

advice with respect to the trials and temptations to which they were continually exposed, he proceeds at once to the matter which lay on his heart—that they should be “doers of the word, and not hearers only.” And he presses this upon them by three illustrations.

1. That of a gift.

Imagine a man whose whole property has been destroyed by fire, who has escaped himself, but the loss of everything he possessed. Then he is forlorn and destitute in the world, hard work and poverty before him. Is there anything that could make a man of him, and set him at once on the road to comfort and prosperity? Yes, a gift will do it. Let an estate be given him, or a business made over to him, or a sum of money be placed to his account, and his fortunes may soon be retrieved. But how? By the use of the gift. As long as the estate lie uncared for, or the business neglected, or the money allowed to lie idle, he will be none the better for it.

And so to fallen, ruined man, there comes a gift for the purpose of making him a new creature in order to raise him from the condition of a beggar to that of a prince, a son of God. 1 Sam. 2. 8; John 1. 12. “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth,” “the word of the Gospel” (see the last lesson) concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a “good” and “perfect” gift coming from above. Ver. 17. But it must be used. If a man continues to live as a beggar, of what use is it that he has been made a prince?

2. That of a power.

Suppose that a man neglects his estate, or his business, so no profit comes from it. He might plead that he had not power to improve it; that he was a helpless sufferer, unfit for work of any kind. And such a plea would be valid. But if at the same time an infallible means of cure be given him, strength and vigor and ability for work may become his. But on what condition? On this condition: that the cure be received and used. Otherwise it will avail him nothing.

And the “word of the Gospel” is not merely a gift, where a man is raised to a position of dignity and blessing; it is power entering into the heart. It is “the implanted word, able to save your souls.” “I saw salvation,” said a young girl speaking of the moment when she heard the “word of the Gospel,” and her heart opened to receive the gracious gift of God, “but I did not see the life.” The word told her that Christ had died for her sins—that she believed; it told her also that she ought to lead a new life—and how to do that she could not tell. But

receiving the word “with meekness” she soon found that it was a power, able to save, not only from the old condition of guilt, but from the old life of self. Thus receiving it, she becomes a doer of the word.

3. That of a mirror.

The glass in which a man beholds himself shows him when anything is wanting to his appearance which may be supplied. He may look and forget, or he may look and act accordingly. Unless he do the latter the mirror is of no use to him.

The “word of the Gospel” comes to raise a man to the position of a “Son of God;” to give him power to live as a “Son of God,” and to show him what is lacking to his appearance and life as a “son of God.” Thus it is a gift, a power, and a mirror, but only effectual when used—done as well as heard.

If a sick man, in rags, were to boast that he possessed a fine estate, an infallible means of cure, and a mirror to show him what he ought to be, it would be hard to credit his story. It is as hard to believe that he who is not a “doer of the word” has ever really received it.

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Let the lesson be read in both versions, the old and the Revised; one section of the teachers' meeting reading a verse from the old version, and another, or a single reader, giving the same verse from the new. Notice the corrections of the Revised Version. . . . Keep in mind James' purpose, not to speak of the Gospel in its essence as an experience, but in its outward aspect as a life. . . . Define the use of the following expressions, and their special reference in this lesson: *Father of lights; shadow of turning; first-fruits of his creatures; righteousness of God; superfluity of naughtiness; engrafted word; face in a glass; law of liberty; pure religion*, etc. . . . Taking the Golden Text as the key, notice first, what things are forbidden, taking up the verses in order, and observing their probabilities. . . . Then, what things are here required. . . . Or, take the law of “liberty,” and see what are the principles of life which it suggests, as here illustrated. (See Additional Practical Lessons). . . . Our lesson shows the servant of Christ in various relations, as shown in the Analytical and Biblical Outline. . . . A good way to begin the lesson in the class would be by showing a small hand-mirror, and talking about it, as in verses 22-25. . . . ILLUSTRATION. The wife of a drunkard once found her husband in filthy condition, with torn clothes, matted hair, bruised face, asleep in