

November 4, 1969

## Radio Changes Sunday Night Service To "Live" Program

by Adon Taft  
Religion Editor, Miami Herald

MIAMI, Fla. (BP)--Combining the art forms of drama and music with a somewhat traditional spoken message has literally transformed the Sunday night worship service at Shenandoah Baptist Church here into a "live" program.

The church has just launched "Air Quest," a "live" broadcast of the Sunday evening service over FM radio station WEDR of Miami.

The program, which lasts only one-half hour compared to traditional hour-long Sunday night services, was originally designed to reach shut-ins, but has had a surprisingly broader impact, according to the pastor, Thomas O. Deckle.

Already attendance in the church has shot up, because the programs "have gotten us out of the rut of the same old kind of preaching service," Deckle said.

In addition, the youth of the church have started a Saturday project of visiting the shut-ins who call in during the program and contacting others who might have a prayer request they would like aired over the radio.

Another plus is that a lot of the church members now are personally involved in the service.

One of the highlights of each program is a six-minute drama written and directed by Paula Milton, an English professor at Miami-Dade Junior College where she also works in drama.

Phone calls to the church during the broadcast indicate that the dramas are catching the ears of listeners who ordinarily would turn off a "church service," according to Deckle.

Another major factor in the program is the music. There are 14 minutes of it, including rock and folk gospel songs, by youth groups, classical anthems by the choir, and popular hymns sung by the congregation.

"A lot of people had reservations about the young people and their guitars in a program for shut-ins," confessed the minister. "But when it was explained that this was the kids' way of making their own gift to the shut-ins, it was well received."

Not only have the older shut-ins appreciated the effort by the teenagers but young people have been attracted to the audience for the show because of the contemporary music, he reported.

Along with his four-minute, devotional-type message, the music and drama help set the stage for what the pastor considers to be the key part of the program--the prayer requests.

All during the program, the phone number 443-1639 is repeated and listeners are urged to call in their special requests for prayer. Those requests, taken by staff members manning the phones in the office and relayed to the pastor, are read over the air during a two-to-three minute segment near the end of the broadcast while the choir hums the theme.

Those prayer requests have revealed the surprisingly broad appeal of the show and have led to some unexpected opportunities for ministry.

"When a blind woman asked for prayer, another listener called in to get the woman's name and address because that person was interested in helping the blind," Deckle said.

The pastor feels the format of the show--s ressing drama and music--has overcome the original objections of some of the church members who warned that "it will never work, there are too many religious programs on already."

The success of the broadcast has proven in the insight of one of the deacons who told the pastor that "we've got to try some new things, because the things we used to do don't work any more."



News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

# ---FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
Telephone (615) 244-2355  
W. C. Fields, Director  
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

November 4, 1969

PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE  
(another in a series)

## GOD AND THE TRAINED MIND

407

by T. B. Maston  
Retired Professor of Christian Ethics  
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

God will use in a special way the trained mind that is dedicated to his work in the world. This means that the child of God should secure the best training available for the work to which he feels led of the Lord. A part of his total stewardship responsibility includes his mind, its training, and his vocation.

As stewards we are not responsible for ability we do not have or for training beyond our capacity to obtain. God can and frequently does use very effectively people with limited abilities and training. These are people who have given to God what they have and he has multiplied it. God has a place and a ministry for each one of us in harmony with our abilities.

On the other hand, some of us may need to remember that God does not place a premium on ignorance. He does not have a special affinity for the untrained mind. There is a latent anti-intellectualism among us that seems at times to think that this is true.

The untrained mind may be used by the Lord; it could be used more effectively if it were trained. This means, among other things, that young people should be encouraged to secure the best training possible and then dedicate that training to the work of God and to the service of their fellowman.

A statement heard in chapel a number of years ago has never been forgotten. The statement was: "God has a special affinity for the trained mind." It should be restated that this affinity is not for the trained mind as such but for the dedicated trained mind. Such a mind is capable of doing things for the Lord that otherwise it could not do.

For example, there were many heroes of the faith in the Old Testament, but there was only one Moses. He had been trained in all the learning of the Egyptians and was used in an unusual way by the Lord. In many ways he was God's top man in the Old Testament.

There were many men who contributed significantly to the young Christian movement, but there was only one Paul. He was unusually well trained. It is even possible that Paul would be known today even if he had not become a Christian.

Call the roll of the men and women through the Christian centuries who have contributed the most to the Christian movement and to the world in general. You will discover that most of them had superior ability but also superior training.

It does seem that God through the centuries has had a special affinity for the trained mind. We should never forget, however, that the trained mind must be dedicated to the work of God in the world.

Among the early church fathers there were men such as Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and Augustine: all with superior training. To these might be added later such men as Aquinas, the greatest of the schoolmen, and Luther and Calvin, the chief of the reformers. Still later there have been molders of the Christian movement such as Wesley and Edwards.

Call your own roll of the Southern Baptists who have contributed most to the shaping of our denomination. Surely your list would include such intellectual giants as Broadus, Carroll, Carver, Conner, Mullins, Robertson, Scarborough, and others. These were men with superior ability and training. Even our leading preachers have been well-trained men although some of them may have been largely self-educated. Who are the men, in the main, who are providing leadership for us today? They are men with real ability but also with superior training.

God still has an affinity for a trained mind although he will use all of us in his service if we give to him what we have. Everyone of us, with little or great ability, should have a deep desire to give to him the best we have.



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Suicide Prompts  
Marketplace Aid

by Mary Burns

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (BP)--Overwhelming marital problems drove her to suicide. From her tragedy has grown a unique ministry--chapelacy in shopping centers.

A newspaper account of Margie's suicide began a flurry of activities for Chaplain George L. Colgin which has resulted in his new concept of missions. Margie, a waitress in the 57-store Thruway Shopping Center of Winston-Salem, N.C., had served the chaplain coffee each morning.

In a recent issue of Guidepost Magazine, Chaplain Colgin gave his reaction to Margie's death. "I was stung by the tragic irony of it. Here was I, an associate pastor at the Knollwood Baptist Church just across from...Thruway Shopping Center..."She (Margie) didn't know God wanted to help her. I didn't know she needed him so desperately. I looked across at the big center, bustling with people. How many Margies were over there."

Colgin shared his frustration with the director of the center's merchants association who later asked him to become chaplain. According to their agreement he would receive no pay but would be given a desk in the business office off the main shopping area and a conference room in case private counseling was necessary. He would not represent any denomination.

"At first my phone was fairly silent," Colgin said in his article. "I began to wonder. Then the lid blew off. Maybe it took people a little time to get used to this new way of finding God's help."

Colgin now counsels about 30 persons a week; this 30 includes managers, shoppers and employees. He says that the largest number of counselees have marital problems; normal anxieties run a close second. Counselees range in age from 15-73.

Colgin counsels with a number of teenagers, many having been referred to him by juvenile authorities. The center has a serious shoplifting problem and too often teenagers are involved. Some parents even refer their children to the chaplain. The most common teenage problem is depression; several have attempted suicide. And there is the usual narcotics problem.

Colgin has ministered to many Knollwood Baptist Church members at the center who will not approach him at the church. "There is something about a church and the role of the church that makes them repress," he said in an interview.

"They're so used to putting on their Sunday best." He gave the example of a female member who was having a sexual problem which she refused to discuss while they were in the church building.

Colgin's ministry is now four years old. Other shopping centers have followed Thruway's lead and are employing chaplains on a voluntary basis.

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"This is an unusual place for a ministry," Colgin says. "Once I got outside the church, the people started using my services. When you go into a shopping center, the world comes to you. You see people from all walks of life. People have found Christ in a meaningful way.

The chaplain admits that his frustrations are many and his responsibility heavy. But he plans, for now, to continue his dual ministry--in his church and at the center--because, "I still have a dream that the church will see this as a new concept of missions, that it will feel free to add a man to do this and feel that he doesn't have to fatten their church budget and add members. That's my dream. I don't think the church has much time to make the decision."



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November 4, 1969

Five Denominations  
Align To Fight Poverty

by Bert O. Tucker

619

CLEVELAND, Ga. (BP)--Churchmen from a 16-county area known for its conservatism have united in an interdenominational alliance to fight poverty, involving both Baptists and Catholics among the five participating denominations.

"Mission: Concern," as the group is called, was formally born after six months of preliminary ground work and committee functioning, led by a Catholic priest, a number of Baptist pastors, leaders from the ninth District Opportunity, Inc., VISTA workers, Episcopalians, Methodist, and Presbyterians.

The Northeast Georgia area involved, which most observers consider an unlikely place for such a venture, is characterized both in general conservative atmosphere and such statistics as:

--2,670 persons unemployed,

--20,437 families with less than \$3,000 annual income,

--1,097 school dropouts,

--36 per cent of housing classified as sub-standard,

--more than 30 per cent of the population over 25 years old with less than an eighth grade education.

Now mobilized again in committees, those involved in "Mission" are preparing a structured assault on poverty.

Immediate goals are being set for housing, for ministries to the elderly, for day care centers, for nutritional programs, for recreation facilities, for tutoring aids, for clothing sales centers, for employment, health, financial and educational services.

Authority for the modern battle on inequities, rejected for decades in this area because of the inevitable label of ecumenism which is feared especially by Baptists, has been assumed simply from a centuries-old mandate:

"...I was hungry and you fed me...thirsty and you gave me drink...a stranger and you took me in...naked and you clothed me...sick and you took care of me...in prison and you visited me..." (Words of Jesus Christ, Matt. 25:35-36.)

Success of the first full gathering of supporters was surprising to some. Approximately 260 leaders, representing a large percentage of the denominational makeup of Northeast Georgia were in attendance. Because of the heavy Baptist population of the area, committee chairmen and others among the organizers were encouraged to see a significant number of small church Baptist pastors present.

Noticeable absences were apparent, they said, however, of "First Baptist Church" pastors and Baptist associational leaders.

Brooks Hays, director of the Center for Ecumenical Studies at Wake Forest University, stated the goal: "We are determined that those deprived shall share in affluence."

The former president of the Southern Baptist Convention warned however, "The paternal kindness of the 19th Century is not adequate for the dynamic present."

As guest speaker for the banquet group, Hays said: "Unworthy of a Christian nation is the fact of millions who will go to bed hungry tonight. However, no matter how much is brought in for food, nothing can take the place of the presence of those who care."

He said there is sound theology in the preaching of "just retribution for sin."

Baptist Pastor Jack H. Richardson of Hiwassee, Ga., recounted details of the months of organization behind the mass assembly. "We're not talking about ways to worship. We're talking about problems much too large for any one church or group, but which can be preached by all of us."

Ross C. Coggins, former Southeastern Regional Director for VISTA and a former associate secretary of the Southern Baptist's Christian Life Commission, cited the formative directions made by 47 current VISTAS in the 16 county Georgia area and for their help "in making us live up to what we're supposed to be."

A prime mover among the organizers, speakers said, was Cleveland Catholic Chapel Priest Frank Ruff who initiated formation of the first steering committee for the "Mission: Concern" endeavor.

Ruff, active in several interdenominational affairs, has covered as a news reporter sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention for a Roman Catholic paper in Georgia.

He said response at the gathering has authorized action in three areas: (1) encouragement of churches of all denominations to make available facilities for day care centers, centers for the elderly, tutoring programs, etc.; (2) training of church members to visit area homes and bridge the gap between available government programs and the people needing them; and (3) enlisting churches to "adopt" the local VISTA worker.

A portion of the banquet program was given to the VISTA Corps who dramatized the specific needs of mountainous North Georgia. Interspersed in the dialogue was the statement from one of the young persons: "It's a sin, if, where the Father has placed us, we do not fight with all our strength against the world in disorder."

He repeated the mandate "...I was hungry and ye fed me..." amid nods of determination on the part of many who also are braced for possible repercussions from those who have decided to do nothing rather than do something on an interdenominational basis.

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Tucker has been on the Index staff since May of 1967. He came to Georgia from the Public Relations staff of the Texas Baptist Convention.

An Oklahoman, he is a graduate of Louisiana College and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a former copy editor for the New Orleans Times-Picayune.

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Moorhead and First Baptist Pastor Jess Moody are trying to recruit 300 to 500 college students or young adults "experienced in witnessing" to help channel the fruits of Blessitt's preaching into meaningful commitment.

Rupp said he would provide a tent for the personal workers to await those who respond to the preaching or who otherwise seek counsel.

"We hope to get something done for God in this thing," the two Baptist leaders said. "We just can't see the Christian church letting something this phenomenal and this meaningful to young people go by."

Moorhead said he hoped that Baptist young people from all over the country would make the pilgrimage to West Palm Beach for the rally after Thanksgiving.

Speaking of Evangelist Blessitt, Moody said: "It takes someone just as broke and humble as these kids are to bring the Gospel to them. This guy is accepted by the overground and the underground."

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