



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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July 19, 1977

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Pastors and Psychiatrists
Urged to Join Forces

By Maryneal Jones

GREENVILLE, S. C. (BP)--Pastors and psychiatrists must join forces to help the mentally anguished, a psychiatrist who trained both for the ministry and for medicine said at the Furman University Pastors School here.

Edgar Draper, a former United Methodist pastor, is a psychoanalyst and psychotherapist at the University of Mississippi Medical Center and author of "Psychiatry and Pastoral Care."

According to Draper, pastors are on the front line of the mental health battle and need to be skilled counselors themselves as well as to know when and how to refer people to mental health professionals.

"It's not enough to wish to help others," Draper said. "Pastors need to be skilled counselors who are able to diagnose need and begin therapeutic action. They owe it to their parishioners and to themselves to have had training which gives them sufficient knowledge and skill to allow them to do more good than harm."

Draper said a report from the Joint Commission on Mental Health shows that 42 percent of people troubled with emotional problems consult their minister first. "Pastors are on the front line of the mental health battle," he said.

Common formulas, he said, such as "prayer changes things" and "start coming to church" will not always work with people who are anguished or facing periods of great stress. A pastor's training will determine the quality of his assistance to the sick, dying, bereaved, imprisoned, maritally conflicted and troubled person, Draper said.

Draper said religion has the psychological power to modify and preserve the spirit of man but that a person's religious ideas also can reveal serious psychological conflict. "Religion meets psychological needs in sickness and in health," Draper said. "The mentally ill can believe and the believer can be mentally ill."

The psychological understanding of religion does not destroy religion but "indeed may enhance its abilities to meet human needs," Draper said, adding that a psychologically sick person's use of religion "does not indict the religion itself any more than the acceptance of religion of merit exempts the devotee from mental illness."

Draper said, "To our knowledge there are no reported cases of schizophrenic patients undergoing a religious conversion who left their schizophrenia behind or of primitively fixed dependent personalities who next day after conversion had developed psychological maturity."

Among the evidences of mental illness in this country is a suicide rate numbering 27,000 a year, he said. Draper listed suicide as the sixth leading cause of death and the third leading cause among adolescents.

Draper said a potential suicide is characterized by anguish and pain so overwhelming that the person is unable to sit still. "Someone or something very important is lost to them," Draper said. "The most important thing for you to do is to communicate that you understand what is happening, that you know how much they are hurting."

The second step in dealing with a person who may take his own life is to get him into what Draper calls "a new investment." The counselor can be encouraged if the anguished person transfers his broken relationship to an emotional investment in the counselor. "If that happens," Draper said, "do not at that point break the relationship by turning him over to another counselor."

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Knowing when to refer persons to mental health professionals is a delicate thing, according to Draper. "A psychiatrist is not necessarily a psychotherapist," Draper said, "and pastors trained in psychotherapy may be more skilled as psychotherapists than medical experts. However, in problems of mental illness, the qualified psychiatrist is the number one medical/legal expert."

Draper said that in addition to obvious situations where steps must be taken to help the anguished person, there are less acute situations involving the chronically mentally ill. "Unless pastors have had specific training of interprofessional quality for these problems, they leave themselves open to problems of foggy legal and medical responsibility," he said. "More importantly, however, the pastor may suffer loss of great expenditures of energy by undertaking to manage serious problems."

As a general rule, Draper said, parishioners considered for a course of counseling without a psychiatric evaluation should present well-understood problems that have been met with successful management before in a reasonable time by a particular pastor's experience. When the time comes for a pastor to refer problems beyond his skills, whether in an emergency, or for a patient long overdue for help, or to assist someone toward getting future help, that pastor needs to know what kind of doctor the patient needs.

"Pastors need working relationships with mental health professionals," Draper said. "Most yellow-page referrals are doomed. Ideally, psychiatric consultation between a pastor and a psychiatrist with whom he has a working relationship should be as close as the telephone."

Affirming the value of religion as a human resource, Draper said, "Through the ages the church's wisdom has prepared in its ritual, sacrament, doctrine, literature, and pastoral care for those well-delineated moments of crisis in the life of man. It has provided not only succor but inspiration and courage to remedy and work through life's trials."

An enlightened religion, Draper said, "will understand itself psychologically and bring its adherents the fruit of this understanding...from sermon to sacrament, from pageantry to prayer, from belief to benediction."

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Fulfill Dream of Youth,
Allen Challenges Adults

Baptist Press
7/19/77

By Jim Newton

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--The president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) told adults and retired Baptist lay people here it is not too late for them to fulfill the dreams of their youth through missions involvement.

Jimmy R. Allen, pastor of the First Baptist Church of San Antonio, issued a challenge for Baptists facing mid-career evaluation crises and for retired Baptists to join Baptist youth in giving from two weeks to two years of their lives in missions service.

Allen issued the challenge during his first address to a national gathering of Baptists since his election as president of the 12.9 million-member Southern Baptist Convention. He delivered the closing address at a week-long Bold Mission Leadership Conference at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center sponsored jointly by the SBC Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union.

He urged the 1,600 conference participants to respond to a new program now being developed by the denomination whereby lay people can spend up to two years of their lives in a volunteer mission corps either overseas or in the United States. The corps will be designed to beef up already existing SBC short-term missionary efforts.

Allen said the new program is being developed, not in response to the suggestion of President Jimmy Carter who proposed it in June, or in response to the action of the SBC two weeks later, but rather in response "to what God has put in the hearts of his people.

"There has been growing in the hearts of the laity of my church and your church a feeling that we will not ever win this world to Christ if we depend on the trickle of professional full-

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time missionaries that we can recruit," but that the work of career missionaries must be augmented with the efforts of all Baptist lay people.

He warned, however, that many Baptist lay people may be reluctant to respond to the denomination's plea for 5,000 short-term lay volunteer missionaries by the year 1982 to help the existing 5,000 career missionaries because they feel "locked in" to their current life styles.

Many Baptists today are undergoing a mid-career crisis in which they are evaluating with agony the careers they selected 20 years ago to make a living, Allen said. He compared such Baptists to Moses, who underwent a similar mid-career crisis when he felt God calling him and speaking to him from the burning bush after he had tended sheep in the wilderness for 40 years. God asked him what he had in his hand, and Moses told God, "It's a rod"--the tool of his trade.

Moses, like so many Baptists today, said Allen, had made his accommodations with life, and was content with making a living, instead of making a life. "He had begun to do what he had to do because he couldn't do what he wanted to do," Allen said.

"Many of you who once shared a dream in your youth, have come to those realities in which the idealism of yesterday began to squeeze down against the realism of today, and you knew you couldn't stand around singing songs all the time, because you had to make a living," Allen said. "And many of you have been making your contributions as best you know how, but deep down there is a hunger that remains, for like Moses, you are on the back side of the wilderness, wondering where the dreams go.

"We are all clamped in this material existence that does not give our spirits room to breathe, crushed with the suffocating walls of circumstances, too narrow for our immortality, with the visions and dreams of our youth beating their wings like caged birds against the buzz of daily, deadening drudgery, of moral mediocrity, and all the thousands of limitations from which we cannot break free," Allen said.

But it is not too late to make those dreams a reality, Allen declared.

What adults caught in mid-career crisis can do, he said, is, like Moses, to give the "tool of your trade" to God and to use your talents in mission service for two weeks, two months, a year, or two years.

He compared retired Baptist lay people to the Biblical character Caleb, who was one of the spies who went into the Promised Land for Moses, and after 40 years wandering in the wilderness, was able to fulfill his dream at age 85, saying he was as strong as he was at age 40.

Allen urged retirees to respond to the challenge of mission involvement, saying that it was not too late for them to fulfill, like Caleb, the dream of their youth.

Urging Baptist youth to respond to the challenge as well, he compared youth to the Biblical character David, who slew Goliath, the giant, with a slingshot, even though the adults of his day told him it couldn't be done that way.

"Young people today, like David, don't know that they can't do it their own way, and that God won't do it, because God has given them a freshness and idealism adults need to recapture," he said.

"There are thousands of Moses and Calebs and Davids out there and you and I may be one of them," Allen concluded. "Let God build the dream, and let's follow it and see what God is going to do."

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Wrapup

SBC Bold Mission Challenge
Emphasized at Conference

Baptist Press

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--An emphasis in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) on bold missions was introduced to about 1,600 mission leaders here through missionary testimonies, training sessions, drama, visual presentations, and a closing address by SBC President Jimmy Allen.

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The seven-day Bold Mission Leadership Conference, sponsored by the SBC Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), offered church and associational Brotherhood and WMU leaders a selection of almost 100 training opportunities at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

One of the highlights of the conference was the disclosure that the commission would sponsor a giant rally for 16,500 Southern Baptist lay people in Atlanta, on June 16, 1978, the day following the 121st annual session of the SBC, with President Jimmy Carter, a former Brotherhood Commission trustee, invited to speak.

Grady Cothen, president of the SBC Sunday School Board, Nashville, keynoted the missions conference with a challenge for Southern Baptists to accept the responsibility to proclaim the gospel to the entire world by the end of the century.

Recalling the positive Southern Baptist response at their annual meeting in Kansas City to a challenge by President Carter to put another 5,000 short-term missionaries in the field by 1982, Cothen told the gathering: "We'll never just do it with professional missionaries. We have got to have all the priests of Christ preaching--that's you. The question I want to ask Southern Baptists is: 'Do you mean it or are you just kidding.'"

SBC President Allen, pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, closed the conference with a reminder that it isn't too late for Baptist lay people to fulfill the dreams of their youth through missions involvement.

Opening the invitation for Baptists of all ages to give from two weeks to two years of their lives in mission service, Allen said the volunteer mission corps, the new program to enlist 5,000 lay missionaries, is a response "to what God has put in the hearts of his people."

"There have been growing in the hearts of the laity of my church and your church a feeling that we will not ever win this world to Christ if we depend on the trickle of professional missionaries... The work of career missionaries must be augmented with efforts of all Baptist lay people."

Supplementing the challenging messages and the leadership training opportunities were presentations by 12 home and foreign missionaries, including Mary Dan Kuhnle, director of Sellers Home, a Southern Baptist-operated maternity and adoption center in New Orleans, and Sidney Smith, director of Christian social ministries in the Watts community of Los Angeles.

Describing the ministries of Sellers Home, Kuhnle emphasized that abortion is not the answer to problem pregnancies. She labeled abortion as "a nasty business, something real, not something you just read about in the newspaper."

"Every child born in Sellers could have been aborted. It is with courage and faith that a girl chooses not to have an abortion and to carry that child, to carry the social stigma that still exists, to carry some of the non-acceptance of her church."

Smith, a large bearded black missionary, told the conferees he was thankful it was no longer possible to identify a Southern Baptist by the color of his or her skin.

Pointing to the success of multi-ethnic ministries among Southern Baptist churches in California, Smith said he sees the multi-ethnic church as a characteristic of the denomination in the near future. In some ways, Southern Baptists are already a multi-ethnic denomination, Smith said. "Thousands of our churches minister to all people and segregation is going out of style."

At the close of the conference, representatives of the Brotherhood Commission and WMU reported they will sponsor a similar conference at Glorieta in 1978 on July 8-14.

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(BP) Photo mailed to state Baptist editors

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Missionaries' Son in
Serious Condition

HOUSTON (BP)--Kyle Kinglsey, 22-year-old son of Southern Baptist missionaries, is in serious condition in the intensive care unit of Northwest Houston Medical Center after suffering a cerebral aneurysm during the weekend of July 16.

A cerebral aneurysm is a weakness of the wall of an artery in the brain, according to Dr. Franklin T. Fowler, medical consultant for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Kingsley's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Gene E. Kingsley of Texas, are stationed in Lilongwe, Malawi. He has just finished his sophomore year at Lamar University, Beaumont, Tex., and is living in Houston for the summer.

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