



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 23, 1970

**Texas Baptist Refutes Claim
Denominationalism Outdated**

DALLAS (BP)--Jimmy Allen, president of the 1.8 million-member Baptist General Convention of Texas, has expressed sharp disagreement with a Dallas theology professor here who declared that denominationalism is outdated and ineffective.

Writing in a weekly column used widely by daily newspapers in Texas, Allen responded to comments of Albert C. Outler, a professor in the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, who addressed the first annual assembly of the Texas Conference of Churches in Dallas.

Outler told the group, "Denominationalism is no longer a productive form of Christian existence--or racism, or class conflict, or self-maintained elites of any sort. All these are pollutants of the human spirit and must be discarded along with sulfonated hydrocarbons and raw sewage."

Allen, pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex., said "Few people want to return to the harsh, bitter sectarianism which once characterized relations between groups of churches.

"It is ironic," he continued, "to watch this same type of harsh attitude once common to sectarian groups now used on a more 'sophisticated' level by those who heap scorn on denominational differences in the name of unity."

Allen admitted the error of denominational or other structures which hinder the spirit of God and his work or limit the concept of God to that of a tribal deity.

But he added, "Sin is not inherent in denominations. They (denominations) may be used as effective channels of Christian service. Harsh judgementalism and pygmy concepts of God also are founded on many other factors," he said.

"Comparing denominational loyalties to raw sewage polluting the human spirit is a tragic misstatement of the case," he wrote. "Christians sharing a similar basic understanding of the truth of Christ's revelation, the place of biblical authority, the level of emotional content in worship, and the urgency of the message of Christ find normal expression of their faith in joining like-minded persons in their efforts for service."

The 43-year-old Texas Baptist president pointed out that the basic grouping founded by Jesus was the local fellowship.

"Precisely for that reason," he continued, "groups showing the greatest spiritual vitality, even in this increasingly secularized age, are those profoundly committed to doing the work of God on a local level, rather than concentrating their energies on creating a profile of uniformity."

Allen added, "Unity, without doubt, is a source of strength in any movement. However, unity is an inward bent of mind and spirit which allows Christian groups to find areas of cooperation, not a uniformity of structure."

Stating that denominational diversity has a valid element of strength to offer, Allen concluded, "Every man-made channel of service, denominational or otherwise, must be kept under constant examination to make sure it remains sensitive to what God is doing to his world."

Volunteers Rebuilt Romanian
Baptist Offices After Fire

BUCHAREST, Romania (BP)--Fifty volunteer workers here are rebuilding the offices of the Baptist Union of Romania, which was damaged by fire apparently caused by overheating from a fireplace with a defective chimney.

Exposed wooden beams began smouldering and damaged electrical wiring, according to reports from European Baptist Press Service. The fire, which apparently never burst into roaring blazes, smouldered for five hours before it was discovered.

The 20 employees in the building escaped injury, although some suffered from smoke inhalation. Some of the records of the union were soaked by water from fire hoses.

The offices were located on the floor above the auditorium of Bucharest's First Baptist Church, which escaped damage. Most of the damage to the main inner walls and partitions between offices has now been repaired by the 50 Baptist volunteers here.

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Belgian Church Featured
On National Television

3/23/70

GRACE-BERLEUR, Belgium (BP)--The Belgian national television agency will broadcast a worship service from the Baptist church in this small city not far from Liege in eastern Belgium.

Belgian Baptist leaders regard this national television exposure as "extraordinary attention" for a group numbering only 300 in the entire country. Belgium has fewer Baptists than any other major nation in western Europe.

Announcement of the coming television broadcast was one of the highlights of the annual Belgian Baptist Union meeting in Brussels recently, according to European Baptist Press Service. The union, which consists mostly of French-speaking churches, accepted into membership two English-language churches.

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Midwestern Seminary Adopts
Budget, Names Visiting Prof

3/23/70

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Trustees of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary adopted a budget of \$629,113 for the 1970-71 school year, elected a new board chairman, and appointed a visiting professor for missions for the next school year.

J. Loyd Moon, professor at the Baptist seminary of Equatorial Brazil in Belem, Brazil, was elected visiting professor of missions for the 1970-71 when he will be on furlough.

Elected president of the board of trustees was C. Harold Mann, attorney from Kansas City, with the law firm of Mann, Sullivan and Gilwee. He succeeds Norman McCrummen, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dalton, Ga.

Other new officers include first vice-president Frank B. Kellogg, pastor, Maplewood Baptist Church, St. Louis; and second vice president, S. W. Eubanks, professor, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, Ark.

Re-elected to offices were Luther Dyer, secretary of the evangelism department, Missouri Baptist Convention, as secretary of the board; and Frank E. Myers, pastor, First Baptist Church, Warrensburg, Mo., as treasurer.

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Southern Baptist Convention

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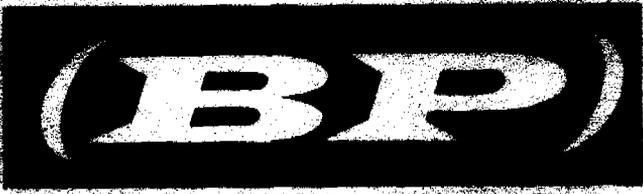
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