

- Editorials -

LET THE TRIVIAL DISAPPEAR

James Whistler, the American painter, once explained to a friend why he liked to paint his portraits in the twilight. "As the light fades," he said, "and the shadows deepen, all the petty and exacting details vanish; everything trivial disappears, and I see things as they are, in great strong masses."

"Everything trivial disappears"—those are the words that ought to bring us up short and require of us an eye examination. Just what are we seeing, anyway? Are we seeing the trivial only? And is it the trivial that occupies all our time and attention? Or are we seeing "things as they are"—the real, the significant, the lasting?

The danger of putting the emphasis in the wrong place is always with us, of seeing the splinters and not the beams, of tithing the mint and anise and cummin and ignoring the weightier matters.

It is altogether too easy for us to get our eyes off God and onto problems, to get our eyes off great truths and principles and onto little, troublous, irking details, to sacrifice the eternal upon the altar of the temporal. God deliver us!

Jesus gave us guidance here. "Lift up your eyes," he said, — from the trivial, the temporal, the unimportant—"and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

The call here is for us to see souls, souls that have eternal value, souls that are lost apart from Christ, and seeing, to do something about them. Answering the call is not optional, it is obligatory. Something must be done, and done quickly, for the time of harvest is now, and only now. For "the night cometh" Jesus said, "when no man can work."

In what direction, then, are we looking, and what are we seeing? May God help us to see the things that really matter, to focus all our attention and energy there, and to let the trivial disappear!

HOW MUCH IS YOUR PASTOR'S SALARY?

A fellow who asks a question like that is sure asking for the privilege of getting his knuckles cracked, at least by those who may be convinced that their pastor is being paid an adequate salary. But as one writer has pointed out, "An editor's job is to observe, to commend, to prod." In this instance I would suppose that we are prodding — yes, prodding, in the hope that at least some churches will explore the possibility of granting a long-overdue increase to their pastor's salary.

A number of churches in recent years have already done something about this matter. In proportion to their giving potential and in relation to their pastor's need, the salary has been raised to a fair level. The pastor is pleased, for he is made to feel the worth and value of his work. The Church is pleased, for the people are happy that their pastor's financial needs are being met. Such churches need to be commended for their wisdom and foresight. For it is only a matter of record that when and where a pastor is paid a proper wage his service to the Church is that much more happy and efficient.

The fact is, however, that the majority of Reformed Baptist pastors are woefully underpaid. In some instances the pastor is the lowest paid man in his church. He is getting by only because help is coming from other sources, possibly friends or family connections. This is not right and ought not to be. For a servant of God cannot be at his best when such financial limitations are forced upon him that he cannot meet even minimum obligations.

No man today, with a wife, a family, and a car, can possibly survive on \$1,500, a year—and yet that is exactly what some pastors are trying to do. It cannot be done! We do not know where the move should begin, but it is high time we were facing up to the needs of our pastors and doing something about them.

Churches, in some instances, are doing the very best that they are able to do, and still their pastor is underpaid. It is not these who may need the prodding. But in other instances there are churches in a position to pay their pastor much better than they are doing presently. It is these who need encouragement to study their pastor's needs and to seek to meet them adequately.

It is our firm conviction that every one of our pastors takes his work seriously, seeks to give acceptable service to his church, and is worthy of his church's best support. If that be true, then he has a right to receive sufficient means to enable him and his family to live without the constant embarrassment that there just is not enough money to go around.

SHINE BOY

There is a story of a certain man who was one day having his shoes shined. He was in a bit of a hurry. When he thought it was about time for the task to be finished, he looked down only to find his shoes in a worse condition than they were at the beginning. He spoke sharply to the bootblack. Then the little fellow looked up and showed a face that was wet with tears. "I'm sorry, sir," he said, "but my mother died this morning, and I am trying to make a little money to buy some flowers to put on her coffin."

We do not know the load our neighbor may be carrying. We see a heroic soul wearing a smile but we do not know the crown of thorns he may be wearing on his heart or the burdens he has to bear.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

There is nothing in the Christian's life that does not depend on prayer. We must kneel to conquer. From the case of the young convert just beginning the Christian life, to the preacher greeted by overflowing congregations wherever he travels, there will be tragic failure unless prayer is the dominant experience of life.

—Lionel B. Fletcher

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