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REV. J. McLEOD.]

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## The Intelligencer.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON X.—June 8.

(For Questions see Star Quarterly and Lesson Papers.)

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Rom. 3: 19-31.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Justification by faith. Rom. 3: 19-31.

T. Saved through faith. Eph. 2: 8-22.

W. Faith and works. James 2: 14-26.

T. Confession of salvation. Mark 16: 15, 16: Acts

10: 30-34.

F. Power of faith. Heb. 11: 1-28.

S. Faith and confession. Rom. 10: 9-17.

S. Failure without faith. Rom. 9: 30-33.

Golden Text.—Therefore being justified by faith, we have

peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.—Rom.

5: 1.

TOPICS.—All condemned.

Believers justified.

TIME, A. D. 53.

TOPICAL TESTIMONY.

Connecting Link.—This epistle was written by

Paul at Corinth early in the year A. D. 53. He had

then never seen Rome, but had long cherished a

strong desire to visit the city and preach the Gospel

there, and this he intended to do at the first oppor-

tunity. Looking forward to this privilege he wrote

this letter treating of the way of salvation through

faith in Jesus Christ. All men are sinners and are

in need of salvation. This lesson is the conclusion of

the first part of his argument, which begins at the

eighteenth verse of the first chapter, in which he

showed that salvation can be obtained only through

faith in Christ.

I. All condemned. Paul begins his argu-

ment on the divine plan of salvation by proving

that all men are sinners, and as such are ex-

posed to punishment. God had revealed himself

to men through the visible works of creation to

the gross and most deluding sins and vices. Plainly

enough, all such are sinners and are

justly exposed to punishment. Not less were

those sinners who had conformed to the rites

and ceremonies of the Jewish church, if they

practiced the sins of the polluted Gentiles. That

which was sin in the idolatrous and relatively

ignorant Gentiles could not be anything else

than sin in the God-worshipping and religiously

instructed Jew. The responsibility of the Jew

was not greater than that of the Gentile;

the latter had the voice of Conscience,

which even when taught by natural religion

only was to him a real guide, though an im-

perfect one, while the former had both Conscience

and Revelation, and having Revelation, ought

certainly to have had a better, a more active, a

more trustworthy Conscience. The law speaks

of the law which was given to the Jews, and

which was to be their guide, and which was to

be their standard of conduct, and which was to

be their punishment for disobedience to it. The

apostle then proceeds to show that all may become

righteous, so as to enjoy the blessing of justifi-

cation, through faith in Jesus Christ.

II. Believers justified. "All men have

sinned and come short of the glory of God." Under

the law all are condemned. If they can escape

from the condemnation that has passed upon all

men? The law, which expresses the justice and

holiness of God, demands a perfect and perpetual

obedience. If there is a way of justification it

must be "apart from the law," for man can not

now maintain an obedience as will entitle

him to justification. This justification he may,

however, receive through faith in the Lord Jesus

Christ, upon whom the law has no claim, for he

has never broken it. This faith may be in some

hearts the child of love, but in all it will mani-

fest itself in a devoted loyalty to all his com-

mands. Such a Christian experience is open to

all, Jews and Gentiles alike, and the law is in

no way dishonored by the opening of such a

possibility.

THOUGHTS AND APPLICATIONS.

I. The law brings the knowledge or consci-

ousness of sin.

II. Justification by faith does not release us

from obedience to the moral law of God.

TOPICS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

I. The origin and condition of the church at

Rome.

the reputation of an unsympathetic church,

where working people and the poor would not be

welcome. At this time, however, he was deeply

and, therefore, on the Monday morning when we

first saw him he was bowed to himself.

"I think I had better resign,"

When he told his wife of his half-formed re-

solution, she quietly said, "Very well, my dear;

I'll get you a new pen, and you can write your

resignation on Tuesday night."

But on Tuesday morning a change came over

the spirit of his dream. From his study-window

he saw the first snowdrift hanging in the

air, and the sight quickened the pulses of

hope within him. A new train of thought

passed through his mind. The snowdrifts

impressed themselves strongly upon him. "Go

out into the highways and hedges, and compel

them to come in, that my house may be filled."

"Yes," he said to himself, "that's what I

must do. Evidently the people won't come to

me; then I must go to them. The old order in

this place has changed, and we must adapt our-

selves to the new. I will shut my eyes to the

signs of the times."

An hour's prayerful meditation soon suggested

to him a course of action. Putting on his hat

he went first to speak to his wife.

"Mary, I'm going out for a short time; and,

by the bye, I shall not want that new pen to-

night."

"Very well, my dear," said she, and smiling

to herself went on with her work.

Mr. Brown went to his deacons and asked

them to meet him the next evening to confer

together on some important matters. When they

met they told him frankly all they were feeling,

and all that he desired for the church, and then

asked for their advice. There was a brief pause,

during which the portrait of the old minister,

hanging on the vestry wall, regarded the com-

pany with grave curiosity. The silence was broken by Mr. Cheque,

the treasurer, who raised his eyebrows, glanced

round, and said with slow and deliberate em-

phasis, "The problem of how to reach the

masses, Mr. Brown, is a very difficult one. I

am not sure that we can do it for forty years,

and it is not solved yet."

All present felt this to be true, if not quite

new, or brilliant. The next suggestion came

from Mr. Robinson, a meek old member, who

coughed nervously several times, and then said

that possibly a week of special services would

do good. But Mr. Bang, a pushing auctioneer,

said irreverently, "Oh, that's no good; better

send the bellman round. I should say,"

Mr. Mercer, the draper, smilingly said that he

could not quite agree with his friend Bang. He

did not like lowering the dignity of the church

by such a thing as a bellman, and he would

suggest the free use of judicious advertisements,

and good-sized posters. He knew that in business

things always paid for themselves.

Mr. Cheque was heard to murmur to himself

only, "shopper," and seemed about to say

more, but did not. Now the junior deacon,

Mr. Blossom, had hitherto kept silence, though

there was a humorous sparkle in his eye, and

he rose at last, and gravely said that as it

was very evident they could not get on by

the people by simply waiting until the people

came, they had better boldly go to them. He

therefore respectfully proposed that the deacons,

representing the senior order, should go forth

manfully at Mr. Cheque—should go out

two and two like the disciples, and should

carry the neighborhood from house to house.

Now the elderly deacons, good, easy men,

were like so many other good people, willing

to do what they should be done, provided they

were not called upon to do it themselves, and

so they received the audacious proposition of

Mr. Blossom with suppressed indignation. Mr.

Bang said, "That's not in my line." Mr.

Cheque feared his numerous engagements would

prevent him from entertaining the idea even for

a small band of those whose

hearts God had touched. The foundation

principle of their organization was expressed in

the minister's words, "To get at the people you

must go to the people." Accordingly they set

to work in the following way:

I shall never forget one night in my early

life. I was traveling alone. I had mid-day

way, and was groping along, hour after hour,

weary, hungry and heart-sick, on a strange, wild

road. I might be going toward a clearing in

the forest, and I might be plunging farther into

its depths. The region had not an enviable

reputation; and when I saw a light in the distance,

it might be from a cabin where I would be in

greater danger than in the woods. Oh, the

terrible uncertainty that haunted every step! The

rustle of a leaf startled me. In the dense

shadows wild beasts might be crouching. I

hastened when I fancied that I heard something

behind me. Then I paused and listened, for I

thought I heard something behind me. In broad

daylight, with full knowledge of the way, that

something had been a prison walk through the

woods. But the uncertainty made it sad and

painful.

Like that journey is the life of multitudes.

Rejecting the Bible, the true and only light,

they are in doubt and darkness all their days.

For it is only the Bible that is not changing

in this world but the word of God.

We talk about certainties, certainties in the

arts, certainties in business. This, we say, is a

sure thing, and that we claim, never has and

can not fail. But again and again these claims

prove deceptive, until the wisest have come

to the conclusion that the only thing we can

all depend on with absolute assurance is

death. We live now, but we know that we

shall not live. We live here today, but some

unlooked-for event may send us far away to-

morrow. We have a house, full of comforts and

luxuries; it may be taken from us to-morrow.

We have children; they may be cold in death.

We have money; but ere another

day dawns we may hear the rattle of the wings

with which it flows away. We have health;

but it may fail in a moment. So always and

everywhere, we are reminded that the things of

the world are not permanent and unstable. God,