

THAT ANNUAL SERMON ON THE MINISTRY.

The need for more preachers and for stronger preachers is felt in all the Churches. Two of the methods by which our Church seeks to cooperate with the Spirit of God in calling men into the ministry is to observe annually Vocation Day in all our Sunday-schools and to require a sermon once a year in every pulpit on the Claims of the Christian Ministry.

Our Sunday-school authorities have moved up the date of Vocation day this year from the fourth Sunday in September to the Sunday before Easter, viz., April 1st, and it is to be observed in connection with Decision Day.

The object of this notice is to request that the day be properly emphasized in all our Sunday-schools and to suggest that this will be an appropriate time to preach the annual sermon on the Claims of the Christian Ministry. May we not have a ringing call on this subject from every pulpit in Southern Methodism? If Saul is hid among the stuff, let us find and summon him to his kingdom under divine guidance. Civilization crumbles without the Church and the Church languishes without strong leadership. When did the world ever need worse than today an able and consecrated ministry? We must all help call the leaders of tomorrow.

The Department of Ministerial Supply and Training, Atlanta, Ga., will send literature on the ministry free to all pastors who write for it.

R. H. BENNETT.

RESOLUTIONS.

Your committee appointed to make some definite statement in regard to the duty of the pastor to the unsaved, realizes that it is impossible to work out any hard and fast system that will apply alike to all charges. But we submit the following suggestions which we sincerely trust may help at least in some measure.

First; we must be deeply conscious of the fact that the one purpose of the Church and the ministry of the Church is to lead the unsaved to a knowledge of Christ as a sin-pardoning and personal Savior. No matter how proficient and how well-equipped the minister may be otherwise, if he fails at this vital point, in so far as the mission of Christ is concerned, his ministry is a total and tragic failure.

The minister must have a deep, abiding, passionate love for the souls of men. Love is the only sufficient force to hold the ministry steady in this work. This love must come into his heart from God, through Christ, by the agency of the Holy Spirit. Christ, our Lord, stated most clearly and emphatically that it was the love of the father that brought Him into the world and impelled Him to lay down His life for others.

In order to sustain a love of this kind, it will be necessary for the minister to spend a great deal of time in earnest, importunate, intercessory prayer. We cannot love people as we should without praying for them. As a means of help to the ministry, we would suggest the reading of devotional books. We would suggest further that the pastor make the Wednesday evening prayer service a sort of spiritual dynamo or heating plant from which we shall radiate warmth for the entire Church membership. Gathering about him a band of men and women who love God and their fellow-men and who enjoy praying and working for God, he may keep his own heart on fire and do much to

keep up the spiritual temperature of his Church.

In addition to this, it will be necessary to discover as many points of contact between himself and the unsaved as possible. No pastor can do all the work or even a large part of it without the assistance of his Church. The Church is his working force and he must know how to organize it to the very best advantage in order to get results. We would suggest a central committee of something like twenty persons, so selected as to have one in each section of town or the city. Every organization of the Church should be represented in the committee, so that there will be no friction or crossing of organizations. Then organize a sub-committee in each section with the member of the central committee in that part of the city as chairman of the sub-committee. By operating this method the minister can keep in direct touch with his entire membership at all times.

This will relieve him of a considerable amount of routine work and thus make it possible for him to expend his energy at the points where he can make his work count for the most in bringing the unsaved to Christ. By using this plan, the entire Church membership can be visited in a day any time that it is necessary. By modifying this plan, it can be suited to the needs of any charge in our Conference.

J. H. BUFFALOE,
S. E. MERCER,
E. B. CRAVEN.

WASHINGTON DISTRICT.

In response to a call of the Presiding Elder, Rev. C. L. Read, the preachers of the Washington District met in Washington on the seventh and eighth of February for a Conference. Fifteen of those assigned to work in the district were present for one or more of the sessions. It was a pleasure to have with us Brother C. C. Brothers, one of the superannuate members of our Conference. It is doubtless true that every one present enjoyed both his prayer and testimony.

The opening session of the Conference was held on Wednesday night, at which time Rev. W. A. Stanbury, of Wilson, preached to us.

The morning and afternoon sessions were held in the district parsonage. After devotional exercises conducted by the presiding elder the meeting was opened to testimonies and brief reports from the charges represented. The remainder of the morning session and the afternoon session were given to informal discussions of questions pertaining to the life and work of pastor and people.

It was the sense of the meeting: 1. That we plan longer periods during which our revival meetings are to continue, i. e., the individual meeting, and that due emphasis be placed upon sound conversion.

2. That we emphasize also the great fundamentals of our faith: sin, repentance, and faith.

3. That we endeavor to stimulate and cultivate a higher order of religious experience and life among our people.

4. That we re-emphasize the position of our Church and our gospel with reference to worldliness.

5. That we endeavor to establish the work of the Epworth League in our district and offer it as a counter attraction to our young people.

6. That we familiarize ourselves with our Church schools, their merits and comparative values, to the end that we may properly represent them to our people.

7. That we endeavor to get our

full quota of new subscriptions to the Advocate by March 1.

8. That we should pray for each other during the year.

The evening service was opened with a love feast, which was conducted by Rev. S. T. Moyle, of Farmville. At the conclusion of this service our presiding elder gave a brief report of the progress of the work on the district during the past year. Rev. R. C. Craven, of Rocky Mount, then preached for us and our Conference came to a close.

It was with regret that we said good-bye to our hosts and hostesses on the morning following because we were sure that we had been royally entertained. As we turned our faces toward our respective fields of labor it was with the feeling that it was well that we had come—personally and for a larger service in the Kingdom.

METHODISM IN LUMBERTON.

If you will allow a man of another creed space in your paper, I wish to give a few impressions of the Methodism of Lumberton as gained by a casual observer during a recent visit there. While we are not so awfully old, yet we remember the day when these devout followers of Wesley who resided in Lumberton worshiped in an old wooden building, but that day has passed, no longer are they ministered to by the faithful circuit rider. But Methodism has kept abreast with the times and today Lumberton Methodists have as their Church home one of the most handsome brick buildings in North Carolina. They have a stationed preacher, Rev. W. B. North, D.D., with a modern home, the property of the Church. Dr. North is a preacher of recognized ability, an eminent theologian, a zealous worker, a fearless preacher, who rightly divides unto his flock the Word of God.

The Sunday-school of Chestnut Street M. E. Church, is an eye opener here. The youth, the hope of the next generation, are being instructed and trained for the higher life. Not only are the youth found here, but the elder ones, too. None are present by proxy. All are present. It is the whole Church studying together the Word of God.

Mr. K. M. Barnes, Cashier of the Planters' Bank and Trust Company, is superintendent of this Sunday-school, and he is a live wire in Sunday-school work. Under his administration the school has made rapid strides along all lines. Lumberton Methodism in Lumberton is championed by some of the leading men of Lumberton and Robeson County. Among them we find A. E. White, Lumberton's popular and efficient mayor, J. A. Sharpe, editor and proprietor of "the Robesonian", the best weekly or semi-weekly periodical published in North Carolina. C. B. Townsend, President Planters' Bank and Trust Company, H. E. Stacy, prominent attorney, C. V. Brown, Cashier of the National Bank of Lumberton, the oldest banking institution in Robeson, R. E. Lewis, the present popular sheriff of the County of Robeson, J. R. Poole, Superintendent of Public Instruction, C. M. Fuller, the original horse and mule king, and most popular live stock dealer in this section of North Carolina, G. M. Whitfield, wholesale grocer and commission merchant, W. H. Humphry, ex-Clerk of Superior Court, J. H. Floyd, owner and proprietor of the Lumberton Marble Works. With such a noble band of consecrated Christian men, whose first interest is the business of their Kind, no modern prophet

can foretell the future of Methodism in this section of the North Carolina Conference.

The first Sunday in March this house will be formally dedicated to God. Bishop Kilgo will preach the dedication sermon. When we see the achievements of this faithful band, and view their great accomplishments as a member of another creed, we can only say in the words of another, "Oh, God, to us may grace be given to follow in their train."

FRED BROWNE.

JONES CIRCUIT.

We have for the past two days had the pleasure of having Brother Hurley with us. Our Sunday School Conference was held Saturday and fairly well attended. Brother Hurley's earnest way of putting things surely will bring a harvest.

The stewards raised the pastor's salary one hundred dollars. Now, if any one thinks our people of Jones are going to be satisfied with anything less than a place among those in the front rank, they are mistaken.

Listen again, the following brethren have recently remembered us in a substantial (smoke house) way: Jack Pearce, Major Craven Frank Foy, Jonah Foy, Sheriff Hargett, Will Dail, John Marquette, Joe Moore and the Meadows family. We not only appreciate the gifts, but the feelings that brought this giving. May God bless the givers.

Brother Hurley preached three times for us Sunday, and our people appreciated it. They will anxiously await his return trip, and he may count on a full house to welcome him.

May God bless our many friends whom we have served and are serving today.

C. T. ROGERS.

It is not something we don't have that the Lord demands of us, but that we use what we have.—Rev. L. K. Smith.

"God sometimes tests our faith by His delays. Oftener, perhaps, He rebukes our unbelief by answering before we call."

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