

# Baptist Informer

Official Organ of the General Baptist Convention of North Carolina, Inc.

VOLUME 86

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, JANUARY, 1964

No. 1

## Women Set \$50,000 Goal For Shaw

The Baptist Women of North Carolina, meeting in the historic First Baptist Church, Raleigh, Rev. C. W. Ward, pastor, January 11, accepted the challenge to raise \$50,000.00 for Shaw by May 5, when the General Convention will hold its One Day Session.

The challenge was presented by President Horne after Dr. Cheek addressed the women on the urgent financial need at Shaw. Dr. Cheek stated that "Shaw must have \$280,000.00 by the close of the current school year or Shaw's accreditation in the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges will be placed in jeopardy. In fact, said Dr. Cheek, president of Shaw, "if we fail to meet the demand Shaw will be dropped from the accredited college list."

The dynamic and persuasive leaders of Baptist Women, Mrs. Horne, together with the efficient Executive Secretary, Mrs. Alston, put the matter before the women and received an enthusiastic response.

When asked if she felt the women would be successful in this ambitious program, Dr. Alston said, "When women set their hearts and minds to do a job they will do it. I am sure our women will raise this (\$50,000.00) and more by May 5."

This was the fourth One Day Session of the Women's Convention in their long and glorious history. First Baptist was filled to capacity and then some for this history making session. Rev. Ward and the members of First Baptist are to be commended for the excellent preparation made for the Women's meeting, Juniors and Seniors.

President Horne, Executive Secretary Alston and the entire official staff express grateful appreciation for the financial response. A total of \$3,710.69 was reported. \$3,482.09 was reported by the Seniors and \$228.60 by the Juniors.

The theme of this session was "We've A Message To Give" I John 1:5. Every order of business and item on the program came off on schedule. It is amazing how much can be accomplished when you have a plan and then work the plan.

Rev. L. M. Gooch, pastor of St. John Baptist Church, Durham, brought the Inspirational Message. Gooch cannot not only inspire women with his preaching but anyone who hears him.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

1964 Motto: "Christ In Every Home"

1964 Budget—\$70,000.00

Special Shaw Effort—\$50,000.00

### GOAL FOR ANNUAL SESSION

#### YEAR-ROUND COMMITTEES:

|                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| State Missions I .....           | 300.00   |
| State Missions II .....          | 300.00   |
| Foreign Missions .....           | 600.00   |
| Shaw University .....            | 600.00   |
| Oxford Orphanage .....           | 600.00   |
| Ministers' Wives .....           | 600.00   |
| Self-Denial .....                | 4,000.00 |
| Junior-Young Peoples' Dept. .... | 3,000.00 |
| "The Missionary Helper" .....    |          |

700 New Subscribers

#### Representation Fee—1964 Annual Session

|                                  |       |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Missionary Circles .....         | 25.00 |
| Unions .....                     | 40.00 |
| Auxiliaries .....                | 60.00 |
| Executive Board Members .....    | 10.00 |
| Every Member—(Self-Denial) ..... | 3.65  |

The 1964 ANNUAL SESSION of the Woman's Baptist Home and Foreign Missionary Convention will convene at the MT. VERNON BAPTIST CHURCH, Durham, August 11-14, 1964. Rev. E. T. Brown, Pastor. Plan your vacation now — WE NEED YOU . . . YOU NEED US.



## THE BAPTIST INFORMER

ORGAN OF THE GENERAL BAPTIST STATE  
CONVENTION OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

COLEMON W. KERRY, JR., EDITOR

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## General

### Convention Roster

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J. R. R. McRay, *2nd Vice President*  
A. D. Mosley, *3rd Vice President*  
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Jerry Drayton, *Historian*  
R. Irving Boone, *Statistician*

## President Pitts Calls Moderators



DR. R. M. PITTS

Dr. R. Mack Pitts, President of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina extends an urgent call to ALL MODERATORS for a special meeting Tuesday, February 4, 1964, 10:00 a.m. at the Morehead Street Baptist Church, Durham, N. C., Dr. C. L. McLester, pastor.

Brethren this is not a "perhaps" or "maybe" meeting, it is a MUST. Whatever rearranging you must do or sacrifices you must make, make them. There are matters that only you can settle; problems that only you can solve and needs that only you can meet.

The featured speaker for this SPECIAL meeting will be Dr. James Edward Cheek, president of Shaw University. Dr. Cheek has a burden on his heart and a message on his mind that you need to know about. For many of you this will be an opportunity to meet and hear the President for the first time, so please meet me. A question and answer period will follow Dr. Cheek's message. Get all answers first hand.

Now Brethren, I am asking a personal favor of you as you make plans for the meeting in Durham—1. Please be on TIME. Let us be present ON TIME, START ON TIME, Follow the AGENDA ON TIME and QUIT IN TIME for you to get lunch and return home. 2. Bring at least \$25.00 from your association for State Missions. Now don't let this keep you away. If you can't respond to this appeal NOW I know you will later. Don't let anything keep you away from this URGENT MEETING.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN SPECIAL SESSION

The Executive Committee of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Dr. James F. Wertz, Charlotte, Chairman, will meet in a Special Session Monday evening, February 3, 1964, at the Headquarters Building, Raleigh.

Dr. R. M. Pitts, President, Dr. O. L. Sherrill, Executive Secretary and Dr. J. F. Werts, Chairman intensely urge all members to be present and on time.

The future of Shaw University is at stake. This dearly beloved institution's future, to a great measure, rests with the Baptist forces of North Carolina.

The meeting has been scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Your response to this call, the cause of our Convention and the cause of Christian Education will be greatly appreciated.

## CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 1963

### THROUGH THE OFFICE OF WOMAN'S BAPTIST HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONARY CONVENTION OF N. C.

|                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| HOME MISSIONS                        |            |
| Undesignated .....                   | \$ 704.06  |
| Institutes .....                     | 98.75      |
| District Conferences .....           | 7.15       |
| Special Workers .....                | 20.23      |
| DESIGNATED GIFTS                     |            |
| Orphanage .....                      | \$ 199.00  |
| Self-Denial Funds .....              | 24.75      |
| Building Fund .....                  | 2.00       |
| FOREIGN MISSIONS                     |            |
| Undesignated .....                   | \$ 260.44  |
| Foreign Scholarship .....            | 22.00      |
| CHRISTIAN EDUCATION                  |            |
| Shaw Expansion Program .....         | \$ 192.86  |
| Shaw Scholarship .....               | 21.00      |
| Ministers Wives Loan Shaw .....      | 60.06      |
| Richard Adams Scholarship .....      |            |
| Winston-Salem Teachers College ..... | 190.00     |
| SALES-SERVICE                        |            |
| Helpers .....                        | \$ 663.85  |
| Guide-Handbooks .....                | 19.50      |
| Student Loans .....                  | 20.00      |
| Mimeograph work .....                | 9.00       |
| Books .....                          | 10.92      |
| Rent .....                           | 52.69      |
| TOTAL .....                          | \$2,578.26 |



## SHAW UNIVERSITY

RALEIGH, N. C.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

January 6, 1964

The Reverend Coleman W. Kerry  
Editor  
The Baptist Informer  
Baptist Headquarters  
Post Office Box 287  
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Reverend Kerry:

On behalf of the trustees, faculty and students of Shaw University, I wish to express to you our deepest appreciation for your story and editorial in the December issue of the Baptist Informer.

Your interpretation of our greatest immediate need is quite correct. Although there are several areas of our program which will need to be strengthened, the accrediting agency has raised question only about the adequacy of our financial resources to support an educational program fully compliant with the standards for accreditation. We shall, therefore, have to raise approximately \$300,000 by the end of June if *our accreditation is to be maintained*. In terms of the numbers of persons affiliated with the Baptist Church in the State of North Carolina and the wealth comprised in this group and the alumni, it would seem that the amount needed would not be difficult to secure. We are now hopeful that the time has come when all of those who are committed to the preservation of Christian higher education will now realize the nature of the imperative inherent in that commitment.

We wish you to know how badly needed your services are as we plot our course toward the realization of this objective. We are now at the fork in the road and we have approximately six months to make a choice about the direction our school will take in the future. I believe that the Baptists of the state and the alumni of Shaw University do not want the failure of our institution on our conscience.

Please come in to see us whenever you are in Raleigh. We shall be happy to receive you in our home or office at any time. All of us here wish for you and your work abundant prosperity and happiness in the New Year.

Very truly yours,

JAMES E. CHEEK

President

JEC:rf1

## AMONG THE BRETHREN

Dr. O. L. Sherrill is off to the Mid-Winter Board Meeting in Hot Springs to represent North Carolina. More and more of North Carolina men are getting national recognition because of his efforts. Thanks Brother Secretary for keeping North Carolina before the nation.

\* \* \* \*



Congratulations-

Rev. N. K. Dunn has a new mailing address, P. O. Box 458, Beaufort, N.C. Code 28516 — Bro. Dunn was officially installed December 28 as pastor of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Beaufort—Rev. F. H. Johnson, Congregationalist; Revs. F. S. Pretty, S. W. Croom, E. W. Wooten, and A. D. Mosely, all Baptist, were on hand to see the job well done.

Rev. Mosely preached the installation sermon from Rev. 4:1, "Come Up Higher". Mosely said "Pastoring a church was the only job that he knew, where people would hire you and pay you and not let you do it." Come Up Higher and the Lord will show you a more excellent way.

Thanks Bro. Dunn for renewing your subscription. We trust God's choicest blessings will be yours in your new field. Now \$1r, about this good article and other \$ervice\$, please make it payable to the BAPTIST INFORMER, 603 S. Wilmington St., Raleigh.

\* \* \* \*

Queen City bound! Rev. Talmadge Watkins, Wilson, N. C., will soon assume duties as pastor of the University Park Baptist Church, Charlotte. Welcome to Charlotte. Bro. Watkins won't leave Wilson until March Brethren. Hold the letters, please.

\* \* \* \*

Saw Bro. Lewis, formerly of Wilmington, now pastoring Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, at the One Day Session of the Women's Convention. He saw the Editor, thanked him for the write up, shook the Editor's hand, then ran his hands in his pocket. My heart leaped, for I knew that he knew that we need

(Continued on Page 5)



## — Editorially Speaking —

The delima of Shaw University and the solution to her problem, from within and without, leaves no doubt that support for Christian Education has been woefully neglected.

It is so easy in one breath to express our love for the school and in the next breath fail to tell her story or plead in her behalf.

It is so easy, without carefully checking the resources and its potential, as Baptists to boast of what we have done and are doing for Shaw. If the record was searched and our numerical strength accurately determined, we would all have reasons to be ashamed.

There are, at present in North Carolina, Baptist churches and associations with sufficient RESERVE funds, property and other financial resources that would greatly lighten Shaw's financial burden if they would respond.

This does not mean that Shaw is not the responsibility of every Baptist. It means to whom is given much is required.

When our giving is motivated by what someone else or some Pastor or some church or some association gave we have missed the whole idea of Christian giving. Give because God has given us. Give because we can give. Give because there is a need to give.

If Shaw fails, it is because we have contributed to her failure by our neglect to give. If Shaw loses her accreditation, it will not be the fault of the Administrators, students or faculty, but rather every alumnus, Baptist Christian and so called lovers of the Cause.

Shaw does not HAVE to fail. She can solve her financial problem, reclaim her past glory and move into the educational arena on a comparable basis with similar institutions.

Negro youth, with the assistance of their elders, are waging the greatest war for freedom, Civil Rights, social and political liberties in the history of our nation. These young people have gotten their knowledge and inspiration in schools such as Shaw.

Are we to say to them, "The world owes you a living without any effort on your part?" "Freedom

is yours without any obligation?" "Civil Rights should be guaranteed without responsibility," Social and political liberties are yours because you are an American," The answer is obvious. NO! A thousand times NO! We are to say to them? Not in words, but in action.

We must tell them, in action, that with every privilege comes responsibility. That every freedom imposes upon us an obligation to meet it. That for every gain you must carry your share of the load. That the world owes you nothing you are not willing to work, sacrifice and deny yourself for.

We must say to the Trustees, faculty, students, world and generations unborn that Shaw has a place in the sun and we shall see to it that she gets there.

### SPECIAL FEBRUARY EDITION

The BAPTIST INFORMER is running a special edition for February entitled "From Tupper to Cheek". This exciting and moving production will be the Shaw Story. It is our desire to get a copy into every home and into the hands of as many people as possible.

For this reason we are offering special bulk rates to churches, Shaw clubs, Missionary Circles and groups generally. To assure your order being filled send in your order today—

#### BAPTIST INFORMER

603 S. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, N. C.

Bulk rates—10c per copy, to same address. Your order must be in not later than Friday, Feb 7, 1964.

### CORRECTION

Due to an oversight, the Contribution from the Parson Grove Baptist Church, Mt. Gilead (Yadkin-Philadelphia Association), was not published in our recent Annual Report.

Please accept our sincere apology for this error.

O. L. Sherrill

The Missionary Helper a Must  
for every Woman  
\$1.00 Per Year



# Woman's Page-----



## MY DEAR BAPTIST SISTERS OF NORTH CAROLINA

How does one repeatedly say Thank You convincingly enough for one to know it comes from the heart? This is my predicament at this moment. Each year and after you have responded so well to our appeals, all I can say is Thank

You and God Bless you. Believe me, it comes from the heart.

The One Day Session of our Convention, 1964 goes into history as the best yet. Never have I seen you better. In spite of weather conditions in many parts of the state you came to Raleigh and you brought a token of love for the cause. Do know I am eternally grateful.

Our Convention is making progress because we have progressive followers. It has been said, "you can lead a horse to the water but you can't make him drink." This to me means you can't make one do what he does not want to do. Evidently your leaders are directing you where you want to go and in doing what you want to do because you have followed where we have led.

While we bask in the sunlight of our accomplishments, let us not see the sunset of our desires fade into darkness. The One Day Session was history making but we also committed ourselves to write a page never written before. That page must be written and your name must be recorded thereon.

On January 11, 1964 you accepted the challenge to raise \$50,000 for Shaw by May 1, 1964. Some will say this is ambition without reason. Others will say this is impossible in the light of our past history, we've never done this before. Still others will say, they'll never do it—But I say, in the name of Him who said it better than I ever could, "With MAN it is impossible; but with GOD—ALL things ARE possible."

Sisters there is no doubt in my mind about what we are going to do. Our drive will be launched through County Unions and Auxiliaries. Very soon you will receive the information and direction from our Executive Secretary, Mrs. Alston. But don't wait until you have gotten the information—start now. Make your plans—then get busy working them.

Much depends on what we do from now until May 1. God is counting on us. Shaw is depending on us. The Convention is relying on us. The Baptist Witness and the Cause of Christ awaits. Can we do less than succeed?

May I close by urging you to pray much. Put

God in front and follow where He leads. As you hear from us let us hear from us AND on to victory May 5, First Baptist Church, Chapel Hill, Rev. J. R. Manley, host church and pastor.

## CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED THROUGH EXECUTIVE OFFICE—GENERAL BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF N. C. INC., DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, 1963.

|                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| Foreign Missions ..... | 512.01   |
| Shaw University .....  | 1,219.93 |
| Oxford Orphanage ..... | 289.48   |

### STATE MISSIONS:

|                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Designated-Unified ..... | 1,412.53 |
| Building Fund .....      | 6.00     |
| Baptist Convention ..... | 500.00   |
| Baptist Informer .....   | 18.00    |

### OTHER RECEIPTS:

|                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Designated Gifts ..... | 151.00             |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>    | <b>\$ 4,108.95</b> |

## AMONG THE BRETHREN

(Continued from Page 3)

a typewriter in our office, but to my dismay, he forgot his gloves and it was cold. Maybe next time, Bro. Lewis?

\* \* \* \*

The Mt. Zion Baptist Church of Chatham County under the leadership of Rev. J. R. Burt will hold services every Sunday, beginning the first Sunday in January, 1964. Mt. Zion Church which is located off Hwy. U.S. 15-501, about nine miles south of Chapel Hill, N. C., was founded in 1860. The present membership is 341 and it is a member of the New Hope Missionary Baptists Association. Sunday school is held every Sunday with an enrollment of 120 members and B.T.U. every second and fourth Sunday evening with an enrollment of 75.

Bro. Clifton Stone a fine churchman gave us the information. Bro. Stone is a Deacon, B.T.U. Director, Teacher, Men's Bible Class and Editor of the church Bulletin. Bro. Burt is fortunate to have such able assistance.



# LABORS TOGETHER

by

REV. W. R. GRIGG

## Part III

At this stage of our inquiry we need to confront two related and basic questions:

1. What makes the ministry of the Church **Christian** ministry; that is, what is the constituent component of our ministry that cannot be removed or replaced under any circumstances?
2. What is necessary to **every** form of ministry, no matter how different the various forms of ministry may or Should be?

There is a New Testament passage that provides the raw material for answers to both of these questions. It says:

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (I Peter 2:9)

Here we are told, first of all, that Christian ministry is always our **re-action** to God's action. That is to say, ministry must always be a **response**. It is the response of the Christian Church to God's "wonderful deeds," the most wonderful of which is his gracious self-emptying condescension in Jesus Christ.

We are told, secondly, that these wonderful deeds are our "gospel," our Good News. What we are called upon to do as the Christian Church, or as "God's own people," is to "declare these wonderful deeds."

In the third place, in the New Testament the word "ministry" always literally means service. So when we join together these three observations, we begin to get some clearer light on the essential component of Christian ministry. We can put it like this:

We are to serve the world with the gospel, for we are God's own people **in order that** we may tell the Good News (or declare the wonderful deeds) of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

No matter how many forms of Christian ministry there may be, and how different they may be in other ways, they must all conform to the basic understanding of what Christian ministry is: Christian ministry is the response evoked when those who hear the Good News of the grace of God in Jesus Christ find that they must communicate it to others.

### The Three Forms of Ministry

If we remember (from Chapter 1) that ministry is given **to the Church**, not to a select group or select-

ed individuals within the Church, we will realize that every Christian must participate in three elemental forms of ministry. These can be designated by three common words:

1. Worship
2. Vocation
3. Order

Let us examine them in sequence.

**1. Worship.** Each Christian finds himself united with the other members of the body in praise and thanksgiving, in confession and intercession, and in the sacramental acts of the Church.

The Greek word that lies behind our words "liturgy" and "liturgical" means **work**, and more specifically **the people's work**. The Christian who understands the nature of his church membership knows that he is not a spectator (one who merely watches), nor is he part of an audience (one who merely listens), when he engages in the worship of the Church. He is a **participant**, a worker, one who is serving Christ as a member of Christ's Body. His worship is one form of his Christian ministry.

It is therefore eminently appropriate that when Christians gather to worship, what they do is called a "service." For it is just that. It is part of their service, their ministry. The Christian who is joining in worship with the other members of the Body of Christ is engaging in the essential "work" of Christian ministry.

**2. Vocation.** Each Christian who understands the nature of Christian ministry also knows that he is called to serve God in and through his life in the world. He realizes that as father or son, employer or employee, citizen or public official, he is called to a Christian ministry in each of his roles.

Nor will the Christian, if he understands the situation, look upon this service, or ministry, as something he does **in addition** to his duties as a church member. He will know that this is his assigned service as a Christian and member of the Church. He will realize that this is one of the forms of his ministry as a member of the Body of Christ. He will not regard himself as a father **and also** a member of the Church or a servant of Christ. He will realize that he is a servant of Christ as a father. He will not think of himself as a citizen of his nation, **and also** a member of the Church or a servant of Christ. He will realize that he is a servant of Christ as a citizen.

He will therefore recognize that each and every role he plays in the world is a channel and an expression of his Christian ministry.

**3. Order.** Each Christian also participates in the ministry of order within the Church itself. Ordering is the necessary response of the Church as it deter-



## LABORS TOGETHER

mines, equips, and sustains the special services or ministries necessary to its mission in the world. Here the Church as a whole, as a co-ordinated "body" is approaching its task in a systematic, orderly way.

It is essential to see that this ordered ministry is the work of the body. When ordained officers or ministers act, individually or corporately, the Church is acting. When they minister, or serve, the Church is serving in and through their ministry. This is why the ministry of order is the responsibility of each and every member of the Church.

All three forms of ministry are essential to the mission of the Church. Worship and vocation are not more important forms of ministry than order. Nor are they less important forms. Every attempt to compare them in terms of their relative degrees of importance can only be misleading. Each is indispensable to the mission of the Church in the world. The fact that we shall presently concentrate on the third of these does not make it more important than the other two. It simply means that it needs special attention because of the confusion surrounding it at present.

But before we turn to an explicit consideration of the ministry of order, we should mark carefully the two-sided conviction on which every form of ministry is based. This conviction is suggested by the recurring Biblical assertions that God **chose** and that God **chose**.

## God Chose...

(The Biblical doctrine of election)

A church recently held a dinner to welcome forty-seven new members. Following the meal, each person was asked to state briefly why he had become a member of the church.

The pastor of the church did not commit suicide at the conclusion of these testimonies, although it would have been a fitting conclusion to the evening. For if the answers given to the question were hardly original, they obviously were somewhat more candid than had been expected. And they were much more uniform, disquieting, and discouraging than could possibly have been anticipated.

They ran the gamut from the usual to the usual—from the usual "Because it is the best way to become acquainted in a new community," and "Because it is helpful when you are in business," to the usual "I enjoy the minister's sermons," and "Our children like the Sunday school." Other reasons fell somewhere between these extremes. But none were voiced that went beyond them.

The disturbing fact is that **not one** of these forty-seven persons suggested, even haltingly or vaguely, that he or she had united with the Church in response to the act and call of God in Jesus Christ. Nor did one of them suggest that he or she was responding to God's call in order to become a part of the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ in the world. In fact, the words "Jesus Christ" were not once mentioned in the course of forty-seven testimonies.

This incident may have been atypical, although there is no real reason to think that it was. It symbolized the absence in contemporary American Protestantism of the two-edged conviction that has given the Church its distinctive form in the past:

1. A recognition that the initiative in church membership, and therefore in Christian ministry, is with the sovereign electing God.

2. A recognition that church membership, by its very nature, is Christian ministry.

How can we recover a sense of the relevance of this two-edged conviction? Let us approach the matter through a recent comment by a Protestant minister, to the effect that the principles of God's arithmetic seem to be the reverse of ours.

Our arithmetical presuppositions normally work something like this:

The church that receives 188 new members during the year **obviously** is "more effective" than the church that receives 88, or the church that receives only 8.

The church that oversubscribes a \$100,000 budget **obviously** is a "better" church than the one that must struggle to raise \$10,000.

The church that must have two, or even three, services on Sunday morning **obviously** is more "successful" than the church that has only one.

The logic of the Copenhagen tavern keeper who fascinated Soren Kierkegaard suggests the trap into which we seem to have fallen. He was buying ale for four cents a bottle and selling it for three cents. A worried friend broached the subject and tried to point out the economic facts of life. The tavern keeper replied that his friend obviously was not taking sufficiently into account the new volume of his business. "This way," he said, "I may sell 100,000 bottles"

It is disconcerting when we discover that God's arithmetical presuppositions are quite different.

We find that among all the nations of the earth, God began his mission with one man, Abraham. Among all the families of the earth, he promised a special blessing to the family of this one man.

Moreover, among the numerous descendants of Abraham, God chose Isaac over Ishmael, and Jacob over Esau. He established a "nation" of their descendants. It wasn't much of a nation by human standards. In fact, it was so small that it was continually being conquered by the large nations surrounding it. But God called this particular nation his own.

For centuries, this tiny nation was the instrument of God's unfolding purpose in history. And then hundreds of years later he narrowed his choice once more, to **one** man from this **one** nation, the man called Jesus. This single descendant of Abraham became the locus of God's revelation and the instrument of God's mission to the world. In this one individual, God chose a new people, made a new covenant, and established a New Israel.

(Continued on Page 8)



This pattern of the divine choosing has frequently been referred to as "the scandal of particularity." And a scandal it is. Why should divine truth and revelation be centered in **one** man? Haven't we a right to be offended at the claim that of all the peoples of the earth, **one** alone is God's chosen people? Even those of us who are members of the Christian Church (and thus find ourselves identified as the "New Israel" and therefore tarred with the same brush) are less than eager to be characterized in this seemingly arbitrary way.

Why are we so offended by this announcement of the divine election?

Our usual way of dismissing the claim is to twist it so that it will look like some sort of heavenly bigotry or divine discrimination. We almost assume that the point at issue is favoritism, or some special privilege bestowed by God on his chosen people. But it may be that this misunderstanding is simply a convenient way of avoiding a proper understanding of the claim that "God chose."

Notice that God's first word to Abraham, in the moment when he was chosen, was

Go...

Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house...

(Gen. 12:1.)

Notice that Jesus said to his disciples, "You did not choose me, but I chose you..." But he continued, "and appointed you that you should

Go...

Go and bear fruit... (John 15:16.)

Notice that the first word of Jesus' Great Commission to his disciples was

Go...

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... (Matt. 28:19.)

Martin Buber has remarked that in the Bible every self-revelation of God is both **summons** and **sending**. God does not reveal himself to satisfy our curiosity. Nor does he elect his people to be the recipients of divine favoritism. He **summons** then in order that he may **send** them.

If we are less than eager to face this part of the Biblical message, perhaps it is because we are less than eager to have the consequences of election applied to us. For, to put it another way, an imperative always follows the indicative:

You did not choose me, but I chose you...

Go...

As members of the Christian Church, we **are** God's elect, "God's own people." But this is not an assertion of privilege, save in the sense that the privileges accorded God's chosen are the "privileges" of sacrifice and suffering. (See Paul's account of his "privileges" in II Cor. 11:23-29.)

Nor is the designation as God's "elect" a designation of status, except as it is a contradiction of the world's notion of status. The status is one of slavery, of servitude. To be one of the people of God is to be a servant, "a slave of Christ."

The Biblical emphasis upon election is a call to responsibility. It is an appointment to the exacting, rigorous work of God's redemptive mission. And that is the meaning of the Church's ministry. To know ourselves as the chosen people of God is to know that we are called to Christian ministry, chosen to be the instrument of God's mission in the world. God **chose**.

God Chose...

(The Biblical doctrine of sovereignty)

But something more must be said. It was not just anyone who did this choosing. **God** chose. In every assertion we have made about the basis of the Christian ministry, the first word is always **God**. So let us come at last to what is first.

God created...

God revealed...

God chose...

God elected...

God called...

God sent...

This awareness of the absolute primacy of God, as the one who orders all that happens (what we sometimes call God's "sovereignty") — this awareness permeates the entire Bible. Any conclusions to which we come about the ministry of the Church must be consistent with it.

This is the Biblical strain which reminds us that in his relationship with God, man does not initiate. He responds. It is the Biblical strain which likewise reminds us that in its service of Christ, the Church does not initiate. It responds.

This is as true of the Church's ministry of order as it is anywhere else. **Responsible** church order is **responsive** church order. To be obedient and responsible as the people of God is to be consistent in our response to God's sovereign initiative. **He** chooses. The most we can do is respond.

We may try to avoid this sequence. Men, in fact, usually do. But they cannot succeed in their attempt. Professor G. Ernest Wright reminds us that we learn from Scripture that among God's chosen, all organization and government was either of divine institution and active direction, or else useless, unprofitable, even sinful. Furthermore, an institution which once had received what appeared to be a permanent covenant and blessing could find itself in condemnation and deprived of blessing when it failed its God-given task.

The conception of a direct heavenly rule meant the subjection of all human organization to it, and every promise and blessing given was contingent upon the fulfillment of election to a responsible task.

Saul was chosen; then rejected. The kingdom was established; then destroyed. The cultus for worship traced its origin to the Sinai revelation; yet the divine Word by prophet and apostle proclaimed that God now despised it, had fulfilled it, and that it held no permanent status in his plans...

(Continued Next Month)