

The Quiet Hour.

The Church at Corinth Founded.

S. S. LESSON, Feb. 8th; Act 18: 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: 1 Cor. 3: 11. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

BY REV. JAS. FALCONER, B.D., HALIFAX.

Came to Corinth, v. 1. From every great commercial city like Corinth, streams of influence flow to the ends of the earth. These streams will bear blessing or blight according as the source is pure or polluted. The gospel of Jesus Christ is meant to be taken down to the wharves and the banks and the stores, and so to cleanse business plans and methods from everything unjust and unkind, and through the traffic of the market-place the whole world shall feel the purifying and uplifting power of our divine religion.

Aquila, v. 2. Learn from the history of this man and his likeminded wife, how much help may be given in the work of the church by its humbler members. It may be that from them Paul gained much of the knowledge of the church at Rome which afterward led to the writing of his great epistle to that church. They became the instructors of Apollos, the eloquent preacher, who did so great a work for Christ in Corinth. There is no Christian so obscure that he may not by his prayers and devotion to duty set in motion forces that the whole world will feel. Faithfulness in the lowly places of life is as needful, and will at the end of the day be as generously rewarded, as faithfulness in exalted positions.

He abode . . . and wrought, v. 3. There is in a mansion of a certain noble family, a large oil painting of one of the sons, which is kept with its face turned to the wall, and underneath is scratched the contemptuous inscription "Gone into trade." The example of Paul, a gentleman of good family and honorable station, gives no countenance to the notion that honest work of any kind is a disgrace. He would have felt dishonored if there had been any reason to suppose that he was preaching the gospel to make money. But he saw no dishonor in toiling with his hands. The youth of Canada and of any land can learn few lessons of more value than the dignity of labor and the nobility of manly independence.

Reasons in the synagogue, v. 4. The service of Christ requires brains as well as piety. There is room in the church for the powerful, well-trained mind as well as the warm, loving heart. Our powers of mind are the gift of God. They are to be carefully cultivated and wholly yielded to Him. The ministry of the church is calling for the brightest boys, the most successful scholars, the most brilliant students. Men are needed who can reason and persuade. There are without doubt some in our Sabbath school classes for whom God has a place waiting in the holy ministry.

Pressed in the spirit, v. 5. You know how steam in the cylinder of an engine moves the machinery of a great factory by pressing on the piston. Without that steady pressure of the steam, the best machine would be useless. So the world's great need of Christ pressed upon the spirit of Paul and moved him to work with all his might to meet that need. That was many centuries ago, but the world is yet full of needy ones. Our spirits should feel the

pressure of others' needs and our energies should be put forth to help them.

When they opposed themselves, v. 6. When Bunyan's pilgrim was in the house of the Interpreter he was led "into a place where was a fire burning against a wall, and one standing by it, always casting much water upon it to quench it; yet did the fire burn higher and hotter." The explanation was that there was another man behind the wall continually pouring oil on the fire. This pictures the experience of those who follow Christ. Satan is always, like the man pouring water on the fire, trying to hinder them, but Christ is always helping them. And the help of Christ is more powerful than the hindrance of Satan.

Many of the Corinthians . . . believed, v. 8. It is the worst cases of disease that test the skill of the physician and the value of his remedies. In 1 Cor. 6: 9-11, Paul describes the character of some of these Corinthians before their conversion. If there was power in the gospel to save such people as these, there is surely no one whom it cannot save.

Then spoke the Lord . . . by a vision, v. 9. Men have often found light on dark problems and help in hard places through the vision and the voice of God. The Lord spoke to Job out of the whirlwind, and the great sufferer passed from the gloomy shades of doubt into the bright sunlight of trust. Elijah, lying in despair under the juniper tree, took up his work with new courage after God had spoken to him. From the presence of God, the timid Jeremiah went forth to meet his foes with the boldness of a lion. And the vision and the voice are for us. Ours may be the victory if we look and listen.

Life's Best Always Ahead.

How common it is for one in mature or advanced life to wish that he were young again! And what a mistake this is! If one remembers joys that he had in former years let him be grateful for them, and know that better things, even if not the same as these, are yet before him. The best things to God's children are ever ahead, not behind. If he thinks of mistakes that he then made, let him be grateful that he has not to try the thing over again, lest he might do even worse if he had another trial. If, indeed, he really can do better now, let him do so where and as he is, instead of showing his unfitness for the present by repining over the lost past.

"Would you be young again?
So would not I,
One tear to mem'ry given,
Onward I'd hie,—
Life's dark flood tormented o'er,
All but at rest on shore,—
Say, would you plunge once more
With home so nigh?"

Self righteousness makes a poor dress in which to appear before the King. "Mr. Legality," said Bunyan, "is a formal impostor and can do you no good."

Some people worry their poor brains over the unpardonable sin, Cain's wife and foreordination who might be more usefully employed carrying flour and potatoes to the poor or a ton of coal to the penniless.

For DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

Bible Study. One Verse at a Time.

Isaiah 55: 7; Paper VIII.

BY MRS. ANNA ROSS.

Prayer at the beginning. "Lord I turn at thy reproof. Pour out thy spirit into me, make known thy words unto me."

Clause I. "Let the wicked forsake his way."

Our own ways keep our faces turned away from God. We shall never find Him there. If we would find Him, we must forsake those ways, and "enquire the way to Zion, with our faces thitherward." This is the old Gospel claim put in other words—Repent.

Clause II. "And the unrighteous man his thoughts."

Our own thoughts of God are little and distorted and wrong. We could never rightly trust in One who should be like the God of our own thoughts. We must let go these thoughts of Him and take in simpler ones if ever our hearts are to reach out to Him in childlike confidence. If we keep our own miserable thoughts of God, we shall instinctively hide from Him as Adam did.

Clauses III, V. "And let him return unto the Lord, and to our God."

This is a double invitation to the sinner to come home. "Whosoever wilt, let him come."

Clauses IV, VI. "And He will have mercy upon Him, for He will abundantly pardon."

This is a double assurance of welcome. Here are the right thoughts of God set down alongside of the invitation to return. Let these two thoughts in their certainty and tenderness and amplitude enter in, and the returning sinner will see his God to be such that he will run unto Him like the nations of verse 5. Let the soul that is turning to seek God study the emphasized words of this double assurance until his heart warms and melts toward Him who spoke them.

Ottawa Ladies' College.

God's Way of Saving Sinners.

BY ROBERT JOHNSTON.

We are not in a safe condition to obtain salvation, unless we are first thoroughly convinced in our minds of our utter inability to do anything for ourselves to obtain salvation.

Before asking to be forgiven, we must first feel in our hearts that we are guilty sinners in God's sight, and are standing in need of pardon of our sins. Unless we feel that we are guilty, and make a truly humble and penitent confession of our sins, we are still in a state of rebellion against God. It is the kind of spirit we are entertaining in our hearts, when we approach God in prayer that is either in favour of, or against us being heard.

We read the truthful words, viz.: that man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh into the heart, yes, it is the true and willing service of the heart that God demands. His words to us all are—son and daughter give me thine heart, nothing less than the whole of our hearts affection will satisfy God. Yet how sad it is that so many are giving a divided heart—the largest share to the world and its demands, and the smallest part to God. It is impossible to serve both, it must either be God or Mammon. Therefore if we come to God in a humble and penitent frame of spirit, acknowledging our sinfulness, and pleading the merits of Jesus' death as the sacrifice for sin on our behalf, God will then