

The GRANDVIEW EXHORTER

EXHORTING CHRISTIANS TO GREATER SERVICE

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EDITOR'S NOTE: In the next four issues of this paper we are going to publish four articles written by H. Leo Boles in 1932 concerning the Missionary Society. If you read these articles with an open mind you will be able to see that these issues continue to live today. You will be able to see that our problems today are not new, but the same old problems, in principle, that brought about the Christian church. A truth we must learn is that each generation must have its education in loyalty to the scriptures. It is also true that every generation produces many who in the name of "progress" go beyond the limits of Bible authority, and under the banner of zeal for the lost and compassion for the unfortunate are able to stir up mass interest - even to the point of religious hysteria -- and woe be to the man who tries to stem the tide!! (dt)

THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY - ITS ORIGIN
(H. Leo Boles, Gospel Advocate, Sept. 29, 1932)

The church of our Lord was established in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after the crucifixion of Christ. Pentecost has been called "the birthday of the church." The church continued its work and mission for a few centuries without any great departures from the apostolic teaching being made. Slowly and gradually departures were made, and these departures gradually developed into the Roman Catholic Church. This great hierarchy in religion did not spring into existence full-grown; it was many years in reaching its full development. Departures were made step by step away from the New Testament order, and the final result was the great Roman Catholic Church. This institution was formed and guided in its progress by human wisdom and superstition. The Restoration Movement sought to return to the firm basis of the New Testament. This was done, and for a number of years the church continued faithful to the New Testament pattern. It took B. W. Stone, the Campbells, Walter Scott,
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John Smith, and others some time to get out of the fog and confusion of religious errors. These godly men, with the New Testament in hand, led the way back to "the ancient order of work and worship". Perhaps these pioneers in this movement never entirely got away from all the superstition and confusion to which they had fallen heir from the different denominations.

After continuing true and faithful to "the ancient order" of worship for a number of years, departures were slowly and gradually made. History again repeated itself. From the Brush Run Church, which was organized in 1812, the movement originated, and had a hard struggle up to 1832. Many difficulties were encountered and the leaders had to combat with fierce opposition. Some of the leaders were often discouraged during this period and thought that the movement would never be successful. However, many of the leaders among them saw the light and were courageous enough to make the fight and win the victory. From 1832 to 1850 great multitudes of believers returned to "the ancient order" of things. During this period the movement outgrew in number any of the denominations at that time. Frequently entire churches in the Baptist denomination threw away their creeds, left off their denominational names, and returned to the New Testament pattern of work and worship. The movement continued to increase rapidly. At first the increase came largely from the agricultural sections of Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Virginia and Tennessee.

W. T. Moore, in his "Comprehensive History of the Disciples of Christ", says that for the decade ending in 1850 "twenty thousand additions to the church were made yearly." This increase brought the total numerical strength of the disciples to about one-fifth of a million members in 1850. It was estimated that during the period between 1850 and 1860 the population of the United States increased about thirty-five per cent, but the number of disciples increased one hundred per cent. The membership of the disciples increased about three times as rapidly as the population of the United States. Joseph King estimated that the number of disciples who had returned from the denominations to "the ancient order of worship" in 1820 was only about two hundred. His estimation of the number in 1866 was about one-half of a million. No religious body increased so rapidly during this period of time as did the disciples.

The increase in number greatly augmented the Restoration Movement and strengthened it, so far as numerical strength may be measured. The number increased more rapidly than a knowledge of the New Testament teaching was disseminated. Many were not well-grounded in the faith and

did not understand the importance of the movement, and especially the importance of following the New Testament order of work and worship. Many who were enlisted in this great cause were tired of creeds and human traditions and wanted to get away from them. They did this; but they did not learn the New Testament teachings thoroughly, and they followed the crowd. Sometimes a party spirit was engendered instead of the spirit of Christ. An untaught membership weakened the cause. An unfaithful leadership helped to bring the movement into disrepute and gave the enemy occasion to criticize the movement. Departures from the New Testament pattern were made because many were ignorant of the New Testament. Oftentimes a lack of loyalty to the truth gave rise to some departures. The pioneers accepted the famous slogan: "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." Many of the leaders began to violate this rule, and not a few finally ignored it altogether.

The first wide departure which was made was the organization of the American Christian Missionary Society. Step by step, little by little, the departure led to the organization of this society. For several years the trend of the movement had been toward organization. The first step was taken when they began to have "cooperative meetings." These meetings were held in counties or districts. They were local. They seemed to be innocent within themselves, and the brethren had plausible motives to actuate them in holding these meetings. Very few of the brethren, if any, saw the danger in them. Because their motives were pure, they thought they were doing the right thing in holding these meetings.

Complaints were made that they were not doing what they should. Many claimed that they could not do much without these "cooperative meetings." They claimed that they were doing too little with the meetings, and without them nothing would be done. The denominations around them were having their great gatherings in associations, presbyteries, and conferences. So the brethren in their innocency thought that they should have larger meetings than that of the local congregation. They claimed that the churches could not make progress and fill their mission without the enthusiasm engendered by these "cooperative meetings." At first there was no organization in these meetings, and no one thought of organizing anything when they began to have these meetings. They overlooked the fact that the period of their greatest prosperity was the period in which they had no "cooperative meetings." The greatest increase had come during the period in which there was no "organized effort" except that of the local congregation. The greatest growth came when the congregations were independent and free in their congregational activity. The great number of churches existing then in their independent operations were established without these "cooperative meetings." The brethren overlooked the

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fact that the only cooperation the churches needed to fulfill their mission was that each congregation do its best and work independent of any and all other congregations. They continued to stress the commission of our Lord to go into all the world to preach the gospel to every creature, but they began to inquire how this could be done without the different churches cooperating with each other. The "cooperative meetings" was the answer to their inquiry. (GOSPEL GUARDIAN, Sept. 14, 1950, Number 14)

PREACHER'S VIEWS AND LOCAL NEWS: In the month of Jan. one was baptized, and one restored. Miss Charlene Faye Turner was baptized, and sister Sue Harlan was restored.. Max and Fay Ray are moving to Greensburg, Ky. Max will preach for the church in Greensburg on a full-time basis.. We are glad to see Max go back into full-time work. We know he will do a good job because he is a capable gospel preacher. He has meant a lot to the cause of Christ here in Monroe County in the trying years of digression. He has worked with his hands to feed his family, and at the same time carried a full load - preaching every Sunday and teaching classes during the week. He has been a big help to the cause here at Grandview..... We extend our sympathy to sister Bessie Ford and to Larry in the passing of her father..... We have had snow and severe cold weather the last two week-ends, which has taken its toll in attendance..... ATTENDANCE and CONTRIBUTION for January - Jan. 2 - Bible study 135, worship 158, evening worship 108, contribution \$348.01, Wed. Bible study 92; Jan. 9 - Bible study 141, worship 161, evening worship 100, contribution \$360.20, Wed. Bible study 94; Jan. 16 - Bible study 131, worship 165, evening worship 111, contribution \$336.51, Wed. Bible study 96; Jan. 23 - Bible study 78, worship 87, evening worship 95, contribution \$277.84, Wed. Bible study 77; Jan. 30 - Bible study 61, worship 73, evening worship 69, contribution \$295.98.

THOSE WHO SERVE - February 1966

LORD'S SUPPER:

L. B. Waddell
Frank Richardson
Rue McMillin
Roger Fox

PRAYER:

Harold Ray
H. T. Bartley
Basil Deckard
H. S. Vance

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