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

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THE PREACHER AND THE WORLD OF POLITICS

(An address delivered before the faculty and students of McCormick Seminary, Chicago.)

By Rev. A. H. Prince

This subject suggests that we have two opposing fields of interest with which to deal: on the one hand, the world of politics, concerned mainly with such things as parties, elections, government and administration; and on the other, the world of religion, having to do mostly with interpretation and application of religious truth.

But our subject suggests also that there may be a relation between these two through the medium of the preacher, who is the spokesman for the world of religion. Now some will deny that there is or can be anything in common with politics and religion. They feel that between them there must ever be a deep gulf fixed. They maintain that our whole system of government is founded on the proposition of complete separation of Church and state.

But there are others who, while they recognize that in theory and actual administration politics and religion are separate and should so remain, still in practical everyday life no hard and fast line of distinction can be drawn between the two. We live in a day when the Gospel is receiving a tremendous social emphasis. Many have come to believe that its message is vitally concerned with all the activities of men, and that its aim is to remake this world as well as to prepare for the next. Hence they feel that anything which has to do with the life of the people is the concern of religion. From this point of view the preacher, as representative of the world of religion, cannot help but be interested in politics. Does politics have to do with the external welfare of man? Very well; so does the preacher. Is politics interested in better civic and social conditions? So is the preacher. Then religion and politics meet on this common ground; both at their best are concerned with the welfare of the people.

Now this world of politics with which the preacher has to deal is not all that it might be. As a matter of fact politics has acquired in the opinion of many, an unsavory reputation. Whether this is deserved or undeserved we shall not here discuss. But government has become so complex, and politics so intricate that the ordinary citizen, engrossed mainly in the affairs of his own business, has almost lost intelligent connection with either. What he does not understand he does not trust. This attitude of mind is reflected in a little story which came my way:

"Johnnie, is the world round?" inquired a school ma'am of a little boy in geography class.

"Nom, 'taint round," replied Johnnie.

"Well, is it flat?"

"Nope, 'taint flat neither."

"Why, child, if the world isn't round and it isn't flat, what is it?"

"Pop says its crooked."

And "Pop" in this case, I am inclined to believe, expresses a widespread opinion in regard to the world of politics.

In the Book of Ecclesiastes the Preacher of old says that "the crooked cannot be made straight." And some modern preachers share this view with him, especially in regard to politics. They concern themselves very little with the affairs of politics and do not take the trouble to be at least moderately informed. They wash their hands of the whole business and resign everything political into the hands of the devil.

But most of us would rather take for our motto, I believe, the more hopeful words of Isaiah when he says, "The crooked shall be made straight." With this as the basis for our treatment of the subject, how can we ministers help to make the crooked straight? Not that politics is wholly crooked nor that it is the only line of endeavor in need of straightening. But giving due regard for all the goodness it may possess, how can we preachers help to make politics better?

In discussing such a wide field in such a short space of time I shall not attempt to deal with particular conditions, such as are in great cities where abnormal conditions may call for extreme measures, or with exceptional men who can do successfully what most of us cannot. But I shall content myself with a few general observations and point out what seems to me to be some of the prime factors underlying the whole situation.

In the first place, you have noticed, no doubt, in your study of history that we mortals are always in danger of running to extremes. History records one series of pendulum swings from this side to that. The Church has not escaped this tendency. At one time we find her fanatically ascetic; at another tragically worldly. At one period she is extremely individualistic; at another so engrossed in social affairs as to forget her other functions.

With this in mind the wise preacher may well be slow in taking a stand on public affairs, and cautious in his statements concerning politics, striving always to get at the heart and core of matters in question. For the preacher ought above all men to be fair and reasonable in his judgments. But his sources of information are, as a rule, no better than those of the layman. And often the best information he can get is grossly misleading and unreliable. So the preacher needs to be careful lest his statements, instead of being carefully thought out opinions, based on accurate information, become just "echoes" of what another has said, and perhaps, mistakenly. He ought to remember, too, that there are many movements and interests eager to secure the minister as a mouthpiece. Let the preacher not be swept off his feet by these "issues," "movements," "campaigns," "problems," and "dangers" which we have bombarded at us from every side. These we have with us always. And dealt with they must be, but in the light of calm reflection, commonsense, justice, and love. We can never forget the sad spectacle of the Church emerging from the war days when it became apparent that all too many preachers had become the tools of a hateful propaganda. To turn back to the journals of these sad days and read the public statements made by clergymen, some of them prominent and influential, and yet in their attitudes so manifestly unfair, unjust, misinformed, prejudiced, and even unchristian, is enough to make any preacher think twice before opening his mouth on matters of public import.

Another danger to which we preachers are peculiarly susceptible is that we fail to distinguish between local and temporary issues and matters of far-reaching consequence. A mountain may appear to occupy the whole horizon when one is close to it. But that does not make of it a continent. Just so a real-

ly trivial affair may assume large proportions to those who see it only at close range. But that does not warrant giving it undue prominence. And usually the preacher belittles himself by taking an active and conspicuous part in the petty bickerings and rabid accusations of local politics. These matters usually settle themselves in the course of time, and for the preacher to take a conspicuous part seldom brings to them a conclusion any sooner, sometimes prolongs them and ultimately brings down ridicule and ruin upon the head of the minister, besides causing factions in the church. Let the preacher lift the thought of his people and widen their horizon so that they may see these local issues in their proper perspective. If he can do this the people will settle these local affairs in a more permanent and lasting fashion.

Another matter which I bring to your attention is this: The preacher is one who occupies two offices. He is at once a private citizen, and at the same time a "preacher" with all that the word implies. As a private citizen he is expected to perform his duties of citizenship, and has a right to declare himself on matters of public policy, and align himself with parties or factions as he may see fit. But as a preacher he occupies a peculiar and lofty position. Whether he so wills it or not in the eyes of the mass of people he is looked upon as the interpreter of the mind of God, a priest of religion, set aside to perform a special function. When he speaks from the pulpit he speaks with authority; and whether he wills or no something of that ecclesiastical authority clings to him whatever he does or says. In the eyes of the world he is always a priest. As a citizen he may wish to belong to certain organizations or espouse certain issues. Clearly this is his right. But can he always keep this distinction clear—that he is acting as a private individual and not as one who speaks for the Church? Failure to do this has caused no end of trouble. No one can lay down the law on these matters and each must do as he sees fit, but as for myself I believe in general that it is better for the preacher to subordinate his rights as a citizen to his office as a priest. He will have plenty of opportunity to air his political views and exert such influence as he may wish in the personal contact he has with his people when he can speak in a frank heart-to-heart way. And the chances are they will respect his opinion more if they know that he is not tied up with any special interests.

Now as to the pulpit. Why not preach politics from the pulpit, you say? Surely there are great issues that ought to be dealt with by the minister. He ought to lift a stern voice against wrong and give his aid to the forces of right. All this sounds very grand and heroic but let us look at it in the light of a few facts.

In the first place, people do not come to church in order to hear politics. Newspapers are crammed with it. Any layman may have all the information he wants without coming to church for it. And besides he is usually glad to go somewhere where he doesn't hear politics for a while. For he almost has politics rammed down his throat every other day of the week. A thousand voices clamor to be heard. They bark at him to do this or to do that. What a relief it must be to come into the quiet atmosphere of the church and have his thoughts lifted above the world for a time. And what a disappointment to have the same old round of the week rehearsed from the pulpit. As one layman writes in a current journal, "When we go to church on Sundays, most of us deep-

ly down in our souls are unspeakably lonely for God. The toil and the worry and heartache and losses of the past week oftentimes make us feel that the immortal hope burns low in our hearts. We feel little mental receptivity for elaborate sermons on some phase of passing events. We already know, alas, too much of the shallow, ephemeral worthlessness of much of the current bluster and bluff and brag with which we have to deal during the week. Therefore it is far more satisfactory when our spiritual leaders take up with us on Sundays those themes which we feel in our hearts to be the only really permanent ones." The layman does not go to church to hear a lecture devoted to the current topics in the same careworn world from which he comes.

Another reason for not preaching politics is this: the preacher does not wield his greatest influence by so doing. The church ought to be a place where the minister can gather all opposing factions and clashing interests and say to them, "This is the house of peace. Come, lay aside your differences and join in the worship of God." He need not mention parties or issues or platforms, but he can so preach the Word as to shame them for their petty bickerings, rebuke them for their selfish, narrow-minded attitudes, inspire them by the life and example of their Master, and present the All-Loving One in such a light as to make them want to go out and remake the world after His will.

And after all is said and done, this is the supreme function of the preacher—to plant and propagate the spirit of God in the life of men. Not in fiery denunciation, or zealous reform does the preacher exert his greatest influence, but in the quiet, steady, persuasive, powerful contact of personality upon personality. As the life of God in man grows and enlarges it calls for better government, cleaner and more wholesome political conditions, higher moral welfare, more just and equitable industrial conditions; in short, it transforms and remakes the whole social structure. So comes the kingdom like the growth of a tree; like yeast permeating the whole, slowly yet surely. But if the minister feels he must preach politics from the pulpit let him expect to be misunderstood and maligned as other men are. Let him be as quick to retract false statements as he is to declare himself. But when the minister preaches politics from the pulpit with the air of "The prophet has spoken. Thus saith the Lord. The last word hath been said; let no other dog bark," he at once opens the pulpit to the caustic criticism of being a "coward's castle" and a refuge for the weak.

Let us see this principle at work in some of the major problems of the day. I suppose there is no question so widely discussed and so prominent in politics as the question of prohibition. Another most important question is that of international peace. What is the relation of the preacher toward these?

Well, the Church has uniformly taught temperance and condemned intemperance. And not only intemperance in drinking, but in eating, and in pleasures, and clothing, have been condemned by the ministry. And under the influence of Christianity a steady advance in temperance has been made. The ministry could teach prohibition but could not bring it about. And now that the prohibition law has been written upon our statute books is the work of the preacher done? By no means. He has yet to proclaim self-control, and observance of the law as he did in the past. And he does not

DEATH OF MRS. PLUTINA WALKER GALLOWAY.

By Mrs. J. H. Clement

A mourning church and a vacant seat tell us that one we loved to meet will join our happy throng no more fill all these changing scenes are o'er.

Mrs. Plutina Walker Galloway of Mt. Airy, N. C., wife of Elder Andrew Galloway, and mother of Rev. H. O. Walker, pastor of Edward Presbyterian Church, was claimed by death, Wednesday night, about 12 o'clock, July 11th. She had been ill for some time. She was so patient and it seemed that nothing went wrong with her. God in His all-wise power, saw fit to relieve her from pain and sent the death angel to relieve her.

Sister Galloway was a consistent Christian, a good church worker, a woman that carried a smile for every one, and a kind word for the low-spirited. She was always ready to cheer you when you were downhearted.

The funeral services were held at the M. E. church. Rev. J. H. Clement, the former pastor of Edward Webb church, officiated, assisted by Rev. S. L. Young and Rev. T. B. Hargrave, pastor of Hollbrook Presbyterian church, of Danville, Va. Rev. Clement chose his text from II Timothy 4:6, "I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith." He pictured the life of Mrs. Galloway very beautifully. He spoke of how she had left living examples of her life to go by. She had reared a Christian minister and had the pleasure of looking upon him as her pastor. We feel that she lived a bright life in her home. The speaker said in his discourse that through the Rev. H. O. Walker and Dr. W. A. Walker, her most noble sons, she was living right on.

Quite a host of friends from all parts of North Carolina and some from Virginia were present to pay the last tribute of respect to our dear sister. We shall miss Sister Galloway. Her seat in Edward Webb cannot be filled. The eulogy of the Woman's Missionary Society was read by the writer.

Mesdames Mary A. Gordon, Margaret Kegler, Alice Crawford, Sarah Palmer and Gertrude Reynolds were flower bearers.

At the close of the sermon Mrs. J. H. Clement rendered a solo which was very fitting for the occasion. The interment was in the Shady Level Cemetery.

Mrs. Galloway is survived by a husband, Mr. Andrew Galloway, an elder of Edward Webb Presbyterian church; two sons, Dr. W. A. Walker, of Anniston, Ala.; and Rev. H. O. Walker, of Mt. Airy; a daughter, Mrs. Nannie Belle Robinson, of New York City; five sisters and one brother, namely, Mrs. Pauline Bowman, of Mt. Airy; Mrs. Belle Coble and Mrs. Ida Reid, of Wilkesboro; Mesdames Regina Davis of this city, and Blanche Matthews, of Winston-Salem; and Mr. John Greenwood of West Va.

Eulogy of the Woman's Missionary Society.

By Mrs. J. H. Clement

Death has been here and borne away

A dear one from our side; Just in the morning of her day, As young as we she died.

We, the members of the Woman's Missionary Society of Edward Webb Presbyterian church, deeply deplore the death of our Sister, Plutina Walker Galloway, who passed from earth to glory Wednesday night, July 11th, 1928.

She was a consistent Christian and an ideal church worker. She loved her church and was

always found at her post of duty when she was able.

She was once President of the Missionary Society for two years, and there was never a sweeter or better woman to work with than she. When she did not understand the work she was always willing to take advice from others that knew more about it than she did.

She was patient during her illness. No matter how severe her pains she endured all things. She would always greet you with a smile.

Her bright Christian life gave to the world a Dr. Walker, and a Christian minister, Rev. H. O. Walker, and a devoted daughter, Mrs. N. B. Robinson, to care for her during her illness, together with a tireless husband, Mr. Andrew Galloway, who did every thing he could for her comfort. We shall miss her in our Missionary Circle—her songs, her prayers and advice.

Oh tell us not that she is dead; She hovers as a cloud above us; Is she dead that yet speaketh louder than we can speak; and in a more universal language? Is she dead that yet moves upon society and inspires the people with noble motives, and more Christian patriotism?

In her death we, the members of the Woman's Missionary Society of Edward Webb church, do humbly bow to the will of God who does all things well. We realize our loss is heaven's gain.

Dearest sister, thou hast left us here, Thy loss we deeply feel; But 'tis God that hath bereft us; He can all our sorrows heal. "Peaceful be thy silent slumber, Peaceful in the grave so low; Thou no more shall join our number, Thou no more our songs shall know."

CEDAR GROVE CHURCH NOTES.

By Miss Olelia Russell

On Sunday, July 8th, our pastor, Dr. L. J. Melton, came to us with a powerful sermon from Matthew 17: 2, 3, on "The Transfiguration of Christ with the Witnesses from Heaven." The sermon was enjoyed by all.

Sunday night a large audience was present to witness a program rendered by the men of the church. The Junior choir of Columbus chapel A. M. E. Zion church rendered excellent music.

We are glad to say that our Christian Endeavor Society is progressing nicely under the leadership of Miss Rosella Forney. A special program will be given by the society on Sunday night, July 29th.

We regret very much to lose one of our Christian Endeavor workers, Mr. Thomas Caldwell, who is spending the summer with his brother, Mr. J. F. Caldwell, of Landis.

Mr. J. H. Russell, who has been confined to his home for the past two weeks or more, is now able to be out, to the delight of his many friends.

On Sunday, July 22nd, our pastor came to us again with an inspiring sermon. At the opening of the service Mrs. M. J. and Mrs. Katie Alexander gave a very interesting report of the work done during their week's study in conference at Greensboro a few weeks ago.

Mrs. Maggie Lytle Russell, Mrs. Naomi Lytle and Mrs. Eliza Russell have just completed a summer school course at Johnson C. Smith University and were very successful.

The annual Masonic picnic will be pulled off at Landis, Saturday, July 28th, at which the Cedar Grove Lodge will take a part.

Delegates to the Sabbath School and Christian Endeavor

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