

August 28, 1959

Colleges In Jeopardy,  
Need Serious Thought

NASHVILLE--(BP)--"Our greatest need" in Baptist higher education has been described as "a clear-cut sense of values, a sharply-defined philosophy of what we are supposed to be doing with and through our Baptist schools."

This viewpoint was expressed in the Southern Baptist Educator's July-August issue by Ralph A. Phelps of Arkadelphia, Ark.

Phelps is chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Education Commission, which publishes the magazine, and president of Ouachita Baptist College.

"We have been making more progress on the material side of education than we have on the intangible side," he continued. "We have learned how to build buildings and recruit teachers, but we have only a hazy idea of why we do either."

He said programs have been based on expediency---"expediency embellished with a few pious platitudes to make the outsider believe that our schools have a crystal-clear sense of divine mission and programs at least as scriptural as the New Testament."

Phelps contended that several questions need "serious, dedicated attention." The questions, summarized, include:

1. What makes a school Christian, and what about the school which publicly proclaims one set of principles and privately practices the opposite?
2. What sort of people should teach on the faculty of a Baptist school? Should non-Baptists, even non-Christians teach, and does a faculty made up of evangelical Christians necessarily mean there will be spiritual quality?
3. How much say-so should a denomination have in running its own school, one it has supported through the years and still "theoretically at least" owns and operates?
4. From whom shall the Baptist college take money? Shall it accept government funds, or even private foundation grants which dictate the courses to be taught and "slant given them"?
5. To what extent is service to the denomination a responsibility of the Baptist college?
6. What are the primary purposes of a Christian college? How does it balance development of Christian character, a championship football objective, and academic achievement?
7. What part does Jesus Christ play in a school which is supposed to exist because of and for him?

The problem, according to Phelps, is that there are too few people associated with the Baptist colleges to think through these questions. The president? "No one looks to the president as a thinker these days. He is a producer, a builder, a fund-raiser, a huckster, a financier, a public speaker, a politician."

Trustees "are busy with their own businesses and professions" and faculty are "paid to teach, not think," Phelps added. "Pastors might, but their job security does not rest on a denomination's program but on their local responsibility."

Baptist editors might be the thinkers, "but they have many other causes also in need of editorial attention," Phelps said.

"The cold truth is that the job of thinking is given little attention and that no particular individual is apt to be raised up as a Moses to lead us from the wilderness in which we are wandering," he complained.

"Unless many Baptists . . . give serious thought to these matters at once, future generations may well look back upon this present period as the age in which the cause of Christian education was lost for Southern Baptists," Phelps warned.

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Secretarial Efficiency  
Used In Naming of Baby

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. --(BP)--There is nothing like secretarial efficiency, even in the naming of a new-comer to the family circle.

As the Harry P. Gibersons, of Little Rock, looked forward to the arrival of their first child, they agreed that the child's name would be the same, whether a boy or a girl, only the spelling to vary.

Upon the arrival of the new Giberson girl, she was promptly named Terri Lyn. If the stork had brought a boy, the name would have been Terry Lynn.

Mrs. Giberson was formerly a member of the staff of Arkansas Baptist, where she was secretary to the editor.

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Folks & facts.....

.....Frank L. Ashmore has been selected as executive director of the American College Public Relations Association. He is a graduate of Furman University, Greenville, S. C., and has been director of development at Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Va.

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.....Richard K. Young and the pastoral care training program at North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, are featured in a lengthy article in the September issue of Reader's Digest. Young pioneered in the field of hospital pastoral care training in the Southern Baptist Convention at the Winston-Salem hospital.

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