may be able to do nothing among strangers and out in the open world; there is always a narrow circle where you can operate to advantage. The home circle may be touched at once. There they know you and believe in you; there you may speak when every other door is closed. Feasibly no one save Andrew could have reached Simon. Every one has his circle of friends or of persons with whom he has in fellowship. There is his field. Let each believer exert his influence in these narrow circles, and the world will soon be reached.—Zion's Herald.

The Believer's Fullness in Christ. In Jesus the Christian reaches the very end of his creation. In Him he is made full of all the qualities and attributes of soul which are the admiration of angels, the glory of our humanity, and the despair of man-made philistines and the scorn of religionists.

He is full of love to God and love to man. God-ward this love burns as a flame. The elements of his being have been so transmuted by the incoming of Christ's life that a real kinship exists between him and God. True love rests upon worthiness and esteem; and the Christian sees in God so much of himself—justice, mercy, and goodness, that he flies to him with ineffable delight for purposes of communion and fellowship. Yes, and reciprocal! God beholds much in the believer upon which his esteem can rest. This is made possible through the wonders of redemption. I believe that Almighty God respects and admires a man who is full of truth, purity, integrity and purity. He loves him largely because of these characteristics. The Christ said: "If a man serve Me, him will my Father honor" (John 12: 26). And Paul testifies that the living God "is the Servant of all men, especially of those that believe!" (1 Tim. 4: 10). If Love Divine can know gradations, Jesus loves His brethren in the Gospel more intensely than those who reject His offer of mercy.

The heart of a believer filled with the Christ-life flows out in love to his fellow-men. He is full of benevolence which strives for the happiness of mankind. His Christianity is extremely practical. He is full of sympathy, he commiserates his brother who has fallen among thieves, and binds up his wounds.

Times of financial stringency are not wholly an evil, for they give good opportunity for the exercise of sympathy and disinterested Christian charity. Let all Christians in the present stress prove their invisible purity and holiness by an outward and palpable generosity. If a dispirited son of toil, by an unobtrusive exercise of sympathy in employment, comes seeking bread for himself and family, turn him not empty away. In the meantime, it is the duty of Christians at this crisis to be patient, hopeful and brave. God's promises are still sure, and His goodness is still over this land.—Rev. E. J. Curran.

Sympathy. It is not merely the words and the form into which they are cast when sympathy is expressed that will do good, though sometimes, the sorrowing one will preserve them for their own sake, that they may at a future day be recalled to the heart of grief-stricken one. There is value in the simplest expression of unfeigned interest and sincere concern. It deprives sorrow of the more or less inseparable feeling of loneliness. It is a proof to the stricken heart that the burden is shared by others. With God's blessing it applies help and comfort.

He who has words at command will do well to use them thoughtfully as possible in the blessed administration of sympathy. He who has no choice of words, but can only in simple bluntness of speech make manifest his own concern at his neighbor's distress, will do well to be not too timid. The mere hand wring, with the transfused look, and the stammering words that give evidence of soul in them will tell the other all he needs to know, and so will be effected the good that a benevolent father meant to be effected, when he made us capable of sympathy, and made sympathy a link between heart and heart.—Marian.

The First Called. The story of Andrew, the humble and inconspicuous witness of the first hearing the voice of the Son of God calling him to a higher and holier fellowship, contains a lesson for all Christian workers. It teaches us the importance of a personal preparation and equipment for our work. He sought the first light possible at the time. As a disciple of John, with eyes ever turned to the dawn, he could not fail to recognize the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. His relations with John and with Christ were in the nature of preparation. Like Andrew, the Christian worker must come into intimate relations with the great Teacher. This personal and intimate communion with the Saviour will constitute his best preparation to enter the harvest field. With Andrew there was not only an adequate preparation; he actually prepared work as a part of his preparation. He was not a mere camp follower, subsisting on the rations of the soldiers without doing any fighting. Service was the alpha of his religion; he first found his own brother Simon and brought him to Christ.

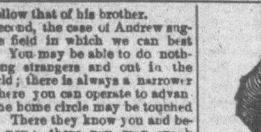
About his service two points are worthy of note: The first is that he labored to secure individuals. Without waiting to capture a multitude, he sought out and led to Christ his one man. Here he touched the secret of the most effective Christian service. There are no more numerous soldiers to take the game on the wing and in flocks; there are others, less expert, who must have a rest and take careful aim at a single object. Andrew's brother, Peter, could be led to a flock and bring down 3,000 at once. Through Andrew's careful preparation, he could do a greater thing in reaching Simon himself. The devils do not always move in platoons; they must often be sought in detail and overcome by the single genuine soldier. If you would promote the work of God and secure a revival of genuine religion, imitate this first of the disciples of the Lord by individual effort to gain individual effort to gain individuals. One day for twenty days is better than twenty days for one day. Every one can follow Andrew's method, even if unable to follow that of his brother.

Arrow Points. BY PASTOR J. CLARK. More prayer, less care. He who sows sin will reap sorrow. Have religion in the heart as well as on the tongue. None will ever be like Christ except those that love Christ. Be as truly on the Lord's side as you wish Him to be on yours. If your heart is in heaven you will soon be there too. The pleasures of sin are always dangerous. There is always a safe shelter at the cross of Christ. Only through redeeming grace may we hope to see God's face. Turner's Falls, Mass.

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