

Enlarging Our Educational Facilities

Excerpt of article by Rev. P.C. Nelson from The Pentecostal Evangel, June 16, 1934

When our present constitution and bylaws were adopted nearly seven years ago, the following paragraph was inserted, 'The General Council shall be in sympathy with the establishment and maintenance of academic schools for the children of our constituency,' Article IX, Section 3(b). There is a growing feeling among the brethren that we ought to advance from sympathy to action.

Conviction

Many people believe that the hour has come for us to take an advanced step along educational lines. We have an ever-increasing number of splendid young people who not only have character and capability, but also the anointing of the Spirit for doing a worthy work in other fields besides that of the ministry.

A beginning has been made to provide Bible school training for prospective pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and other Christian workers. But as yet nothing has been attempted by the General Council to run education along other lines. All of our fine young people cannot be preachers, or missionaries. But all need a good knowledge of the Bible and a liberal education. We should have young people thoroughly prepared to go into public schools and other institutions as teachers and musicians. Some of our young people need training to fit them for a business career; others to take work in offices as stenographers, bookkeepers, and other gainful positions. Some should be trained as engineers and architects and in such practical trades as carpentry, masons, auto mechanics, printers, and various other occupations. Our Bible schools are receiving numerous letters from parents of our young people in regard to literary training, which they are not able to provide.

Need

The moral and social conditions in most schools and colleges cause our parents to hesitate to send their young people to the schools that are now available. The attitude in these schools toward our Pentecostal teaching and experience makes it impossible for Pentecostal young people to go through these schools and maintain their doctrines and experience. That means we lose, to the great cause we represent, the young people that we send to institutions of that kind. Hence, if we want our young people to remain loyal to our movement, our fellowship must

provide instruction for them along all branches of study, in which our youth should engage.

In many communities, our people are mostly from the ranks of those who have had meager educational advantages. Many have dropped out of the public schools before finishing eighth grade. Then after being converted and being filled with the Spirit, they find a new desire to do something worthwhile for God and humanity, but they feel too old to go back into the lower grades to complete their education. Moreover, they will not go to schools where the whole trend is toward worldliness and where moral standards are low. The need of a more complete course of education is great.

Opportunity

A Pentecostal institution of learning can be built up with incredible swiftness, as we have hundreds if not thousands of young people who desire training along some line but cannot be induced to go to existing institutions. If the necessary equipment can be secured, a great student body of the finest kind of young people can be gathered in a very short time.

Moreover, we have many well-qualified teachers who have come into Pentecost and for that reason are no longer wanted in our public schools, or at least find conditions such that they cannot with a good conscience continue in their proportions. Such persons are eager to teach in a Pentecostal school even at a great sacrifice and salary.

Scope

Then too the charges made in worldly schools are usually prohibitive to a majority of our young people. To meet the actual need in these times of financial stress, the cost of schooling should be made as low as possible, as quickly as practicable, and the industrial feature should be introduced giving worth-while young people something to do to earn their way through. Many are out of work and out of funds, but have what is worth much more -- real sterling character, native ability, and spirituality. They ask for nothing more than a chance to earn while they learn so that they can come in without money and go without debt. We have Pentecostal mechanics in various lines, who would be glad to devote their lives to teaching young people useful trades, and thus enable them to become more useful members of society. The industrial feature may have to be developed very

gradually, and all the wisdom of our fellowship may need to plan and to operate this department.

Finance

So great an undertaking cannot be achieved without money, but the value exceeds the cost. If every member of our Pentecostal fellowship would give one dollar, we could build an institution which would be a credit to our movement and would adequately meet the educational needs of our young people. A Pentecostal college for one dollar! It will be as valuable to each person in our movement as if he owned the whole institution. Some may not be able to give one dollar and some for lack of vision may see no need. But others may see not only a need but also an opportunity to invest the resources which God has put in their hands for the good of our Fellowship and our youth. No investment will pay a larger dividend. Some may give large donations that will enable our executives to go forward at once. The purpose of this article is largely to find out if there are some among us who have the vision and feel the call of God to build an institution of this kind.

It is true that we are looking for the soon coming of our Lord, but we cannot be found better occupied at the moment of his appearing than in investing our resources and seeking to do something to advance the cause of Christ.

Our present Bible schools were built from small donations. Some gifts were as small as a dollar representing real sacrifice. Hence, pastors and laymen, whether able to give much or little, should not hesitate to write to the headquarters to express their opinion of this matter.