

October 5, 1960

Declines--A Slowing
Or Catching Breath?

By the Baptist Press

Are Southern Baptists slowing down or merely catching their breath for another period of growth and witness during the 1960's?

This question troubles Convention leaders. In fact, concern over it is enough to make it "story of the month" for Southern Baptists for September.

A former vice-president of the Convention, speaking "with a heavy heart," expressed his "very great concern" over downward trends this year in offerings, baptisms, and commitments of young people to church service.

Even Southern Baptists' individual convictions in the current Presidential campaign may be a factor affecting future growth, according to a Baptist public affairs specialist.

During September, it was announced that goals for baptisms of converts and for Cooperative Program receipts have been revised downward. The Cooperative Program is considered the lifeline of financial support for Baptist agencies and missionary programs.

W. Douglas Hudgins of Jackson, Miss., First Baptist Church voiced the concern about these reverse trends in an impromptu address to the S B C Executive Committee.

Hudgins said he fears Baptists have neglected the "primacy of worship." During the decade of the 1950's gains were evident in all areas now falling.

There was no note of defeatism, however. It was simply advice that Southern Baptists should take personal inventory to stem the decreases. Hudgins said a re-emphasis of worship might create an upward swing in giving, conversions, and vocational commitments.

Projected Cooperative Program income for 1965 for Convention agencies (not counting state shares of the income) was set at about \$26 million a year ago. Because of the sharp contrast in the year 1960, the Executive Committee reduced this estimate for 1965 to about \$20 million.

Cooperative Program gifts are still rising. What troubles financial committees is the fact they are not rising nearly as fast as they have been up to 1960. For the decade of the 1950's the gain of one year over the previous year was at least 6 per cent, often greater.

For 1960 over 1959, a liberal estimate is a 2.75 per cent increase. It may be as low as 1½ per cent.

W. Barry Garrett of Washington said the brand "bigot" can influence Baptists' witness. It is being used widely during the campaign for United States President in the so-called "religious issue."

Garrett believes that even if Baptists are wrongly considered "bigots", because of their statements, this image will be just as bad as if Baptists could be truthfully called "bigoted."

He is associate director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, an agency in the Capital reporting to Baptists on church-state and religious liberty affairs.

Reaction to Hudgins' speech came quickly. James F. Cole, editor of the Baptist Message at Alexandria, La., said Hudgins expressed what many others felt but had hesitated to express openly.

In Hudgins' own city, the Baptist Record said editorially:

"Is it not time to face our condition as it is? If we are in a spiritual decline, there is only one remedy. . . . As we face the challenges of the sixties, let us tarry with the Lord until we are filled with his power, and then go forth in his strength, as he leads. If we do this the most glorious days of Southern Baptists are not in the past. They are just ahead."

The Southern Baptist Convention treasurer's office in Nashville had good news. Cooperative Program receipts for September showed a marked increase and gave rise to renewed optimism for the remainder of the calendar-budget year.

(See separate story on Cooperative Program income.)

Texas Baptists elected a new Convention executive secretary to take office Jan. 1. He is Thomas A. Patterson, Beaumont, Tex., minister, who'll succeed Forrest C. Feezor, retiring.

At a study conference in Washington called by the Public Affairs agency, Baptist leaders came to no unanimous opinion on the matter of taxing church and church-related property.

The consensus was that tax exemption for churches does not impair their freedom, but a hard look needs to be taken at tax exemption for other church properties and for church businesses.

Personal opinions of the 85 participants varied widely.

Southern Baptists along the Atlantic "Gold Coast" of Florida planned to help lead possibly the largest, house-to-house survey ever undertaken. Scheduled for October, the religious survey was to cover a wide area from West Palm Beach to Key West.

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Governor Reports He
Didn't Hit Baptists

(10-5-60)

RALEIGH, N. C.--(BP)--North Carolina Gov. Luther Hodges has often referred to the "religious issue" in talking about the current Presidential campaign.

But he denies a statement attributed to him by the Chicago Tribune following an address to a business group there. The Tribune quoted Hodges as saying:

"They (the Baptists) usually are against anybody who is not one of them. I'm a Methodist and I have trouble."

He, according to the Tribune, had predicted North Carolina would go for the Democratic ticket of Kennedy-Johnson despite 800,000 Baptists living in North Carolina.

Gov. Hodges, asked here about his statement, told Baptist Press he did not say what the Tribune alleged.

"I did appear at a press conference, at which I said the Baptist church was the most numerous in North Carolina and that Baptists have said more on the religious issue than any others."

He told Baptist Press that support of individual Baptist voters is necessary for one to be elected in his state. Hodges also said he had appointed several prominent Baptist laymen to posts during his administration.

He singled out A. Gordon Maddrey of Ahoskie, N. C., appointed to the probation board. (Mrs. Maddrey is a member of the S B C Executive Committee.)

In an editorial comment on the Hodges statement, the Biblical Recorder here observed: "We do not like some current attempts to smear the good Baptist name simply because they are standing up for what they believe to be right. Any individual in the denomination that dares to express unpopular convictions about an issue can expect rough treatment and harsh words."

The Biblical Recorder, edited by J. Marse Grant of Raleigh, is weekly newspaper of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

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Hodges has frequently said that were it not for the "religious issue" the Democratic Party candidates would carry 45 of the 50 states. The Tribune article also quoted him as making this particular statement, which he has made on other occasions elsewhere.

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Pastors' Leader Has
Comment On Campaign

ATLANTA, Ga.--(BP)--The president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference has said that "religion definitely is an issue" in the current U. S. Presidential campaign.

He added that "usually those who cry 'prejudice' are displaying more of the same than those who would sincerely seek separate facts from hearsay."

Roy O. McClain, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Atlanta, said in a by-lined article for the Christian Index, Georgia Baptist weekly newspaper, that "no man should be judged solely on the basis of his religion but to ask that he be judged without any consideration of his religion is absurd. If a candidate were an atheist, his atheism would be an issue."

McClain said: "The 'official' position of Roman Catholicism is not in keeping with the Protestant position on separation of church and state. Protestants concede liberties and safeguards to all religious groups which would not be similarly conceded to Protestants if Catholics were in the same office."

He continued: "An individual's religion so far as private devotional matters are concerned is one thing; the hierarchical frame-work through which that devotion functions is another matter."

Referring to the possibility of a Catholic President having "misgivings" about participation in other religious services, McClain said: "While the President doubtless would be granted certain concessions by the Vatican the very necessity of concessions is the point of concern."

The well-known pastor recently observed his seventh anniversary as pastor of Atlanta's First Church. In regard to possible future efforts toward Catholic control if a Catholic president were elected, he observed:

"It is not the distance travelled so much as it is the direction taken that determines our ultimate National destiny. . . . Even if but a few sands were washed from the dikes of religious liberty separating church and state, it would be easier for many sands to follow in subsequent tenures of office."

McClain concluded: "Out of considered, Christian charity and a long look at church history, I must conclude that the many fine qualities of a Catholic nominee are not sufficient enough to outweigh the dualism involved in trying to reconcile this dilemma: Can one be a devout Roman Catholic and at the same time be a first-allegiance, all-religions-tolerated-in-equal-fair-mindedness, American citizen?"

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Optimism Appears
In New Statement

(10-5-60)

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Optimism appeared in the September financial report from the Southern Baptist Convention treasurer's office.

Treasurer Porter Routh of Nashville said that Cooperative Program receipts are now running 3.41 per cent over the previous year to date.

This represents a definite upward turn. Through August Cooperative Program receipts were only 2 per cent greater than for the corresponding eight months of 1959.

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\$1,420,944 came in through the Cooperative Program in September to support work of Southern Baptist Convention agencies. This brought the year's total to date to \$12,844,827 compared with \$12,420,990 for nine months of 1959.

The rate of increase for 1959 over 1958, however, remains greater than for 1960 over 1959. By September, 1959, Cooperative Program receipts were 7.84 per cent above the year before.

The downward turn noted in August income had forced Southern Baptist Convention financial planners to revise, downward, goals for Convention gifts for the years ahead.

The September, 1960, report also showed income through special designations of \$130,534 bringing the total for the year so far to \$11,048,316--an increase of 11.07 per cent over 1959 at this point.

The combined receipts totaled \$23,893,143, or 6.83 per cent more than the \$22,367,919 after three-fourths of the year 1959.

Cooperative Program income for the Southern Baptist Convention does not include that portion of collections kept by state Baptist groups for their work. It does not include funds retained by individual churches to support their local church programs.

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Gallman To Accept
Howard College Post

(10-5-60)

JACKSON, Miss.--(BP)--Lee Gallman, Jackson, director of the Seminary Extension Department of Southern Baptist Seminaries, has resigned to become director of the extension division of Howard College, Birmingham, Ala., effective Nov. 15.

Gallman, who has been director of the department in Jackson since its beginning nine years ago, came to the work here from the pastorate of the Second Baptist Church in Montgomery, Ala.

A graduate of Howard College (Southern Baptist), he has the master of theology degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and his doctor of theology degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He has also done special studies in University of Indiana and in Boston University.

He is a contributing member of the Adult Education Association and is currently the chairman of the Mississippi Co-ordinating Committee on Adult Education, an executive committee member of the Southeastern Adult Education Association, and was recently president of the Southern Baptist Extension Education Association.

The Seminary Extension Department has grown until it has reached approximately 20,000 in extension centers and by correspondence. Last year's enrollment included 3,392 people in 41 states.

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Folks & facts.....

.....Georgetown College, Baptist school in the Kentucky city of the same name, has embarked on a full-scale self-evaluation of its objectives and the way in which it is achieving those aims. (BP)

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Cuban Missionaries
Being Withdrawn

ATLANTA--(BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries in Cuba are returning at the suggestion of the United States Government. Some families have already reached Miami, Fla., and others are expected to follow.

The announcement was made by Loyd Corder of Atlanta, Ga., secretary of the language group ministries department of the denomination's Home Mission Board with offices in Atlanta.

The board supports 10 United States missionaries in the western portion of the island. Not all of the missionaries have indicated they will leave Cuba, but Corder expects most of them to depart.

The U. S. Government had advised that all dependents should be removed, but the Home Mission Board had previously voted not to withdraw the families without the missionaries. The financial support of the work will not be withdrawn.

Corder felt withdrawal of the missionaries would not severely curtail the work, since the Cuban leadership is sufficiently strong to continue the program among the 85 churches and more than 200 missions. There are more than 150 Cubans employed by the churches and the Home Mission Board.

According to Corder, "We have nationals in Cuba who are well-trained and who have ability to carry on the work without American leadership."

In fact, Corder felt that even if financial support had to be withdrawn the work would be continued by the national leadership.

The work of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Cuba is directed by Herbert Caudill of Havana. Other missionaries are Mrs. Caudill, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Law of Havana, Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Hurt of Havana, Mrs. David Fite of Havana, David Fite in language school at Costa Rica, and Miss Ruby Miller and Miss Lucille Kerrigan of Cabanas.

Religious News Service reported recently that one of the problems facing the churches arises from Castro-stimulated prejudice against Americans. Many missionaries have complained they cannot talk to some Cubans either because they dislike Americans or are afraid to be seen talking to an American.

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Quarter-Million Given
Stetson University

(10-5-60)

DELAND, Fla.--(BP)--Nearly a quarter of a million dollars has been left to Stetson University here by a DeLeon Springs, Fla., widow.

By terms of the will of Mrs. G. G. H. Van Der Heyden, funds totaling \$100,000 were provided for scholarships. The residue of the estate, estimated at between \$125,000 and \$150,000, was designated for construction of educational buildings at the Baptist school.

The scholarships are "for worthy students of all faiths."

Mrs. Van Der Heyden had no direct connection with Stetson University, but through the years she developed an interest in the school and frequently attended campus music concerts. DeLeon Springs is a nearby tourist attraction.

According to friends, she was unassuming woman who showed quiet consideration of others. In her will, she specifically asked no repayment to her estate from any recipients of gifts, and no accounting from individuals or institutions. She asked that no building bear her name.

Mrs. Van Der Heyden, who came from Holland, died Sept. 27.

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