

HERALD OF HOLINESS

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FEEDING CHRIST'S LAMBS

JOHN WESLEY said that it means more to keep the grace of God than it does to get it, and the experience of men proves the validity of the statement. Jesus commissioned His Church to go to all the world with the gospel message, but He also made it obligatory to feed the lambs of His flock.

Hon. Arthur L. Bates says in the Watchman-Examiner: "The common practice is to let the converts starve. No beginners classes are formed. No A B C's in denominational belief are taught. Sometimes not even a friendly handshake or visit to the home are thought of. And then we have meetings, and ponder seriously over the question why so many members of the individual church falter and fall away."

And there are probably no people more generally at fault in this matter than churches connected with the holiness movement, like our own. We have always had to lay great emphasis upon the crises of regeneration and entire sanctification to make up for the lack of others on these points. And while emphasizing the crises we have practically ignored the progresses. Our remedy is the mourner's bench, no matter whether the disease be sin, sorrow, ignorance, weakness, trial or temptation. We give the same medicine, no matter what the sickness. But this is a mistake. People, especially the beginners in the faith, need instruction, sympathy and encouragement.

A few days ago I was riding with a doctor who is also a preacher in our church. He gave me the outline of a sermon he had recently preached and I remarked that it appeared to be a "pastoral sermon." He replied that he desired above every other thing to be able to preach pastoral sermons; for, said he, "Nazarenes do not get many pastoral sermons." He went on to say that practically every one of our preachers begins and concludes his sermon with the thought of getting someone to the mourner's bench at the close and that his sermon is adapted to that end, but not to the end of instructing and encouraging those who are already in the faith.

But the fault is not alone with the preachers. Laymen are easily stirred to pray for seekers and to bear great burdens for those who are definitely in need of pardon or holiness, but not many are earnest and practical in instructing, advising and encouraging those who have recently found the Lord.

We must not lay less stress upon definite seeking and definite finding, but we must give more attention to the feeding of the lambs. We must help our converts to become established.

It is remarkable how a small church of the Church of the Nazarene can have a revival with as many seekers as there are members of the church and come out at the end with no new members at all. It reminds one of the mother in Texas, who was proud of her three sons' trading ability. "Why," said she, "those boys can get together on a rainy day and make a dollar and a quarter apiece [which was good farm wages at that time], just trading among themselves." And it has seemed that we can have big revivals just getting one another to the mourner's bench. And we do not say that those who go to the mourner's bench in the revival should not go, but we do say that the fact that they needed to go is a testimonial to the laxness of the shepherds to the duty of feeding the lambs.

You know it is said that science has lengthened the average span of human life in this country by about twenty years. But still it is as unusual to see a person ninety or one hundred years of age as ever; for the work of science has had little to do with the health and longevity of people above fifty, its success has been in decreasing the death rate of children and young people. Among heathen people, where the living conditions are unsanitary and hard, there are as many old people as in our own land. But the test of the proper standards of life is the infantile mortality rate. For if the child is strong and fortunate enough to "live through it" he will become adjusted and immune. Likewise the test of a church's efficiency is not the number of its mature saints, but the number and state of health of its "new converts." The older one will live anyhow—they are used to it.

MORE PREACHERS AND BETTER PREACHERS ARE NEEDED

THE Church of the Nazarene has assumed a tremendous task in connection with the spreading and conserving of scriptural holiness. Many factors enter into the success of such an undertaking, but among them we cannot fail to give high place to the number and quality of our preachers. For a church of our age and size, we probably have more preachers than would ordinarily be apportioned to us, and there are those who would say that in actual preaching ability our preachers compare favorably with those of other churches and movements. But whatever may be our comparative position in these matters, we do not hesitate to say that we need more preachers and better preachers. We have approximately three thousand preachers now and we should have twice as many within five years. We have a reasonable percentage of college trained men and a few who have had university or seminary training, but we must have more trained men in our pulpits.

From the beginning days of our movement, the watch-word has been the planting of churches in the

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centers of population and the building up of centers of fire. This must continue to be our plan and purpose, and this is going to draw heavily upon our supply of trained men. In fact it is already drawing heavily upon such supply, and finding suitable pastors for our stronger churches is becoming more and more of a problem as the number of relatively strong churches increases.

But we must also evangelize the rural sections and the smaller towns. In fact we must carry this message and work of full salvation into thousands of fields in which the harvest will never be more than simply a "gleaning;" for we must have men from the country and sparsely settled sections for the future leaders in our church—that's where they come from, you know. But in many of these fields it will not be possible to gather a sufficient nucleus of Nazarenes to support a pastor and take care of an independent work. Once in a while there is a well trained man among us who casts his lot with the rural church and stays with it, but such men are entirely too few to meet the need.

More preachers are needed, especially for the rural and sparsely settled fields, how are we going to supply them? My suggestion is that we follow the plan of the early Methodists and encourage the multiplication of "local preachers." The local preacher is not usually trained for the regular ministry and he does not feel called to leave his regular secular vocation and devote his entire time to the ministry. He continues to support his family at farming or in his business or trade. But in the meantime, he preaches full salvation to his neighbors. He encourages Sunday school work and prayermeetings and wields an influence in the community that is sometimes stronger than that of the regular pastor. He fills his "appointments" in the neighborhood schoolhouse or town hall and lives the life before the people. We need a thousand just such local preachers to take the message to the thousands whom we are not yet reaching, and many of whom we shall never reach by use of their regular means. Let us encourage the local preacher.

And saying that we need better preachers reminds us that in order to have better preachers we must have a certain percentage who have had college training and seminary advantages. We are building the colleges and we have almost a thousand in these colleges who are in training for some kind of Christian service. But we must build one strong theological seminary. We must get at this task soon—the sooner the better and very long will be too long to wait. We must give our young preachers the advantage of the very best there is in seminary training, and yet we must place the Nazarene stamp indelibly upon them while the process is going on. Now I do not mean simply a Bible school or a Christian worker's training school, I mean a real theological seminary that will be just as thorough and just as complete as the Southern Baptist Seminary at Louisville, Ky., or the Western Theological Seminary (Presbyterian) at Pittsburgh, Pa., from which our

General Superintendent Walker graduated back in 1884. Let's go to work soon to establish a full-fledged Nazarene Theological Seminary. This school can be located near one of our own colleges or near the campus of some great university, where our students may pursue work on regular graduate degrees, and with proper endowment with which to provide tuition and living quarters for students, we can have a good enrollment from the very start. Such a school will not require large buildings or expensive equipment, and five or six of the strongest men available will form the nucleus of the faculty. This thing ought to be done and, therefore, "It can be done."

A SUPPRESSIONIST OVERSTEPS

REV. C. W. OVERMAN, writing in the Arizona Baptist, says: "No, we are not perfect here, nor can we ever be as long as we have this body of our humiliation. I object to this teaching of eradication because it denies the Word of God—it denies salvation by grace because it makes full salvation dependent partly upon Christ and partly upon our tarrying at the altar to receive the 'second blessing;' it warps the conscience and thus tends to make hypocrites out of its adherents."

Now we are not personally acquainted with Rev. Overman, but we wonder how a Baptist, unless he be a "Hard Shell Baptist," can take this position regarding full salvation and then go on and preach repentance as a necessary prerequisite of pardon. Perhaps Rev. Overman does not face this difficulty for perhaps he has joined in with that shallow, modernistic crowd which teaches "only believe," instead of "repent and believe," as the Bible and old-time Baptists teach.

But in attempting to emphasize "salvation by grace," Rev. Overman commits the error of making that grace unconditional in its application, which is the error of hyper-Calvinism. Salvation is indeed by grace, but it is also by faith. That is, its energy is grace, but its condition is faith. And faith has its prerequisites. Repentance is the prerequisite of initial saving faith. Consecration is the prerequisite of faith for full salvation. And obedience is the prerequisite of faith for final perseverance. Does Christ regenerate whom He will without regard to any human condition? Hyper-Calvinists would say, he does. But scriptural Arminianism would say He does not, and this last answer is in keeping with the ground of human responsibility and in keeping with the experience and observation of the Christian centuries.

Must sinners "turn or burn"? They must. Then is salvation partly of Christ and partly of ourselves? It is wholly of Christ as to efficacy and power, but it is of ourselves as to choosing. There is human and divine co-operation in salvation. And if this is true regarding initial salvation, why should we question it regarding full salvation?

Bud Robinson has very quaintly and truthfully said: "It takes both manhood and grace to make a saint,