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"FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD."—Paul.

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HOW TO CONDUCT A BIBLE-CLASS.

Adult Bible-classes are becoming one of the most important and hopeful features in our Sabbath-school system. If young men and women can be kept under quickening Bible instruction, instead of getting loose from the schools, and losing the good impressions made there, we may hope much from the knowledge and steadfastness of the next generation of Christians. How shall these Bible-classes be conducted with life and interest? is a question that often perplexes both superintendent and teacher. A contributor to a foreign Sabbath-school journal gives the following answer:—

1. The object of a Bible-class is the same as that of a lecture—namely, instruction. But the method is different. A lecture is an impartial shower, watering all plants alike. In a Bible-class, you are like a gardener with a watering-pot, pouring a little here, and more there, according to the condition and the need of each particular plant. In a lecture, you are like a physician who lays down general rules for the promotion of health; but in a class you prescribe for the symptoms of each individual. Accordingly, it is the duty of the conductor of a Bible-class not merely to talk to the pupils, but to make them talk to him. He must find out their opinions, their difficulties, prejudices, and errors. He must waken their minds to a consideration of the topics before them. To make them think and speak is his first task.

2. And in order to make them speak he must know how to ask questions. Of all modes of teaching, catechetical teaching is the most difficult, but most admirable. As one finds himself falling back into the position of the lecturer, he may consider himself as failing; as one finds himself more and more catechetical, he may feel more and more sure of success.

3. But to ask questions well, one must ask with *ideas* in the mind. We must ask leading questions; not, indeed, questions that indicate an expected answer, but questions that lead toward it. The mind of the scholar must be roused by questions, beset by difficulties, driven out from one refuge of lazy ignorance and indifference after another, till it flies straight to its mark.

4. *Don't be afraid.* Let the scholars see that you are not afraid; that you want their real thoughts, whatever they are. Let there be perfect freedom in your class, and a deep conviction that they cannot say anything that will disturb you; that you are familiar with all mistakes, and that you are ready to welcome any utterance that is honest.

5. *Don't let the conversation be monopolized.* The great danger of all conferences and colloquies, of all prayer-meetings and discussions, is from monopoly. One or two ready talkers, with plenty of words at their

tongue's end, are always apt to be on hand, and very soon the class becomes a mere arena for the display of their prowess. The leader of a Bible-class must steadily impress it on all present, that he wishes the co-operation and instruction of *all*. Speeches are not the thing, but conversation. Put down sternly all attempts to monopolize.

6. *But be interested yourself.* No one is fit to teach anything who is not interested in that thing. The first, second, and third qualification for a teacher is enthusiasm. You must have great faith in the latent meanings of Scripture, in its undeveloped force, in its richness of application, its sweep of law, its inspiration, in short, heavenly and divine. We must believe in the words of Jesus, as He did himself, when He said, "They are spirit, and they are life."

7. *Feel the need you have of the class to help you.* One who does not expect to get any new thought himself, will not go with much interest to the meeting. Know, then, that all your commentaries and lexicons will sometimes stand you in little stead, compared with the light thrown on a text by the action of two or three co-operating intelligences. Be sure that each one of your class has a special faculty, and can lend you special help. Call them all to your aid, marshal them against the difficulty, and so secure the result by a combined attack.—*Selected.*

A GREAT MORAL QUESTION.

There is seldom a century without its great moral reform. The Middle Ages were filled with cycles, alternating at frequent periods, given up to the reform of the tyrannies of the feudal system, and the absurdities of chivalry. Other ages have devoted their best energies to the overthrow of tyrannical forms of government, the destruction of false religions, and the crushing out of slaveries. Great Britain, at the present day, seems to be on the verge of a concerted warfare against licentiousness and its attendant crimes.

The great moral question that is beginning, and is destined still more to agitate the American public, is the temperance question. It is not a question that is attracting the attention of enthusiasts and visionaries merely, but is one that must appeal to the conscience of every thoughtful and patriotic man. It is a vital, economic and political question, and not a purely sentimental one. The most practical statistician, the most hard-hearted economist and man of business, after examining the matter carefully, cannot fail to be logically convinced that the enormities of the alcoholic traffic cannot well be exaggerated, and that the moral intelligence of the country should, in some way, be aroused to an aggressive attitude, and a thoroughly dead-in-earnest fighting mood.

At present, men admit the evil, and let it alone. Politicians fight shy of it; the press is afraid of it; and one half the public feel no responsibility in regard to it, and the

other half is arrayed aggressively on the wrong side. They have become accustomed to the word-play and sentimental rhetoric of the temperance orators, but have but little cool-headed, practical realization of the enormity of the evil.

But indications at present point to a slight awakening on this question. It is undoubtedly to be the dominant moral question of the coming generation, and is just as sure of being disposed of permanently, as all the other great moral issues of the past, when the great mass of the people have been aroused, as they are sure to be, sooner or later.

Of course there is much conflict of honest opinion as to the best method to repress the liquor traffic. But we see no reason why it should not be regarded as a crime and treated accordingly. There may be logical objections against the adoption of prohibitive measures, and arguments, more or less cogent advanced by their opponent. But in dealing with crimes, fine logical subtleties and delicate ethical considerations should not be given undue weight. The first thing to be done is to crush the crime; and the best way to crush the crime is to prohibit it and enforce the prohibition. Prohibition of the liquor crime can be enforced as well as the prohibition of any other crime. To say that it cannot, is to impugn the general common sense of the people.

So we think the question of prohibiting the liquor traffic is to be the great moral issue of the immediate future.—*Christian at Work.*

THE ORIGIN OF HOSPITALS.

For the origin of hospitals we must grope in the thick darkness of the most remote antiquity. Thirteen or fourteen centuries before the Christian era there lived a great healer of the sick, named Æsculapius. According to Homer's Iliad (Book II.), two of the sons of this physician were in the Grecian army that besieged Troy, and they too were physicians, endowed by their "parent god" with superhuman skill. Æsculapius, then, was already regarded as the god of the healing art. Temples were ere long erected in his honour in Greece, and afterwards in various parts of the Roman Empire. There was a famous one at Epidaurus, a city on the Greek coast, forty miles from Athens. This city enjoyed the profitable reputation of having been the birthplace of Æsculapius, and near it, in a secluded valley, was erected a temple to him. The ruins of this temple, which was of great extent and magnificence, still exist. The Greeks called the building a temple; but it became a true hospital. It was thronged with invalids from all parts of Greece, and from more distant countries—even from Rome itself. The priests who served in this temple practised medicine, performed surgical operations, and did all in their power to promote and hasten the cure of their pilgrims. Nor did they fail to advertise their success, for the walls were cover-