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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Day	Date	MORNING.	EVENING.
S.	Dec. 21	4th Sun. n.d.	Isaiah 60; Acts 13; Luke 1; John 1
M.	22	St. Thomas	John 1; Acts 13; Luke 1; John 1
T.	23		John 1; Acts 13; Luke 1; John 1
W.	24		John 1; Acts 13; Luke 1; John 1
T.	25	Christmas Day	Isaiah 9; Luke 1; John 1; Acts 13
F.	26	St. Stephen	Acts 6; Acts 7; Acts 13; Luke 1
S.	27	St. John A. & P.	Isaiah 60; Acts 13; Luke 1; John 1

* Proper Lessons for St. Thomas—Morn. Prov. 23, 17-21; Even. Prov. 23, 17-21. The Athanasian Creed to be used.
 † To ver. 8. ‡ To ver. 15. § Ver. 20 to ver. 27. ¶ Ver. 4 to ver. 9.
 †† Ver. 8 and chap. 7 to ver. 21. ††† Ver. 30 to ver. 33.

Deity.

THE SAVIOUR'S BIRTH IN BETHLEHEM.

Hail, sacred moral
 That spring, or winter drear,
 Or autumn's golden ear,
 Didst with thy beam adorn;
 When, of the Hebrew maid,
 The Son of God was born,
 And in a manger laid
 —Then that prophetic star,
 Athwart the heaven divine,
 Did on the Magi shine,
 In eastern lands afar,
 And hark! on Bethlehem's plain,
 That blessed jubilee,
 That charmed each shepherd swain,
 Loud as the swelling main;
 Heaven's highest minstrelsy!

For angels bright and holy,
 Through the mid-air descending,
 Did purge the night's dark womb,
 Of all her irksome gloom,
 And shadows melancholy,
 Their light and music blending,
 "Ye midnight wretches, hail!"
 That tend the manger stall,
 And ceaseless vigils keep,
 Lest ravening beasts assail,
 While all mankind do sleep,
 Fear not—to you we bring,
 From heaven's eternal king,
 The wondrous joyful story:
 For even now is born,
 (This long expected morn,)
 The Prince, of light and glory!
 And Satan's reign is ending,
 Behold the fiend descending
 From yon aerial throne!
 His power and kingdom gone;
 And lost his victory—
 To David's city haste,
 The shadows now are flying,
 The deeper gloom is chased,
 From off the mountains wild;
 Go! find the holy child,
 In humble manger lying."

So spake the voice divine,
 The ear with rapture bending,
 While heavenly choirs attending,
 Their harmony combine:
 "Glory to God most high;
 O'er earth let peace and love
 Their balmy pinions move:
 Bid human tears be dry;
 All silent is heaven's thunder,
 And God is reconciled,
 Through the blest virgin's child;
 Let men and angels wonder!"

Religious Miscellany.

ADULT BAPTISM.

A second part of the preparation is faith, corresponding with our knowledge. Belief and Baptism had been coupled in the promise of our Saviour. When the Ethiopian asked, "What doth hinder me to be baptised?" Philip answered, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." "I believe," he answered, "that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;" and in this faith he went down into the water. When the Samaritans "believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women;" and Simon the sorcerer "himself believed also and was baptised." "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," was the promise of Paul and Silas to the jailor before his baptism. The very administration in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, expresses and exacts belief in the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Every Church

(Concluded from last week.)

accordingly requires before baptism some distinct profession of Christian belief. But what, you may ask, is the kind of belief which is required? There is a belief which overcomes the world, which proves itself by its works, which justifies, which saves; and there is a belief which merely assents to the facts of religion. The former you are afraid to profess; the latter you certainly can avow. No exact definitions and descriptions are here given us by the Scriptures. They speak a language which is to be construed by common sense and earnest feeling. To common sense and earnest feeling it is plain that it cannot aid the salvation of a bad man that he believes certain events to have occurred, which have no influence over his conduct and character. It is just as plain that when the simple proposition is uttered, "If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest," nothing more is meant than a simple, entire, hearty acceptance of the truth which has been announced and understood. No ruse is laid for the feet of the inquirer. No mystical meaning hides itself from him at the very threshold of Christianity. The belief which is required before baptism is an honest reliance of the mind and heart upon the truth of the Gospel, upon the truth of the proclamation, "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."

When the Apostle Paul, in those very words, declared the Gospel, and immediately, as an ambassador of Christ, prayed his readers "to be reconciled to God," he expressed thus the third requisition. It is that which remains on our part towards perfect reconciliation, when every hindrance on the part of our Maker and his law has been removed. It is repentance; and repentance is the change of the mind and heart from following sin to renouncing sin. In such an act the whole man acts; and the action is simple, intelligible, reasonable, and our conscience bears witness, as if with ten thousand voices, that it is just, right, and necessary. Without such a resolve against sin, we perfectly feel and know that sin can never be washed away. Men cut to the heart inquired of Peter and the other apostles, "What shall we do?" and Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." They were not encouraged to linger till they could bring forth fruits meet for repentance. They were baptized, that, their guilt being blotted out, they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and be fruitful in good works, unto life eternal. It is, in fact, impossible to be poised equally between two sides in that great contest which, in this world, and in our very hearts, is carried on between God and his enemies and ours. We are against him, or on his side; and when we lay down the weapons of our rebellion, we become at once his servants. He who is not prepared to renounce, for the remainder of his days, the service of the world, the flesh, and the devil; he who has not determined that by God's help, he will walk, to the end of his days, in the way of God's commandments; he certainly has no repentance, and must not come to the baptismal waters. But he who, after a faithful examination of his heart, feels that his choice is made, should not ask to tarry till he has further proof of the reality of his penitence. He can have no proof which will not leave it open to him to suspect himself, whenever its diligence in making his calling and election sure shall decline. He can have no proof which will secure him against the utter disappointment of all his hope at last, if he shall hereafter turn back into perdition.

Such is the preparation for adult baptism; such knowledge, such faith, such repentance. The necessary knowledge is certainly yours. If you have begun to inquire with earnestness whether you also possess the necessary faith and repentance, you must be in one of three states of mind; either persuaded—I do not say, assured—that you have them; or persuaded that you have them not; or quite in uncertainty. If you are quite in uncertainty, that uncertainty ought now to have an end. For, you have only to push the inquiry with sincerity and steadfastness a little longer, and you will reach a degree of certainty which is sufficient to govern your conduct. The balance will hang on one side or on the other, decidedly.

What, then, if you are persuaded, reasonably persuaded, that you have not from your heart accepted

Christ as your Lord, and His gospel as your hope, and are not prepared to promise, in the strength of God, renunciation of sin, and obedience to his commandments? It then remains for you to determine whether this shall longer be so; whether you will turn, and go on your way, without hope and without God, and live a little longer without the fellowship of the Church on earth, liable to hear, on any day, that summons which, finding you thus, must shut you out from the fellowship of the Church in heaven. So it need not be, for if there be truth in the Gospel you can obtain, without money and without price, that for want of which your soul is perishing. "Whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

If, on the contrary, you are persuaded, reasonably persuaded, that with the heart you believe and trust in the Redeemer of mankind, and that from the heart you renounce Satan and sin, your way is as plain as that of Israel on the border of the Red Sea. In the cloud and in the Sea they were baptized unto Moses. Like them "go forward." You must not hesitate to advance wherever the command of your Saviour, like the pillar of the cloud, directs your way. No false humility, no real timidity, no willingness to be tried by a lower standard than that of the Christian profession, no desire to rise above the standard by which you are judged amongst men, no habit of delaying acts of serious decision, must be permitted to prevail. It is, of course, easier to stand still; to assume no responsibilities; to encounter no public notice; to take up no cross; to be better than your profession; to do more for religion than you have undertaken, because you have undertaken nothing. It is easier, if you have no glowing love of Christ—if your conscience can suffer you to be at rest in the neglect of his laws, and if you attach no preciousness to the seals of his covenant, to be a truant of his grace, or the fellowship of his people. But with you I have supposed it to be otherwise; and if it be otherwise, you will never be satisfied till, having believed, you have been also baptized, for the service and in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Not there, however, will you pause. It would be a dreadful error, to think of baptism as a point which once reached, was to be deemed the place of safety. It is not the end, so much as the beginning, of Christian soldiery. The race, the battle, the business of serving God, purifying the heart, and working out salvation with fear and trembling, still follows. All the Epistles of the New Testament, with all their reproofs and exhortations, were written to baptized persons. Baptism is but a step, though a most solemn and sacred one, upon the road, which leads through duties, ordinances, conflicts, temptations, comforts, and defeats and triumphs, to glory, honor, and immortality.

When you clearly perceive the duty of receiving baptism, and humbly trust that you are prepared to take it upon you, let me counsel you to seek such conference with your pastor as may tend to make your approach to the sacramental fold of the Lord Jesus most unhesitating, tranquil, and joyful. In the administration and reception of baptism there should be no abruptness. Some time should be set apart for special prayer, and meditation, as the occasion draws nigh. Let some friends in whose Christian sincerity and fidelity you can have confidence attend you to the font, that you may have companions on your course who will not see you depart hereafter from the safe and narrow way, without fulfilling the office of a faithful friend. Having endeavoured to assist you thus far, nothing is left for me but to speak once more, as Atania spoke when the Lord had sent him to one who had just been brought out of darkness into light, and who was to become a glorious leader in the army of believers, and to be welcomed as a good and faithful servant to a dazzling and everlasting crown of righteousness. "And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

MAN'S REDEMPTION.

Recollect, Christian! God thought fit to require the blood of his Son for the redemption of our souls. These souls must have been very precious in the sight of God, since he redeemed them at a price so