

BULLETIN

SEMINARY EXTENSION

DEPARTMENT

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SUSPICION

Perhaps one of the deadliest foes to unity, brotherhood, and fellowship is suspicion. More often than not suspicion is the result of emotional immature thinking and fear. In the same sense that many of our worries are unfounded, our suspicions are also groundless. This does not mean to say that we should never anticipate the direction that others may take, but it does ask that every individual be given a fair chance. As I travel from one section of our country to another I find that many misgivings grow out of unfounded suspicion. They relate to the relationships between various Baptist bodies and conventions, to relationships between races, and to sectional ideas. Every man should have the right to be heard in the context of his own life. This is not possible where there are suspicions, for suspicions have a way of building up. Suspicion imagines the worst and therefore never gives the best a chance.

I am often reminded of the frame of mind that I had when I went to college. I was of the opinion that all teachers were modernists, skeptics, and infidels. With such a suspicious nature, one does not have a chance to evaluate others.

I know of at least half a dozen vital problems of separate groups with which I am personally acquainted, that would have a good chance of being solved if those involved could, without suspicion, sit down and talk. Not long ago I asked a question in a Sunday School class about a certain issue that was then alive and noted the response from the

ten or twelve men. Only one gave such an answer that invited discussion. The others faced it with closed and suspicious minds.

One of the greatest problems that we face today is that of seriously considering that there are others who are just as anxious as we for fair play, honor, and righteousness, and that those who differ from our point of view quite frequently have as logical a basis for their position as do we. I believe the real problem lies in an adequate communication. We must simply communicate with others if we are to be friends and permit others to communicate with us. Honestly, is not this life at its best - the communication of ideas and viewpoints? Would it not be a dreary world to know that we had to live in the small circle of our own ideas alone? Would it not be an even smaller world to know that all about us others were forced to capitulate to our small circle of ideas?

Opportunities for this type of communication are possible on every hand. Democratic groups may meet and discuss ideas, give out separate sets of facts, compare notes and draw their own conclusions. I know of a Coffee Club of men whose ideas are altogether different in a community. This club is a constructive sharing of varying points of view. I know of an inter-racial club where a few well-educated men of two races gather to meet as friends and share with each other not only their ideas, but their hopes, aspirations, and problems as well. Some time ago a group of men of varying points of view met in Louisville Seminary to discuss, informally, the church. Other

groups will be doing the same. This type of communication is altogether wholesome for Christian people. It appears that this offers our best chance of curing the great malady of suspicion.

"Study to show thyself approved..."

FIRST GRADUATION

Congratulations to Dr. Thomas S. Messer, Chair of Bible and director of the Seminary Extension Center, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, upon having the first graduating class in the Southern Baptist Convention. Dr. Messer planned appropriate ceremonies in the Baptist Student Center Chapel on March 1. The graduates and speakers wore caps and gowns befitting the occasion.

The graduates were Rev. L. F. Bain, Farnfeld, Missouri; Rev. Ernest Punch, Benton, Missouri; Rev. Charles Creibaum, Cape Girardeau, Missouri; Rev. H. L. Smith, Chaffee, Missouri; and Rev. Lloyd Englemann, Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Dr. L. W. Cleland, pastor, First Baptist Church gave the invocation, and Dr. R. C. Holliday pastor Centenary Methodist Church gave the commencement address. Dr. Messer presented the certificates in Pastoral Training for the completion of Series A.

Rev. Frank Robinson of North Carolina is the only other graduate--having completed the work through correspondence.

NEW ASSOCIATE

Rev. W. A. Whitten has accepted the position of an associate director of the Seminary Extension Department and began work on March 15. His work will be centered mainly in Mississippi, Louisiana, and east Texas.

For the past two years Mr. Whitten has been pastor of the Richland Baptist Church, Florence Mississippi. His former pastorates include Calvary Baptist Mission, Jackson, Mississippi, Vine Hill Baptist Church, Clearmont, Kentucky, and associate pastor of the First Baptist Church, Washington, Indiana.

Mr. Whitten is a native of Weir, Mississippi and received his

preparatory education there. He received his B. A. from Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi and his B.D. from Southern Baptist Seminary in 1954. He is married to the former Miss Lucille Stennett of Addison, Kentucky, and is a brother of the Rev. Charles W. Whitten, Southern Baptist missionary in Spain.

SOMETHING NEW

A workshop is being planned jointly by the Seminary Extension Department and the Illinois Baptist State Association in Carbondale, Illinois on April 9-10. All directors of centers, teachers, registrars-treasurers and others who are interested in adult education, are cordially invited to attend. Program personalities include:

Rev. Kenneth G. Hall, Director of the Extension Center, Effingham, Illinois and president of the Illinois Extension Directors.

Dr. Noel Taylor, Executive Secretary, Illinois Baptist State Association, Carbondale, Illinois.

Dr. Lee Gallman, Director of the Seminary Extension Department, Jackson, Mississippi.

Dr. Gaines S. Dobbins, Dean of the School of Religious Education, Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

Rev. Ray K. Hodge, Associate Director, Seminary Extension Department, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Rev. W. A. Whitten, Associate Director, Seminary Extension Department, Jackson, Mississippi.

Rev. Lloyd K. Spencer, Director Extension Center, Wood River, Illinois.

Mr. H. D. McCracken, Assistant Director Extension Center, Vandalia, Illinois, associational Sunday School superintendent.

Rev. Floyd Lacy, Director, Extension Center, Harrisburg, Illinois.

Dr. Thomas S. Messer, Director of Extension Center, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Baptist Chair of Bible.

STATISTICAL REPORT

Correspondence students	1,735
Extension students	3,354