

The Church Times.

"Evangelical Truth--Apostolic Order."

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Calendar.

CALENDAR WITH LESSONS.

Day	Date	MORNING.	EVENING.
Dec. 1	1st Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 60	John 1
2	2nd Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 61	John 1
3	3rd Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 62	John 1
4	4th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 63	John 1
5	5th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 64	John 1
6	6th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 65	John 1
7	7th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 66	John 1
8	8th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 67	John 1
9	9th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 68	John 1
10	10th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 69	John 1
11	11th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 70	John 1
12	12th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 71	John 1
13	13th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 72	John 1
14	14th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 73	John 1
15	15th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 74	John 1
16	16th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 75	John 1
17	17th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 76	John 1
18	18th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 77	John 1
19	19th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 78	John 1
20	20th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 79	John 1
21	21st Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 80	John 1
22	22nd Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 81	John 1
23	23rd Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 82	John 1
24	24th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 83	John 1
25	25th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 84	John 1
26	26th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 85	John 1
27	27th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 86	John 1
28	28th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 87	John 1
29	29th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 88	John 1
30	30th Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 89	John 1
31	31st Sunday in Advent	Isaiah 90	John 1

Poetry.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

And when those things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.—St. Luke xli. 28.

Nor till the freeing blast is still,
Till freely leaps the sparkling rill,
And gales sweep soft from summer skies,
As o'er a sleeping infant's eyes
A mother's kiss, ere calls like these,
No sunny gleam awakes the trees,
Nor darts the tender flowerets show
Their bosoms to th' uncertain glow.

Why then, in sad and wintry time,
Her heavens all dark with doubt and crime,
Why lifts the Church her drooping head,
As though her evil hour were fled?
Is she less wise than leaves of spring,
Or birds that cower with folded wing?
What sees she in this lowering sky
To tempt her meditative eye?

She has a charm, a word of fire,
A pledge of love that cannot tire,
By tempests, earthquakes, and by wars,
By rushing waves and falling stars,
By every sign her Lord foretold,
She sees the world is waxing old,
And through that last and direst storm
Describes by faith her Saviour's form.

Not sorer does the tender rose,
Set in the flint's polished stem,
Forebode the summer season bland,
Than those dread signs Thy mighty hand:
But Oh! frail hearts, and spirits dark!
The season's light unwarn'd we mark,
Ere miss the Judge behind the door,
For all the light of sacred lore:

Yet is He there: beneath our caves
Each sound His wakeful ear receives:
Hush, idle words, and thoughts of ill,
Your Lord is listening: peace, be still.
Christ speaks by a Christian's hearth,
Be silent, "vain deluding mirth,"
Fill in thine altar'd voice be known
Somewhat of His agonian's tone.

But chiefly ye should lift your gaze
Above the world's uncertain haze,
And look with calm unwavering eye
On the bright fields beyond the sky,
Ye, who your Lord's commission bear,
His way of mercy to prepare:
Angels He calls ye: be your strife
To lead on earth an Angel's life.

Think not of rest: though dreams be sweet,
Start up, and ply your heaven-ward feet.
Is not God's own upon your head,
N'er to sink back on slothful bed,
Never again your loins untie,
Nor let your torches waste and die,
Till, when the shadows thickest fall,
Ye hear your Master's midnight call?
—The Christian Year

Religious Miscellany.

The Tract, of which we commence the publication to-day, although designed for our neighbors, is well calculated to be useful in this Province, and we recommend our readers to make its contents known as widely as possible amongst their acquaintances who may be unbaptized. It is by Bishop Burgess of Maine, and is published by the Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge in New York.

ADULT BAPTISM.

In all Christian countries, except our own, almost all persons have been baptized in their infancy. It was so amongst the settlers of our country. But at present, in the United States, the majority die in childhood unbaptized, or arrive unbaptized at manhood. A denomination which rejects all baptism except that which is performed by immersion, and at a ripe age, has become in its various branches an overwhelming multitude. Far beyond its own limits,

its influence casts, of course, a shade of doubt over what was once prized as a sweet consecration of the cradle and the fireside. Amongst several other denominations, the practice, after a struggle, has been confined to the children of communicants. Every where, it is easier to leave undone than to do. Arguments on the side of neglect are readily admitted, and children will remain without baptism, if their parents believe infant baptism to be wrong, or doubt whether it is right, or are quite indifferent to the duties of religion, or permit themselves to postpone acknowledged duties from month to month, and then from year to year. Thus it is that so many of those into whose hands this tract may fall, will find in it an appeal to themselves; for, very possibly, half of them are still unbaptized when their eyes first rest upon its pages.

In these pages, the question of infant baptism, however, is not to be discussed. Every rebuke of those who bring little children to Jesus, that he may bless them, is a violation of his command, "Forbid them not," and to persuade any whom he has so received and blessed to renounce that baptism and seek another, must be left to more daring pens than mine.

Those, too, who have been already baptized in their maturer years are not here particularly addressed. In any right view of adult baptism they will find something to remind them of the vows that are upon them as soldiers of Christ crucified. But, enlisted as they are, they need not be urged by the summons which calls men to his banners. Their task is now to fight the good fight manfully.

For unbaptized readers chiefly, this tract is intended. They must be at this moment in one of two classes, such as *have not*, and such as *have*, considered more or less, the question whether they ought not to be candidates for baptism.

Those to whom this question has never seriously occurred, should be reminded of question, even more pressing and more solemn. The reason why it has not occurred must be, either that they have thought very little of Christ and his commands; or, that they have been perfectly conscious of their utter unfitness for an act so holy. In either event, the word of God has other messages for them, before this can come with power to their conscience. To speak to the dissipated, the profane, the vicious, the frivolous, or the worldly and merely worldly, of baptism as their duty, might possibly mislead, and would certainly be useless. To speak of baptism as the duty of any, however sober, moral, or virtuous, who have never yet asked with any serious concern, what the Lord would have them to do, might be a language which they could misinterpret. But that which may not be simple and strictly their duty till they are otherwise than they now are, is yet to be before them in all their authority and necessity, as a duty fastened to their duties, of which one and all are as binding upon them as upon all beside who hear the Gospel. They may be startled by *two* reflections, which, in some thoughtful hour, may steal upon them, and refuse to be dismissed.

The first consideration is this. Nothing can be more certain than that our Lord and Saviour has required of "every creature" of the human race to whom his word shall be preached, to believe and to be baptized. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Baptism is as plainly enjoined as belief; not as in itself of the same nature, but upon precisely the same authority. When you are asked why you are not baptized, your answer is, in substance, that it is because you do not believe. With neither of these two conditions, therefore, have you complied, and you have not the slightest hold upon the promise of salvation. You disregard one command because you have already disregarded, and still continue to disregard, another and a higher. That baptism should, under all circumstances, be a condition of salvation, it may be impossible to suppose. But why should it not be such for those whose only excuse for remaining unbaptized is that they are neither fit nor desirous to obey a divine commandment? In offering pardon to a multitude of guilty men, their sovereign might require them to apply for a certain document, which, duly attested should be the pledge of their safety. If any of them while earnestly desiring to comply with his offers of clemency, yet misunderstood them, or were unable

to perform the condition, such might still hope and expect from a just and merciful sovereign that they should not suffer for their involuntary failure. But, surely against those who have turned scornfully away from every offer, the absence of the attested document would be evidence enough. Think well that, however it may be with others, the want of baptism signifies in such as you indifference to the commands of Christ and to the terms of salvation, when those commands and these terms have been declared by him with exceeding plainness and solemnity. You read them in the very commission which he gave to his apostles, when he sent them and their successors into all the world, to preach the Gospel to every creature and so to you.

The other consideration is that the unbaptized are not within the communion of the Church on earth. That Church is a society, founded by our Lord, to bind together all his servants in one sacred fellowship. He names it his temple, his spouse, his body. The only entrance into that society is baptism. It has its unworthy members, and they are many, and yet, the intention of Christ, that all who look to him for salvation should be its members, even though tares should be as thick among the wheat, that it should rather be said that the wheat are among the tares; the intention of Christ that every Christian should be baptized, and thus become a member of his visible Church, is as clear as any other one thing in the Holy Scriptures. The duties of such membership are not yours. It is a very serious, a very awful thing to remain to the end without the fold of the Good Shepherd, when he has come to seek and save the lost; to decline enlisting in the armies of the Captain of our salvation, when he has summoned all to his help against the mighty; and to determine, under the full light of the Gospel, on casting in your lot with the heathen. The Bride, as well as the Spirit, has said, "Come;" and you have not come. You might have entered at any hour, but you have chosen to wait at a distance. You never thought seriously of becoming one of the company of Christians. Those who belong to that company may well remember with deep solicitude that within their outward fellowship there is still an inward communion of the saints, which can not be severed from the unfaithful portion of the Church till the final harvest. But you belong neither to the inward nor to the outward communion: you are not, and you care not to be, members of the church visible or invisible. Shut out by your own willing act and persevering choice, from the society of which Christ is king, here below, how can you enter that in which he reigns above? It cannot be.

We now turn from those who *have not*, to those who *have*, regarded the question whether they ought not to receive baptism, as one of personal and solemn duty. Some obstacle bars their way. It may be a particular view of the nature of baptism; or a doubt, whether they are prepared for its engagements; or a mere habit of consenting to delay a step so decided; or all these causes may have been combined, to produce neglect till now.

Has anything in your view of the nature of baptism persuaded you that you ought not to believe it binding upon your own conscience?

The ordinance of Christian baptism originated, not at all with the wisdom of the Church, but simply from the wisdom of our Lord and Saviour. He said to the apostles, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The apostles did as they were commanded. They preached the Gospel everywhere, and they baptized those by whom it was received. On the day of Pentecost, they that "gladly received the word of Peter were baptized," so that the church of Jerusalem at once numbered more than three thousand. When the Gospel passed on to Samaria, they who believed "were baptized, both men and women." When the Holy Ghost fell on Cornelius and his friends, those fruits of the Gentiles, the apostle Peter at once exclaimed, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?" When the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, she was baptized, and her household. The converted jailer at Philippi "was baptized, he and all his household." It was the practice, always and everywhere, of those