

the remedy only for desperate and seemingly hopeless cases. The remedy which saves is gentle yet faithful remonstrance; words of reproof uttered with the tenderest love, duty plainly pointed out and the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. The incoining of a higher spirit in answer to prayer, is the supreme antidote. With that the world recedes and ceases to fascinate the soul. The oak in winter is sometimes covered with withered, sapless leaves; but the new life which comes in spring-time pushes them off, and in their place are seen bursting buds, unfolding foliage, and forming fruit. So when, through the coming spirit, the life-currents of spiritual spring-time begin to flow in a church the dead leaves of worldliness fall away, and in their place appear the fruits of godliness. And if every member of this church was so filled with the spirit that the deepest impulses of their souls led them to abstain cheerfully from every form of evil, there would scarcely be any limit to their power for good. We wish the conversion of men; God grants us in some measure our desire; but we might see multitudes turned to Christ if every person whose name is on our church record was so fully separated from the world that he found constantly his highest joy in the Lord.

You who have recently professed faith in the gospel, if you would be both happy and in the largest degree useful, abstain from every kind of evil. "If sinners entice thee consent thou not." The moment you begin to toy with worldly amusements, your peace and your power for good are gone. If you desire to live a poor, driveling, miserable Christian life, your own soul devoid of joy, a weight on the church rather than a help to it, then attempt to serve God with one hand and the world with the other. Professing to give Christ all, and by giving him nothing but the withered leaves of a profession, and you will be wretched in heart and worse than useless to the church. But live out your profession, abstain from every kind of evil, and your life will be one unending song, and so full of blessing to others that when you die you will be sadly missed.

Sabbath School Department.

[From the Christian Helper.]

International Bible Lessons.

FAITH AND WORKS.

Oct. 26.—James 2: 14-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.—James 2: 26.

EXPLANATION OF THE TEXT.

14. Though in the interrogative form, this verse is not intended to ask questions. It is rather the strongest form of positive declaration, that faith which has no works is absolutely profitless, that such faith cannot save. CAN FAITH SAVE HIM. He means, of course, such faith as he mentions in the former clause, which is not accompanied by works.

15. 16. Illusions of the uselessness of such faith. DEPART IN PEACE, &c. Here we have words, kind words, which seem to show that the person speaking them is really kind and sympathetic. NOTWITHSTANDING, &c. No deeds accompany the words. WHAT DO THY WORDS PROFIT? For the clothing of the naked brother, for the satisfying of his hunger, of what use are words? Besides, since deeds do not accompany them, are not the words proved hypocritical? In the heart there is no such kindness as the words indicate, else there would be deeds as well as words. A forcible illustration!

17. DEAD. The words of v. 16 are dead words, they are only waggings of the tongue and consequent sounds, they have no life of heart and hand, of feeling and action. Faith without works is as powerless to save, as words are to clothe and feed; besides it is just as dead, ungenune, merely external and superficial, as words without feelings and acts.

18. The Apostle is not yet done with this subject, but still pursues it, so much is he in earnest over it. YEA. Better translated but. It introduces a supposed objection to what has just been said, but some one may say, &c. The objection is this: one may say "that religion is not always manifested in the same way; one man may manifest it in one way and another in another, one man may be distinguished for his faith and another by his works, and both may have real religion."—Barnes. SHOW ME THY FAITH, &c. This is the apostle's reply, viz. that the only way faith can be shown to exist is by the works it produces. Show me, if you can, your faith without works, I for my part will show mine, will prove its existence, by my works. The relation between faith and works is not that between foliage and flowers. One plant may be noted for the richness of its foliage, and another for the beauty of its flowers. But the relation is that between grain and seed. There can be no grain without seed, and the only way in the world by which the seed can prove its worth is by producing grain.

19. THOU BELIEVEST, &c. The greatest assent of intellect, to this fundamental truth of religion, THOU DOEST WELL. So far as it goes this is all right. But you stop there; your belief produces no effect upon you. Well, then, your belief can do you no more good than the belief of devils does them, for they too believe as you do. AND TREMBLE. Their belief does nothing for them but certify to their own misery.—Alford. If they might hold

such faith, and still remain in perdition, men might hold it and go to perdition?—Barnes. 20. WILT THOU KNOW? Wilt thou not be convinced? VAIN MAN. Who deceiveth thyself with a delusive hope existing on an unreal faith.—Peloubet.

21. Then he takes an example of the union of faith and works from real life and for example selects him who of all others is noted for his faith, the father of the Jewish nation. James selects the same person to the inseparableness of faith and works that Paul selects to prove justification by faith, Rom. 4. JUSTIFIED. Not that his works constituted a part of the ground on which he was justified. Christ's finished work is the sole ground of justification; but his works resulting from his faith, gave certain evidence that he was justified. Had there been no works it would have been equally evident that he was not justified. "Faith alone saves, but not the faith that is alone."—Robertson.

22. MADE PERFECT. Attained its development, showed itself to be real, as a seed is made perfect, developed, proved good by its growth into a tree.

23. WAS FULFILLED. Was confirmed, received its full manifestation and meaning. ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD. This the Scripture saith, and this was borne out, fulfilled, when Abraham manifested his faith by his obedience. Righteousness was imputed to him because he believed, and that he did believe was proved by his works.

24. Those to whom James addressed were inclined to think there could be justification where there were no good works. The apostle proves that good works are essential to justification, for only that faith which bears good works is the faith that justifies. NOT BY FAITH ONLY. Not by a faith that is alone.

25. Another example of the oneness of faith and works. Joshua 2.

26. Illustration of faith without works. The body without the spirit is dead, powerless, cold, a clayey form, nothing more. Faith which has no works is equally dead and useless. Faith without work is no more real faith than a corpse is a real man.

CHRISTIAN READINESS.

"The preparation of the gospel of peace" which Paul exhorts us to have our feet shod with, seems to mean a simple readiness to go when we are sent. This quality of readiness is an excellent quality. Many that are competent and that are not altogether unwilling to serve, are never quite ready. When they are called they always answer "Coming!" they never say "Here am I!" That which is done quickly is twice done; and the disciple whose feet are shod with this readiness is the disciple for whom the Master will find the most errands and the best rewards.

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