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

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## A UNITED NEGRO CHURCH

By Dr. Carter G. Woodson

In 1932 the Quadrennial Conferences of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church will consider a proposal to unite as one Church. Why not do the much needed thing of broadening this proposal so as to bring together all Negro religious bodies as the United Negro Church? The merger of merely these two bodies, it will be said, can be effected much more easily than that of a larger number because they agree in doctrine and their uniting will be merely a matter of administration.

As a matter of fact, however, practically all Negroes agree on Church doctrine except where they have taken up the religious disputes of the whites, which have worked havoc with the program of unifying the thought and action of the Negro. The whites, however, are forgetting their religious differences, especially since they have begun to repudiate the principles taught by Jesus. The whites are rapidly breaking down denominational lines to acquire by such union greater power which they often use against the Negro to make his condition more intolerable; and if the Negroes of this country do not meet this effort with the same sort of united action the race will not be able to take care of itself in the struggle of tomorrow.

Practically all Negroes are Protestants, and the large majority of them are Baptists and Methodists. These two Negro groups never pay much attention to doctrine except that one emphasizes immersion and close communion and the other sprinkling and open communion. With the exception of these points there are very few Negroes untrained in theology who can distinguish between a Methodist and a Baptist. These two large groups of Negro Christians are very much alike, and they should forget the mischievous doctrinal differences taught them by ignorant white men and come together with one Lord, one faith, and say nothing at all about the baptism.

Now many a Negro preacher on reading this will frown and snort like a horse. He will think of what he read in some white man's book or what he heard some white man say; and then his mind will run back to the doctrinal sermons which he has heard or delivered himself; but if he will just think a minute he will have to conclude that all such disputes are nonsense in that they are merely intended to force upon someone else another's personal opinions. No two persons are alike, and no two persons can have the same ideas about God and man's relation to Him; and if you carry such a foolhardy effort to its logical conclusion working out a faith to suit everybody the world would have as many religions as there are men.

Negroes must learn to respect the religious beliefs of those who do not agree exactly with them, for the main thing is not what you believe but what you do to help your fellowman. This is the only principle of religion which Jesus of Nazareth emphasized. The quarrels about doctrine, the conflict about faiths, and wars to uproot one religion and establish another are all the work of the Devil. The principles of righteousness have never been advanced hereby. These movements have merely rounded to the benefit of the princes and lords who have embraced and established religion as a means to end. In fact, the most religious people of America are the most enemies of righteousness

and truth. That the Negroes have followed them so long in assisting in carrying out their thoroughly worked-out plans for racial extermination is eloquent evidence that Negroes do not think.

It is really shameful to reflect how the Negro in chameleon-like fashion has taken up everything which has come along instead of carving out his own future. The English split off from the Catholics because Henry VIII had difficulty in getting sanction from the Church to satisfy his lust for ambrosious women, and Negroes went with this ilk, singing, "God Save the King." The white man said the thing necessary is baptism by immersion and the Negroes joined them as Baptists. The white man said again we must have a new method of doing things and we shall call ourselves Methodists; and the Negroes, then, became Methodists. The white Methodists and Baptists split up further on account of the right to hold slaves; and the Negroes arrayed themselves on the respective sides. The whites divided still more on questions beyond human power to understand; and the Negroes started out in similar fashion to imitate them. And thus it goes with the Negro Church, for it has not yet given the world a new idea.

The recent split of the Negro Baptists into the Boyd and Morris factions is peculiarly Negro, but it is a disgrace to the denomination that a large body of persons calling themselves Christians should thus divide because of a dispute about property. It seems now, too, that this mania for dividing an already weak people is soon to result in the split of the Morris Baptists into Williams and Austin Baptists. The Boyd Baptists are also fighting among themselves, but their line of cleavage is not yet so distinctly marked out as in the case of the other body. For the time and energy lost in this unprofitable labor, and the expense involved in maintaining so many camps of ambitious misleaders of the race the masses of the Negroes must pay. The hand is writing on the wall, however, and the combatants had better soon learn that the people some day may begin to think, and they are not going to pay the cost of duplication in their religious administration. They are not going to support two or three different bishops and two or three different schools in the same town merely because some one obtained from a book written by a misguided person centuries ago certain thoughts which he believed set up an ideal. This age is going to set up its own ideals in the light of world progress. It has really outgrown sectarian bias, and the sooner the Negro learns this the better prepared he will be to keep up with the procession. There is no reason why any intelligent man who is trying to imitate Christ can not closely co-operate in an organized body with any other person thus disposed. The United Negro Church, therefore, is inevitable.

I object to the further division of the Negro Church because it is the only institution the Negroes control. Everything else in America and Europe is controlled by the trauducers of the Negro race. If the Negroes permit their church to be further weakened by strife, they will make a fatal mistake. If they can muster enough wisdom to unite these factions they will have for lifting them in their struggle upward the greatest leverage

which has figured in the elevation of the race. Without doubt the Negroes could then go forth to conquer their enemies and remove the obstacles from their path. They would then have something behind them as the Catholics in this country have. Hospitals would be erected to take care of the health of the Negroes. Industries could be established and supported by a united people. The education of the Negro from within could be effected to give the race a chance to contribute to culture. The impetus from this would make the Negro a constituent part of the body politic instead of a political pawn for about a half dozen Negro politicians.

I am interested in the Negro church because I believe in it. I am a member of a church and usually I attend every Sunday. I go to church not because I believe that I have more religion than many others who do not, but because I find there better people than I do on the outside fighting the institution; and because if I attend church I am a much better man than I would be if I did not. I attend church, too, because I find my people there, and I cannot help them unless I remain among them. Wherever they go I want to go, and when they suffer and die let me share my part of the burden and go down to the end with them.

I realize that the Negro Church is corrupt, but it is not beyond the point of redemption. Most of the corruption, moreover, has developed from the unusual opportunity which the institution offers for doing great things; and too many politicians are going into the church to use this opportunity for self-aggrandizement. They promote the division of the people into factions to make it easier to exploit them. This is the reason for trying to crush the church. It is rather a reason for going into it to reform it and to use it for the good of the people. We should not be so foolish as to burn down the barn to get the rats which are destroying some of the grain.

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEAGUE MEETING

The third quarterly meeting of the Young People's League of Catawba Presbytery was held on Saturday, August 1, with Matthews chapel church. The enrollment of delegates was the first thing in order. This was followed by the business of the day.

Our President, Mr. W. S. Brinkley, in the opening remarks of the day, spoke of the League's delight in meeting with Matthews chapel and of the prosperous condition of the church.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved. This was followed by the appointing of a committee by the President to draw up resolutions for the League. Those who served on this committee were Misses Idell Rhyne, L. Jenkins and Mr. R. P. Wyche, Jr.

On the account of the absence of Mr. Emory Rann a report from the Treasurer was not given.

The statistical committee, of which Mr. A. T. James is chairman, gave its report at this time. From this report one could readily see the standing of each young people's organization. This report further showed that in various churches of Catawba Presbytery a larger per cent of girls attended the meetings of the young people of their churches than did boys. Copies of this report were given to representatives of each organization present. The statistical committee is to make a deeper study along

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## SABBATH SCHOOL CONVENTION OF CATAWBA PRESBYTERY

By Mrs. Hallie Q. Mayberry

The 39th annual session of the Sabbath School Convention of Catawba Presbytery met in the Bellefonte Presbyterian church, near Harrisburg, N. C., on August 6th, and continued through August 7th.

Mr. J. V. Spears, the Supt., and the other members and friends of the church were unstinted in their efforts to make our entertainment all that heart could wish. This section of the country is beautiful, the people are of very industrious habits, and the splendid atmosphere conducive to happiness and enjoyment, furnished by these good people to this gathering of Christian workers will long be remembered.

One hundred nine (109) superintendents, ministers and delegates were registered and received the convention's badges, the personnel composed of the best and most intelligent workers from the local churches in our Presbytery.

### Worship and Song Service

Each session began with a lively and inspiring song service, conducted by Mr. T. J. Vanlandingham, musical director of the convention, and the convention choir. The music rendered is always one of the outstanding attractions of the convention. The following named persons served as organists during the session: Mrs. O. Sanders, Miss Helen Wilson and Mr. J. T. Young.

The opening worship service was conducted by Rev. F. M. Beaver. The study Thursday morning was taken from Matt. 14:44-50. His subject was: "The Kingdom of God." On Friday morning Rev. Beaver spoke from the subject, "Are We Denying the Kingdom of God?" These services were indeed uplifting and every one was impressed with the beauty and deep religious feeling of the worship service.

### Welcome Address

Mr. S. L. Harrison extended us a very cordial welcome on behalf of the Sunday school, and Miss Catheline Spears, in a very delightful manner, welcomed us on behalf of the Young People's Society.

After listening to these inspiring addresses and seeing the loving, generous and hospitable spirit existing, we felt at home, for every one seemed to have our interest at heart.

Rev. E. E. Gregg, in a very pleasing manner, expressed the convention's appreciation and gratitude for the beautiful words of welcome.

### Conference

A Superintendents' Conference was conducted by Rev. F. C. Shirley, Director of Young People's Work of Catawba Synod. This was a very interesting and instructive discussion and each superintendent, officer, minister and delegate present should have gotten a broader view of the tasks and the responsibilities of the superintendents to their Sunday schools. Rev. Shirley and the superintendents discussed the three-fold task of the superintendent as an organizer, an administrator and as a supervisor.

Rev. Shirley recommended that each superintendent subscribe for the Westminster Leader, a Sunday school magazine; that the superintendents go on record this year in the matter of submitting a quarterly and yearly report to the sessions of their churches; that they submit a plan for the year's work before the session of the church for approval. The subject created so much

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interest that the superintendents present pledged themselves by vote to accept these recommendations and put this information in practice upon their various fields.

### Reports of Local Sunday Schools

Out of forty-eight churches enrolled, forty made reports. They were encouraging and showed progress financially and spiritually but a falling off of members. Many of the schools are trying to perfect the standard of Educational Efficiency. The President complimented the delegates upon the splendid and distinct manner in which the reports were read.

Dr. J. D. Martin, of Chester, S. C., and Rev. M. A. Sanders, of James Island, S. C., were introduced and accorded seats as corresponding members of the convention.

### Inspirational Addresses

The President's annual address was a gem. It is always inspiring to listen to the message he brings to us. It makes us feel that as a convention we should be more loyal to the command of Christ, that we should catch a new vision of the increasing opportunities for service and grow in power to do. In his interesting and thoughtful address he made mention of the progress the convention has made during the past 13 years, which is so necessary for the intellectual and spiritual growth of the Sunday schools in its bounds. He made special mention of the steps taken last year by the convention in awarding a scholarship in Barber-Scotia College to some young woman in the bounds of this Presbytery. He also expressed the desire of seeing the convention take upon itself the responsibility of a Junior School of Methods. He closed by urging the young people to be active in their Sabbath schools, "for the strength," said he, "is in the hands of the young people."

An address, "Does Youth Understand the Church?" was very ably and forcibly delivered by Dr. F. J. Anderson. Dr. Anderson answered the question in the negative. The church's program is one of worship, instruction, service and recreation. It is adapted to the interest and needs and characteristics of the young people. "The youth are living in a new world; they meet new religious, social and industrial problems," said Dr. Anderson. The two essentials in the program of the young people are interest and organization and this must be brought about through adult leadership.

Dr. J. D. Martin, President of Brainerd Institute, Chester, S. C., delivered an excellent address from the subject, "Manufactured Gods—the Remedy, the Cure." Every one present enjoyed this address. He also spoke of the work at Brainerd Institute that he is engaged in.

### Election of Officers

The following named persons were elected to serve as officers of the convention for the year 1931-1932:

President, Prof. W. H. Stinson.

1st Vice-President, Rev. J. H. Gamble

2nd Vice-President, Prof. E. A. Chisholm.

Secretary, Dr. L. J. Melton, (Permanent.)

Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Hallie Q. Mayberry.

Treasurer, Dr. Geo. S. Leeper.

The officers were installed by Rev. A. P. Corley.

Mrs. Hallie Q. Mayberry and Mr. Edward Brown were elected delegates to the School of Methods at Albion Academy, Franklinton, N. C. Miss Janie Mae Robinson and Georgia Kiser were elected alternates.

Dulatown, N. C., was decided upon as the next place of meeting.

The resolutions of thanks were read by Miss Thelma Drye.

The minutes of the convention were read by Mrs. Hallie Q. Mayberry and approved by the convention.

After singing "God Be With You Till We Meet Again," we closed with the benediction by Dr. F. J. Anderson.

Thus came to a close a convention which it is hardly possible that any delegate could ever forget.

## NEW YORK IS BIGGEST NEGRO CITY; CHICAGO SECOND, PHILADELPHIA THIRD

Washington, July—(By The Associated Negro Press.) More Negroes live in New York City than in any other city in the world, according to figures released by the United States Census Bureau Tuesday. These figures show that the Negro population of New York in April, 1930, was 327,706, an increase of 114.9 per cent over the 1920 population of 152,467.

The statement also shows that wife hunters should find New York's colored quarter a happy ground for operations, there being 170,738 females to 156,968 males. There are 230,069 Negroes in New York City 21 years of age and over. The Negro population which in 1920 constituted only 2.7 per cent of the population is now 4.7 per cent.

Interesting comparisons may be made between the Negro population of a number of other important cities. The Negro population of New York is greater than the total population of any one of the following cities: Birmingham, Ala., Atlanta, Ga., Richmond, Va., Louisville, Ky., or any city in the South except New Orleans; than that of Toledo, Ohio; Columbus, Ohio; Omaha, Nebraska, or any cities in the west except Los Angeles and San Francisco.

There are also more Negroes in the New York community than there are people of all races and colors in either the State of Delaware or Wyoming; Negro New York lacks only 30,000 of the population of the State of Vermont.

With the New York population known, it can be shown that there are five cities in the North with a combined Negro population of more than a million. These cities are: New York, 327,000; Chicago, 234,000; Philadelphia, 219,000; Detroit, 120,000; and St. Louis, 93,000. These figures are of April, 1930. They would be much larger now.

Excluding Los Angeles, for which the figures are not yet available, the American cities with the largest Negro populations are: New York, 327,000; Chicago, 234,000; Philadelphia, 219,000; Baltimore, 142,000; New Orleans, 129,000; Washington, 127,000; Detroit, 120,000; Birmingham, 100,000; Memphis, 96,000; St. Louis, 93,000; Atlanta, 90,000; Cleveland, 71,000; Pittsburgh, 54,000; and Richmond, 52,000.

New York's huge colored population is divided between the five boroughs which make up that city as follows: Manhattan, 224,670; Brooklyn, 63,921; Queens, 18,609; Bronx, 12,930; and Richmond, 2,576.

This vast number of Negroes, representing the highest achievement of Negroes in brains and culture in the United States, does not, however, own and operate a single bank, insurance company, or even a shoe store. For its economic existence, it depends almost entirely upon the other races living in the city. Throughout

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