

June 28, 1963

'Solution' To Decline:
Pray For New Ministers

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--"How much praying have you done for new ministers?"

A Baptist seminary professor termed the denomination's declining number of ministerial students "essentially a spiritual problem." And he told Baptist college presidents and deans they and other Baptist leaders have not done enough praying for the Lord "to send workers into his harvest."

V. L. Stanfield, professor of preaching at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, added, "If we pray, he will thrust them into the ministry."

Stanfield and Herbert C. Gabhart, Nashville, president of Belmont College (Baptist), spoke to the Southern Association of Baptist Colleges and Schools at the group's annual meeting here.

They outlined reasons they felt accounted for the reported decline in students preparing for the ministry in Baptist colleges and seminaries. They also offered at least partial answers to these problems.

To these, other members of the association added their own reasons and solutions.

Stanfield's reasons and his "partial answers," as he called them, are:

Reason for decline: "We take our unusual blessings from God for granted."
Answer: Pray for him to direct or call more youth into the ministry.

Reason: The accent on church administration and counseling has taken the emphasis away from the pastor's role of preaching. Answer: "Young men will be attracted to the ministry when we magnify the preaching office."

Reason: The broadside attacks on colleges, seminaries and professors generally discourage young people. Answer: Many of these attacks are "unethical."

Problem: The church is too occupied with itself in using its time and in spending its money. Stanfield's answer: "Self-denial...a change of atmosphere in our churches, coming back to a sense of worship."

Gabhart blamed uninformed high school vocational counselors, theological and organizational conformity in Southern Baptist life, the "fever of statistics," "feuding and fussing" in Baptist circles, and the secular culture of America for the decline.

He urged as antidotes (1) alert local churches encouraging their young people to enter the ministry, (2) a reemphasis on the pastor as a prophet, (3) parents at home advocating the ministry as a life's service, and (4) more circulation of college youth teams to focus attention on the ministry.

Stanfield reported, "Men are not entering the ministry of any group today in the numbers that they were."

The seminary professor also chided pastors for griping about their problems and not expressing their joy in the ministry.

Others in the group advanced these comments:

"We are too willing to ordain anyone who says he is called to preach. He may wind up driving a taxi, hauling coal, or going into some other business instead of in the pulpit."

"Deterioration of morality in America and the accompanying loss of status of the preacher."

"Low ministerial salaries except in the small percentage of big city churches."

"Too many are men-called rather than God-called. They volunteer after some emotional service and don't follow through."

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Education Commission
Selects 1964 Emphasis

(6-28-63)

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--"Christian Learning for Liberty and Light" will be theme of the February, 1964 emphasis on Christian higher education and denominational colleges in the Southern Baptist Convention.

This was reported here by John A. Fincher of Birmingham, chairman of the Education Commission of the SBC. Fincher is dean of Howard College (Baptist) there.

He said the February theme fits into the 1964 climax of the Baptist Jubilee Advance. The advance's six-year program has used the title, "For Liberty and Light."

Rabun L. Brantley, Nashville, the commission's executive secretary, said 15 of the 17 states in which Southern Baptists have colleges used materials in 1963 on the February higher education emphasis.

He said a third edition of Southern Baptist Campus Directory will be published in 1964. This book, which comes out every four years, pictures and describes all higher educational institutions within the SBC.

The commission, from its office in Nashville, circulated over 1-1/2 million pieces of literature during the last 12 months, according to Brantley. This is twice the number distributed the year before.

Vacation Bible schools in Baptist churches this summer have studied about Baptist colleges, he reported.

The commission, in its annual meeting, elected Fincher to another term as chairman. Reelected also were Vice-chairman Edward N. Jones of Dallas and Recording secretary Hayward Highfill of Nashville.

Jones is secretary of the Christian education commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Highfill is pastor of Eastland Baptist Church, Nashville.

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Harley Fite Heads
School Association

(6-28-63)

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--D. Harley Fite, president of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn., is the new president of the Southern Association of Baptist Colleges and Schools.

He was elected at the association's annual meeting, held on the campus of Oklahoma Baptist University here. Fite succeeds J. Ralph Noonkester, president, William Carey College, Hattiesburg, Miss.

Vice-president of the association for the coming year is Loyed R. Simmons, president of California Baptist College, Riverside. H. I. Hester, vice-president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., was reelected its secretary and treasurer.

The association continued its new plan for annual meetings by voting to visit another Baptist college campus for the 1964 meeting. The school is Howard College in Birmingham. Dates are June 17-18, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention Education Commission at the same site.

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Formerly they met in Nashville each year, where the Education Commission has offices. Starting last summer, when they went to Wake Forest College, Winston-Salem, N. C., the commission and the association began accepting invitations to meet on Baptist campuses.

The association includes presidents and deans of Southern Baptist educational institutions. The Education Commission is an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention; its members are elected by the Convention.

The two groups work in harmony. Rabun L. Brantley of Nashville, executive secretary of the commission, gives staff guidance to the association also.

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Indian Maiden
Speaks To Girls

(6-28-63)

By Mildred Dunn

MEMPHIS (BP)--Marvelita Alicia Iglesias, a 12-year-old Indian maiden, brought a glimpse of the life of her people, the 20,000 Cuna Indians of the San Blas Islands, to all three sessions of the Girls' Auxiliary 50th anniversary convention here.

Wearing the colorful and unique dress of the Cuna Indians (which includes three-inch earrings, a nose ring and an enormous golden necklace), she looked like a page out of National Geographic. As she told of the customs of the Indians on the 400 islands in the Caribbean, just off the coast of Panama, the girls listened with obvious interest.

Marvelita, born on the tiny island of Achutuppu, was taken from her parents when she was six months old. Her father, while working in Panama, had "learned some of the bad ways of the city" and was banished from the islands as a "lesson" to the people.

Her mother was forced sorrowfully to give her tiny daughter to a friend who promised to give her to a Spanish family in Panama City. There she would likely have become a servant.

But Marvelita believes that God had other plans for her life, because that very day Mrs. Lonnie Iglesias, Southern Baptist missionary on another of the islands, heard of her plight and sent a messenger to get her. Mrs. Iglesias and her husband had already adopted two Indian sons, but they wanted a daughter.

So across the ocean in a tiny boat, protected from the sun by a big umbrella, was brought the little outcast baby to be adopted by the Iglesias'.

The sudden appearance of this baby, in Indian dress and wearing a ring in her nose, caused a great disturbance in the Iglesias household. There were no clothes, no bottles, no diapers.

A crowd of Indians had gathered, and one by one they went to their thatched-roofed huts and brought back needed supplies.

From that day, when her Indian neighbors helped supply her needs and selected her name, she was "everybody's baby."

Today, although she has been off the islands for a year living in Colon, Panama, where her adopted father was transferred, these people still are her people and she hopes some day to return to them, perhaps as a missionary nurse.

Living conditions on the island are primitive and there are no doctors and nurses. The people depend mostly on the witch doctors and idols for healing.

Most of them do not know about the Lord Jesus. "Only a short time ago my village accepted a Sunday school," said Marvelita. "The chief of the island, who is very influential, thought the children would become lazy if they went to school.

"There are only eight baptized church members on my island and one training to become a missionary-teacher. There are no schools except a kindergarten and

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first grade taught by the missionaries who opened work there four years ago."

Although Marvelita grew up among people who have little or no education, she herself speaks three languages.

Educated in the mission school conducted by her parents, she learned Spanish. In her home, she learned English, and from her friends she learned the Cuna Indian dialect.

When she moved to Colon, she took an entrance exam and placed first in her entire class in math. Understandably, she did not rate as high in social studies, but has brought those grades steadily upward in the past year.

Perhaps because swimming was one of her chief forms of recreation while on the islands, it is still her favorite sport. With the other children of the islands, she became an expert swimmer as she dived and splashed in the ocean and rivers. She can also handle a boat, but declares she is not very skilled in making the intricate designs used in the native dress. She just liked to swim too well to spend time sewing.

What does she think of American cities, clothes, and people? She likes them! She thinks the cities are wonderful. She prefers American dresses to her native costume partially, perhaps, because it takes at least one hour just to wrap the beads around her legs and arms.

And she likes the American people--especially those in Girls' Auxiliary--but the big attraction to her in Memphis was the television set she found in her hotel room. She was fascinated! Watching it, she would laugh with delight, and her mother could hardly get her to turn it off.

And what did she most want to see in the big city of Memphis? Elvis Presley, or at least his home!

"She has a transistor radio," explained her mother.

Dressed in an American-style dress, lying on the bed looking at television, and asking to see Elvis Presley, she seemed a typical American teenage girl, quite different from the Indian maiden who spoke to the GA Convention.

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(Photo mailed to state Baptist papers)

Alabama Elects
George Bagley

(6-28-63)

MONTGOMERY (BP)--A modern-day success story of "working up through the ranks" belongs to the man chosen as executive secretary-treasurer of the Alabama Baptist state executive board.

George E. Bagley, named leader of the 741,000 Southern Baptists in this deep South state, began work after high school as a \$70-a-month clerk. He felt the call to preach, went to college, was a pastor, graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and earned promotions in the Baptist state executive board which led to his new office.

At 48 years of age, Bagley is the youngest man ever to hold this post. For the past eight years, Bagley has served as assistant executive secretary to Dr. A. Hamilton Reid, who is retiring after 18 years in the top Baptist position in the state.

Upon accepting the position as head of the administrative and promotion work of the largest religious body in Alabama, Bagley said:

"It is with a deep sense of humility that I accept this responsibility in the service of God and of Alabama Baptists. These are challenging times in which we live, and I ask the prayers of all our people as we continue together in our task to win the lost and provide every opportunity for them to grow as Christians."

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Bagley was secretary of the Training Union department for Alabama Baptists from 1946 to 1955, having previously been associate in that department.

The election took place in the chapel of the new Alabama Baptist Building in Montgomery which was occupied this spring. Executive board members from throughout Alabama gave the new secretary the required two-thirds vote. The name of Norman H. McCrummen, Birmingham pastor, failed to receive enough support to be considered as executive secretary.

Board Chairman J. R. White, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Montgomery, commented: "We believe in the leadership of the Lord. We have prayed and feel that George Bagley is the answer to our prayers. We pledge ourselves to cooperate to the fullest with George Bagley as he continues the excellent leadership of our denominational program here in Alabama."

Leon Macon, Birmingham, president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, said, "I'm going to get behind him and help make him the greatest executive secretary Alabama Baptists have ever had. I urge each one of you to support him that together we might win souls and build the kingdom of God."

Andrew Tampling, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Opp, Ala., nominated Bagley for the executive secretary's job.

Bagley received the bachelor of arts degree from Howard College in 1942, and the master of theology from Southern Seminary in 1945. The honorary doctor of divinity degree was conferred on him by Howard, Baptist college at Birmingham in 1958.

His duties as assistant to the executive secretary has brought him in close contact with Baptist ministers and laymen throughout the state. Bagley estimates that he has driven 30,000 to 35,000 miles a year in that position to advise on decisions and problems of the state's 2,890 Baptist churches.

Bagley attended the Baptist World Alliance meeting in Brazil in 1960 and toured the mission fields in South America.

Born of farm parents in Cornersville, Tenn., his family came to Alabama when he was a small boy, and the future executive secretary grew up in Fairfield where he attended public school.

After completing high school, he went to work as a \$70 a month clerk with the Tennessee Coal and Iron division of U. S. Steel in Birmingham.

Mrs. Bagley is a full-time student at Huntingdon College here. She is majoring in English and expects to obtain the bachelor of arts degree. They have three children.

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(Picture coming to Baptist papers)

C O R R E C T I O N

To Baptist Press release mailed through Washington office dated June 21.
Headline: "Educators Discuss Academic Freedom," city of origin, Shawnee, Okla.

A misunderstanding of a word dictated by telephone led to an error in pgh 23 line 3 (found on page 5 of the mailing). The word intended to be "sphere" mistakenly appeared as "fear." The entire line 3 should read correctly as:

trary to their own within his sphere of freedom. (correction underlined)

We regret the error.

Baptist Press, Nashville