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AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE. — John viii, 32.

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WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE WORKERS' CONFERENCE, AND HOW IS IT MAINTAINED?

A Paper read by I. M. Martin, Sunday School Missionary of Catawba Presbytery, at the Workers' Conference held in Chester, South Carolina, February 2-5, 1926.

What is a Workers' Conference? It is a meeting composed of the officers and teachers of the Sunday school and the pastor of the church. This conference meets to plan the work of the Sunday school. The superintendent presides at this meeting. After the devotions the presiding officer enters into the program at once, which ought to be thoughtfully gotten out at least a month prior. This program should endeavor to put before the conference the needs of the school and what it plans to do, which is discussed by the members of the conference, frankly facing the issues, whatever they are, and stating facts whether they be successes or failures. Let it be a failure or mistake of an officer or teacher, it is to be discussed from every angle, to help the individual or individuals. Sometimes the individual becomes offended. Then, what are you going to do? Make an apology for all you have said or try to take it back? No, no, though you must use diplomacy in applying the rod of rectification; you can not afford to make an apology for doing you full Christian duty. Which is better—to make an apology for all you have said because of someone becoming offended, when you were absolutely right, or let the officer or teacher go on and perhaps ruin the lives of several boys and girls, by his or her bad example or satanic teaching? I believe I hear you say, "Hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may." But the mistake or failure must be remedied and, let us hope, cured.

Then we turn our minds to plans for the future by working out the program for the next meeting of the Workers' Conference.

Now what kind of a program should you have for the Workers' Conference? It should be a program that is in keeping with modern Sunday school methods and nothing but things that are needful and helpful should be placed on the program for discussion—things that ought to be put over by the Sunday school a month or two hence. Where you will have time to work out and work up a good program, like planning for special days, such as Lincoln's Birthday, Easter Exercises, Mothers' Day, Children's Day, Rally Day, etc., and many other things of vital importance can be planned to help the Sunday school, church and community by the workers' conference. Mr. Marion Lawrence said "The Workers' Conference is to the Sunday school what the coaling stations and water tanks are to the railroad train. And we know the train can not run unless it is supplied by these stations." Yes, the workers' conference properly mixed with the spirit of Jesus Christ will do for the Sunday school what gasoline properly mixed with air applied to the automobile engine will do. Move it off.

When and how often should the workers' conference be held? It should meet on week days or nights and at an hour that is most agreeable to local conditions. Sometimes it is held in the Sunday school room and sometimes in private homes; this, too, is determined by local conditions. It is not a matter of where it is held, since it is not at a questionable place. The vital point is to have it and do the work that is needful and ought to be done, to help the Sunday school, church and community. It should meet at least once a month at a set time, and should be announced in the

Sunday school room the Sunday prior to the meeting as a reminder, so the members of the conference may not be absent; if so, they should be notified by mail of the meeting, for sometimes the failures or mistakes of the individuals who were absent that Sunday may be discussed at the approaching meeting, and we think it not wise to discuss an individual, he or she being absent, unless they were informed that certain things in which they were involved will be discussed, then you can use your discretion.

Opening
Some conferences begin by giving a supper so as to bring about a more friendly feeling or create an atmosphere of fellowship; some close with a supper so as to satisfy the appetite just as we are about to depart that all may go away feeling fine, having discussed frankly and freely the needs of the Sunday school. Then, too, the conference ought to be general, where all the teachers, officers and workers can join in the discussion and take up the needy problems of the Sunday school, hear reports, make plans for future policies, and hear recommendations and suggestions from the pastor, for many times they are very helpful. All Christians have agreed (supplementing the home) that the Sunday school and the public school and the church constitute the most fertile field for cultivation to secure a glowing harvest for those best fitted for the kingdom of God in this world, and the world to come. And this can better be planned in the workers' conference than in any other place, for here we have all Christian workers assembled.

Then what is more important is to have the workers who are to the forefront in shaping human lives to come together monthly at stated times and take, first: a general survey of the field. 2nd. Places of greatest privileges and opportunity. 3rd. To relate the task of infinite possibilities. 4th. The training and preparation of the youth; these are the tasks of workers of the Sunday school and church.

Then every worker must feel that he or she is a part of the great whole and has his or her part to do, all having an understanding how his or her work fits into that of the other workers. No department, no class, not even one of the adults, is sufficient unto himself, to tackle the problems alone. They are common to all departments and all classes of the school need to be carefully guarded by the workers' conference.

The attendance and the weeding out of the non attendants are problems as to the individual pupil that need to be settled. These and similar problems need the wisdom of the workers' conference. But the all-important purpose, however, lies back of all of these. It is to train and develop the entire force of officers and teachers that the work may improve from week to week and year to year. It is the duty of the officers and teachers to help the boys and girls find themselves and assist them in developing the finest kind of Christian character and prepare them for larger service. The teaching of the pulpit and the Sunday school in the individual church should coincide and the workers' conference is the place where they should be harmonized.

Is a Sunday school too far in the rural district or too small to have a workers' conference? No; no Sunday school is too far away from town, or village to

have a workers' conference and no Sunday school is too small to have a workers' conference, unless there is but one officer in that school, and even then he or she can have a conference with the Lord and the school will be helped.

How Can the Workers' Conference Be Maintained?

The workers' conference can be maintained (supported, upheld) by each officer being at his or her post of duty on time, to do whatever part may be assigned to him or her to do. Then the workers' conference must begin on time and close on time, have a definite program, as mentioned above, for each meeting, and the presiding officer sees that the program is carried out, and has it thoroughly understood that all members must respond when they are called upon, as is being done here today. The presiding officer also should see to it that the members discuss the subject that is at issue and use brevity, and see that all the workers have something to do from time to time in the conference so that no one will have reason for complaint.

It is very helpful sometimes to have someone who knows the needs of the Sunday school work to address the workers' conference, and let it be one who knows, and one who has had some training and experience, that the time will not be wasted by him or her.

Perhaps the small schools out in the rural districts are saying this is not for our school, but it is, for the great Presbyterian Church, of which we are a part, has someone almost in all parts of the field to carry the information to the farthest Sunday school in the rural districts. But no Sunday school or church need sit back and wait for someone to come and do for them what they can do for themselves or try. The late Mr. Theodore Roosevelt once said: "Do the best you can where you are with the resources at your command." Then do it with the help of the pastor. Let us try and enlist the help of the public school teachers, men and women of our community, if you can use them. Sometimes you don't want to use some of them, but the ones you can use to advantage, let us lay hands on them, let us use every legitimate means we can to carry the work on to success. It must be done, and we, the members of the workers' conference, must do it.

The workers' conference is not regarded any longer as a teachers' meeting, but the principal object is to put everybody to work. Let officers, teachers, one and all work to familiarize themselves with the needs of the Sunday school and all that is going on in the Sunday school, to create a Sunday school spirit and increase Sunday school interest.

Have you ever heard the song, "You in Your Corner and I in Mine?" and then stay serenely in your corner never sharing any of your good ideas with others or letting them share with you? And thus

You have an idea,
I have an idea,
We swap:
Now you heva two ideas,
Both are richer;
What you have you gave,
What I got I did not lose.
This is co-operation.

THE YADKIN PRESBYTERIAL

The Woman's Presbyterial Society of Yadkin Presbytery will hold their meeting April 14th at St. James church, Greensboro. All societies are expected to be represented. Please send in your contingent fund, which is ten cents per member.
MRS. E. B. MEARES, Pres.
MRS. J. H. CLEMENT, Sec.

WHAT SPECIAL DAYS SHOULD BE OBSERVED, AND WHY?

C. G. Hutchings, Sabbath School Missionary in Tennessee.

Special days are those particular occasions which have been set apart by our Church to emphasize and to commemorate certain important occasions or principles. Of course, in one sense all Sabbaths are special days, and yet it is upon those particular days that certain phases of the work are brought into prominence that the lives and ideals of certain illustrious men are reviewed and that some of the great occasions touching the Christian Church are commemorated.

Our subject in asking the question, "What Special Days Should Be Observed?", might seem to imply that some days should not be observed, but this is not intended. Since it is true that each day has its own point of emphasis, the ideal would be that each day be observed, and at its proper time, but for a number of reasons it is not practical to do this: (1) In the last few years the number of special days have been greatly multiplied, and some one has said, that if a church or school should attempt to observe every special day called upon by the calendar for a year, it would take considerably more than fifty-two Sabbaths to complete them all, consequently it is high impossible to observe all the special days. In the second place, it would be difficult to fit all the special days into the program of the school, consequently with so many special days on the calendar, a selection must be made on the basis of their importance to the general Church and their adaptability to the program of the local church. There are, however, some special days which should never be omitted from the calendar of a church, large or small. The first of these is Children's Day, then the celebration of Christmas and Easter should form a part of the program of the school. Promotion Day might well be grouped with Rally Day, as is successfully done in many cases; while Vocation Day might suitably be joined with Decision Day. The celebration of Lincoln's Birthday, on the Sabbath nearest February 12th, should also be observed.

We suggest the observance of these days as essential to the program of every progressive school, because they are an essential part of the program of our great Church and because they contribute definitely to a well rounded program of inspiration, information and service.

There are many other special days. For example, Americanization, Thanksgiving and Mothers' Days. Whenever practicable some emphasis should be given to these days also. Usually, however, the observance of these days is given in some department of the Church other than the Sabbath school.

The second phase of our subject deals with the manner or method of observing these special days. A few general principles, however, precede their detailed consideration. First of all, the message of every special day should be thoroughly brought out. This can best be done only by the full use of the program prepared for the observance of that day. Far too often we do find our schools utterly ignoring the programs gotten out by the Boards of our Church and substituting recitations, songs and other material that have no significance upon the day observed. It can be clearly seen that much of the educational value is thereby utterly lost. Then, again, when it can be done, these programs might well be rendered by various groups of the school as classes or departments. This would give not only variety to the program, but would serve to

interest a larger number of the school. I am acquainted with one school which makes it a practice to give the different classes the responsibility of presenting the program for one of the special days.

The third principle is that concerning the offering. This is a very definite and a most important feature of the proper observance of a special day, and just as much emphasis should be given that as to any other part of the program. It is a very poor practice, though a common one, to wait until the Sabbath before a special day or the day itself, before speaking of the offering. A very good practice would be to emphasize the purpose and importance of the offering at the beginning of preparation for the program. The matter should be explained to the entire school and the barrels and the boxes or other collection devices distributed. The awarding of some small prize or token to the person bringing in the largest offering is often done with good effect.

This, above all, the observance of a special day should not be considered completed until the offering gathered on that day is sent to its proper Board.

Coming to a discussion of the special days outlined as essential it will be noticed that we gave first place to Children's Day. It is clearly one of the most important special days of the year, and to be clearly observed, months of preparation are required. Even before the programs are received, work should be well under way in the school. All of the departments of the Children's division should be prepared for this observance. A very effective feature on Children's Day is had by bringing in the members of the Cradle Roll Department with their parents for a part on the program. The entire Sabbath school hour or a more convenient period during the day should be given over to the Children's Day program.

Preparations for Christmas observance are generally extended over a number of weeks and its observance in our schools, in most instances, is a great stimulus; for the children look forward with pleasure to the visit of Santa Claus. The Christmas program, followed by the tree, adds new interest and engenders the spirit of good will that the Christ Child brought over two thousand years ago. In more fortunate schools, pupils delight in giving cheer to those about them that are without the necessities for happiness at this season of the year.

Easter observance in our schools brings to our minds the story of the risen Saviour and it is of vital importance that we should observe this day, in order that the story might be revealed to the Sabbath school, and by using the program sent out by our Boards, we are able to reveal the story effectively upon the minds of the youths.

Lincoln's Day is observed as one of the important anniversaries of the Church. The entire time of the Sabbath school hour should be given for its observance. In addition to the program sent out by our Board, a short treatise of his life should be given. A photo of Lincoln draped with the American flag would be appropriate on this occasion.

Promotion and Rally Days have been grouped. These are important in every progressive school, yet the entire school period need not be given for their observance. Programs for their observance are furnished by our Board.

Vocation and Decision Days have been suitably joined. Their observance comes after many months and sometimes years of

Careful preparation. As a result of concentrated effort made at this time many members of the Sabbath School make plans for their life's work and enter into permanent relationship with the church. Fruitful Vocation and Decision Days' observance, however, will not come of themselves. It requires much in the way of preparation on the part of teachers and officers. Special sermons or sermonettes, special talks given during the opening or closing exercises of the Sabbath school, special mid-week prayer meeting are all effective features.

In the observance of Americanization, Thanksgiving, Mothers' and the other special days too numerous to mention, ten or fifteen minutes may be given in order to fully explain their importance to the pupils, if they are not properly observed by some other agency of the church.

UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION.

The United States Civil Service Commission announces the following open competitive examination:

Head Nurse
Receipt of applications for head nurse will close May 11. The examination is to fill a vacancy at Freedmen's Hospital, Washington, D. C., at \$1,140 a year, plus room, board and laundry, and vacancies occurring in positions requiring similar qualifications.

Applicants must have been graduated from a standard four years' high school course, and from a recognized school of nursing requiring a residence of at least three years in a hospital having a daily average of fifty patients or more, giving a thorough practical and theoretical training; also they must show evidence of State registration, and must have had one year's experience as a graduate nurse.

Freedmen's Hospital is an institution for the care of colored patients. Under supervision, the appointee will be responsible for the patients and personnel in a ward.

Competitors will not be required to report for examination at any place, but will be rated on their education, training, and experience.

NORTH CAROLINA HOLDS SECOND ANNUAL COLORED BOYS' CONFERENCE.

For the second time the State organization of the Y. M. C. A. is fostering Colored Older Boys' Conferences in North Carolina.

Last year the first Colored Older Boys' Conference was held at the A. & T. College at Greensboro and was unusually successful having more different places represented than any similar conference ever held in the State. It was successful also in the fine spirit that pervaded and followed the boys back to their homes.

The demand from the cities has been so insistent for larger representation that the committee decided to hold two conferences instead of one as last year, one in the West at Winston Salem, April 9, 10, 11, and one in the Eastern part of the State at Raleigh, April 23, 24, and 25.

J. T. Fesperman, State Boys' Work Secretary, 350 Tryon St., Charlotte, is in charge of the conferences and W. A. Robinson, State Supervisor of Colored High Schools, is chairman of the Promotion Committee.

CAPE FEAR PRESBYTERY.

Cape Fear Presbytery will meet in the Ebenezer Presbyterian church, New Bern, N. C., Wednesday, April 14-16, 1926.

All persons desiring to attend please notify Rev. O. E. Sanders, 139 Burn Street, New Bern, N. C.

J. A. SAVAGE, S. C.
S. H. VICK, P. C.