

WESTERN RECORDER
JULY 15, 1976



Help for Church-Pastor Relations

One of the most vexing problems in Baptist churches today is pastor-church relations. As a denominational worker in touch with many churches a problem I meet too often is the lack of communication and understanding between church members and pastors.

The pattern is the same wherever the problem exists though the details may be different from church to church. The pastor is capable and sincere. The church members



are equally sincere and anxious for the church to perform its appointed ministry. But there is a gap between the pastor and the people. The people respect the pastor but do not think he is giving proper leadership to the church. His ideas about the church and its ministry are not the same as theirs.

The pastor, on the other hand, is unhappy. He feels the situation is not what he was led to expect when he was called as pastor. His leadership is re-

jected unfairly. The result is the church is stymied and both the pastor and congregation are frustrated.

The frustration is accentuated by the lack of any orderly and honorable way for the pastor and people to let each other know how the other feels. And so the relationship goes from poor to bad and eventually from bad to worse. The pastor and the people suffer and, more tragically, the work of God through the church suffers.

The need for help in such situations has been realized by many but nothing specific has been found so far to help in such dilemmas. In recent years we have made much progress in pinpointing our problems and finding a solution but this one remains without a solution and it's hurting.

We desperately need some way for pastors and church members to communicate with each other in a positive and helpful way. The pastor needs to know how the members feel and the members should understand how the pastor feels.

Such communication cannot take place in a regular business meeting of the congregation without the possibility of tension, hostility and even hard feelings. This kind of communication belongs to a small group in a spirit of love, prayer and mutual concern.

Concern for this problem has led the American Baptist

Convention to recommend to its churches the use of a pastoral relations committee. This committee serves as a sort of liaison between the congregation and the pastor sharing with each other the feelings of the other about what should be the ministry of the church and how to perform it.

This committee is small in number and those serving should be tactful, mature, resourceful and wise. The committee meets four to six times a year and at any other time special needs existed. This committee should be nominated and elected as other church committees. Each church would decide just what is expected of this committee. Among its functions would be the following:

1. To serve as a channel of communications between the pastor and the members. In this way the pastor would know what the congregation expects of him and he of them.
2. To discuss trouble spots and how they may be alleviated. It's only fair for the pastor to know when he is being criticized and for what. Honest confrontation is always better than behind the back criticism.
3. To serve in a peace keeping role by interpreting the congregation to the pastor and the pastor to the congregation.
4. To discuss with the pastor at least once a year his financial needs and to relay information and recommendations to the proper committees.
5. To form the nucleus of the pulpit committee when time comes for the search for a new pastor. No persons in the congregation would know as much about what the members expect and the kind of pastor needed to meet the expectations of the congregation.

Maybe some Kentucky Baptist churches are already using some such plan. If so, we would appreciate having the details and an evaluation of such a church committee to share with *Western Recorder* readers. In some churches deacons may serve in this role but in so doing they risk the charge of bossing the pastor unless they are instructed by the church to serve in this role.

A filmstrip and narrative of the specific plan recommended to American Baptist Convention churches is available from American Baptist Films, Valley Forge, Pa. 19481. Ask for: "Furthering the Ministry: A Filmstrip for Pastoral Relations Committees." The price is \$5.50.

This article is not written as criticism of anyone. It is simply to clarify a mistaken idea which has risen in our thinking. An old axiom says that even if something be incorrect, if you tell or hear it often enough you will accept it as truth.

Such is the idea that the presidency of the Southern Baptist Pastor's Conference has become a political springboard into the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention. (For brevity I will refer to these two groups as PC

and SBC.) It has appeared in many of our state Baptist papers in recent years. Like many others I have passed it by with little thought.

But prior to the recent session of the SBC an editorial stated that "most of the last 14 (Southern Baptist) convention presidents were president of the Pastors' Conference at the time of their election." A quick check of the last 14 presidents showed this to be in error. In reply to my letter to that effect the editor expressed regret and said he

would run a correction. This he did. However, in it he said, "The fact is that six of the past 24 presidents of the SBC were president of the Pastors' Conference at the time of their election." With all love and respect for this honored and honorable friend, this also is incorrect. *The best of us make mistakes. I made one once myself!*

I have deliberately waited until after the convention in Norfolk to write this. It can now be done without any hint in it of SBC politics.

To begin with, counting back from Jaroy Weber, 24 SBC presidents take us back to E. Y. Mullins who served 1921-1923. The PC did not start until 1935. Perhaps the "24" refers to PC presidents. Leaving out Adrian Rogers "24" takes us back to M. E. Dodd, the founder of the PC, who served 1935-1949.

But what are the facts gathered by comparing the list of PC presidents, furnished me by the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, and the "Historical Table" of the SBC annual? This comparison shows that 17 PC presidents prior to Adrian Rogers were never president of SBC. And eight SBC presidents since M. E. Dodd's long term were never president of the PC.

Seven PC presidents also served as presidents of SBC. But how do the two presidencies relate to each other in terms of time?

M. E. Dodd was president of SBC 1934-1935. He organized PC in Memphis in 1935 and became its first president. *Thus he went directly from being SBC president into the PC presidency.* Now let us look at the other six, the dates of serving as president of PC and that of their election as president of SBC.

Herschel Hobbs served as president of PC 1950-1951. Ten years later in 1961 he was elected president of SBC. Casper Warren was president of PC 1952-1953. He was elected president of SBC in 1955. Ramsey Pollard was president of PC 1954-1955. He was elected president of SBC in 1959. Carl Bates served as president of PC in 1962. He was elected president of SBC in 1970. Wayne Dehoney was president of PC in 1964. He was elected president of SBC in 1964. Jaroy Weber was elected president of SBC in 1974.

Thus not "most" but *two* men were elected directly from the presidency of

PC to that of SBC. And these events happened 10 years apart. To my knowledge, and I know these men, neither of them sought to make the presidency of PC a springboard into the presidency of SBC. When Adrian Rogers was nominated this year without his prior knowledge, he withdrew. The other two men were nominated, they were elected, and they served with distinction.

I count myself fortunate to be a close friend to all of the above-mentioned men who served both PC and SBC. If you will permit me to except myself,

Baptist Forum

AWE AND REVERENCE

How many people have heard a United States President speak in person? Thousands of Baptists did for the first time in Norfolk, and it was a great experience. We, who were there, along with millions of Americans watching the news reports will never forget, and the national news exposure alerted Americans to the ministry of Southern Baptists. You cannot help but feel proud of your nation when you see and hear its chief executive officer in person.

Some of our Baptist friends objected to Mr. Ford's appearance because of its possible damage to the campaign of Mr. Carter. The order of business committee said, over and over, that it was the "President" who was invited and not the Republican candidate. If Mr. Carter became President, ran for reelection in 1980, and this objection was pushed to its extreme then our convention could not invite Mr. Carter, a Southern Baptist, to speak as "President." Then we would hear objections.

At the convention some objected because of the limited seating. Let's remember, Norfolk was selected several years ago before any thought was given to inviting the President. The security demanded for the protection of our President applies to a Christian gathering also; it's a shame that it has to be that way. For the welfare of our nation and the President we must accept it. It should encourage our

they served Southern Baptists with distinction in the most honorable and demanding position which the Lord and the brethren among us can bestow.

This article is written to remove a cloud from over them—and from over others who in the future may be fortunate enough to serve as presidents of both PC and SBC. *The office should seek the man, not the man the office.*

To my knowledge in each of these cases, the office sought the man—even as it was true of President James L. Sullivan.

churches to exalt Jesus Christ who is the only one who can change hearts and eliminate the need for such measures.

I feel it was very suitable to have our President speak to us, and we should always respect the office and the person who holds it. I commend the committee and Mr. Puckett for standing by the invitation.

Don W. Gillis, Huron, Ohio

NEVER AGAIN!

I just read in the *Western Recorder* about "Never Again." I was furious. I could not keep from writing.

I don't blame you for not having a President there again.

But the thing, he wasn't a Baptist and Jimmy Carter, of course, is a Baptist.

I could never believe in Baptists again. They are too narrow-minded to love and join other Christians.

It was stated the whole thing was contrary to Southern Baptist Convention and practice treating others with equality and fairness.

What would you call your big "Never Again" speech? I hope others read it and get the meaning of it as I did. "Disgusting."

If you would have more about "Christ" and less about *Southern Baptists* more people might read the *Recorder*. I for one.

Mrs. Oliver Wring, Salem

Guest Editorial

From President to President

by Herschel H. Hobbs

Franklin Owen

WORSHIPING PATRIOTS

American Christians assembled for worship on July 4, 1976 in both Christian and patriotic atmosphere. The question of religion and government, church and state and their proper relationships was right before us. It was the Lord's Day, which was also Independence Day and the 200th birthday of our nation.



I suppose ministers all over felt the tension, as I did, trying to speak to such setting with properly expressed patriotism, but without improperly making it part of our religion, which only is Christianity.

We Baptists are traditionally devoted to the principle of separation of church and state. We believe this is necessary to guarantee freedom of religion. A free church in a free state with neither

exercising control over the other. However, despite government's non-connection with any religious sect, there is an equally strong tradition in this country for the maintenance of a favorable climate that not only permits but encourages religious endeavor. I pray that this will continue. To quote my friend, Edwin Perry, "There needs to be a clear line between church and state, but not a vacuum."

Church and state need to be separate but they should not be so far apart that they can't see one another, nor hear one another, nor feel one another. Our country badly needs the kind of spiritual strength that comes from the religious roots of its people which cannot flow through a vacuum of "touch not, taste not, handle not."

William Shannon, associate editor of the *New York Times* declares that secularism seems now installed as the accepted "religion" of the political arena, as evidenced by the strong early fears and resistance shown against Jimmy Carter, who was seen as a sort of "invader" of the "sanctuary" of secularism because of his known Christian testimony. Thus, Christianity was seen as "another religion" threatening the now sanctified and installed ideology of secularism. (Mind, I'm not campaigning for Mr. Carter. I like Mr. Carter. I also like President Ford. I'm observing a principle.) More next week.

No Recorder July 22

Post office requirements limit *Western Recorder* to 50 issues per year. *Western Recorder* will not be published next week but will return in your mail July 29.

Western Recorder

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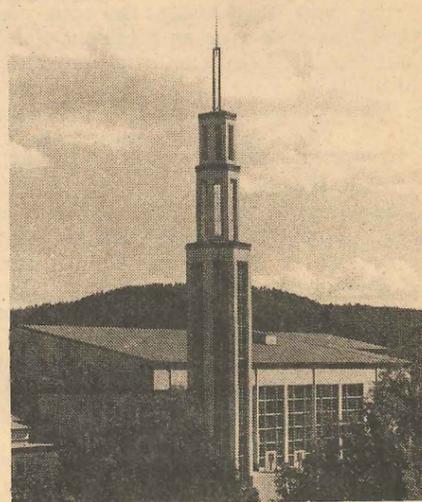
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Glorieta! Its name rings magic in the hearts of all who have been there. So do the words *Ridgecrest, Cedarmore, Jonathan Creek, Camp Joy* and names of encampments like them all across the Southern Baptist Convention where so many of our roots are grounded. "Mountain top experiences to prepare for the valley needs" transpire in these lofty places much today as they did years ago. Those with assembly blood in our veins admire them all, believing—as one Ridgecrest speaker suggested awhile back—"God is everywhere, but at summer assemblies you sleep a little closer to the angels."

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THE KENTUCKY BAPTIST CHILD CARE PROGRAM — A HISTORY OF CARING



THE INDEPENDENCE DAY PICNIC is not complete without gallons of lemonade and when the family numbers more than fifty, you'd better believe gallons will be consumed. Condensed juices and package mixes make preparation today a far cry from the endless lemon-squeezing of fifty years ago but campus young people still revel in the thought of an "outing" and the fun that comes out of celebrating the "fourth!"

International Series

The Message of Grace

Galatians 2:15-21

Knowing that the works of men and their observance of the law did not have anything to do with their justification before God, Paul declared that justification is available only by grace through faith in Christ. Christianity is the only religion which teaches justification by grace through faith as the way of salvation. All other religions more or less teach salvation by works. Rom. 4:5 tells us, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Works are the fruit of salvation, but never the fountain of it. The only place one can be justified by works is in his own mind, or in the estimation of others who refuse to believe what God's Word says.

Verses 19-21 are the utterance of a great Christian who was almost overwhelmed by the amazing wonder of his experience with Christ. Actually his Christian experience was beyond the power of words to express. Paul does tell us that, even as Christ was crucified to the law, Satan, sin and death, so that they did not have more power over him, even so he, being crucified with Christ in spirit, was dead to the law, to sin and to the world.

Paul declared that a great change had been wrought in him and that he was not living as he had lived previously. Christ was living in Paul and that meant refreshment, enjoyment and abiding strength for the daily life. It meant victory in the battle with Satan and sin. His life was under the mastery of the indwelling Christ. Christ's will had replaced his will and Christ's presence had filled his soul so completely that he was able to conform to the divine will in a remarkable manner. He continued to rejoice in the fact that Christ's personality had invaded his and had taken complete possession of it.

What Christ did for Paul he is willing and able to do for us. His presence within the life brightens the dull, monotonous days and makes life worth living. Like Paul, let each of us strive to live in such a way that we do not frustrate, set at nought or nullify the grace of God.

Galatians 3:23-29

Christ came to bring salvation to all who believe on him as their saviour. The purpose of the law was to serve as a schoolmaster to convince men of their need of Christ and bring them to him. The responsibility of the law was discharged when men were brought to Christ. Through faith in Christ they become the children of God. Those who are in Christ are characterized by oneness with him.



H. C. Chiles,
Murray, Ky.

Life and Work Series

One Nation Under God

God protected the children of Israel from the plagues, provided for them the basic needs of water, food and protection from their enemies, provided a great leader for them in the person of Moses, delivered them from bondage in Egypt and chose them for a specific purpose.

Exodus 19:3-8a

Three months after the Israelites left Egypt they arrived at that awe-inspiring mountain called Sinai. There God assured Moses he had great and numerous blessings in store for the Israelites, provided they would obey him. He charged Moses to inform the people that if they were disobedient to him they would not have any right to claim nor to expect his blessings upon them.

God commanded Moses to remind the people of his coming to them in their slavery and helplessness and swiftly delivering them. Consequently, they were obligated to exercise a redemptive ministry in the world out of appreciation to him for doing so much for them. There were two sides to the covenant, namely, what God would do and what the people would do.

After God declared his ownership of all the earth, revealed he had chosen the Israelites for a specific ministry and made it known that he expected them to respond with a ready and cheerful obedience, Moses descended the mountain and conveyed God's message to the elders and they in turn to the people.

Exodus 24:3-8

The children of Israel had been delivered from bondage in Egypt and were traveling toward the land God had promised to them. After leading them to Mount Sinai, God reminded them of the mercies he had shown them and gave them the assurance of his continuing presence and watchcare. Through Moses, God gave to them the ten commandments, declaring the principles by which the people were to be governed and guided. God also conveyed to the people the laws—civil, criminal, ceremonial, moral and religious—by which their conduct was to be regulated.

When Moses called upon the people to decide whether or not they were willing to submit to God's directions or instructions, the people unanimously agreed to the terms proposed, and without any reservation pledged themselves to do all things God had commanded. They did not attempt to deny their obligation to God, but they were not aware of their inability to do what they announced they intended to do. The law gave them a high standard, but it could not supply them with the ability to realize their aspiration.

International Series

God's Words in Man's Language

Acts 8:26-39

After the martyrdom of Stephen the enemies of Christ in Jerusalem launched a campaign to exterminate all Christians. Conspicuous among the dispersed Christians was Philip, who magnified Christ so effectively that the people were aroused, amazed and attracted.

Just when Philip's evangelistic efforts were most successful and the prospects for the immediate future looked most promising, the Lord called him to go elsewhere. From the human point of view this did not appear to be a wise thing to do. Since Philip was in the midst of a successful and sweeping revival in the city, why should he leave and go to a desert where there was no prospect of success? This incident reminds us of the great truth that God's ways and man's ideas do not always coincide, but God always knows best and never makes a mistake.

Philip reached the place to which he had been sent just in the nick of time. Presently he saw a chariot coming towards him. When the Holy Spirit commanded him to "go near, and join thyself to this chariot," Philip ran to the chariot, ready and anxious to witness for Christ. Riding in that chariot was an Ethiopian eunuch, a man of great prominence, prestige, position, pomp, possessions and power. While wending his way homeward, this eunuch was reading aloud the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, which delineates the sufferings of Christ.

After confessing that he did not understand what he was reading, the eunuch invited Philip to enter the chariot with him. When seated by the eunuch, Philip seized his golden opportunity by tactfully beginning with the very scriptures which the Ethiopian was reading and preached Christ to him. Believing what Philip told him, the eunuch received Christ as saviour, whereupon his sins were forgiven and he was saved. He deserved commendation for accepting Christ the first time he heard the gospel message.

When they came to the place where there was ample water in which to be baptized, the eunuch requested Philip to baptize him. Of this event we read, "They went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more, and he went on his way rejoicing." He rejoiced because he had come to know Christ and because he had the glorious privilege of witnessing to others and of informing them of what he could do for them.



H. C. Chiles,
Murray, Ky.

Life and Work Series

A Faithless People; A Faithful God

A Sinful People — Exodus 32:1-6, 9-10

After all that Moses had done for them, prior to the 40 days and nights during which he had absented himself from them, and perhaps thinking that something had happened to him to prevent his return, the fickle, restless and impatient people assembled publicly, attributed their deliverance from bondage in Egypt to Moses instead of to God and requested Aaron, Moses' elder brother, to become their leader.

Aaron's initial mistake was that of commanding the people to remove their gold earrings and to present them to him. Aaron promptly melted the gold therefrom and used it to mold the image of a young bull, which was the symbol of strength. How shocking, inexcusable and tragic that so soon after Jehovah had made a covenant with them, the people were influenced by their leader to turn again to the worship of an idol! Pleased with the readiness of the people to indulge in the worship of the golden calf which he had made, Aaron built an altar in front of it, in direct violation of the divine command.

Whether it was an attempt to win the favor of God or due to another motive, Aaron proclaimed a sacred feast to Jehovah. Their performance was not pleasing to God because it was followed by their indulgence in sexual promiscuity. For their plunge into the depths of immorality and degradation the people themselves were responsible. Contemplating the pouring out of his wrath upon the sinful people, God admonished Moses not to intercede for them.

A Merciful God — Exodus 34:1, 6-7

When Moses learned that his people had fallen into idolatry and immorality he was so filled with righteous indignation that he threw down the tables of testimony which had been written with the finger of God and broke them. Soon thereafter, with utter forgetfulness of self and great zeal for God's glory, Moses interceded for his people and asked God to forgive them. After Moses had prevailed in intercession, God told him to ascend the mountain and bring with him two tables of stone like unto the first which he had broken.

In obedience Moses ascended the mountain to meet God. There God told him plainly who and what he was. He informed Moses that he was "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." Then he added that even though he was holy, righteous, merciful and forgiving, he would punish the iniquities of his rebellious people unless they repented of their sins.

Baptist News in Brief

Sullivan, Valentine Criticize Tax Decision

The recent 5-4 Supreme Court decision allowing use of tax money by religious colleges has drawn sharp criticism from Southern Baptist leaders as a "return to taxation without representation . . . a cruel irony in this bicentennial year."

James L. Sullivan of Nashville, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Foy Valentine of Nashville, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, told Baptist Press they agree with a recent statement by leading Texas Baptists opposing the Supreme Court decision.

Sullivan called the Supreme Court decision a "bold violation of the principle of separation of church and state." Valentine said use of tax money by religious institutions "is now legal but not now right" and urged Baptist institutions to turn down use of it.

Valentine, whose agency deals with citizenship and other social concerns, said of the decision and its relation to Southern Baptists:

"The Christian citizenship of Southern Baptists is about to be tested as by fire."

Calling the 5-4 decision "a grievously divided" one, Valentine said, "This can be one of Southern Baptists' finest hours. We must continue our Baptist commitment to the great principle of separation of church and state. We must decline 'Caesar's' offer to gather money from all taxpayers to help us perform our Christian ministries."

Mo. Abortion Law Vetoed

In a decision aimed at clarifying its position on the volatile subject of abortion the U. S. Supreme Court struck down several sections of Missouri's anti-abortion law.

The law, enacted after the high court's historic decisions in 1973 holding that the state has only a limited interest in controlling abortion, sought to outlaw the practice in a number of instances not specifically covered in the court's action three years ago.

Missouri's law required that a woman obtain the consent of her husband before seeking an abortion and required parental consent for women

under age 18. In addition, the law outlawed the so-called "saline amniocentesis" method of abortions and required physicians, under threat of manslaughter charges, to preserve the life and health of fetuses at every stage of pregnancy.

In its action a divided Supreme Court struck down those four provisions of the Missouri law.

At the same time, the court unanimously upheld the statute's definition of the "viability" of the fetus, a requirement in the law that a woman give written consent to an abortion and certain reporting and record keeping provisions applicable to physicians.

Baptists, Congressmen Breakfast in Washington

Twenty-one U. S. representatives and senators joined some Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) leaders in a Southern Baptist fellowship breakfast in Washington three days before the nation's giant fourth of July bicentennial celebration.

Righteousness was the theme and prayer and fellowship were the agenda for the meeting, presided over by C. Welton Gaddy of Nashville, director of Christian citizenship development for the SBC Christian Life Commission. Speakers included James L. Sullivan, SBC president, and Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Christian Life Commission.

"Our prayers are for you as you fulfill your awesome responsibilities and for the nation as it celebrates in its birth, remembers its first 200 years and enters its third century," Gaddy said to the legislators.

The gathering was the second congressional fellowship breakfast sponsored by the Christian Life Commission, the SBC's social concerns agency. The first was two years earlier. Others may be planned for the future.



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Missions & Ministries

Native Kentuckian FMB Furlough Head

William W. (Bill) Marshall, Frankfort native, was named secretary of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's Department of Furlough Ministries at a meeting of the board at Ridgecrest (N. C.) Baptist Conference Center.

The board appointed 33 missionaries while at Ridgecrest, appropriated \$36,000 for world relief and named William R. O'Brien of Ft. Worth, Tex., secretary of the newly created Department of Denominational Coordination.

Employed as special project personnel during the board's business session were Dr. and Mrs. James (Jim) F. Graves, from Kentucky and Michigan, assigned to Ghana.

New missionaries with Kentucky ties include Jason D. Carlisle, assigned to Uruguay; Mr. and Mrs. William (Bill) P. Steeger, Ethiopia; Patricia Stooksbury, Costa Rica; and Mr. and Mrs. James (Jim) A. Williams Jr., eastern Europe.

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