

about "evening red and morning gray" heralding propitious weather is over and over again proved deceptive in the place where I have spent the last few winters. Then there is another kind of saying—the report which is whispered from one to another—the news which startles every one and causes sudden rejoicing, or sudden fear and grief. I remember how, at an early stage in the siege of Sebastopol, in 1855, the news arrived in England that the stronghold had fallen, news which was shortly after proved to be utterly false. It is not so long since Europe was informed that General Gordon was conquered, and a prisoner in the hands of the Madhi, quite contrary to the facts. And to come to more every-day matters, do we not constantly hear "sayings" about this person and that person, on which no dependence whatever ought to be placed. I have only this morning heard of an injurious statement made more than once, which I know to be utterly untrue. And young people cannot be too strongly warned against repeating statements which they may hear, but which they have not been able to verify.

But there is one saying we cannot repeat too often, nor spread abroad too widely, that of our Golden Text: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

This is an historic saying. It is news of something which has actually occurred. It is the report of an event which has really taken place, and has been thoroughly verified. No fresh news can ever discredit or disprove this.

It is a traditional saying. That Christ has worked out a salvation for, and that he does save, sinners, has been repeated from one to another through many generations. It has the force of a saying which one after another in the years that are gone have proved to be true.

It is an every-day saying. You may hear it constantly, if you will. And it deals with every-day trouble and every-day need. There is sin all about us—the world is full of it. But "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

This saying is often challenged. Christ came, some will tell you, to be an example, to teach a pure code of morals, to assist those who are striving to do right, to help to raise human nature. But all this is another saying, not the "faithful" one. It is a record invented by man.

And it is a saying often frowned upon. Quite unsafe, some will tell you, to proclaim salvation on such easy terms. Sinners must be taught to make some effort of their own, to purify themselves. But God has never said so.

It is "faithful" because it is God's word. It is "the record that God gave of his son." When the dispatch from the commander-in-chief arises from the seat of war, the news is known to be true. God himself has communicated this news.

And because it is faithful, it is "worthy of all acceptance." The traditional sayings of men, the every-day rumors of men, may often deceive. But in repeating this saying you are spreading a true

report, which shall be for the life and health of thousands. It will never deceive you if you accept it. It will never bring you to shame if you repeat it.

Since such good news has come to us, true, faithful, and worthy to be received, three things follow, which Paul sets before us:

1. *Praise to God* (ver. 17). We praise a general who has won a victory, and saved our country from defeat. We thank the messenger who brings us good tidings. The German Protestants fell at the feet of Gustavus Adolphus when he brought them deliverance from the sword of the Imperialists. And no doubt the teacher can recall like instances nearer home. How should we receive the record of God himself, and of what he has wrought for us? When Paul recalled what the good news had been to him, no wonder that he burst forth into a gush of praise! Have you thanked God? Have you praised God?

2. *Warfare* (ver. 16). Sinners are saved to become soldiers in the army of the King. So Paul, addressing Timothy, charges him to "war a good warfare." There is a battle going on for the cause of Christ, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and can those whom Christ has saved do less than fight under his banner? When some turn aside like "Hymeneus and Alexander" there is need that Christ's true servants should be up and doing.

3. *Prayer* (chap. 2. 1-4). Of whom are you most encouraged to ask a favor? Of him who has already granted one. If a man has given proof of his goodwill toward others, you are not afraid to go to him either on their behalf or your own. After the proof of God's love that he has given, there is not one for whose good you are anxious whom you may not bring before him in prayer. It is his good will to save the lost, and he has provided a Mediator, through whom prayer will be accepted (ver. 5).

Praise God for the "faithful saying." Fight boldly, pray earnestly, because of the "faithful saying."

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Tell the class about Timothy, who he was, his fidelity to the apostle, and what is shown of his character in Acts 16. 1, 2; Phil. 2. 19-22, and 2 Tim. 1. 5. . . The time and circumstances of this epistle. (See General Statement.) . . . The lesson has two aspects, either of which may be treated in the class. One is shown in the Analytical and Biblical Outline, and is well adapted to older scholars. If it be followed, let the texts be searched and read by the class, and the teachings concerning Christ be emphasized by the instructor. But let an application be made of the duty of those to whom this salvation comes. . . The Thoughts for Young People contain the other view of the lesson, its practical teachings. . . ILLUSTRATIONS. It is related that Queen Elizabeth once received a manuscript copy of the Bible so finely written that it was placed in a nut-shell. So the first and last verses of our lesson contain the whole Bible in miniature. . . A vessel on its voyage needs both compass and ballast. "Faith" is one, and "a good conscience" is the other. If either be left ashore, the voyage of life will end in shipwreck.