

July 15, 1969

PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
(another in a series)

LAYMEN AND THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

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What can be done to get more laymen to attend the Southern Baptist Convention? Typical of previous conventions there were comparatively few laymen at the most recent meeting at New Orleans.

On Wednesday morning of the convention the approximately 5,600 messengers who were present were asked to answer several questions. One question was concerning their vocation.

The tabulation revealed that 47.4 per cent of those present were members of church staffs. An additional 18.8 per cent were wives of staff members. These two groups represented 66.2 per cent of those present.

Also, there were 12.3 per cent who were in a church or denominationally related vocation: evangelists, home and foreign missionaries, employes of associational, state, and Southern Baptist Convention agencies and institutions. Add this group to the church staff and their wives, and you have 78.5 per cent. Homemakers made up 8.6 per cent of those present. Many and possibly most of the homemakers were wives of denominational employes. There were 4.4 per cent who did not indicate their vocation.

This means that only 8.5 per cent of the messengers present worked at some so-called secular task and considered themselves "laymen." The preponderance of "professional" leadership in attendance raises some question about how much the decisions of the convention represented the perspective of the rank and file of Southern Baptists.

Can anything be done to increase the attendance of laymen at the Southern Baptist Convention? There are two or three things that might be done.

Some consideration should be given to a change in the time for the meeting of the convention. More laymen would be able to attend if the sessions of the convention were on week-ends, possibly beginning Friday night and closing Monday. Plans might be made for a laymen's rally or a special laymen's emphasis at a Saturday or a Sunday session.

Laymen should be given more responsibility in the convention. They should be given a more prominent place in the work of some of the major committees such as the committee on the order of business, the committee on boards, but particularly the resolutions committee.

They should be elected more frequently as an officer of the convention. It might even be wise to establish the practice of having a layman as one of the vice presidents. Why not elect a layman as president of the convention more frequently?

There is at least one other suggestion, and possibly the most important one, that would contribute to an increase in the attendance of laymen at the convention. Let churches provide in their budgets to pay the expenses not only of the pastor to the convention but also of a carefully selected laymen.

Our desire should be not only that laymen in larger numbers attend the Southern Baptist Convention but that they participate actively and effectively in its deliberations, decisions, and work.

Nothing can contribute more to this than getting them involved in the decision making processes in their local churches. This will tend not only to deepen their interest in the work of their churches but also in the work of the denomination.

July 15, 1969

Grant Named President
Of Ouachita University

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. (BP)--Daniel R. Grant, professor of political science and director of the Urban and Regional Development Center at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, has been named president of Ouachita Baptist University, here, effective Feb. 1, 1970. Grant will fill the position left vacant by the resignation of Ralph A. Phelps, who had been president for 16 years.

Grant, 45, received his bachelor of arts degree summa cum laude from Ouachita in 1945. In 1946, he received the Certificate in Public Administration from studies pursued at the Universities of Alabama, Tennessee and Kentucky. He received the master of arts degree from the University of Alabama and the doctor of philosophy degree from Northwestern University in 1948.

He has attained national recognition as an authority on urban government and inter-governmental relations; has served as visiting professor of municipal government and planning at Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand; has served as consultant for the U.S. Advisory Commission on Inter-governmental Relations; and is currently a member of the Advisory Committee on Federalism and Metropolitan Government, established by the National Committee for Economic Development.

Grant is author and co-author of several books; and has served on several committees and commissions of the Southern Baptist Convention, including the Southern Baptist Foundation, the Christian Life Commission, and the Findings Committee of the Baptist Education Study Task (BEST) of Baptist Colleges, and the study committee on Baptist Student Work.

Grant has been consultant for numerous cities and metropolitan areas and is presently completing two research projects--a comparative study of metropolitan governments in Toronto, Miami and Nashville, financed by a grant from the Ford Foundation; and a study for the U.S. Department of Agriculture of the relation of metropolitan government to rural areas.

He is a member of the American Political Science Association, American Society for Public Administration, and American Association of University Professors.

Last year, Grant lectured at Glorieta and Ridgecrest Baptist Assemblies and wrote a book entitled The Christian and Politics.

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Mission Leader's Wife
Dies in Atlanta

7/15/69

ATLANTA (BP)--Mrs. Glendon McCullough, wife of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Secretary of Missionary Personnel, died here on July 13.

Reflecting the family's commitment to missions, Mrs. McCullough shortly before her death requested that in lieu of flowers, friends donate the money to Mission 70, the World Missions Youth Conference scheduled in Atlanta next December.

Before she married, Mrs. McCullough worked as a secretary for the First Baptist Church, here. Later attending Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, she worked for a year as assistant young people's secretary for the Georgia Baptist Convention, where at the time McCullough was Royal Ambassador's secretary.

Funeral services were held in Atlanta on July 15.

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