

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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August 30, 1968

BUREAUBAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,
Telephone (615) 254-1631Students Show Concern
For National Crisis

GLORIETA, N. M. (BP)--More than 1,800 students demonstrated their concern for the crisis in the nation by participating in a service of sacrifice and commitment climaxing student week at Glorieta Baptist Assembly here.

A statement of confession and commitment read at the service states, "As a sinner I have not followed the teachings of Christ in teaching, feeding, and healing my brothers who have been made by God....I have not allowed the power of God's love to aid me to accept others as human beings who have needs just like my own."

Affirming the Southern Baptist Convention's "Statement on the Crisis in Our Nation" passed in Houston, June 5, the students' statement goes further to pledge themselves to action: "I must become involved in the needs of God's people--every person living on the face of the earth."

After the presentation of the statement which had been compiled by 200 students under the leadership of Dan McNeil, a student at Baylor University, Waco, Tex., the service of sacrifice began with the reading of selections concerning the needs felt by many Americans.

As a commitment to God concerning what he would do in the coming days, one of the student program leaders took off his sport coat and left it on the platform. Another student left his sweater.

Soon the stillness of the auditorium was broken by footsteps. Five, then ten, then 25 students at a time began coming down the aisles to give something of their own--suede jackets, watches, shoes, windbreakers, rings, money, socks, shirts, handmade sweaters, all-weather coats. Students and advisors came from all parts of the auditorium to symbolize their dedication to serve God by sharing in Christian love with their fellow men.

As the gifts were piled high on the stage and then began to be placed on the pews, the students left in voluntary silence.

The following morning hundreds of additional items were brought. The students returned to their homes and to their campuses to put into action what they had pledged to God, to their fellow men and to themselves.

The clothing they left at Glorieta will be distributed through the assembly to nearby counties, some of which have the lowest per capita income in the nation. The jewelry will be used as graduation presents and study incentives for students in poor schools.

Cash gifts will be used in the street ministry of the Haight-Ashbury district in San Francisco, Calif.

Text of the Statement of Confession and Commitment read as follows: "I as a sinner confess that in this time of crisis in this nation that I have not followed the teachings of Christ in teaching, feeding, and healing my brothers who have been made by God.

"In the social, political, economic, and religious areas of my life, I have not allowed the power of God's love to aid me to accept others as human beings who have needs just like my own.

"I have sinned and acknowledged my sin before God and my brothers, and from this point on, I will endeavor with all my power to put into practice the life actions of Jesus Christ. I bring the sacrifice of myself to the altar of God and turn again to right myself with my fellow man.

"I as a member of the Southern Baptist Convention confirm the feelings of my convention's 'Statement on the Crisis in Our Nation' and I must become involved in the needs of God's people--every person living on the face of the earth.

"I call upon each person who feels that he must confess, not to stop with confession, but to act.

-more-

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S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

"We, the undersigned, having confessed our sins, endorse the 'Statement on the Crisis in Our Nation' as passed by the Southern Baptist Convention on June 5, 1968. We encourage and lend our support to the Home Mission Board and other agencies to implement this statement as a mandate for action.

"And, further more, we dedicate ourselves to carry out these objectives through our own personal lives and any other means available."

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New Sunday School Youth,
Adult Supervisors Named

8/30/68

NASHVILLE (BP)--Charles R. Livingstone, formerly supervisor of the youth section, Sunday School department for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board has been named supervisor of the department's adult section, and has been replaced by Franklin Farmer, formerly a consultant in the adult section.

Both men will supervise editors who will develop new periodicals for 1970, and field service consultants who work in the age-group areas of youth and adults and with leadership training in these areas.

Livingstone, a native of Kansas, is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and did graduate study at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, the University of Oklahoma, Norman, and George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville.

Before his original employment at the board as editor of adult Life and Work materials in the Sunday School department he served as pastor of churches in Oklahoma.

A native of Texas, Farmer is a graduate of Midwestern University, Wichita Falls, Tex., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He has done graduate study at East Central State College, Ada, Okla., and at the University of Oklahoma.

He joined the staff of the Sunday School department in 1964 as consultant in young people's work. He earlier served as director of the Baptist Student Unions at East Central State College, Oklahoma City University and the University of Oklahoma.

The appointments of Livingstone and Farmer complete the supervisory staff of the recently reorganized Sunday School department.

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Fincher Named President
Of Carson-Newman College

8/30/68

JEFFERSON CITY, Tenn. (BP)--John Albert Fincher, academic dean for Samford University (Baptist) in Birmingham, Ala., has been named president of Carson-Newman College, another Baptist school, effective Sept. 1.

A native of South Carolina, Fincher succeeds Harley Fite, who is retiring after 20 years as president of Carson-Newman.

Fincher is a graduate of the University of South Carolina where he earned the bachelor of science degree magna cum laude and master of science degree, and the University of North Carolina where he earned the doctor of philosophy degree.

He was an elementary school principal in South Carolina before teaching at Cumberland College, Williamsburg, Ky., and Millsaps College, Jackson, Miss. He was head of the biology department at Howard College (now Samford University) before becoming assistant to the president at Howard and later academic dean.

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CORRECTION

Please correct typographical error in story mailed Aug. 28, headlined "Stewardship Commission Okays Fund Raising Program." Graph 6, first word should be "Merrill" (D. Moore), not "Merril" as sent. Thanks.

Baptist Press

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FEATURES

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SEP 3 1968

Key South American Needs:
Ministries to Poor, Rich

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC

By Jim Newton

BOGOTA, Colombia (BP)--An estimated 10,000 homeless children live on the streets of Bogota, sleeping in doorways under piles of newspapers or a burlap sack or two. They are living testimonies to the ravages of poverty that rack much of South America.

The newspaper or burlap offers little protection against the cold mountain temperatures. The altitude of this city of 2 million people is 8,000 feet, and the temperature often drops to the 30's and 40's during the winter months of July and August.

During the daytime, the homeless children, most of them under ten years of age, grovel in trash cans for food, beg on the streets, or steal to ward off starvation.

The Colombians call these children "gamines," which roughly translated from the Spanish means "little worldly children."

There seems to be little organized effort to convert these "little worldly children" into the "children of God."

Interviews with missionaries throughout Colombia, Peru, Argentinian and Brazil indicate that Baptists have made only the slightest dent in meeting the overwhelming spiritual and physical needs of the hard-core poor in much of South America.

The situation in each country is different, and it is difficult to generalize, but one of the most overwhelming impressions on most North American visitors to South America is the rank poverty of the masses in contrast to the extreme wealth of a few in the ruling class.

"You can't compare Brazil to the United States, or Brazil to Colombia, or even Brazil to Brazil," said Catherine Chappell, director of the Baptist Good Will Center in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Miss Chappell directs a booming program of ministry to the people of the heart-rending "favelas" of Rio de Janeiro. In this city of 4 million people, one-fourth of the population lives in some of the world's most terrible slums.

Conditions in the "favelas" are almost indescribable. In many cases, there is no water, electricity, little food, no sewage, or sanitation. In the Rio favelas, the poor often trek down a four-mile hill and back just to get water which is not fit to drink without boiling.

Nowhere in South America is the contrast between the rich and poor more evident. The "favelas" are mostly located on steep mountainsides, often adjacent to high-rise apartments where the rich live in splendor. The poor can in some cases even toss a stone from their shacks made of mud, tar paper, or woven mats onto the balconies of the plush apartments.

The general impression of a North American visiting the southern continent is that Baptists are not able to reach effectively either group--the rich or the extreme poor--with the gospel.

Most of the churches seem to be reaching the lower middle classes and the lower classes. There are exceptions, to be sure, but most missionaries interviewed in South America agreed.

"Where we are missing the boat is that we are not reaching people who will be in charge of the country in years to come--editors, university professors, students, etc.," said Jack Glaze, president of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Two missionaries in Lima, Peru, echoed this view. "If the time ever comes when we can reach the middle and upper class in Peru, then we may be able to build self-supporting churches," said James Redding, missionary in Lima. "One of the mistakes in the past has been we've tried to build middle-class churches with lower class people," added Tom Watson of Lima.

Largely, this is true because the lower classes are more responsive to the gospel than the middle and upper classes, said Bill Warren, missionary in Rio de Janeiro. "They are more aware of their spiritual needs. Those with material possessions don't feel they need anything --they can buy happiness," Warren said.

He added, however, that there is a growing number of middle class professional people who are being reached with the gospel in Brazil, citing as an example the First Baptist Church of Rio de Janeiro where "doctors and lawyers worship beside servants and extremely poor people."

Baptist work with the hundreds of thousands of students in South America is at a critical juncture. Student work is strongest in South America in Chile, said Frank Means, secretary for South America with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond. But the student program in Chile suffers now because the key missionary in charge of it is in the USA.

Efforts to begin student work are underway in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Buenos Aires, Argentina; with existing student work programs operating with some success in Cali and Bogota, Colombia; Montevideo, Uruguay; Recife, Brazil, and a few other cities.

Other than student work programs, there is no really effective organized program of reaching the intelligencia, middle and upper classes in most of South America. The only way is personal evangelism on an individual basis.

This is one reason that Reubens Lopes, pastor in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and president of the Crusade of Americas, has made a concerted effort to visit each governor in Brazil and presidents of other countries in the Crusade of the Americas to present to the top government leaders an inscribed Bible and share a Christian message.

Whether the Crusade of the Americas will make an impact on both the rich and the poor is a key question, for both elements in South American Society are in dire need of the gospel.

Baptist ministries to the poor largely revolve around the work of good will centers, such as the ones visited by a Baptist Press reporting team in Rio de Janeiro and Recife, Brazil, and in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

"Social work is an open door to evangelism in Brazil," said Edith Vaughn, director of the Recife good will center. She explained that over a 10 year period, the good will center had averaged more than 200 decisions per year. They minister to 5,000 persons a year and have more than 1,500 in Vacation Bible School-type programs annually.

Although the work is rewarding and fulfilling, it is also frustrating. "The greatest frustration is seeing the need so much beyond human ability to meet it," said Miss Vaughn.

The needs are so overwhelming that sometimes Miss Vaughn comes home and cannot eat or sleep, said her roommate, Martha Hairston. "I can't eat," Miss Vaughn once told Miss Hairston. "I talked to so many people who have nothing to eat, that I just can't."

Miss Vaughn said, however, that you can't let the overwhelming needs get you down. "The very fact that you suffer with them helps them, for it shows someone cares. You control your emotions, but you do get involved.

"Some people tell me, 'I couldn't do this because it would tear me apart to see such overwhelming needs.' But I tell them that if my workers ever quit feeling it (compassion), then I hope they'll quit."

Miss Vaughn is now seeking to get the Brazilian Baptist Convention Home Mission Board to join the mission in opening up a ministry in Recife to homeless boys like the "gamins" of Bogota.

In Bogota, however, where the problem of homeless children is perhaps even more intense and the poverty in the hillside slums is among the worst in South America, Baptists are able to do little to meet the overwhelming needs.

"We're just not set up to do anything to help these people," said Loren Turnage, missionary in Bogota, as he stood in the midst of a hillside slum where 4,500 people live in the worst squaller imaginable.

"I couldn't come up here and give these people food," he said. "It would cause a riot. There just wouldn't be enough to go around. We could go broke giving vitamins, food, clothing, etc., to them and still not make a dent.

"If we tried to teach the Bible and not give them anything to meet their physical needs, we might win a few converts, and we might not. When the poverty is so great, you just can't come out and teach the Bible and do nothing else," he said.

The people ask questions like, "If God is love, why does He let us be like this?," Turnage said. "The problems of society are so overwhelming that the tendency of the missionary is just to say, 'Hooy on society, I'll just deal with the man's soul.'"

"So we say, 'Let Bill Dyal (director of the Peace Corps in Colombia and a former Baptist missionary and denominational worker) do it. He has 700 Peace Corps volunteers.' The Peace Corps isn't relating their work to the gospel, but they're doing work that ultimately will help the Kingdom of God grow in Colombia," Turnage said.

But some churches and missions are not content to "leave it to the Peace Corps." They are establishing mission points in the slums seeking to minister to both spiritual and physical needs.

The tremendous needs, both of the poor and the rich, are the overwhelming single impression that staggers any visitor to South America. The big question is whether Baptists will provide the people, talents, dedication and financial support to meet these needs.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Jim Newton, assistant director of Baptist Press, and Floyd Craig, director of public relations for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, recently returned from a one-month reporting trip to South America.

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BP PHOTOS being mailed to Baptist state papers.

BAPTIST PRESS PHOTO

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CHILDREN OF THE WORLD: There are 10,000 homeless children in Bogota, Colombia, called "gamines" (translated from Spanish: "little worldly children") who live on the streets, sleep in doorways, and cover up with newspapers or burlap sacks in near-freezing weather. The needs of the poor, such as these people in Bogota, are overwhelming. (BP) PHOTO by Floyd A. Craig.