

the ministry without this. One cannot get this in college degrees. With all due respect to that aspect of a minister's qualification and although such a preparation is necessary and beneficial, indeed we cannot get along without it, and God knows, if we could not get it, He would take this into account; but there is a personal instruction from Christ, by association, observation and receiving from Him through the Spirit, without which we are absolutely helpless in our ministry. We want the best standing educationally. We want the best spiritually; splendid educational attainments with the deepest spirituality is the glorious combination we should desire.

THE PROCLAMATION

"That He might send them forth to preach."

It might be suggested that we are sent out to proclaim a theme. We can be true to that theme after being with Him, and associating with Him. There are many subjects for Christian preaching, but one theme, and it is found in the words of Paul, "We preach Christ crucified," the Person and the cross. Whether touching the home, the political, the national aspect, or any other problem on which a preacher may be duty bound to deal, they all center in the one theme; Christ and the cross. He is the solution. Paul knew that very well for he brought all problems to the Christ and the cross.

Our theme, then brethren, is the Redeemer; one man who died for us; one blood that is efficacious; one sacrifice that is equal to the needs of humanity, "Christ crucified." We are not called to fool with incidentals. We are called to emphasize the Person and His accomplishments. It is more or less useless for a man to harp even at modernism. We are to exalt the wonderful Christ, and get people ready to live, to serve, to suffer, ready for the trumpet's call at any moment.

The source of the message we are called to proclaim is the Word. We have the living Word, the Christ; and we have the written word, the Bible. You cannot separate them without a tragedy. One of the notable failures of the day is an endeavor to separate the written Word from the living Word. The living Christ and all His accomplishments run as a scarlet thread through the written Word. That means life. One of the avenues by which we might be filled with the Word is to know the living Word. We have to be filled with the heavenly manna to preach the glorious message of God and to bless this twentieth century with the apostolic gospel.

With regard to the message, it might be suggestive to say that Paul's commission was that outlined very beautifully. His parchment reads: First, "To open their eyes." Secondly, "To turn them from darkness to light." Thirdly, "From the power of Satan unto God." Fourthly, "That they may receive forgiveness of sins." Fifthly, "An inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

Paul received this commission not from men but from the Lord. The first theological seminary he attended after his conversion was the Arabian desert. The Lord was President of that seminary and the Holy Spirit the Instructor.

Brethren, we are up against stone blindness today. There are people right in our midst and over our land who know no more about the gospel than men and women in Central Africa. By burning logic, a Godly life, and the sword of the Spirit that cuts both ways; by such a qualification we can

carry out the commission outlined by Paul. Brethren, we can by God's help do it. If the devil tells you you cannot, he is a liar. God who has called us will equip us for the job.

As to the illustration of the message proclaimed, well, that depends upon the preacher himself. If he is Christ-like he will be a good illustration. If he is not, he might as well quit.

Here is the order: God called, God qualified, God sent, God used, God honored. Though the Church may be the human avenue it is all of God. Oh, it is so nice, brethren, for us to individually feel, and be able to say, "God has called me, ordained me, fitted me to preach the gospel. God has brought me into contact with the greatest Teacher that ever graced the earth; has imparted to me full salvation; given to me the great Executive in the Godhead; has placed His sacred hand upon me in ordination."

Is that the way you feel? With that blessed consciousness we shall look beyond the difficulties, and realize that God is with us. A man said, "I have put so many years in the Church, and now I am without a church." That is sad, I grant, but there should be a conscious standing before God that the years have been put in for Him. Should we find ourselves without a church home, that is, speaking of that branch of the church militant to which we might be affiliated, we are in the mystic body, spiritual and bound for the church triumphant. Bless the Lord. We shall have a good society up there when we are through here.

Let us be true to God. Brethren, to be used of God is the greatest honor that can come to any man. It is not, after all, a matter of what people may think and say; it is a matter of what God thinks about us. It is so restful to have His approbation.

Then there is that blessed approbation which arises from the fact that you have helped some person. You may have to forget your own tiredness in order to help some person else. You may have to forget your own headaches and heartaches and take the burden of some weary soul and bless them, and do it as though you had no burden at all yourself; but He who sees and knows will give you the satisfaction of knowing that you have been used by Him. When Mrs. Wm. Booth, wife of the founder of the Salvation Army (in fact she is said to have been the founder) died, people from every phase of society walked by her casket with tears. They were heard to say, "Through the instrumentality of that Godly woman, I was led to Christ." It has been said that she was never a moment without suffering in her last years, but she labored on for souls, often it is said, arising from her bed, dressing, going and preaching to some gathering. Then return and retire in pain. Brethren, there are discouraging fields of labor and the Devil will try to discourage you before you start; but go forward in God's name. The fact of a Christ-like man taking up his residence in any locality will speak volumes. God alone knows what it will mean if you will be true.

I read the ordination vows over again this morning. What a solemn moment. What solemn vows. What responsibility is ours. "If any do take any hurt or hindrance by reason of your negligence, ye know the greatness of the faith and also the horrible punishment that will ensue."

Then the prayer for that Divine qualification. "The Lord pour upon thee the Holy Ghost for the office of a minister in the

Church of Christ, and be thou a faithful dispenser of the same in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

Let us have this morning a personal preparation, a personal qualification for the great work to which God has called us. You, brethren, who are to be ordained this morning, exalt Calvary's accomplishments, honor the Holy Ghost, be optimistic, and God will give you a wonderful ministry even in this twentieth century.

Let us pray!

WHAT CAUSES LACK OF INTEREST IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL, AND WHAT IS NECESSARY TO OVERCOME THIS LACK.

It is quite generally acknowledged that Sunday School work is not taken as seriously as it should be. Teachers frequently ask the question, "Why do pupils not take the work more seriously?" To my mind it is the result of the general attitude of the older people and those who have the management in their hands.

Our children have toward Sunday School work the attitude they have learned. They take a more serious attitude toward public school work than Sunday School work. Why? Because they have been taught to do so.

Their attitude towards public schools is learned chiefly from three sources: First, parents; second, teachers; third, community.

First: The parents take public school work seriously and urge upon the children the value of regularity, punctuality and scholarship.

Second: The teachers take public school more seriously because their livelihood depends upon it. They see to it their methods are efficient, their minds kept fresh through study, and they thoroughly prepare and plan their work.

Third: The community takes public school work seriously because of the money they invest therein, investing from one-third to two-thirds of all the money it raises by taxation in them.

The attitude of boys and girls toward Sunday School work is learned from the same sources. But what a difference.

The parents do not co-operate in regard to punctuality, regularity and scholarship; the teachers go with unprepared lessons and hurry through the lesson period as a duty to be done; the church when asked to assist financially in the work of the Sunday School in providing equipment, etc., asks the question: "What will it cost?" and unlike the attitude of the community toward our educational system which regards no expense as long as benefits are derived, it usually considers the cost too great and so the Sunday School must suffer.

In the public schools the final issue at stake is "dollars and cents" or temporal success, and their intense interest and co-operation is given. In the Sunday Schools the final issue at stake is "Souls," and very little if any of either is given.

Boys and girls have the same attitude towards the Sunday Schools that they have learned from the church and its leaders and so it goes on from generation to generation. May we arouse ourselves and create the right attitude toward our Sunday Schools.

How may we help to overcome these difficulties?

First: By obtaining the co-operation of the parents. There has grown up in recent years a great movement for adult education through