

SEMINARY EXTENSION DEPARTMENT

Lee Gallman, Director

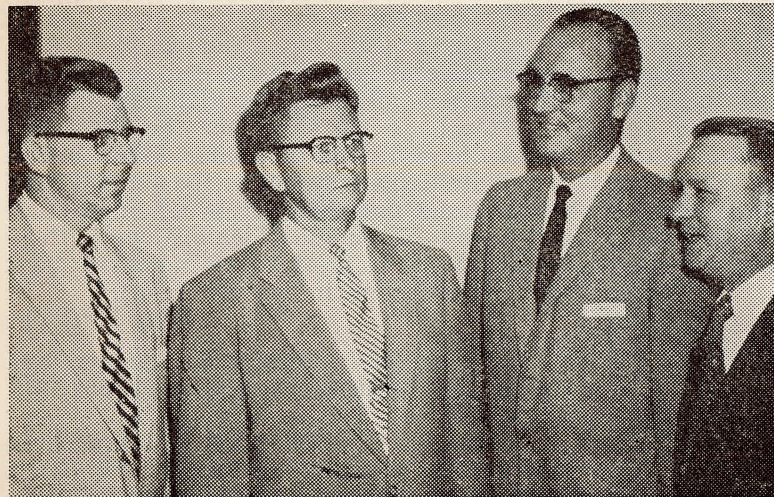
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DIRECTOR AND ASSOCIATES MEET

"We are ready," declared Dr. Lee Gallman (second from left) in the recent meeting with the associates Ray K. Hodge, Raleigh, North Carolina, W. A. Whitten, Jackson, Mississippi, and Albert H. Fauth, Kansas City, Kansas. "As never before," continued Dr. Gallman, "with more adequate personnel and curriculum, we are able to meet the glaring challenge of the in-service-training needs of Southern Baptists. With the addition of three associates during the past two years and the completion and near-completion of several direly needed extension courses and the help of Baptist college co-sponsorship in Kentucky, western Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri we are ready to offer the most workable plan of extension possible."

The three day planning meeting was concerned with general plans for the coming year as well as specific attention to items relating to field work in each area.

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS and THEIR PRAGMATISM

"The pragmatist declares that whatever works is right." This is an oversimplification of a sound philosophical idea. This is the approach of popular definitions. Its value lies in giving the layman a point of departure for conversation. With this popular concept I should like to examine some of our Southern Baptist views of life and service.

Let it be admitted from the outset that there is no way to avoid some pragmatism. A church paper to which no one subscribes folds up. A church that fails to raise a budget meets disaster; a plan that cannot be worked fails. While we may not accept the idea that if it works, it is right, we would not agree that if it works, it is wrong. We cannot reject sound principles that have built great churches. Visits are more effective than telephone calls. Visitation increases attendance, increased attendance results in increased offerings, new people help pay for new buildings. We would not decry the use of meetings to get results. The more a church meets, the more often planning is done, the better are the results in growth and reaching people. By division and multiplication of units, we reach more people. More churches make more Baptists, more classes reach more Sunday school prospects. Although these are pragmatic ideas and concepts, they are sound.

But we are often carried beyond the sound principles to conclusions that are not in keeping with Christian teaching. We may

be led to think that the end justifies the means, that progress can be measured in figures only, or that leadership consists of "getting the job done." We may become calloused or indifferent with respect to the element of human personality. We may develop a program of only reaching people and count that success. The circus reaches people. Hitler and Mussolini reached people and drew crowds to their speeches. Moscow reaches people as does the grocery store. What do we do with the people we reach? How do we transfer our interest from the figure report to human personality. How do we help those we reach to become better persons? How do we deepen the lives of Christians? These questions transcend the adding machine. It is far more valuable to lead ten persons to experience worship and fellowship with God than to reach one hundred who may not experience such worship.

The danger in the pragmatic approach is in the sense of values created. We cannot actually advance the Kingdom of God by numbers alone. Of course we must have numbers, but a far greater program would develop if we center our efforts on helping people reach upward in their Christian lives. To help them solve problems and find answers to their needs is more important than just reaching them. It is more valuable to grow human personality than to build magnificent temples; to develop God-centered lives than to build a tithing program; to lead Christians toward useful service than to "get the program rolling." There is a place for the practical, but it must not make up the aims and purposes of our efforts. These must be human-divine centered.

—Lee Gallman

BOOK REVIEWS

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS PREACHED, S. MacLean Gilmour, Philadelphia Press, 1957, 238 pages. This book follows the stated intention of the author to "mediate an understanding of Jesus' message, as reverent scholarship has enabled us to discover it, to adults almost uninstructed in critical procedure." It is aimed at serious students, but it does not bother them with technical

devices. This book can serve as a valuable aid to the lay Bible student, the minister, and the scholar toward an understanding of Jesus' teachings. There is much direction given toward textual criticism, though this is not pursued far because of the technical limitations of the author's main intended readers.

The title might suggest a comprehensive study of the message of Jesus, but a reading of the book shows this as only a minor part. Good treatment is given to the teachings of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of Heaven, his practice and teaching about prayer, and the ethics of Jesus as seen in the gospels.

This book can introduce the Bible student to many areas of related study and it gives a limited treatment to the actual gospel which Jesus preached. It is not a book on philosophy of religion dealing with these teachings of Jesus, but as indicated some able help is given in this direction.

—Ray K. Hodge

THE SAVING PERSON. Angus Dun. Harper and Brothers, publishers, 1957. 127 pp, \$2.00.

Here is a delightful and refreshing little book dealing with that all important question of salvation. It grew out of a series of Lyman Beecher Lectures delivered by the author at the Yale Divinity School in 1956. In compiling the series the author put aside all books and wrote from the richness of his Christian experience. He uses a minimal number of traditional terms and couches the old message with such terms as, immediacies of life, ultimates of life, The Saving Person, The Ultimate Person. This is what makes the book scintillate with a freshness that captivates.

In a forthright fashion he takes us along the path of salvation by first dealing with the word, salvation. There are many levels of evil from which men are seeking a salvation, but there is only one salvation (The Saving Person) from these immediacies and ultimates of life. These ultimate evils alienate us from God, and must be acknowledged to understand fully the work of the Saving Person. Though ultimate evil alienates, yet there is a Reconciler who brings us in touch with The Other (God), and this saving work

begins in forgiveness and love. This Reconciler shares with us His eternal life which spans the present and the future and bridges for us the horrors of death, the ultimate of hatred and judgment.

If one desires to read again the old, old story with new evangelical emphasis, here is a book that will not disappoint. This book will be read with profit by all those who hold dear the Saving Person. —Albert Fauth

“Can Morals Be Legislated?” — Sermon

The general background that prompted Dr. Joseph R. Estes to prepare this sermon was a special election in Bowling Green, Kentucky where he serves as pastor of the First Baptist Church. The purpose of the election was to decide upon the sale of alcoholic beverages in the city of Bowling Green and the county (Warren) in which it is located. Both city and county voted dry by a good majority after many years of voting wet.

The specific situation that further urged him in the selection of his subject was the recent reiteration of the generally accepted statement **morals cannot be legislated**, however used in a different context by a national figure.

Dr. Estes, in a careful but deliberate

manner, challenges this oft repeated statement and does so with real skill. His method is sociologically and theologically sound. He makes a clear distinction between “Divine Righteousness” — which he states is that that cannot be legislated, and “Civic Morality” — which is the reflection of the laws, customs, and “mores” of a particular society, and thus a matter vitally affected by legislation.

Anyone desiring a copy of this sermon may contact Dr. Joseph R. Estes, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Bowling Green, Kentucky.

—W. A. Whitten

PROBLEM PREACHING CAN BE BIBLICAL PREACHING

The classic classification of sermons often breaks down, for a topical sermon can be a sound textual sermon and a sound textual sermon is expository in nature. Those who preach topically can be just as biblical as those who put all their language in scriptural terminology. There are some principles that ought to be observed in the use of scripture in preaching.

The first principle is that a passage of scripture dealt with for its own sake has a minimum of value. This can be expository

Mr. Theo Sommerkamp (right) is shown interviewing Director Lee Gallman (left) in preparation of an article on the Seminary Extension Department for the **BAPTIST PROGRAM** scheduled to appear in a winter issue. Mr. Sommerkamp is the associate editor of *Publications for the Executive Committee of the S.B.C.* The article will feature the total work of the Department but will carry pictures of the opening session of the Center in Meridian, Mississippi.



preaching but it also can be irrelevant preaching. Preaching means making the Word of God relevant to contemporary life. To use scripture for its own sake is to defeat its original purpose. Revelation was not given for the sake of revelation but for the sake of meeting human needs.

A second principle is that in dealing with problems a problem should be analyzed and thought of on the basis of scriptural principles. To do this is to join problem preaching to biblical preaching. For example, if one should take the nervous tension of our age and analyze it, he would discover that these tensions are touched upon in some scriptural contexts and are dealt with analytically. They can become problem solving experiences. When done in the context of scripture and in the light of scriptural principles such preaching is both biblical and problem solving.

A third principle involved is the selection of problems and scriptures. No scripture should be taken out of its context and made to say what it does not say. In my work I have often been tempted to use a passage of scripture as I begin to enunciate the elements of our program, but my conscience simply will not permit me to call Jesus' teaching his disciples an extension course or college or Sunday school class. These are but small points in which we often hear scripture and scriptural terminology abused.

A fourth principle involves preparation. No one can truly prepare a relevant message that is biblical unless he is a real student of the Bible and of contemporary life. One's reading habits creep into his message and form a pattern whether by intention or not. Quite often a preacher is well acquainted with the Bible but is not well acquainted with the world in which he lives, the problems people confront, nor the issues that life is forcing upon them. We must have sound biblical preaching and sound problem solving if we would meet people with the gospel for this age.

—Lee Gallman

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