

duce such a wonderful change as was wrought in these three thousand. Tradition, prejudice, custom, pride, all had given way, and they had adopted a new standpoint, a new hope, a new aim, a new rule of life. The change was as thorough as it was sudden. And it began immediately to bear fruit. Love, joy, peace, and praise showed themselves in these renewed lives, and the favour accorded to them at once by the multitude bears witness to the blamelessness and beauty of their conduct.

What effected this wonderful transformation? In the world of nature, day and night, heat and cold, cloud and sunshine, alternate. And the opinions and the ways of men undergo many changes during their lives. But the change of which we read here is a change for life. It is as though a tree hitherto fruitless was henceforth to bear pleasant and wholesome fruit, or a pond, hitherto still and stagnant, was to become a source of clear, refreshing, running water. It is a change for which nature cannot account, such a change as was contemplated by the Indian chief, who, on being told that God would have men love their enemies, exclaimed that to do that a man must be made new.

It was effected by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus had declared that "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." And here was a new creation, a new birth. These three thousand had been "born of the Spirit."

It was effected by means of the Word. The word of God in the mouth of Peter was the instrument used. "When they heard this they were pricked in the heart." And they "received his word."

If ever we are to bring forth pleasant fruits unto God, the same change must be effected in us.

It must be (in one sense) sudden. The stagnant pool will never grow gradually into a source of fresh water. It must be altered—made anew. Nor can a heart alienated from God grow toward him. There can be no growth without a beginning. We may hear and hear the word, but if ever we are to be changed there must be a moment when (whether consciously or unconsciously) we receive it.

It must be thorough. It is a giving up of the old life. The company added to the Church at Pentecost had really separated themselves in hope and faith from the great mass of their countrymen at Jerusalem, for they had accepted him whom the nation rejected. So, now, to be changed—converted, means to accept him whom the world rejects—the crucified one.

It must be *for life*—not a passing tide of feeling, nor phase of thought, nor temporary adoption of the opinions and ways of others.

Husband and wife are joined together (as our English marriage service has it) "till death do us part." But Christ receives us unto eternal life.

Have we passed through this change? We cannot convert ourselves, it is true, but we are not like the inanimate things of nature. We can hear the word, and yield ourselves to the influence of that blessed Spirit through whom alone souls are born again and the spiritual "desert" turned into a "fruitful field."

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Give a brief account of Peter's sermon preceding the lesson: (1) The time; (2) The hearers; (3) The circumstances; (4) Characteristics of the Sermon: (1) Scriptural; (2) Having Christ as theme; (3) Direct and plain; (4) Practical; (5) Bold.... The results of Peter's discourse: (1) Conviction; (2) Resolution; (3) Faith; (4) Conversion; (5) Steadfastness; (6) Growth.... The characteristics of a true revival: (1) Earnest preaching; (2) Many conversions; (3) Sudden conversions; (4) Large ingathering; (5) Training of new members; (6) Steadfastness and growth in grace; (7) Power in the world.... The traits of true conversion. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline....) The character of the pentecostal Church. (See Additional Practical Lessons.) What does this lesson teach as the duty of, (1) Those who hear the Gospel; (2) Of young disciples; (3) Of the Church toward seekers and new members.... **ILLUSTRATIONS.** The spies gathered a bunch of grapes of Eschol, (see Num. 13. 23,) a great cluster. So these converts of the pentecost were the first-fruits of the new land of promise, betokening a new fruitage.... The daisies so widely scattered over the meadows of America are said to have grown from a box of seeds which a Frenchman brought to this country, and which was broken by the wayside. The seeds took root, spread their flowers, and were scattered by the winds over the continent. So with these first-fruits of pentecost.... On the day of pentecost the first ripe sheaf of grain was laid on the altar at Jerusalem as a token of the harvest. This was the first sheaf of the great harvest of the Christian Church.

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS: Ver. 37: Prose, 1095, 1097, 5078, 7556. Ver. 38: Prose, 2990, 8855. Ver. 39: Prose, 2194, 3255. Ver. 41: Prose, 11658, 11668. Ver. 42: Prose, 2284, 5873.... FREEMAN: Ver. 46: The temple, 704.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Jesus still Living.*