

The Star of Zion.

ORGAN OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH IN AMERICA.

Volume XXIV.

Charlotte, N. C., Thursday, March 29, 1900.

Number 13

METHODS EMPLOYED.

To Build Up A Perfect Christian Character.

BY REV. G. W. OFFLEY, D. D.

The very excellent article on the "Perfect Christian Character" by the Rev. R. A. Fisher, D. D., in the STAR OF ZION of March the 8th, is a good illustration of the method employed by the purest minded Christian teachers to "build up" a holy or perfect Christian character.

This method consists in *presenting* to, and *keeping before*, the disciple of Christ, whatsoever things are true and honorable, whatsoever things are just and pure, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report, and in exhorting him, "If there be any virtue, and praise, to "think on these things."

This was the method by which Christ trained His immediate disciples; and it is the method now used by the Holy Spirit, who reveals or makes known to the believer the "things of Christ." Beautiful in holiness, and perfect in purity, the Holy Spirit presents to the mind of the believer those things only which are of a like nature with Himself, and thus begets within him a longing desire for that perfection of character of which Christ is the highest possible type.

This was also the method employed by the apostle Paul, as is evidenced not only by the passage in his writings quoted by Dr. Fisher, but in so many others that only a few of them can be referred to in the limited space at our command.

Paul knew, as Dr. Chalmers expresses it, "The expulsive power of a new affection;" and hence he advised men to seek the things that are above where "Christ is seated on the right hand of God;" to "set their minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth;" to "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus;" in short, to so live in the presence of Christ, as that day by day beholding His glory, they might become transformed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

This method operates on the principle of displacement—"on the principle that two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time, but that one will displace the other as a shrp will displace a volume of water equal to its own weight." Paul taught on this principle when he exclaimed, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." The apostle Peter taught on this principle when he said, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." And the beloved disciple taught on the same principle when he simply said, "Little children love one another."

Truly, if we walk in the power

of the Spirit, we *shall* overcome every sinful desire of the flesh; if we grow in the favor of God, we shall obtain a deeper and a higher knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; if we love one another sincerely, we shall love our Father in heaven perfectly, and the love of the Father will expel every unholy affection from our hearts.

There is as much difference between the method employed by some Christian teachers in the work of forming in others the perfect Christian character, and the method specified in the foregoing part of this article, as there is between the work of laying the foundation of a building, and the work of beautifying and completing it. Both foundation and superstructure are necessary; but more skillful labor and finer materials are required in the work of building the superstructure than in digging and laying the foundation. Any common laborer can render help in the beginning of the work, but only artisans directed by a master artist can beautify and complete it.

So, in building the temple of the Lord, almost any workman can speak of the first principles of Christ and lay the foundation of repentance; but it requires the skill of a master-builder to erect upon that foundation a structure that shall be beautiful, harmonious, and strong—complete in all its parts—a holy habitation of God. Comparatively rough stones, and coarse mortar, may be used in the foundation of a building, but more polished stones and finer cement are required for its higher parts. Now, as they would greatly err who should put the rough stones and the coarse mortar into the higher parts of the building for the purpose of beautifying it, so it seems to me that they greatly err who endeavor to make men holy by *roughly* denouncing their sins, and to make them pure by *constantly exhibiting* their vices. Those who do this may be very sincere, and very zealous, but at the same time they are very deficient in good judgment. Either they do not know, or they forget that

"Vice is a monster of so hideous mien, That to be hated, needs but to be seen; Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face, We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

Sometimes in laying the foundation of a building it may be necessary to dig up and throw out a deal of mud and slime, and, perhaps, a whole lot of noisome and creeping things; and some men are by nature peculiarly adapted to this necessary, but, nevertheless, dirty work. We do not look down upon these hardy laborers, we do not feel ourselves above them; and if they stick to the line of work for which nature has so eminently qualified them they will achieve success and we are bound to commend them. It is only when they attempt the work of the artisan

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A GRAND MINISTER

Of Jesus Christ—A Very Busy and Eventful Life.

BY REV. T. A. WEATHINGTON, D. D.

The subject of this sketch, Rev. James William Cooper, was born in Wilks County, Georgia, near Washington City, September 20, 1847. He was brought to Ala-



Rev. James W. Cooper.

bama when about five years old, and reared near Opelika, Ala.

His early traits of character impressed his parents and acquaintances that he was a goodly child with a bright future before him in his day and generation. In this they were not misjudged in their early impression, for he was early converted and became a true believer in the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and was baptized in this faith on the first Sunday in December 1871 by Rev. Jesse Wynn, and joined Little Zion church. Here he served in the capacity of Sunday-school teacher, superintendent and class leader.

He attended the public schools taught in this church by Professors C. S. Gidden and Wm. Blandon. Later on he attended the city graded school at Opelika, Ala., also taught by Prof. Gidden, still hungering and thirsting after knowledge, he entered Talladiga College, at Talladiga, Ala. Leaving the school-room, not by choice, but on account of reverse circumstances, he still pursued his studies and at the same time engaged in the profession of public school teaching in Russell County, Alabama.

He was licensed to preach in 1877 by Rev. Thomas Perry, and was appointed to the Marvyn mission, in Marvyn, Ala., by Rev. R. Ford in 1879. At this point he built a nice church known as Reese's Chapel. Here has been instrumental in adding to the church several useful members, many of whom are bright and shining lights there to this day.

In November, 1879, he joined the annual Conference which convened at Mobile, Ala., and was ordained deacon by Rt. Rev. J. P. Thompson, D. D., M. D., in State-street church. From this Conference he was appointed to

Opelika, Ala. To establish Zion at this place, great hardship and privations were endured. He rented a horse stable and preached in it and raised means and purchased a lot and built Thompson's Chapel at a cost of \$700, and dedicated the same to Almighty God, May, 1880, Bishop Thompson officiating in the ceremony. Here God wonderfully blessed him in his spiritual work in adding 125 or 130 members to Zion. He served this charge two years.

In 1881 he was ordained elder and appointed to Talladiga, Ala. Here he plastered and ceiled the church, and added several prominent and useful members to the same. In 1882 he was appointed to Warrior Stand circuit, and pastored the circuit three years with much success and built three churches, namely, Cooper's chapel, Creek Stand and Boromville. He also pastored Pine Grove church in connection with his regular appointment and accomplished much good for God and Zion. Here his usefulness and pastoral ability were fully recognized and honored by the Alabama Conference.

Having added many prominent and useful members to the circuit, who are to-day beacon lights and full-fledged Zionites in the church and community, he was next appointed to the Cedar Hill circuit in Lowndes Co., Ala. Here he served in the pastorate only six months, and seated off Temple Gate at a cost of \$75 and dedicated the same to our beloved Zion. About this time a vacancy occurred on the Union Springs district by reason of the death of Rev. Adam White, Presiding Elder. Rt. Rev. J. W. Hood, D. D., LL. D., then appointed him to carry out the unexpired term, which he did to the full satisfaction of the Bishop and Conference.

In 1886 he was elected presiding elder, and reappointed to the district and served three years and a half. The Greeneville district was then made, and he was assigned to it and served two years with marvelous success, building it up both spiritually and financially. In fact, his reports were so grand and progressive that he was acknowledged as the model presiding elder.

In 1891, he was appointed pastor of Old Ship Clinton chapel by Bishop Lomax, D. D. For reasons unexplained he by the consent of the Bishop exchanged appointments with Rev. A. J. Rodgers and was assigned to Mt. Zion, our second church in the city of Montgomery. Here he engratiated himself into the hearts of the members and congregation who waited upon his ministry with delight and earnestness for two years with marked improvement on the work and community at large. Rt. Rev. T. H. Lomax, D. D., Presiding Bishop, and the

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WE ARE COMING HERE.

The Lord With Us—Good Minister Dead—The Bishopric.

BY REV. C. W. SIMMONS.

When we came to this charge a little more than eleven months ago the ex-pastor, whose unexpired term we were sent to fill out turned over to us a list of 27 names which purported to be the entire membership of the church; but not one of that number were styled class-leader.

We had a board of five trustees. The chairman and one other of them were unconverted men. And as for the Sunday school, we had not so much as a superintendent. The choir had given up and the electric lights were things of the past. We have at this time a membership of 68 divided into five classes; a board of seven trustees, with the same man for chairman, but a changed man, as is also the whole board.

We have what is acknowledged by the A. M. E. and the Baptist church the best choir in the city. We have a very thriving Sunday school with an average attendance of about 40. We have just closed a protracted meeting with about 35 conversions and 30 accessions. Rev. E. J. Carter, of Cleveland, O., spent two weeks with us. The Dr. is one of the ablest ministers in Zion and preached much to the edification of his hearers. Our second quarterly meeting embraced the third Sunday in January and was in every way a grand success.

The memorial services of Rev. J. W. Tyrie who departed this life December 26 1899, at Pittsburg, Pa., and one of the ex-pastors of the church, was held at 3:30 p. m. Rev. W. S. Lowry of St. Paul A. M. E. Church who had known Rev. Tyrie for more than 30 years paid a glowing tribute to his memory. Rev. Omsted Skinner and Mrs. Ella Ramsy made pathetic speeches; and the choir was at its best. Mrs. Annie Miller the organist, read a grand paper. See paper in next issue of the STAR. G. W. Lewis, P. E., that grand little man, made the closing speech.

Sunday, March 4th, was a big day for Wrights chapel. We baptized 8 adults, received 20 in full connection, and administered the sacrament to 75 persons.

I am in favor of only two more Bishops. If only two is elected, I am for Smith first, and Alstork second.

Washington, Pa.

To attempt to defeat good and competent men for office is the devil's job. See the Bible. The General Conference will solve the problem by electing Drs. J. W. Smith and J. W. Alstork bishops and put Dr. J. H. Anderson in the wheel house with the key of the STAR office as Editor.—Rev. Wm. C. Pierson, Cookeville, Miss.