

Baptist Jubilee Advance
Convention Hall, Atlantic City, N. J.
C. E. Bryant, Press Representative

WHERE DO WE STAND?

Sermon by Joao F. Soren

Scripture reading: The Gospel of John 20:19-31
Text - v. 21

The world in which we live today is not the same world in which Adairam Judson launched the modern Baptist Missionary epoch one hundred and fifty years ago. Perhaps in no other equal period in history has there been such profound and widespread change, affecting all realms of life, as there has been in this last sesquicentury.

Change requires a continual process of human adjustment. Our thinking must keep pace with new trends of thought in many fields. Habits must change according to new conditions of life which are thrust upon us by a changing social order. Institutions must be streamlined into conformity and congruency in order that they retain their usefulness under new conditions and new influences which come to bear upon them.

A changing world also affects our religious life in several ways. Those who are more closely connected with foreign missions enterprises will testify to the fact that changes which are occurring in many lands today require re-adjustments of methods, resources and personnel, both on the mission fields as well as in the home bases, mission boards and missionary societies.

Other Christian institutions face the same problem. Baptist Conventions and Associations, even the Baptist World Alliance, are continually amending their by-laws and constitutions in order to avoid obsolescence in a changing world. They must equip themselves adequately in order to meet the needs of each juncture and contingency in the continuous stream of changing times and changing things.

Deep-rooted changes have deep-rooted effects! This fact lends a very serious significance to the effect of a changing world upon our spiritual life! In my Country, new trends in political and sociological concepts, new theories concerning the state, government, property, social justice and labor rights, have forced Baptists into re-thinking and re-stating our position in the light of the new philosophical and ideological concepts.

Where do we stand as Baptists in this stream of change?

It must be admitted, unfortunately, that the swift current of changing trends often sweeps away the foundations of religious conviction and firmness. Radical and rationalistic modes of thought often make deep dents in the contexture of our theological thinking. Christian doctrine is often tinted by so many different philosophical ingredients that it loses its own peculiar coloring of the Blood of the Lamb of God. It is not my contention that Baptists should be bound by rigid creeds and formal doctrinal confessions. Such tendency is decidedly non-baptistic. But neither should we be so doctrinally amorphous, eclectic and creedless to the point of no one, ourselves included, knowing exactly what we stand for. We do contend that to be a Baptist means to fly certain colors at high mast. We do have a stand, and that stand is the Word of God as revealed in the Christ of Calvary.

As the Disciples were gathered in Jerusalem on the day of the Resurrection, the Lord appeared to them in order to dispel their doubts and fears. He addressed them with the blessing of His perfect peace, and forthwith commissioned them saying: "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you."

These solemn words contain more than a mere formal command. Not only the auspicious fact of the resurrection itself instilled a new spiritual dynamic into the soul and life of those early Christians. The verbal instructions they received from the blessed lips of the Master also became a bed rock of solid foundation upon which a real and abiding faith might be built. They were given to them to the end that when the Divine Shepherd departed the lonely sheep might not become easy prey to the wolves of doubt and despair.

As the risen Christ commissioned his disciples to go out into the world and witness, he also gave to them the content of their message and the groundwork for before a hostile pagan world.

Christians in this changing world, yea Baptists in this generation of profound and ultra-rapid changes, oftentimes find themselves at a loss to state clearly and unhesitatingly exactly what they stand for.

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It is not our purpose to enumerate at this time what we as Baptists, like to call Baptist distinctive principles and practices. I would have you consider, however, this divine command of the risen Christ, and discern within the inner texture and tenor of His words, the ground for Baptist witnessing in this generation.

"As the Father has sent me, even so I send you."

I. This command enhances the supreme lordship of Jesus Christ.

In these trenchant words Our Lord points to the source of his lordship.

Men called Him "Master," and He accepted the title, because indeed He is Master of them that follow Him. His lordship, however, does not stem from the fact that He excelled in wisdom and in knowledge, and because "no man ever spoke like this man."

Many have thought that his Lordship rests upon his power to perform wonders and miracles. The Bible tells us that such wonders were signs, but certainly they were not the ground upon which His lordship rested. In fact He told His disciples that they would perform signs and miracles, and that they would see greater things than those miracles which He performed.

It leaves us speechless when so-called Christian theologians relegate the historical basis of the divine lordship of Jesus Christ in the mystery and the marvel of Incarnation, and allege that His lordship is perhaps an eschatological halo woven through the centuries with the threads of accumulated tradition, myths and theological subtleties. When the process of de-bunking the History of the Christian Religion strikes at the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the Incarnate God, then it becomes the tool of the anti-Christ. It therein ceases to be a quest for truth, because it strikes at the foundation of all truth, the truth of the Living God as revealed in His only begotten Son.

Jesus Christ is Lord because he proceeded from the Father. He is Lord because He is one with the Heavenly Father. He is Lord because He is the true bread that came down from heaven. He is Lord because He is the incarnate God Almighty, "for in Him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fulness of life in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority."

The Lordship of Jesus Christ comprises the entire universe, and of course the terrestrial globe, which we call "our world," for "all things were made through Him, and without Him was nothing made that was made." His divine Lordship over the world rests upon His divine authorship.

It is worth noting that the New Testament is very clear and incisive in its teaching about the cosmic lordship of Jesus Christ. Not only the church and the elect belong to Christ, but the entire world is His. Matthew states very emphatically that Jesus holds and wields all power in the world. St. John proclaims Jesus as the Lamb of God that "taketh away the sin of the world." The Apostle Paul refers to the Christ as being preeminent in all things; that is, in the entire world. The prologue of the Gospel according to John states that "the world was made by Him" and that He came to this world as one coming to that which was His own.

The New Testament view allows a reasonable and coherent interpretation of History. Human existence seems meaningless and chaotic without the sovereign lordship of God in Jesus Christ governing and moulding all forces and events toward the consummation of the divine purpose.

This does not mean that God's servants are always in a position to comprehend the meaning of all that goes on in this apparently contradictory world in which we live. God's chosen people in the Old Dispensation were often perplexed by what happened to them and around them. In this generation of conflict and confusion in many realms of life, the Children of Light often find themselves groping in darkness as to the meaning of what is happening in this world.

"I send you" is indeed an assertion of authority. We do not have here the voice of entreaty or of appeal, but a stern command from Him who is Lord indeed.

The recognition of the supreme lordship of Jesus Christ explains the heroic militancy and aggressiveness of Apostolic Christianity.

As the early disciples grasped the significance of the triumphant Christ, as he rose from the grave in his victorious conquest over death and sin, they acclaimed Him

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as Lord supreme. And as they saw Him and understood Him in the light of his revealed Lordship and power over darkness and evil, this vision produced in them a mysterious and marvelous dynamization. There is no adequate explanation for the momentous and irresistible world-wide expansion of the first-century Christianity apart from the fact that those primitive followers of the Master of Galilee marched under the command of One whom they regarded as Lord Supreme.

Not only the Apostles, but anonymous laymen also, men and women, converted Jews and converted Gentiles, Romans and Barbarians, Asians, Africans and Europeans, wherever they lived, wherever they went, the impact of their witnessing was tremendous. Persecution could not detain them. In fact, it stimulated them unto greater efforts in witnessing for their Lord. In Antioch, without having been officially commissioned, some anonymous disciples who had fled from Jerusalem were so zealous in their preaching of the Christ that they had the honor of being the first to be nicknamed after their Lord: there they were first called Christians.

No one knows to this day how the church in Rome appeared so early. The fact is that long before Paul ministered unto those Christians, there was a flourishing and influential church in the capital of the Roman Empire. Before the end of the first century A.D. the light of the Gospel had spread unto the most distant parts of the Roman Empire, and even beyond its geographical and political boundaries.

That "Name which is above every other name" was the inspiring banner which the early church unfurled as it advanced upon the citadels of sin and paganism. It proved its power to annihilate formidable foes. Its conquering, crusading spirit was indomitable and irresistible. It became a disturbing movement in the prevailing order of things. Paul and Silas were accused of connivance with those who were "upsetting the world." By their preaching they brought disturbance, fear and alarm to those who were in the service of iniquity. They did not cater to public opinion. In fact they came into open collision with the powers of evil, of sin, of injustice, of superstition, even with governments, kings and emperors. But they never flinched. "They subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

The vision and the consciousness of the lordship of the Divine Master also produced in apostolic Christians the spirit of sacrifice and of unstinted devotion to the Lord of the Church.

They came to realize that the spirit that permeates the whole scheme of redemption, the principle that underlies the atonement on the cross, are the spirit and the principle of sacrifice. Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, translates into his own personal experience the self-surrender, self-giving and self-emptying of Christ for the salvation of a lost humanity, when he states that "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

The Incarnation itself meant sacrifice for One who was in equality with God, but emptied himself and humbled himself. His was a sacrificial ministry from His baptism in the waters of the Jordan, to His drinking of the bitter cup of suffering and woe on Calvary.

Early Christians quickly came to the understanding that in order to perform the task that was given to them to perform in this world, they must also bear a cross. Through selflessness alone might they conquer a selfish world. The redemption of a lost race wrought by a tremendously high cost, which was paid out of the loving heart of God our Heavenly Father. There is no easy road for those who have enlisted for service under the banner of a self-sacrificing Lord. Those who follow in His train and in His steps cannot hope to find an easy, expenseless, snug and complacent way to save this troubled and sin-sick world. "If ye would be my disciples," says the Christ of Calvary, "deny yourselves, and take up your cross, and follow me."

As we affirm our stand for the supreme lordship of Jesus Christ, is it not fitting that we ask ourselves if the present-day discipleship or the self-sacrificing Lord can pass the test of the authentic apostolic spirit of sacrifice?

Perhaps the lack of impetus and the shortage of power of Christianity in this generation originates from the loss of that historic trait of early Christianity, that is, its compelling spirit of sacrifice. Something of that consuming, incandescent, self-denying motivation of the Apostolic Church appears to have been lost along the way. We have become more self-saving than self-sacrificing. We have not been willing to

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become a crucified church in order to present, and to adequately represent before the world, the crucified Lord. We must sincerely admit that secular crusades and ideologies in the world today often out-rank present-day Christianity in the attitudes and in the spirit of sacrifice. Some of them have apparently become even more effectively missionary than some Christian churches. It is no wonder that some of them seem to be outstripping the churches in the race for world conquest. It is high time that we be reminded again that Christian missions must be understood and undertaken in terms of Christian sacrifice.

"As the Father has sent me, even so I send you."

II. This command of our Lord implies the fact that the followers of the Christ are a divinely commissioned people with a God-appointed task.

The Lord of the Church was the anointed One; that is, the appointed One. He clearly understood and repeatedly stated the fact that He came to this world by divine appointment and for a definite purpose. At one time He refers to His appointment by simply saying that "He came down from heaven." Then again He goes on to state that "He came to do the things which the Father would have Him do and say the things that the Father would have Him say." He was in the world because He was sent from On High. He came to perform a very definite task in this world. His was a mission of redemption. He was made the Messiah of Salvation unto all men.

The messianic consciousness was something totally absorbing in Jesus our Lord. It became the polarizing center of His life, the magnificent obsession of His earthly ministry. He not only resisted every temptation and insinuation that might deviate Him from the messianic path and task, but He made every occurrence and every circumstance converge and contribute toward the purpose for which He came to this world.

This is what the Lord is referring to when he says "as the Father has sent me."

It is His purpose that those who follow Him also have a mission consciousness. The failure of Israel of old was primarily the failure of its messianic consciousness. As the chosen Nation allowed the messianic meaning of its election to become obscured and obliterated, it also defaulted in its historic role and in its witnessing before other nations of the earth.

The divine commission given to the New Israel; that is, the Church of Jesus Christ, is just as binding and as imperative as that which was given to Old Testament Israel. It is indeed a fundamental doctrine of the New Testament, and not a mere elective course in the discipleship of the Christ. Never was our Saviour more explicit and incisive in language than when He commissioned His followers even as He was commissioned. Never did the words of the Lord of the Church ring with more authority than when He sent His disciples out into the world to propagate the Gospel of God's love unto salvation for all mankind. We decidedly have no choice in this matter once we accept the divine sovereignty of the Son of God as our Lord and Master.

But it is not our mission consciousness also a matter of survival?

It is easy to surmise what would have been the fate of the early Church, yea of Christianity itself, had not the first disciples been propelled by the momentum of their apostolic consciousness to witness and to preach the Kingdom of God unto the tribes and nations of the Graeco-Roman world.

Many churches in the course of History have had their candlestick removed, and their light has been put out, because, like the Church in Ephesus, they allowed themselves to fall away from their first work, their first task, their first love.

If we are to survive as God's people in this world, such survival will not be accomplished by defensive warfare against the increasingly aggressive and combative powers of evil and of sin.

The fact of our mission as God's people in this world forces us to consider two very relevant aspects of this very serious and solemn matter.

The first aspect has to do with the nature of this mission.

What is the task of the Lord's Church in this world?

Quite recently an interdenominational conference was held in Brazil for the purpose of studying the peculiar problems existing in my Country in the light of the social

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responsibility of the Christian churches. When the question we have just raised was mentioned in that conference, this reply was given: "in order to answer that question, we must wait until the theologians get agreed upon what exactly the Church is." We object that this would mean a very long period of waiting. And quite unnecessary in this connection. Every Baptist in this congregation, as he or she reads the New Testament, and comes across the word "church," fully understands what that word conveys even in its several biblical connotations. Perhaps the reason for uncertainties and confusions regarding the nature of the task of the Church is the prevalent confusion concerning the nature of the Church itself. It must be remembered that the doctrine of the Church is the most controversial subject in the History of Christian Theology. The basic issues of what has come to be called "a divided Christianity," are ecclesiological issues. They have to do primarily with the doctrine of the church.

In some quarters this very important matter has become so enveloped by dialogue and dialectics that some have come to wonder if Christian leadership has not gone off on a theoretical tangent concerning the nature and the task of the church. On the other hand, the lack of sound basic, biblical indoctrination opens the way for excessive emphasis on denominational promotion and institutional activism to the point of eclipsing the main issue and the primary purpose for which the church of Jesus Christ exists in this world.

Our Lord gives us the clue in these words: "As the Father has sent me." His mission in this world was the work of Redemption. He came in order to save a lost, ruined and condemned human race. He came to give His life on the Cross, that through His death many might have life eternal. He came to reconcile men unto God. He came that "the people which sat in darkness" might see the "great light," and "to them which sat in the region and shadow of death," light might dawn, "the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Christ."

Thus, says the Lord, "even so I send you." Herein is the substance of our God-given task as a divinely commissioned people. It has to do with that for which the Christ was sent to do in this world. We are sent to implement that which He came for. This is the task for which the Church exists. May we beware of the danger of being sidetracked into secondary, subsidiary and subservient interests and activities, which, in some instances, have all but steered the church away from that course which was set by the Master Pilot who is the Head of the Church.

It was indeed a historic moment in the annals of the Baptist World Alliance, when the 10th Congress, meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, four years ago, voted unanimously for the "year of evangelism emphasis" in 1964. This means that during this year 26 million Baptists in almost 120 nations would be led to give priority to the main task of the church of Jesus Christ. In Latin America the general reaction to that momentous decision was generally expressed in such words as these: "now the Baptist World Alliance is getting down to the main business." And what a blessing this is turning out to be! Baptists in Brazil, as they came to grips with the matter of evangelistic emphasis, concluded that they needed a whole year just for preparation. A nation-wide evangelistic crusade is in the making to be launched in 1965. The movement is gripping the hearts of those 250,000 Brazilian Baptists as nothing ever has before.

Baptists of North America have had their heads and their hearts together as they planned for this historic sesquicentennial celebration. Has it not dawned upon you what might happen to this Continent, yea, to the entire world, if these 20 million Baptists could work out a God-inspired plan whereby this immense potential could be polarized and mobilized into a united spiritual and denominational crusade to push out the frontiers of the Lord's Kingdom even unto the ends of the earth. Is this not the appointed time for all Baptists in North America to knit again the threads of fraternal affinities and Christian solidarities into a closely woven texture of superb denominational cooperation toward the very purpose for which we exist as apostolic believers and New Testament churches?

In closing, I would have you consider the second aspect of the messianic mission of the Lord's people.

This aspect has to do with the implications of the divine commission for the individual believer.

It must be clearly understood, if we are to grasp the full significance of the divine commission, that Our Lord did not give that commission to an institution but to individual believers. It behoves us as individual followers of Jesus Christ to realize

MORE

Baptist Jubilee Celebration, 1964

Convention Hall, Atlantic City, N. J.

C. E. Bryant, Press Representative

Sermon of Billy Graham, May 24, 1964

Baptists have been fighters for freedom throughout their history. Freedom is our greatest gift and in every generation Baptists have been ready to die to preserve it. However, our freedoms are being threatened today as never before. In many parts of the world freedom is diminishing. Twenty-five years after the Atlantic Charter that promised the four freedoms to the entire world we have less freedom than ever before. Millions are living in political, social, and psychological bondage. America is called the "land of the free and the home of the brave" yet there are millions of Americans that are in bondage to narcotics, alcohol, gambling, sexual immorality, pride and a hundred other tyrants.

President Johnson should be commended for leading a war on poverty, yet we must not restrict our thinking and efforts to the millions in America that have sub-standard living conditions. The sub-standard conditions of people in Appalachia would make them wealthy in comparison to millions in India, Africa and Asia. Man has been on an eternal quest for freedom from sin, suffering and death. He struggles in every generation with the same problems. This is one of the psychological reasons why there is such widespread interest in the space program. Earth has been both the home and prison of man for thousands of years. Man longs to escape from this prison. Scientists are talking about new civilizations that we may someday build on other planets. The prospect it holds before us is dazzling. The opportunities in space seem unlimited and our enthusiasm for exploration in space is unbounded and if the conquest of space can serve to divert some of the wicked instincts of a fallen race then it might be worthwhile.

Christ said in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Christ taught that there is no freedom outside of sheer naked truth. However, Pilate asked the all-searching question, "What is truth?" When science finds ultimate truth about our universe--what will they find? Jesus Christ made the astounding claim, "I am the truth." No man in history ever made such a claim. The Bible teaches that He created the world, he sustains the world, and that behind all the mysteries of the universe is Jesus Christ. Now our logic leads us to conclude that either he was truth or he was a blasphemous deceiver who knew he was not, or he thought he was God and did not know the difference--then he was a maniac and should have been in a mental institution--or he was what he claimed to be, God manifested in the flesh. This is the intellectual decision that every person must make about Christ. This decision cannot be made by logic and reason alone, there must be a step of faith.

A man is mentally unbalanced in proportion to his unwillingness to face the truth. I am asking you today to face the reality of Christ. Accept him as ultimate truth.

Christ told the truth about sin. He taught that man's basic problems were not educational, social or political. Man's basic problem is sin. It is the moral disease of the soul that affects every area of life.

He told the truth about hell and judgment. If the Bible teaches anything it teaches there is a great day of judgment coming and that every individual that ever lived will have to give an account to God. Jesus talked more about hell than any other person in the Bible. He warned us that sin will be punished and that hell is a reality. We have made a tragic mistake in our preaching by toning down the fact of judgment and hell. This has led the American people to the false delusion that they can live any way they like and still be saved. If we had more hell in the pulpit we would have less hell in the pew. The fear of judgment and hell is a great deterrent to moral evil.

He told the truth about conversion. He said that no man could enter the kingdom of God unless he had been converted. Every man must accept him or reject him. If you reject him you may think you are free but actually you are in the worst kind of moral and spiritual bondage. You end up with inner conflicts, guilt complexes and fears. In your so-called freedom you will find yourself in bondage. In this revolutionary age there is no other true freedom.

Southern Baptist Convention, 1964
Convention Hall, Atlantic City, N. J.
W. C. Fields, Press Representative
Theo Sommerkamp, Press Room Manager

An estimated 800 alumni and friends overflowed the Renaissance Room of the Ambassador Hotel for the annual meeting of the Alumni Association of Southern Seminary. Associations from both the Southern and American Baptist Conventions combined for the luncheon meeting.

Elected president was O. Norman Shands, pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, Kansas City, Missouri.

Chester Quarles, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, was named president-elect and James A. Canaday, pastor of the Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Johnson City, Tenn., secretary.

Mr. and Mrs. T. R. Allen were presented a silver tray in commemoration of Allen's 25th anniversary as superintendent of buildings and grounds for the seminary.

Presentations were also made to retiring trustees of the Seminary--W. I. Ball of South Carolina, and H. C. Croslin of Illinois. Ball has completed 14 years of service and Croslin 12 years.

W. C. Fields, director
Theo Sommerkamp, assistant director

Baptist Press
News service of the
Southern Baptist Convention
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tenn., 37219

May 24, 1964

Baptists Seek Lessons
From Their History

ATLANTIC CITY (BP)--Baptists of North America listened here to the lessons of their history.

Kenneth Scott Latourette, professor emeritus of Yale University divinity school and a foremost church historian, told leaders of America's 22 million Baptists their traditional appeal to lower educational and income areas of the population is being threatened by an era of affluence.

The occasion was a jubilee celebration of United States and Canadian Baptist groups, marking the 150th anniversary of the first national Baptist organization on the continent. The American Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention met earlier for their annual meetings. Representatives from several other groups, both white and Negro, joined them for the weekend here.

Latourette reminded Baptists they come from "the older American stock." The majority are in the South, he said, because that section has had fewer of the 19th and 20th Century immigrants than the rest of America. Baptist ministry through the years has been largely to lower educational and economic levels of the population. "More than any other Protestant group in America that has been our record," he explained. "From that comes our present numerical strength."

He told Baptists also they have a reputation for particularism. "We are so convinced that our view of the gospel is more nearly in accord with the New Testament that we have been reluctant to run the danger of compromise with too close association with others who bear the name of Christ. Many of us have gladly cooperated with other Christians. But a majority of us, especially in North America, have been either reluctant to join in cooperation or have opposed it," Latourette said.

Looking to the future, he declared Baptists should recognize at least three facts. The first is that lower educational and income constituency to which Baptists have traditionally ministered is diminishing with America's current affluent age.

A second fact of the current day is the ecumenical movement--described by the historian as "the fashion in which increasingly Christians are endeavoring to obey the 'new commandment' which our Lord gave his disciples on the night before his crucifixion, to love one another as he had loved them....As never before since our Lord's resurrection Christians are coming together," according to Latourette.

The third fact of the current day, Latourette said, "is the continued need of all men for the gospel and the age-long command of Christ" to make disciples of all nations.

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Executive Committee
Chairman Relected

(5-24-64)

ATLANTIC CITY (BP)--Harold W. Seever, pastor of Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala., was reelected chairman of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention.

W. Douglas Hudgins, pastor, First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., was reelected vice-chairman. Other officers chosen include Howard P. Giddens, pastor, First Baptist Church, Athens, Ga., secretary, and Porter Routh, Nashville, reelected executive secretary, a staff position.

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Radio, TV Commission
Unveils Building Model

ATLANTIC CITY (BP)--The scale model of the new building for the Southern Baptist Convention Radio and Television Commission was unveiled at a luncheon and business session held by the commission here.

The \$600,000 structure will be located at 6350 West Freeway in Fort Worth, about 1.5 miles north of the commission's present offices and recording studios. Commission officials said the new building, with its 42,000 square feet, will have about three times as much room as the present accommodations. It will also be more functional, they said.

They expect the new building to be completed in 14 months or by August, 1965.

Radio and television commissioners elected H. Guy Moore of Liberty, Mo., president of William Jewell College (Baptist), their new chairman succeeding Brooks H. Wester, of Houston. Andrew M. Hall, pastor, First Baptist Church, Fayetteville, Ark., was re-elected commission vice-chairman.

The new secretary of the agency is Claude O'Shields, a layman from Wilmington, N.C. He is manager of WETC there. Paul M. Stevens of Fort Worth, director and top staff officer of the commission, holds that position indefinitely.

Stevens reported on his visit to Iran where a camera crew from NBC-TV and a member of the commission's staff, Truett Myers, were filming sequences for an hour-long program on biblical archaeology. He said he plans to return next month and meet the group at another film location in the Near East.

The director announced the commission will establish a scholarship in audio-visual communications to encourage study in that field at a Baptist college. The fund, to provide \$300 to \$500 a year, will be named in honor of Robert Sarnoff, chairman of the board of National Broadcasting Co. (NBC).

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Grey Defends
First Amendment

(5-24-64)

ATLANTIC CITY (BP)—J. D. Grey, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, called on messengers to the 107th session of the 10 million member denomination to resist all attempts to tamper with the first amendment to the United States Constitution.

A day after Grey spoke, the messengers overwhelmingly adopted a strongly worded resolution opposing any change in the first amendment. The Convention's expression was contained in a resolution urging the United States Congress to allow the constitution to stand "as our guarantee of religious liberty."

In an auditorium a few steps away, the American Baptist Convention also passed overwhelmingly a resolution opposing a constitutional amendment that would alter the meaning of the first amendment.

The report of the SBC Resolutions Committee was amended to add a statement affirming the "historic right of our schools to full academic freedom for the pursuit of all knowledge, religious or otherwise."

A previous amendment, which was withdrawn, affirmed the right of public schools to "engage voluntarily on a non-sectarian basis in prayer, Bible reading, and other devotional exercises as may be desired by them and their constituents."

G. Emanuel Carlson, executive director, and W. Barry Garrett, his associate on the staff of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington, helped to persuade J. Levering Evans of Richmond to reword the original motion.

The amendment offered by Evans was debated for so long time for the Resolutions Committee report was exhausted and then extended. Messengers put off further debate for an hour and a half to finish the rest of the program, including an address by Evangelist Billy Graham.

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New Orleans Alumni
Elect Lewis Rhodes

ATLANTIC CITY (BP)--Lewis E. Rhodes, pastor, Broadway Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn., was reelected president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary alumni at a breakfast meeting here.

Elected vice-president was Donald Harbuck, pastor, First Baptist Church, Eldorado, Ark. John Gilbert, associational missionary in Shreveport, La., was named secretary.

More than 400 New Orleans alumni heard a report their campaign to raise funds and establish the Roland Q. Leavell chair of evangelism at the seminary is approximately one-fourth complete.

Both Rhodes and Seminary President H. Leo Eddleman brought brief reports of their work the past year.

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Baptists Told They
Stumble On Strength

(5-24-64)

ATLANTIC CITY (BP)--Baptists are stumbling over their own strength, a lay evangelist from Texas told a Baptist men's fellowship meeting here.

Howard E. Butt Jr. of Corpus Christi, Tex., a key speaker at the Baptist Men's Fellowship, shared the speaker's podium with State Supreme Court Judge Matthew Hill of Olympia, Wash.

Butt explained Baptists are strong on the doctrine of salvation by faith calling men to a decisive commitment to Christ.

"But it is heresy for us to imply that becoming Christians means that we have completed the race. We have just begun the race," the Texas grocery chain executive said. Most Christians, he contended, are living in the past or the future with no real contemporary expression of God in current relationships.

Judge Hill reminded the men of their responsibility of winning the world for Christ.

Pastors and laymen representing seven Baptist groups across North America attended the Baptist Men's Fellowship. The meeting preceded the Third Baptist Jubilee Celebration here involving the seven groups.

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Women Asked To Ease
Country's Race Tension

(5-24-64)

ATLANTIC CITY (BP)--Through misuse, disuse and underuse, the part of America which is Negro has become like a shriveled limb, Mrs. Zelma George, a member of the United States delegation to the United Nations, told the North American Baptist Women's Union here.

Mrs. George called on the 500 Baptist women to use their influence to help ease racial tensions in the world. "America cannot be what she is supposed to be as long as she has a shriveled limb," she said.

The North American Baptist Women's Union is composed of 12 Baptist women's groups on this continent. It was formed to promote Baptist fellowship. Its luncheon here was one of a series of meetings related to the Third Baptist Jubilee Celebration drawing Baptists from throughout the United States and Canada.

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Structural Unity
Said Out Of Picture

ATLANTIC CITY (BP)—There is no prospect of structural unity between the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Convention, a group interested in Baptist unity was told here.

Carlyle Marney, pastor, Myers Park Baptist Church, Charlotte, N. C., predicted unity between the two Baptist bodies would be bedlam if they ever did get together.

"The American Baptist Convention would be swallowed like a ticking hand grenade by the larger Southern Baptist Convention, and who could live long with a live grenade in his hand," Marney said.

Speaking to about 325 persons, almost half of them Southern Baptists, Marney said the two Conventions had never been farther apart, and yet never had been closer together.

He explained why he held only a dim possibility of unity of the Conventions:

"Be smart. There are hundreds of colleges and dozens of seminaries, and scores of Baptist organizations which provide little kingdoms which little men just love to run. They won't give up their thrones for unity's sake," he claimed.

Marney described the Southern Baptist Convention as a "Jesus cult dressed like Buster Brown and Little Lord Fauntleroy with a Bowie knife handy to cut the throats of any who disagree with a regional point of view."

The American Baptist Convention could be in danger of being consumed by its own smugness, he added.

In describing the things which keep Southern and American Baptists apart, Marney condemned "shameful regional provincialisms which are the products of time and place which spawned Baptists.

"All who try to transcend this regionalism and join the larger world do so in great agony," he said. "We Baptists are novices and are barely emerging in expression of the Christian church. We are barely out of Elmer Gantryism. If we survive at all, we are a miracle."

Southern Baptists were extremely reluctant to face such relevant issues as racism, and they spurned a gifted leader (presidential candidate Theodore F. Adams of Richmond) for the Convention's highest office, he said.

But there is great hope, he went on. "The votes in the Southern Baptist Convention were too close in any issue to breathe despair.

"Let's go on with our meetings, our work, our conversations, and our exchanging pulpits. We could exchange 3,500 pulpits without doing any damage, and there are enough Southern Baptist pastors who need to move that they could give the American Baptist Convention a permanent growing edge," Marney said.

The Baptist unity group has no official connection with either Convention. It staffed a booth in the exhibit hall here where it gave out literature to passersby who wanted it. The exhibit hall was used by both Conventions during their annual sessions.

11-30-64

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