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Communication of Gospel
To Secular City Explored

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Four speakers at the Southern Baptist Communications Conference here explored the problems of communicating the Gospel to urban man in the secular city, concluding that Baptists must minister to the needs of people to be effective.

The speakers told of the tremendous needs of the people who live in the metropolitan centers of the nation, and said that these needs must be met by the church, not the government.

"The brightest hopes for real urban renewal do not lie in the programs of slum clearance and architectural redevelopment," said Tom Bland of Wake Forest, N.C.

"The greatest needs and hopes for truly significant renewal is in renewal of persons," declared Bland, professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest.

The seminary ethics professor said that ministry to persons is the basic thrust of the Christian mission, and a basic role of today's churches.

"Helping persons to orient themselves savingly to God through Jesus Christ, and in doing, to become new creations with a transformed perspective on life is the primary business of the churches," said Bland.

"The person--rich, poor, Negro, white, slum dweller in a luxurious high-rise apartment or resident of tenement and asphalt jungles of the ghetto--each person is one for whom Christ died and to whom he sends us to minister in his name," Bland said.

The seminary professor said that Baptists should, and must, develop effective ways to minister to the needs of these people, else they will lose the battle for Christ in the secular city.

He cited specific examples of how some churches are ministering to the needs of people in the city through weekday programs in Baptist centers, coffee houses, counseling programs in shopping centers, ministries to children of working mothers, referral centers to show needy people resources of the community, and many other such programs of ministry.

In ministering to poverty-stricken persons, the church must deal with a whole complex network of technological unemployment, illiteracy, minority-group status, outward migration from sharecropping to the agonizing symptoms of urban ghettos, Bland said.

"It is necessary therefore that the servant and prophetic roles of the churches be joined, and that the churches' ministry to persons be related to structures," he said.

In another address, Southeastern Seminary Professor E. Luther Copeland, outlined the characteristics of "secular man" and prescribed five ways in which Baptists should seek to communicate with him.

Copeland said Baptists must (1) develop leaders for urban ministry, (2) communicate through dialogue by listening to what urban man has to say, (3) use every means of communication available, (4) develop a strategy of "lay penetration," and (5) be "incarnational" in nature.

"If we proclaim the kingdom of love and righteousness, secular man has a right to ask us to produce the works of love and righteousness," Copeland said.

"If we speak of the reconciling Gospel, secular man has a right to insist that we show him a reconciled community," he added.

"If we speak of a prophetic servanthood, he has a right to ask that we be prophets and servants.

"Secular man has a right to ask us 'to put up or shut up,'" the seminary missions professor declared.

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Copeland said that Baptist agencies which deal with education and communication badly need to develop leadership for an urban ministry, and an awareness for the problems of today's world.

"We need to bring to bear all of the Biblical, theological, historical and sociological insights we can muster upon the understanding of what is happening to world society, especially at the point of secularization and urbanization," Copeland said.

Earlier, the editor of the Capital Baptist, James O. Duncan, had described the results of a pilot project in urban studies designed to do just that. The project, a Seminar on Urban Studies, was sponsored jointly by the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, the SBC Home Mission Board, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Duncan said that 31 persons were enrolled as students in the seminar which studied in depth the problems of Christian ministries to the city. He concluded that Southern Baptists need to do more of this type of study in the future in order to help Baptists truly minister to the needs of secular man.

Final speaker on the program, C. Emmanuel Carlson of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs said he was greatly encouraged by this type of training program.

Carlson also urged churches to serve as a referral agency to show needy people where they can obtain help from social and government agencies.

Carlson said that the philosophy of government in the past had been based on a brick and mortar approach to urban renewal, but more and more the government is moving into the area of trying to build a quality of living in urban life.

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Frierson Says Southern
Baptists Playing Games

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Many Southern Baptists are playing religious games, an education research specialist declared here at the Southern Baptist Communications Conference.

Edward C. Frierson, professor at George Peabody College for Teachers here, said that a psychological study of many people in the Southern Baptist Convention would reveal that some are just playing games--ego games, word games, and social-cultural behavior games.

"We don't like for someone to tell us that what we are doing is playing games," Frierson quipped. "So for those who don't like the word 'games,' you can call what we're going to talk about next: acquired, cultural, temporary sequences of behavior, or acts."

He cited eight specific ways that Baptists are playing games, as exhibited by their behavior.

1. By the roles that we play in life. "At any moment you are several things, and you have to often decide which role to play," he said.

2. By the rules we make for life. "We sin because we break the rules of the SBC game," in the eyes of some, he added.

3. By the rituals we develop. "For example, we greet people with a friendly 'How're doing?', but we often really don't care."

4. By the language we use. "We have certain language forms and key phrases and all you have to do to be a good Baptist is to learn the proper language," he said.

5. By the goals we set. "Often these goals come in conflict and we play games to decide which goal to emphasize," he said.

6. By the strategies we set. "There is so much in our world and our church of trying to anticipate and think around...to develop a strategy that will offend in the minimum."

7. By the values we establish. "Good and bad seems to change depending on which game you are playing."

8. By the time-space differences we establish. "Things that you will do certain times and places you will not do other times and places--it depends where and when."

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Frierson said, however, that there are always some people who refuse to play the games, who refuse to make "a bargain with the devil."

He said that Jesus did not play the games, and they crucified him because he didn't conform.

The key question, he said, is: "When are you playing games and when are you not playing games?"

Later in an interview, Frierson said there is really no correct way to play the SBC game.

"You must only deal with life with understanding that it involves a far deeper existence than simply playing a role, using the right language, or obeying all the rules," he observed.

Another key question, he said in his speech, is: "What is the church going to give to young people that will help them live in a world that is playing games? Are we preparing them to live with it, or play a game of their own?"

In a second address, Frierson challenged Baptists to minister to the intellectual youth, who in school, is being stimulated intellectually so much that he often rejects the church because it stimulates him so little intellectually.

"Do we really stimulate the growth of the intellect (in the church), or are we asking them to commit themselves to words that we have believed important through the years, but have not thought through with our minds?"

Frierson said that there are six levels of intellectual stimulation, listing them from the lowest to the highest level.

They are: knowledge, comprehension, application of knowledge to life, analysis, intellectual synthesis, and evaluation that goes far beyond opinion-giving.

"Jesus stimulated people with all six of these levels of intellectual stimulation, and we need to do the same," he said. "Jesus said, simply, 'Follow me,' but that is perhaps the most difficult of all."

The church, he indicated, must quit playing games and truly follow Jesus.

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Seminary Lets Contract
On New Student Center

9/22/67

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary at Strawberry Point here has let a \$16,647 contract to remodel its present cafeteria into a functional Student Center.

The Student Center will include a large dining area, three separate dining rooms for meetings, a recreational room, a television lounge, and a lobby area.

The contract was let to Herrero Brothers, Inc., of San Francisco, with the architectural firm of Crawford and Banning, San Rafael, Calif., preparing plans.

The Student Center is a part of a building and remodeling program designed to improve campus living at Strawberry Point.

Other improvements include a pedestrian bridge to connect the living areas with the administration and academic buildings; a playground for the children of students who reside in the student village complexes; a commuter room to accommodate the large number of students who commute from distances ranging up to more than 160 miles daily; and a faculty lounge.

The remodeling of the cafeteria to form a Student Center has kept the architectural scheme of the original building, using aluminum and glass partitions to separate the wings from the main dining room.

Seminary officials said the converting of the cafeteria has accelerated the time-table for the development program and will serve the purpose for many years at a considerable savings in capital expenditures.

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