

power. Plant the cross in the midst of the church and it will become the birth-place of immortal souls. Honor Christ in the proclamation of His word and He will honor us. There is no heart so hard but a sight of Calvary will soften it, no nature so impure but the blood of Christ can cleanse, no soul so lost but the strong arm of mercy can rescue it.

(3) He dwelt upon this subject because preaching Christ is the appeal that means by which men are saved. Paul hungered and pined for the salvation of souls. This was his meat and his drink, his joy and his crown of rejoicings. He could say, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." This was the burden of every prayer, the first the last, the all subduing purpose of his life. He was all on fire for this work. Oh! what intensified agony, what yearning desire, what strong crying and tears are compressed in that awful passage in the Romans, "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Good old Matthew Henry could affirm that he "would deem it a greater happiness to gain one soul to Christ than thousands of gold and silver." This is the holy inspiration that we need. There are thousands in this great city who are yet without God and without hope. Even in our congregations, our families, and our Sabbath Schools there are many on the way to death. Blessed be God for that victorious Cross! What was it which caused Christianity to spread in the days of the apostles like the waves of the sea? The preaching of the Cross. What was it which startled slumbering Europe in the reformation of the sixteenth century like the blast of an archangel's trumpet summoning to the bar of God? The preaching of the cross. What is it that is filling dark India's sky with songs sweeter than those which swelled from angel voices on Bethlehem's plains—singing not only of birth, but also of death and ascension and intercession? It is the cross—the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Oh, the sweet wonders of that cross,  
Where God the Saviour loved and died.  
The noblest life my spirit draws,  
From His dear wounds and bleeding side."

Who is sufficient for these things? If the great apostle acknowledged to conscious inability, to doubtful solicitude, to great mental anxiety—with them in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling—how much more should we, if He presses again and again the request that His brethren should pray for him. Oh! with what a deepening consciousness of increased needs does your pastor plead to-day for a place in your petitions at a throne of grace.

"'Tis not a cause of small import,  
The Pastor's care demands,  
But what might fill an angel's heart,  
And filled the Saviour's hands."

But our sufficiency is of God. When we have done all, the increase must come from Him alone. Take even the most formidable piece of artillery in the British arsenals, an eighty or a hundred ton gun, and what is it? A harmless tube of prepared steel. It can do nothing. Charge it now with powder and one of those formidable steel-pointed projectiles and put it in position. It can do nothing, might just as well be filled with sand or

saw-dust. But touch it now with a spark. That powder becomes a lightning flash—that ball a thunder-bolt and passes crashing through the citadel of the enemy, carrying destruction and death on its frightful pathway.

Thus of the Church. A simple voluntary association of men and women, weak, timorous, easily disturbed, what can they do? But let fire leap down from the upper altar, as it did on Carmel, and "kindle a flame of sacred love" in the altar of our devotion, and the church becomes omnipotent, "laughs at impossibilities and says it must be done," goes forth conquering and to conquer. Let us then begin our work, trusting in the strength of God, the power of the cross and the enlightening presence of the Holy Spirit.

#### THE MISSION BOX PENNY.

What does the mission box penny say?  
I've sent a message of peace away  
To a field of blood, where, wounded, dying,  
A soldier among the dead was lying.  
It spoke to his heart of joys above,  
It brightened his eyes with a Saviour's love;  
And he blessed the page with his latest breath  
That took from his spirit the sting of death. ¶

Mission box penny! What hast thou done?

A gospel sent to the clime of the sun.  
I found a widow by Ganges' side  
Seeking for death in its rolling tide;  
It spoke to her heart of sin forgiven,  
Of an endless life and a blessed heaven;  
And she stooped like Sychar's trembling daughter,  
To drink from the well of living water.

Mission box penny! No pearls of the sea.  
Are so rich as the blessings that flow from thee—  
To the heart of the troubled one, comfort and calm;  
To the wounded spirit, a healing balm;  
Seed for the day of eternity's reaping,  
Lamb's gathered in for the Good Shepherd's keeping;  
As the stars of the firmament, bright and many,  
Are the blessings that flow from the mission box penny.

George Paulin.

### Sunday School Department.

#### International Bible Lessons, 1877.

##### STUDIES IN THE ACTS.

July 1	Paul in Cyprus.....	Acts,	xiii: 1-13
" 2	Paul at Antioch in Pisidia.....	xiii: 13-41	
" 10	Turning to the Gentiles.....	xiii: 42-52	
" 12	Paul at Lystra.....	xiv: 6-20	
" 13	Paul at Iconium.....	xiv: 21-28	
Aug. 5	Paul Sent to Macedonia.....	xvi: 1-15	
" 12	Paul and Silas in Prison.....	xvii: 23-34	
" 13	The Yoke Broken and Bornans.....	xvii: 35-41	
" 30	Paul at Athens.....	xviii: 23-34	
Sept. 2	Paul at Corinth.....	xviii: 1-11	
" 9	Paul at Ephesus.....	xviii: 12-26	
" 16	Power of the Word.....	xix: 17-28	
" 23	Paul at Miletus.....	xx: 17-30	
" 30	REVIEW.....		
Oct. 7	Paul at Caesarea.....	Acts,	xxi: 8-15
" 14	Paul at Jerusalem.....	xvii: 15-31	
" 21	Paul and the Bigoted Jews.....	xxiii: 31-39	
" 28	Paul before the Council.....	xxiii: 31-39	
Nov. 4	Paul before Felix.....	xvii: 10-25	
" 11	Paul before Agrippa.....	xxvi: 6-20	
" 18	Alman Persuaded.....	xxvi: 21-29	
" 25	Paul in the Storm.....	xxvii: 14-28	
Dec. 2	The Deliverance.....	xxvii: 30-44	
" 9	Paul at Miletus.....	xxviii: 1-10	
" 16	Paul at Rome.....	xxviii: 11-30	
" 23	Paul's Last Words.....	2 Tim. iv: 1-8	
" 30	REVIEW.....		

### JULY 1.—Paul in Cyprus.—Acts xiii:

1-12. A. D. 48.

#### HOME READINGS.

**Monday.** The Lesson, Acts xiii, 1-13.  
**Tuesday.** Saul the persecutor, Acts vi, 54-60; viii, 1-4.  
**Wednesday.** Saul's conversion, Acts ix, 1-19.  
**Thursday.** Saul the young convert, Acts ix, 19-31.  
**Friday.** Saul called to apostleship, Gal. i, 11-21.  
**Saturday.** The Gospel to the Gentiles, Acts xi, 1-18.  
**Sunday.** The Church at Antioch, Acts xi, 19-30.

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believing, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.—Acts xiii, 12.

#### INTRODUCTION.

The Book of the Acts divides naturally into two parts: the first twelve chapters treating chiefly of *The Church among the Jews*, the other sixteen of *The Church among the Gentiles*. In the first part Peter is the most conspicuous figure, in the second Paul. With our present lesson begins that wonderful series of Missionary labours by which Christianity was spread among the Gentiles through the instrumentality of the great "Apostle of the Gentiles," sent of God "to open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith that is in Christ Jesus."—Acts xvi, 18.

#### EXPLANATIONS.

**V. 1. Antioch.**—Called Antioch the Great, or Antioch in Syria, to distinguish it from the city of the same name, which is the scene of our next lesson. Founded B. C. 300; situated in Northern Syria, on the river Orontes, about sixteen miles from its mouth. In the time of Paul it was large, (population 200,000), beautiful, busy, opulent, its citizens were "noted for scurrilous wit, and the invention of nick-names," (see Acts xi, 26). This city stands so intimately connected with history of the early Church—See Acts vi, 5; xi, 19-30; xii, 25; xiv, 26, &c.; xv, 1-36; xviii, 22, 23; Gal. ii, 11, 12, &c.

**Prophets and Teachers.**—"In the New Testament, *prophesy* signifies not merely to foretell future events, but to communicate religious truth in general under a divine inspiration (*forth-tell*)."  
**Prophets** is the specific term, **teachers** the generic. The prophets were all teachers, but the reverse was not true.—(Hackett). **Barnabas.**—See Acts iv, 36, 37; xi, 22-30; xii, 25; xiv, 1, &c.; xv, 1-35, 36-39; Gal. ii, 1-13, &c. **Simeon called Niger**, (black)—perhaps an African convert. Some identify him with Simeon the Cyrenian in Luke xxiii, 26. **Lucius.**—See Rom. xvi, 21. Not to be confused with Luke the writer of this book, whose name in Latin would be **Lucanus**. **Manaen**—had either been the comrade or companion of Herod in boyhood, or else his *father-trother*, i. e., nourished at the same nurse with Herod.—(Hackett). **Herod**—Agrippa, the one who put to death John the Baptist.—(Matt. xiv, 1-12).

**V. 2. Ministered.**—Literally, *were ministering*. "Refers here to the rites of Christian worship, as prayer, exhortation, fasting."—(Hackett).  
**Separate Me.**—"The Spirit makes the revelation, selects the missionaries, and assigns to them their work."—(Hackett).

**V. 3. Fasted.**—i. e., The whole church fasted. **Laid their hands on them**—in token of their designation to this particular service, and of desire for blessing on their labours.—(Ripley).

**V. 4. Seleucia**—Sea-port of Antioch, at the mouth of the Orontes, Cyprus—a rich and productive island in the Eastern Mediterranean about 60 miles S.W. from Seleucia. It is about 150 miles long and 60 wide. It was the native place of Barnabas.—Acts iv, 36.