

agency most potent and influential—an agency which the world needs, which no Church can afford to neglect, and which every Church might yet greatly increase and strengthen.

But what is the object? What the work? And what are the wants of the Sunday School?

Its object, I think, is twofold. The conversion and Christian training of the young. Mark, not the conversion only. There has been much talking wide of the mark on this point. Often has it been said by Sunday School teachers and workers that the object of the Sunday School was to bring the children to Jesus. I contend it is more. It is to bring them to Jesus, and then instruct them in all the doctrines and duties of the Christian life. All normal Christian life begins in early childhood; all who come to Him in later years are born, as it were, out of due time. The child instructor, therefore, may scripturally expect to be successful in bringing the will of the child into the obedience of the truth, and the heart of the child into *profoundest* sympathy with Christ its only Saviour. But when this is done his work has but just begun. He is then as a well instructed scribe to train the child in all the precepts and duties of the Christian religion.

And here it should be observed that God's own Word, in the hands of the living teacher, is the grand instrumentality for the accomplishment of this work: not the catechism, not the question book, not the library, the black-board, the paper or the music, but the everliving and the everlasting Word. I would not undervalue the influence of the Holy Spirit. I believe in His operation and power; but as that Spirit is given to every man to profit with-all, and is always willing and waiting to do His work in the salvation of every soul, it remains that a proper presentation of the truth to the mind, and proper illustration of it in the life, is all that is needed to complete the Divine plan in the salvation of men.

And there is very much reason to believe that if the truth of God were thus properly presented and illustrated, many under the gracious influences of the atonement would accept it, and be freed from the dominion, power, and pollution of sin forever.

This, then, is the object of all Christian workers—so to present the Word of God as to secure the final salvation of all under their care.

The work of the Sunday School has been very much misunderstood. Some have imagined that it was to supersede the family, in the Christian instruction and training of the young; but for such an assumption there is neither reasonableness nor Scriptural warrant.

The family is of God, and the family is forever the first, the happiest, the holiest, and the best institution among men. To every parent *especially*, God in some sense has said, in the words of Pharaoh's daughter, "Take this child and nurse it for Me, and I will give thee thy wages." This is a duty which cannot be delegated, which cannot be done by proxy, and which can only be rightfully fulfilled by the parent. Yet many parents seem to think that if they only provide well for the bodily wants of their children, they can safely trust their moral training to others.