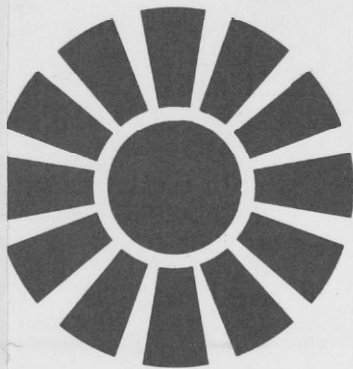


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BAPTIST-CATHOLIC
REGIONAL CONFERENCE

ISSUES AND ANSWERS

MARCO POLO INN
DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA
FEBRUARY 1-3, 1971

SPONSORED BY
HOME MISSION BOARD
DEPARTMENT OF INTERFAITH WITNESS
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BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR ECUMENICAL
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NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
PRESS

SPEECHES FROM
A BAPTIST-CATHOLIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE
AT
DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA

FEBRUARY 1-3, 1971

PREPARED BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF INTERFAITH WITNESS
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HOME MISSION BOARD OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
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February 23, 1971

Foreword

A few days have passed since our historic meeting at Daytona Beach earlier this month. Letters of praise and positive criticism have flooded to my desk. Statements of appreciation have come from such unexpected places as from the editor of *The Texas Catholic*.

In light of all this expected and unexpected praise it is still my contention that what happened in Daytona was a good beginning, but only a beginning. The best results are yet to be seen as we who were privileged to be there in a rare moment of understanding continue to spread the good news that the Holy Spirit is in the business of communication.

The future holds, hopefully, more such encounters on one-to-one, small group, metropolitan and state-wide levels. It is a privilege to be part of a new day of discovering what Jesus meant when he said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."

Thank you for coming and for continuing interest in Catholic-Baptist dialogues.

M. Thomas Starkes
Secretary, Department of
Interfaith Witness
Home Mission Board, SBC

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Opening Remarks

By
BISHOP JOSEPH A. DURICK

As we value the days and weeks of Lent, the Church would have its prayers for the resurrection and triumph of the Lord. It is important to recall again that the resurrection has already begun; it takes place in every situation which presents need to order healing and restoration.

In Lent, we attempt to see that we must seek out and recognize the "Cross Event" as it is made manifest to us. Christ comes to us in every situation to bring us to new situations to be recognized, in every hour.

SECTION I

OPENING REMARKS

Theologians often speak of "crosses" as the fact that Christ will come to us in every situation to bring us to new situations to be recognized, in every hour.

He comes to us in many ways. His coming is most evident in the modern movements for peace, in current efforts to alleviate poverty, in the contemporary struggle to restore greater human dignity to every man, woman and child, in the power to heal those wounds in His body; we must hold the "sign of the cross" and be about it.

What is called for in our day and time is not only a churchly fellowship, one which is concerned with building bridges from Church to Church, but also one which is called a secular cooperative effort, one which is devoted toward a more effective service of God in the world, and for the world—and ultimately, for the sake of the Kingdom.

Therefore, we must be about our Father's business as we work here and now to alleviate the afflictions and hardships of our time, to reconcile, to bring up wounds, to heal.

And we must be prepared to encounter the coming of the Kingdom of God—in those "secular hours" which Our Lord Himself used—"The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them" (Lk. 11: 1-10).



Opening Remarks

Opening Remarks

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SECTION 1

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Opening Remarks

By

BISHOP JOSEPH A. DURICK

As we relive the days and weeks of Jesus, the Church would have us prepare for the resurrection and triumph of the Lord. It is important to recall again that this resurrection has already begun: it takes place in every situation which presents itself to us for healing and reconciliation.

As Christians, we attempt to say that we must seek out and encounter the "Christ Event" as it is made manifest to us. Christ comes to us in every problem to be solved; in every situation to be reconciled; in every human being to be healed.

Theologians often speak of "future eschatology" (the fact that Christ will come again at the end of time), but it is imperative that we also speak of "realized eschatology"—namely, the fact that Christ comes to us in the here and now.

He comes to us in many ways. His coming is most evident in the modern movements for peace, in current efforts to alleviate poverty, in the contemporary struggle to restore greater human dignity to every man. Jesus has given us the power to heal these wounds in His Body; we must heed the "signs of the times" and be about it.

What is called for in our day and time—is not only a churchly fellowship, one which is concerned with building bridges from Church to Church, but what we may call a secular cooperative effort, one which is directed toward a more effective service of God in the world, and for the world—and ultimately, for the sake of the kingdom.

Therefore, we must be about our Father's business as we work here and now to alleviate the afflictions and injustices of our times, to reconcile, to bind up wounds, to heal.

And we must be prepared to announce the coming of the Kingdom of God—in those "secular terms" which Our Lord Himself used—"The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them" (Mt. 11:5; Lk. 4:18-19).



When we are a Church that exists for others, a Church meek and humble, God's servant and the world's—then we can make the Gospel both meaningful and believable to the secular humanists of today.

Then, the cooperative movement must not turn the Church in upon herself. It must not make us all Church-centered, but rather Kingdom-centered. All is for the sake of the Kingdom—that the Gospel of Christ be accepted and lived; that men, in their relationships with one another, exhibit the sympathy, sensitivity, concern, generosity and compassion which the Gospels demand of us all.

So ecumenism's primary concern or cooperation as the Roman Catholic Church understands it, is not with the conversion of individual Christians from one church to another. It is directed to the unity of the separated Christian churches—insofar as they are communities of Christ-centered love and service.

Therefore, the first and cardinal principle of ecumenism, or cooperation, is simply this: that as all the churches draw closer to Christ, they will at the same time draw closer to each other.

But this is not an easy task. We cannot presume success. There can be no drawing closer to Christ—unless and until there has been a dying to everything that is not of Christ. Crucifixion must precede resurrection. As the Decree on Ecumenism (No. 7) phrases it: "Without a change of heart, there can be no ecumenism worthy of the name. We should therefore pray to the Holy Spirit for the grace to be genuinely self-denying, humble, gentle."

And then comes the most comforting thought regarding ecumenism, or Christian cooperation, namely, the basis of our dialogue with one another is broader and deeper than we have imagined. We confess together that Jesus Christ is Lord, that He is the one mediator between God and man. We share a common love and reverence for the Word of God in Scripture. We share a common baptism, the sacramental foundation of our unity.

We share, too, a common resolution to stand by the words of Christ as the source of Christian virtue and to obey the command of the Apostle: "And whatever you do, in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (Col. 3:17)

And, finally, we have a common concern to commemorate the Lord's death together. Christian Unity has been alluded to for a long time and by many people—

1. By Isaiah—enlarge the place of thy tent and stretch out the skins of thy tabernacles. (54:2)

2. Jeremiah—"Work for the good of the city since on its welfare—yours depends."

3. By the instructions of Peter and Paul—Repent for all that has separated us.

4. By our founding fathers in this country—As Jefferson said to John Adams—"We ought not to die before we have explained ourselves to each other."

5. By the late Cardinal Bea: "Let us leave the judgment of the past to the historians—even more to God: Let us try to regain what was lost centuries ago: The unity of all baptized in Christ.

And last and most importantly, we turn back to the prayer of Jesus: "May they all be one, Father, that the world may believe it was you who sent me." (John 17:21)

As I express in the name of all our people here today my sincere heartfelt gratitude to you once again for this privilege of fellowship, and breaking of bread, may we all be united with one another in the following godly ways: In asking forgiveness for our past faults against you and all separated communions—in common pledge of mutual prayer for this—

1) We assert: We can pass through the day of togetherness only on our knees (Yves Congar);

2) In alertness to the "signs of the times"; namely, to work for constant internal reform and renewal;

3) To become more articulate through study of the faith and traditions of each other (in grass roots neighborhood action with other faiths);

4) Through readiness to do the will of Christ—if through honest and patient dialogue, He wills—you or me—to move a little from our well-loved forms—to a position of theirs revealed to us by the Spirit;

5) That we keep witness, fellowship and service before us at all times—in our dedication to human dignity, and especially in our love for the least and poorest in our congregations—and that of others:

6) That we realize that all openness, that all seriousness, which avoids easy evasion—will bring us all to greater tranquility and joy of the Holy Spirit.

For in this all—we can be certain of one thing—that in following the Spirit we cannot be wrong. For indeed, it is only by the effective carrying out of the spirit of Jesus—that all His followers will implement the holy will of the heavenly Father—through our common Lord and Master—and Suffering Servant—and Prince of Peace. Amen.

Thank you and God bless you!

Opening Remarks

By

M. THOMAS STARKES

Monsignor Law, Bishop Durick and various assorted dignitaries:

Tonight we are making history. We are without a doubt part of a new wave of Baptists and Catholics determined—in spite of warnings to the contrary from some of our constituency from both sides—we are determined to learn from and to know each other as fellow human beings in search of God through Christ.

This is indeed a new era in terms of openness and freedom, of dialogue and discussion. Part of the uniqueness of this conference is the diverse Baptist constituency here. We have a dozen or so Baptist pastors and professors of religion in Baptist colleges. We have local and state directors of missions and representatives of various Baptist agencies. This is reflective of the fact that in my lifetime there has been a shift in outlook. An adequate illustration of this is reflected in a comment made by a good friend of mine named Johnny Sheats who remarked in my living room early one morning, "I recall church training in my youth because at least once a quarter you could bet we would get a lesson on 'don't drink liquor' and 'hate Catholics.'" There is some truth in his statement which points out a shift in attitude.

Baptists may join in a confession of a narrow outlook in the past which has resulted in a stereotyping of Catholics. For example when last week on the new television show "It's All in the Family," a Catholic nun called on a middle-class American family, the head of the house remarked, "Contribute generously. Give her fifty cents. After all they spend half of it on gold candlesticks anyway." Part of the laughter heard around the southeast came from Baptist homes because we still suspect that it may be true as stated on the program.

But we are learning—learning that Baptists do not have all the answers in bringing the Gospel to bear in the midst of a needy world.

We are also learning about dialogue—that it is not a polite exchange of jokes, anecdotes, punch and cookies. It also involves getting to know each other and being sure we don't sell out the other party in the process.

I hope that in the next forty hours there will be some sparks flying. These sparks will be assurance that honesty is there in abundance.

So—it is my hope that we will covenant together to share from the very beginning of this conference—in open and candid exchange of our own selves.

Speaking for many Baptists, I say we have come tonight to learn—but with the firm conviction that we have, at the same time, much to give!

Baptists are a people who take their life from the living and written word—and who are learning what it means to know themselves by knowing others.

It is my prayer—and I hope yours—that we go from this conference saying that the Spirit of the presence of the living God was here and we knew Him and each other in intimate exchange of our faith in Christ.

So—"to be changed"—and thereafter

"To change the world" is our purpose in being here.

Program Personalities

Most Reverend John Lawrence May, D.D., Bishop of Mobile, was born at Evanston, Illinois. His education was in Chicago schools, leading to his ordination to the Catholic priesthood at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, Mundeville, Illinois, 1 May of 1947.

Through his working years he served as a priest in Chicago in parish work, teaching in high school and at Loyola University, as a hospital chaplain, and in a parsonage office. In June of 1967 he was named Auxiliary Bishop of Mobile where he served until his appointment as Bishop of Mobile in October of 1969.

SECTION II

MAJOR ADDRESSES

SALVATION: ITS MEANING AND RELATION TO CHRISTIAN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Charles H. Johnson, Jr., Director of the Center for Christian Social Responsibility at Fort Worth, is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, 1958; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, 1964; Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, 1965; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, 1966. From Southwestern seminary he received the Albert Taylor Award, 1963.

He was staff associate, Campus and Clinic Evangelism, Evangelism Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas. He pastored churches in Texas, Princeton, New Jersey, Chamblee, Georgia, and College Station, Texas.

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SECTION II

MAJOR ADDRESSES SALVATION: ITS MEANING AND RELATION TO CHRISTIAN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Dr. Cecil Sherman has served as pastor of the First Baptist Church, Asheville, North Carolina, since 1964. He is a graduate of Polytechnic High School in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1945. A native of Fort Worth, he is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, 1950; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, B.D., 1953; Princeton Theological Seminary, Th.M., 1956; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Th.D., 1960. From Southwestern seminary he received the Albert Venting Award, 1953.

He was staff associate, Campus and Clinic Evangelism, Evangelism Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas. He pastored churches in Texas; Princeton, New Jersey; Chamblee, Georgia; and College Station, Texas.

Salvation: Its Meaning and Relation to Christian Social Responsibility —A Catholic View—

By

BISHOP JOHN MAY

My mother never told me there would be days like this. I am sure she never dreamed of such a day. Nor, I believe, did your mother. In fact, just a few years ago this intimate conference of Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics would have been to dream the impossible dream. Truly, this is the day which the Lord has made. So let us rejoice and celebrate this day. Many eyes have desired to see what we see here in this hall and have not seen it. It is good for us to be here.

My role in the Church is that of a pastor. I am not a professor of theology in any seminary or university. Perhaps that statement will disappoint some, but I suspect it may reassure others. In any case, my intention this evening will be to present an overview of the subject assigned, hopefully in the nature of suggestions for subsequent discussion. So please understand that what follows will be such a summation and not a professionally schematic development of Catholic dogma on our topic.

A Catholic view of salvation is simply enough stated for a group of this kind. We are all one in professing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We acknowledge Christ as the author of salvation. "He was crucified, died, and was buried, and on the third day He rose again from the dead." This proclamation of our creed situates the salvation of mankind and every man in the life-death-resurrection—the paschal mystery—of Jesus Christ.

While Jesus Christ has won salvation, or the new life, for all men, the application of His saving death is not an automatic thing but demands the personal assent of faith and the continual conversion of the individual Christian. Although maintaining the practice of infant baptism by which the child is born again in newness of life, for it is the gift of God, Catholics hold that the Christian who has reached the age of reason must accept Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, and must confirm that faith by conversion of heart and life, if final salvation is to be his. This salvation for the individual Christian is a lifetime process

in which man says "Yes" to God. It is not enough to salute Jesus as Lord but the Christian must also do the will of the Father.

Salvation for the Catholic Christian, then, involves both faith and life. A heart responsive to the Spirit promised by Christ is the measure of what we understand by salvation.

So far, so good. I am confident that thus far we have considerable agreement—despite some apparent differences. But as we go on to the second aspect of our topic—salvation's relationship to social responsibility, I have a feeling that we may have to fill some valleys, lower some mountains, and make some rough ways smooth.

I realize that here we are skirting that ancient Christian battlefield over which so much ink and perhaps even more blood has flowed. We are happily rid of that silly radio and television commercial that asked whether we wanted good grammar or good taste. I hope we are also to be spared these days that ancient Christian warfare over faith or works. The position of each side down the centuries has been caricatured in countless simplistic talks and tracts. I hope during these days that we can put it all together. Certainly faith and works belong together regardless of how their relationship may be described. I believe the massive testimony of the Bible tells us so. Both sides in the theological fracas over faith versus works have hurled Scripture texts back and forth down through the centuries. Meanwhile the saints on both sides often knew little of the theologians' worries and simply lived lives of good works in their saving faith. I just do not think we are going to settle that ancient theoretical controversy in these few days. Somehow or other, the relationship of Salvation and Christian Social Responsibility is close and deep in the practical order. That, I think, we can all see from the Word of God.

God has special concern for the poor and the oppressed in the Old Testament and He requires that of His people, as Isaiah says, before prayer, fasting, and sacrifice (58:1-9). The prophet Amos makes social justice Israel's integral response to God in covenant. There is much more of the same lesson for the Christian in New Testament teaching. Jesus flays the hypocrisy of religionists who are meticulous in temple worship and biblical law but oblivious of human needs. Someone has called His parable of the Good Samaritan the "most anti-clerical story ever told." Dives ignored the poor man and he was buried in hell. Jesus sums it up by saying love of God and fellow man go together. And He will judge every one of us on one criterion—"Whatever you did for the least of My brothers."

The early Christian community understood and lived accordingly in their concern for their poor as we read in Acts and the Epistles. John put it all rather starkly in saying that anyone who says he loves

God whom he does not see but does not love his brother whom he sees is a liar.

Without any further theological analysis, I believe we can agree as Christians that salvation and social responsibility somehow go together. Whether the relationship between the two is analogous to that between father and son or rather to that between two brothers arm in arm is another question. In any case there is an intimate relationship. Somehow the two belong together in the life of a Christian.

So now—how does the community of Christian believers, those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and live their life in a community of faith today, how does this community which is the Church relate to all other men in their daily needs? What is the meaning of poverty, injustice, war, in the light of faith? Does the Gospel have anything to say about man's life in the civic community, or does it have something to say only about man's life in the community of faith? Is the Church the concern of God's people, and the world the concern of the devil?

These are certainly not new questions for the Christian, and yet they are painfully pertinent today. Is the Church an alien divine body inserted in man's world, or is the Church incarnate and as fully human as Christ Himself?

These are the questions which prompt these remarks of mine. Surely as we look at the history of the Church which we share in common, and as we look at that history of the Church which belongs to Roman Catholicism more specifically, we see that there is no constantly identical response to these questions. Political, sociological, economic, cultural factors weigh heavily in the answers which Christians have given in the past.

There is, in some quarters today, a great deal of criticism about the Church's failure to respond to the needs of mankind, about the Church's tendency to be too introspective in her interest and concern, about the Church's limited world view at a time when non-theological factors are forcing upon man a consciousness of his dependence upon every other man. First we Christians must confess our own failures in this regard. We have not responded to God's redemptive love in the measure to which we have been called to do so by Christ. We have not been holy, as our heavenly Father is holy.

Furthermore, our critics who seem at first sight to be antagonistic to traditional Christianity, do voice great passion for human rights, the sacredness of life, peace on earth, the unity of all men, justice for the poor. But do not these and other such concerns spring from the seeds of the Gospel sown in Christian word and life? Can we not say to some

of these searching souls today, "Truly, you are not far from the Kingdom of God." And if their search is truly sincere, might it not bring them in God's grace to Him they already call "Jesus Christ, Superstar"? All this is not to deny that they may also lose their way in the deadend paths of today's sins. This fact too is a necessary pole of Christian realism these days. Nevertheless, I would just say that today's social responsibility and salvation in Christ may be nearer together, to paraphrase Paul, than when we first came to believe.

Now to be more specific on the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on the relationship of Salvation and Social Responsibility: Catholics believe that a man who comes to Christ by God's free gift of saving faith must then continue to work out his final salvation until the day when he will render an account of his stewardship to the Judge of the living and the dead. Serving Christ as Lord means in great part serving the needs of His brothers. The Christian must see the Face of Christ in the men God puts in his life—first in his family, then in the Church, but also in the wider community.

More and more this evangelical teaching of Jesus has been spelled out for Catholics in the modern world. Increasingly since the coming of the industrial revolution Roman Catholic theology has developed a more precise social doctrine. Vatican Council II in its document on "The Church in the Modern World" says:

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realizes that it is truly linked intimately with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds.

I have often thought of these words as I drive into a stately old town in southern Alabama. The tree-lined streets lead to the heart of the city where a cluster of beautiful and venerable churches crown each corner. They are of the traditional denominations, including my own, established, affluent, and respected. A few streets away are rows of flimsy little shacks teeming with some of the poorest people in our nation, people who have been subjugated and neglected for generation after generation. What can we say of the saving faith of those Christians who through the years have gone up to these churches to pray and have passed by the man at the side of the road, beaten and half-dead? In the light of the Gospel is not the salvation of these Christians intrinsically one with their responsibility for those least

brothers of theirs? If not, how can men of our day see Jesus Christ in such a church? How can they see Jesus with His horror of hypocrisy and passion for integrity?

To continue discussing Roman Catholic moral theology on this subject, and to limit ourselves to this country, I believe it would be fair to say that the Catholic Church in the official teaching of the Bishops, following recent Popes and the Second Vatican Council, has supported movements concerned with the rights of the human person: the labor movement, the governmental social programs, family assistance plans, the civil rights movement, welfare reform, etc. At the level of the teaching authority of the Church, there has been a growing emphasis on the responsibility of the American Catholic for social justice as a moral obligation.

At the level of the life of the individual Catholic, however, the story is as varied as there are individuals. If in the past Christian faith was able to influence culture through the Church's institutional life, this is much less the case today. We find committed faith in our culture only where there is personal conversion. The problem inhibiting personal conversion today is basically the same as it has always been. The problem is sin in its multiple forms. So it is that the individual Christian does not always respond to the teaching of the Gospel as enunciated by the Church. There is a hiatus between teaching and life.

There is another development in Catholic doctrine which should also be pointed out. Increasingly, all Catholics are being called upon to shoulder their personal responsibility for the mission of the Church. It is not that the Catholic Church has de-emphasized the special teaching function of Bishop and priest. Rather our contemporary vision holds in clearer relief the dignity and responsibility of all those who have been born again of water and the Spirit. The priesthood of all believers has always been a doctrine of Catholic theology and tradition, but it is a concept which we have recently re-emphasized in fresh vision.

Nowhere is the notion of co-responsibility more pertinent than in the question of the Church's mission in the secular order. The Vatican Council's *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* points out that usually it is the layman, because of his responsibility, because of his direct involvement, who will be most able to apply Christian principles to the concrete problems facing society.

Along with this renewed focus on the priesthood of all believers and all of its implications, there is also in the Church these days a growing awareness and sensitivity to the complexity of social problems. Surely the vision which inspired men of good will in this country in

the early 1960's in the area of racial justice was a very simple vision as we look back on that period now. The victory which some of us tasted in those first registered voters and integrated classrooms turned out to be but the momentary lull before much more complex battles. To preach the Christian principle of racial equality and the doctrine of the brotherhood of man does not yield a sufficiently detailed program to cope with the multiple problems of the human rights struggle today.

This is not to say that the Church has no role, nor is it to say that the preacher has done quit preachin' and gone to meddlin' when he attempts to relate the Gospel to the problems of contemporary man. It is to say, however, that the business of the Church is to read the signs of the times, and to apply to the shifting problems of contemporary society those unchanging principles which come from Jesus Christ, yesterday, today and the same forever. It is the principles of the Gospels which the Church must preach, and on those principles faithful believers must be united.

In this era of growing complexity, there are many examples which might be cited to show the Catholic Church's efforts to apply the Word of God to the social problems of contemporary society. The first example that comes to mind is the action of the Latin American Bishops taken at Medellin, Colombia in 1968. Their statement is a *magna carta* for the Church in Latin America where we have had for too long a Christian belief turned in on itself, oblivious of any social responsibility. In this document we have all of the Bishops of a continent addressing themselves as Christian teachers to the inequities of a political, social, economic system in a singularly forthright way. In one place they say:

Through his task in the world, man fulfills his own calling and gives transcendence to his life, gradually entering into the salvation of Christ and at the same time offering this salvation to his brothers. Through his cooperation with God, he creates with his actions a more just and fraternal world, which he transforms and perfects with his work. While man becomes more humanized, he shows in his accomplishments a sign of the greatness of God.

The Christian, when fully aware of his faith and truly committed to its observance, will be able to attach the right meaning to things and to his own existence. His involvement in an effective way with his neighbors, or his unjustifiable evasion, determines his eternal destiny. 'The Christian who fails in his temporal obligations, also fails in his duties toward his neighbor; he is above all failing in his obligations before God and jeopardizing his eternal salvation.' Man does not find salvation by performing unrelated actions, unattached from his condition, existence, and vocation amid the

People of God, but by doing things, often in a humble and silent way, in generous response to his commitment to the making of a new world which he must offer to God. Only then he will be able to overcome one of the greatest errors of our time, as indicated by the Vatican Council: the separation between faith and life.

'Man is saved according to the human dimension that he gives to his own existence, but he cannot reach that human plenitude without God. An exclusive humanism, Godless humanism, is, in the last analysis, an inhuman humanism.' (Quoted from *Populorum Progressio*, p. 42.)

Another Latin American theologian¹ has recently put it this way:

Salvation embraces the whole man. The struggle for a just society fits fully and rightfully into salvation history. Christ thus appears as the Savior Who, by liberating us from sin, liberates us from the very root of social injustice. The entire dynamism of human history, the struggles against all that depersonalizes man—social inequalities, misery, exploitation—have their origin, are sublimated, and reach their plenitude in the salvific work of Christ.

Much the same doctrine has been stated in these words of a famous Baptist preacher:²

Any religion that professes to be concerned about the souls of men and is not concerned about the economic conditions that damn the soul, the social conditions that corrupt men, and the city governments that cripple them, is a dry, dead, do-nothing religion in need of new blood. I think the Gospel in its essence ministers to the whole man We are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's roadside, but that will be only an initial act. One day the whole Jericho road must be transformed so that men and women will not be beaten and robbed as they make their journey through life. True compassion is more than giving a coin to a beggar. It understands that the edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.

And I think it was expressed even better in these words of a superb Southern Baptist Sermon I read recently:³

Knowing that the disembodied, unformed Word is no Word at all, we shall again let the Word be flesh so that the love of God is expressed through our changed lives in a language men can understand. We shall recognize that social involvement is not an optional matter of ethical obedience but a

¹Rev. Gustavo Gutierrez, M., *Theological Studies*, June, 1970.

²Rev. Martin L. King, Jr., July 6, 1965, Chicago.

³Rev. Foy Valentine, *Best Sermons*, 1965, Trident Press.

condition of being in communion with God at all. We shall understand that to be hid with God in Christ is not to wallow in glossolalia but to be rightly involved in community. We shall quit singing, 'Far away the noise of strife upon my ear is falling Safe am I within the Castle of God's word retreating for I am dwelling in Beulah land,' and start singing, 'Rescue the perishing; care for the dying; snatch them in pity from sin and the grave.'

We shall return to a concern for people with the assurance that as we do, our religion will burst gloriously into new life. We shall know again the heady, hearty, holy thrill of moral leadership. We shall stand in the bow of the ship as it cuts its way into the uncharted sea of a new world order. We shall not mythologize the pivotal point in the Christian Gospel: that the essence of the heavenly Father's majesty is Jesus Christ's magnificently successful humanity. We shall feed the hungry, heal the brokenhearted, set at liberty those that are bruised, clothe the naked, release the prisoners from bondage, and preach the Gospel to the poor. We shall recover the fullness of the Gospel. We shall acknowledge the claim of Christ on all of life. We shall own Him Lord.

To conclude, there are, perhaps, two temptations which the Church faces today in this area of social doctrine. The first is this. It is the temptation to see the Church's social mission quite narrowly in terms of a specific revolutionary movement or economic system. The Church has made this kind of mistake in the past. As soon as the Christian or any group of Christians arrogates to itself, in its own narrow insights and perceptions, the position of the Church on a given social issue, the Church is being compromised. The function of the Church is to proclaim enduring Christian principles which bear refinement in the light of man's accumulated experience and wisdom, and certainly in the light of the signs of the times. But these principles should knit into a community a broad and diverse band of believers.

The second temptation is that of reactive complacency, realized in the life of the Christian who stands so overwhelmed by the complexity of the world, by the manifestations of sinfulness, that he retreats from the world with no intent of returning to minister to it. Surely there must be a place of retreat, a place of withdrawal for any valid Christian life. Even as did Christ, however, the Christian withdraws only to return and to minister. Christ was man, the Son of God, the Word of God made flesh. We fail to comprehend the implications of the Incarnation when we disembody Christianity. Christ did not establish His kingdom in the midst of angels but rather in the hearts of men.

As Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics, we share so much in our understanding of salvation's meaning in the life of the individual

believer. I would also hope that we might see together what each believer's salvation means for the total welfare of all men in today's world.

In God's providence, we are the two major Christian bodies in America today. If we do not give moral leadership—God have mercy on us!

Salvation: Its Meaning and Relation to Christian Social Responsibility —A Baptist View—

By

CECIL SHERMAN

My qualifications to speak to this conference do not lie in any peculiarity of background. I am not a renegade priest, nor am I a long-time Catholic watcher, baiter, or interpreter. I am a Baptist from the Bible-belt. My father's people came from Missouri and Tennessee. My mother's people came from Alabama and Georgia. I was reared on the southeast side of Fort Worth, Texas. I did not know a Catholic. I never had a public school teacher who was Catholic, and I can remember but one classmate who was Catholic—a girl named Connie Flanagan. In the light of all the things I was told about Catholics, it was always disconcerting that Connie was such a nice person. In brief, I was reared in a Protestant ghetto. The public school I attended was a Protestant parochial school. I thought the Trinity was Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian rather than God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Attitudes toward Catholics in my Protestant ghetto ranged from ignoring them—there were not enough to make any difference anyway, to baiting them—Rome was a major threat to the government of the United States. At church I was urged to give attention to the Catholics around me—I should try to “win them to Christ.” Since I gave money to mission causes to send evangelists to Central and South America to try to “win Catholics to Christ,” it did not seem out of order for my church to urge me to “try to win Catholics to Christ” in this country. Underlying all this effort was the presupposition that there might be some Catholics who are Christians, but if this be so, they are Catholics who have happened into saving grace in spite of their Church rather than because of it. What all of this added up to was the Baptists have the truth; Catholics don't. As you have opportunity, try to share the Good News with Catholics.

Two dawning realities have forced a rethinking of the views of my childhood. *First*, I have come to see that Baptists are not really in a position to be so smug. There are all kinds of Baptists. Some are saints; some are faking it. But even more disturbing—some just don't care

and don't bother to hide it. When you see considerable weakness in your product, you tend to develop a little humility in your evangelistic posture. *Second*, I have met a few Catholics. Not all of them impress me as giants in the faith, but on the other hand, some of them are impressive. Sister Mary Joseph of St. Joseph's Hospital in Asheville is a most persuasive Christian. Her discipline, service commitment, and obvious dedication to Christ are hard to down. To assume that she is not a Christian or that she is a Christian in spite of her Church—these are assumptions I cannot reasonably make. There is a devout woman in our town who is Catholic. She experienced extreme difficulty in her marriage. I was able to help a wayward husband back into his marriage vow. All the while, this woman demonstrated great Christian self-discipline. Had she slipped for a moment and given vent to her feelings, her marriage would have been dead. I was watching a Catholic-Christian in action. I did not feel like trying to "win her to Christ"; I was rather humbled by her demonstration of faith. So, I come to this conference in the high hope that I may discover that Baptists and Catholics are really on the same team. I suspect that this is so, and I hope events confirm my suspicions.

My value to this conference does not lie in my theological wisdom. Had Brownlow Hastings wanted to parade before you the best theological mind of Southern Baptists, I doubt that my name would have been considered. I have two things going for me. *First*, I am kin to Brownlow Hastings. I have no doubt but that this special relationship is some small factor in my presence before you. *Second*, I am an interpreter, a popularizer, a local churchman. Southern Baptists are like they are because people like me tell them how to think. If you want to understand the presuppositions of the average Southern Baptist, you must take into account the things he is being told by his pastor. It is at this point that I am valuable to this conference. Others could have done as well, but I am glad that I was asked.

For a time I was disturbed about the overlap that would surely be a part of my speech and that of Bishop John May. We are dealing with the exact subject, back to back, and how can we fail to be repetitious? And then the thought occurred, "Of course we will be repetitious, and that is the point of the conference." If we do not repeat each other, then we are in trouble. If the planes of our thinking do not meet and provide common ground then we have no point of beginning for a rapprochement of Baptists and Catholics. So, rather than being dismayed if we overlap, I shall be disappointed if we do not.

And now to the subject. I am not aiming my remarks to the Catholic portion of the audience. There will be considerable difference of opinion inside Baptists on some of the issues raised by the topic. So I offer my remarks to a group of concerned, and I presume theologically literate, Christians.

I. THE MEANING OF SALVATION:

I accept the biblical estimate of the human predicament. I am not a humanist; I am a Christian. And, though there are times when so bold a statement creates problems, I think there are fewer problems for a biblicist than there are for the well-intentioned humanist. The only reason I make a point of this is that any time a group of Christians come together to talk of social responsibility, I get the uncomfortable feeling that I am not always in the company of other Christians. The Bible is the only objective base I know for salvation or social concern.

1. *Our natural state is one of innocence.*

There are those who make much of the innate evil of the human spirit. Usually, such theologians and pastors make much of Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (RSV) I do not know what Psalm 51 means. I prefer to take my stance with Genesis. God made the first of the human family in a state of innocence. The Adam and Eve story tells of an unblemished humanity. (Genesis 2:25) It seems to be that our children enter the world in this unblemished state. The lovely children who frequent my church are the nearest I know to the innocent. I do not view them as *lost*. Apparently Jesus did not view them as marred. He used one of them to make his point when he said, "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God." (Mark 10:14b, RSV)

2. *The affirmation of my Adamic nature (original sin).*

I enter this world with a tendency in my spirit that will eventually and surely undo my innocent state. When I was born I opened my eyes and viewed the world around me. Without a thought I came to think of my cradle as the center of the universe. Distances I measured from me. Height, depth, space and time—all were using my body as the point of reference. I am not the center of the universe, but unconsciously, I acted as though I were. I did the same thing in the moral world. If something were pleasant to me, I interpreted that pleasantness as "good." If something displeased me, I counted that displeasure as "bad." But I am not the arbiter of "good" and "bad." God is the Center of the universe. God is the arbiter of "good" and "bad." In each instance, I put myself in God's place. Though my act was "normal" my act was a distortion of life as it really is. This was my "original sin." Unless I can correct this false impression of reality and myself, I will bring hurt to myself and to those around me.

Now a practical point. When does this affirmation of my adamic nature take place? Surely, a person must become self-aware. I think the time for this self-affirmation is around the time of eleven to thirteen. Now a point of truth. The Bible does not speak with any certainty to this point. Most Baptists have baptized their children at a younger and younger age. Today the average child is baptized into

the congregation at nine to ten years of age. This is too soon. The practice threatens the principle of a "gathered church." We say we do not believe in covenant theology, but we have come precious close to practicing it. The "fall-out" that comes to our own youth in the high school period and college years is evidence enough that our present practice does not in fact change permanently the person we baptize. We will do well to trust God and wait a while longer to baptize our children.

3. *Christ's part in salvation.*

The sense of the Bible is this: God has tried through hundreds and hundreds of years to save man from himself. Jesus told the story of the tenants in the vineyard. (Luke 20:9-18) The owner of the vineyard sent servants to receive his share of the harvest. The servants were treated cruelly. Finally, the owner sent his son, for he believed that the tenants would surely respect the owner's son. So debased were the minds of the tenants that they reasoned this way: "This is the owner's son. Let us kill him, and the vineyard will be ours!" (Luke 20:14, RSV) Surely, this is Jesus interpreting God's efforts at the rescue of fallen man, and this is Jesus telling of his place in God's plan.

So, our doctrine of salvation is built around Jesus. He is both illustration and interpreter. In the Cross of Christ all Hebrew symbolism centers. The last Sacrifice, the Good One for the bad ones, the Lamb of God—these are the pictures that come to mind of the One who took our place. I tell my people that salvation begins in substitution and proceeds from there. Had He not died for me, I would have died an eternal kind of death. Because He died for me, my death is robbed of its great horror. Death does not defeat me. In resurrection I shall live again in a larger and more complete state.

In the rush to this world, we do err when we forget the eschatology in salvation. People are still dying, and so long as they die, we will do well to help them through dying with all that the Bible promises. We can be saved from hell and death. Only those who are far removed from the parish and the local church can forget that people are still afraid of death, baffled by dying, and long for some hope from death. I Corinthians 15 remains great solace to my people. Christ has saved us from the "last enemy."

There is another side to Christ's salvation. When Jesus called his disciples, He called them "to follow me." Of all his invitations, "follow me" is the one he used most often. Following Jesus was a NOW kind of thing. The people who did not follow right then were passed by. The ones who did follow were asked to assume certain obligations. These obligations were usually given symbolic statement. In John 12 Jesus said,

I tell you the truth: a grain of wheat is no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces many grains. Whoever loves his own life will lose it; whoever hates his own life in this world will keep it for life eternal. Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. My Father will honor him who serves me (John 12:24-26, TEV).

A similar statement is made in Matthew 10:32-33 and Matthew 16:24-28. These statements were tied closely to the price tags for "following Jesus."

Most of my people do not follow symbolic statements very carefully. They do not mind my preaching about "following Jesus." They expect me to do so. They do not mind my preaching about "a grain of wheat falling into the ground." But when such symbolic statements are given specific application to this life, my people pray that I hurry on to more symbolism and depart any attempt at application.

Mark 10 contains an interesting story. The Rich Young Ruler offered himself to Jesus. Jesus gave the man an ethical test—give away all of his money. The young man could not do it. Because He could not pass the ethical test, the young man could not follow Jesus. Most Christians do not have their salvation and their ethic so tightly knit.

One last comment about Christ's interpretation of salvation. Jesus did not discuss salvation systematically. When He spoke with the ruler of the Jews, Nicodemus, he used the illustration of the new birth (John 3:1-21). When He talked with the Woman at the Well, He spoke of living water (John 4:1-30). When He spoke to the Rich Young Ruler, He told of greed that was of such strength that it could be a barrier to fellowship (Mark 10:17-22). All of us like for things to be simple and neat. Salvation is not so simple or so neat. I have tried again and again to tell my congregation that there is mystery and awe in salvation. It is not so compact as three little rules rattled by a child. I do not understand all that I am saying at this point; I only know that there is more to Christ's gift than I can understand or say.

4. *Our part in salvation.*

Neither John Calvin nor Karl Barth would approve this part of my paper. But I believe that there is a part that man plays in his salvation. Matthew 16 is a case in point. Though some may disagree, I believe that Peter's Confession is like to conversion. In that confession Peter was asked to do three things.

First, Peter was asked to come under the authority of Jesus. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," became the basis for

a new relationship. (Matt. 16:16, RSV) One of the things every human being needs to see is his place in the scheme of things. A lot of Christians have not come to view Christ as Lord. Until we can make Jesus Christ Lord, we will remain in the sin of keeping ourselves in God's place.

Second, Peter was asked to view things from the Christ perspective. Jesus told the disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer, and die. Peter called this bad. Jesus saw this as necessary. Then Jesus said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men." (Matt. 16:23 RSV) Surely one part of salvation is the new point of view. God's point of view is hard to spot. Most of us are accustomed to handling holy things, but like all disciples, we can easily miss God's intent and direction in this world. One who is saved has taken God's point of view.

Third, Peter was asked to take up a cross and follow the Christ. Few of my people want the cross discipline. They want the easy, NOW victory of salvation. They love feeling, but the stuff of the Christian life is the capacity to slug it out day by day. The Church has always been troubled with the quick victory mentality. Paul had to scold the Thessalonians. (I Thes. 5:1-22) Those early Christians wanted salvation, and then they wanted Christ to come back. It has not turned out that way. Every generation of Christians has been asked to take the cross and follow and follow and follow and follow. This is evidence of salvation, but it is more. There is a sense in which taking the cross and following is salvation too.

God does not convert us against our will. Our salvation is surely a combined act between God who wants to save us and a subject who wants to be saved.

II. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SALVATION AND CHRISTIAN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Just to get things off to an honest start here, why not admit that there are millions of Christians called Catholic and Baptist who see no relationship between salvation and social responsibility. The ethical issue of our lives and of the region where we work is race. We are the generation who work in the aftermath of slavery, reconstruction, Jim Crow, tokenism and segregation.

I remember well the furor in South Louisiana when the Bishop ordered that the old order must give way to the new. Catholics came out of the woodwork to say that they saw no relationship between salvation and social responsibility.

I remember well the rage of feelings when a black woman in Asheville, North Carolina, asked membership in my church in September of

1964. My church would not let her in. Baptists saw no relationship between salvation and social responsibility. This fight goes on. Catholics and Baptists want to live out their salvation without letting that salvation touch this world. For such imperfect gospel our young have scored us and often abandoned us. It is not the point of this speech to condemn, but we might as well begin at the point of beginning. Most of the people called Southern Baptists do not want to admit that the relationship between salvation and social responsibility is real and they resent being told that it is. Catholics can speak for themselves at this point. Probably this meeting does not have many average Southern Baptists, but I have tried to tell you of the norm as I see them.

1. *Salvation is a larger word in the Bible than it is in the minds of our people.*

Most of my congregation think of salvation as a "new birth" experience. Such "new birth" is past tense—it happened in their yesterdays. Now that it has happened, it need not happen again. They are now saved. I think the strength of Baptist witness has been their emphasis upon the "new birth." There is no apology for this. It has made us what we are, and such strength as we have has come from it.

But as is often the case, our strength is also the seed of our weakness. The New Testament defines salvation as a continuing experience, and all salvation that we know in this life is partial. So, I have been saved. I am being saved. And I shall be saved. Baptists have not stressed this linear quality of salvation. Scriptures like Matt. 10:22, "But he who endures to the end will be saved" (RSV), Phil. 2:13, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (RSV), and Hebrews 11:39-40, "And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect." (RSV) All of these passages and numerous others speak of a continuing work of God in our lives. We shall not be saved in this lifetime. There is a sense in which all of us must await a later and a better world for so long as we are here the scales of the flesh will not fall from us and we shall see only in part, we are still subject to decay, and we do await for God to reveal his children (Romans 8:18-13).

What does this mean? What effect does this have for a deacon in my church or a layman in yours? Plenty! God is still working to improve him, correct him, salvage him, even save him. A lot of my people feel that they were saved twenty, thirty, forty years ago, and they have not let anyone tamper with any of their prejudices from that day to this. But from their point of view there is no need. If you are already saved, what more do you need? I must enlarge the definition of salvation in their minds before I can hope to relate that salvation to social action.

2. *The goals of salvation are too small in the minds of our people.*

(1) *I want to save the whole man, not just his "soul."* You know that I am concerned with eschatology; I have expressed this concern to you already. But salvation is more than just salvation for another world. I want to save the whole man. Jesus came saving all the parts of the people he touched. His miracles, his concern, and the effect of his ministry were total on the lives that he touched. Blind were made to see while their sins were forgiven. The Woman at the Well had the whole of her life redirected. Jesus did not just say magic words over people and hurry on. He came to know, to become involved in, and finally, to save all the parts of the lives of people.

Sometimes the salvation of my ministry is total and sometimes it is partial. When we move to help all of the broken parts of humanity, our church does a pretty good job at helping. When we just touch a piece of the life, our salvation is not much. Inside my church there are some well-intentioned evangelists who are mainly concerned with "souls." They are not happy with me. They want an evangelistic preacher. I am not happy with them. I want them to offer more than salvation for the "soul."

(2) *I want to save society, not just the individual.* There is not much Bible on this. Jesus taught us to pray,

Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:10 RSV).

When the Church was small, she directed nearly all of her energies toward the individual, but in these days we have found that one of the reasons people are as they are is that society bends them. The structures of society are hard to grasp. Some churchmen would never reach for them. But the churchmen of the Middle Ages are our example. They seriously laid hold of the economy, the politics, the military, the judicial system, and the educational system to make a godly world. Most Protestants have failed to see the magnitude of their goals or the accomplishments of their attempts. But those medieval churchmen had an idea. They reached for all of the marbles, and in so doing, they redeemed many of the sores of a harsh world. A similar Protestant effort was made in New England in the seventeenth century. A secular world has held up to scorn the excesses of both of those experiments, but I doubt that God is so inclined to mock.

Today we wrestle with racism, ecology, poverty, war, world disease, and world ignorance on a massive scale. Overpopulation and a fair distribution of the wealth of the world—these are some of the goals of the serious Christian who wants to "save the world." The person-oriented Christian of the nineteenth century does not see this as having anything to do with salvation. Today we have come to a larger interpretation of the word. There is no way that we shall be able

to save individuals if we do not do something about "saving society." So while some of the people called Baptists called Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a saint, others called him a renegade Baptist preacher. It all depends upon how large you are willing to allow your goals in evangelism to become. King saw that he must touch the system if he was to save the individuals. I think King was right; I think he was a saint. It seems to me that we ought to go at the job both ways: save individuals to save society and save society so that we may save individuals. Both are the legitimate goals of the twentieth century churchman. The one without the other is only half a gospel.

(3) *I want to save the Church as well as the lost.* There is one kind of churchman who wants to save the "lost." Today we have grown another kind of churchman who wants to save the Church. There is no doubt in my mind but that one of the best fields for evangelism is the Church. Some people love to criticize Dr. Billy Graham. I think this is cheap. Some of their criticism runs like this: "All those people who come forward are already in somebody's church; they have no need for such emotional experience. He has done nothing when he has won them." Evidently, such critics have forgotten the nature of my church. My church has three thousand people on the role. I cannot find eleven hundred of them. About half of the nineteen hundred I can find have small part in our common life in Christ. Anything Dr. Graham can do for my two thousand church members who are so casual about their faith commitment can only be for the good. More power to Dr. Graham.

Right at this point, we can do a great service to the Church by saving the Church. There is great conscience inside the Church. The Church has been poorly directed. Churchmen like you and me have failed in our tasks. We ought to tell the people what God expects them to do in this world. A surprising number of them are ready to hear what we say and give it a try. Some of us have had little faith in the laymen, and little hope for the gospel. God is at work in today's Church. He is remaking it. It will be smaller, but it will be more lean for the long pull. It will not be so gaudy in wealth, but it may have more of the pungency of saving salt. The Sunday worship may not be so stylish, but the Monday ministry may be more pleasing to Christ. When this comes to pass, the Church will be saved, and God's work will be done in the world. Now whether Baptists or Catholics can stand so radical an alteration is subject for comment, but I am not speaking of Baptists or Catholics—I am speaking of Christ's Church. One way or the other, I am sure that His Church will go on. My prayer is that my congregation will be a part of that on-going Church.

3. *The estimate of our resources has been made small by our denominationalism.*

When you speak of salvation as saving the whole man and saving the structures of society and saving life of the Church—then you are making tall talk. You would do well to have great resources. I contend that our real resources have been cluttered in our own minds by our parochialism. For years I have been taught that Catholics were so different from me until they were really a part of the problem rather than a part of the solution. There is one sense in which the growing secularity of our time may do much to help us. We are being forced in upon each other. We will learn that a secular world cannot tell the difference between the two of us. If a secular world considers the two of us as Christian, might we not do ourselves a favor to consider each other as Christian and pool our resources where we can? "To save the world" by Christian definitions is a large order, and even God may need both of us to get the job done. If God is willing to use both of us, we might do well to lean upon the resources of each other in so large and grand a task.

4. *The timetable for salvation must be enlarged to include eternity.*

There will always be a partial quality about all conversation of salvation. I am but half saved. My ego is at work while I speak to you. Vanity, greed, and lust are with me yet. I am still of this world while I talk of another. So, I am living illustration of the state of society. The Church is flawed even while she is God's hope in the world. Society is mixed; some good, some bad. Purists will scream for an instant kind of salvation for the man, the Church, or for society. All such insistence upon perfection in this world will be frustrated. I will try to deal gently with the immature who shout the NOW slogans, whether they speak of saving souls or saving us from war. These people do not have the perspective of the Christian.

Society will not be saved completely. My task is to be faithful to the gospel. If I preach a whole gospel I must be content for God to judge the effect. Eschatology enters again. I will not bring in the kingdom, my task is to be found faithful. It seems to me that the Church is divided: Some only want to save the souls of men. Some only want to speak of salvation as it relates to social responsibility. These are halfway houses. God's plans are larger.

The individual needs his God, his personal faith, and his private hope of Heaven. The world needs the light and the salt of the gospel so that the world can be saved. But while we try to do both—you know and I know that we will not finish the task. Like Moses, we will work our lives out getting the children of Isreal as far as we can—but they will not yet have crossed Jordan. This will be the story of us. But our glory is not in finishing the task—our glory is in being a part of the plan. He will finish it in his good time. For the good Churchman, this should be enough.

Issues Related to Salvation and Evangelism —A Catholic View—

by
CHARLES T. MILLER

Our speakers last evening each began with the conviction that as Christians our basic notions of salvation must be the same and, as they developed their ideas, we began to see on how many basic points we find ourselves in agreement.

SECTION III

ISSUES RELATED TO SALVATION AND EVANGELISM

If I may list them in the order in which they were presented by Bishop May, we are all one in professing that Jesus is Lord; that, in St. Paul's expression, "there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved"; and that our salvation is brought about by our own being and Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension. We are all one in believing that our resurrection is not sufficient in itself without our cooperation; each of us individually must accept Christ as our personal redeemer, and find in Him the only sufficient atonement for our sins; and that genuine acceptance of Christ is something we both must do whether or not we practice infant baptism.

We are not going in this conference at top-level theological discussion of what differences in belief or in emphasis we would find as we each expounded further on our concepts of salvation. We are attempting here to reach a common understanding of the relationship as we might separately see it between salvation and its repercussions on our sense of Christian social responsibility. If we can differ while basically one on our concepts of salvation, we can differ equally on our concepts of evangelism through which we attempt to spell out to the world the carry-over from salvation in our social responsibilities as Christians.

But as Bishop May said we will list evening, "While theologians on both sides have disputed the relative importance of faith and works, saints on both sides have lived lives of good works in their saving faith." We would like to think of ourselves here as doing with the saints, and in union, rather than with the disputing theologians.

Issues Related to Salvation and Evangelism —A Catholic View—

By

CHARLES T. MILLER

Our speakers last evening each began with the conviction that as Christians our basic notions of salvation must be the same and, as they developed their ideas, we began to see on how many basic points we find ourselves in agreement.

If I may list them under the headings presented by Bishop May, we are all one in proclaiming: (a) that Jesus is Lord; that, in St. Paul's expression, "there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved"; (b) that our salvation is through His death on the cross and through His resurrection which is the promise of our own rising and eternal reward; (c) that Christ's death and resurrection is not sufficient in itself without our cooperation; each of us individually must accept Christ as our personal redeemer and find in Him the only sufficient atonement for our sins; and that personal acceptance of Christ is something we both insist on whether or not we practice infant baptism.

We are not aiming in this conference at top-level theological discussion of what differences in belief or in emphasis we would find as we each expounded further on our concepts of salvation. We are attempting more to reach a common understanding of the relationship as we might separately see it between salvation and its repercussions on our sense of Christian social responsibility. If we can differ while basically one on our concepts of salvation, we can differ equally on our concepts of evangelism through which we attempt to spell out to the world the carry-over from salvation to our social responsibilities as Christians.

But as Bishop May said so well last evening, "While theologians on both sides have disputed the relative importance of faith and works, saints on both sides have lived lives of good works in their saving faith." We would like to think of ourselves here as siding with the saints, and in union, rather than with the disputing theologians.

The common recognition of the basic Christian law of charity is inescapable. The two great commandments of Christ, love of God and neighbor, have a close tie-in and carry-over that for Christians is indisputable. This is a lesson learned in germ as far back as Cain—that we are our brother's keeper. As our race and our church has grown, we have discovered that the relationship between salvation and social responsibility is "closer than when we first came to believe," as Bishop May paraphrased St. Paul.

Our differing on this point may not be as much along denominational lines as in the degree of fullness of our response as Christians. Our sincerity is questioned these days by some who fear our final judgment by Christ may read this way: "When I was hungry, you took a survey; when I was thirsty, you formed an *ad hoc* committee to look into the matter; when I was naked you appointed a task force to investigate the situation; when I was sick and in prison, you made an in-depth study of the causes."

The decree on Ecumenism of our second Vatican Council reminds us that there is no ecumenism worthy of the name without an internal renewal of our hearts. Theologians in increasing numbers remind us that to make salvation meaningful we must give God's Word flesh—our flesh in service to others. From all sides we are exhorting one another to a fuller living out of our Christian faith.

The complexity of the modern issues to which our Christian principles must be applied makes it difficult for us to avoid the accusation of retreating into a complacency of non-involvement on the one hand and the accusation of "meddlin'" if we do take a stand on a multi-sided issue.

The naivete with which some of us could take for granted that the divisions among us are still along the same old lines could be effectively exposed by the comment of our great American dry-humorist Will Rogers: "There are two kinds of people—those that divide people into two kinds and those that don't." Let us no longer be divided.

The Meaning of Salvation —A Baptist View—

By

CLAUDE U. BROACH

I am attempting here a brief and summary statement of the doctrine of salvation as that doctrine is generally understood and proclaimed by Southern Baptists today.

We understand the word itself to be descriptive of a relationship between God and an individual human being wherein the human being stands assured of God's forgiveness for human failure, God's grace for present endeavor, and God's power for victory over death. In the fullest sense, therefore, and by definition, salvation is conceived as a relationship which deals with the past, the present, and the future—the three dimensions in which every man lives out his life, and from which he develops the three dominant facets of his humanity: guilt, anxiety, and hope.

This relationship with God is made possible by the unmerited and undiscourageable love of God for mankind. The great affirmation of John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life," stands as a towering summation of the Gospel, to remind us that the initiative in salvation lies with God and is prompted by the nature of God.

God's initiative in making possible this new relationship culminates in the incarnation, the coming of Jesus Christ. Believing with Paul that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," we see the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as the unique and altogether sufficient event which creates the potential for salvation. That which is potential because of divine and sacrificial love becomes a reality when there is a human love in response of love expressed through repentance for sin and faith in Jesus Christ.

It is our faith, confirmed in our experience, that this new relationship with God is accomplished without the necessity for any human structure, system, symbol or sacrament. It is a covenant between persons; it is subjective and not objective. It is dynamic rather than static; it is personal rather than legal.

Like any other relationship, it must be cultivated if it is to grow in depth and meaning. It has, therefore, as the logical and imperative consequences of its being, the dimensions of devotion and discipleship. The inner life must be nourished by prayer and celebration; the outer life must bring forth the fruits of repentance in the faithful works of Christian love. All of this becomes the responsibility of the individual, who must decide and act for himself, even as he is encouraged and sustained by the fellowship of a believing community—the Church.

In a very simple but yet profound way, Baptists find the meaning of salvation summarized in the invitation which Jesus gave to Peter in the words recorded in John 21, "follow thou me." The central word "thou" is a call to personal decision and responsibility—no one can make my decision for me and I cannot be made whole without my own decision: my personal repentance and my personal faith. The final word of the invitation, "me," is a call to personal fellowship—we are not invited to give assent to a creed or obedience to a system. We are called into a dynamic relationship with a Person. But the word we are most likely to forget is the first word: "follow." Herein is a call to a program of living which reflects the spirit and the quality of the life of Jesus Christ.

The guilt which burdens us from our past, the anxiety which frustrates us in the present, and the hope which haunts us for the future: all of these are caught up and dealt with redemptively in the reality of the salvation relationship of the believer with Jesus Christ. For our guilt, there is atonement and forgiveness. For our anxiety, there is grace and strength. For our hope, there is assurance and the sense of peace.

Let this serve as a beginning for our discussion.

Small Group Conference Reports on Issues Related to Salvation and Evangelism

ALABAMA—MISSISSIPPI:

As a prelude to in-depth consideration of the subject, discussion first centered on the question of salvation with respect to man's relation to Adam, i.e., the doctrine of original sin from both the Baptist and Roman Catholic viewpoint.

Dialogue focused on the following points of divergency and agreement:

I. A. From the Baptist viewpoint:

1. Children are not condemned for Adam's sin and are not accountable until the age of accountability is reached.

2. If the child is not guilty, why is infant baptism necessary?

3. Is there a proxy religion in the Church, a concept rejected by Baptists?

4. How does the "limbo" doctrine relate to this?

B. Roman Catholic response to these items (briefly stated):

1. That a child is *tainted*, by original sin, not condemned; that original sin is a *lack*, that it connotes no guilt; that baptism is the gift of a new birth.

2. There is need to distinguish between faith and theology: that the limbo doctrine is a theological resolution of a concept of faith. There is also the theological concept of baptism of desire which compensates for the lack of the sacrament of baptism.

II. The question of accountability was discussed within the following context:

A. When does accountability begin?

Roman Catholics asked for a Baptist response to the question of conflict in their minds that doctrine seems to point to the effectiveness of Christ's death in salvation up to the point of accountability, then is lost until the person accepts Christ, at which point he is then saved forever. (The chairman referred the discussants to the rules of dialogue, not to discuss theological points of salvation, but to focus on practical application).

A final point was made by Roman Catholics that there is no disjuncture between the Church as an institution and those who carry out its functions; for example, baptism is not the priest baptizing, but the Church baptizing.

B. Relating the concept expressed in the foregoing statement to the need for a personal decision:

Roman Catholic:

1. Analogy was given to the relationship of the mother and her child, a relationship which begins immediately and continues. At some point, however, the child must respond to this love in his own positive and personal way.

Baptists:

2. There is a point in life in which one must make a personal decision.

Discussion then centered on the matter of making a personal decision for Christ; how this relates to the Sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church; whether this is a "once for all" matter or a continual decision-making throughout life, a series of decisions. There was general agreement that salvation is a progressive process.

On this note discussion focused in on practical issues of Christian application to the conflicts of our age.

1. Racial problems:

a. Racial attitudes which deny the equality of man before God.
b. Exclusion of blacks from white churches.
c. Influence of culture over faith (a phenomenon in both churches); cultural viewpoints have prevented application of theology and faith.

d. Many churches have actively sought out ministers who express the "conservative" viewpoint in order to avoid confrontation of this issue.

e. The official position of the Southern Baptist Convention is an open policy in regard to racial membership; however, this position does not prevail always in the local churches.

f. Need to pool resources of both churches (Catholic and Southern Baptist) to attack these immoral social practices. Many statements were made of progress on these matters in various communities.

g. Problems of practical application of the theology of equality exist in Catholic Church also.

h. Alienation of youth is also a current issue in application of the theology of salvation:

(1) Youth rejection of adults who project a dichotomy of belief and application.

(2) Many gaps are evident:

The sin gap; the economy gap; the class gap.

(3) Many young people are grappling with this problem and are acting positively to resolve social issues; unless we can show that institutional religion is concerned with terminal values, we shall lose these youth.

(4) Older people must assess their values and traditions and impart to youth those of lasting significance.

(5) Young people see institutions other than the Church taking the forefront in social justice, for example, the federal government; meaning is found in cultural concepts or in experiences outside established institutions.

ARKANSAS—LOUISIANA:

We found that the Baptists and the Catholics were in agreement on the following aspects of salvation: that it is the gift of God; that it is unmerited.

The Catholics stated that the grace of God is systematized through the Church, the Word of God, the sacraments, and social responsibility.

The Baptists held that salvation is by grace alone through faith and not of works.

As to duration of salvation, the Catholics held that one's choice determines this. One spokesman said, "The Roman Catholic believes a Christian can be lost through a choice against salvation." He continued that actually "we don't know who is saved and who isn't."

The Baptist position as stated here was that once a person is reborn, in the experience of conversion and regeneration through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, he can never be unborn, that the believer in Christ is assured of eternal salvation. A further view was expressed by a Baptist that Christians are not able to live above sin, but as children of God, when Christians sin, God chastises them but does not punish them. The chastisement is for their discipline, he emphasized, and out of God's love for them as their heavenly Father.

Answering the question, "What does it mean to be a Christian?" a Baptist replied: As far as one's eternal destiny is concerned, salvation is complete the moment one commits himself to Jesus Christ. But there should be a growing in grace by the Christian throughout his earthly life; and the Christian is assured of perfection in Christ in the life to come.

Responding to this, a Catholic spokesman said that faith on the part of the individual precedes the individual's baptism. The same spokesman pointed out that when those baptized into the Catholic Church as

infants reach the age of accountability, they must exercise personal faith in Christ.

A Catholic wondered why, if grace is overpowering, as Baptists indicate in their view of the saving process, are not Baptists overpowered by grace to do good works.

Baptists admitted the point as well taken. One of the Baptists' problems, they said, is that they have been captives of political history and traditions which have militated against their having a program of social action. But they reported that this is rapidly changing for the better.

A Baptist raised a question about the dichotomy of priests and people—the problem of separation and isolation between the work of the priest and the work of the laymen in the church.

A Catholic admitted there has been too much retreat and isolation of the priesthood, but that now there is a moving away from this condition as Catholic lay people are being enlisted in a fuller participation in church work and affairs.

A Baptist suggested that the medieval idea of a package deal for society, whereby the church was in control of politics, economics, and religion, was not all bad. He emphasized that when a person accepts God's grace he is not isolated from society.

A Catholic viewpoint on salvation was that it comes as a gradual process. According to this view, an individual may be making choices for God long before he makes a public profession of faith in Christ. In line with this view, the speaker said that one cannot make an instantaneous decision for God without previous practice of making such decisions. He concluded that death-bed conversion is dubious.

The Baptist general position on knowing who is a Christian was expressed by one as being determined by fruits of discipleship. A Catholic stated that the Roman Catholic moral theology is reluctant to judge this matter.

A Baptist suggested that today the "father" image is in trouble and that perhaps the dynamic of an existential faith, involving the total Christian community, speaks to the needs of the modern church.

GEORGIA—FLORIDA:

We began our discussion of salvation and evangelism by stating the problem Baptists have with an apparent disregard of individual will in baptizing infants. Catholics responded by stating the problem they have with an apparent disregard for individual will in the Baptist concept of "the perseverance of the saints" or "once saved/always saved."

We became aware of the variety of individual thinking in both denominations, but it was clear that Catholics had a much more unified witness than Baptists.

In response to the Baptist problem, Catholics agreed that baptism is symbolic of the initiation of a growing process of salvation. To have efficacy, it must be a "correct sign," and there are instances—as when there is no indication that a child will receive domestic Christian nurture—when a priest would not baptize an infant. The estate of such an unbaptized child in death is not known.

The efficacy of correct baptism is the imbuing of the child with an awareness of, and capacity for receiving, grace. A Baptist present felt that his two sons who had become ministers had had a capacity for grace without having been baptized in infancy.

In response to a Baptist suggestion that infant baptism is not scriptural, Catholics pointed out the Old Testament concept of community initiation.

In response to the Catholic problem with the concept of permanent salvation, Baptists seemed to agree that there is a growth in salvation. Initial salvation is commitment to Christ, and saying one is "saved" is the expression of a relationship to Him. The scriptural premise for the permanence of the condition would be that if God did it, it cannot change. But, if salvation is God's action, there will be a reflection of that in the saved man's life.

After the initial salvation encounter, one continues to be saved from the power of sin, and eventually will be saved from the presence of sin.

In this discussion, there was concern that what we focused upon were the fine theological distinctions of how a soul gets into heaven. We seemed to decline to discuss the demand of salvation for social morality or to realize that evangelism is a call not to walk down a red carpet to the front of an elegant church building, but to walk the way of the cross in the hope of Easter morn.

KENTUCKY—TENNESSEE:

In any effective discussion the first fact that emerges is the answer to the question "Who are we?" Not who are we as Baptists or Catholics or pastors or educators, but who are we really? That is, who are we in terms of a basic philosophy of salvation?

When one of our conveners began with the question: "Must we involve ourselves in social action to be saved?", it became almost immediately evident that any division that existed was not Baptist-Catholic but rather traditional evangelism as social action.

Salvation was described as being seized by God's spirit placed in a new estate in which estate we would work out our salvation in social action till the final day when salvation is fulfilled.

We seemed to struggle to keep the meaning of salvation broad. Christ is the Cosmic Christ saving the world, the individual and society. He does not theorize only, but he acts. The Black Christ teaches us a new concept of beauty, the Youthful Christ a new concept of peace and love. He seeks out the needs of men and appears as the Jesus who answers a need—racial justice, better housing, bread for the hungry. Herein lies the saving message.

NORTH CAROLINA—SOUTH CAROLINA

(See page 45 following for the report from this group as to all issues discussed.)

Small Group Conference Report North Carolina—South Carolina

(As to all issues)

If dialogue is premised on the theory that two persons confront each other as equals, freely open to each other's personhood and willing to listen to each other's traditions, commitments and life-goals, and, furthermore, are willing to accept radical disagreement in these vital matters without undue pressure to convert, or to press for hasty and unwarranted conclusions, then our group had dialogue.

Of course there was radical disagreement. Of course longseated misunderstanding rose to the surface. Of course we could not touch upon all the delicate areas of dispute which have divided us for centuries.

But what we did discover about ourselves in this brand new epoch of Baptist-Catholic relations, was more positive than negative. Let us list some of the salient discoveries.

Number One: We discovered, oddly enough, some Baptists taking a stance theologically and morally and socially very much akin to the unfavorable position that they had previously ascribed to Catholics, and vice versa. This was true on such widely divergent matters, say, as regards the nature of the damnation and salvation of infants to the defense of public funds for parochial education at all levels. What then occurred was a uniting of other Baptists and other Catholics in a consensus of a newly interpreted position.

Number Two: We discovered that in our institutional roles as office holders in our respective ecclesiastical bodies (both presently numerical giants in the body-politic yet both still carrying psychological scars of our occasional minority status) that we often reacted quite similarly. As denominational power holders we are very much alike. In opening up to each other, we discovered the richness in the vast diversity of our respective denominations and were also willing to confess the tendency toward corruption in our church life.

Number Three: We discovered that our readiness to cooperate and to join in a united front for theological and moral witness was too often based on our respective denominations being threatened by a hostile world, rather than by finding our commonality in the unbrokenness of the Body of Christ. Yet we discovered that within both bodies, there were persons life-long devoted to reaching out to touch hands in the true unity of our Lord and Master.

Number Four: We discovered that certain symbolic and semantic items in our historic confrontation were greater barriers to Christian brotherhood when they were taken to be actual, objective, and final realities. We discovered that understanding and the promise of continuous dialogue was more possible for those persons who are willing to accept the tentative, the creative, the dynamic nature of this theological enterprise.

Number Five: We discovered that in both our bodies we are considerably hindered in our witness to the modern world due to our over-emphasis on traditional concepts and methods. This nostalgia for the personal, the spiritualization of life, the agrarian, ill-fits us for the contemporary challenge of the corporate, the "holistic," the urban, and the political nature of the contemporary approach. We discovered few experiments in each group equipping Christians for this change-over but we welcomed from any source any aid along this line.

Dialogue as understood by our group is *sui generis*, that is, it exists in and for itself. It has no value outside itself. It can by definition have no other goal. It cannot be measured by a progression of ideas or by a calculated compromise of policies and by a watered-down merger of institutions. The abiding integrity of each body is respected, and the common pilgrimage to maturity is expected. Therefore pluralism within the body-politic was the generally accepted context, both of our discussions and of our continued existence as the Church in the World.

Issues Related to Church-State Relations —A Catholic View—

By
EMILE CONYER

When Father Boris Law asks me to appear at the conference, my reaction was NO! I told him I saw no point in debating the issue of the "wall of separation between church and state" with people who have closed minds on the subject. But the more I thought about the conference and what has happened in the South in the last few years, the more I changed my mind. The South has shown by their ready acceptance of federal aid no longer have closed minds on the subject of church-state relations, health care financing, and the like.

SECTION IV

ISSUES RELATED TO CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

Issues related to the field of religiously sponsored community programs is one of understanding—or it may be misunderstanding. Catholics admit that new compulsory laws on the part of local, state and federal governments, now make it virtually impossible to operate schools, hospitals, nursing homes, housing programs, etc., without some of those laws being returned to the private sector of society.

Baptists on the other hand—at least the general leadership of Baptists I read about—would rather abandon their particular specialties in the field of health care, education, and welfare. They sincerely expect that they need some return from taxes in order to carry out the work they once thought important.

In my own state of Louisiana, Baptists have abandoned their vocation to care for the sick at Southern Baptist Hospital in New Orleans; Baton Rouge General Hospital in Baton Rouge; Alexandria Baptist Hospital. Is it, in your estimation, more important to hold on to the cash phrase "separation of church and state" than to operate medical care facilities aiding persons of all religious denominations in the communities you once served? Are you going to be satisfied with the direction of all health care to take over by government? This will surely come to pass unless persons of dedication and commitment remain in the health care field.

Number Four: We discovered that certain symbols and semantic terms in our liturgical configurations were greatly harmful to Christian brotherhood when they were taken to be actual, objective and final realities. We discovered that understanding and the promise of continuous dialogue was more possible for those persons who are willing to accept the tentative, the creative, the dynamic nature of the theological enterprise.

Number Five: We discovered that in both our bodies we are considerably hindered in our witness to the modern world due to our over-emphasis on individual concepts and methods. This nostalgia for the personal, the individualization of life, the agrarian, fits us for the contemporary challenge of the corporate, the "totalistic," the urban, and the political nature of the contemporary approach. We discovered new experiments in each group amongst Christians for this change-over but we welcomed from any source any aid along this line.

Dialogue is understood by our group as a process, that is, a continuing activity in which the participants are not only in contact with each other but are also in contact with the world. It can be defined as a process of mutual discovery by the various participants by the exchange of ideas and by a calculated compromise of policies and by a mutual discovery of common values. The sharing integrity of each body is respected and the common objectives are recognized. Therefore, dialogue is not a one-way process but a two-way process, both of which are essential for the development of the Church in the world.

ISSUES RELATED TO CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

The first issue that we discussed was the separation of church and state. We discovered that the separation of church and state is a necessary condition for the development of a democratic society. We discovered that the separation of church and state is a necessary condition for the development of a pluralistic society. We discovered that the separation of church and state is a necessary condition for the development of a free society.

The second issue that we discussed was the role of the church in society. We discovered that the church has a responsibility to speak out against social injustice. We discovered that the church has a responsibility to provide social services. We discovered that the church has a responsibility to promote the common good.

The third issue that we discussed was the relationship between the church and the state. We discovered that the church and the state should be separate but not alienated. We discovered that the church and the state should be in dialogue. We discovered that the church and the state should be in partnership.

Issues Related to Church-State Relations —A Catholic View—

By

EMILE COMAR

When Father Bernie Law asked me to appear at this conference, my reaction was NO! I told him I saw no point in debating the issue of the "wall of separation between church and state" with people who have closed minds on the subject. But the more I thought about this conference and what has transpired in the South in the last few years, the more I became convinced that Baptists have shown by their ready acceptance of federal money that they no longer have closed minds on the subject of government aid to education, health care facilities, and the like.

The only "wall" now separating Baptists and Catholics on government assistance in the field of religiously sponsored community programs is one of understanding—or it may be misunderstanding. Catholics admit that near confiscatory taxes on the part of local, state and federal governments, now make it virtually impossible to operate schools, hospitals, nursing homes, housing programs, etc., without some of those taxes being returned to the private sector of society.

Baptists on the other hand—at least the quoted leadership of Baptists I read about—would rather abandon their particular apostolates in the field of health care, education, and welfare, then concede openly that they need some return from taxes in order to carry out the work they once thought important.

In my own state of Louisiana, Baptists have abandoned their earlier mission to care for the sick at Southern Baptist Hospital in New Orleans; Baton Rouge General Hospital in Baton Rouge; Alexandria Baptist Hospital. Is it, in your estimation, more important to hold on to the catch phrase "separation of church and state" than to operate medical care facilities aiding persons of all religious denominations in the communities you once served? Are you going to be satisfied when the direction of all health care is taken over by government? This will surely come to pass unless persons of dedication and commitment remain in the health care field.

Are Southern Baptists really sure that they mean what they say when they echo over and over again "separation of church and state" in another field—that of education?

In November of 1967 I read an article advocating a type of "G.I. Bill" for all students. It advocated that all students receive government funds to attend the college or university of their choice. It was written by Mr. Miller Upton, president of Beloit College in Wisconsin, endorsed by Dr. Duke K. McCall, president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and it appeared in the Louisiana Baptist Message.

That same month—November, 1967,— the Baptist Press, official news source of the Southern Baptist Convention, reported that for the four-year period of 1963, '64, '65 and '66, forty-eight Southern Baptist colleges and universities received \$55,892,000 in federal government funds.

One year later, in December of 1968, the Louisiana Baptist Convention voted unanimously to recommend to Congress "the consideration of legislation which would provide federally funded scholarships for college students in order that they may purchase their education at the college of their choice"

Dr. McCall again spoke up for the Baptist position, saying: "We need to focus attention on a better way for the federal government to aid higher education simply because the principle of federal aid to higher education has been accepted by our society. Here is a situation in which our Baptist principles can solve our nation's problems."

At the risk of further offending the Baptists here assembled, let me ask a question in closing:

If there is a Baptist principle which says that students should, with government funds, be able to select the school of their choice, why does it apply only to college and university students?

Could it be that this is a good principle for Southern Baptist Colleges and Universities because there is such a large number of them in our area?

And could it be that the principle does not extend to elementary and high school students because the majority of parochial schools in the Southern area are operated by Catholic parishes or Catholic religious communities?

I know that a great deal of agonizing decisions have been made by Baptist institutions as they have come to the realization that they can't make it without some return from taxes from the government.

Time magazine two years ago described the various back-door methods by which Baptist schools and hospitals were getting around the so-called "church-state" issue. The Reverend J. T. Miller, president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, for example, explained a set of double entry books by which Baptist Georgetown College in Kentucky was receiving federal funds. The college, he said, had found a method of "beating the devil around the stump."

May I suggest that it is time to stop trying to beat the devil around the stump "one way or another" and to admit that religious groups do have a role to play in education, health care, and other community services and that they should not be ashamed to face the fact that the job can't be done with private dollars alone.

Issues Related to Church-State Relations —A Baptist View—

By

W. BARRY GARRETT

For centuries Baptists and Catholics have talked "at" each other and "about" one another on the subject of religious liberty and church-state relations. It is refreshing to participate in an experience such as this wherein we talk "to" one another, not as adversaries but as fellow Christians, both seeking to understand the truth of God as revealed in and through Jesus Christ.

In our discussions I hope that we will be careful to distinguish between things that differ. We should keep in clear focus the differences between constitutional provisions relating to church-state relations and basic Christian insights concerning religious freedom. The primary focus of our discussion should be on Christian principles. Then we can dialogue on how we apply these principles to the practice of religious freedom and church-state relations.

To illustrate: A citizen of Spain, steeped in the culture and national traditions of his native land, will approach church-state relations from a vastly different viewpoint from that of a citizen of the United States of America whose church-state viewpoints are shaped by the First Amendment and our culture and national traditions.

On the other hand, a Roman Catholic who is aware of the "aggiornamento" that is in process in his church will look to the "Declaration on Religious Freedom" approved by Vatican Council II (Dec. 7, 1965), and a Baptist will take his stance from what he conceives to be the Biblical bases for religious liberty. (Incidentally, it is delightful to note how similar these two viewpoints are becoming.)

As we discuss "issues related to church-state relations" let us make clear distinctions between "separation of church and state" and "religious freedom." Religious liberty is a primary objective. Separation of church and state is a political arrangement to maintain freedom. At least this is the situation in the United States of America, if not in Russia which also has "separation of church and state."

After we have discussed our basic Christian premises relating to freedom, and perhaps have even agreed on many of these, it would

then be worth discussing how we translate them into public policy. To illustrate: Many Baptists that I know are certain that their personal and "Christian" attitudes on alcoholic beverages or sabbath observance should be enacted into law. Many of the Catholics I know are equally certain that their view on abortion or population control should be recognized in the law of the land. You can think of other illustrations.

Perhaps a major focus of our discussion should be on how Christians and Christian bodies should relate their ethical concepts to public policy. Here is an area where we all need to learn how to distinguish between things that differ— Christian commitment and the formation of public policy. Maybe we can agree that the basic principles of religious liberty demand that we not impose our Christian precepts by legislation (or by any other method) upon the entire citizenry.

After we have discussed some of the above problems, then we will be in a better position to approach the questions that arise in "issues relating to church-state relations."

Here is a partial list of the kinds of questions that are involved:

1. Religious Promotion: To what extent are the churches going to ask the government for aid to promote religious objectives? Or the reverse, to what extent will the government utilize the churches and church agencies for the accomplishment of governmental or nationalistic objectives?

2. Public Policy: What will be the permanent public policy in regard to the use of public funds by and for church-related institutions?

3. Education: What is the relation between religion and education and what is the role of the churches in the field of public education?

4. Taxes: In the absence of direct subsidies from the government for the churches, what principles should guide both the churches and the government in tax policies? Both the freedom of the taxpayers and the independence of the churches must be mutually respected.

5. Welfare: With both the government and the church concerned about human welfare how are we to practice principles of religious liberty and separation of church and state, and, at the same time, adequately meet human needs? To what extent and in what ways shall government and church cooperate in meeting human need?

6. Censorship: Problems of religious liberty in relation to censorship, freedom of thought, academic freedom, and free speech are among the liveliest issues of our day. How do we practice religious liberty in relation to these problems?

7. Christian Nation: In the light of the New Testament, can a nation be a "Christian" nation? What is the relationship between religion and public policy?

Here is another way of stating some of the church-state issues suggested by the questions above: (1) the use of public funds for church education purposes; (2) the treatment of religion as American heritage required by law; (3) the stimulation of church contributions by favorable tax policies; (4) using religious institutions abroad by the United States foreign policy programs; and (5) United States (or state) health, education and welfare programs administered by church agencies.

Small Group Conference Reports on Issues Related to Church-State Relations

ALABAMA—MISSISSIPPI:

- I. The importance of religious liberty is the major point.
 - A. Separation of church and state is a political vehicle to protect this liberty.
 - B. What are our own objectives? Principles of religious freedom:
 1. Human dignity.
 2. The biblical basis of religious liberty:
The doctrine of creation is one of religious liberty.
 3. Man must be free, not hindered by government; the responsibility of government is to insure individual freedom (Perhaps we are looking for "freedom to" rather than "freedom from").
 4. Freedom is the absence of coercion.
 - C. Is there really separation of church and state, or separation without domination?
 1. Fear by Baptists of Catholic domination—the historical basis of this fear which goes back to the Middle Ages.
 - D. Lost Issue - reluctance to accept federal funds.

Other related issues:

1. Baptists do not wish to support Catholic schools (with tax dollars) to support a sectarian viewpoint.
2. An individual should be required to pay for a religious viewpoint.
3. Catholics are paying double—both to government in taxes and in support of Catholic schools.
4. Catholics should not be seen as a threat.
5. Baptists reaffirm their stance against supporting religion through tax dollars.
6. Religion is a voluntary response to God; paying taxes is not voluntary but coerced.
7. Acceptance of GI bill money in Baptist colleges appears to be opposed to the Baptist position on acceptance of tax money for education (discussion on supporting teachers of subjects such as biology, physical education, etc.); these schools, in this context, are providing the same services as public institutions.

The point was made that the question of *purchase of services* is now before the courts.

E. When do we have the factor of government's supporting parochial schools?

1. In some instances, Catholic schools have been rented when public schools were condemned.

F. Are we backing out (or down) on the Christian principle by accepting federal grants? (Discussion on Baptist viewpoint).

G. The great concern is fear of the increasing secularization of education—fear of the states' taking over all concerns of man and religion's being relegated to worship only—not to care of the sick, the poor, the uneducated.

1. One position was expressed that the state take over all education.

2. Another viewpoint was of the need for private schools for the sake of competition.

II. What is the mission of the Church?

A. The mission of the Christian in society.

1. Public education may not be a Christian education.

2. In a pluralistic society there is a limit to what the Christian can do.

3. The Church does have a mission in permeating society and providing a Christian society.

PROPOSALS:

1. Religious education should fortify the student for participating in the secular world. (There was some question as to whether this will work; it is not supported by studies on the matter.)

A side issue to this was that Baptist churches have frequently opened private schools in church buildings to support segregation; Catholic schools have de facto segregation in many instances; that the government, not churches, has forced the issue of integration.

2. That Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics mobilize their best minds to hone in on the movement to change the systems which denigrate mankind, such as Welfare System, etc.

ARKANSAS—LOUISIANA:

At this session a Catholic raised the question: "From a practical viewpoint, is it right for the Church not to participate in the broad spectrum of welfare?" Then he asked: "Whose responsibility is it to educate the child?" He concluded that this is the legal responsibility of the state but that the parent is also responsible. He held that a parent has the right to decide where to send his children to school, and that

since the state requires elementary and secondary education, it should provide support for parochial as well as for public schools.

The question was raised as to what the difference is in principle, if any, between the receiving of state funds for higher education and receiving such funds for elementary and secondary education. The only reply was that the lower education is compulsory while higher education is not.

One Catholic speaker pointed out that, in our day, social pressure actually operates to make higher education a necessity. Several of the Catholics in the group saw no difference in principle between state funds for higher education and such funds for lower education. They regarded the total picture of education as being for American citizenship.

Objecting to the support of parochial schools by tax funds, a Baptist said that he saw this as being much the same thing as for representatives of faiths other than his own to come to the door of his home soliciting funds for the propagation of their faiths.

A Catholic replied: "We are not asking for state subsidy for teaching religion, but for teaching arithmetic, etc." He said that Catholic schools are not used for proselyting. Any Protestant children attending Catholic schools are not included in the classes in religion except by written request by their respective parents, he said.

The possibility of closing parochial schools and sending all Catholic children to the public schools was discussed. A Catholic replied that they were convinced that a monolithic system of schools is not desirable. He said that since such a system would be wholly supported by the government, it would be wholly controlled by the government and be used as an instrument of indoctrination and propaganda. He felt that it is for the best interests of both church and state that we continue to have a dual system of schools.

Both Baptists and Catholics made suggestions for the improvement of the public schools. A Catholic said: "We have ignored the public schools, but we must give our attention to them, and we now are." He suggested that we do what we can to make teaching an attractive profession and encourage the paying of better salaries to teachers.

A Baptist said that one of the things Baptists and Catholics can do, as representatives of the two largest denominations in the nation, is to support the superintendents of public education in the matters pertaining to morality.

It was pointed out that the Second Vatican Council specified that it is the responsibility of the Catholic church to teach religious education and to conduct schools when possible.

GEORGIA—FLORIDA:

In the afternoon session regarding the issues of church and state, both groups could demonstrate that they had been the victims of oppression by state churches. The Baptist concept of church-state separation was expressed as a refusal to permit the government to support or control religion. A Catholic response was that government should support religion as a public benefit, but should give no unfair support to a particular religion. They do not feel we must have absolute separation to permit religious liberty.

Baptists and Catholics seemed to agree that since even religionists pay taxes, we too have a right to government funds. It seems agreeable to both groups that this be acquired through a voucher system in education, and possibly even in hospitalization, old age care and other ministries.

Catholics denied any desire to seize or control government, but want their right to select schools not to be hindered by oppressive taxation. Baptists agreed that they had not previously understood this argument.

The discussion closed with reflections by each group upon the images it has of the other. It became apparent that each group should seek to communicate itself honestly to the other, and that each has a responsibility to understand each other better.

KENTUCKY—TENNESSEE:

In our second session we quickly agreed that private education is in critical need. Tax money is necessary if we are to continue our present approach to education.

Then the more basic question was asked: "Is our present approach to education the best approach for today?" And guess what? We couldn't answer that question.

Perhaps public and private educators need to work cooperatively to preserve both systems, since it seems to be agreed that the challenge of a private system of education serves our country by being a challenge to public education.

Perhaps the religious "school" should limit itself to education in very limited specialized areas not being adequately cared for by existing systems.

It is difficult to be assured that the products of our private religious schools are any better Christians than those men and women who are in state schools.

In a short discussion about pre-college education it was agreed that Sunday School - CCD types of religious education do not do everything, but do accomplish something valuable.

NORTH CAROLINA—SOUTH CAROLINA:

(See page 45 and following in Section III)

Issues Related to Civic Righteousness —A Catholic View—

By
LURA ETHRIDGE

The term "civic righteousness" is so intertwined with the concept of social responsibility that the two are inseparable. The concept resembles a great deal the doctrine of love and works in connected Christianism. Surely, anyone who without the other, his mistakes are surely those of a lay person and government any discussion as to civic involvement in running for political office. Our thoughts are left of directed toward the role we should play as Christians in our government.

SECTION V

ISSUES RELATED TO CIVIC RIGHTEOUSNESS

My friends and I are in a predicament which has a long history in the history of our country. We are in a predicament which is a practical matter, after several years of being in the predicament in the light of a professed Christian commitment. It would be quite the same again. The best definition of what we are in is that supposedly decent citizens of piety and integrity regard their political action as: after you, be pleasing to the government men as they are men who are not involved with Christian concerns of their citizenship. In Mississippi we are faced directly with another predicament. Many of us wonder if again at election time we will be subject with all the heavy shillabobs of the past.

We have made progress in the South in many respects but there is one area which seems almost impossible to change and it is this. We cling tenaciously in political affairs to the spirit and dogma of a bygone era. A candidate for political office must almost certainly utter all the outrageous slogans we have inherited—or in the parlance of some of our candidates would indicate—or be subjected to a campaign of intrigue and hate. What a breath of fresh air it would be to all our Southern states if a candidate could forthrightly express his views on labor, race and economic problems this time or without immediately being denigrated as a "liberal" with all the connotations the term implies locally.

GEORGIA—FLORIDA

In the afternoon session regarding the issue of church and state, both groups made statements that they had been the victims of oppression by state churches. The Baptist viewpoint of church-state separation was expressed as a refusal to permit the government to support or control religion. A Catholic viewpoint of church-state separation was expressed as a refusal to permit the government to support or control religion. This is not to say that either group was opposed to a particular religion. They do not feel we have a right to impose our religion on people of other faiths.

Baptists and Catholics seemed to agree that since the Constitution says that we have a right to government funds, it would be appropriate to have a program of church-state separation. It would be appropriate to have a program of church-state separation, and we would like to see it implemented in every state.

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SECTION V
ISSUES RELATED TO CIVIL RIGHTS

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NORTH CAROLINA—SOUTH CAROLINA

It now seems that we have a right to government funds, and we would like to see it implemented in every state. It would be appropriate to have a program of church-state separation, and we would like to see it implemented in every state.

Issues Related to Civic Righteousness —A Catholic View—

By

LURA ETHRIDGE

The term "civic righteousness" is so interwoven with the concept of social responsibility that the lines of demarcation merge. The concepts resemble a great deal the doctrine of faith and works. A committed Christian can hardly embrace one without the other. My remarks are strictly those of a lay person and pretermit any discussion as to clerical involvement in running for political office. Our thoughts are rather directed toward the role we should play as Christians in our obligations as citizens.

My family and I are citizens of Mississippi which state is not unique in its history of electing people to public office who are captives of a bygone era. There is a certain irony in the fact that probably no politician could get elected in that state unless he ostensibly was a member of some organized church. What most high officials do, however, as a practical matter, after election as to serving all the people in the light of a professed Christian commitment, is something quite else again. The most disillusioning aspect of all has been that supposedly decent citizens of probity and integrity repeat their political errors year after year by electing these incompetent men to office—men who are not imbued with Christian concepts of civic righteousness. In Mississippi we are faced shortly with another gubernatorial election. Many of us wonder if again at election time we will be saddled with all the hoary shibboleths of the past.

We have made progress in the South in many respects but there is one area which seems almost immutable to change and it is this: We cling tenaciously in political affairs to the appeals and slogans of a bygone era. A candidate for political office must almost certainly embrace all the outgrown slogans we have inherited—or so the performance of some of our candidates would indicate—or be subjected to a campaign of innuendo and hate. What a breath of fresh air it would be to all our Southern states if a candidate could forthrightly express his views on labor, race and economic problems that beset us without immediately being denigrated as a "liberal" with all the connotations the term implies locally.

It appears people have been preoccupied with the terms "liberal" and "conservative" for quite a while. I recall Disraeli once commented that "Conservatism . . . shrinks from principle, disavows progress." In Mississippi, the terms are as changeable as a chameleon. Normally, however, we tend to think of a conservative as one who encourages isolation from the rest of the country, adopts the worn out creeds and mottoes of past generations, and is unable to plant his feet firmly in the twentieth century. The very minimum we have expected of a conservative in my own state is lip-service to a dead past with protestations of loyalty to such concepts of the future.

A liberal is anyone who has been unwilling to pay homage to such notions and who attempts to view with a clear eye some of our problems. It is likely that by any other yardstick than the one we have historically applied, a "liberal" in the South might well be a genuine conservative anywhere else. It is time to be realistic about politicians and their self-styled designations.

What, then, are our obligations as citizens in the election of our officials? Surely we cannot, as Pilate did, wash our hands and be absolved.

Edmund Burke once said that the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. A far more serious consequence is for good men affirmatively to lend aid, comfort and financial support to candidates who are not the most highly qualified persons, both morally and politically, for office. As long as all of us are guilty of withholding our wholehearted support from politicians on every level who seek the best interests of all citizens, we have failed in our responsibilities. No pragmatic cause should deter us from supporting in every way those persons who dare to be themselves and challenge the status quo for acceptable political and moral reasons.

How can we determine who those persons are? And, what guarantee do we have of their performance? We can only judge by past experiences. I am mindful also of the biblical text "By their fruits ye shall know them." Individuals with a history of commitment to moral, civil, and spiritual causes are worthy of our consideration and support and we should support them in such a fashion that they need not fear to speak out on the issues of our times. We can make them secure in the knowledge they have a bulwark of support in the thoughtful people of our area.

We can encourage candidates to quit paying lip-service to out-grown concepts. It should not be that any candidate wins a public office because he can more effectively criticize the Federal Government, the United States Supreme Court, organized labor and in-

tegration. Actually, some decent, honorable men have fairly been forced into such an intolerable situation because (1) people expect it—including such people as all of us, and (2) financial support may be cut off if a candidate dares to say what he truly believes. We have indulged in the frequent hypocrisy of supporting a decent candidate while, at the same time, we encourage him to take a public stand completely contrary to his basic beliefs and to ours in the thought that otherwise he might lose the election. Can such ends justify the means? I think not. Many times, anyway, the candidate loses and we are left with nothing but a feeling of our own dishonesty and a vague feeling short of unhappiness that we have been unfaithful to our promptings of conscience.

Some of us have felt that for economic and social reasons it has been impractical, if not unwise, to follow the dictates of conscience. We have attempted to rationalize our reasons for not committing our hearts and purses in political venture with the thought that politics is a dirty game and will always be thus. Our attempted justification makes little sense. Those of us who truly love the South will not indulge ourselves in this kind of thinking. It is a luxury we cannot afford.

In addition to our own personal commitment to civic honesty, we should be mindful of the effect the South's political history has had on this generation. I have found, as doubtless many of you have, that today's young people have an uncanny ability to see through sham and dishonesty. Some of these youngsters have become pretty disillusioned with outworn campaign cries calculated to appeal to the emotions and prejudices of the voters. These young people will be much more likely to believe our protestations if we by precept and example indicate our willingness to realistically assess the present and improve the future of the South. We have an obligation to our children to be honest with ourselves and with them.

There are many other aspects of civic righteousness which are not comprehended within the scope of this statement. As for these other matters, we must search our own hearts and consciences. My principal concern today however is to direct our attention to that aspect of civic righteousness which deals with the election of decent candidates to political office.

Issues Related to Civic Righteousness —A Baptist View—

By

LEWIS E. RHODES

Civic righteousness is used here to designate quality relationships of justice, mercy, and humaneness between individuals and social institutions, institutions and institutions, racial groups, government and individuals, government and groups, government and institutions. This is to be distinguished from personal piety—such as individual habits of prayer, sobriety or moderation, honesty, sexual morality, and Sabbath observance, etc. Civic righteousness and personal piety are related, but not synonymous, and not enforced by the same powers. The enforcement of social righteousness is political and heteronomous; personal piety is more autonomous, though informed by religious and social forces.

There is a difference between issue and conditions. Slavery was an evil condition long before it was a public issue. A damaged environment came many years before the issue. Law and order were an issue last fall. It is less an issue now, but not less a condition. School segregation was a condition for centuries; an issue since 1954.

In view of these distinctions, the following procedure will be used: the condition will be stated on the left and the degree of the issue on the right. The public intensity of the issue will be graded high, medium, or low. The conditions are not listed in order of importance.

CONDITION	ISSUE
1. Inadequate and/or prohibitive health care	1. Low, rising
2. Poverty	2. Medium to low
3. Racism	3. Medium
4. Environment	4. High
5. War and peace	5. Medium toward low
6. Decaying cities	6. High
7. World poverty (Foreign Aid, etc.)	7. Low
8. Crime, drugs, gambling, etc.	8. Medium
9. Military-Industry Coalition	9. Low
10. Public education	10. Low
11. Unemployment	11. High

There are other conditions and issues you may want to discuss. You likely will not agree with my grading of issues. One may wonder how these affect civic righteousness.

It seems clear to me that every one of these has to do with civic righteousness. For example, environment is a public trust. We have the power to pollute it, but we do not have the moral right to pollute. If pollution damages the beauty of the environment, this violates a public trust. If polluted environment injures man and/or animals and plants it is unjust. The needless and useless destruction of natural life is bad theology, but also an inhumane act that brutalizes human life. The right to hold title to property does not carry with it the right to destroy it or to make it destructive.

Look at unemployment. Unemployment is an evil if one's life and welfare depend on it. We have planned unemployment. We have officials who tell what percentage of unemployment is acceptable. It seems rather brutal for an employed person to say how many unemployed are acceptable. If unemployment is good for the country, we should manage unemployment democratically. If we need 5,000,000 out of work, we could use a lottery system. Put all our Social Security numbers in a barrel and draw out 5,000,000 at random. Let each of us help the country by serving it a year without employment. It is not difficult to see the injustices of present economic policies.

If judgment begins first at the house of God, the Church should be able to review all human institutions and determine whether or not they are under the dominion of Christ. The Church is concerned with man and whatever helps or hurts man is within its sphere of influence and criticism. We are justified in trying to induce all human institutions to function with justice, mercy, and humaneness.

Small Group Conference Reports on Issues Related to Civic Righteousness

ALABAMA—MISSISSIPPI:

I. What are implications of the term "civic righteousness"?

A. Dealing with the issue of electing worthy, moral candidates:

1. Support should be given to the man who is actively involved in Christian endeavors.

2. Churches should encourage Christian candidates to run for office.

B. Exposing issues as regards the position taken by the candidate on such issues:

Though political candidates are prone to becloud issues, the Church has an obligation to expose these issues to the voting public by:

1. Mobilizing mass media through more creative exploitation of radio and television (there is little likelihood that newspapers can be mobilized for such Christian effort).

2. Bringing candidates and voters in contact, especially bringing candidates into contact with leaders other than those of the economic power bloc, and

3. Making it possible for candidates to come in contact with black leadership.

II. What can be done about getting the candidate elected who seems to be for black people and other oppressed groups and minorities?

A. Proposal: Court an aggressive black bloc vote in conjunction with the white minority.

B. Proposal: Parishes/Churches should make it possible financially for the Christian to run for political office by:

1. Conducting an active campaign for the Christian candidate.

2. Supporting such candidates financially. It was noted that, though the Church itself may find blocks to such direct financial support, members should be encouraged to give this support.

C. Proposal: Get people to attend precinct meetings and to become involved in a political party.

III. Other areas and problems directly affecting the implementation of civic righteousness:

A. Involvement of youth—there must be education for Christian citizenship.

B. There must be further exploration of what the Church must do when members/parishioners are part of the "machine" which oppresses.

C. There must be exposure to the "folly of fears" of a black takeover.

Following is a summation of recommendations as arrived at in this discussion:

1. Expose candidates to pockets of leadership other than those he normally meets.

2. Mobilize a bloc vote of blacks and the white minorities.

3. We as Christians should commend public officials when a job is well done.

4. Develop cells of persons committed to civic righteousness and raising funds for such persons.

5. The Church must mobilize itself to support such persons.

6. Youth have tremendous power to help candidates and this power should be given direction.

7. There must be Christian education to show persons how to participate in the political process and in political parties.

ARKANSAS—LOUISIANA:

In its final session this group agreed that civic righteousness is a matter of Christian integrity exerted in the realm of civic and political affairs.

The responsibility of the church in bringing about civic righteousness was seen as entailing morality education within the church and participation by church members in community and state affairs.

The discussion pointed up the fact that the Roman Catholic Church and Baptist churches, by the nature of their difference in organizational patterns, deal with specific issues differently. While the Catholic Church frequently takes official stands on issues, Baptist churches seldom do, the pastors dealing with principles underlying current issues but leaving the members to act individually. It was pointed out, however, by the Catholic brethren, that even when their church takes an official stand this does not necessarily determine that all members will act accordingly.

A Baptist stated the view that Baptist churches have often failed to teach their members the democratic process for dealing with civic issues. It was the feeling of this person that this situation could be improved by starting at the state convention level to find ways of dealing with issues.

We were agreed that the pastor is the key person in the local congregation. It was noted that Catholic pastors, because they do not serve at the pleasure of their congregations, as do Baptist pastors, may frequently be in better positions than Baptist pastors to take righteous but unpopular stands on issues before the people. As an illustration of this, someone said that in his state there were two classes of pastors among Protestants—the unemployed and those who kept quiet on controversial issues.

A Baptist mission leader reported marked progress in recent months among Baptists of his state in becoming more aware and more concerned about human needs. He asserted that his denomination had long fallen short in the practice of its faith in this area of need.

He said that there continues to be a critical need for the assertion of leadership by Baptist pastors. He cited as a good example in human relations the forthright stand now being taken by W. A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, and immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He said that Dr. Criswell's contention that the Church must minister to and be open to people regardless of race would doubtless have wide and beneficial influence on other pastors in the matter of race relations.

The generation gap was pointed up as a continuing area of concern for the Church. Several expressed the feeling that, as much as young people like to flaunt their thinking as being different from that of their parents, they frequently reflect the prejudices of their parents, particularly in race relations.

A Catholic asked if Baptists have any conscience qualms over inadequate housing conditions. The reply was that the Southern Baptist Convention has pointed up this situation from time to time but that there is a need for corrective action on the local church level. One approach, it was suggested, would be for churches to help the poorly housed to have more adequate income.

In closing this final conference session, the Arkansas-Louisiana group agreed unanimously to recommend to the whole conference: That, upon returning to our respective communities that we agree that during the coming week Baptists will contact Catholics and Catholics will contact Baptists to share highlights of the historic conference we are now concluding.

GEORGIA—FLORIDA:

In the brief evening discussion of civic righteousness, several clergymen recalled instances when ministers in their communities cooperated to combat community sin and negligence. It was pointed out that most of these efforts involved "safe" issues (as eliminating pornography and keeping a rock festival out of the town), and were negative in their emphasis.

Baptists commented that there is a need to expose laymen to the practice of civic righteousness, and to let them be a leaven for the whole church loaf. Also, the power status of the layman needs to be capitalized upon, and the layman's Christian consciousness should be edified and supported through the Church.

Catholics expressed frustration that there is no collective voice for Baptists, no "Baptist position" which can be nailed down.

Some Baptist ministers expressed a leadership strategy that requires them not to get too far ahead of their congregations for fear they lose their leadership power and lose the people. Others commented that we have not gone as far as we might, and that the people will give us more leeway to lead than we credit them for giving.

Our session closed with a moving plea from the editor of the local diocesan Catholic paper for us to make the Church the Christ of Golgotha. He observed that he had become convinced in this conference that he really has not been foolish in thinking we can have church unity.

KENTUCKY—TENNESSEE:

In our final session we sought to find some practical issue that would serve as a focal point for action. Housing, penal reform, poverty issues, literacy crusade, anti-crime crusade, etc.

It was pointed out that Catholics have a center for united action in the Bishop which is an advantage in terms of decisive action in comparison with the Baptist system.

We then adjourned, I having discovered for certain that Baptists are no more and no less confused about the words of the Church today than the Catholics.

NORTH CAROLINA—SOUTH CAROLINA

(See page 45 and following in Section III.)

Closing Statement (Summary)

By

MSGR. BERNARD F. LAW

A debt of gratitude is owed the Department of Interfaith Witness for its work in planning this conference. The work of Dr. Hastings, Dr. Stokely and Mrs. Day is especially noted and deeply appreciated.

While this is the first time that a meeting of this type has been co-sponsored with an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention, it is not the first time that Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics have met in such a setting.

There have been three meetings co-sponsored by the Bishop's Committee for Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs and the Truett Research Institute at Wake Forest University. The first brought Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics for several days of dialogue. These meetings took place at Wake Forest in 1965 and at St. Joseph's, St. Bonaventure and St. Joseph's in 1966.

SECTION VI

CLOSING STATEMENTS

Among the events of those persons who were particularly instrumental in developing and fostering relations between Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists, none looms larger than that of Francis Mayer. It would be difficult to overestimate the contribution this man has made to the growth of understanding between Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists.

Billy Garner, too, has made a notable contribution to our growing relationship, as has Dr. Claude Brunch. Archbishop Ramsey is deeply indebted with the original planning of this consultation, and who remains a powerful force in Roman Catholic-Southern Baptist understanding is Dr. Joe Dickson.

I would like also to express a personal word of appreciation for the presence and active participation of those Catholic bishops who are here. The presence of these bishops indicates the high level of commitment which the Catholic Church in the Southeast has to the nurturing of relationships between Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics. In a special way it is good to know that a man with the enthusiasm, dedication and vision of Bishop Joseph Durkin of Nashville will be especially responsible for the Bishop's Committee in its relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention.

SECTION VI

CLOSING STATEMENTS

Closing Statement (Summary)

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There have been three meetings co-sponsored by the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the Ecumenical Institute at Wake Forest which brought together Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics for several days of dialogue. These meetings took place at Wake Forest, at Louisville, and at St. Joseph Abbey, St. Benedict, Louisiana.

Among the names of those persons who were particularly instrumental in developing and fostering relations between Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists, none looms larger than that of Brooks Hayes. It would be difficult to overestimate the contribution this man has made to the growth of understanding between Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists.

Barry Garrett, too, has made a notable contribution to our growing relationship, as has Dr. Claude Broach. Another man intimately connected with the original planning of this consultation, and who remains a powerful force in Roman Catholic-Southern Baptist understanding, is Dr. Joe Dick Estes.

I would like also to express a personal word of appreciation for the presence and active participation of those Catholic bishops who are here. The presence of these bishops indicates the high level of commitment which the Catholic Church in the Southeast has to the bettering of relationships between Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics. In a special way it is good to know that a man with the enthusiasm, dedication and vision of Bishop Joseph Durick of Nashville will be especially responsible for the Bishops' Committee in its relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention.

While we can rejoice at being part of a historical meeting, it would be totally unrealistic to assume that there are no deep problems between us. For example, Claude Broach, in his remarks, has reflected an understanding of the Church which I could not share in all of its implications. There is, certainly, a difference in ecclesiology between Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics which is fundamental.

As we grow in understanding and in cooperative efforts, it is essential that we not minimize our theological differences, but that we have serious theological dialogue as part of our growing relationship.

There is a distinction in Catholic thought between the deposit of faith and a theological elaboration, a theological understanding of that faith. Certainly in the Catholic tradition there is a pluralism in theological approaches. It would have to be said, however, that Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists have a different comprehension of what is contained in the deposit of faith itself. We must, in candor, discover areas of agreement and refine our points of disagreement.

Father Frank Ruff mentioned in his remarks that there has not been sufficient stress on the need of forgiveness for past sins against one another in this meeting. While no Catholic can speak for any other Catholic in *all* matters, let me at this point express a personal view by assuring you that I, as one Roman Catholic, do not stand waiting for an expression of guilt or sorrow from any Southern Baptist!

There is enough in the history of both Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics to be sorry about as our relationships have worked themselves out at various times and in different places. The past, however, I consign to the integrity of life of the individual Christian believer and to the mercy of God. Each day when I pray the Lord's Prayer I mean it when I say, "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

It is possible, I believe, for Christians to enjoy their guilt over the past and to use this concern over the past as an escape from their present responsibilities. Without in any way minimizing the need for confession, which remains good for the soul, I am rather more interested in the present press for cooperative action and the need for building a better future through cooperation between Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics than I am in dwelling on past injustices.

In terms of the future, I would agree with Bishop Durick and others who have spoken to the point that such conferences as this South-eastern consultation are of great help and should be continued as fully as possible.

I would further urge that meetings be arranged on a statewide basis using, on the Catholic side, the various diocesan ecumenical com-

missions as points of contact, and on the Southern Baptist side the superintendents of mission.

There is something of an organizational problem for a statewide conference. Given the Catholic diocesan structure, it is easier to mobilize the structures of the Catholic Church for such cooperative effort.

This conference, however, has proven what can be done in terms of an effective meeting of Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics. The Department of Interfaith Witness of the Home Mission Board and the office which I represent for the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs should be able to serve in a consultative and catalytic function in planning statewide meetings between Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics.

Granted the theological differences that separate Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists, there is a fundamental unity upon which we must build our growing relationship.

Bishop Waters has emphasized our acceptance of Holy Scripture as God's inspired word and the need to build cooperative programs upon this mutual acceptance wherever possible. Bishop Waters has also stressed our existence in this country, side by side as the two largest Christian groups, in the midst of this great political experiment in democracy.

Bishop Waters referred to this as an *experiment* in democracy; he implies by this that democracy is in process. I don't want to put words into his mouth, but the notion of an experiment denotes, to me, a trial and error method. Appreciating as we do, we Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists in this country, the principle of (separation) of Church and state, we also acknowledge our responsibilities as Christian citizens to work for the common good. The experiment of democracy is quite compatible with the Christian vision of the dignity of man and the value of justice as a guiding principle in human society.

Certainly in this area of civic righteousness, Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics have a special responsibility to see to it that the experiment in democracy does not fail.

There is also our fundamental unity in that complex which might be referred to as baptism—commitment—conversion. All of us in this room have been baptized in Christ Jesus, have expressed in one way or another our lifelong commitment to the following of Jesus Christ, and have turned from sin and are determined to stay turned from sin through conversion of life. The points of disagreement that we may have on infant baptism should not obscure the fact that newness of life, conversion, commitment are an integral part of both Southern Baptist and Roman Catholic understanding of Christian existence. We must encounter one another as Christians in the very real sense of the term if our cooperative efforts are to have meaning.

Closing Statement

By

M. THOMAS STARKES

We never know the future consequences of an action. One of the varying and stimulating factors is the role of the Holy Spirit, whom we have seen at work in the last few hours. We have left this conference somewhat unstructured to allow an element of freedom. What structuring was done was of equal sponsorship from both the Catholic side and the Baptist side. However, certain individuals deserve credit for long hours of planning what has happened here. They include Frank Ruff, a tremendous soul, and Monsignor Bernie Law whom we will all greatly miss as he leaves his national role in ecumenical planning. It has been my personal pleasure to get to know Bishop Durick. I have already come to appreciate him and his spirit and I am looking forward to future cooperation with him. Dr. C. B. Hastings deserves a great deal of credit because he has done much of the legwork and creative planning which has helped make this conference a success.

We here have learned the meaning of dialogue as a common search for truth.

We are learning together how to distinguish:

- a. between cordiality and hard-nosed encounter,
- b. between talk of souls and gut-level living,
- c. between "talking at" and "growing with,"
- d. between "getting saved" and "redeeming a world,"
- e. between "going to church" and "being the church,"
- f. between "separated brethren" and "brothers in Christ,"
- g. between "stereotyping" and "understanding in depth,"
- h. between "verbal profanity" and "the scandal of ignorance,"
- i. between saying "some of my best friends are Catholics" and "Bernie Law is a human being for whom Christ died."

We are growing by discussing and discovering anew the topics under discussion.

In the area of evangelism all Baptists and Roman Catholics should read a new book out of England entitled *Secular Evangelism*. The author builds a thought on Soren Kierkegaard's distinguishing between evangelism as being reading to a hungry man out of a cook-

book and one hungry man showing another where he has found bread. Mr. Brown, the author, further warns against an evangelistic bread "warmed over in a denominational oven." We have profited from each other in learning about evangelism.

In a similar fashion we have learned what it means to be a Southern Baptist, both in the majority and the minority, in a stage of religious pluralism, and to go beyond clever phrases such as "separation of church and state" to deeper issues such as so-called "segregation academies."

In the area of civic righteousness we are learning that what Christ said about the individual is also true of the church, i.e., "you find your life by losing it."

We are learning that God is the God of GMC, IBM, NAACP, as well as CCD and BTU.

What has been going on here is a spiritual "happening." The mass last evening was a high moment in worship for all of us.

Indeed—sparks have flown—
minds have been blown—
emotions have run high—
spirits have been encountered
and souls have been a bit more redeemed.

The Spirit is here—

But, alas, there is a February 4, 1971, and we have the grace of a job to do.

So—we go back to a world much more comfortable with prejudice than with peace—

But our task is as a joint work:

The passing of peace—so may we join in a symbolic action together as we say, "May the peace of God go with you and with your soul."

back and one buggy man showing another where he has found bread
the bread, the sugar, further went against an evangelist bread
"washed" that in a "dormitory" over. We have profited from
each other in learning about evangelism.

Evangelism in the Church

In a similar fashion we have learned that it means to be a soul-
evangelist both in the majority and the minority. In a time of full-
time evangelism, and to go beyond these phases such as "renew-
tion of church and evangelism" which is so-called "evangelism
in the academy."

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