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June 4, 1968

Baptists Told Of Space
Implications On Moon Shot

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HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC

By Roddy Stinson

HOUSTON (BP)--An expert on America's space program mentally launched 3,000 Southern Baptist women into "an age without precedent" last night as he described the effects the Apollo moon-shot program will have on their world.

Edward B. Lindaman, a space program manager for North American Rockwell Corp., in Downey, Calif., addressed the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Convention meeting here.

Lindaman drew a step-by-step picture of the complex process which will take three Americans to the moon and back. "In less than 75 weeks, a representative of earth's mankind will walk on the moon," he said.

"Where we stand tonight and where we'll stand the day an earthman puts his footprint on the lunar surface is merely at the door of a fantastic frontier. There will be new worlds to discover...within the world itself as well as outside it," Lindaman said.

The effects of this space accomplishment will reach into every facet of men's lives, he predicted. "I believe we will see a new thread in the weave of history. It will be saying, 'Man! Man! Now that your freedom and responsibility have moved to worlds beyond our wildest imagination, can you not see that you are able to enrich the lives of all persons with your fantastic know-how?"

"Will you not choose to eradicate disease, war, and famine from this planet earth... that all of God's children might experience the fullness of humanity?"

Lindaman, a prominent Presbyterian layman whose Christian devotion has caused some to call him, "prophet of the Space Age," stressed the effect of space exploration on man's relationship to God. "We have seen what we can do technically. Now, how do we match it spiritually?" he asked.

The answer, he said, lies in man's recognition of the worldwide interdependent scope of love. "A new dimension has been added to the word love," he said. "A dimension always there in Christ, but only now fully dawning on us.

"This new vision of God's future is happening just in time to enable us--we planetary Christians--to come to grips with it--that it might reflect God's purpose," he added.

Earlier in the day, the WMU Convention heard testimonies of three emeritus foreign missionaries and a plea from a Foreign Mission Board staff member to continue to advance the cause of Christ around the world.

The testimonies were delivered by Miss Lucy Wright, former missionary to China and Korea; I. N. Patterson, former missionary to Nigeria; and Mrs. W. C. Harrison, former missionary to Brazil. Speaking on the topic, "Underneath the Everlasting Arms," each described the progress seen and the moments of spiritual encouragement experienced during many years of mission service.

Following the testimonies, Jesse C. Fletcher, secretary of mission personnel at the Foreign Mission Board, pled with Southern Baptists to increase their mission efforts overseas.

Referring to the emeritus missionaries who preceded him, Fletcher asked, "Who is going to validate their action? Who is going to take their place?"

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He voiced concern about some tendencies he saw developing in the convention. "I am worried because I have caught a spirit of neo-isolationism, which is causing people to look away from the international scene and look back at our own country."

Fletcher stressed that he was not criticizing the move by Southern Baptists to reach out into their communities and states. "I am excited that people are becoming concerned about our cities and the problems between races," he said. "This is a healthy spirit because it is a mission spirit that has no boundaries. It will not stop here but will continue across the oceans."

"But there are others," he continued, "who would say--'Wait a minute. We've got terrible needs here at home. Our schools are in trouble. We need concentrated ministries in urban areas. Let's pull in, retreat, or at least hold the line on our overseas commitment.'"

"This is a malignant spirit," Fletcher said. "If we turn our eyes away from people out there who do not know Jesus Christ, we'll invoke our own death."

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Help Negroes, Don't Lose
Faith, Pastors and WMU Told

HOUSTON (BP)--Southern Baptist women were urged to act immediately in helping Negroes right grievous social, political and economic wrongs, while at the same time, Baptist pastors were warned against losing their belief in the integrity of the Bible.

Dr. Dorothy Brown of Nashville, a Negro state legislator and a medical doctor, told the annual Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Convention they need to act now in helping Negroes.

In the adjoining Sam Houston Coliseum, Clark H. Pinnock, of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, accused "a strong minority" of fellow denominational teachers of losing their belief in the integrity of the Bible."

Pinnock, assistant professor of New Testament, told about 5,000 persons attending the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference that a new view of the Bible was growing which loosened believers from the literal teaching and final authority of the Bible.

"This new view is very widely held among the men teaching religion in our colleges and seminaries," Pinnock contended.

The conservative theologian described the new view as a very convenient way to look at the Bible, "because it allows you to quote from the Bible when it suits you, and to retreat out of range when you come across some idea which does not please you."

In the second of three addresses, Pinnock lamented the fact that despite "all the resolutions we pass and the approval we register for the high doctrine of Biblical authority, nothing seems to change.

"The strong minority in positions of considerable power continue to vocalise their sub-Biblical view of inspiration just as if this body were of no importance..."

Pinnock claimed the teachers tossed out big words as smoke screens when preachers tried to question them.

"Let us forsake unbelieving modernism and shallow conservatism...and let the Bible rule our life...in reality and depth."

Pinnock added that it is not too late for the denomination to regain its stability in theology.

"Compared with other churches, our own decline theologically is at an early stage. If we are alert, the drift can be checked," he said.

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Pinnock called for a 'new Reformation' within the church to "restore the crown rights of our divine Lord, and the infallible authority of His inspired Word."

The Protestant Reformation has become the "Protestant Deformation" today, espousing a man-centered and man-made theology based on a consensus of human opinions, he charged.

"Our hope is for a new Reformation from God," he said. "A Reformation of truth and life. A return to Biblical standards and to profound Scriptural preaching."

Dr. Brown, clinical professor of surgery at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, blamed the church for the continuing unsolved problem of black Americans.

The Negro professor said she blamed the church "a thousand times over for allowing America to live a lie for 350 years.

"I can personally testify to the fact that the church has been derelict in its failure to execute its commitment of extending Christianity into everyday living."

"The church has sung its songs, prayed its prayers, and then closed and locked its doors to the real reason for its being.

"If the church would do its job, we wouldn't need any more human relations commissions or civil rights laws.'

Dr. Brown made it clear she didn't condone violence by Negroes. Of the rioting and looting that followed the death of Dr. Martin Luther King recently, she said:

"It will take a long, long time before we as Negroes can live down the child-like responsibility and the bitter insincerity of the mourning of the death of the apostle of nonviolence.

"In order for me to accept violence, hate, malice and insults as a solution," she said she told a Negro clergyman, "you will have to bring me a new religion because violence and Christianity are just not compatible."

Dr. Brown appealed for attitudes of reason which she identified as suitable jobs for Negroes, the assumption of personal and group responsibility of Negroes for achievement, recognizing the power of the vote, and the acceptance of religion as a way of life.

"The era of struggle could still be the Negro's finest hour," she said. "We need religion and not laws to help us to make the Golden Rule a moving and functioning integral of our daily lives."

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Shannon Elected Pastors'
Conference President

6/4/68

HOUSTON (BP)--Harper Shannon of Dothan, Ala., was elected president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference here.

Shannon, vice-president of the pastors' conference and pastor of First Baptist Church, defeated Landrum P. Leavell, pastor of First Baptist Church, Wichita Falls, Texas.

Don Berry, pastor of Memorial Drive Baptist Church, Houston, was named vice-president, and Allen Comish, pastor of Waldrop Baptist Church of Columbus, Ga., secretary.

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Pinnock Tells Pastors
To Foresake Modernism

By Al Morgan

HOUSTON—(BP)—A Southern Baptist seminary professor urged pastors here not to foresake the true Gospel message, but rather "forsake unbelieving modernism and shallow conservatism."

Clark H. Pinnock, assistant professor of New Testament at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, addressing the fourth session of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, challenged the pastors to "go on to maturity," letting the Bible rule their life, not in name only, but in reality and depth.

The greatest crisis the church has ever had to face is the current attack on the existence of divine truth, he charged.

"Perhaps only a small number now hold the new view of the Bible, but it only takes a few agitators to burn a city and a few rebels to overthrow a government," he said.

Pinnock described the new view as belonging to those "who no longer feel that they can be bound to its (Bible) literal teaching and final authority."

The issue involved in the last analysis is Christological, he added, or, "What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?"

Pinnock said to affirm Jesus' lordship in one breath, and then deny his specific teaching in the next, "is intellectual schizophrenia of a dangerous kind."

Pinnock earlier charged that an early-stage drifting away from Southern Baptists' Biblical, Christ-centered theology is apparent, but added that it is not too late for the denomination to regain its stability.

A Virginia pastor said that religious liberty is waning in America, with separation of church and state drifting.

J. B. Flowers, pastor of West Hampton Baptist Church in Newport News, Va., said the dangers that come on the breaking down of the wall of separation between church and state are obvious.

"First is the danger of clericalism, when a particular church used the powers of state to give her a preferred place in society. The purpose of freedom of religion is not only to give freedom of religion but also freedom from religion," said Flowers.

The use of this power by the church in Colombia, in Italy, in Spain, and in Quebec can only be referred to as valid evidence of the dangers of clericalism in the 20th century, he explained.

"At the other extreme is the totalitarian state that sets itself in the place of God," Flowers added. "The third danger that confronts the church when it depends on the state for its sanction of doctrine and its support of its advance is in the loss of vitality."

Flowers was one of four persons participating in a symposium on Baptist distinctives.

Speaking on "Free Institutions," Elwin L. Skiles, president of Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Tex., said, "Baptists should take another look at the consequences of the present limitations imposed by various conventions upon the trustees of her institutions as these relate to sources of financial support."

Skiles said he felt Baptists schools are seriously handicapped in competing with other schools which have financial support from federal and state educational funds.

"In addition to the normal sources of support by which all church-related and private schools operated in an earlier era most schools now have these funds with which to provide facilities which we are unable to offer our young people," he said. "As this gap widens, we may become less and less effective in our educational program."

Skiles added that the very nature of higher education programs as a part of the national purpose demands that the young people have quality equipment and instruction at their command. "Unless there is a change in policy or marked improvement in private support, we face the prospect of lagging behind," he cautioned.

A former pastor, Skiles said Baptists should "rethink the place her schools occupy in American life as well as their responsibility in training for Christian leadership. Provincialism at this point may well prove disastrous."

Skiles concluded that Baptists are "paying taxes to make other schools stronger while denying our own schools like resources with which to do a better job." He said that while religious liberty is one of the great concepts Baptists have enunciated and propagated through the centuries, there is no indication that governmental agencies wish to violate this concept.

Ramsey Pollard, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, chided preachers and laymen who say that the Gospel is not relevant.

"I am sick and tired of people preaching and writing, and telling me that my preaching is not relevant," he said. "Too many of our Sunday School teachers and editors are leaning in the wrong direction."

He urged pastors to "come back to the cross and preach it with fervor." He admitted that "we are living in a new day, but that man is still sinful and is unable to save himself."

He challenged young pastors not to desert the cross, but to "stand there and preach as long as you have strength to do so."

Editor Joe T. Odle added that "It is not the ecumenical churches that are crowded today, but those with an evangelical fervor."

Odle, editor of the Baptist Record, official weekly newspaper of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, said some Southern Baptists believe that the convention should become a participant in such ecumenical organizations as the National Council of Churches or the World Council.

He questioned Baptists' religious liberty, adding, "But could we become a part of these organizations without giving up some of our freedom?"

He said if Baptists were members of these bodies, "there is no possible way that they could separate themselves from the pronouncements and actions of these bodies, or their committees, no matter how distasteful they might be to the majority of our people."

Odle called for "Free souls, free churches, free institutions and a free denomination!"

J. D. Grey, pastor of First Baptist Church In New Orleans for 32 years, told the pastors "There are no easy spots in the Lord's service. God did not call us to search out the easy places."

Grey said he had oftentimes heard the rumor that "Southern Baptists are going to split...but Southern Baptists are not going to have any splits. We're going to have some debate, but then we're going to go ahead and love each other."

He urged persons to start applying preventive medicine now that a diagnosis is completed. "We face crises which are opportunities. Our stand should be...I believe God."

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SBC Must Shun Isolation,
Religious Educators Told

6/4/68

By Beth Hayworth

HOUSTON (BP) -- The Southern Baptist Convention can no longer be isolationist socially, racially or denominationally if it is to be a part of the creative action of the Twentieth Century, a prominent college pastor declared here.

James G. Harris, pastor of the University Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, told the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association that "the eyes of the world are upon us this week. God help us to measure up to the crises of our day."

There are some who have tried to force the convention to choose between evangelism and an involvement in the social application of the gospel, Harris pointed out.

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"It is not an either-or proposition. The old saying (that if You) get a man converted he will do right is only a half truth. He will do right when he knows what is right.

"Actually, the more truly evangelistic a Christian becomes, the more concerned he is not only with the sin in the life of a man, but also the sins of his community and his world."

Harris, who has pastored churches in Arkansas, Alabama and Louisiana, urged the religious educators to support their pastors as they try to be prophetic during these days of racial tensions.

"I am not suggesting that some of you from problem areas go home and tear your church asunder with radical immediate demands,...but I am saying that the racial problem on the local level is primarily an educational process and the pastors must look to you for help and support."

In describing the new roles needed for Southern Baptists, Harris said the convention could not ignore the growing desire for interdenominational involvement.

"A new wind is stirring that will demand that we find ways to communicate and associate with our brethren of other denominations. The new generation will not be satisfied with our self-sufficient isolationism."

Harris explained that he did not mean involvement in "compromising alliances or affiliation with divisive ecumenical organizations that would tear our own fellowship asunder."

Calling for a "deeper respect and affection" for those of other faiths, Harris suggested the educators specifically seek out areas where they can cooperate in mutually compatible areas of concern.

Harris criticized the program committees of the Pastor's Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention for not planning an address on the subject of Southern Baptist involvement with other denominations.

The Fort Worth pastor expressed the hope that convention leaders in the future would "courageously encourage and guide our people to a sane, Christian involvement with their neighbors."

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Negro Legislator Blames
Church For Negro Plight

6/4/68

By Roddy Stinson

HOUSTON -- A Negro doctor-legislator laid the blame for the current plight of the American Negro at the feet of the church in an address to the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union convention meeting here.

Dr. Dorothy Brown, professor of surgery at Meharry Medical College in Nashville and a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives, blamed the church "a thousand times over for allowing America to live a lie for over 350 years."

"I can personally testify that the church has been derelict in its charge to keep the brotherhood and to execute its commitment of extending Christianity into every-day living.

"The church has sung its songs, prayed its prayers, and then closed and locked its doors to the real reason for its being.

"If the church would do its job, we wouldn't need any more human relations commissions or further civil rights laws," she said.

Dr. Brown's address visibly moved the overflow crowd of women, who gave her a standing ovation at the end of her address.

Speaking on the subject, "Come Let Us Reason Together," Dr. Brown emphasized (1) "some of the paradoxes of the current violence sweeping this land of ours and (2) consideration of some of the attitudes of reason in our time of crisis."

She appealed for attitudes of reason regarding suitable jobs for Negroes, the assumption of personal and group responsibility for achievement by Negroes, the power of the

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vote, and the acceptance of nonviolent as opposed to violent approaches to American's problems.

Regarding violence, she said, "As I survey the events of 1967-68, I conclude that violence is stupid and does not solve a single problem.

Nonviolence, the abiding philosophy of that great Baptist apostle of nonviolence, Martin Luther King, is the way of calmness, rationality, Christianity, and faith. But he is gone now, and I feel that it is now white Christian Americans' turn to raise up a leader to take his place."

Departing briefly from her prepared text, Dr. Brown praised President Lyndon Johnson as "a great American."

"Our current President could have been a do-nothing President but he, with sheer courage, returned to Congress again and again to urge passage of legislation which would aid Negroes."

Challenging white Americans to become involved in correcting the problems of our day, she said, "The contemporary white American is responsible for seeing that, without subterfuge, without the necessity for further violence, and in the true spirit of the constitution of this democracy, the children of the slaves of his foreparents get an even break at life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness now."

In a press conference, Dr. Brown was asked if she felt Southern Baptists specifically were ignoring the race problem, and also what she felt Southern Baptists should do about race relations.

She replied that any group of church people "who have had their religious jaw teeth shaken" over the race issue have been too slow, but the churches must prick the conscience of their members or else the church might as well go home and forget the whole show.

"It is one thing to make a statement or pass a law, but another to decide how you are going to react...when a Negro moves into the house next door," she said. "You can pass all the laws and resolutions you want, but until the church, as the guardian of the conscience of people, leads people to change in attitudes, nothing much will come of it."

She said that the church needs to hammer on the exact meaning of brotherhood to Christian people. She also suggested that churches sponsor dialogue sessions with Negroes to enable white people and Negroes to get acquainted. "White people miss a lot of fun by not knowing Negroes," she said.

On the Poor People's Campaign in Washington, D. C., she said that the day of demonstrations is over as an effective means of race relations, and that the groups ought to go back home and get to work on the local level.

Dr. Brown questioned the expenditure of funds in the Poor People's Campaign, saying that two low-cost housing units could have been built for about the same amount used in the march through her home in Nashville enroute to Washington.

Dr. Brown's address climaxed a session which also featured addresses by Mrs. Milton Cunningham, a missionary to Africa and Miss Alma Hunt, executive secretary of the Woman's Missionary Union.

Mrs. Cunningham, on furlough from her mission station in Zambia, emphasized the need for Christians to become involved in missions in their communities. "Oh, what might happen if our youth could see their mothers and fathers involved where they are, involved in love, involved with concern, burdened for our world," she said.

Miss Hunt told the delegates that the WMU was "geared for change." Explaining the reasons for the WMU's recent change in organizational structure, she said, "To look at where we are and where we are headed requires us neither to deplore nor to hail the past, but simply to recognize the handwriting on the wall.

"Recognizing that you cannot meet the challenges of our day with outdated approaches and techniques, we have tried to update our organizational structure, our approaches to study, and our techniques recommended for doing the work committed to us."

In a brief business session, the delegates elected officers for the coming year. They are president, Mrs. Robert Fling of Pleasantville, N.Y.; recording secretary, Mrs. J.R. Lobaugh of Kansas City, Kan.; and new members-at-large of the WMU Executive Board, Mrs. Charles Standridge of Arlington, Va. and Mrs. Wayne Dehoney of Louisville, Ky.

FINAL WRAPUP

Conservatism Underlines
SBC Pastors' Conference

By Al Morgan

HOUSTON (BP)--A strong note of theological conservatism underlined the two-day Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference throughout the 58 sermons, messages and devotionals.

Sounding the major chord with three addresses was Clark H. Pinnock, assistant professor of New Testament at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary who called for a new reformation within the church.

Joining the seminary teacher in support of the theme were J. Norris Palmer, pastor of First Baptist Church of Baton Rouge, La., Robert G. Lee, pastor emeritus of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn., K. Owen White, metropolitan missions coordinator for Southern Baptists in Los Angeles, and W. A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas.

In a business session the pastors chose vice-president Harper Shannon of Dothan, Ala., to succeed President Gerald Martin of Memphis.

Shannon, pastor of First Baptist Church and an evangelist, will direct the Pastors Conference during the next 12 months with Don Berry, pastor of Memorial Drive Baptist Church of Houston, vice-president, and Allen Comish, pastor of Waldrop Baptist Church, Columbus, Ga., secretary.

The Pastors' Conference was one of four auxiliary meetings preceding the 111th meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Pinnock described the job of Christians this way: "Our primary responsibility is to make known the unsearchable riches of Christ to all men. We are called to reform the world by changing men's hearts. We are not called to editorialize but to evangelize."

Speaking on the topic, "The Fact of Christ," Pinnock told the pastors that "men do not need the Christ of liberal theology. They need good news, not good advice. We will not be saved by bearing our cross, but by accepting His.

"Men today are confused about God. They are bewildered by the welter of conflicting religious claims."

Reminding that Southern Baptists stand at a crossroad, Pinnock said "millions of contemporary professed Christians are forsaking the Biblical Christ for a false Christ of process philosophy and revolutionary social action."

In earlier sessions, Pinnock, whose addresses drew repeated applause from an estimated 6,000 persons, charged an early-stage drifting away from Southern Baptists' Biblical, Christ-centered theology is apparent. But he added that it is not too late for the denomination to regain its stability.

"Compared with other churches, our own decline theologically is at an early stage. If we are alert, the drift can be checked," he said.

The greatest crisis the church has ever had to face is the current attack on the existence of divine truth, he charged.

"Perhaps only a small number now hold the new view of the Bible, but it only takes a few agitators to burn a city and a few rebels to overthrow a government," he said.

Pinnock described the new view as belonging to those "who no longer feel that they can be bound to its (Bible) literal teaching and final authority."

He called for a new reformation within the church to "restore the crown rights of our divine Lord, and the infallible authority of His inspired Word."

The Protestant Reformation has become the "Protestant Deformation" today, espousing a man-centered and man-made theology based on a consensus of human opinions, he contended.

"Our hope is for a new reformation from God," he said. "A reformation of truth and life. A return to Biblical standards and to profound Scriptural preaching."

Pinnock challenged pastors to "go on to maturity," letting the Bible rule their life, not in name only, but in reality and depth.

Palmer told the preachers Southern Baptists are going to find themselves "being even more grossly misunderstood" unless they "repeatedly and emphatically" declare themselves in several areas.

Palmer identified the areas as the divine inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures, the virgin birth, the efficacy of Jesus' blood to provide full and complete atonement for sin, Jesus' bodily resurrection, Jesus' literal ascension, and the confident assurance of Jesus' eventual return to claim his own.

The conservatism of the Pastors' Conference was also voiced in addresses dealing with church-state separation, the ecumenical movement and social aspects of the gospel.

Ramsey Pollard, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, chided preachers and laymen who say that the Gospel is not relevant.

"I am sick and tired of people preaching and writing, and telling me that my preaching is not relevant," he said. "Too many of our Sunday School teachers and editors are leaning in the wrong direction."

He urged pastors to "come back to the cross and preach it with fervor." He admitted that "we are living in a new day, but that man is still sinful and is unable to save himself."

Editor Joe T. Odle of Jackson, Miss., added that "It is not the ecumenical churches that are crowded today, but those with an evangelical fervor."

Odle, editor of the Baptist Record, official weekly newspaper of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, said some Southern Baptists believe that the convention should become a participant in such ecumenical organizations as the National Council of Churches or the World Council.

He questioned Baptists' religious liberty, adding "But could we become a part of these organizations without giving up some of our freedom?"

He said if Baptists were members of these bodies, "there is no possible way that they could separate themselves from the pronouncements and actions of these bodies, or their committees, no matter how distasteful they might be to the majority of our people."

On church-state separation, two speakers took differing tacks. J. B. Flowers of Newport News, Va., cited dangers in breaking down of barriers in the wall of church-state separation, but Baptist Hardin-Simmons University President Elwin Skiles said Baptists ought to re-examine the consequences of preventing Baptist colleges from accepting some types of federal aid.

In the closing address, R. G. Lee struck a high note for the universality of Jesus.

Famed among Southern Baptists for his eloquent speaking ability, the silver-haired orator, now 82, said, "This world of wonders and mysteries is a vast autograph album - its pages made of molecules, moats, mountains, continents, seas and starry heavens. The signature of Jesus is on every page."

Lee painted a verbal picture of Jesus as designer, creator and lawmaker saying, "This timeless Christ, Christianized the calendar of the world."

As Jesus showed hot displeasure against hypocrisy and self-seeking, Lee added, so should "we be showing hot displeasure against the evils of today that would lead our greatest graces to the grave and leave the world no copy - against all movements that would turn our land of the free and the home of the brave into the land of space and the home of the rave."

Two speakers urged the pastors to pay more attention to current social issues as they seek to evangelize.

Alvin Brackett, pastor of Ingleside Baptist Church in Macon, Ga., said the church that lags behind the entertainment and sports world in its treatment of colored peoples has little to teach the world in mitigating its racial dilemmas.

A denomination that lives in the past and refuses to rethink its theology under the Holy Spirit's leadership will be a feeble voice in a world where scientific miracles have revolutionized the thoughts of men."

Jerry Glisson, pastor of Leawood Baptist Church in Memphis, predicted the nation would become pagan unless Christians become involved in saving men and society.

FINAL WRAPUP

WMU Convention Challenged
On Issues, Race to Space

By Roddy Stinson

HOUSTON (BP)--Southern Baptist women were challenged here to respond in a Christian spirit to issues ranging from race to space.

Dr. Dorothy Brown, Negro professor of surgery at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tenn., drew a standing ovation from 3,000 delegates to the annual meeting of Women's Missionary Union when she called on the church to do its job in race relations.

Edward B. Lindaman, a space program manager for North American Rockwell Corp. of Downey, Calif., who shocked the women with an account of technical space progress ahead, called for Christians to recognize the scope of love as worldwide.

In a business session the women chose Mrs. Robert Fling of Pleasantville, N. Y., to serve them another year as president. They re-elected Mrs. J. R. Lobaugh of Kansas City, Kan., as recording secretary.

The woman's missionary organization was one of four auxiliary groups which met for two days before the Southern Baptist Convention.

Other major speeches included Jesse C. Fletcher, secretary of mission personnel at the Foreign Mission Board, and Miss Alma Hunt, executive secretary of WMU.

In a hard-hitting address, Dr. Brown, a Tennessee legislator, placed the blame for the current plight of the American Negro on the church.

"The church has sung its songs, prayed its prayers, and then closed and locked its doors to the real reason for its being.

"If the church would do its job, we wouldn't need any more human relations commissions or further civil rights laws," she said.

Dr. Brown strongly condemned violence as the cure for America's ills.

"As I survey the events of 1967-68, I conclude that violence is stupid and does not solve a single problem," she said.

"Nonviolence, the abiding philosophy of that great Baptist apostle of nonviolence, Martin Luther King, is the way of calmness, rationality, Christianity, and faith. But he is gone, and I feel that it is now white Christian Americans' turn to raise up a leader to take his place."

Challenging white Americans to become involved in correcting today's problems, she said the contemporary white American is responsible for seeing that, without subterfuge, without the necessity for further violence, and in the true spirit of the constitution of this democracy, the children of the slaves of his foreparents get an even break at life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Lindaman, a prominent Presbyterian layman whose Christian devotion has caused some to tag him, "prophet of the Space Age," predicted that the effects of man's flight to the moon will reach into every facet of life.

"I believe we will see a new thread in the weave of history. It will be saying, 'Man! Man! Now that your freedom and responsibility have moved to worlds beyond our wildest imagination, can you not see that you are able to enrich the lives of all persons with your fantastic know-how?...Will you not choose to eradicate disease, war, and famine from this planet earth...that all of God's children might experience the fullness of humanity?'"

Fletcher voiced concern about some of the tendencies he said were developing in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"I am worried because I have caught a spirit of neo-isolationism, which is causing people to look away from the international scene and look back at our own country."

Fletcher stressed that he was not criticizing the move by Southern Baptists to reach out into their communities and states.

"I am excited that people are becoming concerned about the problems in our nation. This is a healthy spirit because it is a mission spirit that has no boundaries. It will not stop here but will continue across the oceans.

"But there are others who are saying--'Wait a minute. We've got terrible needs at home, Let's hold the line on our overseas commitment until we solve these problems.'

"This is a malignant spirit. If we turn our eyes away from people out there who do not know Jesus Christ, we'll invoke our own death."

In her report to the women, Miss Hunt said WMU was "geared for change." Explaining the reasons for the WMU's recent change in organizational structure, she said, "To look at where we are headed requires us neither to deplore nor to hail the past, but simply to reorganize the handwriting on the wall.

"Recognizing that we cannot meet the challenges of our day with outdated approaches and techniques, we have tried to update our organizational structure, our approaches to study, and our techniques recommended for doing the work committed to us."

Other emphases at the convention included testimonies by emeritus foreign missionaries and accounts of lay participation in ministries to victims of last summer's flood in Fairbanks, Alaska, and Hurricane Beulah in southern Texas last fall.

A concluding dramatic presentation, "Christ the Only Hope!" focused the convention delegates' attention on the Crusade of the Americas.

Next year's meeting of WMU is planned for June 9, 10 in New Orleans.

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FINAL WRAPUP

Music Conference Told
Of Musical Missions Role

By Orville Scott

HOUSTON (BP)--New developments that seem destined to make music increasingly important in missions efforts were outlined for more than 500 persons attending the annual Southern Baptist Church Music Conference here.

Music leaders from throughout the Southern Baptist Convention agreed, however, that new ideas should be tested against their "probability of producing spiritual results."

T. W. Dean, head of the school of music at Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Tex., told the group the text of the music must be sound scripturally.

"I don't care how effective the music is. If it's not true, it's not evangelistic."

Conference President Donald Winters, head of the music department at William Carey College, Hattiesburg, Miss., reminded fellow musicians that it is not sufficient for music to be a performance.

"As a part of the sensitivity to need, the awareness of change and the possibilities of diversity as they apply to church music, we need to be certain we do not lose the all-important sensitivity," Winters said.

J. William Thompson, supervisor of literary publications for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, identified leadership training as the greatest music need of churches.

Noting that "the greatest revivals have been held by men who put music at the center," Thompson added that "music either wins or drives people away."

The ministers of music agreed that a balanced music program should include anthems suitable for inexperienced singers. They also said that music leaders must be Christian and "God-called," that they must never become separated from the mainstream of Southern Baptists and that they must be "ministers of great influence in the lives of those with whom they deal."

Some new developments utilizing music as a major vehicle in foreign missions were given by Claude H. Rhea, Jr., who is completing his first year as the Baptist Foreign Mission Board's music consultant.

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Rhea told the music leaders data processing is being used in conjunction with a census to determine specific needs. He also said that the Foreign Mission Board is analyzing the music resources among its personnel.

Another new development is a Christian fine arts performing program in which outstanding Christian performers will give at least two weeks each year on the missions field, Rhea said.

"The future is wide open for music missions," he said. "We may eventually have a music missionary couple for each of the 69 countries where we have foreign missions."

Two ministers of music on furlough from the foreign mission field, Kent Balyeat of Argentina and Bill Ichter of Brazil, told of singing before a crowd of 150,000 people at the launching of the Brazilian Baptist Crusade in 1965.

New officers elected by the music directors are Bob Burroughs of First Baptist Church, Abilene, Tex., vice president of the local church division of the conference; Charles Worley of Park Cities Baptist Church, Dallas, and Carl Perry of First Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn., council members for the local church division; James D. Woodward, chairman of the department of church music at Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, vice president of the educators division; Scotty Gray of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, council member for the educators division; Rod Latta, music director for the Illinois Baptist State Association, vice president, denominational division; and James Allcock, church music consultant for the Baptist Convention of Maryland, council member for the denominational division.

Sara Thompson, who is retiring as church music librarian at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, after 23 years, was given a life honorary membership in the Conference.

Next year's meeting will be at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, June 9-10.

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Executive Committee Votes
To Recommend Race Statement

By W. Barry Garrett

HOUSTON (BP)--The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, after a lengthy session of debate, voted to recommend a strongly-worded statement on the racial crisis in the nation for adoption by the Southern Baptist Convention here on the following day (Wednesday).

The statement urged Baptists "to obtain and secure for every person equality of human and legal rights," and was signed earlier by 79 top Baptist executives and editors.

If messengers approve the lengthy document, the Southern Baptist Convention will seek through its agencies "to secure opportunities in matters of citizenship, public services, education, employment and personal habitation that every man achieve his highest potential as a person."

The statement declares that "we will personally accept every Christian as a brother beloved in the Lord and welcome to the fellowship of faith and worship every person irrespective of race and class."

The Executive Committee was not content to make "a statement on the crisis in our nation." It asked the Convention to request the Home Mission Board to take the leadership in working with the Convention agencies concerned with problems related to the crisis.

If the messengers approve the Executive Committee request, the Home Mission Board is expected to start conferring with the agencies concerned almost immediately to make plans for the summer. Longer range plans will follow the summer's crisis.

In addition, the proposed Convention action calls on individuals, churches, associations and state conventions to join the Southern Baptist Convention "in a renewal of Christian effort to meet the national crisis."

The Executive Committee decision came at the end of four hours of intense debate. In the final vote, however, only three members of the Executive Committee opposed the action.

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The statement details the crisis before the nation, commending those who have worked to create a "Christian climate in our nation," voices a confession of corporate guilt in falling short in Christian brotherhood, and appeals to the denomination for immediate action to help improve human relations and achieve justice and peace.

A public statement issued earlier by 79 prominent Southern Baptist leaders, expressed their own position and called on the Executive Committee and the Southern Baptist Convention to take similar action. These 79 included the executives of all the Convention's agencies and most of the executive secretaries and editors of state Baptist conventions.

From the beginning of the debate in the Executive Committee it was evident a large and determined segment of those present were prepared to fight for approval of the proposed or a similar statement. Opposition was vocal and equally determined, but it was an obvious minority throughout the day.

Support for the proposed Convention action picked up when Baker James Cauthen, executive secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, reported 197 missionaries on furlough studied the statement and voted approval of it.

Further support came from Owen Cooper, a prominent Baptist layman and business executive from Yazoo City, Miss. In a prepared statement he said that he had changed in recent years in his racial attitudes and that there is growing sentiment in Southern Baptist circles "in support of Christian ministries."

This growing voice, Cooper said, is demanding that "Southern Baptists should become more involved in current problems such as poverty, hunger, health, literacy, housing, education, family planning, recreation and others."

Opposition to the proposed action did not focus primarily on the contents of the statement itself, but concerned itself with procedure, sources of the proposal, and possible schism among the churches.

Ramsey Pollard, former president of the Convention and pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, said such statements should not originate with the paid staffs of the Convention agencies. He cautioned the agency heads not to "issue statements that will get us into trouble."

T. A. Patterson of Dallas, executive secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, explained why he had not signed the original statement. He opposed the procedure used to prepare the statement, charging it had not followed proper channels.

The Texas Baptist executive also complained that more pastors and laymen were not involved in developing the statement. He also attacked the "confession" section and deplored the absence of commendation of those who had been working in the field of race relations.

After two hours of debate, the Executive Committee appointed a special committee of five of its own members and three others "at large" to take the proposal, rework it and bring it back three hours later for further consideration. The committee was composed of Chairman E. W. Price, Jr. of High Point, N.C., Fred Rhodes of Washington, D.C., Clifton J. Allen of Nashville, Tenn., Cooper Walton of Jackson, Miss., Harold Purdy of Madisonville, Ky., H. H. Hobbs of Oklahoma City, Patterson, and Duke K. McCall of Louisville, Ky.

In the afternoon the committee brought back a revised statement which retained the essence of the original, but eliminated some of the points of objection voiced in the morning session.

A major change in the committee's revision was to ask the Convention to request the Home Mission Board to take leadership in implementing the statement. The earlier statement called for a "task force" of denominational agencies to do the work.

Opponents of the proposed recommendation to the Convention attempted several diverting actions at the end of the day's debate but they lost on every vote. These efforts included an attempt to delay consideration until later, to refer the problem to the resolutions committee, and to commend those who had made the original statement and to authorize the agencies to deal with the problem.



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