

Africo-American Presbyterian

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

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THE PATHWAY TO THE NEGRO'S FINDING HIMSELF

An Address by Mr. W. P. Evans, of Laurinburg, delivered before the Catawba Synodical Sabbath School Convention and School of Methods at Johnson C. Smith University, August 25th.

To the officers, members and friends of the Catawba Sunday School Convention and School of Methods:

I am here tonight because I promised your executive committee I would be, and a promise from any business man, like a promissory note, is one of the most binding and non-forgettable features of his life. After accepting the invitation, however, I wondered why your committee would want a merchant whose study is weights, measures and money, to blunder before this great educational body that they represent. I concluded, that your committee, like the people of the world, are beginning to recognize that Christianity and business are twin sisters. One builds teachers, preachers and missionaries for the world; the other builds school houses, churches, publication houses, wherein Bibles and tracts are printed, and great steamships to carry missionaries and God's gospel across the deep blue ocean into pagan Asia, dark Africa and the isles of the sea.

I consider Christianity and business the chief cornerstones of the world's civilization. One provides for immortality, and the other for mortality. Business broadens men's visions, creates fellowship and encourages cooperation.

The planks in business platforms are broad and on them this whole Convention and School of Methods can stand. The mission of the business man is to wait on and serve others. The least among you can order a business man to sell you a pint of peanuts or a penny stick of candy and he readily obeys and meekly seeks to serve you again. Business is a potent factor in all the affairs of men. It prepared this elegant building that is used in conducting your meetings, which, I believe, are presided over by the Spirit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and executed by the methods of business men.

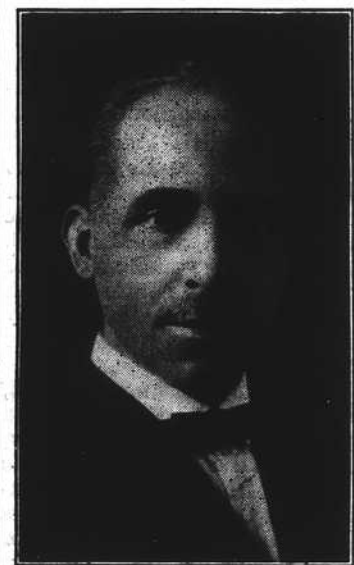
Jesus illustrated economical business when He fed 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fishes, and he stamped his approval of thrift and business upon that servant who, in a business way, added five more talents to the five that God gave him. I submit here tonight that God and the world will stamp their approval on 12 million Negro people, when they inculcate thrift and business in the activities of their lives.

The Negro race to find itself occupying its rightful place along with other races of the world must follow the pathways of Christianity, cooperation and commerce, as well as education.

Members of this noble assembly, it should be love that brings us here tonight. Love is the dominating factor in our lives; without it we can do nothing for the cause of humanity. No great achievement has ever been accomplished or ever will be in this world without love's stepping stones. It has been said by some one, "There dwells somewhere within the breast of every human heart that divine spark which we call love." It is the voice of the universe slumbering in its narrow cell to be awakened by a whisper or to cry out in dear desire to hear the echoing answer of another soul. Without it life would be a pale, relentless episode; without its quickening force no temple could be reared by human hands, and yet hovels wherein love dwells become more glorious than some palaces. If we scatter seeds of love

and sunshine along life's highway its flowers will blossom in fragrance and its colors of beauty will flood the world with effulgent gold. There stands behind this movement for the education of our people, One who said, "Let there be light."

Friends, this should be considered a great occasion to the race and its significance can be emphasized when we remember just around 60 years ago we were a little over three million in number, penniless, pitiful, where now we are over 12 million in number and in possession



MR. W. P. EVANS.

of houses and lands to the value of two billion dollars.

For your encouragement let us pause to enumerate the growth of our people. Homes owned, six hundred thousand; farms operated, one million; businesses conducted, fifty thousand; educational progress, eighty black people out of every one hundred can read and write; number of colleges and normal schools, five hundred; number of children in school, one million eight hundred thousand; school property for high school education, twenty-one million dollars; expenditures for education, fifteen million dollars; number of churches, 43,000; number of communicants, four million eight hundred thousand; number of Sunday schools, forty-six thousand; number of Sunday school scholars, two million two hundred fifty thousand. Value of church property, eighty-five million dollars. If such splendid achievements have been made in sixty-one years in the face of almost innumerable difficulties, how much greater will be our progress when we will have reached the one hundred mile post, if we will inculcate true love, race co-operation and business principles in our lives and energies.

Friends, these statements of our great progress are most gratifying, I admit, but we must not let them stultify us but use them as stepping-stones or mile posts in the business, industrial, educational, Christian and financial race of life that is led the world over by the Anglo-Saxon or white race, the criterion of education, Christianity, finance and business.

The great outstanding need of the Negro people today is training in social and business efficiency. Africa was once owned and peopled by Negroes; today only a small portion is in their hands. Haiti, a Negro Republic, whose government was fashioned after the Republic of the United States, is today under the protectorate of the American government, all because of the lack of business efficiency.

If the studied indifference of a certain number of educated

Negro people towards Negro business enterprises does not yield to the co-ordinated forces of Christian education and racial cooperation then there can be no hope for the race ultimately finding its rightful place with other peoples of the world. A Spartan soldier, on the eve of entering battle, exclaimed to his mother, "My sword is too short." His mother replied, "Add a step to it." If the educated people will only add a step to the Negro business-soldier whose financial sword and experience just now at his beginning are too short, I warrant you that he will win some of the battles in business and finance as he has won in education, pugilism and athletics.

I verily believe that it is the job of our educated people to establish and support business enterprises in the race because business is as fundamental to the perpetuation of nations as is Christianity or education. It is their responsibility and they should try not to shirk it with multitudinous phrases of criticism and fault-finding. Most of our educated people are the products of aid and philanthropy, which supplied to the race the one great essential, education. Why, then, should not the educated colored men in the light of education, take the initiative to supply to his own race the other great essential—business?

In the coal mines of West Virginia the miners use lighted lanterns in their foreheads to develop the rich but hidden fuel in the mines. Why not let your education be your lighted lantern and be the path-finder to the race's business prosperity. If the light that is in the educated leaders be darkness, oh, how great will be that darkness to 12 million dependent, black people, who have all these years been groping through the primitive darkness of ignorance, superstition and the lack of business confidence. The educated of the race must be creators as well as creatures in order that the race will ultimately come into its own. I state that business is one of the greatest fundamentals in the world's progress and prosperity. Education presides over our colleges and kindred institutions, but business builds and maintains them. Therefore, to establish and perpetuate any race's independence the business of the race must be one of its foundation stones.

Dr. Washington in 1900 realized how impotent and futile mere book knowledge for the Negro would be towards placing him in his rightful place with other races of the world. He admitted that a full head and an empty purse did not construct communities. He knew that phraseology would or could not do what materiology would do. He recognized that a depositor of a bank would first have to have cash in the bank before he could demand the cashing of his beautifully written draft on the bank.

Hence he organized the National Negro Business League, so as to foster and encourage Negro business enterprises, and through them harness the great spending power of 12 million Negroes and convert it into channels of business that would give support and employment to the 25,000 college bred men and women, who were economically adrift in and around the large cities of our great country. The gospel of Negro business should be preached from every pulpit, heralded from every hill-top, broadcasted from every tower of learning, taught in every school house, and nurtured around every fireside of the race. Christianity saves spiritual man and business saves physical man, and automatically they will save each other.

Dr. R. R. Moton in his annual address before the National Negro Business League, said, "I believe that the forces of our people should be directed more

largely to business. All over this country we are stressing college or higher education for the Negro. I believe, however, at this stage of our civilization we should stress equally as strong race co-operation, race solidarity. The first requisite of civilization is the ability to make a living. So long as we must look up to some other race, so long will they look down on us. If the Negro race had more wealth there would be less discrimination, but because of the possession of the essentials that as a rule create wealth, viz., sobriety, economy, thrift, industry, integrity, in short, character and culture, the race would be eligible to a greater and more sincere fellowship with all other people of the world.

The American dollar is the badge of American harmony, and, our race, working together for the good of all, each race could have its individual life and yet live in peace and harmony and in helpfulness to the other races which live by its side. I have an abiding faith in the ability of the wealthy white man and the wealthy black man of our South land to solve the Negro problem. And my forty years of experience in the conduct of what is now, according to statistics, the largest Department store owned and operated by Negroes in the United States, with fifty per cent of the patronage white, revealed to me that instances wherein colored people are trained in their homes and colleges to serve and not to strut, harmony between the races prevails and prosperity crowns the work and toil of the black man. I would admonish you to cultivate the friendship of your white neighbors, for in time of need it would be as a savings bank account; you can draw on it. I find that in nearly every community where Negro men are successful and prominent, they are so largely through the counsel, cash and co-operation of some good white citizens of their respective communities.

I want to emphasize co-operation among our people because other races attach so much importance to it. I heard a story once that illustrates business co-operation. A white man and a black man went fishing; the black man fell over board and, quick as done, the white man jumped in after him and saved him. Another white man remarked, "You must love the Negro to risk your life for him." "Aye, golly, that Negro had the bait."

Organization, another great essential to the defense and prosperity of a people is illustrated by a bee story: A boy walked across a clover field with a stick striking down bee after bee from the flowers of the clover. He was so successful that he thought himself king of the bees; but suddenly he came to a stump from which a drove of bees were coming out. At once he attempted to strike them down, but soon found it necessary to take to his heels. After getting away he wondered why he had been so successful in killing bee after bee, and at last the bees made him take to his heels. He decided the bees in the stump were organized. The Negro separately will be stricken down like the bee in all walks of life, but if he will organize he will make it awful for any people who will try to strike him down.

(Concluded next week)

ATLANTIC SYNOD.

The fifty-sixth annual meeting of Atlantic Synod will meet at Macon, Ga., on the 28th of October at 7:30 P. M., with Rev. J. W. Holley as the retiring Moderator.

Like Zion Presbyterian church in Charleston, S. C., the colored Presbyterian church in Macon, Ga., was built and set aside as a separate body from the white Presbyterian church

in Macon in 1858, just one year before Zion in Charleston, S. C.

We are to meet on historic ground. Let us go to dear old Atlantic Synod. Write Rev. T. A. Thompson that you are planning to be there. The closing of churches on account of influenza prevented our meeting in Macon, October, 1918. That is the year in which many church courts did not meet.

Our Small Assessment.

Do not forget that our Synodical assessment is the pitiful sum of five cents the church member, practically nothing; and yet there seems to be a dark cloud rising, about the size of a man's hand, threatening to pour out opposition to the pitiful sum of five cents a member lest our treasury be overrun with money.

I visited the white Synod of South Carolina 18 years ago in the city of Sumter, and I heard the Auditing Committee report a balance of over \$3,000. Can we not think in such big terms without feeling that we have "too much money?" Do not embarrass your congregation—which you should be laboring to bring up to the Christian standard of giving, like other denominations—by reducing five cents when you cannot buy a bottle of orange crush and the like in South Carolina under six cents. And if you wish to send out printed invitations or announcements you must pay one and one-half cent for your postage stamp.

The Church and its auxiliaries are God's means of grace, and we grow in grace; therefore when we reduce our gifts to the Church we are impoverishing the means of grace. Can we as progressive churchmen afford to turn our backs to the future and our faces to the past and try to run the Church on less money or on what our predecessors did even ten years ago? Let's go forward!

Read your minutes of 1924 and see which committee you are chairman of and come prepared to report. Please do not write such lengthy reports. Please type your reports, if possible.

W. L. METZ,
Stated Clerk of the Synod of Atlantic.

CALLS RACE TO DAILY PRAYER.

Plains, Ga., Sept.—Mrs. W. H. Johnson, the wife of Bishop W. D. Johnson, who presides over the A. M. E. Churches of Texas, has issued a call to the whole colored race to pray. She says in her statement:

"Not since the days of slavery has the race put over a program with prayer in it. Family altars in our homes imploring God's protection and guidance, have too often been left off. Many of our children are destroyed by divorces; children have gone astray; our businesses have failed; churches and ministers have lost much of their influence for good. God calls us back to fasting and prayer." While Mrs. Johnson recognizes the value of education, material advantages, etc., she insists that we do not neglect the "old way." "We have not yet got so far that we must not call on God. Let us think about this. Let us send up our petitions cooperatively. Let there be one time when every colored man, woman and child will stop and pray. Twelve million prayers at the same time every day will be a mighty lever." So Mrs. Johnson asks every one: "Will you join the many who are praying at 12 o'clock in the day for the things which the race needs?"

Finish every day and be done with it. If you have been honest you have done what you could. Begin the new day well and serenely, profiting from the mistakes of the past wherever possible. Only in this way will succeeding days increase your capacity.—Grit.

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR NATIONAL MISSIONS WEEK

As Presbyterians come back from their various vacations they will need to give immediate thought to plans for the local celebration of National Missions Week, the purpose being the Board of National Missions has made several suggestions for this annual event, a Thanksgiving service in the Sunday schools, an evening Sunday service to be conducted by the young people, a praise service for the women, a meeting of the church cabinet for the Friday preceding November 22nd, and a church night, at which all groups and ages may come together in fellowship and at which a pageant play, or stereopticon lecture relating to National Missions may be presented, yet the individual church is by no means freed of responsibility in adapting these suggestions to its own purposes. Pastors, too, are being urged to use the first Sunday of the Week for a general presentation of National Missions, and the second, since this is Immigrant Year, for the specific challenge of the foreigner in America to the church.

National Missions Week should come as the natural culmination of a month set apart by the General Assembly for the study and thoughtful consideration of Presbyterian responsibilities in America. Churches everywhere may well use November in a church school of missions in which they may study either the textbooks of the year or the Annual Report of the Board of National Missions for the first time made available for more or less general use, and provided with a syllabus and supplementary helps. National Missions topics should find a place, too, in the Sunday schools and Young People's meetings throughout the month. It is hoped that churches will begin preparation at once and they will see that all channels of publicity are used for the advance promotion of the activities of the Week. Only thus can there really be an enthusiastic and smoothly working rally when the time comes. All Board materials will be ready for distribution by October first.

Yet why do we have this annual event? What good purpose does it serve? The answer, of course, is that if missions in the homelands are to progress there must be behind them a sympathetic and intelligent church. National Missions Week is but one means of quickening the church to its national responsibilities. Through National Missions Week the Board aims to secure for itself the benefits of cooperative and simultaneous effort. It would have every Presbyterian consider the National Missions enterprise in its progress, its variety of activities, and think of his personal relation to it, whether expressed in prayer, in service, or in giving. It desires to make clear to him that the aim of National Missions is not just the preaching of the Gospel of Christ of the neglected and unprivileged classes in America, but the releasing of the spiritual potentialities within each man, so that the spirit of Christianity may move through the social, political, and economic life of America and become a vital force in international relations. Thanksgiving week is a time when, if ever, Americans should give thought to their own land, to its spiritual, as well as its material interests.

ORIGIN OF CHURCH PEWS

Pews were first placed in churches for the use of Norman nobles. Ordinary worshippers sat on three-legged stools.