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

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INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY AND CHRISTIANITY

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(An address delivered before the Catawba Synodical Convention and School of Methods at J. C. Smith University.)

Liberty and Christianity—these words are pregnant with significance. No other combination can exceed them in the magnitude of their importance; no other single substantives outweigh them in their implication.

Liberty is exemption from restraint, freedom from coercion, the privilege of following the will.

Intelligence cannot conceive a higher aspiration, imagination can not covet a grander acquisition. There is no price man will not pay to purchase it, no sacrifice he will not undergo in order to possess it.

It came to him without restriction from the heart of his Creator. Such is the likelihood of its abuse, however, that its unerring exercise involves infallible sagacity, superlative integrity and unaffected charity. For want of these its primitive possessors forfeited their own and posterity's unfettered use thereof.

Because of human imperfection, both in wisdom and in righteousness, each individual is obligated to relinquish so much of his freedom as is inconsistent with the equal freedom of his fellows. Thus necessity has placed a limit upon liberty.

But while expedience approves this rational restriction, justice demands its uniform attainability. The uniform obedience of this demand would compensate the quantity of liberty surrendered, while assuring the possession and enhancing the enjoyment of the residue.

Social preferment, civic power and economic privilege are avidly arrogated by the powerful and covetously doled out to the weak. On every hand the strong usurp the substance and leave the helpless to be thankful for the shadow.

Society has organized itself upon the basic principle of inequality. It has stratified itself with ruthlessly impenetrable barriers. The strong have occupied the upper atmosphere of privilege and power and have limited the lower levels of oppression and proscription to the powerless.

There is no avenue of conduct, no point of social contact where freedom is not more or less restricted. Since this is true, to what extent is liberty consistent with Christianity. The answer hinges on the operation of Christianity, whether as a theory of thinking or as a principle of living.

The fact is recognized that most of what is called Christianity consists of the bare admission of its theories. The majority of its proclaimers are innocent of even the pretense of practicing its principles. They are speculative Christians, literary professors of religion. They learnedly discuss its doctrines, they lavishly extol its virtues, they ostentatiously maintain its propaganda. If need be, they will fight for it, and some will even die for it, but they disclose no evidence whatever that they practice it.

Experience confirms the declaration that professing Christians constitute the bulk of those who claim the designation. Of all the world's religions, there are none more ardently proclaimed, and there are none whose precepts are more brazenly ignored. This circumstance explains the readiness with which one man will ruthlessly mistreat another.

Professing Christians recognize no inconsistency in the deliberate denial of a privilege to others and the audacious arrogation thereof to themselves. Those who by fortune or by force become custodians of pow-

er dispense it with unscrupulous indifference to right or duty. Nations have no hesitancy in despoiling weaker nations. Races most unblushingly oppress more helpless races. Individuals are shameless in their assumption of prerogative and the infliction of proscription.

Is there wonder that society is torn with factions and dissensions? Is there wonder that the world continues to be cursed with war and its incalculable consequences? Is there wonder that men's hearts are agonized with longings for the peace that never comes? It is appalling to contemplate the hypocrisy exhibited in the glib recital of those ill-fated words, "Thy will be done." Nothing is farther from the general desire than that this petition should be gratified. Nothing is more remote from the intentions of the multitudes who unctiously utter it.

Were this petition uttered in sincerity, were its spirit followed with fidelity the ills of the earth would vanish as the shadows flee the sun. All phases of intolerance would fade before the frown of universal reprobation. Christianity would cease to languish as a lifeless theory and it would assert its function as a living principle. The golden rule, musty with antiquity and rusty with disuse, would then become the gleaming guide of every act and attitude. Every man of every race and every creed would have the use of every privilege attainable by any other man.

The failure of Christianity to work out its designs is traceable to nothing faulty in its principles or in its possibilities. The fault is in the substitute parading in its name. The sham is generous in promises but stingy in performances. To such extent the counterfeit is taken for the real that the latter is condemned as disappointing and delusive.

It is freely said of prohibition that it does not prohibit. It is observed, however, that no one says it can't. Its defenders claim, therefore, that the refusal of its opponents to let it have a trial not only commits them to confession of its possibilities but convicts them of the guilt of all the evils that it offers to remove.

It is the vogue of some to say that Christianity does not Christianize, that it does not accomplish what is claimed for it. As well reproach the sun for failing to give light and warmth to those who obstinately shun its rays. As well reproach the fountain for its failure to refresh the thirsty when they stubbornly refuse to drink thereof.

A patient may with truthfulness if not consistency declare that he receives no benefit from medicine he has not used. With equal truthfulness and with the same consistency may it be said that Christianity does not satisfy. These all are instances of values predicated upon benefits derivable as well as upon those derived.

Great as are the benefits Christianity has given, they are not to be compared with those that it is capable of giving. Its Author challenges His children to a test of its potentiality. Neglect to meet the challenge is attributable either to unbelief or to unwillingness. If men believe that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him, their refusal to seek Him is attributable solely to their unwillingness.

And why are they unwilling to obey the precepts and thereby prove His promises? It is not because of unbelief in God or His omnipotence or His beneficence. Men don't refuse Christianity because they do not want its benefits. They do want them, but they want them for themselves; they don't want other folks to have them. Silly as it is, people premeditatedly deny themselves advantages rather than let other people share them. Senseless as it is, they voluntarily submit to inconveniences in order to inflict them upon others. Every day in every way we see this statement verified.

Sanctioned the enslavement of the fathers and approves the degradation of the children. Since the morning of mankind two gigantic forces have contended for supremacy. One of them is selfishness, man's most malignant vice; the other one is charity, his most benignant virtue. One is the source of all injustice, the other is the fountainhead of equity.

Statesmen, scientists, philanthropists have taxed their intellects to find a panacea for the evils that afflict society. Ages of effort have not found the remedy that has always been at hand, and that ever was or ever will be necessary is that selfishness shall be dethroned and charity installed instead.

Then will unequal burdens cease to be imposed, then will unequal privilege cease to be usurped, then will Christianity accomplish its designs, then equal liberty shall be the heritage of all.

CATAWBA PRESBYTERIAL

The Catawba Presbyterial held its annual meeting at Johnson C. Smith University July 30th-31st. Never before has the Presbyterial met with this institution and it was indeed something new for the Presbyterial. Only through the thoughtfulness of Mesdames Davis, Shute and Russell, and the hearty cooperation of Dr. and Mrs. H. L. McCrorey were we fortunate enough to have the honor of meeting there. Mrs. McCrorey, who, it seems, never tires when she is serving others, had the chapel of old J. C. S. University beautifully arranged. Pot plants in profusion adorned the rostrum, and a large glass bowl of asturtiums were placed on the table as a center piece. This, we learned, had all been done by Mrs. McCrorey's own hands. Everything had a homelike appearance.

The opening, as heretofore, was a song and prayer service which began promptly at 10:30 o'clock. This part of the service is always our spiritual preparation and all enjoyed it.

The President, Mrs. M. G. Davis, called for the regular order of the day which was the reading of the minutes of the last meeting, which were read and received. Then new business was taken up. Mrs. Davis spoke of increasing the Ruth Carr scholarship from \$15 to \$25. Mesdames McCrorey and Prude discussed briefly the method by which it could be done. Mrs. McCrorey made a motion to the effect that we give the \$25. Mrs. Prude seconded the motion which was that \$25 should be paid instead of \$15.

Mrs. Davis spoke of the Secretary of Overseas Sewing and asked that we give Mrs. Spencer more hearty support. After hearing Mrs. Spencer's report all felt more inclined to do more. Mrs. Spencer asked that all work be in her hands by September 15.

The Presbyterial decided also as new business that \$15 or \$20 be set aside in order that our Young People's Secretary may be able to reach the local fields and organize the young people. Drs. McCrorey, West, Russell, and Foster were accorded seats as corresponding members; also Revs. Wilson, Corley, Mrs. C. J. Sloan and others. After a few statements from each we adjourned for dinner. Dr. West pronouncing the benediction.

At 2:30 P. M. "Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling" was sung and prayer was offered. Then regular business was resumed with the appointment of committees and the reports from local societies. Thirty mission societies, 2 Light Bearers, 2 Westminster Guilds, 1 Westminster Circle, and 1 Ladies Aid Society reported, making 36 in all, the largest number reporting for a number of years. These reports were discussed at length.

Brother Wm. Phifer urged the delegates to go back home and wake him that sleepeth and let all do their share.

The Synodical delegate made a very full and interesting report. Mrs. Graham was the delegate reporting. Drs. Shute and Jones, and Rev. Shirley were voted corresponding members of the Presbyterial. Dr. Jones pronounced the benediction.

At 8:30 P. M. a grand song service, led by Mrs. J. M. Prude, made the halls ring and re-echo the sound as the grand old hymns were being sung.

Dr. Shute offered a very touching prayer for the success of the meeting.

We here had greetings from Mrs. McCrorey. She spoke with ease and grace in extending to us welcome. She said it was indeed a pleasant task for her. She left no stone unturned and all felt pleasantly situated among friends and not strangers.

A quartet from the Biddleville church choir rendered a beautiful selection, "He Leadeth Me."

In giving her survey of the work, Mrs. Davis, as always, made everything very plain. She especially stressed increase in membership.

Mrs. E. B. White, our General Assembly delegate, made an interesting report and heartily thanked the Presbyterial for making it possible for her to attend, which, she stated, had always been one of the desires of her heart.

Rev. R. Z. Beatty made a brief address on "The Prepared Missionary." He emphasized the need of hearing the call of missions, seeing the need and then being prepared to meet the need.

A series of songs was sung. Mrs. Prude sweetly sang "Do Something for Somebody Every Day." "There is a Beautiful Land on High" was sung by Miss Nora McSwain with telling effect. Miss Annie Brodie captivated the audience with her clear, bird-like tones when she sang "Understood."

Collection was taken to the amount of \$3.65. The benediction was pronounced by Dr. Foster.

Saturday morning, July 31st, at 9:30 o'clock, Mrs. Phifer and Mrs. Granam, of Huntersville, conducted a short praise service. Elder Phifer closed with prayer.

The regular order of the day was called. A mission study class was conducted by Rev. H. Wilson, of Concord. "Peasant Pioneers" was the subject discussed. Rev. Wilson was well prepared to teach this subject and all felt greatly benefited to have such an able instructor.

Mrs. E. B. White, Secretary of Literature, in her report, urged that more local societies read literature pertaining to their work in order to know more about it.

A motion was made by Mrs. McCrorey that we make it a part of our work to send a representative from each local society to the School of Methods each year.

Mrs. M. J. Alexander seconded the motion, and it carried.

A very gratifying report by our Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. P. W. Russell, was given.

Mrs. Cowan being absent, there was a report on the Division of Missions for Colored People.

Mrs. S. L. Rollins always gives a detailed report of all money sent to her and that paid out. She is our treasurer.

Mrs. M. J. Phifer was elected delegate to the Synod.

Thanking Mrs. McCrorey and the Presbyterial churches of the city for entertaining us so royally and feeding us so generously.

Thus ended one of the best Presbyterial sessions in its history to meet at Balastrata church, Harrisburg, July 1927. MRS. R. Z. BEATTY, Recording Secretary. MRS. M. G. DAVIS, President.

SOUTHERN VIRGINIA WESTERN DISTRICT CONVENTION

The 33rd annual session of the Western District Sabbath School Convention of Southern Virginia Presbytery was held at Mt. Lebanon Presbyterian church, Spencer, Va., August 6-8, 1926.

Friday Morning, August 6th. The Convention opened at 10 o'clock with devotional services conducted by Rev. G. B. Carter. After the enrollment of delegates the minutes of the last meeting were read.

The President, Rev. C. M. Dusenbury, of Stuart, Va., then gave a most inspiring address. After the assignment of delegates to their several homes music was rendered by the Convention. Dismissal was made by Rev. G. B. Carter.

Friday Afternoon. The meeting opened again at 2:30 o'clock with devotions and Bible study led by Rev. Wm. Fowlkes of Leaksville, N. C. Rev. Fowlkes spoke very fluently from II Peter 1:10. The Convention was stirred by the impressive remarks of Rev. Fowlkes.

Then came the election of officers which was as follows: Rev. C. M. Dusenbury, President; Miss Ophelia V. Beeson, Vice-President; Mrs. B. M. Hereford, Secretary; Mrs. J. S. Mayer, Treasurer; Jessie A. Fowlkes, Corresponding Secy. Next in order was a paper, "The Need and Value of Trained Lay Workers," by Mrs. G. R. Carter. Owing to the absence of Mrs. Carter there was a general discussion of the subject.

Music was rendered by the Convention followed by another interesting discussion, "The Ten Points Standard for Town and Country Sunday School," led by Prof. S. L. Young, which was very interesting and inspiring.

After music and the offering the benediction was pronounced by Rev. Fowlkes.

Friday Night. At 8 o'clock song service was led by Prof. S. L. Young. The welcome address was given by Mr. W. M. Lampkins, Superintendent of Mt. Lebanon Sunday school. Miss A. B. Loggins being absent, response was made by Rev. C. M. Dusenbury. These addresses were enjoyed by all.

After music by the Convention the opening sermon was preached by Rev. C. M. Dusenbury, owing to the absence of Rev. G. P. Watkins. Rev. Dusenbury took as his text Dan. 1:8. The text was very ably discussed by Rev. Dusenbury and all were benefited by the sermon.

Saturday Morning. The meeting opened at 9:00 o'clock with Bible study and devotions, led by Mr. S. D. Mitchell.

Then came the reports of the various Sunday schools; after which the Synodical delegate was elected. Miss Helen T. Spencer was chosen as delegate to the School of Methods at Charlotte, N. C. Rev. C. M. Dusenbury was chosen as alternate.

A round table discussion, led by Mr. S. D. Mitchell, then followed. After music by the Convention, the offering was taken and the Convention adjourned to meet again at 2:30.

Saturday Afternoon. After the song service the

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