



**Smithsonian Institution**

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

## **The Teacher Vol. 52 No. 1**

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THE CONVENTION TEACHER

INTRODUCTION

[Column 1]

It is a happy moment in the life of a believer who accepts the marvelous doings of Jesus as well as His sayings. Belief in both cases brings deliverance. To believe in Jesus, on the testimony of His apostles will put a man into the possession of the very same blessedness which they themselves enjoyed. "And so has God constituted the whole economy of Grace that a believer, at eighteen hundred years distance from the time of the resurrection, which suffers no loss because he has not seen Christ in the flesh. The importance and excellence of implicit faith in the testimony of God is given like this." The

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[Column 2]

proselyte is more blessed by the holy blessed God than that whole crowd that stood before Mount Sinai; for unless they had heard the thundering, and seen the flames and lightning, the hills trembling, and the trumpets sounding, they had not received the law. But the proselyte had seen nothing of this and yet he hath come in devoting himself to the holy blessed God, and hath taken upon him the yoke of kingdom of Heaven. Listen, Friend, Christ died for thee; believe and thou shalt be saved, and become as blessed and happy as an apostle.

[End of Column 2]

EXPOSITION

[Column 1]

1. BELIEF IN CHRIST BRINGS SALVATION. (VV. 30-31.) (30)

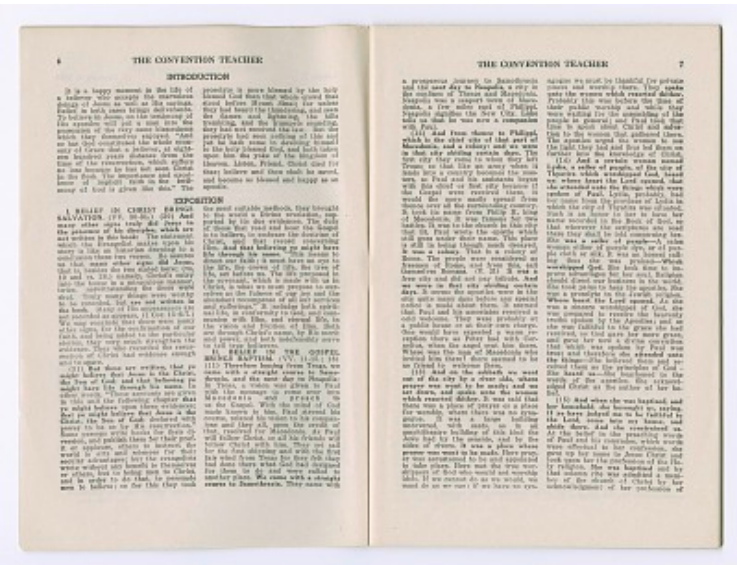
[[bold]]And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: [[/bold]] The statement which the Evangelist makes upon his story is like an historian drawing to a conclusion these two verses. He assures us that [[bold]]many other signs did Jesus, [[/bold]] that is, besides the two stated here; (vs. 19 and vs. 26.) namely, Christ's entry into the house in a miraculous manner, twice, notwithstanding the doors were shut. Truly many things were worthy to be recorded, but [[bold]]are not written in the book. [[/bold]] Many of His appearances are not recorded as appears, (1 Cor. 15:6-7.) We may conclude that there were many other signs, for the confirmation of our faith, and being added to the particular stories, they very much strengthen the evidence. They who recorded the resurrection of Christ had evidence enough and to spare.

(31) [[bold]]But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. [[/bold]] In other words, "These accounts are given in this and the following chapter [[bold]]that ye might believe [[/bold]] upon these evidences; [[bold]]that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; [[/bold]] declared with power to be so by His resurrection." Some persons write books for their diversion, and publish them for their profit or applause, others to instruct the world in arts and sciences for their secular advantages; but the evangelists wrote without any benefit to themselves or others, but to bring men to Christ, and in order to do that, to persuade men to believe; so for this they took

[End of Column 1]

[Column 2]

the most suitable methods, they brought to the world a Divine



revelation, supported by its due evidences. The duty of those that read and hear the Gospel is to believe, to embrace the doctrine of Christ, and that record concerning Him. **And that believe ye might have life through his name.** "This means to direct our faith; it must have an eye to the life, the crown of life, the tree of life, set before us. The life proposed in the covenant, which is made with us in Christ, is what we must propose to ourselves as the fulness of our joy and the abundant recompense of all our services and sufferings." It includes both spiritual life, in conformity to God, and communion with Him, and eternal life, in the vision and fruition of Him. Both are through Christ's name, by His merit and power, and both indefensibly serve to tell believers.

II. BELIEF IN THE GOSPEL BRINGS BAPTISM. (VV. 11-15.; 16) (11)  
**Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;** In Troas, a vision was given to Paul with the message to come over into Macedonia and preach to us the Gospel. With the mind of God made known to him, Paul steered his course, related his vision to his companions and they all, upon the credit of that, resolved for Macedonia. As Paul will follow Christ, so all his friends will follow Christ with him. They set sail for the first shipping and with the first fair wind from Troas for they felt they had done there what God had designed for them to do and were called to another place. **We came with a straight course to Samothracia.** They came with  
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7

#### THE CONVENTION TEACHER

[Column 1]

A prosperous journey to Samothracia and the **next day to Neapolis,** a city in the confines of Thrace and Macedonia. Neapolis was a seaport town of Macedonia, a few miles east of Philippi. Neapolis signifies the New City. Luke tells us that he was now a companion with Paul.

(12) **And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.** The first city they came to when they left Troas; so that like an army when it lands into a country becomes the masters, so Paul and his assistants began with this chief or first city because if the Gospel were received there, it would the more easily spread from thence over all the surrounding country. It took its name from Philip II, king of Macedonia. It was famous for two battles. It was to the church in this city that St. Paul wrote the epistle which still goes under their name. This place is still in being though much decayed. **It was a colony.** That is a colony of Rome. The people were considered as freemen of Rome, and from this, call themselves Romans. (V. 21) It was a free city and did not pay tribute. **And we were in that city abiding certain days.** It seems the apostles were in the city quite many days before any special notice is made about them. It seemed that Paul and his associates received a cold welcome. They were probably at a public house or at their own charge. One would have expected a warm reception there as Peter had with Cornelius, when the angel sent him there. Where was the man of Macedonia who invited him there? there seemed to be no friend to welcome them.

(13) **And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.** It was said that there was a place of prayer or a place for worship, where there was no synagogue. It was a large building uncovered, with seats, as in an amphitheatre building of this kind the Jews had by the seaside, and by the sides of rivers. **It was a place where prayer was wont to be made.** Here prayer was accustomed to be and appointed to take place. Here met the true worshippers of God who would not worship idols. If we cannot do as we would, we must do as we can; if we have no syn-  
[End of Column 1]

[Column 2]  
agogue we must be thankful for private places and worship there. They **spake unto the women which resorted thither.** Probably this was before the time of their public worship and while they were waiting for the assembling of the people in general; and Paul took that time to speak about Christ and salvation to the women that gathered there. The apostles urged the women to use the light they had and thus led them on further into the knowledge of Christ.

(14) **And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.** Lydia, probably, had her name from the province of Lydia in which the city of Thyatira was situated. Such is an honor to her to have her name recorded in the Book of God, so that wherever the scriptures are read there they shall be told concerning her. She **was a seller of purple**--A sales woman either of purple dye, or of purple cloth or silk. It was an honest calling thus she was praised--**Which worshipped God.** She took time to improve advantages for her soul. Religion should direct our business in the world. She took pains to hear the apostles. She was a proselyte to the Jewish religion. **Whose heart the Lord opened.** As she was a sincere worshipper of God, she was prepared to receive the heavenly truths spoken by the Apostles; and as she was faithful to the grace she had received, so God gave her more grace, and gave her now a divine conviction that which was spoken by Paul was true; and therefore she **attended unto the things**-  
-She believed them and received them as the principles of God - She **heard us**--She hearkened to the words of the apostles. She acknowledged Christ as the author of her belief.

(15) **And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.** At the belief in the preaching words of Paul and his comrades, which words were effectual to her confession, she gave up her name to Jesus Christ and took upon her the profession of the Holy religion. **She was baptized** and by that solemn rite was admitted a member of the church of Christ by her acknowledgement of her profession of  
[End of Column 2]

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