

June 21, 1959

Bible Schools Pose  
Question For Baptists

NASHVILLE--(BP)--"Southern Baptists must present a positive denominational answer to the more than 200 other Bible schools in America attracting Southern Baptist students," Baptist educational leaders here were warned.

D. M. Aldridge, president of Clear Creek Baptist School, Pineville, Ky., said he believes Southern Baptists will "respond to the challenge" to train ministers who can not or will not attend a college or seminary.

"To ignore the work of the Bible school is to refuse training, enlightenment, and encouragement to many basically good men called of God to preach, but who lack proper preparation for it," Aldridge added.

He said that there are five Baptist Bible schools, none of which is supported by the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole. They are supported by state Baptist groups.

The five are, in addition to his own, Western Kentucky Baptist Bible Institute, Mayfield, Ky.; Baptist Bible Institute, Graceville, Fla.; Mexican Baptist Bible Institute, San Antonio, Tex., and Fruitland Baptist Institute, Hendersonville, N. C.

"The Bible schools face a dilemma in regard to financial support. There is an apparent necessity for such schools, and yet to date the denomination has failed to recognize that need and refuses to give the Bible school its proper place in the financial structure of the Southern Baptist Convention," he said.

"Baptists can not control such matters as who will enter the ministry or what education he will have when ordained," Aldridge declared.

Many preachers prefer to attend a Bible school, and many churches would not call a seminary graduate if he were available, according to Aldridge. He said accreditation standards of the American Association of Theological Schools resulted in Southern Baptists' six seminaries turning away students who are not college graduates.

"Many men not now eligible for seminary training will seek training in non-denominational or independent schools unless Southern Baptists provide for them," he predicted.

Non-denominational institutes, because of doctrinal differences and ecumenical emphases, "seriously hamper the Southern Baptist students in their future church and denominational relationships," and their students sometimes lead "Baptist splinter movements."

Aldridge gave four avenues through which the Southern Baptist Convention could financially assist Bible schools:

1. Through a percentage of its theological education budget allocated to "selected Bible schools." He said "I can not too strongly emphasize that Bible school education is theological education."
2. Through a scholarship program to Bible school students with money from Cooperative Program receipts.
3. Through direct or indirect financial help to Bible schools now supported by state conventions. He claimed that almost 40 per cent of the students at Clear Creek Baptist School are from outside Kentucky.
4. Through each Southern Baptist seminary adopting a Bible school, with the seminary lending financial aid to its Bible school affiliate from funds received from the Southern Baptist Convention for seminary education.

Aldridge said the adoption plan "would identify the SBC and the seminaries with the Bible schools. Their plan would make it possible for every preacher . . . to know that the SBC is helping him to gain a theological education, and they need this assurance."

College In New Area  
Must Hurdle Obstacles

NASHVILLE--(BP)--A Baptist college in new Baptist territory must win the confidence of established state universities, through whom accreditation is based.

It must also win approval of its teacher-training program by the state department of education if its teacher graduates are to be certified for public school careers.

The school must also win the acceptance of the community and state in which it's located, for the attitude of the public toward a church-affiliated school may be vastly different than that encountered where such schools are common.

While doing all these, the college must win the support of its Baptist constituency, whom it serves and upon whom it relies for financial means.

Each of these problems was faced in establishing a Baptist school in a new Southern Baptist territory, Baptist educators attending a meeting here were told.

Glenn Eason, acting president and dean of Grand Canyon College, said these were vital issues facing the school established in Phoenix by the Baptist General Convention of Arizona.

Eason said that his appraisal of problems was necessarily based on the experience of Grand Canyon College, the only church-affiliated college in the state of Arizona.

In Arizona, the religious problems came from many sides, according to Eason. "There are 15 to 20 different Baptist groups working in Arizona. Other Baptist groups felt we were encroaching on their very definite areas of work," he reported.

To this was added the problem of a predominantly and historically Roman Catholic state, which church forbade its students enrolling at Grand Canyon College because it required every student to take Bible courses.

The Mormons, which are also in the area, "believe in church-state separation but they do not practice it," Eason said. In addition there are many other religious groups.

"All of these groups posed problems because they can not accept principles on which we as Baptists stand," he continued.

The accrediting group from the University of Arizona at first wanted to pass over the religion courses in the Grand Canyon College curriculum as "not being a college department."

Eason said the attitude has changed completely since the school's founding and the University of Arizona "is our staunchest friend."

State department of education approval of the new school's teacher-training program was even harder to obtain, according to Eason. "Perhaps our greatest contribution is in our teacher-training program. We have not failed to successfully place our graduates in the public school system," he added.

This initial attitude of skepticism Eason attributed to the philosophy of the area in which the school is located. "There is a very definite conviction that any cultured person may not have any religious bias, that Christian culture is not the highest culture. This attitude," he said, "made it difficult to establish a Baptist college."

Some people immediately tried to classify the new college with the Bible schools prevalent in Arizona, "which we were not, since we were going to be a four-year liberal arts college."

"Pre-conceived notions as to the type of school we should have, and as to its location" were the problems the school met within its own Baptist family. "Also there was a feeling we should not attempt a school until all our other work was fortified," Eason said.

Grand Canyon College, which opened in 1949, has been located in Phoenix since 1951. Eason reported enrolment nearing 800.

Educators Alerted  
On Church Vs. State

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Administrators of church-related colleges must be alert to new laws passed each year by Congress if they are to preserve the principle of church-state separation, a college president reported here.

Walter Pope Binns, president of William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., spoke to a joint session of the Southern Association of Baptist Colleges and Schools and Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Binns, who is also chairman of the SBC public affairs committee, added, "The government is passing new laws all the time in the field of education.

"If you ask me, 'How far should we go in accepting government funds?' I would say 'Nowhere.' The difficulties arise on borderline questions."

Among the borderline questions mentioned by Binns in his address are government loans to students, use of church-related college campuses for government institutes on science and other subjects, and government loans to colleges for student housing.

Binns said that he did not feel a church-related college violated the church-state separation principle by permitting the government to conduct an institute on its campus, such as is being done in the field of science this summer at William Jewell and other colleges.

He said the college is loaning its summer school faculty, paid by the college, to the government institute as a public service and also is making its campus available as classrooms.

Industry should be encouraged to make contributions to church and private colleges, he continued, because it will enable the private schools to keep pace with tax-supported state universities.

"We believe that the system of having parallel public and private schools is the best," Binns declared. "We should show industry that if they do not voluntarily support private schools they will pay it in taxes to support state colleges."

Binns said "It is dangerous to base our argument on what we are saving the government. That's exactly what the Roman Catholics are saying."

-30-

Virginian President  
Of Education Group

(Attention: Va., La., Tex., Mo.)

NASHVILLE--(BP)--The Southern Association of Baptist Colleges and Schools elected a Virginia college executive as its president for the coming year.

Charles L. Harman, president of Bluefield College, Bluefield, Va., succeeds H. Leo Eddleman, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, La.

Harman was vice-president of the association last year. The new vice-president is Evan A. Reiff, president of Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Tex.

Re-elected executive secretary was H. I. Hester of Liberty, Mo. Hester is vice-president of William Jewell College and chairman of the trustees of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City.

All of the schools are Southern Baptist. The association is a voluntary group meeting twice a year to discuss common problems of Baptist higher education. The June meeting is held in connection with the annual meeting of the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

-30-

Pfeifer Takes Post  
In Louisiana Board

ALEXANDRIA, La.--(BP)--Tom L. Pfeifer has been elected secretary of Negro work for Louisiana Baptist Convention. The operating committee of the convention's executive board made the announcement.

He will succeed R. U. Ferguson, who recently resigned to accept a pastorate at Mobile, Ala.

Pfeifer, who is already on his new field, is a native of Missouri. He was pastor of Monte Sano Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, La., when called to his position here. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

-30-

Folks & facts.....

.....Paul L. Morgan, pastor, Ballast Point Baptist Church, Tampa, Fla., has been elected missionary of district V, Louisiana Baptist Convention. The district covers the Minden-Ruston area in extreme north central Louisiana. Morgan is a native of Coushatta, La., and graduate of Louisiana College.

-30-

Literature Use, New  
Service Announced

NASHVILLE--(BP)--The Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention distributed 1,154,000 pieces of literature, not including its monthly magazine, last year.

Commission Chairman Ralph A. Phelps, Jr., of Arkadelphia, Ark., said literature included the paper, Career News, for young people; tracts and pamphlets about the Commission and about Christian higher education, and material in vacation Bible school packets.

He announced that the Commission still plans to employ an associate secretary who will be in charge of a new teacher-placement service. "This is the field in which the colleges have expressed a great need," Phelps reported.

The teacher-placement secretary would spend "a great deal of time" in field work. He would keep files of persons available for teaching positions in Southern Baptist colleges and of persons in graduate schools who will become available after their schooling.

The first announcement of the planned teacher-placement emphasis came from R. Orin Cornett, former executive secretary of the agency, last year. The Commission already has a file of potential Baptist college teachers, but no one assigned on a permanent basis to administer a program.

Phelps said that the Commission, in addition to being a clearing-house for colleges seeking teachers, hopes to be a central point for ideas and materials in the college administrative field.

"You would send in significant documents from your colleges," he told fellow Baptist educators. These would be shared with other Baptist colleges. "This service," according to Phelps, "will be valuable to colleges in seeking and in retaining accreditation."

The paper, Career News, will follow more of a pattern of educational guidance than of vocational guidance in the future, Phelps continued. Career News was launched several years ago. Recently, a paper on church-related vocations was started by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Both papers are designed primarily for the high-school junior and senior considering his or her life career and choice of college.

-30-