

THE FREE WILL BAPTIST GEM

ORGAN OF THE MISSOURI STATE ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTIST
AND OF THE CO-OPERATIVE GENERAL ASSOCIATION—FOR FREE WILL BAPTIST EVERYWHERE

Vol. 2. No. 11.

Purdy, Missouri, December, 1930.

\$1.00 per year.

Dedication

Outline of a dedication sermon delivered at the Welcome Home Church by Elder C. E. Mann.

1st. The Building. The thing to be dedicated. God has blessed with health, with the material and the time, in order that the house might be completed, and today we assemble in the finished work.

2nd. The Congregation. The building could have been completed, but without a people with a willing mind there would not have been a dedication. Therefore, we have assembled from the east, the west, the north and the south in order that we may give back to the Father that which belonged to him, yet in different form.

3rd. The Trinity. We would have been unable to have a dedication without some one to dedicate to. Therefore we dedicate back to the Trinity the material which was originally his. We do not claim any part of it as ours. The foundation, the building, the altar, the pulpit and the pew is the Lord's, and we humbly dedicate it unto Him. The building is still here, and I am sure the Lord returns it to our care. Keep the building clean, the pulpit and pew pure, and the altar holy.

THE MANNER OF SERVICE

1st. Solomon brought the message unto the congregation revealing God's love, his care and his interest in man. He told them of David's desire, of God's mercy, and of the provisions made and promises fulfilled.

2nd. The Dedication Prayer. Solomon began his prayer by standing, but as he proceeded with his prayer and God began to be

magnified, Solomon realized his unworthiness and humbled himself before God, and falling on his knees with his hands still outspread to heaven, he concludes his prayer.

3rd. The Sacrificial Service. Solomon offered unto the Lord twenty thousand oxen, and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep as a sacrifice. Jesus was offered as a sacrifice once and for all time, and He now asks that we offer ourselves upon the altar as a living sacrifice unto Him.

The dedication prayer will be offered by Rev. Miller while we kneel.

While the choir sings, I am going to ask that the members of this church come into the altar and give your life in loving sacrifice unto the Lord in faith and love, and for loving service for Him and mankind. The sacrificial prayer offered by Rev. Willie Rush of Santa Rosa, Mo.

Benediction.

God's Book of Instruction

Let each one of us ask ourselves this all-important question: "Are we neglecting our Bible? or do we study it and take it as our guide?"

I am sure that most people are neglecting it more than all books. There is nothing in the world that should be of more abiding interest to us than reading and observing the Bible's teachings. When God gave us the Bible, He gave us something that tells us what to do and what not to do, in order that we might reach heaven. If we fail to read it and meditate over it, how can we know what he is telling us in that wonderful Book of His!

The Bible, which is "the Book of books" should be first in our every day lives, but instead of taking the Bible and following it, we read other books and let that go neglected. Other books do not tell us the truth. They don't tell us a thing about our souls and the great world God is preparing for all who love him and keep his commandments. Most of us put more time on newspapers and magazines than we do on the blessed Book that God gave us as a guide from earth to heaven. We can read other books for hours at a time; but how long do we read our Bibles?

The Bible, or gospel of Christ, "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It is the fountain of knowledge and storehouse of wisdom. How many of us are seeking wisdom and knowledge? It is the key that unlocks the way from earth to heaven. When we are brought before the Judgment Bar of God, I'm afraid many of us will be found wanting, and will be turned off to the left into everlasting punishment.

Friends, let us consider it carefully. We may be able to fool a few people, but we can not deceive God. We have got to meet him face to face, and give account of the deeds done in our bodies. Some day our opportunity will be gone, and it will be entirely too late to try to make amends after we are called from this earth to eternity. Christ died that we might live spiritually, which means more to us than all the world, when we get into the dark hours and hard trials of life. Our earthly friends will forsake us, but God is always ready to stand by us in trouble.

and in trials.

Jesus is a friend to sinners, if they are only willing to trust and obey him. Christian friends, are we doing our best to lead the lost to Christ, or are we ourselves not letting our lights shine to this old world of sin?

Only a few weeks ago, I had a very dear friend come to me saying they had sinned against God and people, and wanted to be prayed for. Thank God for those who have the courage to ask an interest in prayer! Oh, how my heart is burdened for that one! I want to ask you who know the worth of prayer to pray for this soul. My earnest desire is that their sins may be blotted out, and that they may some day rejoice with the saints in the presence of the angels of God, there to spend the ceaseless ages of eternity.

Sinner friend, just stop for a moment and think. Do you intend to make preparation for the next world, or live as you are until it is too late? May God pity your soul and help you to see the need of salvation. This world is so full of trials and trouble that I sometimes get eager to go and be with my dear little children and loved ones where there will be no disappointments, and where all our tears will be dried.

I want to thank Bro. Jemes for the December issue of the Gem, also our editor for the extra copy of October issue.

Yours for the Master,
Mrs. Willie Clark.

FREE WILL BAPTIST LEAUGE

John Swaffer, Correspondent

ALTON, MO., Nov' 21, 1930.

Dear Bro. Swaffer: Our Free Will Baptist League, that was organized at Norman Church during the Mo. State Association, now has thirty-five members. Several more have promised to join later.

For our first lesson, Sunday, Nov. 9, we had no literature to take our subject from, but our president, Howard Blankenship, gave us Scriptures from the Bible on "Call and Calling."

Sunday, November 16th, our lesson was, "What It Means to Follow Jesus." This was taken from the sample sent us. They had no sample to send us last quarter, and sent us one of those used for the third quarter. We will not be able to get any literature until the first of the year.

Every one seems to be interestd in the League and are doing their best to make it a success. With God's divine power we can be a success.

God helping them, Bros. Hodge and Arnold had a great revival here at Norman. They closed Nov. 2nd, with ninety-three conversions (including eight saved during the Association). Fifty-five were baptized and twenty-three joined the Free Will Baptist church at Norman.

Ella Baker, Sec.Treas.

To the Leagues of Indian Creek Association: It has been a little over three months since we last met at our Yearly Meeting; and how many of us remember what was done there?

Let's remember the resolution of the committee on finance: "Resolved, That each local League send ten per cent all dues to the Secretary-Treas. of Indian Creek League Association, for the support of the organization. This to be sent in at the end of each quarter." Edna Eaton, Sec.-Treas., Rt. Stella, Missouri.

Be sure to keep a record of all that's done in your league, so you will have a report to offer at our meeting next year.

Let's keep in touch with each other through the "Gem," and pray always for better Leagues.—Noel Turner, Pres.

To the Leagues of the Missouri

State Association:

Dear League Workers: The year of 1930 is just about passed, and I am wondering if we see any progress in the League work. I can see some great changes, and also a growth in the leagues, even greater interest is being shown, which proves that greater things can be accomplished if we keep busy.

There is much to be done in the future, there's work for everyone, although some may think their ability small, yet they can be present at each meeting of their league with a good lesson and encourage their president in every way, and show that they are proud of the league, and are willing to uphold it. Then there's places

where you might organize a league, or encourage some one by a visit or a letter.

Our editor has been good enough to grant us a page in the Gem for league work, so let's be sure to use the space in a way that will be of benefit to the leagues. We want some one from each league to write regularly, so we will know just what each one is doing. When you write, send your letters or reports to John Swaffer, Purdy, Mo. If there's any place there's need of a league, and you don't feel able to organize it yourself write to some of the State officers, or anyone who can help, and we'll gladly offer our assistance. The State Officers are:

Pres., Eld. Noel Turner, Granby, Mo.
Vice Pres. Wm Reeves, Flat River, Mo.
Sec.-Treas. Melba White, Hemple, Mo.
Reporter, John Swaffer, Purdy Mo.

FIELD WORKERS

Lewis Jorgensen, Urbana, Mo.
Cecil Peterson, Greentop Mo.
Frecia Gray, Thayer, Mo.

When there's a league organized, send a report of it to the reporter, so we may all know of it.

We were at Enoch Ark., Nov. 23rd, where we organized a league with twenty-one members. I'm sure it will grow and be a benefit to the church and community. Let's keep praying for the league and for each other, for I see a great future for them if we keep pressing on.

Noel Turner, President.

We are building every day,
In a good or evil way;
And the structure as it grows
Will our inmost soul disclose.

Till in every arch and line
All our faults and failings shine—
It may grow a castle grand,
Or a wreck upon the sand.

Do you ask what building this,
That can show both pain and bliss;
That can be both dark and fair?
Lo, its name is character.

Build it well whate'er you do;
Build it straight and strong and true;
Build it clean and high and broad;
Build it for the eye of God.

—Selected.

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Eld. B. F. Brown, *Editor.*

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TERMS:

1.00 per year, cash in advance. Paper will be discontinued when subscription expires.

We will be glad to change your address for the Gem, if you notify us. Please give both the old and the new address.

Your time is out if a pencil mark appears here  

We are always glad to receive letters or articles for publication from our readers along any line that will help the cause.

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Away Behind, But Still in the Race

I know that all of you are looking for the Gem and wondering why it doesn't come; and I know that some of you will be disappointed when it doesn't arrive by the first Sunday in December, especially those who use the League and Sunday school lessons. We are sorry, but we have done our very best to get the paper out on time.

We were late with the November issue, so were late getting started on this issue. Then I attended the Co-operative Association and soon after that Bro. Davis and I went up to Fayette, Mo. to get the linotype. We had to tear the linotype down to transport it; so putting it up again and getting it adjusted and regulated so it would work has been a real job. Perhaps it wouldn't have been so much of a job for an expert, but we didn't have the money to pay an expert, so I had to do it myself. It is working all right now and we are truly glad it is. We are sure proud of our linotype: it is going to fill a long felt need in the Gem office. We can do much more work and do it better than by hand, as we have been doing it.

It took longer to set the linotype up and get it in operation than we thought it would, because hauling it 240 miles on a truck jarred several parts of it out of time, or out of place, and it gathered lots of dust which kept it from working smoothly, and which had to be all cleaned up. Then the editor didn't know too much about the type of machine we got. It is a model 19, with three magazines and three sizes of type. This column is set up in the smallest size, which is eight point.

We have several sets of minutes now in the office, which we promised to put out by Christmas, but we are not getting started on them as soon as we had hoped to, so we may not get the last of them finished until after New Year's, but we will get some of them done and have the next paper printed out by January first, 1931.

This issue contains the last installment of League Lessons, but the Sunday School Lessons will continue thru the year 1931. We can have room for many more articles, letters, reports, etc. from now on. At present nearly all of our manuscript is used up. All manuscript reaching us before the twentieth of the month will stand a chance of being printed in the current issue, and we appreciate receiving manuscript early in the month.

Now that we have the linotype, our paper should make a better appearance and, consequently make a better impression on those who read it. The prospects for the future of our work are certainly good. Our opportunities for growth and development, as I see things, were never better than they are right now, but with opportunity comes responsibility. Do we see the opportunity, and are we willing to meet the responsibility, and pay the price?

A good paper is the hope of our denomination, so if you would support your denomination, you must support your paper. If the paper is a good thing for the few who are subscribers now, it should be just as good for every member of the body. If you are a Free Will Baptist, and not a subscriber to the Gem, can you give any good reason why you or some member of your family should not be a paid subscriber to the Free Will Baptist Gem? If you can give such a reason, then send it to the editor: if you can't give such reason, then why don't you send in your dollar for a year's subscription to the Gem?

We are thankful for every one who has helped to make the Gem what it is, and we are especially thankful to all who have given to the linotype fund; may God bless you.

FROM THE FIELD

Report of Revival

Well, I am glad I can report this time a glorious revival at our Jones' Chapel church since we attended the State Meeting.

The meeting just lasted two weeks, and twenty-two souls were saved, fourteen united with the church, and fifteen were baptized, also a Mission Circle of thirty-two members was organized. Elder Noel Turner was with us in this meeting, as this is his home church, and Eld. Johnnie Swaffer was with us part of the time. The good people of the whole community co-operated well with us in the meeting; we shall never forget them for it. We also obtained several subs for the Gem while there.

We also attended the Co-operative Association at Tulsa, Okla. Say, you should have been there! We certainly did have a glorious time in the Lord. I expect you will see a report of it elsewhere in this issue of the Gem. You have missed something, if you have failed to meet our good people there, and their dear pastor, Elder Melvin Bingham.

Bro. Brown and I have just returned from purchasing the Linotype for the Gem office. I don't think there is any question but what we have purchased a good machine. We paid \$600.00 down, but remember there is \$700.00 yet to pay. We are still making the appeal. *Will you help us?* We found some real nice folks at Fayette to deal with, who seemed perfectly honest and fair in every way.

We have some revivals going in the bounds of our Indian Creek Association. I am praying that God will pour out His Holy Spirit and give some real revivals of power.

Yours for Jesus and the cause,
Winford Davis.

Charleston, Arkansas

Dear Bro. Brown and all the Gem Family:—I think we have one of the best papers I ever read. We should be proud of it and work for its success. Bro. Brown, although he is a fine editor, cannot make it go unless we subscribe for it and work for the paper. I sure do enjoy reading and telling others about it.

We had the privilege of visiting Bro. Lovett's meeting at Branch, Arkansas. They had a real old-time union meeting. Brother Preacher, let us not allow hard times to stop us, just pray and preach the more. Brother and Sister, this is the time you are needed on the firing line for the cause.

I am preaching every Saturday and Sunday, and hope to do more, so pray for me,

Isaac J. Wilson.

Niangua, Mo.

Dear Gem Readers:—Just thought I would write a few words this morning, hoping I might be a help to some one—the Lord being my guide. I feel very weak myself, but I am interested in others that are lost.

Sinners, won't you come to the Lord and repent and believe while he is merciful and waiting to give you rest? For he has said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Today is the day of salvation, and *now* is the accepted time. Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Sinners, come and accept my Savior as your Savior. He will not turn you away. The Lord is faithful and long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And he has also said, "Nay, I tell you, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Again he said; "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my

word, hath one that judgeth him; the words that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." Oh, sinners, come to Jesus! He's rich in mercy.

Our life is only short on earth. Let's give the rest of our lives to the Lord's service. Let's prepare for that great day.

Remember Lazarus and the rich man, and choose the place that Lazarus chose for a home. "For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

Pray for me.

Your sister in Christ,

Lois Deckard.

Olney, Texas

Dear Editor and Gem Readers: I am down here in Texas with my daughter, and am glad that I don't have to do without my little paper; there are so many good articles in it, and I thank God for folks that hold up the banner of Christ. I am going to say that I am proud of the Free W. Baptists, and may the Lord help us to hold for the old paths that our forefathers trod. I pray that we will always keep the old-fashioned altars in our churches and really live where we are worthy of the visiting of God's presence from the glory world.

May God in his tender mercy bind up our broken hearts, and help us to be fully prepared to meet him in heaven.

May God bless all.

Mrs. M. B. Cockman.

TRUE GIVING

"Carve your name high over shifting sands

Where the steadfast rocks defy decay;

All you can hold in your cold, dead hand

Is what you have given away.

"Count your wide conquests of sea and land,

Heap up the gold, and hoard as you may,

All you can hold in your cold dead hand
Is what you have given away.

Earlsboro, Okla.

Dear Gem Family:—You will see by this letter that we are back in the harvest field again. We have a large Tabernacle built here and well seated, well lighted and heated. We were nearly a week getting a lot to build on. These oil towns change hands so often you have a time finding the right ones that owns the land, but at last a lot was secured near the center of town, and men put to work and in three days the Tabernacle was ready for us to preach in.

Three grown people were saved the first night. The meeting has been running a week tonight (Nov. 7) and twenty-one have been saved. Every night God has saved some—not a break in the service yet. The power of God is felt by the time you enter the Tabernacle. We expect one of the greatest revivals we have ever had, and we ask each one to pray daily for success. The Free Will Baptists have a splendid new church building here, and a nearby organized church, so pray for the church that many will be added during the meeting.

We would like to say to our Mission friends that we still think of you, and we are sure, after such a wonderful State Meeting that each church will take on new life.

We will say to Missouri that you, or we rather, had one of the very best State associations we have ever had. God bless the work, and may we all do our best for a great year's work.

Pray much for us here, and we will do the same for you.

Yours for Jesus,
H. M. and Lizzie McAdams.

Hermitage, Mo.

Dear Bro. and Sister Brown and Readers of the Gem:—As I was here all alone this beautiful morning, I thought I would write a few lines to the Gem Family. I must say I like the Gem. It has many good things in it. I enjoy the good letters, and to hear of the good meetings, as I

am so far away from our church I can't go very often.

I will be eighty-three years old in January. I think my time is about out to my paper. Don't want to miss a copy, so I am sending you a check for three dollars, one for the paper for one year, and two for the Linotype.

Hope the paper will prosper and the good work will go on. I haven't received my paper for November, but hope I will soon. Pray for me, and our little church at Pleasant Ridge.

As ever a sister in Christ,
Harriet Walker.

Alton, Mo.

Dear Bro. Brown:—We are writing you in regard to the revival just closed at Norman Church near Alton, Mo.

There were so many asked that we write them about the meeting that we decided the best thing to do would be write you, and let you put the report in the Gem.

The revival went right on after the State Association and continued until Sunday night November 2nd. There were eight saved during the Association, as you know, and 85 after, making a total of 93, fifty-five baptized in two Sundays, twenty-nine one Sunday and twenty-six the other. There were twenty-four untied with the Free Will Baptist church, and we understand about eight or ten more next meeting day.

We surely thank God for the meeting, and desire to thank the people for praying for us and the meeting. The last night there were four at the altar, and one man saved. The people of Norman community are as good people as we ever met.

We are going together in the work for the Lord, trusting God to bless us wherever we go.

Your brothers in Christ,
Elders G. D. Arnold and W. P. Hodge

Stahl, Mo

Dear Gem Readers:—Just received

my copy of the Gem today. Must say for the paper, it is fine, and filled with splendid letters and news from our workers at large.

But here is something that not many write about and it seems to me to be a big factor for good, the greatest of all the branches of the church, the American Sunday School.

Here are a few facts which I have learned through study of the Sunday School:

First. The Sunday School is said to be one hundred and fifty years old.

Second. It is producing 85 per cent of all the new members of the church.

It is also said that the Christian church has an income of over eight hundred million dollars per year, and only about two per cent goes, or finds its way, to the use of the Sunday School.

Four years ago we found a statement to the effect that we had in the United States 144,450 actual organized Sunday Schools, with an average attendance of from ten to one thousand, and an average cost per scholar of forty eight cents. We also have seventeen million Sunday School scholars, and the average church member gives to the organization about fifty cents a year.

On the other side of the question, we have in the United States possibly 130,000,000 people. More than half of these people are prospective candidates for the Sunday School. We have 17,000,000 or a little over in Sunday School at the present time. By a united effort, all praying and working, each one striving to "win one," in the next few years, we should and could have 34,000,000 in God's great institution, the American Sunday School.

By doubling our average offering of fifty cents, and making our offering average a few dollars more with what could be brought in through new members, we could and would largely solve the mem-

bership and financial problems of the church and Sunday School.

Pastors, Superintendents and Christians everywhere, help in uniting our prayers, and labor together for this great cause.

Yours in His name and for His sake,

Chas A. Phillips,

Sunday School Evangelist, North East Mo. Association of F. W. B.

611 Rutger St., St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Gem Readers:—The following is a brief report of our work for the past month:

October 29th two precious souls professed a hope in Christ. November 2nd two more gave their hearts to God. November 9th five happy souls were born into the kingdom. Since then one more has professed Christ. Three, in the meantime, have united with the church. We have not had any special meeting—just our regular services is all.

This work was organized three and a half years ago, and we have had a three years' revival. God has wonderfully blessed us here. There have been over six hundred people who have professed a hope in Christ as a result of this work. We have sent out several consecrated preachers to other sections of the country who have been, and are doing, splendid work.

Our Sunday School is doing good work under the management of our dear Brother F. M. McCauley. Our B. Y. P. U. is doing good work. We have fifty-three members and they are all doing good work. Most of them will lead in prayer or lead a meeting if called upon.

Yours in the Master's work,

Eld. W. C. Hill, Pastor,
First F. W. B. Church, St. Louis, Mo.

Phenix, Mo.

Dear Bro. Brown and Gem Readers:—I think my time has expired, and while I am not prepared to send my subscription at present, I will try to send it in December.

I like the Gem, especially the letters written by the various correspondents. I take the General Baptist Messenger printed at Owensville, Indiana and like it because I have taken it so long and become so well acquainted with those who write to it, and because it comes every week. Of course I get more out of it, but I would be glad to see the Gem become a weekly instead of a monthly paper. "The Messenger" is the organ of the church I have belonged to for forty-four years, but the original Free Will Articles of Faith expresses the same as taught by the General Baptists.

I have a nephew, Elder Earline Haskins of Stratford, Okla. who is a Free Will Baptist preacher in Center Association. He attended the Mo. Association of General Baptists this year, and preached a very interesting discourse and I had the privilege of following him.

Our next Association will convene with Pleasant Hill Church on highway No. 5 near Mansfield, Mo. on Thursday before the 3rd Sunday in September, 1931. Bro. Brown, you are cordially invited to attend, and if you will you may send me prices on about an 8-page folder the size of this page.

I am still living away from where I can attend General or Free Will Baptist churches. The Missionary Baptists have a Spiritual religion, but don't allow privileges to preachers of other churches, as Generals or Free Wills do. I heartily wish there was a Free Will Church near enough for us to attend. So wishing the Gem, its editor and the people it represents God-speed, I am,

Your brother,

(Eld.) R. F. Haskins.

The Co-operative General Association

Ry B. F. Brown

The following is a brief report of the Co-operative General Association, which met with the First Free Will Baptist Church of Tulsa, Okla., beginning on Tues. night, Nov. 11.

More than twenty preachers and several elected delegates, and several visiting brethren were present, besides a large number of the laity who were in attendance, especially at the preaching services; so each session and each service was well attended, and at night the house could not accommodate the crowds that came.

Elder T. C. Ferguson of Ash Grove, Mo. was chosen Moderator, and Elder Winford Davis of Monett, Mo. was chosen clerk for this year's session.

Bro. T. C. Ferguson was retained as National Evangelist for another year.

The introductory sermon was preached by Elder R. L. Cotnam of Vernon, Texas. An altar service followed the preaching service, and four precious souls were saved. The power of God was felt right from the beginning and continued from service to service throughout the Association, and in the meeting which followed. The Association business was finished at the Thursday morning session, and the Association adjourned to meet with Macedonia Church near Monett, Mo. beginning on Tuesday night before the second Sunday in Nov., 1931.

Up to the time we left, we had witnessed ten happy conversions, and since then we have word from Bro. Melvin Bingham, pastor of the Tulsa Church, that seventeen more had been converted, twenty of whom united with the church, and the meeting still going on, Bro Bingham doing the preaching.

We left for home just after the eleven o'clock service on Thursday, but not before partaking of the bountiful dinner the good sisters had prepared for everybody there that day.

Motion carried that the editor of the Gem and the acting moderator and clerk of the body be authorized to represent this body at any conference of Free Will Baptist or General Baptist they may have the privilege of attending.

Continued on page seventeen

International Sunday School Lessons

Comments by B. F. Brown.

(Fourth Quarter, 1930.)

Lesson X December 7, 1930 Stephen

Acts 6:1 to 7:60

Topic:—Stephen's Contribution to Christianity.

Golden Text—They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. Acts 6:5.

Practical Truth—Some men even in their death accomplish great things for the kingdom of God.

Outline—I. Stephen, the man. II. Stephen, the evangelist. III. Stephen accused. IV. Stephen's defense. V. Stephen's martyrdom.

Time—About A. D. 35.

Place—Jerusalem.

Introduction—It was a custom of the early church to keep a record of its martyred members, covering the main events of their lives; what they did and the death they suffered. Some local churches celebrated the days on which any of its members suffered martyrdom, counting it the birthday of the martyr, on which he entered into eternal glory. The Lord was not forgetful of the first Christian martyr; and placed his record in the Bible.

Unusual situations call for men of rare character and abilities, which they have developed and built up by the help of God. By God's help Stephen had built up a reputation for honesty, sincerity, goodness, and a deep spirituality; he was just the kind of a man needed to head the board of deacons to handle the business of the early church. He was also a man of great eloquence and had a wonderful knowledge of the Scriptures.

The history of the church shows that its periods of greatest glory came in times of great persecution. The Pharisees, thinking they must take Stephen outside the city to stone him to death, reminds us of

some modern professors of religion that think it wrong to swear, etc. on Sunday, but indulge freely during the week. Stephen's last words were so much like the last words of our Lord because he was filled with the Holy Ghost. Falling asleep is not the end; it implies a waking. Saul's holding the young men's clothes, etc., remind us that being a willing witness to evil is but little short of becoming an evil doer.

Commentary—I. STEPHEN, THE MAN (6:1-10). "When the number of the disciples was multiplied," the administration of the community fund in the early Christian church developed some perplexing problems. So when complaint was made, the twelve called the multitude of disciples together and recommended that "seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," be appointed to oversee the business, serving tables, etc. Stephen was one of the seven that were appointed and set apart for their work by prayer and the laying on of hands. He was an outstanding man and the only one of the seven of whom any special comment is made.

II. STEPHEN, THE EVANGELIST (vs. 7-10). As "the word of God increased," and the number of the disciples increased to a multitude, an increasing number of evangelists were taking up the work of spreading the Gospel. Stephen is mentioned as a man "full of faith and power," doing wonders and performing miracles among the people. By his miracles, and by his eloquence and power, Stephen excited the jealousy of the unbelieving Jews, and certain of them disputed with him, but "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake."

III. STEPHEN ACCUSED (vs. 11-15). While they could not resist the words of Stephen, their jealous wicked hearts led them to accuse him before the court. "The people, the elders, and the scribes," being stirred up, took Stephen and brought him before the council, and produced false witnesses to prove him a blasphemer. In the presence of these wicked accusers, Stephen's unruffled spirit made his face appear "as it had been the face of an angel."

IV. STEPHEN'S DEFENSE (7:1-53). Stephen recounted the history of Israel and reminded his hearers that their fathers had even rejected Moses and tried to turn back into Egypt; that they had rejected the prophets and persecuted them; that they had slain the men who had foretold the coming of the Just One—in fact their whole history was one of rejection, and as their fathers had rejected God, so now his hearers were rejecting God in the person of Jesus. The Jews were prone to think that the temple was God's resting place on earth, and that there was salvation only in the temple worship, but Stephen would show them their eternal hope lay not in their traditions and their formal worship, but in Jesus the Christ whom they had murdered.

V. STEPHEN'S MARTYRDOM (vs. 54-60). When they heard themselves arraigned as murderers, they "were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." Stephen, "being full of the Holy Ghost," looked into heaven and saw Jesus "standing on the right hand of God." As they stoned him, he called upon God, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He also prayed, "Lay not this sin to their charge."

Lesson XI Dec. 14, 1930**Saul of Tarsus**

Acts 22:3-15

Topic:—Conversion: Its Nature and Effect**Golden Text**—I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. Phil. 3:8.**Practical Truth**—Conversion is the great change that marks the beginning of Christian life and service.

- Outline**—I. Saul, a persecutor.
 II. Jesus arresting Saul's attention.
 III. Saul's response.
 IV. Saul's commission.

Time—About A. D. 35.**Place**—In and near Damascus.

Introduction—Saul (Paul) was naturally and by education a high-powered man. His home training must have been of the best kind, and his education must have included some work in the higher schools of his day, then he sat at the feet of Gamaliel where he was given the very best culture and training in Jewish religion and wisdom that it was possible to secure. He was conscientious and zealous and loyal to the Jewish religion, and felt that if the temple with all it stood for was to be done away with by the new religion of Jesus, the work of God through Israel would be lost to men.

Saul had been honest and sincere in his intentions and actions, but a great change of nature came to Saul. No one can read the history of Paul's life and honestly say that he only changed his career at his conversion. The man himself was changed. He passed through the experience which Jesus called the new birth. His theology was changed, so that he believed in justification by faith, and not by the works of the law. His conduct was changed; he quit persecuting the Christians. His affections were changed; instead of hating Christ and the Christians, he loved them. His career was changed; instead of being a Jewish rabbi, he became the great apostle to the Gentiles. His destiny was changed:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:8).

When it was revealed to Paul that he was fighting against God, he made a full and honest surrender to Jesus. When he became willing to make all necessary changes of conduct, he asked, when he was stricken down on the way to Damascus to bind and persecute all the Christians he found, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Saul the Pharisee was harsh, and cruel, but when changed to Paul the apostle, sweetness and goodness flowed out of his life, and continues to flow down to us today. No conversion is without a sense of God's power in the great transforming experience, yet every experience is not just like that of Paul.

Commentary—I. SAUL, A PERSECUTOR (vs. 3-5). What noble spectacle was that of Paul, as he stood on the stairs, bound with two chains, ready to make his defence to his people. He was taken for an Egyptian, at least by the captain who expected him to speak in Greek, and they could have understood him in Greek, and doubtless they expected the renegade to address them in that language, but the sound of the holy mother tongue awed them into deep silence.

As Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians as a preparation for his great work; so Saul was educated, first in the Grecian schools of Tarsus, and at home, then he was a student under Gamaliel who taught him "according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers," but all this he used against the followers of Jesus. As Paul stood on the stairs, he saw his own murderous zeal reflected upon himself by the treatment the Jews were giving him.

II. JESUS ARRESTING SAUL'S ATTENTION (vs. 6-9). As Saul journeyed, going to Damascus on his mission of persecution, suddenly a great

light shone out from heaven upon him and his company. So great was that light that Saul and all those with him were prostrated upon the earth. They all saw the light, but only Saul saw the Lord. They all heard the sound of His voice, but only Saul understood His words.

III. SAUL'S RESPONSE (vs. 10, 11). When Saul saw the Lord, he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" When he knew it was the Lord, he said, "What shall I do, Lord?" And the Lord said unto him, "Go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." It is not said that Saul was blind, but that he "could not see for the glory of that light." Yet he was so blinded by that light that he had to be led by the hand into Damascus. "He was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." What three days those must have been! Perhaps, as he prayed and fasted in total darkness, he came to realize that his understanding of the Old Testament was false and fatal; that salvation and the hope of eternal life lay only in "that Just One" whom he had been persecuting.

IV. SAUL'S COMMISSION (vs. 12-15). While Saul was struggling and groping in darkness, God prepared Ananias to go to him and lay his hands on him, that he might receive his sight, and to show him what the Lord had commanded for him to do, and what he must suffer. The Lord also prepared Saul for the coming of Ananias, so Saul received the answer to his question, "What shall I do?" Taking the accounts of Saul's conversion found in Acts 9: 22-26, is it possible to explain away Christ's appearance to him? His conversion came after three days of darkness and struggle, when the light broke through physically and spiritually. But his conversion, his confession of Christ, preceded his baptism.

Question. 1. What submissive question did Saul ask the glorified Christ?

2. What great task was assigned to Saul?

OUR SUNSHINE CIRCLE

YOUNG PEOPLES' FREEWILL BAPTIST LEAGUE

Ora Mae McKinney Davis, Editor

(Fourth Quarter, 1930.)

Our Motto:—"The Kingdom of God First."—Matt. 6:33.

December 7, 1930

The Best Christmas Gifts

2 Cor. 8:1-5.

DAILY READINGS

Dec. 1. Gifts That Help. 2 Cor. 9:8-11

Dec. 2. Gifts That Please. Gen. 37:1-3

Dec. 3. Gifts That Cheer. Matt. 2:1-11

Dec. 4. Gifts That are Not Burdensome

2 Cor. 9:1-5.

Dec. 5. Gifts We Enjoy Giving.

2 Cor. 9: 6-7

Dec. 6. Gifts That Express Love

2 Cor. 8:1-9

Dec. 7. Gifts That Represent Christ

2 Cor. 9:12-15

MONDAY—Gifts That Help. 2 Cor. 9:8-11. Christmas is a good time to help those in need of material assistance. The fundamental spirit of Christmas is that of giving. We have Christmas because God loved the world and shared Himself in the person of His Son. Christ loved us and shared His life with us in order that His fellowship might fit us for His heavenly home with the Father, when this life is done. The Spirit of Jesus prompts us to share God's blessings with others, in recognition of His greatest gift to the world. Our Lord, may we prove our gratitude for all thou hast shared with us, by sharing with others the blessings thou hast given us.

Question. What blessing has God given to us that we can best share with others?

TUESDAY—Gifts That Please. Gen. 37:1-3. "A coat of many colors" (v.3). Utility need not be decreased by beauty. Beauty is just as useful; and when both are combined, the gift is most appropriate and beautiful. The time and money spent in making Christmas gifts attractive are not wasted. A basket of apples, a bag of flour, or even coin may be greatly increased in value as a gift if made attractive by appropriate wrappings, decorations, and the manner of presentation. Grant, O Lord, that we may find our greatest joy and pleasure in giving happiness to others.

Question. What is the secret of

beautiful giving?

WEDNESDAY—Gifts That Cheer. Matt. 2:1-11. "Gold and frankincense and myrrh" (v. 11). Perhaps God meant that the gifts of the wise men to the Christ child should be typical of the gifts that express love and adoration, and Goodwill. Surely they were gifts fit for a King! If we are thoughtful we shall try to make our gifts express ourselves, our thoughts, our feelings, our love toward another. Even our hopes and prayers should embrace the cradle, a rude manger with its rough bedding of hay and straw, while wrapped in swaddling clothes lay the small Prince of Glory. His only pillow was His mother's arm as she cuddled Him close to her bosom. Ah, the blossom of God! These thots should encircle each and every gift we wrap, or tie, or decorate to send to another. We should try to make each gift fit for the one to whom it is given, that it may cheer and inspire, and comfort, else why give it at all? Our Father, may we not spoil the joy of Christmas by giving thoughtlessly. May we put ourselves into our gifts by praying as we send forth the gifts of love and remembrance of the Christ-child of Bethlehem.

Question. In what way does the manger represent humility?

THURSDAY—Gifts That Are Not Burdensome (2 Cor. 9:1-5). Make up beforehand your bounty" (v. 3). When Christmas becomes burdensome it is no longer true Christmas giving. When it no longer means a joy to the giver he has lost the spirit and the blessing of Christmas. When we put off the preparation of Christmas gifts until all is confusion and nervous exhaustion to ourselves and those from whom we buy, Christmas does more harm to us than good, for even in the purchase of the gifts there does not exist a fervent, prayerful spirit that should be present, even when Christmas gifts selected. I wonder how many have thought seriously about this when selecting your Christmas gifts.

"Even our thoughts are heard in heaven." What then is the value of serious thinking? The thought you put forth as you buy your gift may be of more value than even the gift itself. The angels know your thoughts, they know mine too; and God is able to use our thoughts in every gift we send, until the person to whom the gift is sent will feel the divine touch of love, folded away sweetly by the gentle hand of the Lord is a thought. It may have been a serious, precious thought, until it has power enough to bring before the receiver of the gift a tender, touching picture of the Christ-child, in a rude, cold manger with nowhere to lay His tiny head of glory save only on His mother's arm. Lord Jesus, if we have been failures in the past, help us to cautiously consider the future as we select our Christmas gifts; for a true Christmas spirit demands proper consideration, prayer and selection of gifts.

Question. How does our influence go with our Christmas gifts? Why?

FRIDAY—Gifts We Enjoy Giving.

(2 Cor. 9:6, 7). A cheerful giver

(v 7). The best gifts we can give

are those into which we put ourselves,

the work of our hands or our brains.

All the time we are preparing them

we have the joy of giving. We are

thinking of those whom we shall

make glad, and when they receive our

gifts they are happy, not only for the

gifts, but even for the thought and

love, and the definite personal effort

which they represent, scarcely realizing

that prayer made the gifts appear

even more attractive. Our Father,

help us to understand and to know the

Spirit of Christ better this Christmas

as we prepare for giving in personal

service which even our circumstances

allow. There are so many out of

work and many cry for bread. If

you can spare only a five cent loaf of

bread, a pound of sugar, or even a

small jar of fruit, the one thing to be

remembered is prepare your gift in

Jesus' name and with each bundle

utter a prayer. The widow that gave

her mite (all her living) was blessed

more than all the others who gave

large gifts into the treasury. A gift

though small, if given with cheer and

prayer, is worth far more in God's

sight than a costly gift given without

the Spirit of Christ put into it. That

is the real value of your Christmas

gifts, because the spirit of Christmas

is Christ Himself.

Question. How can the unfortunate (those who have no work or food) help to make others happy? Their prayers are worth just as much as our prayers. And their sorrows should be remembered by us all, and mingled with all our joys, yet, after all there is something they can do that will make others glad, what is it?

SATURDAY— Gifts That Express Love (2 Cor. 8:1-9). *They gave of their own accord* (v. 3). Who cares for a gift that is given only that another may be received in return? Who cares for a gift that expresses merely an effort to return only a favor? Such gifts bring no joy, either to those who give or to those who receive. In reality they are no gifts at all. They only substitute for giving, in the true spirit of Christmas. Give at Christmas only that which you wish to give, hoping to receive nothing in return. Grant unto us, O God, that the spirit of trade may not replace the Spirit of Christ in our hearts at Christmas time.

Question. Children, young people! You all have a gift to give to Jesus. Christ was a Christmas gift to us. How many are to give to Jesus a gift this Christmas? (It is your soul)

SUNDAY— Gifts That Represent Christ (2 Cor. 9:12-15). *His unspeakable gift* (v. 15). All our Christmas giving should in some way remind us and our friends of Him who brought Christmas into the world. Why should a Christian send even a Christmas card that carries nothing of the true message and meaning of Christmastide? O Christ, who loved us and who gave thyself for us, may we give unto thee the central place in our minds and our hearts during all the Christmas season. May our thoughts and our gifts be inspired of thee by the memory of thine own self as a gift to us.

Question. What is the real Divine Spirit of Christmas?

Benediction—The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

December 14, 1930.

What a Young Woman Should Be
Proverbs 31:10-31.

DAILY READINGS

- Dec. 8. Trustworthy. Prov. 31:10-15.
- Dec. 9. Industrious. Ruth 2:17-23.
- Dec. 10. Thrifty. Proverbs 31:16-24.
- Dec. 11. Generous. 1 Sam. 25:2-42.
- Dec. 12. Modest. Genesis 24:61-67.
- Dec. 13. Religious. Luke 10:33-42.

Dec. 14. Home Loving. Prov. 31:25-31.

MONDAY—Trustworthy (Prov. 31:10-15). *Trusteth in her* (v. 11). A woman has a right to change her mind; so has every one else. But no one has a right to betray a trust. No one has a right to be undependable. No one has a right to reveal a secret without the permission of those concerned. No one has a right to pretend, to deceive, to misrepresent. No one has a right to make a promise without the absolute intention to keep it. Loyalty is the first necessity of happy companionship with the Lord Jesus and our fellowmen. Teach us these words Father, *To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved.*
Question. What can we do, that others may trust us more?

TUESDAY—Industrious (Ruth 2:17-23). *She gleaned in the field until evening* (v. 17). A young man said to a young woman, "I do not believe that the girls of today know what a needle is for." And she quickly answered, "Of course we do!" Not many self-respecting young women now are willing to be supported wholly by the labor of others, receiving all from a world to which they give nothing.

Idleness is the way to dissatisfaction, restlessness, mischief, and misery. We enjoy ourselves only in our work, our doing is our enjoyment. Dear Lord, may each of us be worth something to others in what we can do. In our best manner may we pay our own way, asking God for strength and grace measured out for each day, in His will, His way.

Question. What is the greatest deed we can do for others?

WEDNESDAY—Thrifty (Prov. 31:16-24). *Her merchandise is profitable* (v. 18). A young married woman said, "I am not interested in saving. The more I spend, the harder my husband will have to work to pay the bills." An older and wiser woman who heard her, remarked, "I wonder what her husband thinks about it?" Already the foundations of that home are shaky. Even the home life and work is a co-operative enterprise, and it cannot survive long on any other basis. O God, that made the world, who ceaselessly watches to sustain it, grant that each of us may gladly do his or her part in all the walks of life, that each strive to do his or her duty.

Question. In what way can we be thrifty in accordance with God's will?

THURSDAY—Generous (1 Sam. 25:2-42). *She reacheth forth her hands*

to the needy (Prov. 31:20). A stingy hand is always the instrument of a selfish heart. Generosity, a desire to help, a recognition of worth in the humblest and poorest, a preparedness to serve in time of need, these are the marks of a disposition that always cheers, and a soul of whose comradeship one never tires. Teach us, O God, to live for others, and that our opportunities never shall be limited.

Question. How can we be most generous to those around us?

FRIDAY—Modest (Gen. 24:61-67). *She took her veil and covered herself* (v. 65). Modesty is every woman's treasure. It may be expressed in different ways and in different ages, but the nature of modesty itself never changes. Its priceless value is never discounted. When modesty (self-respect) is lost, all that women hold most dear, and that men prize most in womanhood is gone. Modesty is always attractive, even to those who have it not. Help us, Lord, to always be our best selves. May our desire to be courteous and polite and cheerful never make us cheap. May we always win with self-respect or lose with honor. We thank thee for the glory of true womanhood.

Question. At what value does God place womanhood?

SATURDAY—Religious. Luke 10:38-42). *A woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised* (Prov. 31:30). Human happiness has no perfect security but freedom, freedom none but virtue, virtue none but knowledge; and neither freedom nor virtue, nor knowledge has any vigor, or immortal hope, except in the principles of the Christian faith. Women of today owe most everything in their lives that is worth having to Christian living and the faith that others had in the centuries gone by. Life and religion are one. Neither is of much value when separated from the other. O God, wilt thou always be to us the most real thing we know. May our relation to thee be to us the most important thing we have. May the knowledge and worship of thee be the most glorious thing we undertake in our homes or out of them.

Question. In what way can a woman make her home an altar unto the Lord?

SUNDAY—Home Loving (Prov. 31:25-31). *She looketh well to the ways of her husband* (v. 27). The greatest work in which a woman can engage is the making of a real home for herself and for those she loves.

Our civilization depends upon the home. Family life will be at an end when homes are no longer cherished. Constant love, abiding joy, and undisturbed peace and rest do not live outside the home. Lord Jesus, we thank thee for the example of thy life within the home of a carpenter; a man of humble trade. May we never forget that *Be it ever so humble there's no place like home.* May each of us understand she has a part in making the home what it ought to be. And may we all realize this as the the greatest thing we shall ever do.

Question. In each and every home there should be erected a family altar. How can it be done. When?

BENEDICTION:—

December 21, 1930.

Joy To The World

Luke 2:13, 14; Eph. 5:19, 20.

DAILY READINGS

- Dec. 15. God's Love. John 3:16-21.
- Dec. 16. God's Nearness. John 1:1-14.
- Dec. 17. God's Forgiveness. John 1:29-34.
- Dec. 18. God's Power. Phil. 4:8-13.
- Dec. 19. God's Example. Eph. 4:11-15.
- Dec. 20. God's Purpose. Luke 2:8-12.
- Dec. 21. God's Plan. Matt. 2:1-12.

MONDAY—God's Love (John 3:16-21). *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son* (v.16). The gladdest message the world has ever received is the assurance that God loves us and desires our good. The angels from heaven sang in the Bethlehem sky, of *good will toward men.* The star was the direct sign which the Lord Himself should give as a signal of God's love.

One lone star to mark the cradle,

Of a manger cold and bare;

Only straw within for comfort,

While the angels watched with care.

I wonder how many would really love to have seen that lowly place where Christ was born? It may have been a cold, cheerless stable with the cold wind sweeping through, while no doubt the moon-beams peeped through the large open space between rude logs. There was no stove in which to make a fire, the moment of distress had come, for almost we can hear Joseph saying, "This is to be the King of glory. O, we had hoped to have things in order when Jesus should be born, but now that the time is here, we are far away from our own home, and I have sought in vain for a place of comfort for Mary but alas, it must be God's purpose for it to be just as it is." And so it was. God watched, waited, then with simplicity a gentle loving hand placed a

beautiful star just above this lowly place where lay God's only begotten Son, just a Babe, but our Savior.

Question. Have you ever realized how much God loved us?

TUESDAY—God's nearness (John 1:1-14). *And the word became flesh and dwelt among us* (v. 14). The salvation of Christ fills with joy and hope. Is it no wonder the wise men worshiped the new-born King? Is it not wonderful that the shepherds heard the angels singing and beheld their beauty, at the birth of Jesus? Yes, the bells of heaven rang,

Yes, the blessed angels sang:
Christ is born, 'tis Christmas morn;
Peace on earth, good will toward men.

God gave to the world a very precious Gift, His only Son. What have we to give in return? God's nearness has been demonstrated to us in the person of His Son. We have been made nigh unto God by the blood of Christ, and "in God we live, and move, and have our being."

Question. How can we reflect God?

WEDNESDAY—God's Forgiveness (John 1:29-34). *Take away the sin of the world* (v. 29). The Jewish people had supposed that the guilt of God the life of a lamb without sin could be removed by offering to blemish. Jesus came with the glad message from God, and John pointed him out as the Lamb of God, the One who could take away sin by His own precious blood. We thank thee O God, for the love that really forgives. May we believe in Him who shed His blood for our sins, that by that blood we may be cleansed from all our sins.

Question. How many would truly love to become God's child?

THURSDAY—God's Power (Phil. 4:8-13). The Divine Spirit who lived in Jesus will live in each of us in just the degree in which we make room for Him, receive Him, and obey Him. When Jesus was born there was no room found for Him at the inn, is there in your life for Him? He does not transform us into perfect beings who cannot sin, but He gives us power to become children of God, yielding to His influence, and obeying Him in all things, we grow in grace and a knowledge of Him. A child cannot walk when it first tries, it is apt to stumble and fall; so a young Christian is apt to fall, but Jesus has promised to be with us to help in every time of need.

How may we become the children of God?

Question. How may we grow, and reach the full measure of Christ?

FRIDAY—God's Example (Eph. 4:11-15). *"Unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ"* (v.13) We know what a human life ought to be and what a human life may become when lived in fellowship with God. Our example is the life of Jesus. He has set a copy for each of us to reproduce. God desires that we shall grow, not always remaining babes and children in spiritual experience, but reaching maturity; that is, reaching the full measure of development in the fullness of Christ. How long in our own churches and young people's work shall we remain babes to be cuddled, and petted, and humored? When shall we become strong so that others may look to us for comfort and strength? Since Christ has been made known to us, may we be satisfied with nothing less than the likeness of Him in our lives day by day.

Question. How may we grow, reaching the full measure of Christ?

SATURDAY—God's Purpose (Luke 2:8-14). God made man to resemble Him in likeness. If we are to reflect God and live to His glory and honor, we must be like Him. God made us all to live and work together. Only when we live according to God's purpose can we be happy. Only when we work together can we make progress. Only when we recognize God as the universal Father of all living can the world know permanent peace. Our Father, may thy great love for us, revealed in thy gift on that first Christmas day, shame us out of our jealousy, envy, and selfish ambitions that cause suspicion and hatred, and strife.

Question. How many will do without something this Christmas, in order that some little boy or girl might have a Christmas gift, in memory of the lowly birth of Jesus?

SUNDAY—God's Plan (Matt. 2:1-12). God's plan from beginning of creation has been to make a world that will fully express Himself. All that we see are the garments of God, or perhaps we could say, the body in which God lives, and works. The end of all creation with its highest form is man, who is made in the image of God. Thus Christ humbled Himself to become a man and *who took upon Himself the form of a servant.* He came in the flesh that He might give His own blood to redeem man, to bring man back to God, from whence man had strayed, "Being made nigh unto God by the blood of Christ." Thus Christ came to this world to restore to God that which was lost. Man had dis-

beyed and had committed treason against the divine laws of God. Jesus came to restore and pardon.

Question. How many will strive and work to be like Jesus?

BENEDICTION:—

December 28, 1930.

Things This Year Has Taught Us

Deut. 8:1—11.

DAILY READINGS

Dec. 22. God's Care of Us. Deut. 8:1-10.

Dec. 23. Our Own Weakness. Deut. 9:6-19.

Dec. 24. Our Own Strength. Deut. 11:8-25.

Dec. 25. Our Need of God. Deut. 8:11-18.

Dec. 26. God's Discipline. Deut. 11:1-7.

Dec. 27. God's Progressive Purpose. Deut. 10:12-22.

Dec. 28. Assurance of the Future. Deut. 11:26-32.

MONDAY—God's Care of Us (Deut. 8:1-10). *Jehovah thy God hath led thee* (v. 2). How grateful we are at the end of the year for God's loving care over us! Many times we seemed to walk alone, many times the way was dark, and we seemed to walk blindly, but now we look back over the path by which we have come, and we know that God's hand was leading us every step of the way. Many of the experiences we dreaded most we know now to have been our greatest blessings. Some of the things which still puzzle us and grieve us, sometime we shall understand. God never fails His own. Help us, O God, to believe we cannot understand; help us to walk by faith, unafraid when we cannot see the way.

Question. In what way has God most tenderly cared for you in the past year?

TUESDAY—Our Own Weakness. (Deut. 9:6-19). *That He might humble thee* (Deut. 8:2). God never tempts men to do wrong, but He cannot leave them to go free without being subject to testings and trials. If men were incapable of being tempted, they would be like machines with no character, and with no fellowship with God as their Creator. If the trials of the year have revealed to us our own weakness, we should thank God that we have discovered our faults and endeavor to correct them. This is the way real, genuine character grows.

Father, may we be better men and women during the coming year, because of the experience of the year that has passed. May this be true not only of what we do, but also of what we are.

Question. How may our failings in the past year mean blessings to us

in the coming year?

WEDNESDAY—Our Own Strength. (Deut. 11:8-25). *To prove thee to know what is in thy heart* (Deut. 8:2). If the past year has not taught us some new things that we can do, if it has not opened to us some new opportunity into which we entered, we have been very careless indeed. If we remember no obstacles which we have overcome, if we have won no moral battles of which we are conscious, our lives have been lacking in purpose and heroism. But if we have been loyal to the best we have known, if we have walked with Christ upon the heights where the view is clear and the air is clean, we have gained spiritual vision which will enable us to reach new elevations of Christian experience and Christ-like service during the year into which we are about to enter. So long as we live we must grow.

We thank thee Father, for what we have learned of good and righteousness in the year that has enclosed in its swift moments of time our joys and our sorrows. Enrich our lives during the coming year by our making some other life sweeter and better.

Question. How can we make the lives of others brighter the coming year?

THURSDAY—Our Need of God (Deut. 8:11-18). *Man doth not live by bread alone* (Deut. 8:3). If material things could have satisfied our wants, then the Christ need not have come into the world and there never would have been the first Christmas day. He is the true Bread which cometh down from God out of heaven. He giveth life unto the whole world. If we have lived the past year out of fellowship with God, our souls have been starved and we have become weaklings; but if our souls have fed upon His living Spirit through daily Bible readings, and prayers, then has He lived in us, and Christmas is something far deeper and richer, and better than a holiday. O Lord Christ, who was born of Mary at Bethlehem so long ago, may we behold thy glory and enter into thy purpose for the world.

Question. How may our own lives be sweeter the coming year?

FRIDAY—God's Discipline (Deut. 11:1-7). *Jehovah thy God chasteneth thee* (Deut. 8:5). A father who never exercised discipline toward his children would be an unworthy father. He would be merely leaving them to suffer the penalties of their wrong doings in a far more merciless way.

A real father warns, corrects, encourages, and sometimes must punish. If God had not made us so that we feel pain when we lean against a red-hot stove, we would destroy our own bodies unconsciously. If God had not made us so that every sin brings sorrow and suffering, we would destroy our souls thoughtlessly. We thank thee Lord, that thy laws are always just, thou dost always treat us as a father, and we pray that we may always treat thee as true sons and daughters.

Question. How may we best humble ourselves to the discipline of God our heavenly Father?

SATURDAY—God's Progressive Purpose (Deut. 10:12-22). When the birdlings' wings have grown the mother bird pushes them out of the nest. The eagle takes her young upon her back and flies toward the open sky. Then suddenly swoops downward, leaving them dependent upon the support of their own wings. It is the law of all life. God does not want us to always be moral and spiritual babes. He does not wish us to always be satisfied with little tasks. Not only are we to stand with Him, but we are to walk with Him. Walking means progress. That is what time is for. Our Father, we thank thee for Him who said, *I am the way*. We are not blind. We know the way to go. Help us to walk in the way of Christ. Help us to not be content in standing still, but may we as true soldiers keep marching forward in the ranks of all the young people who stand for God.

Question. In what way may I help those who cannot help themselves?

SUNDAY—Assurance of the Future (Deut. 11:26-32). *Jehovah thy God bringeth thee into a good land* (Deut. 8:7). There is assurance for the future in God's love, and care in the past.

To Him who reigns above the sun

A thousand years are but a day.

'Tis better a lowly deed were done.

And kept the humble way.

The rust will find the sword of fame,

The dust will hide the crown:

Ay, none shall hang so high his name,

Time shall not tear it down.

The happiest heart that ever beat

Was in some quiet breast

That found the common things so sweet;

And left to heaven the rest.

Question. In what way may we be fully aware of God's love and protection in the future?

BENEDICTION:—

Lesson XII Dec. 21, 1930**Christmas Lesson**

Luke 2:1-20

Topic:—The Message of the Angels.**Golden Text:**—Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11.**Practical Truth:**—Jesus died for the redemption of every person.**Outline:**—I. The birth of Jesus.
II. Jesus' birth announced to shepherds.
III. The angel's song.
IV. The shepherds' visit to Jesus.**Time:**—December B. C. 5.**Place:**—Bethlehem.

Introduction—Only Matthew and Luke give an account of Jesus' birth. The first appearance of Jesus in Mark's record is when he presented himself to be baptized of John in Jordan. John's Gospel begins with the pre-incarnate existence of Jesus and refers to his birth only in these words, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (1:14). Both Matthew and Luke make it plain that Jesus was born of a virgin according to Isaiah 7:14, and that He was begotten by the Holy Ghost. And both records tell how, before His birth, Jesus was announced to be the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

In Matthew, the ancestry of Jesus as the royal son of David, is traced back to Abraham. Luke traces His descent back to Adam as the representative of the human race. The world's peace, good will and joy can not be produced by the world itself; they must be brought by a Savior. Christ's coming to earth was the greatest event in the history of the world—it proved God's good-will toward men, and brought the peace of God to the hearts of men; thus brought peace among men. If the peace of God rules in our hearts, we will follow things which make for peace.

Commentary—I. THE BIRTH OF JESUS (vs 1-7). God uses many very effective ways of leading people to the right place at the right time. Bishop Hall once said, "Every creature walks blindfold; only

He that dwells in light knows whither we go." Jesus was born at Bethlehem, and He could not be born there if his parents remained at Nazareth. A little longer stay at Nazareth and the prophecy would have failed, but certainly there was no intention on Mary's part, nor on Joseph's part to fulfil the prophecy, nor was it the purpose of Caesar Augustus to fulfil prophecy when he issued the decree that every citizen should go to his or her city and register that they might be taxed. Caesar's purpose was simply to tax the people, but Joseph and Mary were brought to Bethlehem at just the right time that Jesus should be born in the City of David. The large company of people who were in Bethlehem at this time, in obedience to the emperor's decree, had taken up all the room at the inn, so Joseph and Mary found shelter in a place where the domestic animals were housed. Often the same roof covered the place where the family lived and the place where the animals were kept. The stable where Jesus was born might have been a part of the inn, or it may have been a part of some home in Bethlehem.

II. JESUS' BIRTH ANNOUNCED TO THE SHEPHERDS (vs 8-12). Sheep raising was an important occupation in the region of Bethlehem. The people lived in towns and villages, but shepherds watched and guarded the flocks day and night against robbers and wild beasts. No doubt these shepherds, like Simeon, were among those who waited for the "consolation of Israel." Perhaps they beguiled the tedious hours with meditation and conversation concerning the "Coming One," and were prepared somewhat for the unexpected visit. Thus was Nathanael engaged, all alone but not unseen, in unconscious preparation for his first interview with Jesus. So was John the Revelator on his lonely rock "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," prepared for hearing the voice of the Son of man. But if the shepherds were the first, the sages

were the first from afar to see the new-born king. Yes, on that very day in the right place, "in the city of David," unto them, unto us, unto all the world a child was born, a Savior was given—not One who is to be a Savior, but One who *is* a Savior. The shepherds were to find Him whose goings forth had been from of old, from everlasting; Him whom the heaven of heavens could not contain, "a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

III. THE ANGEL'S SONG (vs 13, 14). Suddenly the angel who had brought the message of joy to the shepherds was joined by a multitude of the heavenly host, "to let it be known how this event is regarded in heaven, and should be regarded on earth. The first note of their transporting hymn was, "Glory to God," which the new-born babe was to bring. The second note was, "Peace on earth," the third, "Good will toward men." Peace with God is the supreme need of this fallen world of men. To bring this in was the prime errand of the Savior to this earth, and with it descends the "Good will" of the Father to rest upon men, as upon the Son with whom God is well pleased.

IV. THE SHEPHERDS' VISIT TO JESUS (vs 15-20). The message of the angel and the chorus of the heavenly host had greatly impressed the shepherds, and they were hungry to know more of the Savior whom the angel had announced. They did not say, "Let us go and see if *this be true*." They had no misgivings, so they said, "Let us go and see this thing *which is come to pass*." They went with haste and found it according to the words of the angel, and when they had seen they made known all that they had heard and seen concerning the Christ child, and they glorified and praised God for it all. The message Mary received from the shepherds, together with the words of the angel to her (Luke 1:32-33) and the words of the angel to Joseph (Matt 1:21) she pondered in her heart.

Lesson XIII Dec. 28, 1930**Review:****The Pattern of Christian Living:**

(Reading Lesson: Heb. 12:1-10.)

Devotional Reading: Matt. 5:3-16.**Topic:**—Fellowship with Christ.**Practical Truth:**—To walk with God is the greatest privilege given to men.**Time:**—The period covered by the lives studied during the quarter just closing is the first fifty-five years of the Christian era.

Introduction—During this quarter we have studied the lives of nineteen men, one of whom was a Gentile, and seven women. These lives covered a period of about 2000 years, from about B. C. 1996 to about A. D. 50. Each person's life shows that life without God is incomplete, and that God's presence and power in the life makes successful, worthwhile living. Many of these had fellowship with Christ in the flesh, but that was not all that was needed. Peter and Judas had been with the Lord; Peter denied Him, and Judas betrayed Him. The coming of the Holy Spirit after Christ's ascension did what the bodily presence of Jesus failed to do. We may have true fellowship with Christ today, through the Holy Spirit, and every true Christian has a measure of such fellowship. None of the lives we have studied were true Christians until their hearts were changed; neither can we be true Christians without a change of heart.

Summary—Lesson I. Topic: What Makes a Christian Home? Zacharias and Elizabeth were very devout persons who served God faithfully and prayed over all the affairs of life, and they prayed for a son. God heard their prayer, and they became the parents of John, the Baptist. Their humble devotion to God and their constant, earnest prayers point the way to obtaining the thing we desire in the will of God.

II. Topic: A Mother's Influence. Mary was the most favored among women and became the mother of Jesus. By her prayers, meditation, and service for her Son, Mary shows us the way to be good parents. It

takes wisdom from above to be good parents.

III. Topic: How Wisdom Depends on Character. Because Simeon and Anna lived close to God and were truly interested in the coming of the Messiah, the Holy Ghost gave them wisdom and insight not possessed by others. The same holy living and communion with God account for the deep spiritual knowledge often exhibited by otherwise unlearned persons. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

IV. Topic: Making Prohibition Effective and Permanent. It is told that a certain American saloon-keeper said to a preacher, "You can preach here, if I may choose the pulpit." "Right," said the preacher. The saloon-keeper set him on a whisky-barrel, thinking it a great joke. But the preacher began, "I am now preaching where I have long wished to be—with the devil under my feet." When Christ arose from the dead He had Satan under His feet. He gave us patterns of the life we are to live—a busy, practical life of fellowship with Him, with the devil under our feet.

V. Topic: How Christ Gives Strength. Peter was a man with a fervid, impetuous nature. He loved Christ greatly, but in an hour of weakness and confusion, he denied him. His experience at Pentecost made him a man of power. The mercy that provides for salvation at the first will keep us saved, and provides for failures like Peter's.

VI. Topic: The Value and Peril of Doubt. Thomas was a brave but cautious man. He proposed to face all dangers with Jesus. But after the crucifixion he would not believe that Jesus was alive again until he saw Him.

VII. Topic: Overcoming Racial Prejudice. Faith opens the door to let in the power of God. It was so when Jesus met the centurion, who came to Him on behalf of his servant who lay sick of the palsy, and said unto Jesus, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed."

Real faith is always rewarded.

VIII. Topic: What Following Christ Means. The rich young ruler failed utterly when he counted the things of earth of more value than the things of God. All depends on the choice we make. We can choose Christ and live, or we can choose the world and die.

IX. Topic: Making Business Christian. The signs of conversion are repentance, confession, restitution and benevolence. Out of great sinners Jesus can make great saints. Zacchaens must have been truly converted, for Jesus said to him, "This day is salvation come to this house." The man made right, rights his wrongs.

X. Topic: Stephen's Contribution to Christianity. Stephen was a mighty and effective preacher. He must have been aflame with zeal and passion for Christ to press into a few years a great life work. By his holy life and example, a successful evangelism, and his spirit and conduct at his death, he helped to win to Christ the great apostle to the Gentiles.

XI. Topic: Conversion; Its nature and Extent. Conversion is the great change which marks the beginning of Christian life and service. After his conversion, Paul was a much changed man, and could say, "I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things; and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

XII. Topic: The Message of the Angels. Men were not concerned about the birth of Jesus, but heaven was concerned and angels were sent to announce the event. The announcement was made to humble shepherds who visited the Child and spread the news abroad.

The first message at the birth of Christ was a missionary message.

The first message of the risen Lord was a missionary message.

The first command of the risen Lord to his disciples was a missionary command.

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

Eld. C. E. Mann, "Uncle Charley," Editor.

Greentop, Missouri

Falling of the Leaves

In front of Uncle Charlie's office there stands a large Maple tree that during the hot summer days has been a comfort, as with its heavy foliage it has broken the rays of the summer sun. More than once have I reclined in its shade and gazed into the tree top, watching the birds as they hopped from branch to branch, singing their morning or evening lay. As I gazed upon the tree in all its beauty and grandeur I thought, how beautiful is nature!

Today, as I entered the office I noticed the walk covered with leaves, and as I looked into the tree I noticed the leaves were much changed in appearance. Instead of being a dark green, they were all colors from green to brown. Only a few months ago each leaf was a very small bud whose highest aim was to be a full grown leaf, and as it grew to fill a place in life that would lend comfort and protection, and at the same time speak of the greatness of its Maker.

During the last few hours, several boys and girls have entered my office for a few moments' chat, and occasionally for a story, and as I beheld their smiling faces, as they stood with their arms across my shoulders, or holding my hand, I have thought, What beautiful buds, just blooming into man and womanhood of life! I have no doubt but what the desire of each is to become a full grown man or woman.

In order that they may accomplish their mission and become a blessing, it is necessary they draw from the Tree of Life the necessary food for the development of the soul which is to blossom into the likeness of its Maker, and become a blessing to man and a glory to God. Then when they shall have

ripened into old age and are ready to drop off, they will not drop off as the little leaves, but with faith in their Maker, and a knowledge of having filled a useful position in life they can step into another life, and into another home where they will dwell in the presence of Him who loved them and gave Himself for them.

Granby, Missouri

Dear Uncle Charley:—I am writing to you, as I like to hear from the other boys and girls of Uncle Charlie's family.

I am a member of the Free Will Baptist church at Jones Chapel. Elder Winford Davis is our pastor. We have a Free Will Baptist League of which I am a member of the Junior Department. We also have a good Sunday School and prayer meeting. Elder Noel Turner is my brother. He is away from home now, helping in a revival near Cassville, Mo.

Uncle Charlie, I ask you and all Christians to pray for me that I may be of service in the Lord's work.

Your friend,

Rupert Turner

We will pray for you, Rupert. Write us again, as we enjoy your letters.

Yours,

Uncle Charlie.

Who Has Seen the Wind?

Who has seen the wind?

Neither I nor you,

But when the leaves hang trembling

The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I;

But when the trees bow down their

heads,

The wind is passing by.

The Prodigal Son, or the Backslider

By Kenneth Turner

Through mistake this article was signed "Mrs. Joe Turner," in the November Gem, when it should have been Kenneth Turner, who is a son of Mrs. Joe Turner.

(Continued from November issue)
But I began to think of worldly things, associating with ungodly folks who caused me to become careless and neglectful. I then failed to pray and failed to attend religious meetings, and before I had realized it I was indulging in sinful things. Instead of going to church, I went to the picture show. On Sunday I went swimming, or to see horse races or ball games and any thing that was ungodlike. Oh, the awfulness, wickedness, ungodliness, and sinfulness that is caused from attending such places of amusement on Sunday! Why not be found in Sunday School, prayer meeting, League or church work of some kind, working for your blessed Master, instead of indulging in these disgraceful things. What if you were found at a Sunday base ball game or some other worldly amusement, and there was an opportunity to be at church, when Jesus comes back to earth? I wish that the time I have spent in folly at such places could be changed into work for our blessed Master.

When I was in sin I would hunt for excuse for not living right. I would say, "I can not live a Christian life, and there is no use for me to try." What better could the devil wish for! That is just what Satan is trying to get into our heads all the time. We can live a Christian life. God's word tells us so. He says that He will give us grace to overcome all temptations. Who would doubt God's precious word! Thank God, for those words that are such a help to us, if we will only trust Him and believe He will help us when we are tempted with worldly things. But before I could realize what I was doing, the devil had me so steeped in sin that life became un-

pleasant, and so miserable that when I did attend church I felt a desire for God's presence, and I wished I could take the stand with the Christians. Thank God for His convicting power, for it has made me what I am today. There is nothing in this world that will bring happiness like God's love. True happiness is found only in a divine love being applied to your heart.

I think you will all agree with me, that life is more miserable when you backslide, because we read in Matt. 12:45 that "the last state of that man is worse than the first."

Dear people, it grieves our Heavenly Father when we turn him away and do wickedly. If you were the parent of a dear little child, and it was precious in your sight and you loved that child dearly; if it grew up into a young man or woman, and it would turn you down, leave home, and indulge in the wickedness of this world. Don't you suppose it would grieve you? Sure it would! You would beg it to come back home; you would never rest as long as it was away. You would still love that child. You would forget about all other folks and think of that one you so dearly loved, just as the shepherd who left his ninety and nine sheep and went to seek for the lost one.

How much more would it grieve our Heavenly Father if one of his children would turn him away, and do as the child did its earthly parent!

So, if you are not right in God's sight, won't you decide to say "no" to sin, and turn to the one who so freely suffered and died for your sins? What if time would cease here on earth at this moment? How would the Lord find us? That would be an awful moment if we are living a sinner. On the other hand it will be a happy moment if we are true children of God.

May God help the poor backslider to stop and turn back as the prodigal son did!

The Benefit of True Religion To Mankind

By Eliabeth Garner

First, I will give my definition of true religion, which is "loving, serving and obeying the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength."

I am sure when we love, serve and obey the Lord to the extent of which I have just mentioned, we will surely have *true religion*.

The subject upon which I am going to write a few words is wonderful to me. As I think of how great a benefit true religion is to mankind I don't know whether there can be words found to express its greatness.

True religion is procured by the gospel being preached. The gospel is a revelation of the grace of God to fallen man through a Mediator; or, it is a wise, a holy and a gracious Constitution of God, for the recovery of fallen, sinful and miserable man from that deplorable state into which sin had brought him, by sending his own Son, Jesus Christ, in the flesh, to obey his law which man had broken; to make a proper atonement for sin by his death, and thus to procure pardon and the favor of God, and eternal happiness for all that believe and repent and receive the gospel salvation; together with a promise of the Holy Spirit to work this faith and repentance in their hearts, to renew their sinful natures unto holiness to form them on earth fit for this happiness and to bring them to full possession of it in heaven.

Whenever we have *true religion* we will be connected up with God's Spirit, which will enable us to have the great love, to be courageous in serving, and causes us to have a desire to obey our Lord's requests.

When we have true religion, or Christ in our lives, we will have some one to go to in time of our trials and troubles of life for consolation. It is said in his word, "Even though every one upon earth

forsake you, I will never! This says, "If we should be forsaken, but we will never be, if we stay where religion or Christianity is abroad. But if we should be among strangers, and those who do not know the Lord, we would need not feel forsaken, for the Lord is ever present with us and knows all about us. So we can be blest at any and all times if we will only stay close to Him.

As we try to live a Christian life, we will have to expect trials, troubles and persecutions, for that is what life is partly made up of. Then, if we have true religion, all of the things with which we have to contend will not seem so bad, for we will have faith, grace, patience and courage to bear them.

In the eleventh chapter of 2nd Corinthians, Paul is telling of his sufferings and persecutions that he had to undergo, and in the thirtieth verse he says, "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities."

I have also read that when the Apostle Peter's wife was on her way to be killed as a martyr, that he met her and consoled her by gloryfying her life which was being taken for this purpose, and that she was really worthy and courageous to give up her life for the Lord.

If we today could be like Paul, and "Glory in our infirmities," for when we are weak, then we are strong in the sight of God.

The people of today have much to be thankful for, as we have such good privileges of living for the Lord. As we think of the things the disciples and people of that day and age had to contend with that served the Lord, it should make us more courageous and determined to live for Him, and be true and faithful to the end, as the way was much more difficult for them than it is for us people of today.

Pure religion is described by its fruits, which are love, mercy and purity from worldly defilements. Let us not be deceived, but have true religion. Let our minds be

as Christ's was characterized by humility, dependence upon God, a determination to do only the Father's will, thoughtfulness of others, a willingness to sacrifice and suffer, and even to die for the good of others. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 2:5.

One who has true religion will possess all of these things I have just mentioned. Now let us think of what a great benefit they are to the world, as they have that love and willingness to help their fellowman. This person will not only be blest, but there may be many others, as this one being an example to the world to show how enjoyable it is to have the love of God in our hearts, and that there really is something in living for the Lord.

The greatest of all benefits that true religion is to mankind is that it leads them to inherit eternal life or gain the home in heaven that God has prepared for us. It is so much of an enjoyment to think of this, for we will all pass from this life some time or other, and we have the promise of going to the home in heaven, if we only keep faithful to the end. Why, is it not worth living and striving for?

Let us all live such a life, that when we leave this world our Lord can say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

THE CO-OPERATIVE GEN. ASS'N (Continued from page six)

A committee consisting of Elders Melvin Bingham, Winford Davis, B. F. Brown, A. B. Talbert, and A. B. Epperson was elected to select or prepare matter for a Minister's Manual, and have same printed as soon as convenient.

Motion carried to distribute the books from the College Library, which were saved when the building burned, among the Associations, and Elds. B. F. Brown and A. B. Epperson were appointed to distribute these books according to requests made for them from the different lo-

cal associations, that make requests and send money to pay for packing and transportation. The books are now in the F. W. B. building at Tecumseh, Okla. These books are of many kinds, including "A History of the Bible by Ellen Copp," about 150 copies; about 50 or 60 large volumes of "Homiletics;" many books of reference, and many others which I am not able to give a list of from memory.

I am sure that everyone felt when the Association closed that next year will see the Association take on new life, and begin to take care of some of the things that are so necessary for the welfare and growth of our denomination. I never attended an association when the spirit of co-operation and helpfulness, brotherly love and Christian fellowship were stronger than we had at Tulsa this year. It was good to be there.

FAITH

By Mrs. Pearl Bowden

Greetings to the Editor and Gem Readers:—I have thought for several days I would renew my subscription, and write a short article on "Faith," but I feel so very little and weak, I fear I can not say anything worth while. Guess my *faith* isn't strong enough.

I fear so many of us do not have as much faith as we should have, but I pray to God to give me more and more faith and a better understanding of the blessed old Book, the *Holy Bible*.

Faith, as I see it, is belief or trust in the religious sense. Paul refers to it as one of the greatest of human attributes, and one of the chief links between God and man. Without faith we know that God would not answer our prayers.

The more faith we have, the closer we will live to God. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. (Heb. 11:1). It is not visible, neither is God, or heaven, but by faith we, who keep His commandments,

believe when this short life on earth is over, we will enter heaven, there to live with God throughout ceaseless ages to come. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"—Romans 5:1.

God did not intend for us just to have faith without works. James says, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." We might have faith enough to believe that God would answer our prayers, but if we never would pray and ask him to help us, what good would our faith do?

Every one of us has a work to do, and we should pray earnestly to God to know what he would have us do. Some know and realize what their talents are, and feel impressed to go into the field and work, but say they are handicapped and think they can not go. If we had more faith, we would all be more willing to give up earthly things, and do more for the cause of Christ. Then we would receive more blessings from him. We are too careless, we do not think it over seriously enough. We should be ready and really anxious to do anything that might bring souls to Christ. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were formed by the word of God." God warned Noah of things not as yet seen, and he believed, and by faith he built the ark to save himself and his house. If he had not had faith in God, Noah and all his house would have been destroyed with all others. But he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

"By faith Abraham when tried offered up his only son Isaac." He knew that God had foretold a work for Isaac, and could not understand God's command, but he loved God so well that he was ready to give his only son if it was God's will. He had faith to believe that God would make all things right, and he did.

How many of us today have such faith? Of course we do not have such customs today, but I fear

some grieve too much for our loved ones that God has called away from us. I may be in that number. It seems to me that if I could only have my father back I would be so much happier. It seems too, that I would forget to some extent, for God took him away when I was a very small child twenty-seven years ago, but every day I seem to feel the need of a father, and wish for him more and more, yet I know that it was God's will for him to leave us. If it was not for the faith I have to believe that some day I will go to live with him, it doesn't seem that I could live.

We should lay everything at Jesus' feet and be ready at all times to say, "Thy will be done," not ours. We who are striving to live for God have many persecutions to bear. The devil has many cunning ways to sidetrack us. He and his workers are our enemies. They try our faith by telling every untrue thing they can study up, trying to ruin the Christian's influence. I want to live so close to God that when my time on earth is ended I can say as Paul did, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me in that day. And not only to me, but to all them that love his appearing."

Obituary

Lewis—Ora May Harlan was born in Iowa, December 18, 1883, departed this life November 14, 1930, being forty-six years, ten months and twenty-six days old at her death.

Ora Harlan was united in marriage to Jerry Lewis April 15, 1914. To this union two children were born, Lula May and Raymond Earl.

She leaves her husband, two children, one brother, Frank Harlan

of Vilas Colo., three nieces and three nephews to mourn her departure. Her mother, father and one sister, Lula have preceded her in death.

At a young age Ora accepted Christ as her personal Savior and united with the Christian Church of Purdy, where she remained a member until death.

She was a loving wife and a devoted mother, and will be missed by all who knew her.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Winford Davis at the Christian Church, Purdy, Mo. Interment in the Purdy Cemetery.

Baumgardener—Mrs. Grace Baumgardener was born in Cass County, Missouri February 15, 1897 and departed this life October 31, 1930 at the age of thirty-three years, eight months and sixteen days.

She was converted at the age of twelve years, and united with the Hickory Grove Free Will Baptist church, Cass County, Mo. She leaves to mourn her loss her husband, Ralph Baumgardner, two daughters Margurete and Irene, one son Ray, her loving parents Mr. and Mrs. J. O Parker, three brothers, James, Marvin and Lester Parker, and a host of relatives and friends. She was a dutiful daughter and sister, a loving wife, a kind mother, and was dearly loved by a host of friends.

A precious one from us has gone;
A voice we loved is stilled;
A place is vacant in our home,
Which never can be filled.

And while we linger lonely here
In this sad world to roam;
She'll be waiting there at heaven's gate,

To welcome her loved ones home.

The funeral services were conducted at the First Free Will Baptist church of Tulsa, Okla. by Elder Melvin Bingham, who is pastor of that church. One thousand

or more were present at the funeral, and the procession was one and one half miles long.

A PROPOSITION

You have probably heard of the man in the Cotton Belt that had what he called, *God's Acre*, and how that the boll weevil so mysteriously left it alone, and that it yielded so much more than its neighboring acres; any way, whether you have heard the story or not, here is the proposition:

How many of you will plant a small portion of your farm in some kind of a crop in the spring, the entire proceeds to be paid into the treasury of the Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptist, to help pay the balance on the linotype by next fall? If there should be more than we need to pay out the linotype, the balance of the money can be used to help our Free Will Baptist cause in some other way, and many things are badly needed.

Now, any of us can get in on this, even the boys and girls, and we can plant just anything, and any amount, $\frac{1}{8}$ acre, $\frac{1}{4}$ acre, 1 acre or more in corn, potatoes, tomatoes, or whatever we please. I am going to endeavor to direct this plan through the year, and I expect to get in on it too, soon as I can make up my mind what my crop shall be.

Now listen, How many will get in on this in the spring? Let me hear from you at once. I hope to have a long list of names to publish in the January issue of the Gem. You don't have to state your crop and acreage yet, we can that in the paper early in the spring; but if you want to join this move, just let me hear from you. Let's see how much of a *God's Acre* sum we can turn in to the treasury next fall.

Move, and we will publish the names next month. Let's decide now and get the thing started big before crop time gets here.

Yours for Jesus and the cause,

Winford Davis.

Gossip Town

Have you ever heard of Gossip
Town,

On the shore of Falsehood Bay,
Where old Dame Rumor, with
rustling gown,
Is going the livelong day?

It isn't far to Gossip Town
For the people who want to go;
The Idleness Train will take you
down
In just an hour or so.

The Thoughtless Road is a popular
route,
And most folks start that way;
But it's steep down grade—if you
don't look out—
Will land you in Falsehood Bay.

You glide through the valley of
Vicious Talk,
And into the tunnel of Hate;
Then, crossing the Add-to Bridge,
you walk
Right into the city gate.

But it is not healthy in Gossip
Town,
And I will not follow you there,
I would rather live on Thanksgiv-
ing Street,
In the House that is called All
Prayer.

For here I learn my Father's will.
And the sun is warm and bright;
And whatever the Master bids me
do.
I'll do it with all my might.

BETHLEHEM

"Come up the road to Bethlehem"
a heavenly herald calls.
"Serene upon a slumbering world a
starry splendor falls
Come with love's fragrant frankin-
cense, its myrrh and aloes rare,
More costly than the gift you bring
is the one that waits you there!

"Come up the road to Bethlehem.
The heart's long hunger ends
Where by the little Son of God
your knee in worship bends.
Here the poor mantle care has
wrought, forever from you lay,
There waits more peace in Bethle-
hem than the world can take away
—Selected.

Worth While

It is easy enough to be pleasant,
When life flows along like a song;
But the man worth while is the one
who will smile,
When everything goes dead
wrong:
For the test of the heart is trouble,
And it always comes with the
years,
But the smile that is worth the
praises of earth
Is the smile that comes through
tears.

It is easy enough to be prudent,
When nothing tempts you to
stray;
When without or within no voice
of sin
Is luring your soul away;
But it's only a negative virtue,
Until it is tried by fire,
And life that is worth the honor
of earth,
Is the one that resists desire.

By the cynic, the sad, and the
fallen,
Who had not strength for the
strife,
The world's highway is cumbered
today;
They make up the items of life,
But the virtue that conquers pos-
session,

And the sorrow that hides in a
smile;
It is these that are worth the
homage of earth,
For we find them but once in a
while.
Sent in by Miss Margaret Sim-
mons, Picher, Okla.

I Once Was blind

By Verna William

I once was blind as Bartimaeus
Who sat beside the road,
All weighted down with many sins,
A very heavy load.

I could not hear the sermon,
The songs of praise or prayer;
I never caught the spirit,
Or didn't really care.

I walked in sinful pleasure
Which lasted but a day,
But, since I found my Savior,
I'm happy all the way.

He opened up my blinded eyes,
And made my ears to hear,
And in my mouth he put a song,
And in my heart a prayer.

He gave a great unshaken faith,
And sweet unending peace;
Though I am weak and sinful,
His mercy will not cease.
Pryor, Okla.

Jesus

I was very weak and worn;
Tired of burdens I had borne
When He came—Jesus came,
Softly rolled the clouds away;
Happy day, that He came,
Jesus.

Now I'll trust Him all the way,
For He guides me day by day;
Praise His name—precious name
Holds me firmly in His arms;
Wondrous charms of His love,
Jesus

When life's shadows all are past;
Gates of Glory open at last
While they sing—angels sing,
I'll meet my King in all His grace
Face to face—in His glory.
Jesus

Contributed by Mrs. Hetty Orem
Tucker, Shelbyville, Indiana.

Information

The Gem office is well prepared to do your job printing, and that at prices that are right.

We do minute work in first class shape, and want your work.

We print letterheads, envelopes, cards, circulars, posters, etc.

Ask us for samples of any work you are interested in, and get our prices; perhaps we can make you better prices than you can get elsewhere. Give your publishing house a chance to do your job printing; it will help us to meet our expenses.

Letter Heads

Printed on Hammermill Bond

Size 8½x11 inches

100	\$1.25
200	1.50
500	2.25
1000	3.50

Envelopes

Good envelopes printed as ordered

Size 6¾

100	\$1.25
200	1.50
500	2.25
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10 inch Size

100	\$1.35
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Blanks

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Treatise of the Faith and Usages of the Free Will Baptist, 25c each.

Letter Blanks

Letter from a Church to a Q. M., Y. M. or Association. Letter from Y. M. or Association to State Association, 5c each, 6 for 25c, postpaid.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The announcement of your Association, Quarterly Meeting or 5th Sunday Meeting should appear here. Send in your announcement so it can be printed in the August issue of the Gem.

Butler-Dunn Theology

The Butler-Dunn Systematic Theology, the standard book on Free Will Baptist faith and doctrine, is now reprinted; and every minister and Christian worker should have a copy. This is an important book in the SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE, conducted by Rev. John H. Wolfe. Ministers and Christian workers, wishing to better prepare themselves for Christian work, should have this book, and should take the correspondence course offered by the "School of the Bible." The book is well bound, has 476 pages, \$2.50 postpaid.

Send orders to the F. W. B. Gem, Purdy, Missouri or to Rev. John H. Wolfe, Pawnee City, Nebr.

DRUMRIGHT, OKLAHOMA

The Quarterly Meeting of the First Mission Association of Free Will Baptist met with the Tulsa Church, on Tuesday before the third Sunday in November. All of our churches reported good meetings and a great interest.

Our next Quarterly Meeting will be with the Cushing Church, beginning on Friday night before the fourth Sunday in February.

A. B. Talbert, Clerk.

What Is "Faith?"

By Miss Oleta Davis

Just what are we talking of when we speak of faith? Webster says, "Faith is to believe or give credit

to. The understanding of the truth of what God has revealed."

I don't believe the children of God have as much faith as they should have, and I believe the reason is because they do not understand the truths that are revealed in the Word of God. How are we to understand them? By reading and studying them.

Paul said, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen." Surely we all have faith to hope for a life beyond.

Why did Noah work so faithfully on his ark, and warning the people of the flood that was to come? Was it because he wanted to? No, it was because he had faith. He believed in being led by the divine Spirit.

Why was Abraham so willing to offer his only son, Isaac, as a sacrifice? It was faith.

Why did Mary and Martha call for Jesus when their brother, Lazarus died? In my mind they would never have called for him had they not had faith.

It was by faith the walls of Jerico fell down, after they had been compassed about for seven days.

We have faith for three main reasons:

First. We believed because we have heard—some one has told us, and we believed,

Second. We look out upon this great universe upon which we live, and we are made to believe because we know this could not have been, had it not been for God.

Third. We have faith because we can feel the Spirit of God within our own hearts, which makes us, not only believe, but it makes us to know.

"Wherefore seeing we also, are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily doth beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."