

September 21, 1961

**Conference Challenges  
Men With World 'Mess'**

By Lloyd Wright

MEMPHIS (BP)--The world is in desperate straits. And it's up to Christian laymen to straighten it out.

That was the dominant theme running through all general sessions, seminars and presentations of the Second National Conference of Southern Baptist Men. The meeting here ended with a commissioning service for nine new foreign missionaries.

But neither they, nor the preachers at home, can make much of a dent in the mountainous task of world evangelism. Laymen must become informed, dedicated Christian witnesses, the men were told, if the goal is to be achieved.

A lot of them are ready to try. Daily seminars, which helped lift this meeting out of the realm of a typical Southern Baptist gathering by providing the laymen a chance to sound off, devoted much of their time to the subject, "Christian Witnessing."

Final registration totaled 4022, several thousand short of the expected attendance of 10,000. Hurricane Carla, inadequate motivation and busy schedules were cited as reasons for the low figure, a sampling of laymen showed.

No date was set for the next conference. The first held in Oklahoma City in 1957, registered 6128.

Gregory Walcott, television actor and Baptist layman, appeared to outshine such world figures as former United Nations General Assembly President Charles Malik and Louis Evans, top Presbyterian minister, in the minds of many of the men.

The 33-year-old Walcott, California Baptists' representative on the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and star of a new network detective series, pleaded for the men to express Christian love...even to those of different races and creeds.

Later, Walcott's admonition sparked the only tense moment in the seminars, when a Mississippi layman asked:

"How far should we go to love everyone? Should we have our toes stepped on, things shoved down our throats and still continue to love?"

A Negro attending the conference calmed the waters by taking the seminar floor with the statement:

"The Negro should not get in too big a hurry. God is in this plan. He will work it out if we let him; it will be to the advantage of both races because it is helping to bring us closer together in Christian love."

What could be a major contribution of the conference was the initial planning of a new medical missionary program to work within the framework of the denomination.

Fifty Baptist physicians and dentists attending the conference launched the project at a breakfast after R. Paul Caudill, pastor of First Baptist Church, Memphis, said:

"It is my conviction that we ought to have an organization of Southern Baptist physicians and dentists to work...in a unified effort to meet the desperate need in the realm of medical missions throughout the world."

Plans were mapped to call together a group of medical leaders to work out definite plans for the project.

Atlanta pastor Roy O. McClain sounded a note in his keynote address that was to recur often during the conference: Christianity and communism are in total conflict,

and Christians must strengthen their attack if they are to survive.

None of the speakers indicated Christianity should be merely anti-communist. But McClain, Malik, Evans, and Seminary Professor W. W. Adams of Louisville offered no hope for Christianity, if communism is the victor.

Malik told reporters that churches are not organized to combat communism, but should project a vibrant message.

Brooks Hays, former Southern Baptist Convention president and now assistant secretary of state for Congressional relations, provided the conference's lightest moments in an informal public interview conducted by Albert McClellan, program planning secretary for Southern Baptists' Executive Committee, Nashville.

"I wrote two books, you know," Hays quipped. "My father was asked once if he had read my last book. Replied my father, 'I hope so.'"

Women scored another victory when the "Men Only" signs come down on the final day of the conference. A few had attended other sessions, but the Oklahoma City meeting and this one were planned for men only.

Two men entered a hotel coffee shop on the final day of the conference and summed up its purpose and contribution. They told this story in a final seminar:

"We asked the waitress if she were a Christian. She said she wasn't. We asked if she would like to learn about Jesus. 'Yes,' she said. We met with her later that day, outlined the plan of salvation...and she accepted Christ."

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\$2,860,000 Announced  
As Armstrong Goal

(9-21-61)

BIRMINGHAM (BP)--The goal for the 1962 Annie Armstrong Offering for home missions, carried on by Southern Baptists, was announced here as \$2,860,000.

The figure was announced by Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, which promotes the special annual offering.

The goal is 14 per cent higher than the 1961 offering goal of \$2,470,000. Final tabulation has not been reached on 1961 receipts, but an incomplete, partial total indicates they are at least \$8000 beyond the goal.

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Weak Church Efforts  
Called Calamitous

(9-21-61)

MEMPHIS (BP)--A stinging rebuke for the Christian's failure to practice what he preaches was issued here by a Southern Baptist seminary professor.

Using such words as "calamitous," "blindness" and "blasphemous" to describe the weak efforts of Christians to make their religion universal, W. W. Adams of Louisville, said:

"Measured by other forces and movements dedicated to world conquest, Christianity is a mere side show.

"Christianity was intended to be and could be the universal religion and because it is not that, the human race is sick unto death. Christianity is not universal because we have failed to do our part."

More than 4000 Baptist laymen and pastors heard the professor of New Testament interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary blueprint a challenge to "turn the course of this century."

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Adams' address climaxed the three-day Second National Conference of Southern Baptist Men. A parade of top speakers, including world statesmen, preachers and laymen, had previously pleaded for the Baptist men to seek their role in providing solutions to the world's problems.

A commissioning service for nine newly-appointed Southern Baptist missionaries concluded the meeting. An earlier report from 16 vocational interest seminars indicated that the men were groping for ways to apply their Christian beliefs in their jobs.

Adams said they had better search for ways because the organized church can never get the job done.

"If the influence for good which formal church services are effecting in our nation represents Christ's will and resources for redeeming mankind," he said, "then Christ is not the hope of the world. The tragedy spread before our eyes is calamitous."

Continuing an insistent concern about the communist menace that ran through the entire conference, Adams said four groups are ahead of Christians in influencing Africans. He listed them as materialism, communism, Catholicism and Mohammedanism.

"Leaders of other religions are saying out loud now that Christianity has had her opportunity and has failed."

He quoted a Southern Baptist missionary to Africa as saying that all Christian groups have 19 missionaries in North Africa where the communists have 20,000.

Both preachers and laymen felt the sting of Adams' words when he ridiculed their continuation of the "tragedy" of separating sharply the clergy and the laity. All men are to be ministers, he said. He attributed development of a separate status for ministers and laity to the Roman Catholic Church.

"When they developed the erroneous idea of a controlling clergy, they needed a word to identify the masses of believers who are not called to minister, as they see it. So they took the greek word 'Laos,' from which comes the word laity."

"What a tragedy," he said. "You laymen proceed to call your pastor, 'minister.' Then you say and act in essence this idea: 'You are our minister; now minister, while we lay.' This distinction might be acceptable," he quipped, "if you should ever lay anything worth while."

Adams defined as "blasphemous" the idea advanced by an unnamed preacher that "the only hope for the world is in the second coming of Christ."

"That idea is false, but most of us believe it essentially. And it points straight to the reason why tonight the human race rots in sin and the heart of God sobs in sorrow.

"The hope of the world lies not in the second coming...but in his first coming. I dare you to name one resource that is in God and that man needs that is not now available in Christ," he said.

"Let's stop dodging some of the issues that we and the world face...and face all of them in the light of God's clear, full revelation."

Pleading for the men to act instead of merely talking about Christian living, he said:

"My faith in God is solid; my faith in us, you men, needs a lift. Can you get action? We shall see what we shall see."

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Folks and Facts.....

(9-21-61)

.....C. Roy Angell, pastor of Central Baptist Church, Miami, Fla., and former first vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention, has announced his retirement effective Feb. 28. He is 69. (BP)

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Seminars Concentrate  
On Laymen Witnessing

By John J. Hurt

MEMPHIS (BP)--Closing seminars for the Second National Conference of Southern Baptist Men here tossed aside the vocational classifications in which they assembled and instead gave themselves to the layman's role in spreading Christianity.

All but a few of the 16 groups chose as a topic for discussion, "Christian Witnessing." It was the same topic which drew the largest crowd on the opening day.

Discussions varied widely but all stressed the importance of the layman in evangelism. There was general agreement that the Christian example is essential, one man suggesting a laborer who loafed on the company job throughout the week had no chance of winning another to Christ.

In another section (religious vocations), the discussion started amid tension on the racial issue. The tension eased in the free exchange which followed.

The men agreed there is no easy solution to the racial issue and also that the race problems of America are a handicap to Christian missions abroad. One suggested that racial conflict also is contributing to tension within the Southern Baptist Convention.

Businessmen in their conference said a Bible on the office desk frequently opens the opportunity for presentation of Christ to a visitor. They also stressed the importance of example, concentrating somewhat on the problem of social drinking.

They promised their continued opposition to alcohol as a beverage, the serving of alcohol at company parties and the gift of liquor for business favors.

The farm section said there is widespread misrepresentation of facts in filing agriculture reports for government allotments. They resolved to "begin a campaign among farmers to 'shoot square' with our Lord, our neighbors and our government to build integrity and honesty as a virtue among farmers and ranchers."

Next to Christian witnessing, the most popular topic was in the stewardship area. The men said stewardship extends beyond the tenth of their income to disposition of the other nine-tenths and also into their wills which should include gifts for the church.

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Chaplaincy Staffer  
Dead From Leukemia

(9-21-61)

ATLANTA (BP)--Death claimed the second staff member of the chaplaincy division of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in less than six weeks when E. L. Ackiss of Atlanta succumbed suddenly to leukemia.

Ackiss died Sept. 17, the day after his 74th birthday. He had entered the hospital only 10 days before for a check-up. The Friday before his birthday, Ackiss had sent candy and cookies to the staff of the Home Mission Board as his gift to them.

James C. Peck, a co-worker of Ackiss', was killed in an automobile accident Aug. 12. The former director of the division, Alfred Carpenter, Atlanta, has been seriously ill following a gall bladder operation and heart complications.

"Chaplain Ackiss was indeed a man of God and one of the most effective military chaplains during his 33 years with the Navy," said George Cummins of Atlanta, director of the chaplaincy division.

"His service with us as secretary of ministries to military personnel for the past eight years has been one of outstanding achievement. His concern was that the local church minister to military personnel and their families through definite contact with these church members wherever they may be found around the world. This man was a world missionary."

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Ackiss, a native of Oceana, Va., was a teacher, pastor and chaplain previous to his work with the chaplaincy division.

During his military career his work included service as assistant director of the chaplains division of the U. S. Navy, writing the first chaplain school textbook, "The Navy Chaplain," and responsibilities in the field of training, education and promotion.

He was a graduate of Massey Business College and Richmond College, Richmond, Va.; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, and the divinity school of the University of Chicago. He also did graduate work at Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University, New York City, and the University of Pennsylvania.

Survivors include his wife in Atlanta; daughters, Mrs. Mary Ann Goolsby of Johnsville, Pa., Mrs. Susan Sevale of Burbank, Calif., and one son, Capt. Ernest L. Ackiss Jr. of Ft. Benning, Ga.

Memorial services were held in Atlanta Sept. 20. Interment was in the Arlington National Cemetery, Va., Sept. 22.

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Folks and Facts.....

(9-21-61)

.....H. O. Hester, pastor of 35th Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, has been elected, effective Oct. 1, secretary of the department of missions to special groups, with the Alabama Baptist State Convention Executive Board. The department will include work with Negro Baptists, work with Indians and work with the deaf. (BP)

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.....The greater Miami (Fla.) Council of Churches secured Luther C. Pierce as new executive director. Pierce, a former director of the Connecticut Baptist Convention, resigned his Miami post as education director of Flagler Street Baptist Church. (BP)

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.....Miss Vanita Baldwin of Montgomery, Ala., has been elected executive secretary of Woman's Missionary Union for the Baptist Convention of New Mexico. The new secretary will assume her duties Nov. 10. For the past six years, Miss Baldwin has been associate in the Woman's Missionary Union in Alabama. (BP)

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.....Two Baptist college football teams were to have their game televised this November. The game between Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn., and Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., was to be televised by a Jackson, Miss., station when the two clashed in Jackson. (BP)

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Baptist Press Outlines

September 21, 1961

**EIGHT SIDES--**The new Southern Baptist Convention Building, to be located in Nashville, will be in the shape of an octagon. The general design was adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee here. The building, to be constructed during 1962, will house the Executive Committee and four agencies. The Sunday School Board is not among the agencies. (BP) Photo.