

compared with the same in these times. Then and now Christ came, and on certain conditions; then people repented of sin—have I? John humbled himself before Christ—do I? Pointed others to Christ—do I? Mark begins a chapter of a book; I begin with 1889 a new chapter of life. (b) Contrast. Mark's reverence for and interest in the Old Testament; my lack of these. Christ's humility; my pride. John's preaching; modern preaching. John's testimony to Christ; the world's. John 8. 48. The descent of the Spirit; the departure of the Spirit. Comp. Gal. 4. 30 and Gen. 6. 3. 2. *Method.* (1) What is the writer's main thought? Is it not, How John prepared the way for the Christ?

(2) What was the writer's chief purpose in expressing this thought? Was it not to teach Christians the truths of the spiritual life, and to lead unbelievers into that life? (3) Do you see in the main thought any phase of the spiritual life important (a) to yourself: (b) to A, B, C, and D, your pupils? Think of them one by one. (4) On the understanding and answering of questions like the three preceding hang all true success in biblical study and teaching. The printed page may help make plain the truth, but only meditation and prayer, with the help of the Spirit, can reveal one's own and others' spiritual needs. Have you prayed over this lesson? Have you studied it seriously?

## HOME READINGS.

- M. The mission of John the Baptist. Mark 1. 1-11.  
Th. John's mission foretold. Luke 1. 5-17.  
W. Prophecy of Zacharias. Luke 1. 67-80.  
Th. John's testimony to Jesus. John 1. 6-18.  
F. John describes his office. John 1. 19-28.  
S. John preaching repentance. Matt. 3. 1-12.  
S. Isaiah's prophecy. Isa. 40. 1-8.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Mark 1. 3.

## LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 47, Dominion Hymnal.  
Come, O come with thy broken heart,  
Weary and worn with care.  
No. 48, Dominion Hymnal.  
Child of sin and sorrow!  
Filled with dismay  
No. 58, Dominion Hymnal  
Come, every soul by sin oppressed,  
There's mercy with the Lord.

**TIME.**—26 A. D. The opening of the year preliminary to Christ's public work, called the year of preparation or obscurity.

**PLACES.**—The wilderness of Judea. The banks of the Jordan River, not far north of the Dead Sea. Nazareth.

**RULERS.**—Tiberius, emperor of Rome. Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea. Herod Antipas, tetrarch in Galilee.

**DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—Repentance.

## QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. The Voice in the Wilderness.**  
What is the first claim that Mark makes concerning Jesus of Nazareth?  
On what historic basis does he place his gospel at its outset?  
What is the Scripture from which he quotes in proof of his claim? Mal. 3. 1; Isa. 40. 3.  
Who was this messenger, so long foretold?  
What was his character? Matt. 11. 7-14.  
What was the character of his preaching? Luke 3. 7-14.  
What position did he claim in reference to the One whom he was sent to announce? John 1. 19-27.  
What was the probable effect of his preaching upon the Pharisees?  
Why is he called in our outline, "The voice in the wilderness?"
- 2. The Voice from Heaven.**  
What testimony given at the baptism of Jesus harmonizes with Mark's first claim concerning Jesus?  
Who heard this voice from heaven?  
If the disciples did not hear it, what did they nevertheless believe? 2 Pet. 1. 17.  
Why did Jesus come to be baptized? Matt. 3. 15.  
Did any one see the dove-like form except Jesus himself? John 1. 32.  
Why was this sight permitted to John? John 1. 33.  
If this record is true, what does it surely prove concerning (a) the supernatural world? (b) the character of Jesus?

## Practical Teachings.

The foundation of the Gospel is that Jesus is divine. That is the first thing we must believe.  
Baptism by water is the ordinance of the wilderness. It cannot save.

Baptism by the Holy Ghost is the ordinance from heaven. It is our evidence of salvation.

Confession of sins is a great step toward the Christ. But confession cannot come without conviction, and conviction must end in repentance.

## Hints for Home Study.

1. Read the story of John's life from the first chapter and the third chapter of Luke and the fourteenth chapter of Matthew.
2. Find an evidence that the Pharisees were not permanently affected by John's life. Matt. 21. 23-27.
3. Make for yourself in imagination a picture of John the Baptist: complexion, stature, dress, figure, etc. If you have not, hitherto, read now the description of him in *Ben-Hur*.
4. Fix upon five respects in which you could well imitate John the Baptist.  
He was not injured by p...y. ver. 5.  
He utterly r...d the world. ver. 6.  
He forgot h...f in pointing to Jesus. ver. 7.  
He was content to be simply .... ver. 3.  
He was simply a m....r. ver. 2, etc.

## QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Voice in the Wilderness, vs. 1-8.**  
Whose voice was this?  
What did he declare? (Golden Text.)  
For whom did he prepare the way?  
How did John dress and live?  
What did he call upon the people to do?  
What is it to repent? Isa. 55. 7.  
What did John do to those who repented?  
What did John say of Jesus?  
What did he say that Jesus would do?  
When was this fulfilled? Acts 2. 1-4.
- 2. The Voice from Heaven, vs. 9-11.**  
Who came to be baptized by John?  
From what place did he come?  
How old was Jesus at the time? Luke 3. 23.  
What took place when he was baptized?  
What words were spoken?  
Who spoke these words?

## Teachings of the Lesson.

How do we learn in these verses—

1. That we should turn from our sins?
2. That we should be baptized?
3. That we should honor Christ as God's Son?

## Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find what Old Testament prophet John the Baptist was like, and wherein he was like him.  
Find what John said of Jesus in the gospel of John.  
Was this the same John who wrote the gospel?  
Find at another time a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son."

## QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- What is the Gospel? **Good news.**  
What good news does the Gospel bring? **That Jesus Christ has come.**  
Who is Jesus Christ? **The Son of God.**  
Who did the prophets say would go before his face?  
**A messenger to prepare the way.**  
Who was this messenger? **John the Baptist.**  
What did he do? **He preached and baptized.**  
What did he preach? **The coming of Jesus.**  
How did he tell people to get ready for him? **By putting away sin.**  
How did he say Jesus would baptize? **With the Holy Ghost.**  
How did John baptize? **With water.**  
Can water make the heart clean? **No; but Jesus can.**  
Who came to John to be baptized? **Jesus himself.**