

# LIGHT

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Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention

January-February 1982

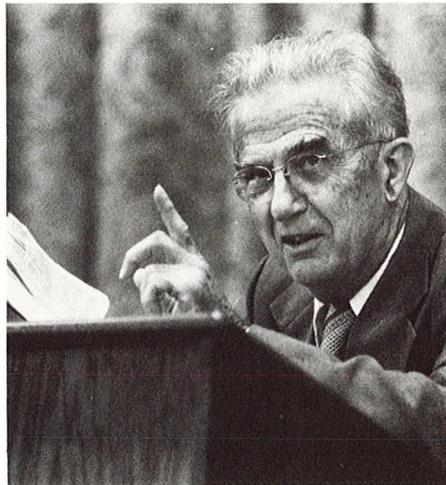
## An Interview with T. B. Maston Race and Race Relations

**LIGHT:** What are some of the highlights of your professional career that reflect your involvement with the issue of race relations?

**MASTON:** Only a few can be mentioned. The area of involvement has included teaching, writing, and speaking. The first thing that I wrote in the area of race, so far as I can remember, was a pamphlet entitled *Racial Revelations* (1927). Beginning in the early 30s there were numerous Sunday School lessons, Training Union programs, and articles for the *Baptist Student*. The second book I ever had published was *Of One* (1946) in a series for the Home Mission Board.

In 1946 a course was offered on "Problems of the South" which included the rural South and race relations. After a couple of years it was divided with a course on each. I judge this course was the first taught in any of our seminaries.

I was elected the first chairman (1955) of the Advisory Council on Southern Baptist Work with Negroes. At the request of the Council, I was asked to speak to the Southern Baptist Convention on "Southern Baptists and the Negro." Two or three years ago I was included in a volume produced by the Home Mission Board entitled *His Heart Is Black*.



T. B. Maston

**LIGHT:** What special events or circumstances sensitized you to the needs in this area?

**MASTON:** One factor was my family. It had little if any racial prejudice. Also, we lived for ten years in a small town in Ohio where there were only two black families. I sat across the aisle from a boy from one of those families and played with him at recess. When I was in high school in Tennessee, there was a race riot in Knoxville. This made a considerable impact on my life. I think I can honestly say, though, that the greatest impact of my life regarding race and a good

many other things was the reading of the Scriptures. I was almost seventeen years of age when I was converted. I read the entire Bible through two or three times within about a year after my conversion. I have never gotten away from some of the impressions that that made on my life.

**LIGHT:** Describe the issue of race relations as you saw it in the 1940s and 1950s. What stances were churches taking, especially Southern Baptist churches?

**MASTON:** This was a critical stage. The blacks or Negroes were increasingly restless. As they became more vocal, many of the white people, including many in our churches, hardened in their attitude toward blacks. Southern Baptist churches, of course, varied a good deal, but many of them would not permit a black in the worship service. This same pattern of varied reaction continued through the Civil Rights era into our own time.

**LIGHT:** What barriers existed in the religious and political communities that you thought needed to be overcome?

**MASTON:** From the political viewpoint, of course, blacks were second-class citizens. I had a conviction which I

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# Stand Fast

The long war against racism is not over.

The great American dilemma is not resolved.

The cries of poor blacks in particular, of other poor minorities, and of the poor in general are now being callously ignored in Washington.

The positive actions in support of the Christian way in race relations taken by the people of God in recent decades have tended to succumb to benign neglect which in turn is slowly but surely changing into malignant racism.

After taking some positive steps forward in race relations, the country is now taking an unconscionable step backward.

We must stop this madness.

What can Christians do?

**We can remember and be thankful.** Thank God for the end of human slavery that came not much more than a hundred years ago. Thank God for the legal demolition of this nation's separate-but-equal doctrine which undegraded a caste system based on race. Thank God for the Supreme Court's

1954 ruling that segregation in the public schools on the basis of race is unconstitutional and thank God for all the other civil rights victories of the 1950s and 1960s. Thank God for the color-blind churches that with open hearts and open doors have committed themselves to "stand fast" in proclaiming the whole gospel to the whole human race. And thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord who has broken down the middle wall of partition, the dividing wall of hostility, between races, classes, sexes, generations, and nations.

**We can watch and be prayerful.**

Test the spirits. Has anyone really believed that trickle-down economics would be anything other than devastating to black children, Hispanic mothers, Asian immigrant families, minority workers, and poor old people? Has there been any general discernment of the long-range impact on America of the Reagan Administration's recent decision to subsidize racism in education by extending tax-exempt status to schools that discriminate against blacks? How many Christians have recently really looked racism in the eye and decided not only to touch not the unclean thing but also to resist it with every ounce of their moral strength? We must watch carefully and pray earnestly lest we ourselves fall into grievous sin at the point of racism.

**We can work and be hopeful.**

Using whatever implements, little or big, private or public, personal or social, that we can lay our hands on, Christians can work for justice, equal opportunity, mercy, kindness, forgiveness, restoration, and renewal in the tremendously important arena of race relations. If we do not renew our work to cast out the evil spirit of racism and replace that evil force with a good spirit of brotherly love and aggressive good will, then it is clear that seven devils, each worse than the first, are ready to move in and take over. If we will do our part to "stand fast" in support of the Christian way in race relations, we can be hopeful, for this "battle is the Lord's."



**"... You are all one in Christ Jesus."**

Galatians 3:28b

**Observe Race Relations Sunday  
February 14, 1982**

Sponsored by the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention

*Joy Valentine*

## . . .Interview

(continued from page 1)

still have that every church that claims to be a "church of God" should not and really cannot close its doors to any of God's children. A church may be at Corinth, at Atlanta, or at Dallas, but it is a "church of God" and should never forget that.

**LIGHT: How do you evaluate the responses of Southern Baptists to the 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing segregated public schools.**

**MASTON:** I am sure that the vast majority of Southern Baptists at that time disapproved the Supreme Court's action. Fortunately, the Southern Baptist Convention itself approved it. I was not at the Convention but my understanding is that the motion to approve likely would not have passed if it had not been for a statesmanlike speech that J. B. Weatherspoon made. He was chairman of the Christian Life Commission at that time, and was a highly respected denominational statesman and teacher.

**LIGHT: Why did you decide to write *The Bible and Race*?**

**MASTON:** *Of One*, written in 1946, had gone out of print. I felt that Southern Baptists needed something on race. It might be interesting for the readers to know that I had a problem getting the book published. I do not remember how long Broadman Press had the manuscript, but I do know that on two different occasions I was asked to revise it at certain points. The last request included, I think, about twenty-five or thirty specific changes that were requested. I made as many of those as I could, but I did write back and say there were some that I could not in good conscience make. I was not sure whether it would be published or not. The same year (1959) *Segregation and Desegregation* was published by the Macmillan Company. They had previously published a book of mine, *Christianity and World Issues* (1957). In some way they found out that I was working on something on race and wrote that if I had not gone too far with Broadman Press they would like to con-

sider it. I wrote back and told Macmillan that I wanted to have Broadman publish it because I wanted to reach Southern Baptists, but that I did have in mind another manuscript. I was asked to send a chapter. I did so and received immediately a contract for the book. The difference in writing the two books was that as I wrote *The Bible and Race* I continually asked myself, "Can I say this and get it published?" When I wrote *Segregation and Desegregation*, I simply asked myself, "Is this what I want to say?" because I was sure that the Macmillan Company would go ahead and publish it.

Incidentally, I think Broadman Press at

**LIGHT: How would you evaluate the contributions of Martin Luther King, Jr., in the area of race relations?**

**MASTON:** His contributions, it seems to me, were the greatest of any from the strictly religious perspective. I think the strategy that he suggested of peaceful resistance was what he considered to be a Christian one, but it also was the best strategy at that particular time. There were other blacks who made major contributions, such as W.E.B. DuBose and Booker T. Washington, who advocated different strategies but had somewhat the same goal. My judgment is that the writers, particularly the Negro poets,

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**"A church can theoretically desegregate without really integrating."**

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the present time should have something in print on race. It should possibly be broadened to include groups other than blacks.

**LIGHT: How was *The Bible and Race* received?**

**MASTON:** There was a mixture of reaction, the critical balanced by approval. The criticisms were not as severe as I received after I wrote *Of One*. The Woman's Missionary Union requested Broadman to publish 50,000 paperback copies of the book. I have been eternally grateful to the W.M.U. for its pioneer leadership in the area of race as well as in some other areas.

**LIGHT: Why did the civil rights movement become such a major social phenomenon in the 1960s? Why did it not happen earlier?**

**MASTON:** One of the major factors, of course, was the upward educational and economic movement of the blacks. As they moved up they became more aware of their inequities. I think it is impossible to measure accurately the contributions that were made by sociologists and others. I personally think that the publication of Myrdal's study was a major factor. These kinds of things may be rather indirect, but the contributions trickle down and become very significant.

made some distinctive contributions to the awareness of whites to the restless movement of the masses including in our own country. I personally was challenged and I enjoyed, back in those days, reading some of the poetry of Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and others.

**LIGHT: Are Southern Baptists of today more responsive to minority groups and their needs than was true twenty-five years ago? How have we changed? How are we similar?**

**MASTON:** We are definitely more responsive than we were twenty-five years ago, although that is spotty. There is still plenty of resistance to full desegregation and meaningful integration. And, incidentally, we should recognize that even churches that have opened their doors to blacks and have black members have not really integrated the blacks as well as other minority groups until they have utilized those members in the structures of the church. A church can theoretically desegregate without really integrating.

**LIGHT: In which area(s) do you think race relations have made the most noticeable progress, i.e., political, social, economic, religious, educational? Why?**

**MASTON:** I hate to admit it, but pos-

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## . . . Interview

(continued from page 3)

sibly the least in the religious area. This is primarily due to the fact that in religious organizations there is not the pressure to change that there is in most of the others. In other words, whatever progress is made in our churches and in our denominational life will be voluntary. Possibly as much progress has been made in the area of athletics as anywhere else. One reason for this is the fact that many blacks are noticeably superior to most whites and in some sports they almost dominate the sport. It is also true that there has been considerable pressure in the area of

only contributor to this situation but it is a factor. It has seemed to me for a long time that the greatest need is in the area of housing. This is beginning to change in most of our cities, where there are a number of blacks and Latins who have moved up the educational and economic ladder and are moving into some of the nicer areas that have been largely if not exclusively white.

**LIGHT: The Reagan administration has been criticized for neglecting minorities and the poor. Is this a valid criticism?**

**MASTON:** Definitely, yes. It may be that "neglecting" is not exactly the right word. At least, the administration has

**other than blacks should be considered?**

**MASTON:** In the southwest, the Latin Americans. It is predicted that some of the states bordering Mexico will soon have more Latins than Anglos. There are many communities that have more of some groups other than black. It might be that "minorities" would be a better term, but in certain areas some non-white groups are no longer minorities or will not be for very long. It is possible that the simple term "human relations" would be a better term.

**LIGHT: How do you see our current social environment? What are the current issues that Southern Baptists need to address?**

**MASTON:** There are many issues that Southern Baptists need to think about in addition to the race issue, which is a continuing one. My judgment is that the relation of church and state will be a major issue in the years immediately ahead. I hope Southern Baptists will increasingly see that we have become entirely too materially minded and too obsessed with bigness. This is true of local churches but it tends also to be true of denominational agencies and institutions. We have tended to move up the economic and educational ladder and, unfortunately, have also tended to move away from the common people. The former seems to be inevitable, but the latter is not. If we do not correct this movement, it is going to adversely effect every phase of Southern Baptist life, including our evangelistic outreach and results.

**LIGHT: What special barriers do we have to overcome in applying the gospel to relationships with persons of a race different than our own?**

**MASTON:** We need to understand the nature of racial prejudice. For most of us it has been caught like we catch the measles. In other words, we live in an environment where it is prevalent. We need also to understand that racial prejudice is a two-way street. It has been and still is extremely difficult for us to get away from the paternalistic attitude toward those of other races. This must be done if we are to reach them effectively. Fraternalism rather than paternalism

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*"I hope Southern Baptists will increasingly see that we have become entirely too materially minded and too obsessed with bigness."*

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politics, although there has not been as much progress as there should have been. The economic area is rather slow. It is hard for a black or a member of another minority group to get the advancement that he ought to have based on his ability and training. Marked progress has been made in the educational area, but we still have a long way to go there.

**LIGHT: Share with LIGHT readers your opinion about affirmative action and busing. What do you foresee politically for these two strategies for improving the status of minority groups?**

**MASTON:** I personally believe that limited affirmative action is justified. I do believe, however, that blacks and other minority groups should recognize that affirmative action does not, at least should not, relieve them of special efforts to prepare themselves so they can compete on the level with the white majority.

I personally favored busing but it seems in many communities to be counter-productive. At least partially because of busing there has been a "white flight" to private schools in the community and to the suburbs. Most inner cities are increasingly becoming black, brown, and poor white. There is some movement right now back to the inner city but not much. Of course, busing is not the

been putting its priorities somewhere else.

**LIGHT: How has the issue of race relations affected our foreign and home mission efforts?**

**MASTON:** I can speak more directly to the effect on foreign mission work since I have been involved in a good many ways with the work of our Foreign Mission Board and our missionaries. Some years ago, which incidentally was 1954, while I was in Uruguay we had a meeting with pastors and their wives in the home of one of the missionaries. Curiously enough, the very first question that I was asked was about the race issue in the United States. With rapid communication around the world, what is done here in the States on Saturday night is known by Sunday morning almost everywhere else in the world. Also, the racial situation here in the States tends to affect the missionaries as they go. Some of them may not think so, but they frequently have attitudes toward those of other cultures and ethnic groups that will be a handicap to them unless they overcome those attitudes.

**LIGHT: The phrase "race relations" has been used almost as a synonym for "black-white" relations. This is no longer adequate. How broadly should the phrase be used today? What minority groups**

needs to characterize our approach to and relation to those of other races.

**LIGHT: How do we avoid being overcome by frustration and pessimism in the face of the difficulty of achieving the type of love Christ showed us?**

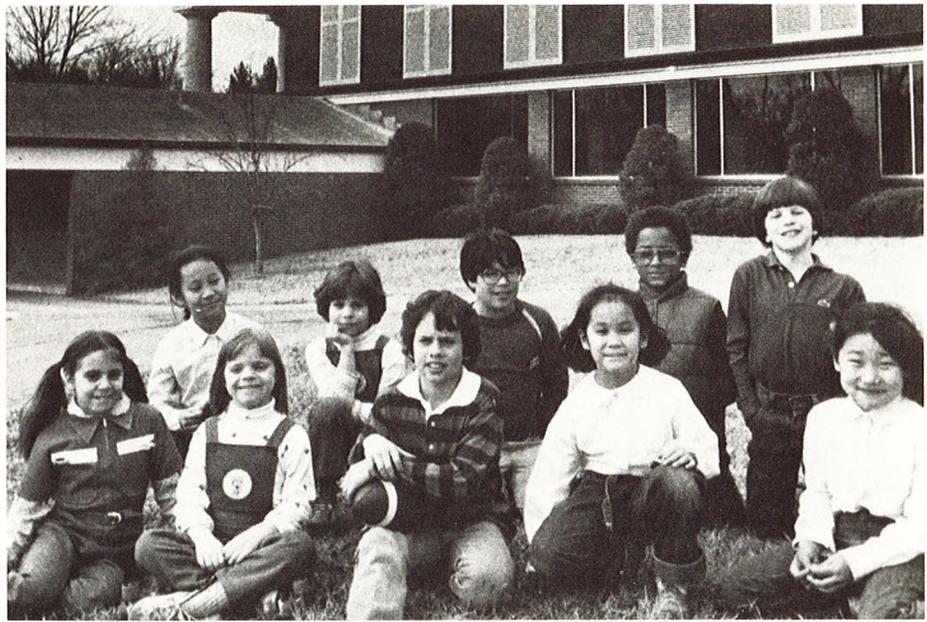
**MASTON:** Strong abiding faith in the sovereign God of the universe whose big overall will will be done ultimately will help to save us from frustration and pessimism. We need to be sure that we are right, not only in our position, but also in our spirit and attitude.

**LIGHT: If you were going to preach in a Southern Baptist church on Race Relations Sunday, what two or three passages from the Bible might you use for your sermon?**

**MASTON:** One suggestion would be to speak on "No Respector of Persons," using Acts 10:34 as the basic text. After a brief introduction, giving the setting for the statement by Peter in the house of Cornelius, the message could be built around the following: (1) Background for the Statement—Peter's vision on the housetop, (2) Significance of the Statement, and (3) Application of the Statement. (This based on Chapter III of *The Bible and Race*.)

**LIGHT: What can we as individuals do? As local churches? As a denomination?**

**MASTON:** As individual Christians we should respect all people regardless of color, culture, or condition of life. We should recognize that all people are created in the image of God, that they are individuals for whom Christ died.



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***"We should recognize that all people are created in the image of God, that they are individuals for whom Christ died."***

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This should give us a deep sense of their worth. It means, among other things, that we should reach out to them in a spirit of understanding and love. Local churches should be open to anyone to come to worship or to come into the membership of the church the same way that we receive others from our own churches. Also, if blacks or other groups live in our area, then churches ought to put forth the same effort to reach them, to win and to enlist them as they do any of the white people.

The denominational agencies could

do quite a bit by employing blacks and those of other so-called minority groups when they can find individuals who are qualified. There ought to be a special effort to do this in some of our agencies that most directly are related to the racial situation, such as the Christian Life Commission, Home Mission Board, and so forth.

**Dr. T. B. Maston is Professor of Christian Ethics, Retired, at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he taught for forty years.**

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# Good News to the Poor

by The Honorable Walter E. Fauntroy

This article is adapted from a presentation by Delegate Fauntroy at the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs National Religious Liberty Conference, October 6, 1981, in Washington, D.C.

## Vantage Points

I bring you greetings first as pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church, the church of my childhood, the church that fried chitlins and chicken to send me to college, and the church which upon completion of my preparation for the Christian ministry honored me with the highest calling to which a man may be summoned. That is the privilege of preaching the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I am one who has learned over the years that it has been my privilege to be engaged in that preaching ministry, that the gospel is not just good history. It's good news. It's good history that the Master fed five thousand people two thousand years ago, but it's good news when his followers of today act in the living present to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked and to set at liberty those who are oppressed.

And one of the great joys of my life is that every once in a while I am privileged as I am this morning to declare good news to the poor. Last night at approximately 10:10 p.m., 389 members of the House outvoted 24 members in declaring good news to the oppressed and poor across this nation, that a voting rights act would be sent to the Senate. That is good news because politics, as you know, is the means by which we in a democracy translate what we believe into public policy and practice. Let me say that again. Politics is the means by which we in a democracy translate what we believe into public policy and practice.

Those of us who claim to be Christians hold to two very important beliefs. One is the one given us in our Lord's inaugural address, that we are anointed of God to declare good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, and to set at lib-



erty the oppressed. And the other is that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself and has given to us a ministry of reconciliation.

I wear another hat. I chair the Congressional Black Caucus, sixteen black men and two beautiful black women who together here on Capitol Hill seek to move this nation to the high grounds of principle that we enunciate but so often fail to live. Sixteen black men and two beautiful black women who together on this Hill seek to move the nation to deal with the basic problems confronting us, problems that just happen to be reflected most acutely in the black experience. The problems of *unemployment* are destabilizing families across this nation and that experience is reflected most acutely in the life of black Americans. The problems of *quality education in our public schools* are problems that are reflected most acutely in the black experience. The problems of *economic development and social justice* are reflected most acutely in the black experience.

We are in the midst of a period when there is being fashioned in this our nation's capital a great deal of bad news for the poor. It was Hubert Humphrey who, in 1977 in his last speech on Capitol Hill, said that the moral test of government is how we treat those in the dawn of life, our children; those in the twilight of life, our elderly; and those in the shadows of life, the sick, the poor, the needy, and the

handicapped. By that definition, our government has failed the moral test of government. By that definition, we have a great task ahead of us to declare good news where bad news is being declared from this Hill today.

## Faulty Assessments

I need not remind you that we have launched, both the President and the Congress, the most extraordinary attempt to redistribute wealth in this nation undertaken by any President and Congress in this century, with billions of dollars going from the poor to the very rich, with millions of Americans being kept at tiptoe. We are going about that transfer, which quickly involves \$241 billion being transferred—not cut, transferred—from human needs programs while \$220 billion are being delivered to multinational corporations and rich individuals through a tax relief program, at the same time that we are contemplating an outlay of \$1.7 trillion over the next five years in military spending.

## Domestic Matters

And the irony of it is that, first, this whole approach to government is based on two faulty assessments of what our problems in the country are. We have been treated for nearly a year to the thesis that the reason we have unemployment and inflation and low economic growth in this country is government: government spending, we spend too much on the poor; government taxation, we take too much from the rich; and government regulation, we attempt to regulate the lives of American citizens too much.

They have convinced the American people that that is the problem. Now we have been offered a solution that is relatively simplistic. That solution says that obviously what we must do to create jobs and economic development and revitalize our country is to cut government spending and cut government taxes and

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- **Jimmy Allen**, president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, and **Jerry Falwell**, pastor of the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, will present their **different perspectives on the subject of "Strengthening Families in the Nation."** These presentations like most of the other addresses will be followed by dialogue and discussion. This **exchange of differing viewpoints** on the same subject should be one of the highlights of the annual seminar which is known for its **lively and thought-provoking exchange of ideas.**
- **David Mace**, world famous family authority who will give six theme interpretations.
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deregulate American society. And that is what we are about.

The tragedy is that that is a faulty and false assessment of the nature of our domestic problem. The true nature of our domestic problems has nothing to do with twenty-two million families on food stamps or with the children of twenty-two million families enjoying child nutrition programs or with elderly citizens who are poor on Medicaid or with people who are in search of jobs not being able to find them and thus being eligible for 350,000 CETA jobs. That is not the problem.

Our problem domestically simply is that over the past fifteen to twenty years we have been experiencing a steady decline in economic performance in this country in manufacturing output and in product design and in productivity. The problem is that in sector after sector in our economy, we are producing insufficient quantities of poorly designed products at too high a price. When you do that, not only does the world not buy what we make, but we don't buy what we make. And, thus, we don't have jobs.

This is illustrated by an experience I had here a couple of years ago when my son asked me to get him a portable radio for Christmas. My son at that time was fourteen years of age and he knew who Santa Claus was, so I said, "Fine, I'll buy you a portable radio." And I went downtown to my favorite department store and saw on the shelf one of my favorite makes of portable radios, RCA Victor—you know, "his master's voice." It said AM and FM portable radio, \$87. I was just about to buy it when I got my wallet halfway out of my pocket and saw on another shelf something that said Sanyo. Now, it said AM, FM, three speakers, tape recorder, \$47. Now, I love America and, as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Domestic Monetary Policy of the House Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee, I know that when I buy products made with American labor, I'm supporting jobs for Americans and the tax base to help bear the burden of government. I know that. But when I saw something better for less, you know what I said? I said, "Sanyo," and I bought it.

The problem with our economy is that most Americans are doing just what I did. Most of us are buying Datsuns, Toyotas,

Kawasakis, Suzukis, Panasonics, Sonys. That's our problem. And that problem will not be solved by taking people off of food stamps and giving multinational corporations and rich individuals a tax raid on the federal treasury so that they can then convert their dollars to yen or marks or francs or rubles or Kruegerrand in South Africa where they exploit cheap labor. It will not be solved that way.

It will be solved only when we fashion a constructive alternative to the policies that are now being employed that will

what the nature of our problem internationally is. We have been convinced that we can solve our problems internationally, which are rooted in Soviet Russian expansionism, by military means.

I tell you in the name of God that our problems internationally do not lend themselves to military solutions. If that were the case, how could a little nation in the Middle East hold fifty-two hostages of ours for 444 days? All of our nuclear submarines slipping around in the water around the world, all of our B-52 bomb-

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### ***"I tell you in the name of God that our problems do not lend themselves to military solutions."***

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mean good news to the poor here and around the world. Those policies can be fashioned. Those policies can be implemented. When people understand that the role of government is to protect, care for, and defend the poor, we can do it. We recognize that we have a very difficult task in convincing the American people that the world beats a path to the one who makes the best mousetrap. You can't make the best mousetrap getting drunk at lunch on three-martini lunches.

We in the Congressional Black Caucus have fashioned a constructive alternative budget which we offered the nation. It's the best-kept secret in the country today, but it balances the budget this year and gives the nation a \$7 billion surplus. It provides \$2 billion more in tax relief than does the Reagan proposal. And it provides all of the social and human needs programs and a strong national defense, simply by asking the rich to share the burden of revitalizing the economy and putting Americans to work making what we and the world will buy again. Now that program, as I said, is being ignored because we've been sold this faulty thesis that if we can only get the poor off our backs in government and, secondly, defend ourselves against the Russians, everything will be all right.

#### **International Matters**

That leads me to my second point. Just as we have a faulty assessment of what the nature of our problem domestically is, we have a faulty assessment of

ers ready to fly overhead, and all of our ICBM missiles—9,600 of them siloed around the world—couldn't deal with the situation.

We couldn't deal with it because our problems do not lend themselves to military solutions. They are economic, social, and political in nature and we must fashion the diplomatic, social, economic, and political policies to deal with them. And so what we ought to be doing as a nation "under God," declaring good news to the poor, is not to provide military assistance to repressive regimes all over the world. Instead of providing military assistance, we need to be providing technical assistance and development assistance to nations like Zimbabwe, so that a Mugabee can build roads from the chromium mines to the sea where we can buy it, sell it to Detroit, and make a car that runs a longer way to empty than Datsun. That's our need.

#### **Roles**

So you see that as a Baptist preacher anointed of God to declare good news to the poor, I am trying, and I hope you will, to carry out the historic social action mission of the church. We, as clergy in the black church, have assumed at critical moments in our nation's history our role in the black community as prophet, priest, and king.

#### **As Prophet**

There come times when we must go from God to the people with a message

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## . . . Good News

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and that is what the church, I think, in these critical times is called to do. We must speak to the Moral Majority. We must speak to those who have been taken advantage of by shrewd, right-wing strategists, who have been misled to apply Christian principles to a narrow range of secondary issues while blatantly refusing to apply Christian principles to a broad range of primary issues in our nation.

I am a born-again Baptist preacher and I am opposed to abortion. I think every fetus ought to become a child. But once the child gets here, I am anointed of God, if the child is poor, to declare good news to it. So, I cannot, as a prophet, say that if the child is hungry, cut out the free

undertake, military spending. You cannot do that." And the Japanese generals, who left the army and went into business, said, "We can't make weapons?" And our managers said, "No." They said, "Can we make motorcycles?" Our managers said, "Yeah!" They said, "Can we make radios?" Our managers said, "Yeah!" They said, "Can we make televisions?" Our managers said, "Yeah!" They said, "Can we make automobiles?" And our managers said, "Yeah!"

And the problem with the nation is that our leadership has been getting drunk at lunch, out to lunch, while the Germans and Japanese are fashioning creative coalitions between government and labor and business to make what the world will buy. And so the time has come for us to say "No" to those who would deny hungry children a free lunch and who would take money from public schools, which are the only hope of the poor for educa-

they be in Somalia, or Zimbabwe or at 14th and G—inasmuch as you did it not to the least of these my little ones, you did it not unto me."

### As Priest

Well, secondly, we have to perform our role as priests. We've got to go from the people to God with a message. My good friend, Otis Morse, pastor of Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Cleveland and a colleague of ours in the struggle, says that black folks spend most of their time between, "Oh, Lord!" and "Thank you, Jesus!" We're in the "Oh, Lord!" period now, but this is not the first "Oh, Lord!" period we've been in. We were in it ten years ago when President Nixon ruled Washington with an iron hand. He had the imperial presidency and he impounded health care funds for the sick and aid for the handicapped and housing for the poor. And we said, "Oh, Lord!" because we have a role to go from the people as priests to the Father with an appeal.

You'll forgive me, but I worked hard to keep Mr. Nixon from becoming President; however, he became the President. And I was so despondent. But my grandmother said to me, "Don't worry about it, son. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof and he hasn't turned it over to Mr. Nixon. You just pray for him."

And I prayed. And before I knew it, God broke into the White House and started writing on the wall! And people were running around there saying, "You can't do it! You can't impeach the President! It will tear the nation up!" And I said, "Oh, no! That's what they told us a hundred years ago, but a Christian white woman named Julia Ward Howe said, 'Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored. He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword and his truth is marching on.'"

So when they were struggling around, John Buchanan and I were saying, "Glory, hallelujah! Glory, hallelujah! I have seen him in the watchfires of a hundred circling camps. They are building him an altar in the evening dews and damps and I can read his righteous sentence in the dim and flaring lamps; our God is marching on." I can read the

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***"I say that some people are being misled into applying Christian principles to a narrow range of secondary issues."***

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lunch program and instead allow the rich of the nation to continue the free lunch program they have on us.

Our constructive alternative budget notes a fact that most Americans are not aware of and that is that we have a free lunch program for the rich. It costs us \$3 billion a year. But we don't call it welfare, we call it the three-martini lunch deduction. We in our constructive alternative budget said, "Why should we deny \$1.5 billion in child nutrition programs for the poor and allow the rich to continue their free lunch program, and three-martini lunch?" Not just because I'm Baptist, but I don't think they need to drink that much. And we said, "Let's just take half the three-martini lunch. Give us \$1.5 billion and we can feed the children again and we can sober up the business and executives and managers of our country, because that's the problem."

You see, our managers, those in the command posts of economic power in this country, had to be drunk at lunch to be saying to the Japanese and Germans, "You all shall not engage in the most inflationary spending that a nation can

tion. We must say "No" to those who would transfer money, in the form of tuition tax credits, to "born-again Christian" schools like those in Prince William County, Virginia, where last year a little white girl got too friendly with a little black boy and the pastor-principal put her out of school, took her mother to court, and stood before the world and said, "In the name of de Lawd, Aunt Hagar's children should not be playing with Miss Ann's children."

I say that some people are being misled into applying Christian principles to a narrow range of secondary issues. When this warfare of life is over—and I'm almost ready to preach now—when this warfare of life is over, the Lord's not going to ask us how many churches we built and how many tuition tax credits we gamered and how many MX missiles we deployed around the world. He's going to ask you, "When I was hungry, did you feed me and when I was thirsty, did you give me to drink, and when I was sick and in prison, did you come to see about me? And inasmuch as you did it not unto the least of these my little ones—whether

sentence, "Be not deceived. God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

And so, we must be about that priestly ministry, and I'm not wishing anyone ill. I'm just hoping the Lord will open up the eyes of the blind and unstop the ears of the deaf and will speak to those who have been misled. There are those who feel that they can increase their wealth by dividing government from the people and black from white and labor from management. They have us who are anointed of God saying with the Master in the Sermon on the Mount, "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing." They want to pray in the schools and yet in their hearts are they ravenous wolves. I say with the psalmist in the 55th Psalm, "Their tongues are smoother than butter, but war is in their hearts: the words of their mouths are softer than oil, and yet are they drawn swords." They cut out the hearts of programs that meet the needs of the least of these, my little ones. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the church at Rome, a conservative church, said, "For I bear you record that you have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For you being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish your own righteousness, have not submitted yourselves unto the righteousness

of God." We have a prophetic and a priestly ministry to carry on.

### As King

Finally, we've got to be kings. I don't want you to think that as a Baptist preacher, accustomed to "ruling with an iron hand" in my church, I think I'm a king. I don't want you to think that. But I'm a child of the King. My Father is rich. I didn't want to preach; but he's rich in houses and lands, he holds the wealth of the world in his hands, and it's time for Christian leadership to lead, to lead the nation. We just held last week our Congressional Black Caucus Weekend; and they made the mistake of giving a preacher the responsibility of leading the Caucus during this 97th Congress. While we wrestled through the valley of the dry bones of our dreams deferred, they asked a preacher to lead. And I simply said last Saturday night, "Can these dry bones live?" Somebody said, "Oh, yes, Reverend, if the head bone connected to the neck bone, if the shoulder bone connected to the backbone, the backbone to the hip bone, the hip bone to the leg bone and these bones walked around, somebody would hear the word of the Lord."

And just this past week, we walked and called 389 members of the House, and said, "In the name of the Lord, you

are to declare good news to the poor on October 5 when it comes to the floor for a vote. And those of you who don't declare good news, who don't vote for our right to vote, we'll remember that you don't want us to vote and we will not vote for you next year." That's what you call a prophetic ministry, a prophecy in that sense.

### Conclusion

We do have this great responsibility to give leadership. This is a time when we must dig deeper than ever in the wellsprings of our faith and draw the waters of joy from the wells of salvation that were good enough for our mothers and fathers and ought to be good enough for us today. It may mean that we're lied on and cheated and talked about and mistreated and it may mean that we bear a cross. But no cross, no crown. I would just leave you with the hope and the expectation that as you proclaim good news in these difficult times, you will resolve to fulfill the important role of the prophet, the priest, and representative of the King.

**Walter E. Fauntroy is Delegate to the United States House of Representatives for the District of Columbia. He is also pastor of the New Bethel Baptist Church of Washington, D.C.**

## Foreign Missions and Race Relations

by **A. Clark Scanlon**

While serving as a missionary in Tanzania, Davis Saunders greeted his little daughter Nina coming home from school. She proudly announced that the next day she was bringing home a friend from school to play with her. Davis responded, "That's fine. Is she European, Asian or African?"

Nina thought for a moment and then said, "I don't know; I'll look tomorrow."

If everyone had Nina's perspective and noticed what people are on a depth level instead of superficial levels of race, language and customs, there would be no race problems, and the cause of missions would be helped immensely.

The foreign mission enterprise is built

on the truth that every human being is created in the image of God and is a candidate for heaven through Jesus Christ. This world view shared by most Southern Baptists provides a valuable tool to determine our personal strategy of race relationships. Twenty-seven years as a foreign missionary in Middle America and in the Caribbean and current involvement in the world of missions have provided me with a vantage point to see some of the connections between missions and race relations.

### The Biblical Concept

Ours is one world created by the one God. In a visionary passage, Isaiah grasped the idea of God who said, "I

alone am the Lord your God. No other God may share my glory; I will not let idols share my praise" (Isaiah 42:8, Good News Bible). There is one God who is God of all, or he is not God at all. Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:26, 27 point out that God is the Creator of the heavens, the earth and all persons.

Creation in God's image means we have a common humanity. One of the things that comes from living in a foreign culture and digging beneath the superficial aspects of cultural differences in speech, dress and manner is the realization that fundamentally people everywhere are the same with common hurts, needs and desires in life. There is a

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common stuff of humanity that transcends all cultural differences. It is this aspect that makes salvation possible. It is this fact that makes missions possible. Because there is one God and one Savior Jesus Christ, and everyone who comes to the Father must come through him, there is a great deal of kinship in humanity.

This fact makes missions necessary. It is necessary that all people hear the message of Jesus Christ; for without him there is no hope.

A foreigner who has joined the Lord's people should not say, "The Lord will not let me worship with his people." God broke through racial barriers to invite all to worship him.

Jesus, risen from the dead and prepared to ascend to the Father, opened the minds of his disciples to understand the Scripture. He brought together the entire impact and purpose of the Bible.

This is what is written, the Messiah shall suffer and must rise from the dead three days later, and in his name the message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins must be preached to all nations beginning in Jerusalem (Luke 24:46, Good News Bible).

From the beginning of the Bible to Revelation's glance into eternity, we see God's love for every race. This basic biblical concept is the wellspring and the foundation stone of missions. It means that we as God's children cannot afford, because of cultural training, to look down upon those who are of a different color or physical appearance.

## A Missionary People

Through the centuries, Baptists have grown as a missionary people. The English shoe cobbler, William Carey, wrestled with missionary responsibility. He brought the whole world to the ministers in his association. By so doing, he became the father of the modern missionary movement.

Inspired by him, Adoniram Judson

and other classmates caught the vision of American Baptist responsibility in Christian missions. These young people who started out as Congregational missionaries and became Baptist missionaries en route to India helped to draw Baptists together in a missionary enterprise.

Partaking of that same heritage, the Southern Baptist Convention was organized. One hundred and thirty-five years later at the Los Angeles Convention of 1981, Foreign Mission Board Chairman Travis Berry presented the Historical Commission a handwritten copy of the Preamble and Constitution of the Southern Baptist Convention. Who could fail to observe the drama of those faded handwritten words:

It shall be the design of this Convention to promote Foreign and Domestic Missions and other important objects connected with the redeemer's kingdom and combine for this purpose such portions of the Baptist denomination and the United States as may desire a general organization for Christian benevolence which shall fully respect the independence and rights of the churches.

This is the foundation stone of our Southern Baptist Convention, which today is 35,000 plus churches, 13.7 million members and 3,100 foreign missionaries serving overseas. This missionary commitment has both affected and been affected by attitudes and actions of Southern Baptists concerning race relations within the United States.

## The Nature of Prejudice

Prejudice is a natural inclination to dislike that which is different from us. It happens among all peoples. In Nigeria, children might refer to a passing white man as "the peeled one." Orientals think white people have funny round eyes. The Hawaiians have a legend that when the gods created man, some were overdone and became the black people, some were not cooked enough and became the white people. When the gods were able to get one that was "just right," they made the Hawaiian people. No group of people is immune from looking

at persons who are different and feeling superior.

## The Influence of Missions on Cultural Practices in the Southern Baptist Convention

Southern Baptists have a varied and checkered history in race relations, but the trend has been toward a developing maturity. In the South, the heartland of Southern Baptists, blacks who first were slaves later found themselves in a disadvantaged position socially and economically after emancipation, in a position little better than slavery. Reconstruction increased tension among whites as unwise military governors imposed humiliating laws on the defeated Confederacy.

In response, southern states developed Jim Crow laws and social strata that effectively separated people.

Missions have helped bring Southern Baptists to a more mature sense of responsibility. Missionary Josephine Skaggs has related the following story:

In 1961, I was asked to speak at Foreign Mission Night at the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. I had been home only a few months before I had a great disappointment and a deep hurt. One of our Baptist churches had invited me to come and speak on missions in Africa so their people would be more interested in missions in Africa. At that time, another Nigerian student, like a son of mine from that river area, was studying in one of our universities here in America, and I thought how wonderful. Let the missionary speak and then let a product of our Baptist missions in Nigeria speak, but when I wrote and said I would bring a Nigerian student with me, the reply came back, "Miss Skaggs, we'd rather you would not come."

I spoke in a very short time after that at the convention. I didn't speak on the subject I was given to speak on. I pleaded with our Southern Baptists, "Don't just give your millions to send your missionaries with the gospel to the black men in Africa for that message of the same Savior who died for

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## **“Southern Baptists will need to look into administrative structures and to include ethnic members of our denomination.”**

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them has died for us, and then not be willing to worship with them the same Savior in your church in America.”

There have been times in the maturing process of Southern Baptists in the matter of race relations when it seemed as if our credibility as a missionary people hung on the decision of a single church. Robert O'Brien, former news director of *Baptist Press*, and a writer at the Foreign Mission Board, remembers 1965 as one of those decisive moments in the life of Southern Baptists.

Two young Nigerian Baptist men, products of Southern Baptist mission efforts in their homeland, naturally gravitated toward Richmond's First Baptist Church during their student days and presented themselves for membership.

They were completely unaware that their very normal action caused consternation in the congregation. The great church had a noble history in the support of missions for well over 150 years.

It had among its membership Baker James Cauthen, executive secretary, and other staff members from the Foreign Mission Board, but it also had members, those that, influenced by cultural patterns, felt that blacks and whites should have separate churches. Still others feared their ability to reach the mainstream of Richmonders if they became a mixed congregation.

As the congregation met in closed-door session to consider the matter under the leadership of Pastor Ted Adams, the eyes of missionaries and others focused on the congregation on Monument Avenue.

The consequences were clear. If this great church, the home church of many foreign mission board staff members, refused to receive a Baptist into its membership because of race, then the credibility of Southern Baptist missionaries everywhere would be severely crippled.

The congregation voted to receive the Nigerian Baptist students, and Baptists as a whole moved toward maturity, while Southern Baptist missionaries everywhere breathed a sigh of relief and

a prayer of gratitude.

Today, the Southern Baptist Convention is becoming a multi-ethnic, multi-racial denomination. Southern Baptists speak 70 languages. According to Emmanuel McCall of the Home Mission Board, there are now some 700 black Baptist churches in the Southern Baptist Convention. In addition 3,300 predominantly white churches have as many as 275,000 black members. Black membership in Southern Baptist churches is growing at a healthy eight percent a year. Some 146 black seminary students are studying in Southern Baptist Convention seminaries, and a dozen blacks are in contact with the Foreign Mission Board exploring missionary appointment.

Other ethnic groups such as the Polish, Vietnamese, Cambodians and Latin Americans are also being incorporated into Southern Baptist churches.

The future will see an increasing number of ethnic Southern Baptists going out as missionaries and as our representatives. Southern Baptists will need to look into administrative structures and to include ethnic members of our denomination. The election of Don M. Kim as second vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention was a statement of the convention's self-understanding of its nature as a multi-ethnic people.

In difficult days past, a day's occurrence on the streets of our hometown made the international press wires of the world that night. During the days of racial conflict in Little Rock, a missionary presented his passport to a Nigerian government official to have his visa approved. The official read, "Arkansas,— Little Rock," then shook his head sadly before giving courteous and prompt attention. Southern Baptists have made steps toward maturity since that day, especially in the South.

Sometimes meeting racism can cause a person to recoil from his unchristian nature and become a bridge builder of love. Such was the experience of James D. Crane, missionary par excellence to Mexico for nearly 37 years. He related

his experience to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Los Angeles in June, 1981.

My call to a Spanish-speaking ministry came when I was 11 years old. That year, I entered the seventh grade in Mathis, Texas. For the second time in the history of the little town a Mexican showed up for enrollment in the seventh grade.

There was a run-down school in the Mexican part of town. It went through the sixth grade. Most of the families were so poor that they never let their children finish sixth grade because they needed them in the fields to help the family make a living.

When Zenaïdo Maldonado walked into our room that morning, you would have thought he had smallpox. Nothing was said, but the atmosphere was charged with tension. Not realizing what was happening inside me, I rebelled. Moving over in my seat toward him, I loaned him pencils and paper and silently made a promise to God.

"Dear God," I said, "If you will help me to learn Spanish, I will dedicate my life to making up to this boy's people the shabby way my people have treated them!"<sup>1</sup>

Over forty years have passed since that small boy made his commitment to God; his love for the Mexican people is unchanged and the Hispanics are an integral element in Southern Baptist life, but the elements of a personal strategy are still there.

### **Developing a Personal Strategy**

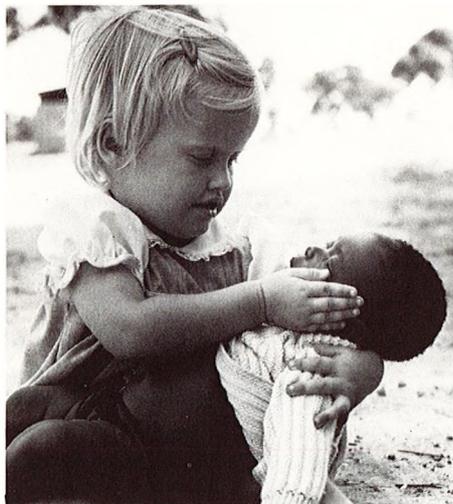
A Christian in today's volatile world cannot afford the luxury to speculate in an armchair manner about missions and race. The involved Christian must put into practice what he believes. As one seeks to develop a personal strategy, one of the first steps is to dig deeply into the Biblical record and realize that there is one God and one humanity. We belong together.

A second step is to remember that this world is our Father's world and those in it

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**Southern Baptist missionary child Amanda Cox holds this infant while her mother Cheryl treats its mother in a clinic in Upper Volta.**

are his creatures.

A third step is to get to know persons as individuals apart from their group. A young missionary asked the famous Christian Kagawa, "How do I learn to love all the Japanese people?" Kagawa responded, "Begin with just one." This formula helps us to develop right relationships with individuals of other races. When we come to know individuals apart from their color or culture, we are well on our way to developing sound and wholesome relationships. Such relationships enhance the foreign mission effort.

An additional step in developing our own personal strategy is to recognize that we bring along some cultural baggage and heritage and that often we catch responses to things that happened in the past. When we meet hostility among some groups that have no reason for being hostile to us personally, we can be assured that perhaps they or their people have suffered in the past. We must live in a redemptive fashion in light of this hostility. As Christians, we are life bearers and love bearers, and it is our calling to be bridge builders.

Now and then in the racial picture, we receive a glimpse of what might be. We see fellowship gatherings of Baptists from many nations in the Baptist World Alliance and through meetings of the

Foreign Mission Board, and we come to know something of the reality of accepting persons as they are.

In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Davis Saunders was working in evangelistic crusades with John Falconer, a missionary preacher from Liberia. Both men were of approximately the same height and build. A missionary child, the son of James Tidenberg, saw a Polaroid picture in which the two preachers were standing together. He said, "Why, Uncle Davis, you and the preacher look just alike, except he has a red tie." John Falconer was black.

Missionaries, products of their home churches, live in a day of opportunity to help emerging peoples.

The signs of the times suggest that to future historians, the next 30 years will be marked as a period when the dark-skinned, deprived and the alienated of the world effectively assert their claims to stature, and they are not led by a privileged elite. . . ., but by exceptional people of their own kind.<sup>2</sup>

We can have a part in helping those persons to walk into the future as leaders under the banner of the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>1</sup>Crane substantially repeated this account recorded in *Passport to People* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1973), p. 5.

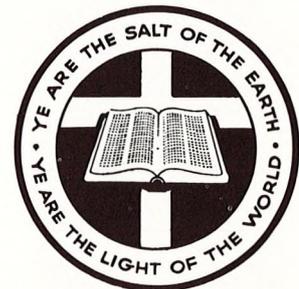
<sup>2</sup>Robert Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), p. 34.



**Dr. A. Clark Scanlon is Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Overseas Operations of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.**

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**Foy Valentine, Executive Director  
Larry Braidfoot, Editor  
Tim Fields, Managing Editor**



## Christian Life Commission

Of The Southern Baptist Convention

460 James Robertson Parkway,  
Nashville, TN 37

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