



# SUNDAY READING

## BIBLE QUESTION COMPETITION.

Although this competition is open to all the readers of PROGRESS, it is more especially intended to interest the young people—the boys and girls who are, or should be attending Sunday School. We have entrusted its management to one who is very competent to take charge of the department. In order to make the competition more interesting, the proprietor of PROGRESS will give One Dollar to the person who sends in the first correct answer to all the questions. We believe that this inducement will result not only in increasing the interest in the contest, but also in the acquisition of much information by those who search for the correct answers.

The following rules should be strictly observed:

### RULES FOR COMPETITORS.

1. A prize of one dollar will be awarded every week for the first correct answer that reaches PROGRESS office. If there is no correct answer the person who sends the first best answer will receive the dollar. In case two correct answers reach the office at the same time the dating stamps of the post offices at which they are mailed will be taken into consideration.
2. Competitors must write on one side of the paper only, giving name and address in full with each answer. These need not be published except in the case of prize-winners, and a non-de-plume may be adopted for publication.
3. The winner of a prize will not be eligible to compete for another for four weeks.
4. All replies must be received on or before Saturday one week after publication of the questions, thus allowing competitors a clear week for their efforts.
5. No post-cards can be received. All replies should be addressed to the "SUNDAY READING," EDITOR PROGRESS, ST. JOHN, N. B.

I have much pleasure in stating that Miss C. M. HARE is the successful competitor for Prize Bible Questions No. 2. Of the many answers, the following seven were correctly answered: Miss C. M. Hare, Miss Grace Hamilton Thomas, Miss Agnes Hanselpecker, Indiantown; Miss Ellie B. Gorham, Long Reach; Miss Marion B. Fraser, Chatham; Miss Carrie M. Moran and Master John Flewelling, Centreville.

I have no hesitation in saying that Miss C. M. Hare's answers are the best, as well as the first correct answers received.

Among the competitors there seems to have been some doubt about the commandments broken to obtain possession of Naboth's vineyard; a great many omitted the eighth, while others substituted the third; now certainly Ahab broke the eighth when he took possession of Naboth's vineyard. There was a law in the history of England, when a person suffered capital punishment, for the crime of treason; his property and title were confiscated, which law was handed down from the feudal system, when the baron or vassal received his lands from the crown. The obligations the vassal was under were called homage, accompanied with an oath of fealty. But the Hebrews knew no such law. They received their lands from God (Lev. xxv., 23.) Their property was strictly entailed for their posterity (Numbers xxxvii., 7, and in Ezekiel xxxvi., 18. The prince was forbidden to take the people's inheritance by oppression. The third commandment, blasphemy, was part of the accusation brought against Naboth the ninth was broken, and not the third. I am very much pleased to know you are all so familiar with your Bibles as to find out the different parts from which those expressions were taken, and hope you will continue to "search the scriptures," which are able to make you wise (2 Tim., iii., 15).

### NEAR.

Answers to Prize Bible Questions No. 2.

1.—Give the name of a city where the Apostles were taken for Gods?  
Ans.—At the city of Lystra the people thought that Barnabas was Jupiter, and St. Paul was Mercurius. Acts, xiv. 12 and 21.

2.—Give the name of the first gentile convert to christianity?  
Ans.—The first gentile convert to christianity was Cornelius. Acts, x. 45.

3.—How many commandments were broken in order that Ahab might obtain possession of Naboth's vineyard.  
Ans. The following commandments were broken in order that Ahab might gain possession of Naboth's vineyard. (1) The seventh, covetousness. 1 Kings, xxi. 4. (2) The sixth, murder, 1 Kings, xxi. 13. (3) The ninth, false witness. 1 Kings, xxi. 10. (4) The eighth, theft. 1 Kings, xxi. 16. Besides those our Lord's great commandment to "Love one another," was sadly violated. John, xiii. 34.

4.—By whom were each of the following expressions used, and to whom addressed? Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? Thou art the man. My punishment is greater than I can bear. But think on me when it shall be well with thee. What is that to us? See thou to that.  
Ans.—Ahab said to Elijah, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" 1 Kings, xxi. 20.

Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man." 2 Sam., xxii. 7.

Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." Gen. iv. 13.

Joseph said to King Pharaoh's butler, "But think on me when it shall be well with thee." Genesis xl. 14.

The chief priests and elders said to Judas, "What is that to us? See thou to that." St. Matt. xxvii., 4.

### PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS.—No. 4.

1st. Give the name of a prophet who was cup-bearer to the King of Persia?

2nd. What kind of wood was used in building the temple, and where obtained?

3rd. Enumerate the different instances in which death is compared to sleep both in the old and new Testaments?

4th. When did a touch bring healing? When did a touch bring life? When was a touch to be punished with death?

### A SERMON TO S. S. TEACHERS.

Rev. James Stalker, D. D.  
(Free St. Matthew's, Glasgow, 21st Sept., 1890.)

On Sunday afternoon last, in free St. Matthew's, Dr. Stalker delivered a thoughtful and practical address on the subject of Sabbath school teaching, which may with profit be read not only by teachers, but by all who have the welfare of our youth at heart. On the pulpit style of the esteemed and popular minister of St. Matthew's it is not necessary here to dwell. His oratory is absolutely unconventional, and even his prayers are not in the set phrases of many of his brethren. He is never passionate—he is, indeed, seldom emotional—but he is always natural and forcible and a plain exposition of the word at his hands is worth a hundred gymnastic performances inspired by German philosophy.

The text of the sermon hereafter reported was I Timothy, IV., 16, "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine: continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

This counsel said the preacher, was originally given to a young minister, but it is very suitable for christian workers of all description, and I think it will be found to contain a comprehensive message to Sabbath school teachers especially. It tells you who work for the Lord, that if you would be successful, you must fix your attention on three things—on yourself, on your doctrine, and on them that hear you.

1. Take heed unto thyself. In all work for God, for that matter in all work for man, very much depends upon the personal of those who engage in it. Take a minister for instance; everything in his work depends upon his character. When a minister is settled for the first time in a congregation, there is very likely a kind of exaggeration of his gifts in the minds of the people, and for a while they listen to everything he says as if he were an oracle. But that very soon dies away; the magnifying nimbus is dissipated, he is seen in his true proportions, and people take his actual measure. They know perfectly well whether or not he is a scholar and a thinker, whether he spends the week preparing for Sabbath or wastes his time on trifles, whether he is fully given up to the master or pursuing personal ends of his own, whether he is man of sincerity and solidity of character or a small-minded creature strutting in the garb of authority, and when they have made up their minds about him and formed in their thoughts an image of what he is, it is this image that they see when they look at him, and hear when they are listening to him. This image rises up every time he appears before them and stands behind him, and it gives either weight or insignificance to everything he says.

Or, take an illustration still closer to your own work. How much of the success of the Sabbath school depends on the superintendent. If it is a large school and he does not teach himself, it may seem indeed that he did not do much, but every teacher and every class feels his influence. Take, for instance, the essential matter of good order.

It is quite impossible that teaching can be carried on with profit in an atmosphere of noise. Quietness is absolutely essential to the securing of close attention and the doing of fine work. But one superintendent may allow a noisy hum rising every now and then into exciting breaks of misrule, to fill the school from commencement to close, while another, with the gift of order and the genius of command, secures peace by his mere presence, almost without a word, and thus supplies every teacher in the school with the first essential condition of effective work.

But this principle which is so obvious in the case of a minister or a superintendent is quite as applicable to the case of a teacher. Everything in teaching depends upon the personal of the teacher. Do you think the children's eyes are less sharp than those of grown people? If this congregation or that congregation can take the measure of its minister's intellectual and spiritual stature, the children can take the measure of you. They know very well whether they are in the hands of an enthusiastic teacher or not; whether he really loves them and is interested in them, or simply comes there because the bell has rung and he is expected to be at his post; whether he comes to them prepared with the lesson of the day, or simply talks to fill up the time. I do not say that the children expressly pass these criticisms on their teachers, but I say that they feel even if they cannot express them, and they act accordingly. That is to say, if something is said to them worth listening to, they listen; if they are loved, they love; if their teachers have enthusiasm, they become enthusiastic. There are some teachers who are forgotten by their scholars as soon as time separates the connection between them. But here and there—let us hope at not very wide intervals—there is a teacher whom his scholars never forget. He is

their idol; they carry his image in their hearts, where they worship it with love and devotion. As time goes on, their images grow larger enveloped in the golden haze of childhood's recollection; he is to them an embodiment of christianity—I had almost said an embodiment of Christ—and the only proof they ever need that religion is a reality. Thus you must take heed to yourself for the children's sake.

But our text gives another reason—for your own sake—because it says: "By so doing, you will save yourself." What does that mean? Is a man saved by Sabbath School teaching? Ought he not to be saved before he commences to teach? Well, it may mean this: a man may have begun Sabbath school teaching before he is saved. He is pressed by the minister or the superintendent, or he slips into it he hardly knows how. But if he is an honest and true man, as he goes on teaching, and the responsibility of what he is doing comes to him, I can scarcely conceive but he will feel that, unless he is to occupy an entirely false position he must become himself a saved man. How can I talk about salvation to others if I am not saved myself? How can I pretend to lead others to heaven if I am not going there myself?

But this is not all that is meant by the suggestion that by his teaching, the teacher may save himself. In the bible, salvation does not mean, as it often means in our mouths, merely the commencement of religious life. It means the beginning, the middle, and the end of it. It means not merely entering the narrow way, but travelling in it, growing in grace, developing in power and spirituality. This is what it is to be saved, and there is nothing helps it more than work for God well done. Every faithful teacher will find this out and acknowledge that what he has spent on others has been repaid to himself, good measure, pressed down and running over. I am sure there are so many men and women in mature life who will say that if they love the bible and know anything about prayer and are attached to a church, it is because they have been Sabbath school teachers who took lead to themselves.

(2.) Take heed to the doctrine. This is the second advice that my text gives to teachers; and it means, take heed to the substance of your teaching; make sure that you have a message to deliver, and that it is God's message. The late Archbishop Whately used to say that the difference between a good speaker and a bad one was the former had something to say and the latter had to say something. Well, a sabbath school teacher has to say something, no doubt, he is placed for a certain time on the Lord's day to entertain the minds of his pupils but woe to him and, for them, if he has nothing to say.

I do not think, however, that the doctrine of a teacher can mean merely his preparation for the lesson of the day. It denotes more than this; the sum of conviction and knowledge accumulated in his mind, which he is to fall back on. Our Saviour invented a very striking name for this. Once when speaking to his disciples about their work, he said, "Every scribe who is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." What is a teacher's treasure? It is the invisible receptacle in which is stored up all he learned, and he can only give out what he has once put in there. I should think that the treasures of different teachers are of all sorts and sizes; one is large; another is small; one is filled with fine, choice, solid, material; another is filled with useless odds and ends; one is like a pawnbroker's shop filled with miscellaneous articles scattered here and there; another is well arranged that its possessor knows where to lay his hands on anything whenever he wants it. No doubt the best teacher is he who has the best treasury—that is, the largest, the fullest and the best ordered. He is not either in the Sunday or the day school the best teacher who is only a lesson or two ahead of his pupils; but he who can pour his knowledge out of a full mind; and always give the impression that there is plenty more behind. Still, one of the best ways to fill the treasury is to be faithful about each day's lesson as it comes; because this is the reward of teaching faithfully from sabbath to sabbath, that the lesson not only serves its immediate purpose, but when it is done, it goes to add to the store gradually being accumulated in the mental treasury. No doubt it is well for a man before beginning to teach to have as much knowledge as possible of books, and life: especially of the bible, but the younger teacher who knows that his mind is very barely furnished, need not despond, for if he is conscientious in preparing every lesson as it comes, he will be slowly accumulating a store which, with the blessing of God's spirit, will by degrees make him mighty in the scriptures and furnished to every good work.

The helps towards preparation of the lesson week by week, are now so ample that, as far as information is concerned, the path of the teacher who conscientiously masters what is put into his hands is perfectly plain, and books of the most helpful kind are easily procurable.

I would venture to recommend to Sabbath school teachers, a wise extravagance in the purchase of books. You do not spend your money on drink, and therefore ought to have something to spare, for the entertainment of your mind. The other day calling at the house of a middle aged man, I looked over the contents of the book case in his parlor, and I saw that his little library had been formed by his Sunday school teacher. There were *Barnes' Notes*, *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, and many another good book belonging to the apparatus of a teacher, and I was proud to see that a man who, when young, may have had very moderate means, had laid so solid a basis of culture. Do not be afraid to spend a few shillings on a good book such as *Conybeare and Howson's Life of St. Paul*, or *Farrar's Life of Christ*, or the volumes of the Cambridge bible for schools, or even a pound or two on a commentary like *Matthew Henry* or a good bible dictionary. There is no furniture so handsome as a good shelf of books.

But you have not given sufficient heed to "the doctrine," when you have merely mastered the information of the lesson, which you have on hand. I remember once when I was a younger minister than I am today preaching in a country church and walking home with a gentleman after the sermon with whom I was staying; as we walked he made the remark, that in his opinion every sermon ought to do two things, it ought to interest and it ought to

impress. I did not just at the moment see the difference, but, on reflecting on it, I came to consider it a very important one. A sermon may interest by communicating, curious information, or following some novel line of thought, it may keep the attention of the congregation on the strain, yet, it may fail to impress, to hush and to overawe. You know the difference between going away from the church simply pleased and going away moved, wishing to be in solitude where you can meditate and pray. You know the silence that falls on a congregation sometimes at the close, when a preacher, full of the Holy Ghost, is striving with his hearers and they forget the church and the congregation and feel themselves face to face with the powers of the world to come. Now the teacher also has to impress as well as to interest. How is it done? Information got from books and clearly and pleasantly communicated will interest; but more is needed to impress, it requires conviction, heart and earnestness of purpose. Some teachers are indeed so earnest that they give no information at all, but spend their whole time in appeals to believe and come to Jesus. But they miss the mark, for nothing is so stale and unprofitable as the same exhortations constantly repeated. Information and exhortation ought to go together, or rather the one ought to raise out of the other.

Information lies on the surface; but, after you have made use of it, let your mind penetrate beneath the surface, and working round and round go deeper and deeper, till it reaches the central fire which lies beneath all the texts, and the fiery jet, as it springs aloft, will touch other minds and set on fire.

(3.) Take heed to them that hear you. This is not, perhaps, directly said in the text, though the words, "continue in them," may possibly mean "be urgent with them," that is with them that hear you. So Bengel thought and he was a good scholar, but at any rate, it is obviously implied. If you would be a successful teacher, you must take heed to the children, that is, you must study them and try to understand them. It will be of little use to study "the doctrine" unless you also study their minds to which it has to be applied, for it has to be applied in one way to the old and in another to the young. You must study child-nature and child-life in general, and you must study your own scholars one by one, for no two specimens of human nature are exactly alike. The more you know of their life outside the school, the better—their week life, their home life, their amusements, even their sins. The way to raise either men or children to higher attainments, in either knowledge or conduct, is to go down and meet them where they are, take them sympathetically by the hand, and lead them step by step.

But if we are to do them any good, we must believe in them. No man will be a successful teacher who has not a high and reverent conception of the possibilities and capabilities of children.

Believe in their intellectual capabilities. There are some faculties which are more vigorous in childhood than at any subsequent period of life. This is especially the case with the memory. [A child will learn in a few minutes what a man could not commit to memory with perfect accuracy after the labor of hours. Childhood, therefore, is the time to store the mind with those parts of knowledge which may be called the grammar of subsequent acquisition.] I was much struck the other day to hear from a gentleman who devotes his life to philanthropic work among working lads in the east of London that he finds it almost impossible to speak to them on any scripture theme, because they have no knowledge of the language of scripture truth, or even of the personages of scripture story. Having no knowledge of scripture, so to speak, they cannot refer any incident or character to the place to which it belongs. Teachers kindly realize how important is the service they are rendering to the children and the church when they are acquainting themselves with the names and doctrines of the bible. For one thing they are making it possible for ministers to preach to them in their subsequent life.

But it is only the memory of childhood we can trust. I have heard people object to children being taught the catechism because they cannot understand it. Well, even if they cannot understand it, this does not prove that they should not be taught it.

Children learn many things, whilst the memory is in the flexible and receptive state characteristic of childhood which they do not understand at that time. They do not understand what is the use of Greek or algebra, and indeed oft ask bitterly what is the use of it. But they know afterwards, and a delightful thing it is, when practical life begins, gradually to find out things learned at schools which then seemed useless. In the same way many of us can remember how, when our childhood was over, the phrases and answers of the catechism came up one by one, flashing into meaning as the light of life's growing experience fell on them, without perhaps understanding it, we possessed an interpretation of the mystery of existence.

But are you sure they cannot understand it? It is easy to underestimate the power of children to understand. We are often talking down to them when they do not need it. The truth is, the mind of childhood is often a very theological mind; it is full of wonder, as it opens its eyes on this marvellous world, and the doctrine of an infinite power and an infinite love answers its instinctive expectations. I have sometimes heard city ministers in pulpits in the country, who evidently thought it was not safe to give their best and strongest thinking there, and tried to make themselves excessively simple to the country people, who all the time were easily looking over their heads, and we may commit the same mistake with children.

Above all the true teacher must believe in the spiritual capacities of his scholars. It is here we make the worst mistake of all.

We forget our childhood, we forget how real religion was to us then, how distinctly we saw the infinite difference between right and wrong, how we were moved by the terror of God's law and thrilled with the story of redeeming love. We forget that what we were these children are now. The same drama of pain and conviction and resolution is going on in their minds. Who is the greatest teacher? It is the man who rises before the commonest audience, however poor or rustic it may be, feels an infinite respect for their manhood, believes

in them there are all the elements of human nature—love and hate, guilt and remorse, aspiration and self contempt, and flings himself in perfect trust on their sympathy and intelligence. And he is the true teacher, who standing before his class, is filled with like reverence, and lays his fingers on the keys of the soul, confident that the hidden music will respond.

This is the kind of teaching that will attain that which is given in our text, as the grand aim of teaching—"By so doing, thou wilt save them that hear thee." What an achievement: People discuss whether children can be saved. I think that as a minister I magnify my office and preach with great hope of doing good. But, teachers, yours is far the more hopeful work than ours. I do not say that no good is done unless your scholars are saved. I think a wise teacher will work for distant as well as immediate results; but never let your aim for a moment out of your view, never omit it for a day from your prayers—that you may save them that hear you.

### Something for Mothers to Get Their Boys To Read and Think Over.

Truth, not eloquence, is to be sought for in holy scripture.

Each part of the scripture is to be read with the same spirit wherewith it was written.

We should rather search after profit in the scriptures, than after subtle arguments.

We ought to read plain and devout books as willingly as those of high and profound.

Let not the authority of the writer be a stumbling-block, whether he be of great or small learning, but let the love of pure truth draw thee to read. Enquire not who spoke this or that, but mark what is spoken.

Men pass away, but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. God speaks unto us in sundry ways without respect of persons.

Our own curiosity often hindereth us in reading of the scriptures when we will examine and discuss that which we should rather pass over without more ado.

If thou desire to profit, read with humility, simplicity and faithfulness, nor ever desire the repute of learning.

Enquire willingly, and hear with silence the words of holy men.

Let not the parables of the elders displease thee, for they are not given without cause.

### A Prayer.

Almighty Father, God of Infinite Truth and Purity, let there be sorrow, not fearful and despairing, but true and tender, in our hearts, as we remember and confess in Thy presence our manifold sins and wickedness. We are much that we ought not to be; we are little that we ought to be. Life might be so noble and faithful, and we often make it so mean and false. We look back through our days and we see much weakness, and failure, and defeat. Deal with us, not according to our poor deservings and our sinfulness, but according to Thy goodness and mercy made known to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. O, Infinite Love, help us to depart from evil and to do good; purge and purify our hearts; redeem us into a life of truth, and purity, and charity; give us grace daily to follow Thy law faithfully—to seek everything that is true, to do everything that is right, to love everything that is good. Save us from pride, perversity, and vanity; from the small and narrow mind, the unrelenting temper, the unsympathetic heart. Strengthen us to walk steadfastly in the footsteps of Thy Son, the Lord of childlikeness and brotherliness, of submission and self-sacrifice. May we see to our duties as He took to His; may we bear our sorrows as He bore His. In all the relations and services of life may we keep His new commandment of love; and, by bearing one another's burdens, may we fulfil the law of His cross, and fill up that which is behind of His sufferings. And this we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

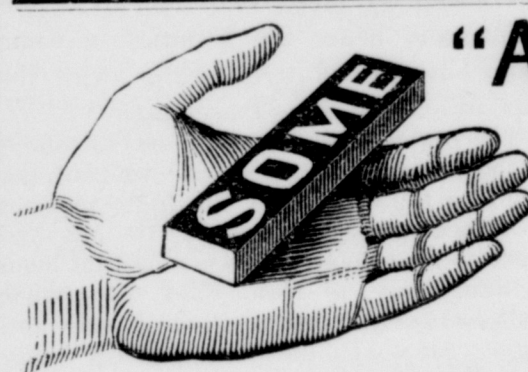
### "Our Country."

O Beautiful, our country:  
Be thine a nobler care  
Than all thy wealth of commerce,  
Thy harvests waving fair:  
Be it thy pride to lift up  
The manhood of the poor:  
Be thou to the oppressed  
Fair Freedom's open door.

For thee our fathers suffered,  
For thee they toiled and prayed:  
Upon thy holy altar  
Their willing lives they laid.  
Thou hast no common birthright,  
Grand memories on thee shine:  
The blood of pilgrim nations  
Commingled flows in thine.

O Beautiful, our country:  
Round thee in love we draw:  
Thine be the grace of freedom,  
The majesty of Law.  
Be righteousness thy sceptre,  
Justice thy diadem:  
And on thy shining forehead  
Be peace the crowning gem.

—F. L. Homer.



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