

coming fewer every year, who are engaged in the business. Last year in one of our associations the debate over the matter was very hot. Some advocated withdrawing fellowship from the churches that would not exclude liquor dealers and others favored more forbearance. The latter prevailed and the churches are using their influence to get the liquor dealers to give up the business and are refusing to receive any new members from this class. Less than twenty years ago there were more than one in the Clarksville church. Some of these are members of the church today, but they have not been in the business for several years and last Sunday signed the petitions. It was the same with neighboring churches. So we have reason to thank God and take courage.

JOHN LEWIS.

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## The Soul-Winner and His Servant.

BY REV. EDWIN S. STUCKER.

The Holy Spirit is the soul-winner. The disciple of Jesus is his servant. "When he is come he shall testify of me; and ye shall also bear witness." Christ's work in redemption is followed by the Spirit's work in regeneration. He is engaged in making men holy. Luke deals largely in samples in the book of "Acts," of doings of the risen Christ, who continued to work after his ascension by the Holy Spirit, through the apostles and disciples whom he had chosen. In his eighth chapter we have what may properly be considered a typical case of soul winning.

To study this we need first of all to look at the Soul-winner himself. We discern in Acts as nowhere else his passion for souls. That "God so loved" and that the Son of God loved" are familiar thoughts, but we too often overlook the statement of "the love of the Spirit" who "maketh intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered." The "compassion" of Jesus who was "full of the Spirit" may well illustrate the Spirit's yearning after men. Having this passion for souls he plans for their salvation. The 120 in the upper room in Jerusalem are in his plan for reaching the multitude in the streets below. So Philip is sent a ter the Ethiopian prince; Ananias is sent to Saul; Peter to Cornelius; Barnabas and Saul to Sergius Paulus; Paul to Lydia; and so on through the book. Each messenger is specially prepared and set apart. A deliberate plan was made to reach each of the individuals just mentioned. See, now in the next step how he prepares the souls for whom he has made the plan. When the 120 came to the multitude they had only to speak and thousands cried out, "what must we do?" The Spirit had gone before, and was even then with his disciples, convincing men "of sin, of righteousness, and the judgment." When Philip reached the prince what was he doing? "Reading the Prophet Isaiah." What did he do? Realizing that he needed "some man to guide" him, "he besought Philip to come up and sit with him." When God sends a man he goes before and prepares the way.

The soul-winning is described in detail in this typical case introduced in Luke's wonderful story. It is clear that it is a case of an individual dealing with an individual. "Go near" is the command. The man may be a prince, but God's servant need not fear to "go near." If the Spirit sends him The means used is the word of God. Out of that word a message of Christ is presented to the inquirer. More than that, it is a message of Christ as Saviour. The convicted sinner does not need to be argued with, or to have "difficult passages" explained, but to have a message of salvation. He must be told of Christ, and especially of Christ "led as a lamb to the slaughter." "He was wounded for our transgressions." "By his stripes we are healed." This is the message for the inquirer. It remains for Luke now to show us the work completed. The evangelized soul must confess his faith in a crucified and risen Saviour in the divinely appointed way. It is remarkable that he asked for the baptism. There must have been something in the teachings which suggested the ordinance. Luke now for the first time in his story describes carefully the act of baptism. Burial and resurrection were plainly shown. The work of evangelization was ended, the convert was happy in believing, and "the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip."

One can not carefully study this story, without discovering the soul-winner's method. He sends a saved man after an unsaved man. The Spiritual God reaches the unspiritual man through the two-natured disciple of Christ, who is in touch with both. We learn, too, the voluntariness of service. We are not "instruments," but agents. We can resist God if we will. We can refuse to hear and to heed his call. Instruments deserve neither blame nor glory. Agents do. To refuse to cooperate with the Spirit in witnessing to Christ the Saviour is to thwart a plan of God, and it may be to cause the loss of a soul. Who is responsible? On the other hand we see what great possibilities lie before the faithful disciple. As the servants of the Soul-winner we have it in our power to "save a soul from death," to "hide a

multitude of sins' and, by the words that we speak, to pass on that eternal life which was with the Father, and which was manifested unto us, for "he that believeth on the Son hath eternal life." "This is the record." Let us count it all joy to be the devoted and active servants of the divine Soul-winner.—Standard.

## Half Baked.

BY REV. S. E. WISHARD, D. D.

That was God's characterization of his people, when their piety had decayed. "Ephraim is a cake not turned," half baked unfit for use. Half cooked food, neither cold nor hot, is insipid, nauseating. For such a quality our Lord said; "I will spew thee out of my mouth."

Ephraim had lost his spirit of communion. His spirit of devotion had been smothered by his idolatries. "There is none among them that calleth unto me," said God, by his prophet Hosea. Some of the forms of worship were kept up, but they were only the dry skeleton, the rattling bones of a defunct life. The desire of Ephraim was to gratify himself with the new forms of heathenism about him, while holding to some show of the old religion which he had been taught of God. He was as a cake baked on one side, half-cooked and half raw, fit for nothing, but to mock and offend God.

One of the most seductive ways of departing from God, as Ephraim had done, was by taking down the barriers between a godly and a godless life, mingling with those of whom it must be said; "The love of the truth is not in them." This preference of the things forbidden, both leads astray and marks the estrangement. "Ephraim mixeth himself among the peoples." He finds congenial sentiments among those that know not God. He adopts their maxims concerning business, social and religious life. They are good enough for him in his back-slidden state, and more congenial than the severe, self-conquering maxims of a walk with God. Ephraim has discovered that the church is narrow, and by reason of its narrowness fails to get hold of the people. He has therefore decided to throw overboard the loving requirements of the Lord. He changes the reading—interprets it to mean, "Be conformed to this world, and be not transformed by the renewing of your mind." It is only a slight transposition of the negative and positive, and adapts it to the dominant influences of the world.

Adopting the maxims of the world leads inevitably to the adoption of its methods. For the underlying principles determine the outcropping life. "He mixeth himself among the peoples," and comes to accept their idolatrous worship, and corrupt himself with their sinful practices. Half baked is worse than not being baked at all for it is neither dough nor bread. God does not accept things by the half. He will have the whole man, the whole heart, the whole life, or nothing at all. He does not dicker with Ephraim for a part of his service, and let him off on certain scores. With God it is all or nothing; it is entire reception or entire rejection. The half baked cake is like "the salt that has lost its savor. Wherewith shall it be seasoned! It is neither fit for the land nor yet for the dung-hill; but men cast it out."

The prophet said of Ephraim: "Strangers have devoured his strength." Having lost communion with God, by making friends with the world his new-made friends are discovered to be enemies in disguise. Like the wine of intoxication, the friendship of the world "at last biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

The strangers to whom Ephraim had gone for fellowship had devoured his strength. Having used him they turned upon him with curses. The godless world has never changed its habitation in this respect. Having degraded the professor of religion to their own level, men scorn his weakness and mock at his ruin. Having broken his hold upon God, Ephraim's only strength, they leave him in derision and without succor.

They that think to win men to God by coming down to their level in morals, by diluting the Gospel, strewing flowers in the road to perdition, and prophesying smooth things when God has bidden them warn the lost of their danger, incur the judgments of God and the reprobation of all honest men. Ephraim, whether he be preacher or layman, must, above all things, be honest—tell the truth and live it, whether men will hear or forbear.—Rx.

A writer in the Cumberland Presbyterian is very much disturbed because Prof. Farr, of the Theological Department of Cumberland University, gives up Isaiah 52:15 as a proof text for sprinkling. Prof. Farr, among other things says: "The marginal reading in the revised version 'stirle' for 'sprinkle' presents the interpretation adopted by most students at the present time."

On this we say:

1st. Prof. Farr knows what he is talking about and his critic does not.

2nd. Even if the passage read "so shall he sprinkle many nations," it could not be argued that it had any reference to sprinkling for baptism unless it were first

proved that baptism is sprinkling. There is not a scintilla of evidence that the passage has the slightest reference to baptism. Nothing is said about baptism in the connection, and baptism did not come into existence for many centuries afterward.

3d. The Hebrew word *nazah*, here rendered 'sprinkle,' in King James' version is thus defined by Davies in his Hebrew Lexicon: "To bound or spring; of liquid to spurt, to cause to leap for strong feeling; to make a start." And Davies, in that connection, translates that passage "so shall he startle (or surprise) many nations." And, as Prof. Farr says, this is "the interpretation adopted by most students at the present time."

The Septuagint version, which is the Greek version used by Christ and the Apostles, translates *nazah* by *thaumazo*, which means to astonish. And this makes the passage intelligible. Leaving out the parenthesis, the passage thus reads: "As many as were astonished at thee, so shall he astonish many nations." This is clear and plain, while to make it read: "As many were astonished at thee, so shall he sprinkle many nations," renders it unintelligible.

Putting in the parenthetical language the passage in full is thus: "As many were astonished at thee (his visage was so marred more than any man and his form more than the sons of men) so shall he astonish many nations: the kings shall shut their mouths at him; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider." The American version puts the parenthetical part in parenthesis, as above. The meaning is thus clear. The marring of his visage and form is mentioned as a reason for the astonishment of the "many," and then the astonishing of the many nations is enlarged upon by saying that kings shall shut their mouths in astonishment "for that which had not been told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider." To insert "sprinkle" simply destroys the sense. Both the revised and the American versions put "stirle" in the margin—"so shall he startle many nations."

## No Happening.

BY H. O. ROWLANDS

Great excellencies and valuable results in character do not happen to any one. One may become rich by pot luck; but that does not touch character. The wealth that effects character is industry, economy and wise persistence. One does not become learned in any knowledge by chance. Learning is the result of plodding, persistent, costly, and wearying. Accomplishment is the child of Labor and Patience and the grandchild of genius and faith. The Christian character and life are no exceptions. God has provided no special legislation to exempt the Christian from those great laws of life. You were not converted to a Christian life by magic, or a shock; you become a Christian by "striving to enter in at the straight gate," the Spirit of God assisting. You will not "grow" in any grace except by exercise and service. A babe chained to the cradle and there always fed, but never taught self-help and exercise will develop into an imbecile, or a freak, a helpless lump of babiness. We think we have seen such things occasionally in the church. They are a perpetual care, never a help or an inspiration to God's cause. Growth, effectiveness, power, influence, and holiness in the divine life are qualities to be "worked out,"—they are the results of efforts and consecration. The work may be more laborious to some than to others, as are all kinds of toil; but to one will those virtues come by chance. "Something for nothing" is a principle unknown in God's economy. While salvation from sin is all of free grace; yet heaven in its glory is not free. No one enters in by good luck; it is not a windfall to a dying man; not a "present" to favorites; but, "blessed are they that do his commandments they may have a right to the tree of life." "The rest that remaineth" is for those who have labored with faithfulness and patience.—Standard.

## Numbering Our Days.

The ninetyeth Psalm may be cited as perhaps the most sublime of human compositions, the deepest in feeling, the loftiest in conception, the most magnificent in its imagery, presenting a perfect picture of human life as troubled, transitory and sinful, giving a right conception of God as the Eternal One, the Sovereign and the Judge, and yet presenting a refuge and hope to all men who in the midst of great trials turn to him for refuge. There seems to be no reason to doubt that this psalm was composed by Moses. From the remotest period his name has been attached to it.

The first verse reads: "Lord, thou has been our dwelling place in all generations." So near and dear is the relation between God and his people that they mutually dwell in each other. The soul is at home in God, because this is its birthplace, and one can never be at home elsewhere; he is the only true dwelling place, for all men, at all times.—J. Wilbur Chapman.