

Wesley Sprinkle

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Sprinkle, who was ordained a Baptist minister on Sunday, Sept. 16, 1918, has pastored 34 churches in North Carolina, all the way from Haywood County in the hills to Carteret County on Atlantic Coast.

On June 24, 1956, because of ill health, Mr. Sprinkle retired from active pastoring, though he has continued to preach and teach regularly since.

Down through the years of his ministry, the world has undergone a more drastic change than in any other corresponding span in history.

"Churches," he said, focusing the conversation on religion, "have changed almost completely."

"I would put the biggest change in the realm of emotion. People used to be more tender; they would weep over their sins."

"Back then, people believed in a change of the heart; now it's a change of mind. The appeal in our churches now is to the intellect. We've lost the appeal to the heart."

"I think these changes are almost wholly responsible for the upheaval in our country today. You don't find anybody who fears God anymore. I've known many people who trembled when they got on their knees. They feared God."

"God works inside a person where the change needs to be. Man does his polishing on the outside. We can change our appearances, but it takes God to change our lives."

"Christ said 'Come and weep, come and suffer. If ye suffer with Me, ye can reign with Me.' That is an appeal to the heart."

"The appeal to the intellect is to come and have a good time."

Mr. Sprinkle said his favorite scripture is James 1:12 which reads: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

"You have to have faith enough to endure," Mr. Sprinkle said quietly.

His two favorite Books of the Bible are John and Romans. "John," he said, "gives you the

way into Christ; Romans tells you how to stay in Him."

For more than 60 years Mr. Sprinkle has been a Christian. "It's been 74 years since I was first baptized," he said, "but I don't claim that I was a Christian until sometime later." He attended church for 40 years without missing a Sunday, and was 65 before he was ever sick enough to call a doctor.

On Friday, April 7, 1882, Wesley Sprinkle was born to Susan Elizabeth and Andrew Jackson Sprinkle in a two-room log house that straddled the Buncombe-Madison county line. The living room was in Buncombe and the kitchen in Madison and Dr. W. A. Sams often jokingly said that the Sprinkle family of Buncombe had to go to Madison to eat.

Andrew Jackson Sprinkle was a minister and he was pleased to see four of his sons, including Wesley, grow up to become preachers.

Wesley Sprinkle was employed at the Duckett Milling Company and doing quite well when the realization crept over him that he should become a preacher.

"I was 36 years old," he said, "and I felt like I ought to be doing something for a right smart bit."

A Baptist Young People's Union — known simply by its initials, BYPU — had been organized at Newfound Church and Wesley Sprinkle was assigned to make a talk on the subject of what the Holy Spirit means to a believer.

"I studied all week," he said, "and when I got to church that Sunday night, there were only six people there — three of us and our wives, still, I was scared to death, but I made my talk."

"After the service, we all left and I, being a timid fellow and very uncertain of how well I had made my talk, walked on out ahead of the rest of them. Fred Jarvis, the principal of Leicester School, overtook me and said, 'Wesley there's something in you. You ought to go on.'"

"He encouraged me. He gave me confidence. So I went on. I promised the Lord that if he opened the way, I would preach for him. Soon after that Uncle Jesse Frisbee, the superintendent of Newfound Baptist Church, asked me when I would preach my first

sermon. Well, I preached it on July 31, 1918, and I've been preaching ever since."

Less than a month after his first sermon, Wesley Sprinkle attended the Newfound Association meeting and 20 minutes before the annual message was scheduled, he was asked to preach it. Help from the Rev. J. D. Colley furnished the scripture reference, "and after the fire a still small voice." (Taken from I Kings 19, the story of Elijah). Mr. Sprinkle describes that effort by saying he took the stand and made a joyful noise unto the brethren.

His first pastorate was at the Round Hill Baptist Church in the Rabbit Ham section of Leicester. One family constituted the membership of the church which was disbanded at the end of the summer of 1918.

Mr. Sprinkle quit his job at the milling company to devote full time to the ministry. He lived beyond West Buncombe School, almost next door to Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. The first of September, 1918, he accepted pastorates at Big Pine Baptist Church and Wesley's Chapel in Madison County, whose pulpits he filled on Sundays, and on Mondays he walked across the mountains to preach at Mt. Pleasant Church on Slides Knob at the head of Spring Creek.

In those days, churches were where you found them — wherever people lived. The country churches were reached primarily by walking, and many preachers of World War I vintage wore out considerable shoe leather in the name of the Lord.

Long before his ministry began, Mr. Sprinkle married Corn Knapp of Madison County. They had two sons, one of whom died in infancy. The other, Rex, now lives in Winston-Salem. Their daughter, Mrs. Don Edwards lives in Mars Hill.

Following the death of Mrs. Sprinkle, Mr. Sprinkle married Sadie Anderson of Burke County. They have two daughters, Mrs. Robert B. Piner of Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota, and Mrs.

Harold Morris of Asheville. There are 11 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Though Mr. Sprinkle never went to the war, he got his classification card the day the Armistice was signed, (Nov. 11, 1918), his son-in-law, Robert B. Piner, served in Vietnam, and upon war, Vietnam in particular, Mr. Sprinkle has some decided opinions.

"There's something about our wars," he said, "which disturbs me. We don't settle them right. After World War I we let Germany rise again; after World War II we let Russia have Germany, which is part of what has led to the present unstable condition of the world; and in Korea we took only half the country and didn't settle anything."

"My thoughts on Vietnam are these: if they'd gone in there and fought the war, it would have been over with a good long while ago. As it is, we're just sitting there where we started. If we've gained anything, I can't see it. I can see what we've lost — over 20,000 men."

"But I don't see how we can quit in Vietnam. If we do we will lose the respect of everybody. If we don't, I don't know how we can settle it. It's just there, that's all."

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of Mr. Sprinkle's ministry, a reception will be given by his family Saturday evening, July 27, from 6 to 9 o'clock, at New Bridge Baptist Church where he pastored for more than one-third of his ministry. Among those who have been invited are members of all churches he has pastored and countless friends throughout several states.

For the half-Century Mr. Sprinkle preached love, understanding, brotherhood, and salvation to thousands of people, he also taught it to his children, one of whom, Mrs. Robert Piner, best summed up the fruits of his ministry by writing him the following while watching the funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King:

"There might have been hundreds of thousands there today

This Is The Law
—by—
ROBERT E. LEE

TRESPASS ON LAND

Jones recently bought a large farm. One morning he was found walking a short distance on the adjoining land of Smith. Jones was under a reasonable but mistaken belief that he was on his own land. No harm was done to the land of Smith. May Smith recover damages from Jones in a civil action of trespass?

Yes. An authorized entry upon the land of Smith entitled him to at least nominal damages.

The interest of the landowner is protected at the expense of those who make innocent mistakes. It is immaterial whether or not Jones honestly believes that the land is his own.

One who enters any piece of land takes the risk of the existence of such facts as would give him a right or privilege to enter.

Even a harmless walking across another's land may constitute a trespass. The actor's motive is immaterial. It has been held a trespass to extend one's arm over a fence above another's land.

In 1952 the Supreme Court of North Carolina said: "The essence of a trespass to realty is the disturbance of possession. In consequence, every unauthorized entry on land in the peaceable possession of another constitutes a trespass, without regard to the degree of force used and irre-

for curiosity, political reasons, etc., and his name may go in all history books, but he has never taught peace, brotherhood, or lived it as fully as you. I'm thankful that I don't have to change my whole concept of living, thinking, and acceptance of a man because of the color of his skin like the majority are having to do. I've had it preached to me since the cradle and I'm grateful to you forever."



BE AN OPPORTUNIST

Disagreeable days are not subject to recall, so make the most of it when the going is good.

pective of whether actual damage is done."

Jones would not, under the particular facts, be guilty of a criminal offense. And the amount of damages in the civil action, being nominal, would probably not exceed a dollar. But Jones would be the losing party in the civil action, and to him would be assessed the court costs, which could be a considerable sum.

There was a tall tree growing on the land of Anderson, near the dividing line of his neighbor, Newson. While Anderson was cutting the tree, the top of the tree accidentally fell on the land of Newson. There was no evidence that the tree was felled by design or carelessness on Newson's land or the Newson's land sustained any actual injury. Does Newson have a cause of action against Anderson.

Yes. The Supreme Court of North Carolina so held in 1841. An act of trespass had been committed.



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