

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.**THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—God's Promise of the Spirit.—Isa. xlv. 1-8.

Second Day—"I will send Him unto you."—John xvi. 1-15.

Third Day—"He shall be in you."—John xiv. 15-26.

Fourth Day—The Holy Spirit Given.—Acts ii. 1-13.

Fifth Day—"This is that which was spoken."—Acts ii. 14-31.

Sixth Day—The gifts of the Spirit.—1 Cor. xii. 1-31.

PRAYER MEETING TONIC, Jan. 10.—"Why we are Presbyterians."—1 Peter iii. 8-16.

WHY WE ARE PRESBYTERIANS.

Strictly speaking, Presbyterianism is a form of church government, but that form is an expression of great principles, principles which were implanted in the bosom of man, illustrated in divine revelation and crystallized in the only form of government which ever received explicit divine sanction; namely, government by the representatives of the people. The primitive family was at once the state and the church; the father of the family being the priest and ruler of his household. He was the first elder. Aggregations of families were governed by councils composed of these elders. When families increased and became communities the elders ruled through representatives, thus the ancient and primitive Church of God was ruled until the time of Saul. It was a divinely sanctioned theocracy, administered through representatives of the people. The people were rebuked when they desired to substitute a monarchy, a centralized government. The local rule of the elders was continued. Christ found them ruling in the synagogue. Paul instituted them in the churches which he organized. This form of government remains to-day, and it will continue throughout eternity. When John looked from the cliffs of Patmos into the Golden City, did he see a "prudential committee?" Did he see a bunch of mitred abbots, big or little, from an acolyte to a pope? Nay. He saw four and twenty elders in the exercise of their spiritual functions. There were one hundred and forty and four thousand there already—not a pope nor a prudential committee in the whole heavenly country. The brethren of the other communions will come into the most ancient, the divine and the eternal Church of God, at last.

The Presbyterian Church therefore, stands for a government of the people, by the people, and under God, for the people.

The doctrine of the Presbyterian is in accord with his policy the sole sovereignty of God and the perfect freedom of man. The sovereignty of God can receive no help from us, but the freedom of man may receive much. The first element of freedom is knowledge; therefore the Presbyterian who knows his calling is devoted to the education of the people. Thus it has come about that the Presbyterians possess a higher average of education than any other people.

That men may be free they must be virtuous as well as intelligent. The Presbyterian is therefore a champion for every instrumentality and reform that will elevate the moral standard of men. They are vigorous defenders of the Sabbath, because it is essential to the intellectual, moral and spiritual enlightenment of men. They are uncompromising enemies of the saloon, because it is a chief force in maintaining the devil's institution of human chattelhood. Whatever degrades men enslaves them to their own passions, or to the will of other men is determinedly resisted. They regard the Bible, and therefore they so strenuously defend it, as the magna charta of human freedom, the charter of God, upon which a man may stand and bid defiance to any matter, civil or ecclesiastical. We stand in this freedom wherewith Jesus Christ hath made us free.

Wherein does the present Presbyterian differ from his predecessors? Chiefly in that he knows more—hence he is not so narrow in his views. Our men who know it all are now confined to two classes—old men who stopped acquiring knowledge forty years ago, and young men who have not yet begun to acquire it.

What is the present chief duty of the Presbyterian? I must say it is to inform himself more thoroughly of his mission in the world. Let him put his money and his muscle behind his own convictions in promoting his own works. Let him be more watchful in spotting demagogues, civil or ecclesiastical. Let him not allow himself to be diverted from his work by controversies over non-essentials. He knows what he wants. Let him go for it straight.

Presbyterianism stands for living principles towards man and pure worship towards God. It stands resolutely for the Bible because the Bible is its charter of rights, terrestrial and celestial. It stands for God as the Universal Sovereign, for Christ as the

expiatory Saviour, and for man as a lost sinner, whom it is the duty of every Presbyterian to find and bring back to his Father's house.

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL.**International S. S. Lesson.****LESSON II.—THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN.—JANUARY 10.**

(Acts ii: 1-13.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost."—Acts ii. 4.

TIME AND PLACE.—Sabbath, May 28th, A.D. 30. Jerusalem.

INTRODUCTION.—From the closing verses of our last lesson we learn that the disciples of Christ returned from Bethany, where they had witnessed the ascension of the Lord to Jerusalem, and there, in an upper room, and in the temple, from day to day, they continued in praise and prayer. At some time during the ten days that followed the ascension of Christ there was chosen from among the disciples one to take the place of Judas as one of the twelve apostles. At length, on the tenth day after Christ's ascension, the promise for which He had commanded them to wait was fulfilled, as related in our present lesson.

I. THE GIFT GIVEN. (1-4.)

"The time."—Pentecost, sometimes called Feast of Weeks (Deut. xvi. 16), fifty days after Passover. Jerusalem again full of Jews from all parts. Best time for preaching the Gospel to all nations.

"The sound."—Like rushing mighty wind. Fit emblem. Wind is invisible (St. John iii. 8), mysterious—coming and going suddenly; sometimes powerful, as in a storm; sometimes gentle. always healthy and life-giving.

So is the Holy Spirit. Works unseen. Sometimes mightily, e.g. on this very day making 3,000 repent at once. Sometimes gently moving hearts.

"The sight."—Bright light on each, like tongue of fire. What does fire do? It gives light. So does the Holy Spirit teach the things of God and guide to all truth. (St. John xvi. 13.) It also purifies. Gold is tried, or tested, by fire. So by the Spirit can mortify sin and become holy. (Rom. viii. 13).

Lesson.—As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.

II. THE GIFT USED. (5-13.)

"The gift of tongues."—Who were gathered together? Jews from different parts—Asia Minor, Egypt, Arabia, Central Asia, etc. They had heard the loud sound of the wind—collected quickly round the house. What did they now hear? The Apostles speaking in their languages. What a strange thing! Apostles, natives of Galilee, unlearned men (iv. 13), yet now telling God's wonderful works in sending His Son so that all could understand. What a great gift! Just what the Apostles wanted. They could not otherwise have reached the ears of all.

Lesson.—The entrance of Thy Word giveth life.

TROUBLES.—The day of Pentecost was the culminating period in the system of Redemption. It ushered in the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, thus proving the divine mission of Jesus, and the truth of Christianity. The old dispensation of types and shadows, of forms and ceremonies, was completely supplanted by the incoming of the spiritual power wrought in men by the Holy Ghost. It was evident that a special divine influence spread over the waiting company of disciples, bringing to them the means of advancing Christ's Kingdom throughout the world.

The Holy Spirit moved directly upon the disciples. They were made conscious of His presence, both by hearing and seeing. They were filled with His power when touched by His bright-shining, genial warming and destructive burning. They were moved to speak openly to the wondering, doubting, mocking people. Their tongues became as it were fiery. No one looked to see how another was affected, for each one was inspired with such courage of his own, that he arose and spoke in the language which the Spirit gave, and declared the plan of Salvation, the dispensation of grace. The inward change was so perfect, so purifying, that all thought of personal vanity, or carnal enjoyment was gone, and the spontaneous praise to God sounded forth upon the scorner as well as those who were awakened.

The Galilean disciples were made examples of the power of God's Salvation. They were gathered from different walks in life, and were made up of various dispositions and temperaments. Yet they found it possible to wait upon God unitedly until He visited them, bringing to them the promised gift of His own Spirit. It was seen that every one who waited received the baptism. Each one was able to speak words that astonished the people. Each one took up the same strain, had the same theme. According to his capacity, each one was filled, ended, and