RACE: NEW DIRECTIONS FOR A NEW DAY

ADDRESSES FROM CONFERENCES AT RIDGECREST BAPTIST CONFERENCE CENTER June, 1973

Sponsored by the Christian Life Commission

of the Southern Baptist Convention

RACE: NEW DIRECTIONS FOR A NEW DAY

Addresses from the Christian Life Conference at
Ridgecrest
June, 1973

Sponsored by the
Christian Life Commission
of the Southern Baptist Convention
460 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, Tennessee
Cecil E. Sherman, Chairman
Foy Valentine, Executive Secretary
Floyd A. Craig, Director of Public Relations
C. Welton Gaddy, Director of Christian Citizenship Development
Harry N. Hollis, Jr., Director of Special Moral Concerns
Lee Porter, Director of Organization
Elmer S. West, Jr., Director of Program Development

The Christian Life Commission is glad to share these addresses delivered at the 1973 Christian Life Conference at Ridgecrest, North Carolina. No attempt has been made to polish these spoken addresses for formal publication. It is hoped that readers will be challenged by these messages to a fuller understanding and acceptance of the Christian way in race relations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RACE: NEW DIRECTIONS FOR A NEW DAY

WHERE ARE WE IN RACE RELATIONS: AN OVERVIEW

Dr. T. B. Maston
Former Professor of Christian Ethics
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

An "overview" is a sketch or a broad outline. It is to paint with a big brush or to generalize. This particular overview is considered introductory. Later addresses will fill in some of the details.

There are so many aspects of and such an abundance of materials on contemporary race relations that some limitations had to be established. Among these are the following:

1. We will restrict our study to the United States. This will be done in spite of the fact that one cannot understand the racial situation in the United States apart from some acquaintance with the world crisis or revolution that is evident to varying degrees in all parts of the world.

2. This study will be restricted almost exclusively to the relation of blacks and whites. It should be remembered, however, that there are problems regarding the relation of our majority white people to Indians, Orientals, and Chicanos or Mexican Americans. (In addition, we are plagued with a rather persistent and perplexing anti-semitism.)

3. This overview will be limited primarily to the general situation regarding the relations of whites and blacks in our society. For example, the religious aspects of race relations will be left to be supplied by later speakers.

4. More attention will be given to blacks than to whites in this overview. This will be done for two reasons: (1) Most of us are white and we know much less about the black phases of our relations than about the white. (2) There is more material readily available on the black than the white aspects of our relations and our racial situation in general.

5. This overview will be restricted to a few major facets of the relations of blacks and whites. This means that some rather important phases of race relations will not be touched on at all.

6. There is at least one other limitation that should be mentioned. It evolves from our natures. Just as no man can ever fully understand a woman, likewise no white man can ever fully understand a black man. The reverse, in each case, is also true.

Contemporary Attitudes

The attitudes or moods of blacks and whites are important factors in understanding the developing relations between them. Just as there is a "black experience" that determines to a considerable degree the attitude of black people, so there is a "white experience." The latter is identified with and expressive of the majority, the dominant, the privileged, the powerful group. The "black

experience" is characteristic of the minority, the dominated, the underprivileged, the subordinate group. The preceding suggests that "white" and "black" in this connection may describe more than a color. For example, there are many whites who are not among the privileged and hence have not had, to the fullest, the "white experience." On the other hand, there are increasing numbers of blacks who are middle- if not upper-class. These have a considerable problem of identity.

Lest we tend to judge whites too harshly, it may be wise to remind ourselves of a statement of Ina Corrine Brown. She says, "No race has any monopoly on greed, selfishness, cruelty, ethnocentrism, or willingness to use power in the exploitation of the powerless."[1]

To understand adequately contemporary attitudes of blacks and whites and their relations to one another would require considerable historical perspective. Even a bare outline of the history of the black man in America would require more time and space than we can give. A sketch of more recent years would include the mass migration of Negroes from the rural South to the industrial centers of the North and the contribution of these new arrivals to the complex problems of those population centers. We would have to trace the civil rights movement with its demonstrations. We would need to evaluate the work of Martin Luther King, Jr., and his more activist counterparts. Such a sketch would also include the Supreme Court decision of 1954 and the struggle since that time to implement it. The violence of the black militants and the explosion of the ghettoes would have to be included.

Now, how can we describe the black attitude today? There is no one attitude typical of all blacks. It is true that the radicalism of a few years ago is lacking. The more radical blacks have at least changed their strategy. It is doubtful if they have changed their ultimate goal. The change has been demonstrated by Bobby Seale, co-founder of the Black Panthers, who was recently defeated by the incumbent in a run-off for mayor of Oakland.

Many blacks are discouraged and frustrated. Also, many of them, particularly their leaders, are impatient. Speaking at a stockholders' meeting of General Motors, of which he is a Board member, Leon H. Sullivan said: "Why does the world always want to go slow when the rights of black men are at stake?"[2]

Blacks are not only impatient, they are also determined to bring about changes. Whitney Young, for many years the executive director of the National Urban League, in speaking of black organizations recently said: "We are all angry. We are all determined to lead a responsibly militant black community in a fight for power and justice."[3] Let me quote two observations from a respected Negro pastor. He says, "More overt racism is now evident in the black community" than formerly. He also says, "Very little real dialogue is occurring."[4]

What about white attitudes? Let us permit one who has made a careful scientific study speak for us. Angus Campbell closes his book entitled White Attitudes Toward Black People with the following:

> We close with a final reminder that . . . the white population of this country is far from a general acceptance of the principle and practice of racial equality. There are many white individuals whose attitudes have hardened in response to the persistent black pressure for change. . . . These people are found at all levels of the population and it is not likely that they will soon disappear.

Campbell further says:

> We are at present at a point of uneasy confrontation. The black demands for change . . . are insistent and sometimes abusive. Most white people agree that change should occur but they want to move gradually. . . . Change is taking place but black expectations rise as achievements rise. American society is developing a new pattern of relationships between white and black and the time of change is a time of tension for both races.[5]

Let me quote again from Marvin Griffin's letter: "As we move toward the goal of full equality, the intensity of the struggle increases. The door which was shut to minorities is being opened more and more and the wider the door is opened the more intense the struggle for full equality becomes."

There is one individual who stands in a particularly difficult place in the contemporary racial situation. That individual is the so-called white "liberal," who has advocated school integration and the reform of racial patterns in general. He is now confused because of the threat of Black Power and because of some of the problems that have arisen as a result of integration. He is being accused by some of his black brothers of being a traitor or at best a coward. He does not relish either label.

Economically

Let us turn out attention now to two or three specific aspects of the contemporary racial situation. Also, let us remember that this is primarily an overview of black and white relations, with more emphasis on blacks than on whites.

There are some encouraging signs for the Negroes on the economic horizon. There have been some striking examples of successful business ventures by blacks. Some of these have received considerable help from the Small Business Administration, which provides loans for firms operated by minority people. The funding of such businesses is expected to rise to approximately $562 million this next year, beginning with July 1. There has also been a noticeable increase in recent years in the number of blacks employed by white business concerns. These expanding business opportunities have contributed to a noticeable increase in middle-class blacks, up from 1/20 to 1/3 of all blacks in thirty years.[6] There have developed some self-help programs such as Leon Sullivan's "10-36 Plan," already tested in Philadelphia. In this plan people put ten dollars a month into the "treasury of the people" for thirty-six months. This money is used to help build enterprises owned by blacks. In Philadelphia, blacks through this plan "own a shopping center, food chain stores, apartment houses, office buildings, and factories."[7]

The preceding may sound quite encouraging and it is until we realize how far behind the Negro people still are. The following are only a few of the available statistics that reflect the inequities of our contemporary economic situation. In spite of the improvement in black income, the dollar gap between median white and black income actually increased from 1960 ($2,600) to 1970 ($3,800). The percentage of white families with incomes of over $10,000 is double the percentage of black families. It takes two workers in a black family to make as much as one worker in the average white family. "Black college graduates still earn less than whites who haven't completed high school."[8]

The economic picture for most blacks is still rather dark. The old saying that "the Negro is the last hired and the first fired" is still too true. Blacks constitute approximately 12% of the labor force in the United States but 18% of the unemployed. Furthermore, 40% of black workers are in unskilled jobs. Whereas 12% of the citizens of the United States are below the official poverty level, 27% of the blacks are below that level.

No wonder Vernon Jordan, the executive director of the National Urban League, says, "In the sixties, the burning question was whether blacks would be allowed to ride the buses and where they would sit. In the seventies . . . the issues are whether black people will be allowed to drive the bus [and] whether the masses of black people will have the money to pay the fare."[9] Jordan also said, "We have found that it does not mean much to have the right to sleep in the Hilton if you don't have the money to pay the rent." Whites can expect the pressure from blacks to continue until full equality is achieved in the economic area.

Politically

Politics has been labelled "the civil rights movement of the 70's." Marked political progress has been made by the blacks in the past few years. However, the road ahead is still long and rough. We will spell out the situation politically as concisely as possible. The statistics given may not be entirely accurate but it is believed that they paint a correct general picture. (And, after all, our concern is with an overview or general picture.) I have never particularly cared for alliteration but it seems that the material rather naturally divides itself into past, potential, present, and problems.

1. The immediate past.

Richard Hatcher, mayor of Gary, Indiana, speaking before the National Black Political Convention, March 22, 1972, said, "From Reconstruction to the mid-1930's, we nestled in the white bosom of the Republican Party--a warm home for some, perhaps; but a rocky bed for the sons and daughters of Africa. In the mid-1930's we took up residence in the hip pocket of the Democratic Party where we lodged uneasily to this day." He concluded: "Life was no sweater for us with the Democrats." The big switch from the Republican to the Democratic Party came in 1936. The chief factors in the move were Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Great Depression.

In the 1972 election, 87% of the black vote went to McGovern, 13% for Nixon, a 3% increase over the vote for him in 1968. Twenty-three per cent of

McGovern's total vote was from blacks. They were the only voting block that did not defect from the Democratic Party. Many black leaders, however, will agree with Leon Sullivan that "the day has come for the black man to practice political independence."[10]

2. The potential.

The Negro population of the United States is approximately 12 per cent of the total. (The National Black Political Convention claimed 15 per cent, some as low as 11 per cent). The potential power of the black is considerably more than that percentage would suggest. The latter is due to the concentration of blacks in the southern "black belt" and in the great industrial cities of the North where whites are moving to the suburbs and satellite towns and leaving the inner city to the blacks and those of other minority groups. For example, there are 108 counties in the South with black majorities. There are seven U.S. cities where more than 50 per cent of the population is black, with another 21 cities where it is more than 40 per cent black. Ebony, in a recent issue (January, 1973), claimed that there are 89 cities where blacks potentially could elect mayors. Several cities have or have had black mayors, such as Gary, Indiana; Cleveland, Ohio; and Newark, New Jersey. The latest is Los Angeles, the third largest city of the United States, where Tom Bradley, a Texas share-cropper's son, defeated Mayor Yorty. According to newspaper reports, less than 15 per cent of the population of Los Angeles is black.

Another thing that underscores the potential power of the black vote is the heavy concentration of blacks in the seven big industrial states, some of which are considered swing states. These are New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and California.

3. The present.

When compared to the past, the Negro has made tremendous progress politically. When compared to his potential political power he still has a long way to go.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965 coupled with the strenuous efforts of many black leaders resulted in a marked increase in black registered voters. A million new voters were registered in the South, with a total of 3 1/2 million in the South and 7 million in the United States.

This increased registration along with an awakened interest in the political process by many blacks made possible a dramatic increase in the number of blacks elected to political offices. One source said that there were in 1972 873 black office holders in the South, with the largest number--128--in Mississippi. This compares to less than 100 in all the South five years ago.[11]

Ebony, reporting the 1972 election, said that there was an increase of 23 state legislators, up from 204 in thirty states to 227 in thirty-eight states. Thirteen southern states have blacks in their House of Representatives, from one to fourteen in number. Six southern States have blacks in their state senate.

Black delegates to the Democratic National Convention increased from 204 in 1968 to 454 in 1972. For the Republican Convention the increase was from 26 in 1968 to 56 in 1972. These figures represented 14 per cent of the delegates to the Democratic Convention and 4 per cent at the Republican Convention.

The progress on the federal level seems to be somewhat slower than on local and state levels, but is possibly most encouraging. When John Conyers (D.--Mich.) was elected in 1964 there were only six blacks in Congress. Previous to the last election there were 13 black congressmen and one black senator (Brookes of Massachusetts). All of the black congressmen were reelected in 1972 and three blacks were added to their number. The three new representatives were from California, Georgia, and Texas. The latter two, Young of Atlanta and Barbara Jordan of Houston, were the first blacks to be elected to Congress from the South since the Reconstruction. Both of these represent districts where a majority of the voters are non-black.

Vernon Jordan, the relatively recently elected executive director of the National Urban League, said that 1972 marked the emergence "of self-conscious black participation in the electoral process on a scale of involvement and influence unmatched in the past century."

4. The problems.

In spite of the marked increase in the number of blacks elected to political office in recent years, they hold only .3 of 1 per cent of all elected offices at local, state, and federal levels of government. For example, on the state level, if blacks held offices in proportion to the population, they would have, according to The Black Agenda, 182 state senators rather than the 37 they now have, and 526 members of state House of Representatives instead of the 169 they now have. On the national level it would be somewhat comparable: 66 members of the U.S. House of Representatives instead of 16 as now and 15 senators as compared to one now.

The lack of unity among black people is one of their biggest political problems. A minority cannot carry much political weight if they are not united. The National Black Political Convention, with 2,782 voting delegates, sought, at least on the surface, to unite blacks of various political persuasions. It failed to accomplish this goal. It lost the support of many blacks particularly when in its fifty-five page National Black Agenda it condemned school busing and the nation of Israel. Organizations such as the NAACP disassociated themselves from the Convention. The Congressional Black Caucus came out after the Convention with its own "Black Bill of Rights."

The preceding is an evidence of a deep division politically among black people. Overall, the division is largely along integrationist-separationist or nationalist lines. This division will be considered more fully later.

Furthermore, a minority to be most effective politically needs some allies. There was clear evidence at the Gary Convention that black leaders had hoped for a coalition with other minority groups. For example, Mayor Hatcher, in his address at Gary, said, "If we form a third political movement, we shall take with us Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Indians, Orientals, a wonderful

kaleidoscope of colors." So far little if any progress has been made in achieving such a coalition.

Educationally

One of the most encouraging things, from the perspective of blacks, is the larger number of blacks who are completing high school, going on to college, securing undergraduate and graduate degrees. A recent Reader's Digest article (November, 1972) said that the 680,000 blacks in U.S. colleges represented a 200 per cent increase from a decade earlier. These are the ones, in the main, who will provide the leadership for the improvement of Negro life in general, such as better economic conditions and more effective operation in the political arena. Really, all aspects of the black experience interact on one another. They must move forward together.

There is still considerable tension between blacks and whites in some areas concerning the use of recreational facilities, employment opportunities, and admission to churches. The sharpest tension, however, in the contemporary period, is related to busing in an effort to attain racial balance in the public schools.

In evaluating busing, we should recognize that almost as long as there have been automobiles, American children have been going to school in buses. In the main, buses have been accepted as a part of the educational picture. They came into particularly wide use with the consolidated school movement.

At the present time, approximately 20 million elementary and high school students ride buses to and from school. This is 42 per cent of all public school pupils. The vast majority ride the buses because their school is not within walking distance, at least not within walking distance for a modern-day youngster. One estimate is that only approximately 3 per cent of all bused students are for the purpose of school desegregation.[12] There is little evidence that the youngsters themselves object to the busing. It is largely the parents, mostly white but some black.

The preceding should suggest that busing is not the real issue. Vernon Jordan even suggests that it is a phony issue that has been artificially inflated. He says, "It is only when it has become one of the several instruments to achieve desegregation that opposition has become vocal, if not irrationally hysterical."[13] The main argument by white parents, which may have some validity, is that busing will lower the standard of education for their children. This may be a part of the price that white people in general will have to pay for a while for the inferior education that Negro youngsters have received for years in segregated schools. Another argument against busing with the further integration of schools is that it tends to increase rather than decrease tension between the races. The picture here is not uniform. It is also possible that tension may be increased temporarily but that the close contact of blacks and whites may ultimately contribute to a better understanding and to improved relations between the races.

One rather acute problem for some areas, evolving from the increased integration through busing, has been the resegregation of the races. The main

contributor to this resegregation has been the tendency of whites, particularly those with school-age children, to move from the inner city to what someone has called "white suburban sanctuaries of segregation" or even out to satellite towns or cities. Newsweek recently said that "during the sixties 3.4 million blacks moved into the central cities--and 2.5 million whites moved out."[14] Some suggest that this movement may be of such consequence that desegregation achieved through busing may be counter-productive. Cities where such a movement has been very noticeable are Washington, D.C., where 95 per cent of the school population is now Negro, Detroit, Atlanta, Baltimore, Newark, St. Louis, and Richmond. For example, in Richmond 70 per cent of the school enrollment is black, while in adjoining Henrico and Chesterfield counties 90 per cent of the school population is white. On January 11, 1972, the U.S. District Judge Robert T. Merhige, Jr., ordered state authorities to consolidate the city schools and the schools in the two adjoining counties. This decision was overturned by a five to one vote of the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Very recently the U.S. Supreme Court, by a four to four vote, with Judge Potter from Richmond abstaining, failed to overturn the Appeals Court's decision. What will happen when a case gets in the courts appealing for desegregation on a county-wide basis, including suburbs and satellite towns in the same county with the inner city?

One unfortunate result of busing is that it puts the burden too heavily on the blacks. If schools are to be closed, they are practically always black. At times these are schools in which the black people have had a real pride. In some areas black teachers and principals have lost their jobs or in some cases have been demoted. In most communities, far more black than white pupils are bused.

A full picture of the educational scene would include a report of white segregated academies, too many of which are sponsored or supported by churches. It seems that they have passed their peak. Another phase of education that should be mentioned is the Negro college or university. What place will it have in an increasingly desegregated society?

Integration Versus Nationalism

An entire book could be written on another phase of our contemporary racial situation. It is the cleavage within the black community between the integrationists and the segregationists or nationalists. The former still believe in and work for advances in the area of integration. They welcome all the help they can get from white people. The nationalists tend to form all black organizations and to push for black control over institutions and institutional policies. The latter includes such things as busing, child adoption, housing, control of schools and police. For example, the National Association of Black Social Workers, meeting in Nashville, May, 1972, condemned the placement of black children in white families for either foster care or adoption. The anti-busing resolution adopted by the Gary Convention was the product of the nationalists.

The integrationists and nationalists differ regarding most phases of the over-all racial situation. For example, not only the NAACP but also the National Urban League, and many leading Negroes disassociated themselves from the black convention at Gary which adopted an anti-busing resolution. In turn, some of the nationalists believed that the NAACP made a big mistake

when it brought a suit calling for the merger of the predominantly black schools of Richmond, Virginia, with the predominantly white schools of the two adjoining counties. The nationalists have been strong supporters of black studies in colleges and universities, while integrationists, in the main, have opposed such studies. For example, the well-known black psychologist, Kenneth B. Clark, was recently reported in U.S. News and World Report as saying: "Black studies are as revolting as the former segregation we fought against, even more so because they are insidious. They are allegedly buying peace (on campuses) but at the expense of the education of black students."[15] The integrationists and the nationalists differ in their view concerning the ghetto. The nationalists consider it a black community that should be strengthened and controlled by blacks. The integrationists suggest that it should be broken up and integrated into the mainstream of American life.

The nationalist movement among blacks is a product of but also to some degree the producer of Black Power. The Black Power movement, which arose about the time of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, means different things to different people. "For some liberal whites who enthusiastically participated in the civil rights movement, Black Power is a pink dismissal slip. For the black members of the more conservative civil rights organizations, Black Power means dissension in their ranks, and rebellion against their leadership."[16]

One writer (Norman Hill, associate director of the Philip Randolph Institute) has said that the leaders of Black Power did not understand that a black minority even if united was not in position to do what only a majority movement could do. Because this is true, he concluded that "'Black Power' could not be a strategy but only a slogan."[17] The same author also concludes that "the 'Black Power' movement was a victim of its own inability to achieve real black power. In representing the crystallization of racial hostilities it was the symptom of a problem, not its solution."[18] Bayard Rustin, one of the more respected but also more conservative black spokesmen, recently suggested that Black Power was never a significant force in the black man's struggle but it left to the blacks "a powerful legacy of polarization, division, and political nonsense."[19] Benjamin Mays, another respected elder statesman among the blacks, says that the blacks need to be reconciled with each other about as much as they need to be reconciled with the whites. He also says, "We blacks are a divided people. We are too few in number and too weak to be effective when divided, but we are divided."[20]

We will have to close this discussion of the conflict between integrationists and nationalists among the blacks. It possibly should be added that the older blacks are more frequently in the integrationist camp and the younger blacks in the nationalist camp. Leon Sullivan's statement concerning Black Power is as follows: "The time has come for us to put black power and white power together to build American power, in order that we might save the nation for everyone."[21]

Conclusions

Permit me, in outline form, to state a few personal conclusions.

1. The picture from the viewpoint of blacks and whites is not uniform regarding their relations to one another and their progress in general.

2. When compared to the past, blacks have made marked progress along most lines, but they still have a long way to go.

3. The areas of progress for blacks, such as the economic, the political, and the educational, are closely interrelated. Progress in one area generally speaking means progress in the other areas.

4. Whites have made noticeable progress in their attitudes toward blacks but most of them still have a long way to go.

5. There is, however, abundant evidence of racism and its accompanying prejudice. There is still plenty of prejudice, when 60 per cent of the mail Hank Aaron gets is "hate" mail as he threatens the long-standing home run record of Babe Ruth.

6. The greater the progress of the blacks, the stronger and the more open will be the pressure for additional progress.

7. In some ways and in some areas, it is more difficult than it has been in the past for blacks and whites to communicate. A possible explanation is the more frequent willingness of blacks to be open and frank. Many of them will no longer simply say what they think the white man wants them to say. This makes it difficult for the white man to communicate with them.

NOTES

[1]Ina Corrine Brown, Understanding Race Relations (Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 193.

[2]Leon H. Sullivan, Alternatives to Despair (Judson Press, 1972), p. 122.

[3]Whitney M. Young, Jr., Beyond Racism (McGraw-Hill, 1969).

[4]Letter from Marvin Griffin, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Austin, Texas.

[5]Angus Campbell, White Attitudes Toward Black People (Institute of Social Research, University of Michigan, 1971), p. 102.

[6]Newsweek, February 19, 1973, p. 31.

[7]Sullivan, p. 127.

[8]Vernon E. Jordan, "End of the Second Reconstruction," Vital Speeches, July 1, 1972, p. 553.

[9]Vernon E. Jordan, "Black People and Labor Unions," Vital Speeches, January 1, 1972, p. 171.

[10]Sullivan, p. 125.

[11]Vernon E. Jordan, "Busing," Vital Speeches, May 1, 1972, p. 437.

[12]Metropolitan Applied Research Center, Inc., Fact Book on Pupil Transportation (April, 1972), p. 10. A booklet.

[13]Jordan, "End of Second Reconstruction," p. 554.

[14]Newsweek, February 19, 1973, p. 33.

[15]U. S. News and World Report, January 29, 1973, p. 29.

[16]Christian Life Commission, Issues and Answers: Black Power.

[17]Norman Hill, "A New Black Labor Coalition," Current, January 1972, p. 29.

[18]Ibid., p. 30.

[19]Newsweek, November 13, 1972, p. 18.

[20]Benjamin Mays, Criterion, Spring, 1972, p. 11.

[21]Sullivan, p. 118.

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES CONCERNING RACE RELATIONS TODAY

Dr. T. B. Maston
Former Professor of Christian Ethics
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

If the word "today" had not been tacked on to the end of the assigned subject, I might have used a paper or a chapter that I had written previously. "Today" has forced me to update my material.

We shall present the subject under several headings. After an introductory section on "Theological Trends," which will include some consideration of Black Theology, the following major headings will be discussed: "The Nature of God," "The Nature of Man," "The Message of the Prophets," "The Ministry of Jesus," "The Witness of the Apostles." There will be a closing summary section on "Central Concepts." To cover any one of these adequately would require an entire chapter or even a book.

Theological Trends

The two most distinctive theological movements of the contemporary period are the theology of hope[1] and Black Theology. We shall restrict our consideration to the latter, which includes, to some degree, elements of the former.

Each new theological movement is a product of its age and its environment. It also arises, to some degree, as a corrective. For example, the Social Gospel Movement arose in response to the needs of an increasingly industrialized society and as a corrective for certain weaknesses of the traditional theology of that time.

Neo-orthodoxy, as a theology of crisis, first appeared in Europe where the crisis was most severe. When it crossed the Atlantic, it was adapted, in some ways, to the American scene. At least it retained some of the social insights and concerns of the Social Gospel Movement. Also, neo-orthodoxy arose and served as a corrective for certain weaknesses of the Social Gospel Movement and of theological liberalism in general. Among those weaknesses were a superficial view of sin, an unrealistic optimism concerning man and his ability to solve his problems and the problems of his world, and an unbalanced emphasis on the imminence of God to the neglect of his transcendence.

Black Theology, which possibly should be dated from the publication of Black Religion by Joseph Washington in 1964, is a product of its age and environment and claims to serve as a corrective to what is termed "White" theology. Black Theology is closely related to if not an actual expression of Black Power. It makes a distinctive emphasis on God's concern for and even his identification with the underprivileged or oppressed, which includes the blacks. For example, James Cone develops the idea of the "identification of God with the dispossessed and the eschatological visiion of a new society" in his exposition of his theology for black American Christians.[2] To support the contention of God's identification

with the struggles of the oppressed, Cone and others utilize the great eighth-century prophets' concern for and the ministry of Jesus to the poor, the hungry, etc.

Black Theology, frequently considered a part of radical or revolutionary theology which includes some Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, is most accurately described as a theology of liberation. This liberation, however, is not a pietistic liberation but a liberation from oppressive institutions and from a white-dominated society. Some, such as Cone, would justify, from the Christian perspective, any means, even rebellion if it contributed to the liberation of blacks.[3] Cone goes so far as to say, "Whoever fights for the poor, fights for God; whoever risks his life for the helpeless and unwanted risks his life for God."[4] Cone suggests that the sole purpose of Black Theology "is to apply the freeing power of the gospel to black people under white oppression,"[5] or its purpose is "to emancipate the gospel from its 'whiteness'."[6] It is not surprising that Cone defends and even identifies himself and his work with the Black Power Movement, which he considers the most important movement in contemporary American life.

There are other rather prominent black theologians who are identified with Black Theology. One of these is Cleage, whose Black Messiah attracted considerable attention. Cleage plainly says that "Jesus was a revolutionary black leader, a Zealot, seeking to lead a Black nation to freedom."[7]

Roberts is somewhat more moderate than Cone or Cleage. He speaks of the Black Messiah, not in "a literal historic sense," but rather as a symbol or myth.[8] Roberts believes that "liberation and reconciliation must be considered at the same time and in relation to each other."[9]

Benjamin Mays, one of the truly great Christian statesmen of our day, recently said: "The church must preach a gospel of reconciliation not only between Black and Black but between Black and White. The gospel of love and forgiveness is still relevant. It is still appropriate to preach a Gospel which combines the love of God with the love of man."[10] Let us hear one other black voice. Miss Terry Smithers, writing to Christianity and Crisis, said: "Because nearly all American White Christians are White first and Christian second, must I fall into the same pattern and be Black first and Christian second?" This should challenge all of us—white and black. Miss Smithers further said, "We Black Christians must ... continuously remind ourselves to hate the sin but not the sinner. If we give up love, if we give up Christ, we may make material gains. But what will it profit us if in the process of trying to liberate ourselves from White racism we infest ourselves with the same hate for Whitey that he has for us? We would then lose our soul."[11]

Now, let us give our attention, in a more specific way, to the biblical aspects of our subject. You know, of course, that there is comparatively little in the Bible directly related to race. The race problem as we have it today, at least the color aspects of the problem, seems to have been unknown in biblical days. Let us notice, however, the assigned subject. It is "Biblical and Theological Perspectives Concerning Race Relations Today." There are in the Bible some very clear perspectives and some basic concepts that relate in a positive and

helpful way to contemporary race relations. Really, the more Christian theology and Christian ethics are based upon and stay close to the biblical revelation the less justified will be the criticism of some black theologians of "White" theology and "White" ethics. The logical place to begin is with the nature of the God we find revealed in the Scriptures.

The Nature of God

The first thing that impresses us about the God revealed in the Bible is that he is a person. He has all the qualities essential to personality: the power to think, to judge, to feel, to will, to communicate. He is not only a person; he is a moral person; a God of holiness, righteousness, and justice.

The fact that God is a moral person has significant implications for us in our relations to him and to our fellowman. While we should be faithful to the formal requirements of our religion, such faithfulness will not make us acceptable to God if we have left undone the weightier, the more important matters (Matt. 23: 23). Those more important matters have to do with our relations to our fellowman.

God, who is holy, righteous, just, and merciful, expects his children to possess these same qualities. His word to the children of Israel was, "You shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy" (Lev. 19:2). What is true of holiness is true of every other moral quality that God possesses. This fact has tremendous significance for race relations, and for human relations in general. God, who was no respecter of persons, expects us not to be respecters of persons.

God is not only a person, he is also sovereign. As sovereign his concern is as broad as life. He is interested and active in every area of the life of the individual and in the world in which he lives. This also means that his will is inclusive of every area of human relations, including race relations.

The sovereign God of the universe, who is creatively active in the life of the world and who exercises dynamic control over the world, is revealed in the Bible as Father. The idea of his fatherhood is found in the Old Testament (see Deut. 32:6; Isa. 63:16; 64: 8; Jer. 3:19), but it is particularly prevalent in the life and ministry of Jesus. Jesus referred to God as "the Father," "my Father," "your Father," and in the Model Prayer as "our Father." The last— "our Father" —is particularly significant for us in the area of race relations.

When we pray, "Our Father," we should remember that everyone in the world, regardless of class or color, who has been brought into union with the resurrected Christ, can likewise pray, "Our Father." Are we big enough and Christian enough to include them within the circle of our prayers? What if their skins are red, yellow, or black: can we still pray with them, "Our Father"? If we cannot, then we have failed to catch the spirit of our Father and their Father; we are not acting like members of the family of God.

One other thing must be mentioned concerning God. It may be that "white" theologians have neglected it but I do not believe, generally speaking, that Christian ethicists have overlooked it. It has already been mentioned that God is no respecter of persons or shows no partiality. This emphasis is found in the

Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. Not in violation of his impartiality but as expressive and proof of that impartiality, it is revealed in the Bible that God had a special concern for the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, and the poor. His care for them, as his "special proteges," is evident in the provisions of the law(Deut. 14:29; 16:11; 24:17-21; 26:12-13), in the messages of the prophets—discussed later, in the songs of Israel (Ps. 41:1; 68:33; 140:12), and in the wisdom literature (Prov. 14:31; 19:17; 22:9).

The Nature of Man

Not only does the biblical conception of God but also of man have major significance in the realm of race relations. What does the Bible reveal concerning the nature of man? We shall not attempt to set out the entire biblical doctrine or estimate of man. We shall limit ourselves to a few ideas that are most pertinent to our discussion.

The Bible clearly reveals that all peoples are from one family stock. Back of every race of men is the human race, which gives unity to all. This concept of the unity of the human race is basic in the Old Testament. This is true whether one goes back to the creation story for the beginning of human life or to the story of Noah and his family as the source of the races of mankind.

Paul, in his sermon on Mars Hill, set out pointedly the idea of the oneness of the human family. He said that God "made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). There are different interpretations of the meaning of the two words "from one," some interpreting "One" to refer to God, while others—the majority of commentators— make it refer to one source or family. Wiliams and Phillips both translate the expression "from one forefather."

Regardless of which idea is correct, Paul stressed in his sermon the oneness of God and the unity of mankind. What a long way we would go in solving our problems in the area of race relations if we accepted men and women as members of the human family rather than as members of a particular race, class, or caste!

Add to the preceding the fact that all Christians are in the spiritual family of God, have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and have been brought into union with him, and we lay the foundation for the solution of all problems in the area of human relations. How can any child of God, when he considers all these things, justify or defend his prejudice and discrimination against any man because of his class or color?

Another concept in the biblical view of man of major importance for us is the fact that man was created in the image of God. There have been and are varied meanings given to "the image." Central to any correct interpretation must be the idea of personality. God is a person, man is created a person. A person can think, judge, feel, and will, which involves freedom of choice. Possibly no one quality is more basic to personality, however, than the capacity and even the necessity for communication.

Whatever may be the correct interpretation of the "image of God" in man, there is no question concerning the importance of the image of human relations in general and for race relations in particular. The image of God in man gives to man his worth and dignity. God himself, on at least one occasion, related directly the high value he placed on man with the fact that the latter was created in his image (Gen. 9:60.

The important thing for us to remember is that all men are created in the image of God and that Christ died for all to restore that image, which has been marred by sin. This means that all should be treated with respect. No man who has been created in the image of God, no man for whom Christ died should ever be treated as a mere means or instrument but always as an end of infinite value. This should be just as true of the yardman or garbage collector--black, brown, or white--as it is of one's husband or wife, one's son or daughter. One is created in the image of God just as much as the other.

Another idea concerning the nature of man, which is quite relevant to the present racial situation, is the Christian position, maintained rather consistently, concerning basic human equality. Certainly men are not created equal in abilities. But what is far more important, we are created equal in all that is essential to make us men and women. We are equal in being although we may be unequal in performance. We are equal in essence although we may be unequal in capacity. We are in a basic sense all equal in the presence of God and equally dependent on him.

If all of us had a proper understanding of our relation to and dependence on God we would see how foolish and irrelevant is any discussion of the supposed innate superiority and inferiority of races. In the presence of God, the creator and sustainer of all, there is no room either for haughty egotism or for a cringing sense of inferiority and defeat. This is particularly true of those who have come into the family of God through union with Christ. They are children of the King. There is no partiality in his family.

The Message of the Prophets

Black Theology may not be a balanced or adequate theology, as proclaimed by most black theologians, but it wisely gives considerable emphasis to the Old Testament prophets. There is no portion of the Old Testament that speaks more pointedly to our day. The relevance of the messages of the prophets stems from the fact that the problems they dealt with were human problems and those problems are basically the same from generation to generation. For example, many of the children of Israel in the days of the prophets thought they could be right in their relations with God simply by being faithful to the formalities of their religion. This has been one of the problems that prophets of God have faced in every age. The word of the prophets was and is that no man is acceptable to God unless he treats his fellowman rightly, and this means to treat him like God treats him. The latter means, among other things, that he will have a particular concern for the poor, the underprivileged of society. This emphasis, so prominent in the prophets, speaks loudly to the class- and color-conscious churches of our day, when the restless masses, including the colored peoples of the world, are on the move.

It was natural and even inevitable that the prophet who spoke for God would speak a word in defense of the poor and the oppressed. This note is particularly prevalent in the preaching and teaching of the great eighth-century prophets. And, incidently, they were primarily concerned about the will of God rather than the welfare of man. Theirs was a religious or theological motivation rather than humanitarian. They spoke convincingly of the judgment of God that was coming on the nation, the leaders of the nation, and the rich and privileged of the nation. One of the major reasons for the coming judgment was the mistreatment of the poor and needy.

We shall give only a couple of illustrations. Rugged Amos pronounced the judgment of God on Israel:

> because they sell the righteous for silver,
> and the needy for a pair of shoes—
> they that trample the head of the poor
> into the dust of the earth,
> and turn aside the way of the afflicted (Amos 2:6-7)

Again Amos says,

> Therefore because you trample upon the poor
> and take from him exactions of wheat,
> you have built houses of hewn stone,
> but you shall not dwell in them;
> You have planted pleasant vineyards,
> but you shall not drink their wine.
> For I know how many are your transgressions,
> and how great are your sins—
> you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe,
> and turn aside the needy in the gate. (Amos 5:11-12)

Isaiah, prince of the prophets and associate of kings, reminded the rulers and the people in general that God would not accept or be pleased with their offerings and sacrifices. He would even hide his eyes when they stretched forth their hands in prayer. Then, he told them what they must do to be acceptable to God.

> Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
> remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes;
> cease to do evil, learn to do good;
> seek justice, correct oppression; defend the fatherless,
> plead for the widow. (Isa. 1:16-17)

These words from the prophets should convey a convincing message to our age and every age. If we follow in their train we will be defenders of the defenseless, we will speak out for the underprivileged of our society.

The Ministry of Jesus

Again, the black theologians wisely make use of the announcement by Jesus of his messiahship. You remember that he went to the synagogue in his home town of Nazareth. When he stook up to read, he was handed the scroll of Isaiah. He turned until he found the scripture he wanted to read. It was:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4:18-19)

Later John the Baptist, while in prison, sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus if he was the Messiah or did they need to look for another. Jesus simply said to John's messengers: "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them." (Luke 7:22). My judgment is that when the message of Jesus was delivered to John the Baptist his mind went back to the same words from Isaiah that Jesus had read in Nazareth and I believe he said to himself and possibly to his disciples: "If that is what he is doing, then he is the promised Messiah."

No wonder Peter said of Jesus: "He went about doing good" (Acts 10:38), doing good to all kinds of people but particularly to the poor and the underprivileged of his day. He was a friend of publicans and sinners (Matt. 11:19), ate with them (Luke 5:29-30), and chose one of them (Levi or Matthew) as a member of the inner circle of his disciples. The Master, on at least one occasion, had some kind words even for a harlot (Luke 7:36-50). Really, it seems that the only ones to whom he ever spoke a sharp, critical word were the hypocritical religious leaders of his day. No wonder the common people heard him gladly (Mark 12:37, KJV).

The attitude of Jesus toward underprivileged people in general is illustrated very graphically by his relation to the Samaritans, with whom the Jews had no dealings. The attitude of the Jews toward the Samaritans was the nearest thing in that day to the attitude of many whites to blacks in our day. But Jesus never permitted any man-made difference to keep him from reaching and communicating with people. He introduced the sinful Samaritan woman to the living water (John 4:1-42), remained in the area for two days and introduced many other Samaritans to that same living water. No wonder that the first notable revival outside of Jerusalem was in Samaria (Acts 8:4-25).

On one occasion when some of the Jews could not answer Jesus, they blurted out, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" (John 8:48). Jesus did not think the first part of their charge was important enough for him to reply to it. He made a Samaritan the hero of one of his greatest stories (Luke 10:25-37). When ten lepers were healed, he called attention to the fact that the only one who returned to thank him was a Samaritan (Luke 17:11-19). In Luke's version of the Great Commission the disciples were told that after they had received power that came from the presence of the Holy Spirit, they were to be his witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Why "and Samaria"? Why not "and Galilee" or "and Perea"? Is it possible that he believed that if his Jewish disciples would be his witnesses in Samaria they would go any where? Samaria was their greatest point of prejudice. What is our "and Samaria"? We cannot imagine Jesus himself giving any consideration to the outer conditions of men or to the color of their skin. We, his disciples, are supposed to follow his example.

The Witness of the Apostles

When we think of the relation of Jesus to publicans and sinners, to Samaritans, and to the underprivileged in general, we can understand why Paul, speaking concerning Jews and Gentiles, would say: "For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility" (Eph. 2:14) or "the wall of contempt that used to separate us" (The Living Bible). Segregation and all legal forms of the separation of races may be eliminated by law and by those who interpret and enforce the law. But the inner enmity that builds barriers or walls of hostility between classes and colors can be eliminated or broken down only by the presence of the resurrected Christ in the hearts of his people.

Paul, in many places, plainly says that in Christ man-made and culturally recognized divisions among men are eliminated. One example is his inclusive statement in Galatians 3:28 (cf. Rom. 15:12; I Cor. 12:13; Col. 3:11_, which Williams translates as follows: "There is no room for.[Gone is the distinction between, Phillips] Jew or Greek, no room for slave or freeman, no room for male or female, for you are all one through union with Christ Jesus." Notice the words, "there is no room," which is a simple statement of fact.

Peter's vision on the housetop and his subsequent visit to the house of Cornelius contain some significant truths for us in the area of race relations. God, though the vision, revealed to Peter that he was not to call common or unclean anything that God had cleansed. In the presence of Cornelius and his friends Peter saw more fully the meaning of the vision. He said, "God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28). On the housetop it had been "anything"; in the house of Cornelius, it had become "any man." What progress! No wonder that the first words of Peter's message to Cornelius and his friends was: "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34), "I see quite plainly" (Moffatt), or "I am catching on" (Stagg).

James, the most Jewish of any of the New Testament writings, has a very pointed application of the no-respecter-of-persons principle to the church. His specific application is to the treatment of the rich and poor in the church gatherings. His initial statement of the principle, "show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ," would apply to partiality on any basis, color or otherwise. James considered impartiality as an expression of the love of neighbor and any individual or church that shows partiality sins (James 2:1-9). Also, James, in a statement that sounds like it might have been lifted from one of the Old Testament prophets, said: "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world" (James 1:27). Here in James is the continuing biblical emphasis on ministering to the underprivileged.

John makes his own distinctive contribution. I John in particular is rich in its insights into the Christian life. The theme of the first portion of the epistle is "God is light" and for the last part "God is love." John plainly says, "He who does not love does not know God; for God is love" (I John 4:8). One who claims that he loves God and hates his brother is a liar (I John 4:20). And we should never forget that there is no class or color line in Christ. John also says that the child of God is not to lock his heart against a brother who is in need. If one

does,, John asks the searching question, "How does God's love abide in him?" (I John 3:17)—either the love that comes from God or his love for God.

Central Concepts

Now what are some of the central biblical concepts that are abidingly pertinent for the relation of races? Some have been discussed in previous sections; others have not.

1. All men belong to one human family, the come from one source.

2. God created man in his own image. This is true of all men—red and yellow, black and white.

3. Christ died to restore that image that had been marred but not totally destroyed by sin. This along, with the fact that man is created in the image of God, gives to man his dignity and worth.

4. Man, every man, is an end of infinite value. He is never to be manipulated or used as a mere means. He is a thou and not an it.

5. God is no respecter of persons or is impartial. As an expression of his impartiality he has a special concern for the oppressed, the underprivileged.

6. Jesus, who said that he and the Father were one, revealed in his life while he walked among men the Father's concern for the moral and social outcasts of society, for the underprivileged in general.

7. God is love and one who has been brought into the family of God through union with the resurrected Christ has been brought into union with love.

8. Christian love is not an idle, meaningless sentimentality. It is a live, vibrant part of everyday Christian living. It will find ways to reach out and to minister to those in need of that love.

9. The more fully we open our lives to the indwelling Christ, the more we will be identified with and concerned for those of other classes and colors, particularly the underprivileged.

10. Also, the more our churches really become the churches of God, the body of Christ, the wider their doors and arms will be opened to men andwomen, boys and girls of all classes and colors.

Please permit me, in closing to ask two or three personal and pointed questions.

1. What will be the outcome of these sessions together on race relations? Are we going to feel good because we have had these discussions and yet do little or nothing to implement what will be said? Are we going simply to talk and not walk our talk?

2. What have we done to cultivate some friends of other classes and races?

3. How long has it been since you did something for someone who really needed it, someone who could not do anything for you except to say, "Thank you"?

4. Is it possible that many of us benefit so much from our affluent society that we have lost, if we ever had it, our concern for the masses of people? Is there a possibility that we prefer not to know how the other half live? Is there a possibility that this is one danger of the big salaries that many of us are getting?

ENDNOTES

[1]Jurgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope: On the General and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology, trans. by James W. Leitch (Harper & Row, 1967).

[2]Roger A. Johnson, et al., Critical Issues in American Religion (Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 203.

[3]James H. Cone, Black Theology and Black Power (Seabury Press, 1969), p. 6. Also see his later book, A Black Theology of Liberation (Lippincott, 1970). In the latter book the author has a section of a chapter entitled "God Is Black" and one in another chapter on "The Black Christ."

[4]Ibid., p. 47.

[5]Ibid., p. 31.

[6]Ibid., p. 32.

[7]Albert B. Cleage, Jr., The Black Messiah (Sheed and Ward, 1968), p. 4.

[8]J. Deotis Roberts, Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology (Westminster Press, 1971), p. 130.

[9]Ibid., p. 13.

[10]Benjamin Mays, "The Urgent Need of Reconciliation in Today's World: A Challenge to the Church," Criterion, Spring, 1972, p. 12.

[11]Christianity and Crisis, March 8, 1971, p. 34.

[12]This section, and the one on "The Nature of Man," with slight changes, are found in my The Christian, the Church, and Contemporary Problems (Word Books, 1968), pp. 126-29.

CHALLENGES SOUTHERN BAPTISTS FACE IN RACE RELATIONS

Dr. Thomas A. Bland
Professor of Christian Ethics and Sociology
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

The fact that those persons responsible for this program have deemed it appropriate that this 1973 conference should deal with race is both significant and commendable. It is significant because it indicates a continuing recognition that we Southern Baptists have a large unfinished agenda with regard to race relations. It is commendable because this topic demands careful thought, deep soul-searching, honest confession, and bold new commitments.

I would like to take this occasion to offer a word of sincere gratitude for the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. This agency has done more than any agency of our Convention to remind us of our Christian responsibilities in race relations. Based on an objective appraisal of the Commission's work, Professor John Lee Eighmy concluded that this Commission has made its greatest contribution "in the treatment of the race question" (John Lee Eighmy, Churches in Cultural Captivity. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972, p. 189.)

I like the emphasis of the conference: "Race: New Directions for a New Day." It is a new day of crisis and of challenge, and we need to consider thoughtfully the direction in which we ought to go forward into the new day.

My assigned subject is "Challenges Southern Baptists Face in Race Relations." Please note that this subject is approached from the perspective of one Southern Baptist. If what I say serves to stimulate thought or to motivate constructive discussion and action, I will be well pleased.

I invite you to consider the subject with me as we explore "Challenges Southern Baptists Face in Race Relations" under three headings: (1) theological; (2) ecclesiological; and (3) societal.

I.

It is my conviction that the primary challenges we face in race relations as Southern Baptists are theological in nature. I shall speak of six theological considerations with respect to race relations.

(1) If we are to face the challenge of race with a view toward advancing Christian understanding and action, it will be necessary to confront racism as a theological issue. Racism is the belief that one group of humanity is

superior to another group. Racism expresses itself in such forms as white supremacy, black supremacy, or the assumption of dominance of some other group over another group or groups. Racism is widespread. It is a terrible malady which spreads bitterness and causes untold harm in human relations.

At its base, racism is a manifestation of sin. It is an expression of that sinful pride which causes a person or a group to seek to play the role of God through undue exaltation of one's self or one's group, accompanied by the assignment of inferiority to another group.

I am grateful for the contributions of the social scientists in helping us to understand problems of race. The definitive work in the social sciences on race relations in America identifies the problem of race as fundamentally a moral problem, consisting of a gap between our profession of faith in freedom and equality and our actual practices in race relations. (See Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma (New York: Harper, 1944), pp. xiv-lix and Appendix 1, pp. 1027-1034.)

The identification of the race problem as a moral problem does not get to the root of the matter. At the heart of the problem of race is racism, and that is a problem of the human heart. Therefore, it will require the radical action of the transforming grace of God to deal with this problem.

Here, then, is a major challenge for us. We have the diagnostic task to identify racism as a theological problem, and we have the added challenge to be channels of the saving grace of Jesus Christ who is able to transform the racist!

(2) A second theological task we face is to see what is happening in race relations today as an expression of God's judgment upon us. The biblical view of judgment is two-fold: (a) the final judgment, at the end of history; and (b) the process of judgment that goes on within history. I am here thinking of judgment in the latter sense.

Our contemporary patterns in race relations, including the vexing problems we face, cannot be divorced from the historical particularities of slavery, segregation, second-class citizenship, economic and cultural deprivation, and the emerging patterns of desegregation. In truth, the sins of the fathers are being visited upon the children to the third and fourth generations.

We are learning the bitter lessons that sin brings judgment within history. Furthermore, we are learning that we are bound together in the bundle of life in such ways that the consequences of sin are shared across generations. We must remind ourselves and our fellow Southern Baptists, therefore, that we are

experiencing the judgment of God today in race relations.

In American history no one has spoken more eloquently or more insightfully of judgment in race relations than did President Abraham Lincoln in his Second Inaugural Address:

> The Almighty has his own purposes . . . . Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two-hundred and fifty years of unrequitted toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

It is not enough, of course, simply to recognize God's judgment upon us. We must declare it in proclamation and in teaching. Furthermore, we must repent and seek the forgiveness of God, which forgiveness we believe to be abundantly available.

(3) A third theological task confronting us as we face the challenge of race relations is the announcement of the possibility of deliverance from the sin of racism and the judgment of God through the liberation which is in Jesus Christ. This is the good news that needs telling!

What power is able to liberate from the bondage of sin, including the sin of racism? What power is able to help us to see that the right way to relate to God's judgment is through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? Surely it is only the power of the liberating Christian gospel!

This gospel of liberation can build bridges of love across chasms of hate. It can transform the spirit of racial exclusiveness into a frank affirmation that God is no respecter of persons. Liberation can come as "recovery of sight" to help persons blind with prejudice to see each person as one for whom Christ died. Liberation is available to awaken a sense of Christian mission to the "near neighbor" as well as to the "distant neighbor." This liberating gospel has the power to break down dividing walls of hostility between races and classes and to help transformed people to see all of humanity in the spirit of One who makes all things new. Liberation through the gospel can activate those who experience the redeeming love of Christ to share this love across barriers of race which have now become of no consequence to persons who have found true freedom in Christ.

(4) Power is a reality to be reckoned with in race relations, and we need a theological approach to power.

Such an approach will recognize and identify expressions of power in race relations. The power of white supremacy, although it has been challenged, persists. It often expresses itself through economic exploitation. Black power has arisen in reaction to white power.

Black power is an expression of a recent pattern of separateness as an alternative to integration. It is espoused by some of the black leadership in an effort to establish black identity, to build black racial pride, and to support black institutions. It is also an expression of concern for a larger share in the economic spheres of American life. Black business leaders have become more aggressive in their expressions of economic power under the rubrick of "Black Power."

What is the meaning of Black Power? Is it a phase of race relations which will pass? If one sees the need for blacks to remind whites of the pluralistic nature of American society, something constructive can come from the expressions of Black Power. On the other hand, if this separateness asserts itself in exploiting racist tendencies among blacks and whites, it will need to be challenged. At the present time, we Christians need to adopt a cautious "wait and see" approach to Black Power, in my opinion.

From a theological perspective I suggest the following tentative guidelines as we seek to face the reality of power. (1) Let us be alert to expressions of power in race relations. How is power expressed in a given instance? Is it destructive, actually or potentially? (2) Let us seek to discern the meaning of power in terms of goals and objectives. What, for example, is the meaning of bloc voting by a given racial group? (3) Let us recognize the power which resides in the Christian gospel and in the Christian ethic, and let us be prepared to utilize this power for the betterment of human relations. Truth, for example, is powerful. Justice is powerful. Christian love is powerful. An authentic Christian witness is powerful. A truly Christian fellowship in the form of a local church is a powerful factor in building a better human community. It can be a center of redemptive Christian power to restrain evil and to support right action in race relations.

In my opinion we Southern Baptists need to give much more attention to a theological stance in response to power. A thoroughgoing individualism is an ineffective response. An appropriation of the methods utilized by secular political and economic power centers is unworthy of the Christian community in general, and of the people called Southern Baptists, in particular. In short, we need to develop a Christian theology of power.

(5) A fifth dimension of our profoundly important theological task in facing challenges in race relations is in the Christian doctrine of reconciliation.

The Christian doctrine of reconciliation affirms a continuity in God's activity as Creator, Judge, and Redeemer. He who created all people in His

image governs according to a standard of righteousness set forth in Jesus Christ. Moreover, the Christian doctrine of reconciliation affirms that man, created in the image of God, is alienated from God because of willful sin. God takes the initiative in Jesus Christ to overcome the alienation and to reconcile man to Himself by Jesus Christ.

The work of Jesus Christ the Reconciler is a restored relationship between God and man. For those who respond in genuine repentance and in trustful, faithful commitment of one's life to Christ, a new creation occurs. Christ makes the convert into a new creation by effecting a new relationship between the believer and God and between the new Christian and all other people. "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (Cor. 5: 17-18).

It is important to note that persons who have been reconciled to God are to take up the ministry of reconciliation. What more powerful way is there to confront the challenge of race? In view of Christ's reconciling work, all human distinctions, such as race or color, fade into insignificance. When one is reconciled to God through Christ, he becomes a member of a community of reconciliation in which he affirms:

> For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3:26-28).

As a member of a community of reconciliation the believer enters upon the vocation of being an agent of reconciliation in the world.

(6) A sixth theological consideration which bears upon our response to the challenge of race is eschatology. In Christian theological understanding there is a Center of dependability who is Creator, Governor, Judge, and Redeemer. He is Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. This means that there is purpose, order, and goal-oriented action in and through which He participates. The ultimate end is beyond the history of these times, but the history of these times is related to the ultimate end.

We Christians participate in the work of God in the world in these times in the knowledge that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. We know what it is to be disappointed, but we know, in our best moments, at least, that God's purpose to bring the world into subjection to the Christ as Exalted Lord will not fail.

In view of our eschatological beliefs, therefore, we can face the challenges of race without being over-awed by the twin spectres of a naive and romantic utopianism on the one hand, or by a pessimistic capitulation to things as they are, on the other hand.

Because of the faith we possess in God's eschatological purposes we can confront our tasks with realism and with hope. These are tremendous theological assets for the work we have set our heads and hands and hearts to do.

II

The major thrust of this discussion, by design, has been theological. However, there are some ecclesiological tasks to which we must give attention as we face challenges in race relations as Southern Baptists.

It is a lamentable fact of our existence that the church is, today, the most segregated major institution in American society. Although progress has been made in the last decade and a half in the number of Southern Baptist churches in which blacks would be accepted as members, there is a prevailing mood of passivity with respect to the seeking of blacks, as we would seek others, to join our churches.

There are other reasons. For one thing, it would appear that black separatism, which is in vogue now to a greater degree than it was a decade ago, causes blacks to value membership in the predominantly black churches in preference to being a token of integration in an overwhelmingly white fellowship.

Furthermore, the pressure in the early 1960's for acceptance as worshippers or as members in all-white churches was, understandably, often motivated by a desire on the part of blacks to test the white churches' willingness, or lack of willingness, to receive blacks. Once it was established that blacks were not uniformly denied admission, the purpose of testing was fulfilled and, in many instances, there was no further effort to come into the white churches.

Racial mixing has occurred most frequently in downtown churches that serve the whole city, in churches in racially changing neighborhoods, (which would also include downtown churches, in many instances), and in the specialized community or neighborhood churches, such as churches adjacent to racially desegregated educational institutions.

It perhaps also needs to be said that patterns of residential segregation serve to promote racially segregated churches.

The black church has, historically, been a focal point of black community solidarity. In addition, the high value which is currently placed upon characteristically black life styles, by the blacks themselves, very likely contributes to a preference for patterns of worship, including preaching and music, which are found in the black churches.

While the preceding analysis may serve to explain, in part, the slowness of churches to desegregate, no part of what has been said is to be construed as approval of, or defense of, segregated churches.

As it faces the future, the local church has the challenge before it to make visible in the human community the love of God for all people. This surely means a racially inclusive membership. This surely means also an aggressive program of outreach which is racially inclusive. Moreover, conscious efforts should be made to build into the worship and educational efforts of the church elements which would have special meaning for blacks. This will require careful planning of music, for example, and great care in the selection of curriculum materials. The church that consciously seeks to be racially inclusive should seek to have a racially inclusive professional church staff, in my opinion.

It should be recognized that some churches, because of location, for example, will not become racially inclusive. There are special challenges open to such churches. For example, a congregation of whites in the suburbs could enter into a "companion-Church" relationship with a black church in the inner city. Careful planning, which should be joint planning by both congregations, may result in mutually helpful ministries.

Beyond the analysis of the situation with respect to church life today, and in addition to what I have offered as some practical suggestions, let me indicate something much more basic with respect to the ecclesiological dimensions of the challenges of race to Southern Baptists.

The most severe test a church will face in meeting the challenge of race is this test: how can this church be obedient to the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, and minister to the world, including the neighborhood and the larger geographic area the church should be serving? This question has posed an identity crisis for many a Southern Baptist congregation.

While the answer to the preceding question is not easy, the clue to its successful answer, I believe, is in acknowledging the prior claim of Christ upon the church. It is His Church! Therefore, we, the members of His Body, are to be obedient to Him, the Head. The world at the churchhouse door is God's world. These are the people for whom Christ died. Can we do anything other than to seek to minister, in Christ's name, to <u>these</u> people?

If, in our churches, we can keep the matter of our identity straight, we can then keep the priorities of our commitments in proper perspective. If we acknowledge Christ's Lordship we will not fall into captivity to the world around us. For a church to fall into a trap of cultural captivity is to fail both the Lord of the church and the people He would have us to minister unto.

III

In addition to the theological and ecclesiological challenges which we face, we Southern Baptists have very heavy responsibilities as participants in the larger community, state, regional, and national contexts in which we live.

As the largest non-Catholic body in the United States, and as the numerically dominant denomination in those regions with the greatest involvements in race relations, we should be exceedingly careful to fulfill our Christian service as citizens.

I would like to point to two areas of special societal concern.

One of these is in public school education. Public school education is, in many places, in peril of being abandoned by the solid middle-class citizens. This would be a tragedy for the schools. Despite the problems occasioned in these times of transition by racial desegregation, by busing, and by what many feel to be a loss of educational quality, we need to stand by our public schools.

We should resist all efforts to have our church buildings become private, segregated "Christian" schools.

We should, as individual Christian citizens, work for the continued improvement of public school education. Administrators, teachers, and pupils need and deserve our support.

Secondly, individual members of our Southern Baptist churches should look about in the community in which you live and seek ways to make it a better community for all people, and especially for racial minorities. Find out about employment opportunities, pay scales, and working conditions. Look into housing conditions. Make the matter of health services, police services, and other community services your special concern. Are these services being delivered to the people who really need them? Is justice being done? We must become much more involved in the structures of society if the challenges of race relations are met with integrity, with intelligence, and with compassion.

In conclusion let it be noted that we Southern Baptists are confronted with very basic theological, ecclesiological, and societal decisions and actions as

we confront the dynamic days of this decade and of the last quarter of the twentieth century. We face an open future. God invites us to participate with Him and with one another in shaping that future. God invites us to participate with Him and with one another in shaping that future in ways that are in keeping with His purposes and with our best Christian responses.

WORKING WITH SECULAR AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS IN RACIAL CONCERNS

Dr. Larry McSwain
Assistant Professor of Church and Community
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

The student was intensely serious as he engaged in dialogue within my office. He had graduated from seminary last May and had accepted a challenging pastorate in a leading Southern city. His question was not a new one to me, but just as discomforting as previous ones raised in a similar tone.

"How can I maintain my own sense of Christian brotherhood with Black people when the power structure of my church creates the most powerful pressure I face in my community to conform to a discriminatory style of ministry? It is not overt racism; just subtle hints. They ask me, 'Are you not afraid for the safety of your children when you send them to the public schools?' I know that they think I should send them to a private academy. Others say, 'Maybe we ought to relocate the parsonage in a nicer neighborhood.' I know that they mean a neighborhood where there are no blacks. Now some are saying, 'What is our church going to do in the face of the changes that are taking place in our community?' I know they are referring to the racial transition taking place."

"I think I could handle it if someone would take a forthright stand for racial segregation," he said. "But what I have not learned how to handle is the subtlety and finesse with which everyone thinks Christians ought to love Negroes, but practically assure that real interaction with them never happens."

What this mature pastor was reflecting seems to me to be the character of the context within which any involvement in cooperative actions with community agencies must occur. Verbalized opposition to racial interaction seems to be diminishing. However, there is facing the concerned churchman an apathetic reaction to the needs of minority peoples which may be just as discriminating as some of the more overt resistance of the past.

The Context for Racial Interaction Today

I would characterize the seventies as the period of the Second Reconstruction. Just as the sixties of the 1800's and 1900's were periods of dramatic upheaval and the breaking down of systemic barriers to an integrated society, it seems there may be parallels to the seventies in the two centuries as well. C. Vann Woodward has carefully traced the nature of the process of rebuilding those walls of separation during the period of Reconstruction through the establishment of a state legal system which circumvented the effects of national policies of non-discrimination.

The Second Reconstruction of the 1970's is a much more subtle one than in the 1870's and following. It is not a legal approach to rebuilding the walls; it is an attitudinal one. It is the official stance of this nation at the moment that if we ignore the problems of minority peoples they will go away. The Moynihan Memo of 1968 reinforced the concept of "benign neglect" which has

become the modus operandi from the White House to the man on the street. It is this attitudinal problem with which we must now clearly deal.

The language of the current moment is that the problems are being solved. We hear, "Black income is rising at a faster rate than at any other time in history." But what that does not say is that white income still rises faster. We hear, "Qualified blacks are in such demand that we cannot afford to hire them at the same price as whites." But that does not say that quality is still determined by white standards. We hear, "We have passed every conceivable law against discrimination and it just doesn't happen here." But that does not say why there are apartment vacancies when you call on the phone which suddenly get rented when a black couple appears. "Blacks and whites are never going to be able to work together until the black man achieves his manhood." But that segregationist ideology does not say what it implies--that blacks are still inferior rather than the equally creative, fully adult human beings that they are.

The nature of this context for involvement in racial concerns makes true progress no easier than ever before. The needs for minority peoples continue to be overwhelming. There is much to do for Christians who are concerned about the imperatives of the Gospel that they love all men and love them equally. Common justice and fairness in the social order demand continued alterations of the social structures which we have inherited.

One possibility for churches and churchmen is to engage in action projects in cooperation with secular agencies and institutions. The purpose of this presentation is to outline the presuppositions, principles, and process whereby churches as groups or churchmen as individuals can become involved. I will not be spelling out the specific organizations or institutions with which one should become involved. There are so many differences depending upon local situations that that cannot be done adequately. What will be developed are a set of guidelines one may follow in utilizing the strength and influence of the church to continue its involvement in altering local economic, social, political, and religious settings toward greater justice in racial affairs.

Presuppositions for Working with Secular Agencies and Institutions

1. The purpose of church cooperation with community agencies is to help effect actions which will help minority peoples. Many churchmen have been hesitant to become involved in the work of "secular" agencies and institutions. Their assumption is that to do so would be to compromise the tenets of faith and doctrine to which they hold.

The primary purpose of church involvement is not to develop a concensus of ideas, but of actions. We may not have sufficient ideology about justice and freedom, but the American dilemma is still not the problem of a correct ideal of equality and justice, but an adequate actualization of it. Churchmen who commit their time and energies to working with community agencies often engage in verbal ideals to which there may never be a concensus.

This means that ideological diversity is possible within a group of people who are committed to the same action goals for the solutions of the problems

of hunger, inadequate housing, consumer fraud, and racial discrimination. If you are concerned that participation with persons who do not share your political, religious, social, or moral viewpoints will compromise your personal integrity or standing with the constituency you serve, then direct participation in community action through secular agencies and institutions will never occur.

This requires a recognition that the church cannot fulfill all of its purposes through involvement with secular agencies and institutions. While no church should give up its evangelistic zeal and concern, its purpose for working with other agencies and institutions should not be evangelism primarily. Churchmen should not apologize for being concerned about the basic human needs of their communities. Neither should they feel that the primary purposes of their calling under God is not being fulfilled when they engage in those social actions which will effect significant human development and change.

It is my personal view that cooperative actions which utilize the financial and political power of churches to effect specific changes within a community can occur cooperatively with other religious and secular groups without compromising that group's own motivations or commitments of faith.

2. Participation by churches in community agencies will require restructuring and change within the church. Many churchmen become involved in working with secular agencies and institutions only to discover that some of them are more "Christian" than the church which they represent. This should never be, though in many communities it is so.

The risk of real exposure to the needs of a particular community may be the discovery that you are part of the problem. For a church or a church leader to become involved in the solution of slum housing may lead to the discovery that the unresponsive owner of the deteriorating housing is a crucial financial supporter of the congregation. Effectively confronting the problem may result in the loss of the most crucial resources you thought available for the solution of the problem.

The other side of this presupposition is that community involvement offers the church an opportunity to constantly reexamine itself. An investigation of unjust employment practices in one's community may lead to the conclusion that church employees, especially minority employees, may be underpaid as well.

3. Effective solutions to community problems will require the change of institutions, individuals, and attitudes. There are no easy panaceas to such a complex issue as, for instance, the institutional racism which so pervasively affects this nation and has for three hundred years. A recognition of this complexity may save us from the despair of disappointment when a newspaper ad has no seeming effect when the change of a discriminatory law results in new methods of defying its intent, and when a demonstration intended for improved racial interaction results in further polarization.

All of us feel most comfortable with simple solutions. Most of us assume that if each of us as individuals were persons of integrity and right thinking, then everything would be O.K. However, we function in groups. Groups have

their shaping over the lives of individuals. Morality requires addressing the institutional centers of power as well as preaching to the individuals of a social order.

There is perhaps no commodity needed more in this area of human endeavor than a persistent patience which continues to press for equality now, change now, the ideal now amid the recognition that the forces of resistance will be equally strong.

4. The exercise of power is essential to change. The church has often viewed itself as an institution whose power had to be restricted to moral comment and prayer for the solution of problems. It is a presupposition of the address that churches which must restrict their activity only to these dimensions of their task will be ineffective if they become involved in working with other agencies.

Participation in action coalitions with other agencies assumes that money, people, influence, education, and the other resources of the church can be utilized legitimately in the work and goals of coalition building with other groups.

5. The church must exercise a role of uniqueness in its work with secular agencies and institutions. The church has three basic resources to offer other agencies and institutions. First, the church is a motivational force. Its primary uniqueness is that it claims allegiance to the power of God beyond itself to change human life. The theology of the church is its best instrument for effective social change by conveying the message of redemption in what it does. In addition to this, the church has as its primary focus the individual. It is one of the few places in our society where intensive personal support can be available for individuals. Its program of moral education provides motivation for its members to become involved in solving the foundational social issues which it faces. Inherent in its motivational power is the imperative for service. Because of this imperative Christian people engage themselves in the process of helping others.

Second, the church is a manpower resource. Its resources are both clergy and lay. Every clergyman ought to be personally involved in at least one kind of community action project. In addition the clergyman's role is to lead the larger lay membership to become involved in education, political action, and volunteer service in helping projects led by other agencies and institutions. Any church which is not involving its membership in the needs and life of its community is failing to fulfill the fullest imperative of the Gospel.

Third, the church is a money resource. It has been stated by Dieter Hessel that "The churches and synagogues of America control roughly $80 billion worth of real estate, and $20 billion invested in securities. Furthermore $7 billion a year are contributed by the members." With this kind of financial support many churches can become involved in directly funding action projects. One of the most helpful things a congregation can do is to provide matching funds to go along with community funds to engage in innovative programs to meet social needs. One of the most important of its money resources are the facilities and staffs available to it. Multitudes of community efforts

currently paying for space can utilize unused church spaces and equipment to great benefit in their causes.

In summary, the church or churchman who is not willing:

1) to act,
2) to grow and change himself and the institution he represents,
3) to work for change in individuals, institutions, and attitudes, and
4) to use power,

should not become involved.

Principles for Working with Secular Agencies and Institutions

1. Discover the needs of minority peoples. No action will ever be taken by any group until it discovers the reality of hurt which vast segments of minority people continue to experience. Much of the apathy and inactivity in racial affairs is the result of the widespread belief by white America that since the riots have stopped the problems are solved. America is more segregated than it was five years ago. There is more residential segregation and more school segregation than five years ago. The quality of ghetto housing in most cities of the nation is worse than five years ago. The quality of ghetto housing in most cities of the nation is worse than five years ago. The quality of education for minorities has improved only little, if any. The death rate for minority children has worsened. Income has risen less rapidly for non-whites than whites. Black America is $352 farther behind in median income than ten years ago as compared with whites. A white person with an eighth grade education earned more in 1970 ($7,018) than a black person with a high school diploma ($6,192). A white high school graduate earned more ($8,829) than a black college graduate ($8,669). There is seemingly no area of social concern where we can point to significant achievements in the area of racial concerns since the advancements of the 1960's.

If you are concerned to do something it requires involvement with black people on their turf and according to their rules. If you are willing to do that, do it patiently, and do it over a long period of time, the needs for positive action will become as obvious as the hand on your arm.

2. Recognize that the job is big enough to use everyone. Too often, well meaning people try to become involved only to end up trying to get someone else to do what they want done. There are many organizations--church, governmental, and private--which are working to deal with the needs of black, brown, and red people. Too often the problems get left undone because of jealousy between groups or personal power groups within agencies and institutions. If your motivation in planting your life in the work of human justice is personal aggrandizement or pretentious power, there are better ways to get that elsewhere.

3. Decide whether to initiate new action or participate with an existing group. If you decide to start something new, choose an action which will not duplicate what others are doing successfully. This is what I call a "gaps" strategy. One of the most effective things a church group can do is to find

needs which existing groups are failing to meet and set out to deal with that area of concern.

4. Refer needs which you encounter and are unable to deal with to the appropriate place which can help them with their need. It may be that you are not equipped to handle the particular needs of some persons you will encounter if you become involved. Others are equipped to be helpful if you know who they are and how they can help.

5. Get personally involved with the people who are responsible for the policy making and administration of agencies and institutions. Every group has its movers and its plodders. Many times within the same agency one person is the right person to see if you want to get something done. That can happen only if you have developed some personal relationships with them.

6. Apply pressure to agencies and institutions which are not fulfilling their moral and legal responsibilities in the area of racial concerns. One of the most effective things a church group can do is serve as a watchdog of public agencies to insure that they maintain the public's trust. The actions in which one can engage are as follows:

1) Lobbying of policy making bodies to insure that fair and just laws are established.
2) Confront decision-makers with the inadequacies of existing conditions and insist upon change.
3) Boycott stores, institutions, and agencies which refuse to be responsive to the causes of human justice.
4) Demonstrate public support through the political process for those goals to which you are committed. On a recent weekend in Louisville, Kentucky groups of which I am aware were engaged in at least three types of pressure. A group of black clergymen boycotted a local movie theater showing the black exploitation film Sweet Jesus Preacher Man. In another section of the city groups were picketting a grocery chain which buys lettuce from growers who refuse to negotiate with Mexican-American unions. Still a third group was engaging in a test of discrimination in apartment housing at the same time. This is just one illustration of the kinds of actions groups may take.

7. Insure a predominant voice for minorities within secular agencies and institutions. One of the most important actions a church group can become involved in is to advocate that minorities have a voice in those agencies which affect their lives. Too often minority groups have inadequate representation in policy-making processes. The result is that agencies designed to be of help often create problems which could be avoided.

The Process for Working with Secular Agencies and Institutions

1. Formulate specific goals for action which are capable of achievement within a specific time frame. Many groups get frustrated because they are attempting to achieve something, but have never clearly stated their goals. Another frequent problem is that a small group may undertake goals which are beyond their capacity for solution. A local group which is going to change the

attitudes of the nation within two years is obviously totally out of touch with reality. Any new group has to choose goals with which it can succeed fairly early in order to keep its organizational efforts alive. Most groups must have short-range as well as long-range goals. If they are not engaged in both processes at the same time they may not have sufficient vision to keep them alive.

2. Organize a specific action group around a strategy for which there is concensus. Many different strategies can be utilized by action groups. Be sure that you identify yourself with a group or organize a group where you can be compatible with the methodologies employed. The following definitions are suggested of various strategies which groups tend to employ.

1) Community development--The utilization of local communities in action toward the direction of change that will improve the basic living conditions of the community.

2) Community relations is a set of methods or strategies by which a community group relates itself to the geographic community.

3) Social education is the process of informing people about social issues or problems.

4) Social witness is the art of making public, by word and/or deed, convictions of an individual, organization, or institution on particular social issues. Social witness may be individual or corporate. Its main object is to register a strong conviction or conscientious viewpoint, to take stand.

5) Social service is the effort to help marginal or disadvantaged individuals to function better so as to strengthen the social system. Social service is client-centered and includes case work, group work, and community organization.

6) Social action is a process of deliberate group effort to alter community or societal structures for the common good.

7) Community organization is the process of a community identifying its need and organizing to meet that need with effective solutions.

3. Act. Too many groups never get out of the talking stage to get on with the specific business of getting down to action. Without action no progress will ever be made.

4. Evaluate actions in the light of their effects. Every organization needs to be about the task of continually evaluating its effectiveness. Has the goal been achieved? Has sufficient organization been developed to keep people involved? This is the true measure of real success.

In summary, there is much to do in many avenues for church involvement. A church must decide whether it wants to act on its own or basically through existing agencies and organizations. If a church group is small or only individuals can be mobilized, working through existing agencies is probably the best choice. Best wishes to you in your actions for improved race relations.

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS AT WORK IN RACE RELATIONS

Dr. Charles V. Petty, Director
Council on Christian Life and Public Affairs
Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

While preparing this address one depressing reality kept reoccuring: nobody really knows what Southern Baptists are doing in the area of race relations. Some individuals know what generally is being done in their particular localities, a few know somewhat of Southern Baptists' involvement on a Convention-wide basis, but as far as I can determine, no one has completed a recent comprehensive one-paper compilation of information regarding the topic.

Particularly is this true concerning Baptist churches' action, and even more so, by individuals within these churches. For example, some Baptists march in civil rights demonstrations while others wear white sheets and burn crosses.

Therefore, I was faced with these choices: either spend three or four thousand dollars and several months studying to ferret out and compile information, or share my own feelings and impressions.

Because I did not have the time and since it was assumed that the Christian Life Commission did not have the funds to underwrite such a study, the latter option was selected. It is imperative that everyone hear me clearly say that my remarks are personal information and observations. They are not based exclusively on empirical data. It is simply an overview of my own impressions.

A second imperative is the understanding that race means more than just black-white relationships. Baptists are at work among members of several races--Negroid, Mongolian, and Caucasian.

A third imperative is that Baptists must be seen at work on individual, local church, associational, state and national levels. There is no one area or one method of working within that area.

A final imperative regards the nature of our work. Southern Baptists are doing much to promote brotherhood and alienation--love and hate--justice and injustice. The news about Southern Baptist at work in race relations is both good and bad.

I. First, the Good News

I arbitrarily selected seven positive contributions which I feel Southern Baptists have made toward encouraging brotherhood, love, and justice. These are not necessarily listed in order of importance.

1. Desegregation. There is no question that more and more members of minority groups are becoming part of our structure. Perhaps the areas where the most desegregation has occurred is within our institutions concerned with health-care and higher education.

This is especially true relative to our hospitals. Whether one is speaking of employment or patient admission, discrimination is not abundant. However, much of the equality practiced by our hospitals may be the result of a shortage of workers, governmental pressure and standards, and the fact that many Baptist hospitals are not administered or even practically controlled by the rank and file Baptist.

Much of the charity work of our hospitals is directed toward minority groups. Likewise, some of our hospitals are located in minority areas and in addition to rendering health care, make an excellent contribution by teaching health-care skills to minority members.

Baptist colleges and universities have enrolled non-white students in increasing numbers. What began for many educational institutions as a policy of accepting international students eventually resulted in an acceptance of Americans of similar skin color. While a student in a Baptist school, I was personally involved in the desegregation of that university which had this policy

Several of our colleges have a large percentage of minority groups enrolled, particularly blacks. Recently a black was elected president of the student body at one of our schools.

All of our six seminaries have "open door" policies. Qualified students of any race are admitted.

More and more local churches are adopting "open door" policies. While a few of these churches make headlines for one reason or another, most desegregate in a quiet, unassuming way. All races are now allowed to be members of many of our churches.

Some of our churches in transition communities have black staff members. While pastor of an all-white church in Texas, I found that my Polynesian minister of music was often mistaken for a Negro. It was an interesting experience for all concerned.

Desegregation is the present trend among Baptists at all levels. However, the trend is slow and certainly less than what it could or should be.

2. There is also good news regarding Southern Baptists' ministry to minority groups. By its very nature the Foreign Mission Board directs most of its ministry to minorities. Obviously these people are located outside the United States. But often it was our foreign missionaries who sent foreign students to our colleges and universities. And it was our missionaries who kept reminding us of our inconsistency in refusing to witness at home while sending missionaries abroad. They also made us aware that our actions here affected their ministry and credibility in other nations.

In like manner the Home Mission Board has grown and has been very aggressive in attempting to meet the needs of all Americans. It has conceived and implemented many creative and innovative programs relative to minority groups. Perhaps no other Southern Baptist agency has been as diligent in

trying to witness and reach persons of all races as the Home Mission Board. Their programs are diverse and many.

Also our auxiliary mission education agencies have attempted to meet human needs through several emphases as reflected in mission action guidebooks. Several of these books very specifically relate to race relations.

The Sunday School Board has printed some books and curriculum materials regarding race relations. They have hired staff members to work in this area.

The Annuity Board has several standards upon which it bases its decision to invest funds. One such standard is the corporation's racial posture.

Among these Conventionwide organizations resides the Christian Life Commission. Its voice has been heard on this issue through many medias. The voice has been lauded by many, castigated by others, and ignored by the majority. It has been a consistent nagging reminder that, under God, men are to take their neighbor responsibilities seriously.

On the staff of most Baptist state conventions, and even some associations, are those who are assigned the specific task of relating their convention to minority groups. While the abilities, effectiveness, and job descriptions of these staff persons vary tremendously, most state conventions do attempt in specific ways to understand, minister to, and cooperate with minority groups.

On the local-church level programs related to cooperation with, understanding of, and ministry to minority groups are legion. Across our Convention church after church has made some attempt to proclaim reconciliation between brothers. These attempts vary from no more than putting up a Race Relations Sunday poster to a day-by-day sharing of their very life with persons of different skin colors.

The giving of food, clothing, medical, and dental care; the use of the church's facilities for day care centers, vocational guidance centers, literacy, international, political, drug, and dialogue programs are but a few of the ministries some churches have. Baptists are at work on many fronts ministering to minorities.

3. A third virtue is dialogue groups. It is true that talking can be a cop-out. However it is generally true that talking precedes action. And it is equally true, as any counselor will testify, that sometimes talking is all that is needed. Simple verbalization accomplishes the desired goal.

Baptists have attempted to provide platforms and forums whereby racial issues can be discussed and evaluated. These discussion opportunities vary from a sharing group within a church, association, or ministerial alliance to some statewide meeting in which small discussion groups are structured. On other occasions platform speakers present a monologue with non-structured dialogue following the address.

In certain instances Baptists have been the leaders in trying to respond to explosive situations within communities. Their willingness to confront the

issue often made the difference.

Baptists are talking a great deal about race relations. The content of the conversations varies, but dialogue is the level where many people are and what many situations need. As long as we continue to provide more and more opportunities for open discussion of racial issues as well as action, the potential to alleviate racial discord becomes greater.

4. Another of our positive contributions involves materials relative to race. Certainly there has been no abundance of materials, but along the way Baptists, in one form or another, have published materials which have reminded us of God's requirements. There have been books, Sunday School and Church Training curricula, mission action guides, music, articles in periodicals, special study and emphases materials, tracts, pamphlets, and of significant importance, resolutions, recommendations, and policy statements.

How much good do these writings accomplish? There is no accurate measure of their effectiveness. It does seem to me that the availability, distribution, and utilization of relevant material can be one of the major building blocks which will enable the house to stand during difficult times. Awareness of, study about, and information regarding racial abuse, needs, and Christian responsibility can make the difference.

5. A fifth positive influence Baptists have made relates to a confrontation of the power structure, particularly the political structure. This concept is extremely difficult to measure as most of this type confrontation is done behind the scenes.

Baptists often are the power structure and they have made many decisions regarding race, both good and bad, depending upon the insight and conviction of the Baptist making the decision.

Baptists have been politically involved collectively on a number of racial issues. Let me share one illustration. The Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention, Texas, has for at least the last two legislative sessions been vitally concerned about bilingual education in Texas. The Texas Commission, utilizing the powerful political influence of Baptists, and allied with other groups, passed a bilingual education bill just a few weeks ago. Baptists are at work on school boards, city councils, county, state, and national government levels acting as salt, leaven, and light.

6. A sixth virtue is that Baptists have their prophets. We have had, and still do have, those who are willing to pay the price to preach the whole gospel. Holding a Bible over one's head in Denver and loudly proclaiming belief in every word of it is validated only when a man preaches and lives every word of it in his home community.

There are prophets among us--men who are courageous, men who not only know the truth, but also speak it and apply it to life. Some proclaim it in thundering voices, while others speak in quiet ways. But regardless of their methodology, their message is one of brotherhood, love, justice, reconciliation, the image of God in all men, the worth of every individual, the death of

Christ for all.

A prophet must be careful not to bring too much tension upon his people lest he lose his ministry with them and forfeit his opportunity to be a Christian change-agent. However, if he brings no tension between the ideal and the real he is no prophet at all. We are indebted to those who have reminded us of God's value system and life style.

7. One last virtue: Baptists have strongly supported the presuppositions that each man is personally responsible to his own conscience and to God. As long as we continue an emphasis upon these two ideas, sensitivity to one's conscience and ultimate responsibility to God, Baptists will continue to produce prophets, will continue to have those who minister in the name of Jesus to all men, will continue to desegregate its churches and institutions, will continue to confront power structures which abuse, hurt, and destroy humanity, will continue to dialogue with one another and with members of minority groups, and will continue to produce relevant materials.

If Baptists ever sell out to either the state or to their culture, they will have committed idolatry and will have lost the privilege and capacity to be the children of God.

While a student at Mississippi State University, I became aware that biblical teachings and my racist heritage are incompatible. We must hear and obey the Word of God.

II. Now for the Bad News

Just as there were seven virtues, there are seven sins.

1. Our first sin is that of apathy. The truth is that many of us don't really care about race relations unless we have a direct vested interest.

For example, few of us care about the quality of education for blacks until our children are assigned to the black schools or to classes with these black students; few of us are concerned about ghettos and substandard housing until a minority person moves into our neighborhood and potentially affects our property's value; few of us are concerned with unemployment or underemployment of minorities until they ask for our jobs and our salaries or refuse to work in our fields for slave wages; few of us care about the quality of religion in black churches until they ask to join our church.

Too many of us simply don't care. We don't care enough to discover the facts and if we do, our commitment is often not strong enough to override the inevitable resistance to good that there will be.

2. Our second sin is timidity. "The Bold Ones" is certainly not a title that can be applied to many Baptists, Baptist churches, or agencies. Having an "open door" policy and aggressively recuiting minority members are two entirely different things. Many of these doors have been opened accompanied by silent prayers of hope that no one would take the policy seriously and attempt to enter.

Some of our agencies are intimidated by a few racists. It is annoying and depressing how a few can control the larger entity.

Fear of loss of revenue, status, members, jobs, etc., have stymied many Baptists from being the people of God. Our literature, programs, resolutions, policies, staffs, and sermons reflect this timidity. We have eaten Nebuchadnezzar's food lest we offend--and God will judge us.

3. This timidity surfaces in a related but distinct sin. It is the sin of talk without deeds. As previously stated some dialogue is needed, but if we consistently fail to convert talk and concern about race relations into positive actions, then we have failed to be salt and light and leaven. A cliche that became popular some years ago, "the paralysis of analysis," is still with us. We meet, talk, debate, analyze, speculate, and then go on as if we had never convened.

Ultimately dialogue groups can be a cop-out--a cheap way of paying one's debt to his conscience. An hour discussion group becomes the yearly emphasis for some on relating to minority groups.

It is easier to talk about something than it is to do it. Baptists are still prone to naval gaze rather than handshake.

4. A fourth sin is paternalism. It is a farce for one to believe that the average Baptist structure relates to minority groups as equals. We often tend to make basic plans and then ask our brothers to share in those decision processes, leaving the impression that they are participating on the ground level.

The truth is that most of us still believe that the white way is the superior way. We believe this so strongly that we delude ourselves into believing that blacks or browns actually believe that they are in on the initial planning. While the Uncle Toms and Pedros believe, the sharper minority individuals do not. They see us as we really are--Daddy indulging his children, but ultimately knowing best; Daddy who often lets his children have their way while all the time muttering to himself, "I could do it better."

Our paternalism is also reflected in our gifts to minority groups. Just as we give them unwanted and dated clothing we have made black churches dumping grounds for unwanted, irrelevant, dated, and unmarketable materials.

Treating minority groups as equals is difficult, frustrating, and painful. But it is necessary if brotherhood is to be achieved, if love is to become as God intended, and if justice is to be a reality.

5. A related concept is a spin-off of several of the above. By and large we have hired white people to work with blacks. If Dr. Maston's assertion is true that whites cannot totally understand blacks, and vice versa, then it makes sense that more blacks be hired to work with blacks, browns with browns, Indians with Indians, etc. To my knowledge only Washington, D.C. has a black who works for a convention interracial department. Hear me clearly, I am not advocating the hiring of minority workers exclusively. It is true that more and more minority people are being hired, but how many black Baptist seminary

professors do you know; black Baptist university professors or administrators? It seems to me that greater efforts will have to be made to recruit, hire, and support minority leaders for programs to minorities.

6. A sixth sin is that many Baptists initiate and support many programs which promote segregation and racism. One of our most recent sins may be the most serious as far as the welfare of our country is concerned. Across the land segregated academies have been created. Tragically many of these are housed in Baptist churches or created by Baptist associations. My concern is not with private education, but with segregation academies. Hear me clearly at that point.

If our present government administration has its way, public funds will eventually find their way to these academies, and America can forget about public school education. It will be no more as we know it--and America will be the loser.

Some Baptists have used social fear to make money on real estate or promote closed housing while other Baptists have used far of minority groups to promote racist legislation or political causes. I need only to remind you that the former Governor of my home state Arkansas, Orval Faubus, was a Baptist. The white flight from inner cities includes Baptists and Baptist churches.

There are still cries of prejudice on some of our educational institutions' campuses. We tolerate and give tacit approval to unbelievable judicial abuses! Our sinful actions are legion. The list is endless.

7. One final sin. Baptists still stone and kill their prophets. Anyone, particularly a minister, who has become involved in the struggle for racial justice has been scarred. Our fellow church members and often fellow pastors act quite viciously toward the one who is a "nigger lover." Ask anyone who has been involved and the stories are incredible; the abusive letters, the obscene and threatening telephone calls, the shotgun blasts through living room windows, the retaliation upon innocent, helpless children, the loss of a job, the inability or extreme difficulty in finding other employment, the alienation of friends, the withdrawal of friendship because of guilt by association, the ostracization from denominational life, the character assassination all make one believe in bad dreams.

The ones who have put their heads on the chopping block for what is right have usually been accommodated. The price is high.

Many of us have hurled rocks of destruction or stood silently by holding the coats of those who did. We need to hear the words of Amos: "For three transgressions of Southern Baptists and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof."

One of the most unnerving experiences ever to happen to me occurred sometime ago. You remember the film in tribute to the non-violent movement of Martin Luther King, Jr. It was shown just one night in theaters across the nation. I went to see this movie in a theater in Dallas.

Here I was among 2,000 people of which 90% were black. That causes a little uncomfortable feeling, particularly when the movie begins with the radical blacks calling for violence. "Whitey get a gun. We are at war." About 50 blacks in the auditorium stand and cheer. You sort of glance sideways at the young Negro sitting beside you, wondering if he plans to get his "whitey" here and now.

But what began to haunt me was the format of the movie. It would flash a scene of Dr. King, the city where he was, and the date. I watched those dates: 1955 - Montgomery; 1962 - Birmingham and Washington D.C.; 1965 - Selma, Chicago, and Atlanta; 1968 - Memphis.

As I sat there and saw those dates I said, "Charles, where were you in 1955, '63, '65, '68? What were you doing?"

One of these days my little boys will go to school. They will study history and the dogs of Selma, the four little dead Baptist Sunday School girls--it will all be there. And my sons will turn to me and ask, "Daddy, when men were striving for justice, when men were trying to be free, when men were asking for others to play fair, when men were dying for basic human rights and dignity, Daddy, where were you?"

How will I answer them?

It may be that you do not have to worry about your children asking you that question. But make no mistake about it, one day your Father will ask you. God will ask, "Where were you when people across the earth were seeking to be free--spiritually and physically. Where were you when the fight for justice was raging?" Your life and the lives of others depend upon how well you answer that question.

RELATING TO BLACK BAPTISTS TODAY

Emmanuel L. McCall, Associate Secretary
Department of Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists
Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board

Only a Rip Van Winkle would suggest that race relations in America are still where they were twenty years ago.

An illustration of the extent of change comes from a recent fishing trip. At 6:00 a.m. I stopped at a Krystal restaurant in a small community near Lake Alatoona, Georgia. Not only was I served but the waitress asked if I wanted my order "to go" or "to eat there." Already seated and enjoying their breakfast was an interracial couple.

At 6:30 a.m. I stopped at a bait shop and chatted leisurely with the proprietress. Neither of the four customers entering during those fifteen minutes seemed disturbed that we were conversing. I fished for six hours without the least concern for my being the only black in a remote area of middle Georgia. For about three hours I was joined by a retired couple and their four-year-old granddaughter. From their speech and mannerisms it was apparent they were from rural America. I could not help but be amused that the tapes inserted into the stereo tape deck of their pickup truck and played loudly were all Charlie Pride albums.

Twenty, fifteen, or ten years ago much of this would not have happened in Georgia. Change has come and with it has come new directions for relationships with black Baptists.

Until about 1967 or '68, Southern Baptist relationships with black Baptists could best be described as paternalistic. All denominational ministries were channeled through what was formerly called the Department of Work with National Baptists. The previous names of this department were, Work with Negroes and Work with Colored People. Whether it was campus ministries, social work, language ministries, associational missions or any other ministry, and without regard for the ability or inability of this department to give proper guidance, all Southern Baptist ministries to blacks were funneled through this department. Until three years ago this department represented the Southern Baptist Convention as fraternal messengers to National Baptist Conventions.

All of this has changed. The President and Executive Secretary of the SBC now are the fraternal messengers to National Baptist Conventions. Campus ministries on black campuses are now directed through the National Student Ministries office. Blacks using other than English are ministered

to by the Language Department of the Home Mission Board. The same would be correspondingly true of all other Home Mission Board ministries.

The Home Mission Board is now trying to lead our Convention in ministering to people, not races or other differences. Social and cultural factors are significant only as they determine the method, structure, and nature of that ministry.

Last week you had the privilege of voting on the new program statement that governs the Department of Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists. While the program statement charts "New Directions for a New Day," the process for its revision was a "New Direction." National Baptist leaders and representatives were a part of the dialogue-writing consultation that produced the new program statement. Our ability to implement the statement will be contingent on several factors.

Before discussing those factors let me define who black Baptists are. Black Baptists in America may fall into one of eight categories. Most belong to one of three National Baptist Conventions. The National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. is the oldest of the three. Its organization in 1895 in Atlanta, Georgia resulted from a merger of national conventions for foreign missions, educational necessities, and home missions.

In 1915 the first split occurred over the ownership of the Convention's Publishing House. Through legal technicalities the dissident faction maintained the name National Baptist Convention. These two bodies are distinguished by the original group adding Incorporated to its title. The dissident group added "of America" to its title. So from 1915 until 1961 there was the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., and the National Baptist Convention of America.

In 1961 the National Baptist Convention, Inc. split again over the issue of tenure of office. The splitting faction is called the Progressive National Baptist Convention. As implied in their names, all three conventions are national in scope. In some states each has its own state convention. In other states all churches belong to one associational or state unit, but separate in national affiliation.

Black Baptists are also found in the American and Southern Baptist Conventions. Some are singularly aligned. Others are dually aligned in one of the National Baptist Conventions and either/or the American Baptist Convention or Southern Baptist Convention.

Many black Baptists have no affiliation with any national body. Their prime concern is in meeting their own spiritual and corporate needs. Some few are in Baptist organizations formed on doctrinal issues. In doing so

these churches follow their white counterparts on such regional or local doctrines as footwashing, sabbath observance, or anti-missionism.

Altogether we are talking about some 11 million people who are the spiritual twins of Southern Baptists. They are more readily distinguished by the color of their skin than by religious or theological distinctives. National and Southern Baptists are a part of the same religious and cultural heritage. The circumstances of history has allowed each some other embellishments, but not so much as to distort our basic and original relationship.

The new directions which Southern Baptists have adopted are not original with us. While there have been champions of progressive race relationships all through the Conventions history, we have been forced into new relationships by conscience and expediency.

Our consciences were disturbed by the painful recitation of black history which was panoramed on our television screens, the streets of our cities, the courthouse steps and even through kneel-ins at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Expediency gripped us at the point of our national and world wide image, the integrity of our proclamation and our future creditability, especially with the young and the internationals.

Hopefully the Holy Spirit will redeem both expediency and conscience into purposeful Christian brotherhood. It is my conviction that once Southern Baptists are really converted and convinced about reconciling relationships, once we can sever the appendages of culture from authentic Christianity, we will really move this nation. I have been interested in the number of non-Southern Baptists who also share this view.

How can we effectively relate to black Baptists?

1. Our first need is for a re-reading of history. Most Southern Baptists still lack a more adequate understanding of the black presence in America and what the attendant evils of slavery has done to both races then and now. Most of our present day racial problems are the direct result or the carry-over of the past. Most histories are still biased with misunderstandings and misinterpretations. It is well for us to begin re-reading histories from the black perspectives. These continue to be produced at an accelerated pace. To be sure black perspectives will contain their biases. It will be necessary to cull the best from the two traditions to find balance.

2. Beyond the historical dimension one must try to understand the contemporary dynamics that form black opinions and attitudes. What effect has the political rhetoric of law and order had on black thinking? The election popularity of a Richard Nixon over a George McGovern? Flight from the central city? Vicious rezoning laws? Busing? Constant studies on black problems

that are ill researched, unredemptive, and counter productive? The tendency of Southern Baptists to determine priorities and invite black Baptists to support them? The refusal of Southern Baptists to meaningfully support priorities established by black Baptists.

To be sure it has led black Baptists to determine their own priorities and concentrate on those, with or without the good will or cooperation of Southern Baptists. If neighboring black pastors are unresponsive to invitations and overtures of reconciliation, please understand the dynamics involved before turning away.

It ought to be clearly established that the goals of the civil rights movements were for public accommodations and equity in public processes. Amalgamation into white society or denominations was not a goal. Now that public accommodations are a way of life and the instruments for assuring equity in the public sector are available, the larger aims of the movement have been realized. To participate in a Southern Baptist venture now is no big deal.

3. Southern Baptists who have feelings of guilt over the past must be careful in dealing with that guilt. You cannot be held responsible for the sins of fathers, grandfathers, greats, uncles or a host of other relatives. <u>One is responsible only for his time and his involvement in redeeming the corporate sin that affects us</u>.

One cannot be careless in the stewardship of resources because of guilt feelings. To abandon caution, to over-compensate, to be offered as a sacrifice to redeem the sins of the fathers is neither healthy nor wise. Those who over-compensate are often disillusioned in discovering that their benefactors can be corrupt, evil or hateful. After all, the name of the game is sin not skin.

A responsible attitude towards guilt ought to bring out the best creative potential for the restructuring of our lopsided society. A valuable lesson can be learned from the "Watergate" story in Nehemiah 8. When the law had been read and the people informed of their sinfulness, guilt caused them to weep and lapse into expressions of sorrow. Rather than wallow in this kind of self-pity the people were enjoined to strengthen themselves, express godly concern for the welfare of their fellows, and set about the task of rebuilding their spiritual lives and their external surroundings. They were given a new reason for being.

". . . the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10).

4. If Southern Baptists are to properly relate to black Baptists certain aspects of black Baptist history must be recognized.

Until 1954 black Baptist energies were devoted to social welfare, religious and secular education. In many communities public school education was provided by black Baptist churches. The doctrine of "separate but equal" was a late attempt to cover up the educational inequities of the past.

At the collegiate level black Baptists began and supported colleges because none else was provided. In later years state governments would establish state schools, but these were very limited in scope and resources. The vocational options were culturally restricted.

I have mentioned this to focus on the structure of black associations and conventions. Most black denominational structures were begun or developed for the sole purpose of social and educational welfare. They did not need nor did they develop highly organized structures comparable to their American and Southern Baptist counterparts. Associations and state conventions could easily split based on loyalty to an educational unit or form of social welfare. Some splits resulted from power plays and sociological differences.

After the Supreme Court ruling of 1954 the state and federal governments quickly poured sums of money into black educational units to avoid integration. Colleges and universities discovering available government money ignored the church and denominational units. Town-gown attitudes and conflicts quickly emerged which resulted in the withdrawal of black church units from their supportive roles. Other black colleges could not survive the faculty-student drain nor the town-gown conflict.

About the same time momentum was building for the various civil rights movements. Black Baptists rechanneled their support and energies to these efforts. Non-denominational alliances for achieving civil and social goals were formed. These organizations now undermined the Baptist organizational units, especially at the associational level.

Since the aims of the civil rights movement are partially realized, black associations and conventions must determine who they are, what their tasks shall be and how they will be achieved. With other sociological and religious problems considered, this will not be an easy task.

Black Baptists do not now have the necessary structure, organization, or interests to make possible parallel communicative and operational procedures for common tasks. Valiant attempts are now being made in this direction. Much more time is required. Understanding is needed on the part of Southern Baptists, along with flexibility.

5. If Southern Baptists wish to relate to black Baptists, we must be willing to be ministered unto as well as to minister. Black Baptists have learned many valuable insights about the Christian faith and our response to it. Black preaching contains a genius all its own. Black worship can be as liberating to others as it has been to blacks. Black Baptists have much to offer if Southern Baptists are willing to receive.

While some insights can be gained from independent reading or black study classes, nothing can replace the first handed experience of knowing a pastor or church. One need not be fearful. You will always be welcome in black churches.

Our reception of the black experience must go beyond the limited few blacks overly used in Southern Baptist circles. There are many black Christians of great ability if Southern Baptists are willing to get to know the nearby pastors and churches. It is not necessary to wait until a black has been "approved" by the Home Mission Board or the Convention before using him. Take the initiative in getting to know your neighbor. Allow yourself to be open to new experiences. For the first time you may discover how much you have been missing.

6. To properly relate to black Baptists, we must be willing to share our resources. This is more than offering finances. We can share with black Baptists the church and denomination administrative skills we have acquired. We can invite them to our promotional meetings at all levels. We can make our extension centers, institutes, seminaries, workshops, and other opportunities available to blacks. Companion church units allow excellent opportunities for the cross fertilization and inspiration of ideas. We can help cultivate each other by sharing our resources.

7. Finally, Southern Baptists can relate to black Baptists by seeking to cooperate at all levels of involvement. Companion church units, joint associational and state convention committees, and agency counterparts can take the initiatives in creating new ventures in human understanding and growth.

Several cautions are needed. (1) Any cooperative venture ought to be planned together. It cannot be <u>their</u> idea. It must be <u>ours</u>. (2) Any venture worth being involved in ought to be beneficial to all. Everyone is too busy for "busywork." (3) Any cooperative venture ought to be supported together with each contributing to the best of his ability. Black Baptists should be given every opportunity and encouraged to share in financing any cooperative venture. (4) Credit for any success or failure ought to be shared. (5) Cooperative ventures need support only until the needs are met. To try to perpetuate an organization that is no longer necessary may defeat future cooperation when it becomes necessary.

Change is occurring. Southern Baptists are changing. New directions can have new impetus for our new day. We can have more effective relationships with black Baptists. Once we really get our priorities straight at the point of race, Southern Baptists can move this nation.

WORKING WITH A CHURCH TO DEAL WITH RACIAL CONCERNS

Dr. Cecil E. Sherman, Pastor
First Baptist Church
Asheville, North Carolina

I am the pastor of a church. I do not have an overview of race relations. The same news that come to you, comes to me. I have no inside information. This speech comes to you from the point of view of one who had very little contact with black people in youth. My world was segregated. In my high school, college, and seminary days I was introduced to some ideas in the Bible. My teachers told me that God "treats all men alike. Whoever fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him, no matter what race he belongs to" (Acts 10:34b-35 TEV). Such a notion was persuasive to me. It appealed to my sense of fair play. When I read my Bible, I saw what these teachers were saying. At some time in this educational process I made a serious commitment to a gospel that included a plank on race relations. This commitment still stands.

My ministry as the pastor of The First Baptist Church of Asheville, North Carolina has been seriously shaped and bent because of the commitment I made as a student to a gospel that includes race relations. Race is too big, the fall-out from preaching on and acting on race is too radioactive for me to act as if my race commitment were just another little line in the fine print at the bottom of my theological contract. My ministry has been different because of my commitment to race. Let me tell you some of the ways this commitment has worked out.

I. Ground We've Already Covered.

1. We have broken the silence that has long been the horse blanket that has covered our racial problems. Most Southern Baptist churches are still wrapped in a blanket of silence on this troublesome subject. Everyone knows that race has something to do with religion. Too many preachers have said too much. Still the average Southern Baptist preacher does not want to lift the silence. Our church has come far enough to get the whole race mess out in the open.

2. I decided that I was not going to try to have a unified church. This was a harder decision to make than I thought. I am unwilling to try to "run off" all of the people who disagree with me on race. I think that these people are my field for racial evangelism. To drive them away is just to resegregate one more church. We do have supporters of George Wallace and McGovern Democrats. We do have hardline racists inside my church. These people do not get to "have their way." They are not used as the whipping boy and made to feel that they are synonymous with sin incarnate.

3. My commitment to a gospel that includes a plank on race relations does not please the more liberal members of my congregation. These enlightened ones feel that I must say more about race relations than I do. Some of them seem to believe that the gospel is race relations. I have not followed their lead.

I think that race relations is in the gospel. Race relations is not the gospel.

4. Our church is integrated. That four-word sentence does not even hint at the agony that was a part of making our church have an open membership. We had to change the rules -- and in the process deny membership to the first black who wanted to join us. Finally, we integrated the church in January of 1970. Now we have three black members out of a membership of 1,900 residents. It is only token. Visits have been made to blacks. But a fact of life is that black separatism is the greater barrier to further integration than anything else today.

II. Some Phase-Two Problems.

1. The integration of my church has taken place in a much larger arena than just the little town in the mountains of Western North Carolina. All over this nation there has been a seething and bubbling and moving and stirring in race relations. Especially through the '60's the racial pot did boil. Much was accomplished. But the fall-out from that social revolution is still alive.

Most important, the schools of my town are completely integrated. Thanks to HEW, our school officials have never been so color-conscious. We are numerically integrated. I am not prepared to evaluate the educational effect of this integration. I am prepared to say that the youth of my church are the most damaged and prejudiced people in my church. Their prejudice is astonishingly like to the prejudice of their great-grandfathers. They generalize to say that blacks are dumb, dirty, lazy, and arrogant. Some of these youth make exceptions to their generalizations, and I think they feel guilty about their feelings of bigotry. Others speak with the assurance of a Tom Watson or a Theodore Bilbo.

Before any assessment of the attitudes of these youth is made, the hearer would do well to consider some of the circumstances that have been a part of the forming of these prejudicial attitudes. We have had two race riots. Schools have been closed on both occasions all over town. People have been beaten. Property has been destroyed. Gangs of toughs have attacked, beaten, and hospitalized isolated individuals. Most of the white youth see the violence as coming from a militant black group within the larger black community. Almost no civil action has come against those people who have made these attacks. Two boys from my church have been beaten by black gangs. My daughter has been threatened several times, and hit two times by a group of black girls. The young feel that two sets of rules apply: one set for whites that uses discipline and another set of rules for blacks that requires almost nothing in the way of obedience.

2. Black separatism is a moral dilemma for us all. On the one hand, we hear sociologists and psychologists tell of the necessity and the useful purposes that can come of black separatism. On the other hand, it looks to me as if black separatism is no more than white separatism in reverse. The results of black separatism are not nearly so hopeful as some starry-eyed theorists would

lead us to believe.

The reluctance of the black community to deal with their own separatists has disillusioned me. When a "red-neck" rises to take my pulpit and lead my people, I am supposed to put that "red-neck" down. He is a bigot. He is flying in the face of the revealed truth of the Word of God. When a black bigot says the same things, I am to see him as developing racial identity and pride. And to my consternation, the black clergy have been strangely silent in the face of black racism. I see very little ultimate authority in the black clergy I have known. When the black community calls, the black clergy dutifully gets in line.

Of course, another effect of black separatism is the end of real enlistment of blacks in churches like mine. To join a white church now would be to give up black identity.

3. The goals of the black movement now leave me confused. Among some, I see an honest attempt to do away with the inequality of the black man's life. These people want no more than a fair chance for everyone. On the other hand, among other activists I see another goal. These people do not seek a fair chance; they want an equality of result from the racial revolution. If the effect of integration does not produce a black child who can pass a college board that is color-blind, then do away with college boards and take that black child into that college anyway. If enough black people cannot pass civil service exams and get good jobs then do away with the civil service exams and hire black people anyway.

This quest for equality of result --rather than mere equal opportunity -- raises some severe questions for a biblical ethic. I don't think these questions have been honestly faced by most of our theorists, much less our pastors. What is often described as a "meritocracy" may be at work in this nation. But the effect of replacing that meritocracy with anything else runs against the grain with me. I have not yet sorted out all of my feelings about this. It could be that my reluctance to embrace equality of result is mere conservatism; I have been guilty of such a sin. On the other hand, there are some ideas in the Bible, Old and New Testaments, that would bring the idea of equality of result under the judgment of the scriptures.

As I understand it, we are supposed to try to create among the kingdoms of men a shadow of that goal of all kingdoms -- the Kingdom of God. If God gave to some men ten talents and to some five and to some one -- and that same God rewarded those men on the basis of their industriousness -- what does this say for the equality of result as a goal of a nation? (Matt. 25:14-30). That the Bible teaches rewards for diligence, work, and obedience there can be no doubt. That these virtues should not be rewarded in a nation is the height of folly to me.

III. <u>Ideals to Guide Us.</u>

Because the issues are now muddy and the leaders compromised, there has come a time when rational men counsel that we ignore the issues and let the leaders of the black community shout at themselves. The nation, and Southern Baptists in particular, are all too ready to hear such easy gospel. If ever there was need for prophetic word, that time is now. Here are some guidelines that I am using in my church. Whether they have any larger use, I would not presume to say. I do offer them to you for your consideration.

1. Racism is still evil, has always been evil, is evil in the black community, and continues to be respectable in white communities. This word needs to be spoken. Waiting for the black clergy to declare black racism to be evil is a wait that will let a thousand white pastors off the hook. Why do we have to wait for someone else before we declare all the counsel of God? What is wrong is wrong. If they won't say it, we still ought to say it.

2. God still views all of his children as brothers. The gospel is offered to all regardless of where or whom they may be..(see Paul's comment to the Romans 1:13-15). Our selective evangelism and our precious limited social concern is a direct result of our racism. Until we come to the point of view of God, our churches will continue to be cut from the bias of men rather than the point of view of God.

3. All of us have indulged the sin of wish thinking. We thought that a few Sundays given to race relations and a few prophets bombing us with the word would do away with racism. I am guilty. But the fact is that the barriers that divide us are built in the hard cement of original sin. This racism is a part of the soul-sickness that has always blighted the human spirit. Washing away original sin is hard. It is the ages-long struggle of the Church. It is a part of the fight of Good against Evil. The victory will not be won in my lifetime nor any else's--not even those who self-righteously bellow, NOW! Including race in the gospel will do more to do away with racism than anything I know. One of our major problems is that most pastors have never told their people that racism is really a sin against the living God.

4. Ten years ago a pastor who preached on race relations was courageous. Today there are several more spicy tidbits to give taste to dull pulpit fare. I can preach on ecology and peace and technology. I need not risk myself if the troublesome swamp of race. Most of the people feel that "we've tried, and it didn't work. And I told you so!" The "benign neglect" advised by Patrick Moynihan has been heeded by too many preachers who once thought they must speak on race. I think we need to keep on trying to preach Acts 10:34-35. We don't need to preach any more. We just need to preach it. The more liberals among Southern Baptists need to come out, risk themselves, if necessary fly in the face of the establishmentarians among us, take our lumps, and declare again the biblical ideal. We do not stop preaching on stewardship when we do not get all of the people to tithe. We come at it again and again. We have to. This is the same stance we need to take on the continuing blight of racism. And until we do, it will grow larger--not recede.

THE RACE FACTOR IN MISSIONS TODAY

Dr. Edgar H. Burks, Jr.
Executive Secretary, Nigerian Mission
Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board

Furloughing missionaries all too frequently make "one night stands" to represent their work and do not have time to deal adequately with problems. On the other hand, missionaries are sometimes asked to refrain from discussion of racial matters since this is a domestic situation which the foreign missionary may not fully appreciate or understand. Because of this, therefore, I am grateful to this opportunity to share with you some of my impressions about the relation of racial attitudes and practices to foreign missions. We are all involved in this serious Christian moral and social problem which requires the best thought, prayer, practice and commitment of which we are capable under the influence, leadership and power of the Holy Spirit.

Let me state further that what I say is from my own personal experiences and insights growing out of nearly eighteen years spent in West Africa as a missionary to Nigeria. I have no illusions about the romanticized foreign missionary. I know him for what he is--an ordinary and often prejudiced human being whom God has reached down and touched by His grace. Then, in God's own way of election, He has chosen this earthen vessel to serve on a foreign field. Remember that he was born and reared in the same kind of home and educated in the same churches and schools as other Southern Baptists. He is no holier-than-thou Joe who wears a halo. I say that to remind you that every foreign missionary has to deal with racial tensions in his own Christian experience. For example, failure of a national, ranging all the way from ineptness as a mechanic to a lack of social grace, is too easily passed with the remark, "That's because he is black or brown or white" A favorite expression of the British in West Africa is, "Well, what can you expect from a Frenchman". Missionaries are not entirely free from these feelings and remarks with which they have to deal on a deeper level.

I. THE TIMES IN WHICH WE NOW ATTEMPT TO EVANGELIZE THE NATIONS

We are living in times which have launched us into moral and spiritual space for which we are not prepared. We are not to be excused for we have had the time, the message, the Spirit, and the urging to get prepared, but we have not done it. I heard an educator speaking to a civic club during the time our government was working on civil rights legislation. He was being questioned by a clergyman present about the implications for education. Finally, in exasperation, the educator turned on his questioner and said, "Sir, I can assure you that the secular educational system will deal with this problem long before your religious congregations and institutions." We in the churches have been saying, "Tomorrow, we will get at this matter. Today, we have evangelism and other more weighty matters to deal with."

Time has run out for us on the continent of Africa and for many other parts of the world. Africa wants nothing to do with the philosophy of gradualism. They were thrust suddenly into the technological age by World War II. Following that

conflagration, former war airfields were converted into international airports. Taxis, buses and trucks soon filled the roads. The attention of students turned to science. National politicians arose with the cry of "freedom" and within a period of ten years, around 1960, almost all of the colonies of Africa became independent nations. Dominated for as long as they could remember by colonial masters, in most cases white masters, they were now ready to make their own destiny.

Along with the coming of technology and independence to Africa came the revolution in communication. Perhaps no technological invention has so influenced Africa as did the perfection of the "transistor" which has brought the world to the farthest bush village by radio. What happens in Washington or in Ridgecrest (if something important should happen here) will be known in the bush villages of Africa almost as soon as it is known in your home town. The coming of jet travel has opened Africa not only to visitors, but also has given opportunity for Africans to travel abroad and see the rest of the world for themselves.

Nationalism has also become a burning passion in most countries of the so-called third world. Men of these former colonies have now become aware of their own potentialities as individuals and citizens. This passion burns with blazing heat in many parts of the world. Even the visitor to the mission field often gets scorched. He sees open sewers and makes some remarks about how things could be improved. He is quickly told to go back and clean his own sewers. This nationalism has come face to face with the issue of racism and this is the burning issue in Africa today. No matter what may be happening around the world, nothing is so important in African politics as the racist policies of Rhodesia, South Africa and Portuguese colonies.

Now, at the turn of this century, very few Africans knew much about Americans and Southern Baptists except what they learned from American missionaries. Churches sprung up wherever Southern Baptist missionaries went, and these churches supposed all Baptists were like their missionaries. In earlier years, a missionary might have condoned slavery in the United States, or segregation in churches and schools. But this was not a subject of conversation, for neither the missionary nor his African convert was greatly interested nor saw much correlation to what was happening on the mission field. It did not seem to occur to either that the convert won by the missionary would not be welcome as a guest in the homes of those who sent the missionary, including church members, pastors, denominational leaders, and at times even some mission board members. The missionary was welcome in almost any African home as a special guest. Africans were welcomed in most missionary homes, although not in all. I heard a missionary of another denomination remark after independence celebrations that it was going to be hard to change from asking Africans to come in the back door to inviting them in the front door. But in older days, and under colonial conditions, race was not a major topic of discussion.

Those times have gone forever. The newer churches of Africa are fully aware of the racial situation in the United States and they question why such should be allowed to continue. Missions and missionaries, as well as government officials, were given a reprieve of perhaps ten to twenty years when the United States Government officially passed legislation to make segregation and discrimination because of race illegal. We immediately stood far above South Africa and

Rhodesia because we officially said it was wrong. But our time has run out. Africa cannot see that much advance in race relations in the United States since that time. But the most difficult thing for them to understand is that while discrimination is officially taboo, while government and public agencies have made gestures in the right direction, the slowest tortoise of all is the church, which should have been the pacesetter.

Now let me move on to some areas in which race factors do directly affect the work of missions and of missionaries. I might add also that these factors affect the image of Christianity as a whole. Someday I would like for theologians and sociologists to explain the enigma of Southern Baptists--why is it that among the most conservative of Christian groups and among the most evangelistic and missionary-minded, there can at the same time be the strongest resistance to real progress in the field of race relations?

II. SOME FACTORS THAT AFFECT MISSIONS TODAY

Again, let me remind you that I speak out of a limited experience in West Africa. I have very little direct contact with other Southern Baptist mission fields. I am also speaking out of my own experience and relating, not what I have read or researched or polled, but what I know from my own missionary work.

1. Race and Governments Where Missionaries Work

Missionaries do their work in all countries as guests of these governments. The average Baptist often finds this difficult to understand. That there are governments that do not want missionaries, that are suspicious of missionaries is beyond the comprehension of many people. But we are the guests of these governments and we must work within them in such a way that we will meet all the legal requirements as aliens, that we do our work in agreement with any special restrictions or limitations imposed, and that we conduct ourselves in such a way that we are acceptable to the local communities among whom we live and work. You must also remember that most of these governments are not democratic in form, but are ruled by military men, dictators, or one-party systems. The practice of racial discrimination in the United States is a constant threat to every American who works abroad, especially in countries whose nationals have been discriminated against.

You can rest assured that whatever occurs of a racial nature in any city or state here sufficient to get the attention of the media will also likely find its way into filing cabinets of African governments. After all, that is why governments have embassies, consuls and information services, among other reasons. I suspect that there are sizeable files in Washington offices that are available to African media if needed. It was called to my attention recently that there are even files on Baptist activities and proclamations, since Baptists do form a large segment of aliens in some countries.

Just before leaving Nigeria, I went to the immigration office to secure my re-entry visa, without which I could not return. I had worked with this officer for nearly eight years, since I was the Executive Secretary of the Mission. I had asked for a visa valid for twelve months. The officer stamped my passport, and then held his pen poised over it to write in the number of months. He looked up

and said, "I have decided that twelve months is too long for you. I will give you only six months." I told him all the reasons I needed the twelve months. Then he said, "You see, Nigerians have been having a hard time in your immigration office. I have decided to give you the same kind of treatment your people have given us." Then he wrote on my passport, closed it and gave it back to me. As he passed it across his desk, he said with a smile, "I have given you twelve months. I was only joking with you." He did give me the visa, but he had also made a vital point in his joking.

A serious racial incident or crisis in the United States has serious effects on the host countries where your missionaries go to serve.

2. Race and Students Abroad

African nations do not yet have adequate educational facilities to meet the educational crisis which has come upon them. Only a fraction of Nigerians who want to attend university are able to gain admittance to the five government universities there. Not only this, but business, government, and church groups often select some of their best students and send them overseas. This group of students usually go back to become leaders of their respective sending groups. That student who was ignored, or abused, or roughed up, or refused membership in a church may in turn become the one to whom your missionary goes to get his visa, or the leader of the Convention with whom and under whom your missionaries must work. On the other hand, any kindness offered here is usually more than repaid on later contacts there.

It is unfortunate, nevertheless true, that almost every Nigerian student who travels to the United States is warned by his elders and friends, "Be sure to wear your Nigerian dress. Don't go out among strangers without it." It is an accepted fact that dressed as a foreigner, he will be given better treatment than if he were a native black American. Now, the Nigerian student accepts this and he expects to have occasional problems at the airport or in the bus station. But he is hardly prepared to find what he often receives among his benefactors, Southern Baptists. This is especially true in regard to church membership. In some churches, he will be readily accepted as a member. But in others, he may be met at the door and told he cannot come in or that he is not wanted as a member. Or he may be visited by the pastor and advised that he would be much happier if he joined the black Baptist Church. How would you return to your native country and with what attitude would you greet your missionaries upon your return? At the same time, I must register my appreciation for what Southern Baptists have done to help us train for leadership.

Some years ago, a brilliant Nigerian student was attending a Baptist Seminary. He was working on a graduate degree to better prepare himself to serve in his convention. His wife was also attending classes. One night, in the middle of the night, the wife became seriously ill. As a student, covered by the medical policy of the Seminary, he did the normal thing. He, in company with fellow students and faculty, rushed the wife to the Baptist Hospital, only to be told that they would have to go on to City Hospital which would accept blacks. In the years that I have known this man, now a leader among Nigerian Baptists, I have only heard him refer to this incident one time. But for the grace of God, this man

would be the most bitter antagonist of Southern Baptists and could destroy any relationships we have with the Convention there. Instead, he is our strong supporter. But how can a missionary justify that kind of treatment? Someone will say, but was not that some time ago. That hospital surely now will accept all. And I am aware of that. But I live and work with leaders, both government and Christian, who share such scars far too often inflicted by the denomination that gave them spiritual birth.

I remember going to a University in my home state to get a fine black couple to spend the New Year's holiday with us on furlough. This man was working on a graduate degree with a scholarship given by the Nigerian Baptist Convention. He now holds a major full-time and influential office there. I had been his teacher at the Seminary in Ogbomosho. He had been a respected teacher before that. As we drove along, I wondered what I would do if the community in which I grew up and knew everybody would not accept this man. I thought what might happen on the next Sunday morning when I took him to my home church--the church that had baptized me, licensed and ordained me, and helped to send me to the mission field. What would I do if they turned their backs on all that I had believed and to my commitment because the man was black? I thank God they did not, but received him as a Christian and fellow-worker. I talked a few days ago with retired missionaries from Africa who cannot bring their Nigerian friends home with them or to their church.

3. Race and Americans Abroad

As I stated earlier, some years ago the only Americans that nationals were associated with were missionaries. We had few government or businessmen in West Africa. Following the independence of so many African nations, there came a flurry of American business ventures. Government agencies vied with each other to give development aid to struggling nations. Then only a few years ago, a rich oil field was discovered in Nigeria. Nigeria soon jumped from tenth place to third place in world crude oil production. This brought many Americans to the country to aid in the discovery, production and processing of oil.

Many, and perhaps I could say most, of the Americans I have met in Nigeria are professing Christians. Some of them are Southern Baptists who even know their current pastors' names and give evidence of having attended churches with some regularity when at home. Some have held places of leadership in their home churches. A very small minority of these, and we missionaries praise God for these, find a missionary or a Baptist church upon arrival and ask how they can help. There are people like the Sykes family who have helped nurture a little English-speaking mission to church status--they are oil people. Then others like the U. S. Military Attache with the American Embassy who has made a real witness in high places through his high standard of morals in government service. He also attends that same church. The congregation is almost entirely black. Then there are the Bill Finleys, a civil engineer with WHO who came out to plan a drainage and sewage system for Ibadan, Africa's largest black city. Bill was made a deacon in Oritamefa Church and became one of the most popular speakers to Christian student groups. There are a number of these people who have been like additional missionaries in national churches.

But unfortunately, there are others. There are those who attend church one time, or when invited will say, "Don't you have any churches just for Americans or whites?" And let me say here, I am not opposed to English-speaking churches, but I am not in favor of churches for Americans overseas which become islands of racism and separatism. I held a revival meeting in recent months in the oil capital of Nigeria. There were several Southern Baptist families who live there. We visited and invited them to services. They were very friendly and most spoke of the church and pastor back home. But they refused to get involved. Perhaps they were backslidden, but one felt that the basic cause of their condition was the refusal to enter into church relations because of racial attitudes.

Now Nigerians have not known these people before. Here is racism brought from abroad and imported to their own homeland. They don't like racism in America, but they deeply resent it when Americans come as guests to their land and bring along their sickness. It is difficult for them to separate one Baptist from another. It is difficult for them to see how Baptists can give money to send missionaries to Africa, and then refuse to have fellowship with them when they meet in Africa. One of the greatest opportunities American Christians have these days since so many are travelling overseas, is to share their witness and concern wherever they go. This is especially true of laymen. Africans, like most Americans, bow at the altar of science and technology. A layman who is respected in his profession or career and stops to make a Christian witness often carries a wider influence than does the preacher. Recently a space scientist from El Paso came to Nigeria for a conference on Aeronomy. He was a dedicated Baptist deacon. He spoke several times while there in both churches and schools, sharing his faith as a scientist. These opportunities are open to almost every Christian who travels where there are missionaries and churches.

4. Race and the Denomination

I had been a missionary only a few years when the U. S. government's policy on desegregation was discussed at the Southern Baptist Convention. The pros and cons of whether or not the Convention should make some statement were presented. I spoke my own conviction that our foreign mission policy demanded that we take some action. Some church leaders threatened that if such were done, they would withhold Cooperative Program money from the Foreign Mission Board. I do not believe that economic threats are the mature Christian way of facing moral and spiritual problems. I recognize the right of churches to do so, but feel that such threats may have served to muzzle some of the best denominational spokesmen who ought to have spoken and to speak on this and related issues.

There is still another matter that involves Foreign Mission Board and denominational policy. For example, at the present time, we have only one black career foreign missionary, and one black Journeyman. I wish I had time to tell you about these two, both serving in West Africa. But at present, the denomination is committed to appoint as career missionaries only those who are members of Southern Baptist churches. This is understandable. We cannot even send all of the people who hold membership in our churches who might like to serve overseas. But there are very few blacks who hold membership in our churches. And we need more blacks to join with us in sharing the truth that Christ can and does break down barriers and that Christianity is not just a white man's religion.

I trust that church doors will continue to be opened to black members and that we shall see a number of them seeking missionary appointment. Perhaps, in multi-racial meetings also, we need to pursue how Baptist groups can share together their resources and Christian calling. Until these things happen, we are likely to have only a token number.

CONCLUSION

I have presented to you some of the problem areas that I see where the matter of race hits missions in Africa. I am sorry I cannot talk with you about race and missions in South America, Asia or Mexico. I have purposely spoken only of my own experience. I wish others were here to share, for race is not confined to a black-white situation, and I am sorry that I have been able to deal only with this. However, I suspect that problems and principles will apply to most areas, although the individual situations may differ.

By way of summary, I have presented several problems which arise when American race practices directly affect Christian missions abroad. First, race does affect government attitudes toward missionaries. Secondly, foreign students are often involved in situations which tend to embitter them as future leaders. Thirdly, American racial attitudes overseas bring reaction among ordinary nationals who would not otherwise get involved. Fourthly, the weakness of denominational position in racial matters often raises serious questions among national Christians.

In concluding, may I again emphasize that every racial problem or incident in the United States does affect the Baptist witness in Africa. However, the greatest barrier to be overcome is the position and practice of Baptist people and Baptist churches. I am glad to see the efforts made and the progress achieved, but I am also disappointed that we make progress so slowly, so slowly that time may run out on us.

The foreign missionary is faced almost daily with the question which was put rather bluntly to Dr. Joseph Underwood, the Consultant on Evangelism for the Foreign Mission Board. He had come to Nigeria to discuss evangelism with Convention and associational leaders. The Foreign Mission Board and missionaries had been interested for some time in the crusades which have blessed other parts of the world. It was only this year that Nigeria was able to begin a series of eighteen city-wide crusades using visiting American pastors and laymen, this lateness due largely to racial implications. But at the meeting held earlier in Ogbomosho, a question was put to Dr. Underwood, not by a militant racist, but by a humble, female Baptist school teacher. She spoke the question of many when she asked, "Dr. Underwood, how is it that Southern Baptists love us black people so much in Nigeria, but can't love black people in your own country?" This is the question your foreign missionaries must continually try to answer. What would you say?

RACE: NEXT STEPS FOR SOUTHERN BAPTISTS

Dr. Douglas Watterson
Pastor, Cliff Temple Baptist Church
Dallas, Texas

Introduction

It is perhaps assuming a fact not in evidence to state that Southern Baptists have, indeed, "gone anywhere" in the area of race relationships. Statistics reveal that the church is the most segregated institution in the land still. However, for the purposes of this paper we will assume some basic and fundamental understandings have been grasped and accepted by Southern Baptists.

The marvelous Genesis account of mankind reveals that sin, man's choice of self, brought about four separations: the separation of man from God, from himself (he became a divided personality), from his fellow man, and from nature.

The Bible further reveals God's intention to recapitulate, to make all things right: to create a new kind of mankind, to create community from these new men, to create a new government (the Kingdom of God), and, ultimately, to create a new heaven and earth.

Still further, we understand from the New Testament that God has given to Christians this ministry of reconciliation, that Christ would live in us, that we are His instruments in the making of all things right.

So, I understand that God is at present producing a new race of men by the miracle of the New Birth, that from these men He is producing a fellowship where genuine community obtains (where class distinctions, racial distinctions, sexual distinctions, etc. are done away), and where genuine sharing, caring, involvement, accepting, and loving is the rule. Surely this is in part what the cross means to us.

I. SOUTHERN BAPTISTS HAVE RECOGNIZED THE INTENTION OF GOD AND HIS CLAIM UPON THEIR LIVES AS INSTRUMENTS OF RECONCILIATION AND MAKING THINGS RIGHT.

As above said, this is a large assumption, but let us assume it. Let's assume that we recognize not only God's intention to save our souls from the penalty of sin, but to make of us a new community. Surely a theology that majors on eschatological redemption and bliss to the exclusion of coming to grips with the realities of sin in the "nasty now and now" is a "cop-out" on reality, a delusive dream of a crown without a cross. But we are assuming that Southern Baptists understand that and have turned their gaze from the sweet bye and bye to the nasty now and now. We are assuming that Southern Baptists have understood themselves as a community of grace, a community where every person at the banquet table of the king is a beggar and not only rejoices in the grace that brought him there but accepts his fellow beggar as well. For that reason we have opened the doors of our churches to men of all races because to exclude any is to become a community of privilege, not of grace, and denies that we are the church.

II. WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS ????

A. To move from integration to brotherhood. Obviously it is one thing to open the doors of our churches to men of other races and quite another to accept them as our brothers in Christ or merely as our fellow human beings. If the biblical hope of a new community of new men is to be realized, then we must go beyond our open door policies to brotherhood. Our gospel is often suspect by men of other races because they readily understand the broad dispartiy between grudging accommodation and accepting brotherhood. Like the tenacious demon which the disciples could not cast out, this subtle racism of ours comes out only by "prayer and fasting."

B. To make Community a Realityin the Community. The blight of our cities and one of the great catalysts for black disillusionment has been "white flight" from black neighbors. Communities have literally turned from white to black in a few months. In concentric circles the white middle and upper classed have moved further and further away. In Dallas, where we are facing this problem, I have said to my church that such a flight from black neighbors is a denial of our ministry reconciliation, believes our commitment to producing community, and is an affirmation of our racism. To move away from a neighbor simply because his skin is black is like spitting in the face of God and is a sin. When will we come to understand that this rejection of other human beings is far closer to the essence of hell than many of the peccadillos against which we have raged? Would God that our outrage against Madeline O'Hare's rejection of God were matched by God's childrens' rejection of His children. Unless pastors and church leaders take a strong stand on this matter and speak prophetically and clearly to their people this flight must continue to the ends of the earth and the black man's rage and disillusionment will drive him further and further from us. Is not Christ the answer to this problem? I recently had opportunity to "put my life where my mouth has been." Into my upper middle class neighborhood, right across the street from me, moved a gigantic black football player! Up the street a Negro funeral director is regularly parking a hearse! We have seized this opportunity to welcome our new neighbors and to set about practicing the community which I have preached. Whether my preaching at this point has had any bearing or not I cannot tell, but in our community a neighborhood organization has been formed, the vast majority of white people are not selling their homes and both black and white are buying into the community at about the same rate! When our people learn that sin goes deeper than smoking, drinking and dancing, they will take sin seriously. When we help them to understand that "white flight" is a sin for the "new humanity," many will respond positively. Talk of community at church has a hollow ring when we refuse black neighbors.

C. To Maintain Community and Quality in the Public Schools. The vision of the Lord calling us to establish church schools seems to escalate in troubled racial times. While it is true that some church schools have black students, the percentage in most is very low and the social status of these blacks is quite high. Deserved or not, "Christian schools" created in the midst of racial tension are widely considered to be "segregation academies." Where this is true, and I am convinced that it is widely true, the final paradox, the greatest blasphemy obtains! That the house of reconciliation, the community of new men, should be the final bastion of separation! That racism, subtly disguising itself as "Christian education" or "finer education" should hide behind the cross on which the

Savior broke down the barriers between men is close to the unpardonable sin! If those of us who know Christ and believe that union with Him by the indwelling Holy Spirit is the answer to the horrible division and dreadful agony of the world forsake the public schools, the most dire consequences must ensue. Division, polarity, and hostility already rising like a boil will continue to fester and ultimately erupt. The Christian is the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and is given the ministry of reconciliation. His task, as a Christ-man, is to remain in the difficult and vulnerable place where it is possible to be wounded, because that is what it means to "take up the cross and follow." It is not easy. Gethsemane and Golgotha are always difficult but they are the route to resurrection in newness of life and community. Southern Baptists must preach this word with all of the clarity and power with which they have preached "ye must be born again."

D. Busing. There is no more volatile issue in the land than that of school busing. Normally quiet and gentle people can become violent on this subject. One readily understands. Things which do not disturb us personally become objects of great concern when they threaten our children. Parents, honestly convinced that mass busing away from the neighborhood schools is education folly and violates common sense are up in arms. Fear that physical harm may come to their children enroute is not lacking. Whatever the merits of busing may be, ours is the ministry of reconciliation. While some are burning school buses and loudly proclaiming disdain for the law of the land, let us determine that we will do something positive to ensure safety for all of the children, minimize the concern for the distance to be traveled, and work for reconciliation and peace. "Blessed are the peacemakers" was never more relevant. In our church we have volunteers who have said that they will ride the buses as monitors if it is necessary. We have adopted two local schools and are sending volunteers in to help in the classrooms, the hallways, the lunchrooms in all of the educational and peacemaking ways that we can. Our efforts have been eagerly received by the school system and by the local schools. Black people understand our concern about busing. They have endured it for decades! They understand about threat to one's children, too. When we give ourselves to guarantee safety, peace, and reconciliation, some from every race will respond in kind. Perhaps we will find a better way than busing in the near future. In the meantime, God's people can be instruments of destruction or of peace.

E. To "Infiltrate" the Governmental Processes. In the final analysis, Southern Baptists must have some part of the "power structure" if they hope to maximize their efforts to participate in God's intention to make all things right. Much of the decision-making which controls housing, taxation, services, jail systems, zoning, street-paving, etc. is accomplished in the city-council or local government. The distribution of governmental funds for the relief of poverty, equal employment, etc. is often accomplished by Community Action Boards. Baptists have too long exchewed these opportunities as means of God's reconciling grace. We must run for and elect councilmen, representatives, senators, and the like on every level of government. Baptists should become a part of every community group which is honestly seeking to enrich the lives of others, particularly the poor and minority races. It is so rare for Baptists to speak in this way that they are bound to be noticed when they do and make a part of these agencies.

Southern Baptists are a powerful force in this country and people in the power structures are aware of it. They desperately need our efforts in the rapidly deteriorating racial scene in the land. In the past we have been little involved in "social affairs" and it has been my experience that the city welcomes the weight and help of Southern Baptists.

If we would belie the charges of incredible, irrelevant, and impotent often levelled against us, we must NOW go beyond open church doors to active participation with the Father in "making all things right."

NEWS RELEASES CONCERNING CONFERENCE

David Gooch
Christian Life Commission Staff Writer

Apathy, inactivity, regression, mingled with some signs of hope characterize race relations in America today, participants in a Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission Conference were told here.

"Much of the apathy and inactivity in racial affairs is the result of the widespread belief by white America that since the riots have stopped, the problems are solved," said Larry McSwain, assistant professor of church and community at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

"America is more segregated than it was five years ago," McSwain observed. "There is more residential segregation and more school segregation than five years ago. The quality of ghetto housing in most cities of the nation is worse than five years ago."

Both McSwain and T. B. Maston, retired professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, cited figures that show that the dollar gap between the average white and black annual income has actually increased during the last decade.

Both were major speakers at the Christian Life Commission-sponsored conference on "Race: New Directions for a New Day," at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center here.

In a paper which presented an overview of "Where We Are in Race Relations," Maston said that while there has been progress--educationally, politically, economically--there is still a long way to go in bringing an end to racial injustice.

He discussed the current impact of the busing to achieve racial balance in public schools, noting that some say it is a "phoney issue" since buses have long been accepted as a part of educational procedure.

Maston said arguments against busing that claim the practice will lower the educational standards for their children "may be a part of the problem that white people in general will have to pay for a while for the inferior education that Negro youngsters have received for years in segregated schools."

Speaking about segregated Baptist churches, Maston said, "What really concerns me is when a preacher refers to the present state of race relations as the 'will of God.'"

"The more our churches really become the churches of God, the body of Christ, the wider their doors and arms will be opened to men and women, boys and girls of all classes and colors," Maston concluded.

Thomas Bland, professor of Christian ethics and sociology at Southeastern

Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, spoke about the "challenges Southern Baptists face in race relations."

Bland said we must seek "what is happening in race relations today as expression of God's judgment upon us." He said we are learning that "the consequences of sin are shared across generations."

Calling the church "the most segregated major institution in American society," Bland condemned the general passive attitude in seeking to deal with race relations.

"The local church has the challenge before us to make visible in the human community the love of God for all people. This surely means a racially inclusive membership," he said. And, it requires an aggressive program of outreach which is racially inclusive, he said.

"As the largest non-Catholic body in the United States, and as the numerically dominant denomination in those regions with the greatest involvement in race relations, we should be exceedingly careful to fulfill our Christian service as citizens," Bland admonished.

He called for Southern Baptists to "stand by our public schools," during "these times of transition" marked by racial desegregation, by busing and "by what may feel to be a loss of educational quality."

Bland said, "we should resist all efforts to have our church buildings become private, segregated 'Christian schools.'"

Bland called for the church to exercise its power in social and political structures of the world, working with secular agencies and individuals in racial concern.

Along a similar line, McSwain told the conference that "every person ought to be personally involved in at least one kind of community action project," and that ministers should be leading laymen toward involvement in such issues.

"Any church which is not involving its membership in the needs and life of its community is failing to fulfill the fullest imperative of the gospel," McSwain asserted.

* * * * *

Baptist leaders speaking here at a Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission conference painted a grim picture of the race relations scene affecting Southern Baptists today.

Citing the development of a new racism among both blacks and whites coupled with a growing sense of apathy, the conference speakers called for Southern Baptists to turn back the regressive tide that threatens to end progress in the area of race relations.

"Race: New Directions for a New Day" was the topic of the week-long

conference held at the Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center here.

Cecil E. Sherman, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Asheville, N.C., called problems Southern Baptists face in race relations, "tough, complex ones, with no easy answers."

Sherman, who is chairman of the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, called for preachers to proclaim the gospel in the area of race relations. "Most Southern Baptists churches are still wrapped in a blanket of silence on this troublesome subject," he said.

"One of our major problems is that most pastors have never told their people that racism is really a sin against the living God," Sherman said.

"This racism is a part of the soul-sickness that has always blighted the human spirit," Sherman commented. "It is the ages-long struggle of the Church."

"Including race in the gospel will do more to do away with racism than anything I know," he said.

Sherman spoke of the struggles of his church to have an open membership, observing that "black separatism is the greatest barrier to further integration than anything else today."

He called on Southern Baptist pastors to condemn racism in all quarters--white or black--and warned them not to wait for black pastors to speak out against black racism before condemning white racism.

"Waiting for the black clergy to declare black racism to be evil is a wait that will let a thousand white pastors off the hook," he observed. "What is wrong is wrong. If they won't say it, we ought to say it."

He called for Southern Baptists not to tire in their efforts to bring about racial reconciliation. He said, "Most of the people feel, 'We've tried, and it didn't work. And I told you so!'"

"The more liberal among Southern Baptists need to come out, risk themselves, if necessary fly in the face of the establishmentarians among us, take our lumps, and declare again the biblical ideal," Sherman challenged. "We do not stop preaching on stewardship when we do not get all of the people to tithe."

Charles V. Petty, director of the Council of Christian Life and Public Affairs of the Baptist General Convention of North Carolina in Raleigh, cited some positive and negative contributions Southern Baptists have made in the area of race relations. "Southern Baptists are doing much to promote brotherhood and alienation--love and hate--justice and injustice," Petty claimed.

As positive contributions, Petty listed the desegregation of Baptist hospitals, colleges, seminaries, institutions, and churches; increased ministries to minority groups; increased interracial dialogue; material by Baptist agencies on race relations; involvement of Baptists in seeking to change power structures

to bring about racial justice; and prophetic preaching by some pastors.

In a list of "sins" in the area of race relations, Petty included apathy, timidity, talk without deed, paternalism, failure to employ blacks to work with blacks, the support of legislation, programs and schools that promote segregation and racism, and punishment of persons who speak out for social justice.

In a speech entitled, "Race: Next Steps for Southern Baptists," Douglas Watterson, pastor of the Cliff Temple Baptist Church in Dallas, Tex., said that the basic assumption was that the doors of the church are open to all of the children of God.

From there, he said that pastors should "Call white flight (from racial problems and racially changing neighborhoods) a sin."

Not only should we stay in the community, but we should stay in the public schools, Watterson said. "We'll ride the bus if it is necessary to bring about reconciliation."

"We have to get involved in the governmental process in our city," he said, to bring about needed changes.

Speaking from the black viewpoint, Emmanuel L. McCall, associate secretary of the department of work with National Baptists of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta, suggested that there needs to be "a re-reading of history." He claimed, "Most Southern Baptists still lack an adequate understanding of the black presence in America and what the attendant evils of slavery have done to both races then and now."

"One must try to understand the contemporary dynamics that form black opinions and attitudes," he added.

He cautioned Southern Baptists about over-compensation for feelings of guilt. "You cannot be held responsible for the sins of fathers, grandfathers, greats . . . One is responsible only for his time and his involvement in redeeming the corporate sin that affects us," McCall said.

If Southern Baptists expect to relate successfully to black Baptists, "we must be willing to be ministered unto as well as to minister," McCall explained. "Black Baptists have much to offer if Southern Baptists are willing to receive."

Edgar H. Burks, Jr., Southern Baptist foreign missionary to Nigeria, spoke about problems that are caused for missionaries working among Africans by racist attitudes of Americans and, particularly, Southern Baptists.

"The practice of racial discrimination in the United States is a constant threat to every American who works abroad, especially countries whose nationals have been discriminated against," declared Burks, who is executive secretary of the Nigerian Mission of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

He told of numerous incidents of racism against persons converted by Southern Baptist foreign missionaries when they had come to the United States.

He also told of "ugly Americans" who have imported their racism from their homeland. "Nigerians don't like racism in America, but they deeply resent it when Americans come as guests to their land and bring along their sickness," Burks explained.

Burks said that currently only two black missionaries are under appointment by the Foreign Mission Board--one career and one journeyman missionary. "We need more blacks to join us in sharing the truth that Christ can and does break down barriers and that Christianity is not just a white man's religion," he said.

"I trust that church doors will continue to be opened to black members and that we shall see a number of them seeking missionary appointment," Burks said.

Earlier in the conference, T. B. Maston, former professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, had presented a paper that gave an overview of "Where We Are in Race Relations."

Maston had concluded that while there had been some progress in several areas--such as economics, politics, and education--there is still a long way to go in bringing about an end to racial injustice.

Thomas Bland, professor of Christian ethics and sociology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., spoke about the "challenges Southern Baptists face in race relations."

In another address, Larry McSwain, assistant professor of church and community at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., called Southern Baptists to active involvement in community action projects to help bring about changes.

He said, "Any church which is not involving its membership in the needs and life of its community is failing to fulfill the fullest imperatives of the gospel."