

Africo-American Presbyterian

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

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PRAYER FOR A MORATORIUM

By William F. McDermott In The Chicago Daily News

The rector of New York's famous Trinity Church, with its graveyard heads up Wall Street in New York—the East river being the foot of that financial thoroughfare—suggests a moratorium of a year or two on sermons. Trinity, a \$30,000,000 corporation which for many years drew its support from New York City's tenements, a situation, which, however, is reported to be largely cleaned up, might be an eminently fitting place to start the moratorium.

The idea, nevertheless, is an excellent one. The suggestion of this writer after an experience of twenty-five years in the pulpit, pew and at a reporter's desk with the vicissitudes of life, is that the moratorium be made permanent, and that it apply not only to preaching but also to preachers of certain types. The good rector's recommendation, which it is hoped he will evolve into an experiment, suggests this prayer for a moratorium.

From sermons that are dull, pointless, meaningless and purposeless; from sermons that are ill-prepared, have no relationship to the problems of everyday life, which leave the congregation hungering after eternal truth; from sermons that are negative, raising a lot of doubts and presenting no conviction; from sermons that are perfunctorily delivered, having back of them no spiritual power, no flaming passion to bring a lost world to its Creator—

Oh Lord, eternally deliver us. From preachers whose fluency, volubility and self-esteem lead them to mistake words for ideas and eloquence for consecrations; from clergymen who parade in their pulpits and who feed and fatten upon the simpering compliments of their conscience-lulled church members; from ministers whose prayers are addresses and instructions to the Almighty instead of confessions and pleadings; from pastors who subtly flatter and coddle their members in order to hold their jobs and perhaps pave the way to more remunerative ones; from clergymen anywhere and everywhere who are indifferent, without compassion, and who have forgotten the Way of the Cross for themselves, their congregations and the world—

Oh Lord, eternally deliver us. From churches that fight among themselves in the name of the Prince of Peace, who will die for the denomination but not for the Savior; from churches that are arrogant because they have better buildings, their members have a little better clothes, more education, finer cars than the mission around the corner; from churches that will work themselves into fever heat over a bazaar and door-prizes but let the prayer meeting die for lack of spirituality; from churches that are mere social clubs with clergymen-secretaries; from churches that are betraying their Master by their indifference to the needs of under-fed children, overworked mothers, defeated men, to the cause of world peace and social justice, to the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth in individual lives, in industry, in international relations—

Oh Lord, eternally deliver us. From laymen who are Christians in everything but their actions; who put on their cloak of religion when they enter the church door and leave it when they go out; who piously feel they have "done their religious duty" by attending church, drowsing through the sermon and trying to conjure up during the prayers a method to put it over a competitor, and then going out to be pagans in homes and business; who compliment the pastor to his face and then stab him in the back; who put a nickel in the plate and sing

"Jesus Paid It All," from laymen who are shysters, crooks, hypocrites, Pharisees, sulkers, tyrants, double-crossers, poor sports, quitters, shirkers and everything else antithetical to their professed religion; from laymen who make others turn from religious faith as a mockery—

Oh Lord, eternally deliver us. From headline-chasers of pulpit and pew; from pin-headed ecclesiastical politicians who run around meddling into every business but their own; from eternal conferees and resolutions; from publicity hounds, spellbinders, pointers-with-pride and viewers-with-alarm about everything and everybody but themselves and their own sins; from self-seekers, racketeers, loafers, bigots, self-appointed Messiahs and other Judases who every day crucify again Thy Son—

Oh Lord, eternally deliver us. From slackers who attempt to cover their hypocrisy with the inconsistencies of those in the church; from maudlinism and sentimentalism, products of weak-mindedness and cowardice, which gloss over crime and obstruct justice; from breeders of intolerance, race hatred and class consciousness, who spawn war, riots and poverty; from pseudo-scientists who use the classroom to destroy religious faith; from the superficiality and delusion of materialism, and from selfishness, vainglory, shoddy workmanship, braggadocio, defeatism and other sins of the flesh and the spirit.

FAIRFIELD YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEAGUE MEETING

The Young People's League of District No. 2, Fairfield Presbyterian, held its 6th meeting Saturday, Sep. 5, 1936 at Ebenezer Presbyterian church, Dalzell, S. C., Rev. M. J. Jackson, pastor.

The meeting opened with registration at 11 o'clock, with Misses Otelia Taylor and Brydia Tindal in charge. At 11:30 recreation and games were supervised by Misses Tena Frierson and Amanda James.

The opening worship services were conducted by the young people of Ebenezer Parish. After which the League went immediately into the business session with the new President, Mr. Harry Shaw, presiding.

Reports from Y. P. societies, Bible schools and the installation of new officers were had.

At 1:15 a very delicious dinner was served by members of Ebenezer church. A cordial welcome was extended by Miss La Nelle Jackson. The discussion period began at 2:15, theme: "Christian Youth Builds a New Church." Discussion was led by Mr. Clifton Brogden, Mr. Ernest Jackson, Misses Ernestine Pogue and Thelma Colton and Mr. J. T. Jones. From the discussion came the question, Why aren't the young people more attracted to the church services of today. Some of the complaints and problems were brought to consideration.

The church needs a new social order, shorter and more interesting services, better pastors, more social activities were some of the needs mentioned in the discussion. In order to build a new church for Christ we must begin building through worship, with stronger teachings, better fellowship between man and God, and with more service. These are the essentials in building a new church. So let us contemplate these essential phases of the theme and begin building a new church for Christ along with new Christian lives for His service.

At 3:45 there was a worship service. Theme: "I Will Build My Church." The message was given by Rev. J. F. Henderson

FACTS ABOUT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

(From The Federal Council Bulletin.)

Despite the chorus of lament about the alleged "decline of organized religion" in America, the churches more than held their own in membership in 1935. According to the figures reported last month by Dr. George Linn Kieffer, President of the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, our total church membership—Protestant, Catholic and Jewish—has reached the high point of 62,678,177. This is a gain of 670,801, a percentage of gain of 1.08 over the previous year. When this is compared with the average of gain of less than one percent in the population, it is seen that the churches are more than keeping pace with the population.

If the figures for adult membership are taken—an adult for the purpose of the census being defined as a person thirteen years of age or over—the record is even more encouraging. The total "adult" membership, as thus defined, was 51,035,549 in 1935, which is 58.55 percent of the population of that age. In 1926, when the last Census of Religious Bodies was taken by the federal Bureau of the Census, the percentage stood at 55.64.

An interesting aspect of church statistics is gained by noting the bodies to which these church members belong. In spite of the fact that there are more than 200 different groups listed as "national bodies," the vast majority belong to a much more limited circle. No fewer than 61,212,998, or 97.66 percent of the total, belong to the 49 denominations that have at least 50,000 members each. It thus appears that the great body of American church members are not quite as badly split up as is often assumed.

To say how many Protestants or Catholics there are is not easy in the lack of a precise definition of the terms, but at least a general statement can be made. In the total church membership there are 22,609,302 Roman Catholics (including all their baptized children), 4,081,242 are Jews. The Eastern Churches, including both those that recognize the Ecumenical Patriarch (Orthodox) and those who do not, number 1,105,762 members. There are 764,714 Mormons, 202,098 Christian Scientists. The Old Catholics, the Polish National Catholics and miscellaneous groups like Spiritualists, Vedantists, Bahá'is, Buddhists, etc., number considerably less than 300,000. This means that American Protestantism, in its well recognized branches, includes more than 35,600,000 members.

There are, of course, far more important criteria of success than size. In the religious realm quality is vastly more significant than quantity. It is entirely possible, as William Watson's satirical poem reminds us, for a church to be "outwardly splendid as of old" and yet to be "inwardly sparkless, void and cold." Nevertheless, it is of no little import that more than sixty millions of Americans still feel the force of religion sufficiently to desire to be associated with its organized forms and that the percentage has never been larger than it is today.

PEACE

(From The North Carolina Agricultural Review)

In the solitude of evening,
When the cooling breezes
blow—
In the east a full moon rising,
In the west, day's afterglow;
'Tis then no doubts can hover
In the puny soul of man;
'Tis then that God, the Lover,
Soothes His own, as naught
else can. —WHR

Good humor is the world's best antidote for trouble.

SCHOOLS PROGRESS IN NORTH CAROLINA

Nothing is more important than education; nothing can be a greater asset to the farm and those who earn their living from the soil. Following is a concise statement of the progress of public education in North Carolina, which should be clipped and preserved by every reader of this paper.

1705—Charles Griffin, the first professional teacher in North Carolina, was sent to Pasquotank County by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts through the Established Church of England.

1760—First academy established by Reverend James Tate at Wilmington. Crowfield Academy established in Mecklenburg County near the present site of Davidson College.

1772—A school for little girls established by the Moravians at Salem. This ultimately developed into Salem Female Academy, later Salem College.

1776—Adoption of a constitutional provision for legislative establishment of schools and for a university.

1825—Establishment of the State Literary Fund.

1839—"An Act to divide the Counties into School Districts and for other purposes"—first Common School Law drawn by William W. Cherry. In the election of August 8, nearly every county voted favorably.

1852—Election of Calvin H. Wiley, first General Superintendent of Common Schools.

1860—Plan of graded school system outlined at the annual meeting of the State Educational Association.

1864—Legislature passed graded school bill.

1865—Legislature recognized right of the Negro to be educated. Establishment of Shaw University, Raleigh, and Washburn Seminary, Beaufort, the first institutions for Negroes set up to offer courses above the elementary level.

1870—First public white graded school aided by money from a city treasury established in Greensboro.

1903—The Literary Fund set aside exclusively as a means of building and improving school-houses.

1907—Legislature authorized the establishment of rural high schools and appropriated \$45,000 annually for their maintenance.

1914—The establishment of the first County Training Schools for Negroes by the aid of the John F. Slater Fund.

1915—By this date there was a public high school in every county. Publication of the first list of high schools accredited by the State University. The beginning of the Rosenwald Building Program for Negro schools.

1917—State certification of teachers begun on a definite standard of training. Smith-Hughes act providing Federal aid for the teaching of agriculture and home economics in public schools accepted. High schools declared by the supreme court to be a part of the public school system.

1918—Constitutional amendment passed setting up a minimum term of six months.

1919—The first accredited high schools for Negroes, all attached to institutions of higher learning—four State-supported and seven private. Aid on equipment in high schools from the General Education Board.

1920—First listing of high schools accredited by the State Department of Public Instruction.

1921—The General Assembly provided the first Special Building Fund of \$5,000,000 to be loaned to the counties for building and equipping schoolhouses. The establishment of the Division of Negro Education in the State Department of Public Instruction. The staff included a

High School Inspector of Negro schools.

1923—Provisions made for county-wide organization of schools. The first public high schools for Negroes were accredited by the State—Durham, Reidsville, Wilmington, and Method.

1929—Beginning of Rosenwald aid on libraries and bus transportation in Negro schools.

1931—Complete support for a term of six months of school assumed by the State.

1933—Complete support for a term of eight months of school assumed by the State.—J. Henry Highsmith, in North Carolina Education.

CONFIDENCE MARKS PREACHING CONFERENCE

Reports from cities in all parts of the United States made at a two-day conference at Beaver College, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, September 8-9, in preparation for the National Preaching Mission of September 13 to December 9, disclosed a wide variety of methods adopted by the cities' Committees of One Hundred. Some of these follow: "Today 80 ministers are meeting at Birmingham in prayer for the National Preaching Mission"; "more than 500 of our women got together a few days ago to discuss their part in making the National Preaching Mission effective"; "every county in Pennsylvania is asked to organize an interdenominational committee of at least 25 members"; "practically every one of the cities visited in America will hold a prayer 'retreat' for the mission before the missionaries arrive"; "noon prayer meetings will be held daily for a week in advance"; "in some cities all midweek meetings of the churches are being devoted for four weeks to petitions for the mission"; "at Louisville every Saturday night a period is devoted by a radio station to silent but point-by-point suggested prayer for the mission"; "on the opening day of the mission Dr. Stanley Jones will broadcast a message over WEA and the red network, and other distinguished speakers will be heard over national hook-ups every few days afterwards"; "our city, like others, will have an Angelus Hour. Ours will be at 5 P. M. daily for one week just before the mission begins. For five minutes the bell of every Protestant Church will ring, to draw the entire city's attention to what is to come."

An unusual Christian optimism marked the Jenkintown conference. Expressed in terms of a revived hope for a disillusioned world, a note of confidence was heard time and again during morning, afternoon and evening sessions, luncheon and dinner meetings and between-times conversations by the 100 men and women present. The visitors came from all parts of the country. Prominent among them were about 25 members of the group of 52 "missionaries" who are traveling across the country this fall as preaching representatives of a united Protestantism. Others present were members of Committees of One Hundred in cities in which the Preaching Mission is holding its evangelistic services.

As indicated by the addresses at the conference and by many open discussions of problems and methods, the feeling of confident hope was based on reports of unparalleled cooperation among all classes and churches of persons throughout the land, on more than a year of concerted preparation by local leaders and by the Federal Council of Churches, under whose auspices the mission is held; on the movement's unusual comprehensiveness—"one of our city's newspaper men," reported a speaker, "exclaimed to me: 'Why, this is the biggest thing that ever came to this town!';" on the give-and-take

harmonious discussions by men widely differing in religious thought and methods; and on newly emphasized convictions such as that voiced by two missionaries, Protestant Episcopal Bishop Robert Nelson Spencer of Kansas City, "There is a growing Christian conviction in the world that God and his Kingdom are alive today," and President John S. Whale of Cambridge, England, "Today men are verily rediscovering the Gospel of Christ."

Certain phases received repeated emphasis at the conference, which devoted much of its time to prayer for the forthcoming mission. "The Gospel will solve every human problem," and "The Kingdom of God is for all of man" were two of these. The statement, "A larger number of people are becoming motivated by a spirit of good will," was underlined by Dr. E. Stanley Jones of India—one of the few missionaries who will visit every city to be reached by the National Preaching Mission—who exclaimed: "The Kingdom of God as Jesus described it is founded directly on good will and brotherhood—life as it ought to be."

Francis B. Sayre, Assistant Secretary of State at Washington, who also is one of the traveling missionaries, made this positive Christian statement based on world events of 1936: "At Washington we are facing some tortuous and critical problems. For many of these statesmen have found no solution. Economists have found no solution. I am convinced that the only solution lies in what this National Preaching Mission stands for, a mission with tremendous possibilities."

Forecasts of some anticipated results of the National Preaching Mission were made by many speakers. Among them were these: "It should release a spiritual influence over the whole nation," "give people a fresh sense of the fundamental place of God in human life," "provide a continuous crusade for evangelism," "restore evangelism to its central place in the life of the Church," and "regain for religion the place it should have in all our national life."

The National Preaching Mission is expected to reach hundreds of thousands of persons, according to details of plans announced at the Jenkintown conference. Through developing circles of evangelism, including four-day missions in 24 cities, two-day missions in 150 cities, one-day missions in 500 to 1,000 cities and towns and, later in the year, thousands of eight-day missions in every church of every denomination in every city, town and hamlet that will have been influenced by the earlier missions—in these ways this 1936 united Christian evangelism was visualized as reaching a multitude which "no man can number."

National Preaching Mission radio engagements announced at the Jenkintown conference in addition to that by Dr. Jones September 13, are the following:

Saturday, September 19, 6:45 P. M. (E. D. S. T., Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, WEA and red network.

Sunday, September 20, 4:30 P. M. (Sunday Vespers hour), Dr. Paul E. Scherer, WJZ and blue network

Wednesday, September 23, 11 A. M., Dr. William Thomson Hanzsche, WJZ and blue network

Sunday, September 27, 1:30 P. M. (Highlights of the Bible hour), Dr. Lynn Harold Hough, WJZ and blue network.

YADKIN PRESBYTERY

The Yadkin Presbytery will meet in its Fall session in the Faith Presbyterian church, Aberdeen, N. C., September 30, 1936, at 7:30 P. M. All persons planning to attend will notify Mr. Wm. Byrd, Aberdeen, N. C.

J. E. McMILLAN, S. C.