

**83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Session**  
**New Era Missionary Baptist District Association**  
**Congress of Christian Education**  
**Auxiliary to the**  
**New Era Missionary Baptist District Association**  
**“Reviving Holistically the Purpose of Christian Education”**  
**Matt. 28:18-20**  
**June 2-6, 2025**

**President’s 1<sup>st</sup> Keynote Address**  
**Rev. Robert L. Smith II, M.Div.**

**Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church of Jesus Christ**  
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**Rev. Dr. John Modest Miles – Host Pastor**

**Dr. Sandra Jones – District Congress Dean**  
**Sis. Reagan Dixon – District Congress Executive Secretary**  
**Rev. Gregory Nichols – District Moderator**

**GIVING PRAISES AND HONOR TO GOD OUR FATHER, TO JESUS CHRIST, OUR SAVIOR, AND TO THE HOLY SPIRIT, OUR COMFORTER AND KEEPER.**

**To this great Congress staff. I thank God greatly for your various leadership roles, all the prayers and support given to me this year in trying to navigate this position of president. I appreciate the patience that you afforded me as we planned this year's program. I look forward to many more good years. God bless you all. To Moderator Gregory Nichols and the parent body staff, I thank you also for your counsel, vision, and prayers that enabled me to take on this position this year.**

**To the Instructors of this great Congress of Christian Education, your gift you shared with us this week cannot be measured and will not be forgotten as you have given unselfishly of yourselves. May God continue to shower all of you with his many blessings.**

**To my pastor, Rev. Kevin McNeil, you have been a great support to me, also a friend and brother. I thank God I get to serve under another great leader. May God continue to bless you richly.**

**To my son and namesake Robert L. Smith III and Sister Carmella Dooley thank you for blessing us with your ministry gift in song.**

**To Pastor Donald Graves, I thank you for allowing me to serve under your leadership. We had a great many conversations concerning congress work. I appreciate all that you poured into me in order to prepare for this task. May God Bless and Keep you.**

### **The Address**

**The N.E.D. Congress of Christian Education theme for 2025 is "Reviving Holistically the Purpose of Christian Education" the Scripture reference is Matt. 28:18-20 KJV. This evening if you have your bibles I'll be looking at Matt. 28:20 of that particular narrative. Reading from the KJV of the Bible you have these words. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." By the help of the Holy Spirit I would like to share with you this thought, "How to Revive the Holistic Purpose of Christian Education?" I have three points to this question.**

- 1. We must teach because of the prioritized mandate given by Christ.**
- 2. We must teach with the purpose of delineating and differentiating biblical Christlikeness.**
- 3. We must teach knowing confidently of the powerful presence of Christ.**

**Most churches in particularly Baptist churches all do some form of the Great Commission. One of the things that some churches miss is the all-important follow-through of the Great Commission that is in Matt. 28:20. We can go with the best of them, but the preparation to send them back out ready to compel someone to give their life over to Christ can sometimes**

be missed because they are not prepared to share effectively the word of God to the point of compelling the heart of someone to consider giving their life over to the Lord. Well, we are not going to beat up on anyone tonight, I don't think. Within these three points it is my hope that we can discover some things to help us get to the heart of men by preparing ourselves better to serve in this kingdom building process.

My first point is we must teach because of the prioritized mandate given by Christ. We teach because Jesus commanded us to teach, and there is no way of diminishing the importance of an activity that owes its origin to the command of our Lord himself. This all-encompassing teaching goes from the age of when a child can say amen, hallelujah, and thank you Jesus to the very last moment before you go to be with our Lord. It pains me to see the age gaps that exist in our churches today. Some of our churches are varying away from the basic tenets of Christianity, and their preaching and teaching have become more inspirational and less biblical. Folk don't even mention sin or hell anymore.

Jesus, here in this narrative is not speaking about education for education sake. He speaks of the taught as "observing" what Jesus had commanded. In other words, Jesus is concerned with a way of life. Throughout this Gospel, he continually urges his follower's to live in a

manner pleasing to God. Listen, the best way to make what you teach stick for yourself so you can pour into someone else is by practicing what you teach on the daily basis. Listen, anyone can fake a Holy Ghost high on Sunday morning but be living like the devil on Monday. Folk running down the aisles and tearing up pews, getting that holy ghost lather going but they still living like a dirty wet dog. This prioritized mandate to teach should challenge us. See, when we are inspiration wrapped we ask God for stuff, and he blesses us with some of that, and we don't even say thank you or don't know to say thank you. When we teach inspiration only you are not teaching them about the relationship that needs to happen with God our Savior, Jesus Christ. Beloved, Sunday school, Prayer meeting, Bible study, BTU, Discipleship Training, New Membership, and everything that's been going on all this week should not just be haphazard events or secondary choices or schemes, but it must be it must be, it's got to be woven into the fabrics of our churches! The question is what are we teaching if we're not teaching those rudimentary components?

Point number two. We must teach with the purpose of delineating and differentiating biblical Christlikeness. I don't know if you heard but there are some bad actors out there posing as Christians. The record says, "Teaching

them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” The Greek word *didasko* means to know or teach. Teach, instruct by word of mouth. The word observe describes a warden type person or a guard and their job is to keep an eye on something. To watch, observe attentively, keep the eyes fixed upon. In other words, we must become protectors of Gods word in delineating and differentiating true biblical Christlikeness. The ways of Christ and how he dealt with humanity as well as how he lived. Why is that Important? It’s important because we’re living in a time where revisionist are changing everything and literally erasing historical facts, even the facts about Jesus. In this country this group called Christian nationalist supposedly focuses on promoting the Christian values of its followers, in order to achieve prominence or dominance in political, cultural, and social life. Well that sounds dandy to the powers that be but look at some of the attributes of Jesus Christ. Jesus was full of compassion; Unwavering in truth; Perfectly loving; Humble and Servant-Hearted; Forgiving and Merciful; Powerful yet gentle; righteous and pure; Ever-faithful friend; filled with hope and joy; victorious over death. We have to make sure what we teach lines up with what thus says the Lord. What we pour into people has life consequences. We don’t want to be guilty of teaching practical atheism either. In that we make Jesus Christ our

superhero, but we remain unchanged as if he never existed in a neglectful way when we feel he's not needed. As believers, when we teach with the purpose of delineating and differentiating we must present the biblical Savior to the world. We must be equipped to show the world the biblical truth as it relates to Christlikeness. This worldly culture is full of blackity black, black faiths. Some that embrace Christ or a form of him. For me, if Christ isn't King, if Christ isn't the center you can miss me we that stuff. It's far better to be biblically correct than culturally identified. We must be equipped to teach those with different gender and social constructs as well. we have to have ministry going on in our church's that can help people break up the fallow ground in their lives so deliverance and healing growth can begin to sprout up.

Point 3, we must teach knowing confidently of the powerful presence of Christ. This is a big leap for some people, but our assignment is clear. We've been recruited to be a part of God's kingdom building plan. Souls are at stake and our preparation on the inside of the four walls of a church will help believers be more suited and booted for battle. Being prepared is only part of it. You also got to know the Savior for yourself. It is in this knowing Jesus not only from what we read in the Bible but from experiencing him on a personal level will you begin

confidently teaching, preaching, and living more like Jesus. Yes, it is challenging but, in his word he said lo. Oh yes, he is calling attention to this fact that he is with us even to the end of the world. This promise that Jesus made if you trust him, he will be powerful for you. He will be there no matter come what may. So we got something we can talk about now. We have the best doctor; we have the best lawyer; In war we have the best battle ax; In our teaching he will draw things to our remembrance because he's a mind regulator. Just when we think we can't do it God reminds us that we shall reap if we faint not. Don't you know that Jesus is still and will always be a way-maker; don't you know that Jesus will still be your shelter in the time of storms. We serve a God that will never leave us or forsake us. Aren't you glad that we serve a mighty good God. Aren't you glad we have blessed assurance!

May God Bless and Keep You is my Prayer  
Humbly Submitted,

Rev. Robert L. Smith II, New Era District Congress  
President

Dr. Sandra Jones, New Era District Congress Dean

Pastor Gregory Nichols, New Era District Moderator