

Thoughts for Young People. Believers and Unbelievers.

There are two classes of people, and only two, according to God's estimate—those who accept Christ and those who reject him. It is very important for every person to decide to which of these two classes he belongs. (Verse 31.)

1. *Those who believe in Christ receive his word*, know the truth, and have all that the truth brings to them; while those who reject Christ are in blindness, ignorance, and darkness. How utterly these Jews misapprehended spiritual truth, because they would not accept Christ, who is the truth! (Verse 32.)

2. *Those who believe have liberty*, while those who believe not are in slavery. Compare the saint with the sinner—which enjoys the greater freedom? (Verses 33-36.) If now we extend our reading a little beyond the limits of this lesson, we find three additional facts concerning believers and unbelievers.

3. *Those who believe are children of God*; those who believe not are children of Satan. To the one there is a likeness to God; to the other, a likeness in deed and character to their master. (Verses 37-44.)

4. *Those who believe honor God*; those who believe not dishonor him in the person of his Son. (Verses 45-50.)

5. *Those who believe have eternal life*; those who believe not have eternal death. (Verse 51.)

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

BY J. T. GRACEY, D.D.

As the time of this lesson is supposed to be near the feast of tabernacles, we may remind ourselves of what would be a general occasion for the assertion by Jesus, "I am the light of the world." The Talmuds contain the following description: "On the evening of the first day of the feast the people come down into the court of the women, where a great scene is prepared. Golden lamps are fastened to the walls, and little cups of gold are suspended from them. Four steps lead up to them, and by these four young priests go up, carrying in their hands flagons containing 120 logs of oil. They pour this into these little lamps. When they are lighted they shine so brightly that all Jerusalem is illuminated by them. Pious and grave men dance and sing hymns and doxologies. The Levites, with their cymbals and other instruments, stand in great numbers upon the fifteen steps which separate the court of the women from the court of Israel and sing a hymn. Two priests stand at the gate at the top of these fifteen steps, each with a trumpet in his hand. At a

signal from the captain of the temple they sound the trumpet. They descend, and sound again upon the last step. They do the same in the court of the women. In the court of the Gentiles they continue to sound the trumpet as far as the eastern gate. There they turn their torches from east to west and say, "Our fathers worshiped the sun in this place, their backs turned to the temple, and facing the east, but we turn our faces to God." It was with special adaptation, therefore, that during these days Jesus should cry out, "I am the light of the world."

But this was not the only feast of which illuminations formed a prominent feature. The feast of the dedication, also, was the scene of brilliant lighting of lamps. The following quotation from the Talmuds may illustrate the joy and gladness which was represented at this feast which was instituted in commemoration of the triumph of Judas Maccabeus, who restored the temple: "The rabbis teach that on the 25th day of the month of Chisleu begins the eight-day commemoration of the dedication. During this time no one may be sorrowful or fast; for when the Greeks came into the temple they defiled all the oil which was in the temple, but the great king of the Asmoneans conquered them. They sought and found just one vial of oil which had been placed under the seal of the high priest, and in it was only oil for one day. But a miracle was wrought, and the oil lasted eight days. The year following a feast was observed in memory of the miracle," Maimonides adds: "These eight days are days of joy; lights are lighted at the doors of the houses for eight nights in remembrance of the miracle. If there are many inhabitants in one house, the one light may suffice for all. Nevertheless, he who would honor the commandment will light one for every person in the house, and even more; for the number of lights is doubled the second night, tripled the third night, and so on. For example, if there are ten people in a house, ten lights will be lighted the first night, twenty the second, thirty the third, and eighty on the eighth night." This feast was kept not merely in Jerusalem, but throughout the land, hence the familiarity of the people with the symbol, which to all Jews more or less represented the fiery pillar of the wilderness, and thus rendered forceful the proclamation of Jesus, "I am the light of the world."

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

The Light of the world. Farrar, speaking of the tall candelabra in the temple which were lighted during the feast of tabernacles, says: