

Sabbath School Teacher.

LESSON XXXIV.

August 21, 1873.

THE TWO FOUNDATIONS.

Matt. vii. 21-29.

CONSIDER TO MEMORY VS. 22-23.

PARALLEL PASSAGES.—Rom. ii. 13; Ps. i. 16.

With vs. 21 read Luke vi. 46; with v. 23, 24, and John vi. 51; with v. 24, 25, read 2 Tim. ii. 19; with v. 26, 27, read Ps. i. 6; and with v. 28, 29, read Act. xiii. 12.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Christ the one foundation.

INSTRUCTIONAL TEXT.—Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. 1 Pet. ii. 6.

This is the closing portion of the sermon on the Mount—direct, pointed, and practical. It brought home the truth to the hearers own bosoms, as all sermons and Sunday school lessons ought to do.

We cannot better introduce the points the Saviour makes, than by referring to the impression which Matthew tells us this preaching made. This instance, no doubt, stands for many others, as in xiii. 54, and Mark vi. 2.

The people (multitude), were struck, amazed with his doctrine; not his learning; nor his opinions; nor views; but his method of teaching. The scribes gave their opinions; and no doubt often supported them by the views of others, as Jewish writers have a habit of doing, "as Rabbi—says." Jesus spoke as one who knew of his own knowledge, who had within himself the truth he was telling, and whose manner, without being boisterous, or violent, or odd (that is not power), showed that he had a certain right to speak. By this greatness of character, he awed men, as we can see in the purifying of the temple. John ii. 15.

The classes described in this pointed appeal, we may call Dead Professors, Believers and Despisers.

I. DEAD PROFESSORS.—How far they may go! This is shown by the dialogue, which for the sake of vividness, Christ gives, and not as if it would actually be spoken, but as what men think now, as God sees them.

1. Mere professors may prophesy—even foretell events, like Balaam (Numb. xxiv. 3, 4), who was a wicked man. Numb. xxiii. 8, and Rev. ii. 11. The word, however, often means to declare God's will, to teach, as in Sabbath-school. So Judas; so Demas; so Simon the sorcerer; so unconverted ministers.

2. They may have a commission to teach from him, attested by the signs which he gave the twelve, "casting out demons," the common name by which the supposed inferior gods were described among the heathen, and which the Hebrews at this time applied to fallen angels. The two uses of the word come together in 1 Cor. x. 20, "the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God," not to the Devil (one leading accuser and a proper name.) He gave this power to the twelve, Matt. x. 8.

3. They may work "miracles generally;" for such power could be given to men whose hearts were not right with God. When such gifts were bestowed, men would be taken at their word, so to say, as men are taken in the church, now. The word for "wonderful works" might as well be miracle. It is a solemn thing to see that men may look not only like saints, but highly honored saints, may do a great deal of good, be great workers, get up and carry on societies, cast out devils, of drink and other vices for example, and yet not be the Lord's.

It is to be noticed (1) that no grace is here mentioned—only gifts. The least portion of true faith, or love, is of more value than great gifts.

(2) That great alarm will be felt at last by such. The Lord's hearers would not as clearly understand "in that day," as we do, but they would know it referred to some time of examining, rewarding, and punishing. We know "as the judgment day." How eager, tremulous, and amazed, they now are! They used to have God's name frequently on their lips, "Lord! Lord!" Now they repeat it in awful alarm, "Lord! Lord! have we not, &c? Is it possible we shall be cast out?"

(3) That their end is lamentable. They were doing their own will. The love of learning, knowledge, power, consequence may set men to many things outwardly useful. But nothing is obedience and a root of faith, but doing God's will—the will of the Father. To them who do not obey the Judge will say (they professed; he also will "protest" with a sincerity they never felt). "I never knew you, never owned you as friends, always knew you as doing your own will, and so my real enemies." Then follows the sentence, "Depart," (see Matt. xxv. 11, 12, and 41,) and the kind of persons on whom it falls. "Ye that work, make a business of iniquity."

II. BELIEVERS.—Two things mark them, "hearing" Christ's saying, having knowledge and intelligence ("faith cometh by hearing") and "doing." He says "repent." They repent. He says "believe." They believe. He says "follow me." They follow him. So did the raiments that noble list in Heb. xi. "According to all that God commanded him, so did he." Gen. vi. 22.

Such are we (Dan. xii. 3), as their course shows. Possibly something had occurred in the neighborhood, that showed the difference between building a house on the sand or on a rock (which in the English Bible, as in England now, never means a movable piece of stone, but a solid mass.) Heavy rains often fell and washed away, as in all lands like Palestine, the dry sandy earth; so foundations are made to keep clay enough, for the vines and fig-trees on the slopes.

All are builders. Each can build but one house. The believer begins on the right foundation. His building is tried, like others, but it bears the trial, falls not, for founded on a rock. The dangers great, rain storms, carried by fierce winds, making freshets, falling on the house, but it does not fall. So, by figure of the tree, in Psal. i. 3.

So alarms, temptations, false doctrines, the roaring lion, all try believers, but "who shall be able to separate," &c., Rom. viii. 35, 39. Exposed buildings, like light houses, have their lower stories set into the living rock. So saints and Christ. Rom. viii. 1.

III. DESISTERS OR NEGLECTERS.—They also hear, or at least might, if they would. It is the other side of the picture. But there is no believing, as proved by no doing. So, many of the Lord's hearers at that time. So, many of Ezekiel's. Ex. xxxiii. 31, 32.

They are foolish, irrational, making no provision for the future, not like the steward, whose forethought (not his honesty,) his master commended, not like the ants, but "careless," "simple," as in Isa. xxxiii. 9, 10; Prov. i. 22, 32. Wise enough, often in early things, foolish in spiritual. The very same text applied to their building, for all are building, but oh! how different the result! "It fell, and great was the fall of it," impossible to rebuild, ruin final, eternal. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? Heb. ii. 3. Not a whisper or hint of another offer after death?"

These lessons (among others) may be learned.

(1) Dead professors, and open unbelievers come to the same end. Both lost. No gain to a man that he can say. "I never pretended to religion."

(2) There is but one rock. Seamen know the rocks to shun them. Wise builders know them to build on them. Let us not miss the rock!

(3) But there are many kinds of "sands;" our prayers, tears, works, honesty, church, good forefathers, sacraments, &c.

All alike in this, what is built on them falls and perishes. All good in their place, but it is not their place to save.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

GOING TO JESUS.—A Christian mother was once showing her little girl, about five years old, a picture representing Jesus holding an infant in his arms, while the mothers were pushing their children towards him. "There, Carrie," said her mother, "this is what I would have done with you, if I had been there." "I wouldn't be pushed to Jesus," said little Carrie with beautiful and touching earnestness; "I'd go to him without pushing."—The Biblical Treasury.

DISMAL PEOPLE.

There are many people who take a strange delight in being dismal. Some of them are so selfish that nothing is ever right, because they imagine they ought to have something extraordinary in the way of luck. A few are ill-tempered, and adopt the dismal line on purpose to spite those who live with them being well assured that this is the most effectual way of so doing. But the majority of the Dismals are good people (or, at least, people who want to be good), and they appear to be dismal strictly on conscientious grounds. If they put their feelings into words, they would probably say something of this sort:

"This world is made up of sin and sorrow, and suffering. It is a probation, and we need not look for anything pleasant until we pass into the next. We must not give way to happiness, or encourage joy. It is true that God gives the sunshine and the flowers, but He intends that while looking at them we constantly remind ourselves that the rain will come, and that the flowers will die."

It seems impossible that such hearts can love, but perhaps they do so after their own dismal fashion. Everything is done for duty, and if by chance in performing this duty they stumble upon the doing of anything pleasant, they are sure to spoil the taste of it. The question is, what pleasure do these people find in life? The best thing that mortals can do while passing through this thorny world, is to pluck as many roses as possible.

ON ACQUIRED PHYSICAL HABITS.

"The effects of disease and injury on the memory are so marvellous and diverse, that only a very general indication of them can be here given. Cases are very common in which the form of impairment just spoken of as characteristic of old age shows itself to a yet greater extent; the brain being so disordered by attacks of apoplexy or epilepsy, for example, that it seems altogether incapable of retaining any new impressions, so that the patient does not remember anything that passes from day to day, whilst the impressions of events which happened long before the commencement of his malady recur with greater vividness than ever. The memory of particular classes of ideas is frequently destroyed; that, for example, of a certain language, or of some other branch of knowledge, or of the patient's domestic or social relations. This case was recorded by Dr. Beattie, of a gentleman who, after a blow on the head, found that he had lost his knowledge of Greek, but did not appear to have suffered in any other way. A similar case has been recently communicated to me in which a lady who for three days insensible, in consequence of a severe blow on the head, found herself on recovering to have lost all the music she had learned, though nothing else had been thus 'knocked out' of her. Again, Dr. Abernethy relates a curious case, in which the authority of an eminent medical friend, in which a surgeon who suffered an injury of his head by a fall from his horse, on recovering from his insensibility, gave minute directions in regard to his own treatment, but was found to have lost all remembrance of having a wife and children, and this did not return until the third day. Strikingly losses of particular languages and other kinds of acquired knowledges have been noted as results of fevers."—Contemporary Review.

Our Young Folks.

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S SEARCH.

Among all the beautiful legends of the middle ages, none is more pathetic and suggestive than the story of St. Christopher.

Colossal in stature, unequalled in strength, there dwelt in the land of Canaan a giant named Offero. Feeling in his heart the want that comes in man to all hearts, he travelled far and wide, seeking to find the mightiest prince on earth, that he might serve him. From one to another potentate he went, ever finding, after a short period of labor, that his new master stood in fear of some other and stronger. Existing at last in the service of the devil, he worked for him faithfully, till he discovered that the sight of a cross by the wayside caused him to tremble with fear. So he left him, and marched on, seeking but not finding Christ, and desiring to follow the bidding of a hermit, who desired him to fast and pray. Then the hermit bethought him doubtless that in Christ's economy there is scope for all natures, and to this man, who did not comprehend fasting and prayer nor the gentler aspects of religion, it might be that hard work might become the chosen means of grace. So he told him of a perilous river, in fording which many pilgrims perished, saying, "Since thou wilt neither fast nor pray, go to that river, and use thy strength to aid and to save those who struggle with the stream, and those who are about to perish. It may be that this good work shall prove acceptable to Jesus Christ, whom thou desirest to serve, and that He may manifest Himself in thee!" To which Offero replied, "This I can do. It is a service that pleaseth me well!"

Patiently, then, by the side of the river, by day and by night, the strong man waited, aiding the weak, carrying the helpless, and standing those who were in danger of going down with the current, till one day our Lord, looking on him well pleased, said, "Behold this strong man, who knoweth not yet the way to worship me, but has found the way to serve me."

So the legend goes on, telling of quiet and faithful service, willingly paid, till there comes a dark, stormy night, when the wind moans drearily, and the drenching rains fall. To the giant, resting in his hut, comes, faint and tremulous, the cry of a child, "Carry me over, carry me over this night!" Twice and thrice came the piteous call ere the weary Offero answered, when going forth from his shelter into the tempest, he found a little child who, borne upon his shoulder, grew heavier and heavier till, almost fainting, he reached the other side. "Henceforth shalt thy name be Christopher," then said the child, "for thou hast carried Christ."

It were idle to try to parallel this poetic legend exactly with the meanings of our daily life. The heart of it is the same that beats in the beautiful utterance of our Saviour, "Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my servants, ye did it unto me!" Those who have found out how to love and labor for Christ's friends are on the way to the knowledge of the best Friend himself. There are some who pitifully complain that they cannot find the personal Jesus. They believe that He is a Redeemer, but their faith fails to appropriate Him as their own. To such, groping in the dark, and knowing not how to find rest, the story of Christopher finds a precious suggestion. Work for the Master, though you yet know Him not. Don't let other people's languish which your hands may help; don't let suffering souls and bodies near you suffer for lack of your tender ministry; give the cup of cold water to the disciple, and you may yet gain the disciple's reward. Not that the good work shall save you, but the germ of faith that prompts to the good work, so tiny perhaps that you do not recognize it, shall be cared for by Him who sees and blesses all who trust in Him.—Christian Intelligencer.

A LESSON IN GOOD MANNERS.

"Mother, Sarah Price is such a rough, ill-mannered girl, I wish she would not come to our school. She is always saying something unpleasant when we girls are playing together, and making fun of those who do not dress as handsomely as she does. She has four gold rings now, and says her father is going to get her a pearl set on Christmas. She told Lina Rockwell she would not wear such a mean little plain ring as that of hers. It made Lina feel badly, as the ring belonged to her mother, and she gave it to her the day she died. Sarah knew that, too. Should you think she would have been so unkind?"

"I should not, indeed, but still I think you can learn valuable lessons from Sarah Price's example."

"I want respect, mother?" asked Nelly, wondering.

"You may learn lessons in good manners from her."

Nelly smiled a little puzzled smile, but said, "I just wish you could see that girl behave for one day."

"I can form a pretty good idea from your statements, and think I have seen many very much like her. But you may learn good manners by seeing how very unlovely the opposite traits look. Whenever you see the feelings of a schoolfellow hurt by a rude remark let it be your study carefully to avoid everything of that kind in your conversation. Let an example of folly and unsuitableness in dress teach you to be humble and tasteful in your appearance. Learn from the faults as well as the virtues of people, all along through life, Nelly. Some of my best lessons in house-keeping I got from a very disorderly house-keeper at whose house it was my duty to board once. Many a time I would say to myself as I sat at her table, 'That is one thing I will never allow in my house, and so I made a note of a good many things which helped me a great deal afterwards. But not the least important lesson, dear, that you may learn is patience with the erring, and self-command under provocation. You will have need enough for both

all through the journey of life. It is a very easy matter to get along well with agreeable people, but how to do the same with disagreeable ones is a more difficult problem. Every thing that helps us is a real blessing."

THE SONS OF HAM.

"What the Africans now are the people that once inhabited these islands were. There is no supposition there that had not its counterpart here, the deed of foulness and barbarity committed there that was not perpetrated here. We now enjoy all the benefits that have accrued to us through long ages of civilization, though having been brought into harmony with the highest forms of the world's progress; whereas they have been until lately isolated from the rest of the world by physical causes, quite as nearly as the ocean separated the Sandwich Islands from our knowledge, and of no people is it recorded that unassisted they have been able to raise themselves from barbarism. It was the slave trade that broke the spell of Africa's seclusion, and in this lies the explanation of its continued degradation. But looking at the tone of feeling amongst all civilized nations with reference to slavery and the slave trade, and the interest now excited amongst all classes by the geographical discoveries of Livingstone and others, the future is full of hope for Africa. . . . The motives of Tasmania have disappeared, the Australians are nearly extinct, it is but an antiquary's question as to when we shall see the last of the New Zealanders and the Indians of America die out in the presence of the white man. Not so the Africans. Place him where you will so long as he gets sunshine, and under what circumstances you may, and Israel in Egypt scarcely increased faster. It is estimated that there are fifteen millions of people of African descent in the mainland and islands of America. Africa is more thickly peopled than was supposed; instead of thirty it probably contains a hundred millions of people."—Cornhill Magazine.

Random Readings.

The Word of God is clear enough, but our human minds are dowdy, and, like bats, cannot face the light.—Francis H. Sales.

Let us keep to Christ, and cling to him, and hang on him, so that no power can sever us. Then soon we shall see him with joy at that day.—Martin Luther.

Before thou reprehend another, take heed thou art not culpable in what thou goest about to reprehend. He that cleanses a blot with blotted fingers, makes a greater blot.—Quarles.

All trials are by His appointment. They are ordered and regulated by His all-wise providence. They are actually brought about by His will, and their precise measure and weight depend upon that will.—Guilliere.

How fast time flies when you are working against it, how slowly when you are working to fill it up! What a difference between trying to get your work done before your dinner hour and trying to fill up your hour before dinner with work!

All ceremonies are in themselves very silly things, but yet a man of the world should know them. They are the out-works of manners and decency, which would be too often broken in upon if it were not for that defense, which keeps the enemy at a proper distance.

He that converses much and is humbly confident with God in prayer, shall certainly be heard; and these answers of prayer and undeniable evidences of the truth, faithfulness, and love of God, will greatly strengthen his faith, and at last bring him to be intimately acquainted with him. The more we receive, the more we are enlightened to see how much there is still wanting. This stirs us up to more frequent prayer, and to desire evermore; and the more we desire and believe that we shall receive it, the more shall be granted. Unbelief receives nothing. Matt. xiii. 58. But faith opens all the treasures of God, and never goes empty away.

An Italian prince, as much delighted with the person as grieved with the prodigality of his oldest son, commanded his steward to deliver him no more money than what the young prince should tell his own self. The young gallant fretted at his heart, that he must buy money at so dear a rate, as to have it for telling it, but (because there was no remedy) he set himself to task, and being greatly tired with telling a small sum, he broke off in this consideration. Money may speedily be spent, but how tedious and troublesome it is to tell it! And by consequence how much more difficult to get it! Men may commit sin presently, pleasantly, with much mirth, in a moment. But O that they would but seriously consider with themselves how many their offences are, and sadly full accounting them! And if so hard truly to sum their sins, sure harder sincerely to sorrow for them.—Fuller.

Grace is not given us to abandon labor, but labor required lest our sluggishness should make the grace of God unprofitable. Shall we betake ourselves to our ease, and in that sort refer salvation to God's grace, as if we had nothing to do with it, because without it we can do nothing? Praising urged labor for the attainment of eternal life without necessity of God's grace; if we teach grace without necessity of man's labor, we use one error as a nail to drive out another. David, to show that grace is needful, maketh his prayers unto God, saying, "Set thou, O Lord, a watch before the door of my lips;" and to teach how needful our travail is to that end, he elsewhere useth exhortation, "Refrain thou thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile." Solomon respecting the use of our labor giveth counsel, "Keep thy heart with all the custody and care that may be." The apostle, having an eye unto necessity of grace, prayeth, "The Lord keep your hearts and understandings in Christ Jesus."—Bramwell.

Scientific and Useful.

APPLES AS BEING FOOD.

It is stated that by careful analysis it has been found that apples contain a larger amount of phosphorus, or brain food, than any other fruit or vegetable, and on the account they are very important to sedentary men who work with their brain rather than muscles. They also contain the acids which are needed every day, especially for sedentary men, the action of whose liver is sluggish, to eliminate the acids which, if retained in the system, produce a reaction of the brain, and indeed of the whole system, causing jaundice, sleepiness, scurvy, and trouble some diseases of the skin.

POISONOUS WALL PAPER.

Cases of arsenical poisoning from wall-paper have been frequently made public. A short time ago a Roman Catholic priest died at Hinsdale, Massachusetts, under circumstances which indicated poisoning by arsenic, although it had been supposed that he was the victim of cancer in the stomach. It was ascertained that another person who had previously occupied the room where the priest died had also died with similar symptoms, and a third person had been made ill, but recovered on removal. On examination the walls of the room were found to be tinted with Paris green, which an analysis showed the presence of arsenic in considerable quantities.

KINDNESS TO CATTLE.

A Massachusetts farmer says in regard to the management of cattle: My cattle like my company. When in the pasture they will follow me until I leave the lot, and as a general rule they come up to the barn-yard every night about sunset, and in their way call for a lock of hay. Though I give them all they want, they take but a few mouthfuls, which satisfies them; and I am confident that it does them a good deal of good. It keeps their bowels regular and they thrive well and are happy. They do much better than they did when I changed pastures once a week; for now they have a change of food every day, instead of once a week. Cattle need kindness, and they pay well for it, I can handle my steers and others as I please. They will come up to me while I am milking, and invite me to play with them. The time I think is not far distant when soiling cattle will be the most profitable where most of the farm can be cultivated. Provide a small lot for them to run in, feed green fodder, save all the manure, and our farms will grow richer.

PAPER BAGS FOR COAL.

You know what a racket is caused, even by the most careful hand, in supplying coals to a grate or stove, and how, when the performance is undertaken by the servant, it becomes almost distracting. If you don't remember take notice the first time you are ill, or you have a dear patient in your care, or the baby is in a quiet slumber. Let some one bring on her coal scuttle or shovel, and revive your recollection. Well the remedy we suggest is to put the coals in little paper bags, each holding about a shovelful. These can be laid quietly on the fire, and, as the paper ignites, the coals will softly settle in their place. You may fill a coal scuttle or box with such parcels, ready for use. For a sick room, or a nursery at night, or even for a library, the plan is admirable. Just try it. Besides, it is so cleanly. If you don't choose to provide yourself with paper bags, you can wrap the coals in pieces of newspaper at your leisure, and have them ready for use when occasion requires.

A DURABLE PASTE.

Four parts by weight of glue are allowed to soften in fifteen parts of cold water for some hours, and then moderately heated till the solution becomes quite clear. Sixty-five parts of boiling water are now added with stirring. In another vessel 30 parts of starch paste are stirred up with 20 parts of cold water so that a thin milky fluid is obtained without lumps. Into this the boiling glue solution is poured, with constant stirring, and the whole is kept at the boiling temperature. After cooling, 10 drops of carbolic acid are added to the paste. This paste is of extraordinary adhesive power, and may be used for leather, paper or cardboard with great success. It must be preserved in closed bottles to prevent evaporation of the water, and will, in this way, keep good for years.

SUNFLOWERS GOOD FOR SOMETHING.

A writer in Coleman's Rural World urges farmers to put in a patch of sunflowers. The yield, he says, is about equal to corn, and they require about the same attention. As food for poultry and hogs they far exceed corn. A little occasionally mixed with horse-feed gives a fine coat. Every farmer's wife, especially on the prairie, will be pleased to see a goodly lot of the stalks stacked near the kitchen. For kindling these have no superior, and are easily prepared, for a feeble child can break the largest stalk across the knee. The stalks make splendid bean-poles. Plant as soon as the frost is out of the ground, and when it comes time to plant the beans the sun-flowers will be knee high. Then thin out to a single stalk and plant the beans at the foot; you will thus get two crops. Chemists tell us its ash contains four-fold more alkali than ordinary wood. It is also a splendid protection from cold winds when set against north and west fences. Cattle like it, and do not pull it down as they do straw or stalks. Again, if a man lives in a malarious district and owns an acre of land, it would pay him well to devote half of it to the sunflower, which is an acknowledged absorber of noxious exhalations.

To-day is not like yesterday; to-morrow will be beyond to-day. The vicissitudes of humanity are decked in now smiles or hidden under unfamiliar frowns. Misery calls itself by new names; suffering puts on a new face. The joy, sin and sorrow and pain do not change their nature and vicissitudes, hunger and disease and death are always with us, yet they appear in new faces and demand new administrations of justice; or new channels of sympathy and relief.