

known to the Jews, who could testify to his strict observance of the law from his youth. V. 6. *And now*—this day. *I stand and am judged*—am subjected to a trial. *Hope of the promise*—of the Messiah. V. 7. *Our twelve tribes*—the whole Jewish people. *Instantly*—with intensity. *For which hope's sake*—on account of my cherishing this hope in common with all the Jews. V. 8. *Incredible*—not to be believed, absurd or wanting evidence. V. 10. *Saints*—Christian believers. *My voice*—my vote. V. 10. *To blaspheme*—to recant from their faith and renounce Christ. *Strange*—foreign. V. 12. *Whereupon*—in the midst of these persecutions. *Damascus*—the capital city of Syria. V. 13. *At mid-day*—at noon. The time is given, as if to anticipate all attempts to explain away the miracle. *A light*—the emblem of the divine presence and glory. V. 14. *Pricks*—an ox goad, a sharp piece of iron inserted in a stick, with which the ox is urged on, against which if it kicked, it would only make the instrument pierce the deeper. So Paul's violent conduct would only increase his remorse and sorrow. V. 16. *A minister and a witness*—one who ministers by witnessing, or one who administers and one who testifies. V. 17. *Unto whom*—both Jews and Gentiles. V. 18. *To open*, etc. A complete sketch of the office of the ministry. Its objects are—1. The instruction of men; 2. Their conversion; 3. Their forgiveness; 4. Their salvation; 5. Faith as the means by which these results are obtained. V. 19. *Not disobedient*—yielded at once to the command. See Acts 9:6. Compare Gal. 1:16. V. 20. An outline of his labors and preaching.

WHERE ARE WE HERE TAUGHT.—1. That we may be very conscientious, and yet very wicked? 2. That we are accountable for our belief as well as for our conduct? 3. That when God calls we should obey promptly? 4. That God's grace is able to reach and subdue the proudest and most hardened?

Nov. 18th.] [Acts 26 : 21-29

ALMOST PERSUADED.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.*”—Acts 26 : 28.

V. 21. *For these causes*—literally, on account of those things, his labors among Jews and Gentiles according to his commission. *Jews caught*—ch. 21 : 28-30. *Went about*—endeavored. V. 22. *Witnessing*—according to his commission, v. 16. *Saying none other things*—delivering no new doc-

trines, but maintaining that the prophecies respecting the Messiah had been fulfilled. *Should come*—should take place. V. 23. *Suffer . . . rise . . . show light*—these are the three chief parts in the writings of the prophets. V. 24. *Thou art beside thyself*—gone mad or become insane by the study of these things. “The unbelieving world thinks the warm-hearted, earnest Christian mad; the Christian knows the worldling to be so.” Eccl. 9:3. V. 25. *Soberness*—sanity, the opposite of madness. V. 26. *These things*—the prophecies of the Jewish Scriptures and the death and resurrection of Jesus. *This thing*—the crucifixion, including also the resurrection of Jesus. *Not done in a corner*—but openly in Jerusalem, in the most public manner. V. 27. *Believest thou?*—implying that if he did he must assent to the truths which Paul had been uttering. V. 28. *Almost*—rather, somewhat, in a little. *I begin to feel the force of your arguments, and if I hear you longer do not know what the effect may be—not a genuine conviction of the truth of Christianity, or any approach thereto.* V. 29. *I would to God*—I could pray to God. *As I am*—fully devoted to Christ. “Iron chains on the hands, with Christ in the soul, are better than royal robes with an unbelieving heart.” The result is given in the remaining verses of the chapter. Agrippa decides that Paul was innocent of the charges, and might be set at liberty but for his appeal to Cæsar. This had taken the case out of the governor's hands, and “to Cæsar he must go.” Thus God was about to grant Paul's earnest desire to “preach the Gospel in Rome also.”

HOW ARE WE HERE TAUGHT.—1. That great learning and earnestness and sincerity ought to go together? 2. That one may believe the truth and yet utterly reject it? 3. That one may be very near the kingdom and never get into it? 4. That faithful Christians may safely appeal to their own record?

Nov. 25th.]

[Acts 27 : 14-26

PAUL IN THE STORM.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*”—Ps. 56 : 3.

The governor lost no time in sending Paul to Rome. Under the charge of a centurion named Julius, he was placed on board a vessel of Adramyttium, a seaport of Mysia, opposite to Lesbos. Sailing from Cæsarea, they stopped at Sidon, then at Myra of Lycia. Here the centurion placed his prisoners on board an Alexandrian vessel bound for Italy. Thence they sailed