

bluntly accosted by a stranger have ordered his coachman to drive faster and not have condescended to give a reply. This man, however, honestly confesses his inability to understand the prophetic words, and courteously invites the stranger to take a seat alongside him in the chariot. Taking the words of Isaiah for his text, Philip "began at that same scripture and preached unto him Jesus." Here, as in his preaching to the people of Samaria, Jesus formed the subject of his discourse.—Jesus, of whom Moses and the prophets did write and by whose coming into the world, in his life, sufferings and death, there was fulfilled all that which was foretold with marvelous accuracy of detail by the prophet Isaiah, as recorded in the very scripture which the eunuch had been reading.

As Philip proceeded to unfold from the scriptures that which was written concerning Jesus, and recited to his willing hearer the wonderful fulfillment of these prophecies which had recently been accomplished at Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit opened the heart of the eunuch, and enabled him not only to understand that concerning which he had been reading, but also to confess that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, 'See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?'" Now, the inference which we are clearly warranted in drawing from this, is that Philip included the duty of baptism in his preaching, as incumbent upon all the followers of Christ. How unlike is this to much of the preaching which now obtains. Baptism is treated with indifference or entirely ignored, either because the preacher himself does not place any importance upon the Divinely appointed ordinance, or else he is afraid of inculcating it lest somebody should be offended. The first Christian preachers held and acted differently. The record invariably states that those who believed were immediately baptized. In Acts IX., which records the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, we note that in verse 18 that as soon as his sight was restored, and although he had fasted for three days, yet he immediately arose and was baptized, and afterwards did eat: most significant testimony to the necessity of prompt obedience to all that the Saviour has commanded. Then as to the mode of baptism, it would seem that as if forever to silence all cavillers against immersion, the Spirit had recorded with emphatic attention to minute details the circumstances in this case. The eunuch "commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down into the water: both Philip and the eunuch: and he baptized (immersed) him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip: that the eunuch saw him no more, and he went on his way rejoicing."

Men have tried to get round this plain narrative of the mode of baptism, by declaring that "down into" means "to" or "close by," and "out of" means "from," but they only show their weakness and land themselves into the dilemma in which the puzzled Dutchman found himself. Philip must have been a happy man indeed, as when he preached to the Samaritans "there was great joy in that city," so the result of his preaching to the eunuch was to send him on his way rejoicing, doubtless to be used of

God in preaching Jesus unto the people of his own country. Who can tell unto how many souls, salvation might come through Philip's preaching to one man! Our Lord himself "must needs go through Samaria," in order to reveal himself to the poor woman by the well, and how wonderfully tender and instructive is his discourse to her.

The entire record of Philip's work, though brief, is most suggestive. We have but indicated a few points of interest in it with the hope that these may lead to profit by a fuller study of the narrative. K.

## THE TEACHER'S PREPARATION FOR HIS WORK.

*A paper read at the Baptist Sunday School Convention held in Aylmer, Ont., on the 15th and 16th of June, 1878.*

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What object has the Sabbath school teacher in his eye when he goes to his work? The Sabbath School is under the supervision of the church. It meets on the Lord's Day: the Bible is its text book. Prayer and hymns of praise are offered in the name of Jesus; in a word, we form a company of religious worshippers who compose the Sunday School.

But all are not converted: yet, all true Sabbath School teachers believe that the children are there and then susceptible of conversion. The infant class is taught to love the Saviour early to believe in him, and receive him as theirs. Illustrations of love and trust are drawn from parental relationships; the tenderest and dearest which children at a very early age can understand. As they advance from the junior to the senior classes, we become the more solicitous about the conversion of those whom we regard as the fathers and mothers of the next generation. The pastor prays in the public congregation for the superintendent and his staff of teachers; that they may be blessed in their work; and that the church may draw from those ranks a healthy supply of young recruits, to fill the vacant places of those whom the Saviour calls to a higher sphere.

The Sabbath School then is an agency adapted in all its plans of working, to teach and to press the gospel of salvation on the hearts of our children and young people. We aim, not at making them scholars, but believers in Jesus Christ. We are not contented to make them intelligent Bible readers merely, but Christians. We believe that however amiable, affectionate and dutiful our children may be, they must be born again ere they can see the kingdom of God—that these natural affections are to be carefully distinguished from spiritual regeneration; and that the new birth is of the Holy Ghost, not of blood relationship, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God.

Now, if this hasty survey be even in the main accurate, then we have accidentally disposed of some other questions. Ought all our Sabbath School teachers to be converted persons? Our answer is, most certainly; just as all safe guides ought to have good eyesight. Is every member of the church fitted to be a Sabbath School teacher? We

think not. Aptitude to teach is a gift. All do not possess the gift of music; neither do all possess the gift of communicating thought.

Of the teacher's work we have now got some idea. What is his preparation for it? The answer will depend greatly on the aim he has before him. If he seek to make the children intelligent on the literature of the Bible; then much of his preparation will be confined to the consultation of scripture geography—the natural history of Bible animals—ancient customs—the history of the Jews, as it touches on the history of Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. This being the burden of his mission, he will stop when he has accomplished it; or at least he will not be careful to go far beyond it. But if his object be to lead the children to a sense of their natural sinfulness, and their need of salvation in Jesus; the beginning of his preparation will be with his own heart. As with the minister, so with the Sabbath School teacher: if he study merely to get something to say to others, it will be a dry morsel.

First then: let the teacher get his own soul into the lesson, and let the lesson permeate his whole soul. "The husbandman that labors must be first partaker of the fruit." There is gospel in every Bible lesson; with that gospel let the teacher's own heart be saturated: then shall he convey to others the impression very distinctly, that he himself has been sitting under its shadow with great delight, and its fruit has been sweet to his taste. He has got into it practically and devotionally. He has seen and tasted, and handed it, and this will clothe with living interest all he has got to say to his class about it. Let him work out and repeat the gospel that is in the lesson, because there must be gospel in it, either in its direct teaching, or by way of analogy or inference. "I think you left the gospel out of your sermon to-day," said an aged minister to a young brother just entering on the work. "There was no gospel statement in my text; and my endeavour was to keep to my subject," was the answer. "Yes, but as from every village in England you will find some road to London, so from every text you select, you must find some road to Christ," was the significant reply. Whatever other dishes we may dispense with, bread, the staff of life, must be daily on our table. So, brethren, we can't afford to spend even half-an-hour in preaching or teaching a class without some presentation of Jesus Christ.

This leads us to a second remark. A good Sabbath School teacher must cultivate the inventive faculty. He must accustom himself to penetrate his subject, analyze, illustrate, and then synthesize. Each member of a subject is capable of indefinite expansion. A well selected lesson is like a bed of roses, but we need holy tact in painting out their beauties, and then arranging them skillfully as into a well set bouquet. To be a good workman in this high department of spiritual science, is no common honour, and to awaken admiration of the Bible as the expression of God's thoughts to man, is no mean point gained in our teaching.

A good teacher must, in the third place, have a good healthy mental digestion. He must naturally possess, and then assiduously cultivate the faculty, of making everything