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GIVE YOURSELF

Give yourself. That is the way that men accomplish good in the world. No better illustration could be found than that of Dr. John Wayland, who began to give himself in the ministry. He not only did an outstanding work as a pastor, he also added to these heavy duties the job of helping his pastor brethren obtain training by establishing a "Pastor's School" in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina. Our Department offered its facilities after Dr. Wayland had been in the field for some time.

His work gained for him the respect and love of his brethren all over North Carolina. In addition to this, the Rendezvous Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution recently gave him an award of merit. His work gained attention of the administration of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, who saw in him the type of man needed to teach in that great young school. Recently Dr. Stealey, the president, mentioned to me in glowing

words his appreciation of the work being done by this man who was once a teacher in the Seminary Extension Department in the mountains.

Dr. Wayland led his church to do a very fine thing which might be repeated all over the Convention, and that is to underwrite the program of teaching and training for pastors and others who attend the Seminary Extension Center in North Wilkesboro.

Not every center has a Dr. John Wayland; but every center has men who have the same love and devotion for their brethren, unselfish enough to offer their services to share their learning and to accept the compensation of growth in the Kingdom of God. All of this further illustrates the teaching of our Lord who said, "He that loseth his life shall find it." There is no better way to give yourself than by offering to your brethren a share of God's blessings upon you through education.

BLACK JACK FOREST

One does not need to be a careful observer to see, while traveling through the southern portion of Georgia and north Florida, the almost tragic situation of Black Jack's growing where once stood the lofty pine. Those who know about tree farming will tell you that you do not have to cultivate Black Jack. Like nut grass, it grows without cultivation. People have Black Jack forests who cut the land closely and fail to clean it up, giving pine seedlings a chance to grow. Once the Black Jack undergrowth covers over the land the seedling cannot find the sunlight sufficient to break through and as a result one may have an area of many thousands of acres all but lost as a pine forest.

That is one of the problems in all areas of life. You cannot sit back and hope for the best. You must plan for the best. You must cultivate to get results. Applied to church life, the tragedy is not that of developing a situation of negative results; it is the cultivation of wrong and evil. Bad habits become a part of the life of a preacher. If he does not explore new ideas and stimulate his mind to think through new problems while orientating his old ones in the light of new truth, ignorance alone will not be the result of his failure. That is to say, his failure will not result in a negativeness. It will result in the formation of habits, ideas, thoughts, and tendencies in his life that will utterly destroy him. The human brain is a delicate instrument. It must think; it must explore. If it ceases to do this it becomes destructive both to oneself and to others. Beware of the Black Jack!

The other side is just as true. If you will cultivate your pine trees, your pine trees will make it more difficult for Black Jack acorns to be washed into the undergrowth, take root, grow, and develop. This is not to say simply that the way to combat false attitudes and thoughts is just to cultivate good ones. The cultivation of good ideas, the exploration of new areas, and the stimulus of thought is necessary for growth in any person, especially in the life of a preacher.

Begin by establishing a time for study. Set aside the time when you will do something that you have wanted to do for a long time. Start digging. I would not be too disturbed about where to start digging, just dig. In time you will certainly need some help and that is where the extension center of the colleges and the seminaries and the correspondence department of the seminaries can help. They can help one establish good habits of study; they can give him a safe method of study; they can offer him areas in which to study and grow. Beware of the Black Jack!

NEW STUDY

Ecclesiology: Dr. Gaines S. Dobbins has completed a course of study on The Church which is both doctrinal and practical. He utilizes two texts in its development -- Building Better Churches by Dr. Dobbins and Manual of Ecclesiology by Dr. H. E. Dana. After proper permission for some quotations has been obtained the courses will be ready for distribution. This course will do much to correct some misinformation on the subject. Every association in the country should study this fine work.