

May 24, 1954

127 Ninth Avenue, North Nashville, Tennessee

SOUTHERN BAPTIST LEADERS CALL
FOR CALM APPRAISAL OF COURT RULING

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--(BP)--A group of Southern Baptist leaders contacted by the Baptist Press agree that the Supreme Court's decision on public school segregation should be received thoughtfully and calmly. Several see it as an opportunity for improvement of religious and social life of the nation. Others are fearful that it is not realistic.

A. C. Miller, Nashville, head of the Christian Life Commission said that the decision should be no surprise to the people and that the present court should not be blamed, pointing out that since 1914 a total of twenty-nine race cases have been tried in the Supreme Court, with twenty-seven of these affirmative. He said, "The decision was the inevitable result of social progress based on the Christian teaching that all men are included in the love of God and have dignity and worth in the sight of God." He also gave as his opinion that "the decision will be accepted by the majority of our people in the South."

Baker James Cauthen, Richmond, Va., executive secretary, Foreign Mission Board, said, "The decision will strengthen American influence in many countries and will reduce some obstacles to missionary work among the races."

Courts Redford, Atlanta, Ga., executive secretary, Home Mission Board, said, "We should seek to so implement the decision as to conceive and improve the great gains already made in racial understanding and co-operation."

L. S. Sedberry, executive secretary, American Baptist Theological Seminary, Nashville, declared that "it is an opportunity to help fifteen million colored people, and several million of other minority races now in America, to become not only good citizens of the United States, but also good citizens of the kingdom of God." Sedberry warned, "We must not permit prejudices, racial antagonism, and petty politics to lead us into confusion, violence, and possible bloodshed."

Henry W. Tiffany, pastor, First Baptist Church, Norfolk, Va., said, "that it imposed a problem that demands avoiding rash statements, wrong attitudes, and hasty actions." He thinks that we ought "to take time to think through clearly and comprehensively then act as true Christians and loyal citizens."

Herschell H. Hobbs, pastor, First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, said that the decision is "Christian in principle but fraught with problems of local appli-

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cation."

John H. Buchanan, pastor, Southside Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala., said "It complicates and damages relations between races in the South. Much progress has been made under decision of 1896. The present court from its cloistered chambers has overlooked the reality of the situation. Our people must exercise sober and sound judgment in facing this crisis."

J. Winston Pearce, pastor, Seventh Baptist Church, Baltimore, Md., said, "The decision calls for putting into actual practice principles that have been enunciated by our Convention for years and is already in practice in our own seminaries."

E. H. Westmoreland, pastor, South Main Baptist Church, Houston, Tex., called it a "consent decision" and said that it is "in keeping with our Christian culture and democratic ideals." He also gave the opinion that "effect will be more psychological than practical." He warned that the "ruling will demand sound judgment and true Christian spirit from leaders of both races on state and local levels."

C. C. Warren, pastor, First Baptist Church, Charlotte, N. C., and president of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, said that the decision was received calmly in his area and that a "wait and see" attitude prevailed.

Monroe F. Swilley, Jr., pastor, Second Ponce De Leon Church, Atlanta, Ga., said the ruling requires "calm consideration and untiring patience." He also said, "People of all races can always solve their problems when they resolve to walk in the way of Christian love."

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TEXAS SECRETARY CALLS
FOR BEST IN BEHAVIOR

DALLAS, Tex.--(BP)--Forrest C. Feezor, state secretary for Texas Baptists, said here that the Supreme Court decision on segregation created serious problems for great sections of the country, but that it is an hour that "calls for our best in behavior, carefulness in conversations, charity in conduct, restraint in remarks, and Christlikeness in citizenship." He added, "I believe Baptists are big enough and Christian enough for all that the hour demands."

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MILLER SAYS DECISION
SHOULD BE NO SURPRISE

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--(BP)--"The Supreme Court decision on segregation in our public schools should not have been a surprise to any of us," declared A. C. Miller, executive secretary of the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. "It was the inevitable result of social progress based on the Christian teaching that all men are included in the love of God and have dignity and worth in the sight of God.

Dr. Miller also pointed out, "the first pronouncement of the Supreme Court on this issue came in 1914. Since that time twenty-nine cases on this question have reached the Supreme Court which has given affirmative decisions in all but two of them. This makes it impossible to blame the nine men who now compose our highest tribunal with the decision on this issue. The political protagonists who seek to lay all blame upon the present court are deliberately misrepresenting the facts of history and ignoring the progress in the jurisprudence of this court.

"Chief Justice Warren is correct in his statement that by this decision our position in the United Nations will be made stronger, and by it we have made it easier for nations whose citizens are colored to join with us in our battles for peace," said Miller.

"This decision will be accepted by the majority of our people in the South. The political blasts which accompany it will soon cease to be heard, and the citizens of our country will march together in unity to build a great nation and a better world on the recognition of the dignity and worth of every individual," Dr. Miller concluded.

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RELIGIOUS FAITH WILL DICTATE
ACTIONS OVER SUPREME COURT RULING

SAVANNAH, Ga.--(BP)--The president of the Georgia Baptist Convention, Searcy S. Garrison, and pastor of Bull Street Baptist Church here has said, "Our people are deeply concerned over the segregation ruling of the Supreme Court, but they are facing the problems arising from the decision as loyal Americans. The religious faith and traditional good will of our citizens will dictate their ultimate decisions and actions. With time and patience our statesmen and people of both races will establish an order in harmony with wisdom and democratic ideals."

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SEGREGATION DECISION CALLS
FOR CHRISTIAN PATRIOTISM

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.--(BP)--"The Supreme Court decision on segregation calls for Christian patriotism at its best," said Ramsey Pollard, pastor, Broadway Baptist Church here. "We now face the inevitable and honorable citizens of both races will make necessary adjustments. No time for violence, undue haste, or loud talk with ulterior motives, the decision presents serious problems to overcome and affords glorious opportunity to applied tactical Christianity for both races. All Americans need to pray. Let serenity, patience, calmness, and matured judgment prevail."

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SBC PRESIDENT MAKES STATEMENT
ON SUPREME COURT DECISION

TULSA, Okla.--(BP)--The president of the Southern Baptist Convention, J. W. Storer, who is also pastor of the First Baptist Church here has appealed to all Christians to respect the ruling of the Supreme Court on public school segregation. He said, "It is a fundamental concept of Christianity that we 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.'

"Our Christian field of thought and practice does not include political areas. As Christians we are to love all men regardless of color, even as God does. I could feel that this is true irrespective of any decision of any court. Since the Supreme Court has made its ruling it is the duty of all Christians to respect that ruling and pray that God shall guide its implementing within the framework of mutual understanding and consideration. "

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