

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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“Preaching the same truth since before Kentucky was a state”

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2003 MISSION BIBLE CONFERENCE ***October 27-29***



One of the many blessings received at the conference last month was the tradition of getting all of God's called preachers together to lift their voices in singing "How Great Thou Art." Led by this pastor, these men of God filled our hearts with the wonder of the great God we serve.

Once again, for the 22nd time, Bryan Station Baptist Church hosted the annual fall Mission Bible Conference. Visitors from all around the world and the U.S. attended; we had visitors from Tokyo, Philippines, Brazil, Mississippi, Michigan, Colorado, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, just to name a few. It was such a blessing for our church! We give God thanks for the harmony of spirit and the great feasting on His Word.

—Pastor Al Gormley

THE MINISTER AND HIS MESSAGE

By: C. D. COLE

Colossians 4:7: "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord." **I Timothy 4:16,** "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." **II Timothy 4:2,** "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." **I Corinthians 4:1,** "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."

One of the greatest perils of the ministry is our proneness to forget that we are the ministers of Christ. We want others to regard us as such, but do we remember this as a fact for ourselves? The divine call and Lordship of Christ must be something more than a mere theory for the head; it must be a truth for the heart and conscience. The modern church, with its multiplicity of organizations, presents a situation that tempts the pastor to think of the lordship of the church, or some auxiliary of the church, rather than of the Lordship of Christ. It does not follow that because the pastor is the servant of the church, that the church is his master. **II Corinthians 4:5,** "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." **Matthew 23:8,** "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ..."

We belong to Christ, and He alone has the Lordship over us and He alone is to be the judge of our labors. He saved us, and called us, and commissioned us, and equips us. These teachers cannot make preachers. They have, no doubt, been of incalculable help in directing you in your studies, but over and above all that they have or can do, a divine enablement is absolutely essential to a successful ministry. And let me warn against the world's standard of success. **I Corinthians 4:5,** "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord

come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." We belong to Christ and must therefore look to Him for orders, for a place to preach, for support, and for rewards.

The ministry is a glorious undertaking; nothing comparable to it among the professions of men. When Felix Carey, son of the immortal William Carey, and who was trained for the work of a missionary, accepted the post of Ambassadorship from the King of England, his father said, with a broken heart, "Felix has dwindled into an ambassador." My brethren, we are ministers of Christ; we are ambassadors of the King of Kings. Under God, the preachers have made the greatest contribution to the welfare and happiness

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of mankind; not the philosophers and scientists of this world. **James 3:15,** "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." **Matthew 15:14,** "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." And in the name of progress they are leading men towards the ditch of destruction. The true prophets of God are pointing the way to deliverance from sin and sorrow, saying, **John 1:29,** "...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We cannot too strongly insist that salvation is in a person, and that person is Jesus Christ, who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

The ministry is a serious and solemn undertaking. It involves a tremendous responsibility. It is a task gigantic. It is a work before which the noblest saints of earth have demurred. The Lord called

Jeremiah: Jeremiah 1:5-7, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, LORD GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." And it was only after God had said, I am with thee that he dared to speak. Isaiah was so filled with a sense of his unworthiness, **Isaiah 6:1-11,** "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, LORD, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate." The apostle Paul, in the face of such an undertaking cried out, **II Corinthians 2:16,** "And who is sufficient for these

things?" And his soul was not quieted until he could answer, II Corinthians 3:5, "...our sufficiency is of God."

The seriousness and solemnity of the gospel ministry is seen: (1) When we consider to whom we are to preach. We are not to preach to the elect angels, who have been confirmed in holiness and who delight to do the will of God. Our ministry is not limited to the sheep, who hear the shepherd's voice and follow him. But, we are to preach to men, who by nature are at enmity against God; men who are void of understanding, and to whom the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness. We are to preach to men who are blinded by the god of this world, and who are taken captive by him at his will. (2) When we consider who we are to whom the gospel has been entrusted. God's ways are not our ways. We would have sought agents for such a task who excelled in strength and wisdom. We would have committed such a task into the hands of the mighty angels. But God has deposited the gospel treasure in earthen vessels, etc. As our Lord took not on Him the nature of angels for man's redemption, so neither does he employ angels for man's conversion.

Our success is not due to any natural love men have for God and the gospel, nor to any power or excellency in the preachers but to God who raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them. I Corinthians 3:5-7, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." To work by weak men brings more glory to God. The weaker the instrument, the more honor to the worker. The first apostles brought all the more glory to God because they came from the fishers' nets and were called, unlearned and ignorant men. Acts 4:13, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." The weakness which men despised compelled them to confess that the power which they wielded was divine. Somebody has said that it proved the divinity of our holy religion that it survived the preachers, and there was a good deal of truth in that remark. We are

poor tools for such a task, and unless He had said in Matthew 28:20, "...lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," we might well despair.

Ministers are Christ's gifts to His churches. Ephesians 4:11-12, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Some qualifications for a successful ministry. The preacher must be a good man. Acts 11:24, talking about Barnabas, "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord." I Timothy 3:7, "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." Nothing will take the place of practical godliness and piety in a preacher. A man with a shady character is doomed to failure. Luke 21:34, "...take heed to yourselves..." II Timothy 2:21, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." God uses weak instruments but they must be clean.

The preacher must have courage. I do not mean that he should be a worldly bravado, but he must "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." He must be a supernatural strength; a moral and spiritual stamina that will overcome all temptation to compromise. Pastor Oncken was the Baptist pioneer in Germany. He suffered much, in his younger days, for the truth's sake. He was fined and imprisoned. One day the Burgomaster of Hamburg held up his finger and said, "Do you see that finger? So long as that can move, I will put you down." "Sir", said Pastor Oncken, "I see your finger, but I also see an arm that you do not see, and so long as that arm is stretched out you cannot put me down." He endured as seeing Him who is invisible. Hugh Lattimer was ordered by Henry VIII to apologize for a too plain sermon he had preached. But with the consciousness that he was sent by a higher King, he repeated the sermon.

The preacher must always be a student. II Timothy 2:15, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Whenever a preacher quits studying, he immediately

takes the dry rot. He begins to decay. B. H. Carroll said to a young preacher: "My son, you are in great danger. You have been complimented so much for the fire of your off-hand, maiden sermons that you have quit studying. You have no library, and do not read. You have already contracted the habit of preaching over your first dozen revival sermons. The first time such a sermon is a juicy roast, the next time it is only warmed over, next time it is hash, and next time it is only soup out of the bones." Booker T. Washington tells the story of his rebuke of a black church for violation of their contract in not paying their pastor. He was completely silenced by a remark of one of the sturdy members: "We done paid for them sermons last year." Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures from a child, but Paul told him to study, and to give himself to reading. II Timothy 3:15, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

The preacher must be a man of deep conviction. I Peter 3:15, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." He must believe something and be able to give a reason for his belief. He must do so in love with the doctrine of this book that nothing will be able to shut his mouth. Christ testified of John the Baptist: John 5:35, "He was a burning and a shining light..." Inwardly burning; outwardly shining. Jeremiah 20:9, "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." As Jeremiah experienced the difficulties of the ministry, he made up his mind to give it up. He rashly resolved never to preach again. Amid the perplexities and difficulties that he set his ministry he determined to seal his lips. But he could not.