

African-American Presbyterian

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

VOL. LIX.

CHARLOTTE, N. C., THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 1938.

NO. 22.

THE RETIRING MODERATOR'S SERMON

Philadelphia, May 26.—The following will give some idea of the sermon of the retiring Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, the Rev. Dr. William Hiram Foulkes of Newark, New Jersey, delivered in Convention Hall, Philadelphia, beginning at 10:50 o'clock this morning. The sermon was preached at the opening of the annual General Assembly of the Church. Dr. Foulkes' subject was "I Will Build My Church," based on the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 16:18.

"I will build my Church." During the one hundred and fifty years of our General Assembly life, this is the first time that these familiar words have been made a Moderatorial text. It surely has not been because, at any time, they would have seemed inappropriate. In their historic setting, following as they do Peter's memorable confession, they aptly summarize the unchanging faith of the Christian centuries. While, therefore, these simple but significant words of the Master Builder are used for the first time today upon such an occasion, their spirit and their implications have been in constant evidence through the years, now lengthening into centuries.

On May 21, 1789, Dr. John Witherspoon, of honored name and of lasting fame, who had been selected to act as presiding officer until the election of a Moderator of the first General Assembly, which met in Philadelphia, chose for the text of his sermon the same text he had used in taking the presidency of Princeton in 1768, the words of the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, in the seventh verse of the third chapter: "So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." Upon the occasion of the Centennial Assembly, on May 19, 1888, the retiring Moderator, Dr. Joseph T. Smith, used the same text. In the midst of the inspiring array of Scripture passages that have been chosen for occasions similar to this one, despite their great variety, one finds the same recurring undertone of allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The figure of a building is, of course, not the only New Testament picture of the Church. That of a vine with its many branches, which man may plant and man may water but for which God only giveth the increase, is also in striking evidence in both the gospel record and that of the epistles. So also may be found the presentation of the Church as the body of Christ, and that beautiful symbol of the Church as his bride. At the conclusion of the Scripture portion, from which our text is drawn, we come face to face with the stirring, militant picture of the Church, against which "the gates of hell" shall not prevail.

In the midst of all of the rich resource of Holy Writ at our reverent disposal is there, however, a more vital, challenging and inspiring message of truth from the word of the living God, than that of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, spoken first at Caesarea Philippi to a little band of believing disciples, and echoing its vibrant, authoritative way down the centuries?

"I will build my Church!" he said and he still says. To those with whom he shared his dreams of a coming Kingdom, a fatherly reign of righteousness, good will and peace and, as he named it, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, it was as though he had spoken, in answer to an unuttered question of their minds and hearts, "Master, how do you propose to make these dreams come true?" a simple and sublime word of assurance: "I will build my Church, and through that Church the Kingdom of Heaven shall come on earth." If the

words of Christ spoken to his first disciples were fitting for that significant day, are they less relevant for our times? Is there any message of mingled assurance and challenge more needed today and more fittingly to be found than in the words of the divine Master Builder, "I will build my Church!"

For over nineteen hundred years he has been building his Church. In every age and in every land, he has been gathering the rough stones out of the quarry of our humanity, hewing them into the shape of his holy purpose, cementing them by his own precious blood, polishing them by his providence, and building them into that vast edifice which overtowers all the generations and reaches into the heavenlies. Let us not forget, fathers and brethren, that we are not the living stones which he is using. The Church is not a human institution—a lodge or a club. It is not something that men have gotten up, but a holy thing that has been let down from the sky. While in some of its aspects it is being made visible before the eyes, it is essentially a spiritual edifice, erected out of the redeemed lives of men and women. It is, indeed, earth-born but it is heaven-begotten. Its head is far above all principalities and powers. Wordly wisdom never would have dreamed it. Earthly skill never could have devised it. It is a structure that has foundations "whose builder and maker is God."

In the face of all that is so tragic in the history of the visible Church, its heresies and schisms, its pride and arrogance, its unchristianity of mind and heart and life, let us remember that through all the centuries the Master has had to build his Church out of the raw material at his disposal, out of plain and fallible men and women, out of confessors who turn deniers and betrayers, out of disciples who follow afar off. Yet he is always building his Church. In the midst of the wreckage of human wisdom and might, and into the face of crafty and sinister foes—parading Caesars who proclaim their totalitarianism of dominion and power—the Crucified and Risen Christ flings his one and only resource. "I will build my Church!" In toil and in tears, in weakness and in want, in mortal men and women, in days of doubt and darkness, across the centuries, into the eternities, his Church is being built.

Let us look at the Master craftsmanship today, as we survey the century and a half during which, we humbly believe, he has been building us as a historic communion into his Holy Catholic Church. While no one of us would be arrogant enough to assert that ours is the only Church, we are warranted in believing that his hand has been upon us, as a people, during all of these one hundred and fifty years. In 1788 the Synods of New York and Philadelphia, in drawing up the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, which in 1789 became the General Assembly, set forth a remarkable series of preliminary principles which for insight into truth, aptness of form, and catholicity of spirit have yet to be surpassed. These seven preliminary principles, with their preamble and conclusion, have an amazing and enduring applicability. In particular, they have a remarkable relevancy to the contemporary scene. While it would be presumptuous to claim that our historic Church has a monopoly upon divine wisdom or human devotion, we may properly say of the Church that has been built this last century and a half under the aegis of these principles, in the words of sacred Writ, "Wisdom hath builded her house. She hath hewn out her seven pillars."

Who of us is wise or good enough, fathers and brethren, to discern the way we should take as we go forward over the untried paths of the future? What does that future hold in store for Protestantism and for us of the Presbyterian household of faith? According to Dr. Adolph Keller of Geneva, the Church of Christ on the continent of Europe is suffering dissolution. A new Church, he believes, is arising, with four striking characteristics—faith, poverty, persecution and meekness. If his diagnosis of the European situation be accurate, what about the American Church? May your retiring Moderator humbly offer a fourfold suggestion for our beloved Church as it enters upon the last half of its second century—the notes of faith, fellowship, passion and martyrdom?

First, Faith—not a faith, but the Faith, the faith once delivered to the saints, with its historic traditions and its contemporary applicability. . . . There are cheering signs that a revival of such a faith is under way.

Second, fellowship. From the apostolic days until now, fellowship has been a characteristic Christian experience. "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," so runs the historic formula. That Church is assuming ever increasing proportions and significance. There is not a land under the shining sun where it is not found. The wonderful outpouring of the loyalty of our Church, in recognition of the Centennial of our Board of Foreign Missions last year, with half a million of dollars contributed for a forward movement all along the missionary line, is only one of many current illustrations of the validity and reality of Christian fellowship.

Third, passion. Passion is power. A Church without a passion is powerless. How low we have permitted the fires of the master passion to burn upon our altars! Discussion groups have taken the place of evangelistic bands. Panel discussions have outmoded prayer meetings. A curious quest for knowledge has crowded out a crusading commitment to the truth. Even the restless energy we spend in whirling the wheels of our Church and in driving our own reluctant, laggard lives, is not real power. It often acts as a paralysis of power. Truth is, the Church has lost no little of its divine militancy. With the widespread disintegration of home life and the collapse, in many places, of any semblance of a family altar, with over half the children of America abysmally ignorant and untaught in the things of the spirit, with public education secularized to an alarming degree, with a commercialized Lord's Day, with gambling becoming a national menace, with crime on the rampage, with the devastating traffic of alcoholic liquor, rushing like a raging flood, out of all bounds of decency or restraint, with economic injustice continuing, and economic tensions multiplying, with mounting racial and class bitterness and strife, and most terrible of all, with the whole world in the maelstrom of mad war, ominous, imminent, and actual—nothing short of a Church literally aflame with Christ's holy passion for a lost world, can provide an antidote for a disease so deadly, the sin of the world. Only the Cross will suffice.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

A college president was about to make an address in his old home town. In order to assure his old friends and neighbors that his position had not caused him to put on airs, he began thus:

"My dear friends,—I will not call you ladies and gentlemen—I know you too well for that."

It does not matter what life brings to you; but it matters a great deal what you do with it.

CATAWBA PRESBYTERIAL MEETING

By Mrs. R. Z. Beatty.

The Women's Presbyterial of Catawba met in its annual meeting April 28, 1938, with the Black's Memorial church at Monroe, N. C.

The Recording Secretary, Mrs. R. Z. Beatty, called for delegates to come forward for registration. Fifty-seven delegates answered the call and had their names recorded, and a larger number of members and friends who were not delegated stood for recognition.

The spiritual service was indeed food for the soul, as Mrs. Rosa Fulwood explained the Scriptures to us and discussed with feeling the theme: "Ready For Service," Exodus 3:4.

Mrs. W. R. Mayberry, Presbyterial President, called for the order of the day. Miss Annie Chresfield gave greetings from the hostess church. Miss Chresfield said it gave her a peculiar thrill to have the pleasure of voicing the sentiments of her church women and the women and friends of Monroë in welcoming us into their midst, to shake hands with old friends, and meet and make new friends.

Miss Elizabeth Rushing gave greetings from the young people, in a happy, youthful way.

Mrs. C. N. Jenkins responded in such a happy manner that all felt she gave the sentiment of each woman present.

The minutes of last year were read by the Recording Secretary for information and facts.

Preparation for service for the coming year was presented by the Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. J. H. Gamble. Recommendations were as follows: (1) Study your chart on the back of the report blank. (2) Divide your women into small groups in order that each one can find her place and fill it. (3) Have a Literature Secretary and let her solicit subscriptions for Women and Missions from each woman in the local society.

Mrs. Dora Crawford, Spiritual Life Secretary, and Mrs. H. L. McCrorey, Secretary of Stewardship were absent and no reports from this phase of the work could be had at this period on the program.

The Prepared Mind. Mrs. E. M. Dixon, Secretary of Literature, stressed the need of using the free literature and buying the other that is needed to keep the mind prepared.

Mrs. Prince said another way to keep the mind prepared is to read your Bible, good books, etc. Keep these three keys at your finger's tips: (1) Love; (2) Prayer; (3) Faith, and you will succeed in keeping the mind prepared for larger service for the King. Mrs. Prince is Secretary of Missionary Education.

Mrs. Henry's report is so rich we are sending it for publication. Mrs. Floretta Johnston, Social Service Secretary, said more churches were doing social service work than formerly, but all should reach out a little farther for more service, said Mrs. Johnston.

Miss Wilma Powell was absent, and the report on National Missions was deferred until later.

The group Conference surpassed any in previous years. One felt like saying to those in charge, as a heathen said to a missionary, "You have told us a little while you were sick, now that you are well tell us more." We wanted more of this rich information from Mrs. Prince, Mrs. Shirley and Miss Chresfield.

Mrs. Prince had in her group the following distinguished visitors: Mrs. Cecelia McCoy Jamison, Mrs. T. E. McKinney and Miss Naomi Freeman, who shared freely their observations and experiences with this very interesting group.

Mrs. McCrorey, Secretary of Stewardship, came in and made the report on Stewardship. She stressed the need of a stewardship Secretary in each society, and said each should send in an

accurate report of her work, and in time for the Presbyterial Stewardship Secretary to record it.

The following visitors were introduced: Miss Naomi Freeman, Mesdames Celia M. Jamison, Revs. W. R. Mayberry, R. Z. Beatty, J. H. Gamble, S. L. Fulwood and E. H. Hunt; Messrs. James Davis, of the Baptist church; McWhirter, Belk, Hoover, Grier and Davis. Mrs. Jamison gave greetings for the lady visitors, and Rev. Gamble for the ministers. These were enjoyed; also the remarks from Miss Freeman, our Young People's worker in Catawba Presbytery.

The next order was appointing Committees, which was done by the President:

Courtesies—Chairman, Mrs. Paul Richardson.

Nominations — Chairman, Mrs. C. N. Jenkins.

Memorial — Chairman, Mrs. Fulwood.

After the benediction by Rev. Fulwood, adjournment for dinner was next in order. A very appetizing dinner was served in the auditorium.

Thursday Afternoon

A short worship period, led by Mrs. Estelle Smith, was conducted.

Mrs. C. H. Shute, 6th Vice-President, presided at the afternoon session. Preparing the minds, hearts, and hands of the youth was the theme. Miss Chresfield urged that the leader must be a praying leader to guide the youth over the dangerous pitfalls of life and to turn their minds from the musical snares of the world. Nothing, said she, takes the place of prayer.

In reporting for the Intermediates, Mrs. D. O. Wallace showed how the Intermediates could be reached. She said give them something to do, and let them do it.

The Children's Secretary, Mrs. F. C. Shirley, reported by showing a chart of the eleven churches having children's work, and recommended books and stations for the children. Mrs. Shirley said make the children responsible for their share of the financial budget and see how readily they will respond.

At the close of these reports Miss Naomi Freeman gave some very valuable information concerning the work among children.

The reports from the local societies showed signs of growth both in membership and finance. Twenty-two local societies brought forward \$77.10 and six Young People's Societies \$9.55, making a total of \$86.65.

Church Women Ready for Creative Work. Mrs. Wilson, our Treasurer, in her report showed how our gifts are making ready for the Kingdom by our giving and sacrificing for the cause.

The Bellefonte church extended to the Committee on Next Place of Meeting an invitation to meet with them next year, which was accepted.

The Memorial Committee reported the loss of 26 members the past year. A short memorial service was held.

The Nominating Committee reported all officers for re-election for the ensuing year, which was voted unanimously. Rev. Hunt in a very impressive way installed the officers.

Dr. Corley and Rev. Prince were present. Dr. West spoke briefly.

There was adjournment for supper. Rev. Prince pronounced the benediction. Another delicious meal was served.

Thursday Night

Miss Annie Kilgo led the young people in an inspirational worship service, after which the President called the Presbyterial to order. Rev. Mayberry gave the opening prayer.

Miss Naomi Freeman presented Mrs. C. McCoy Jamison, Synodical Sunday School worker who, in a brief address, ex-

pressed appreciation for the opportunity of saying something to the Presbyterial, of which she had heard and read. She urged that we pledge anew our faith to God for giving us the talents to work for humanity.

Miss Freeman, following Mrs. Jamison, said she would speak on the theme, "Ready For Service." She said, "Do not paint such ugly pictures, for no one likes ugly things. Look at the many beautiful things about you: the birds, the flowers, the great out-doors—the garden of nature. Win people about you. Love them. When you love them they feel you. Strive to get along together. Old and young should have a big heart full of love for every one and the blessing of the Heavenly Father will come in showers upon us." This was a very timely address.

The last speaker was our President, Mrs. Mayberry began by saying the old Presbyterial had passed into history and we are now looking forward to greater and bigger things. We should try to reach the woman that has not been reached. Have we done our best the past year? What about the coming year? This address was a masterpiece of eloquence.

The young people of Black's Memorial church, under the leadership of Miss Chresfield, rendered beautiful music throughout the program.

An offering of \$8.00 was taken which was given the hostess church.

The Courtesies Committee thanked both Rev. and Mrs. Hunt and their good people for the fine entertainment given us and said we hope to have the pleasure of returning soon.

We adjourned to meet at Bellefonte in April, 1939.

Presbyterial Officers for 1938-1939

Honorary President, Mrs. G. E. Davis.
President, Mrs. Hallie Q. Mayberry.
1st Vice-President, Mrs. P.W. Russell.
2nd Vice-President, Mrs. M.L. Harrison.
3rd Vice-President, Mrs. Dora Davidson.
4th Vice-President, Mrs. M. J. Phifer.
5th Vice-President, Mrs. Irma Grier.
6th Vice-President, Mrs. C. H. Shute.
Treasurer, Mrs. H. Wilson.
Recording Secretary, Mrs. R. Z. Beatty.
Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. J. H. Gamble.
Secretary of Literature, Mrs. E. M. Dixon.
Ass't Secretary of Literature, Mrs. Z. Alexander.
Secretary of Missionary Education, Mrs. A. H. Prince.
Secretary of Stewardship, Mrs. H. L. McCrorey.
Secretary of Young People, Miss Annie Chresfield.
Secretary of Intermediates, Miss Doretha Orr.
Secretary of Children, Mrs. F. C. Shirley.
Secretary of Over Seas, Mrs. Carrie Henry.
Secretary of Social Service, Mrs. Floretta Johnston.
Secretary of Spiritual Life Groups, Mrs. A. B. Crawford.
Secretary of Division of Missions, Miss Wilma Powell.

Service, Not Profit.—"God trieth the motives." George Washington Carver became an accomplished musician and artist. His first picture sold for thousands of dollars. But he, too, was first a Christian. He saw the dire need of his race (the Negro), and leaving the artistic field, he gave himself to study in the scientific field, that he might be a servant of Christ among them. His love for the artistic and beautiful rose to its highest degree when he chose to bring out the beautiful in the lives of underprivileged people. Jesus came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom.—Sel.

If you follow the star of hope the door of opportunity will never close to you.