

V. 17.—*Began*. Hitherto he taught more privately, but now he proclaimed the kingdom of God.

V. 18.—Peter was the first disciple, and continued to be first.

V. 21.—James and John were young men; their parents were still living and in the prime of life. James was the first of the apostles who died; John lived the longest of all. *Ship*—a small vessel—a “boat.”

V. 23.—*Sickness* here means a disease affecting the whole body, such as fever, paralysis, &c. *Disease* in this verse means an ailment or infirmity of some part of the body, such as lameness, sores, &c.

V. 24.—*Syria*—north and east of Palestine; often used as including Palestine.—*Torments*—diseases attended with excruciating pain.

V. 25.—*Decapolis*—a district containing ten towns.

LESSONS.

1. Judea did not welcome Jesus though its privileges were greater than those of Galilee; so Jesus made Galilee the scene of the greater part of his public teaching and his miracles. If we do not use the light we have it may be taken from us and given to others who will be more faithful.

2. Observe how prophecy is fulfilled. V. 14, &c.

3. Christ is true light and through Him alone we can escape the shadowy region of death.

4. Christ's kingdom is “of Heaven”—“of God”—not of this world. In order to become members of this kingdom we must follow Christ; learn of Him, repent of our sins.

5. The first disciples were humble men—fishers. Christ chose the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. The gospel owes its success to God's blessing, not to human instrumentality.

6. The four disciples whom Christ called here obeyed Him at once. They promptly left all and followed Him. We should follow their example.

7. Note how Christ cured *all* who came to Him. No disease was too inveterate, no demon too strong for Him. His miracles were publicly performed; how different the false miracles of pretenders! He who can cure the diseases of the body can heal our souls; He is ever able and willing to help.

DOCTRINE.

We should obey Christ's call—Prov. i. 24-28. Heb. ii. 3; iii. 14. 15, &c.

SECOND SABBATH.

SUBJECT: *Storm stilled—Devils cast out.* Matt. viii. 18-34.

Jesus passes from the west to the south-east side of the sea of Galilee.

V. 19.—Scribes rarely came to Jesus except to tempt Him. *Follow*—that is, become a disciple.

V. 20.—Jesus tells him plainly that his followers must expect poverty and hardship. Jesus had no house or home.

V. 22.—“Let the spiritually dead bury those who are literally dead.” You must not on any account turn back from Christ.

V. 24.—*Ship*, a mere boat. *Asleep*, from weariness. Satan had probably a hand in this tempest; hence “Jesus rebuked the wind.”

V. 28.—*Other side*, the east side. *Tombs*, these are generally excavations of considerable extent in rocks, and in the sides of hills. Persons who had no other home often sought shelter in these tombs.

V. 29.—Devils acknowledged with dread that Jesus was the *Son of God*. Men were much slower to make the discovery. *Time*, the final judgment.

V. 31.—Even the enemy is indulged sometimes. See Job i.

V. 32.—Jesus caused a fig tree to wither; He drove money changers out of the temple; he permitted the destruction of the swine. But even in these instances His mercy was remarkable.

LESSONS.

1. Persons sometimes express their intention to follow Christ without duly weighing the difficulties they must meet with. Vv. 19, 21.

2. Jesus was poor. We should not be ashamed of poverty, unless brought on us by vice or laziness. Despise not the poor. Remember Him who had no house or home!

3. Our obligations to Christ are greater than to father or mother; Christ and His commands first!

4. The winds and sea are more obedient to Christ than men. We should not fear when in the path of duty. Jesus slept, for He was weary and His conscience was pure. Jonah slept, for his conscience was dead. Jonah caused the storm: Christ the deliverance.

5. Christ and his disciples in the boat is a striking type of the church tempest-tossed on the sea of the world. She will be safe so long as Christ is in her. In all ages and countries, in churches and Sabbath schools, Jesus is present to hear the cry of distress, and hush the wild storm.

6. Think of the awful power and malignity of evil spirits and be grateful to Christ that he has them in subjection. We may learn from the conduct of the Gergesenes that men may become so degraded as to prefer property or money to Christ. What a fearful state to fall into!

DOCTRINE.

Christ has power over all. Heb. i. 10; Col. i. 16; Rom. xi. 36; Matt. xxviii. 18.