

The Joint Conference Committee of the two Conventions following the resignation of Dr. Rufus W. Weaver who was responsible for the organization of the Committee and its activities in the cause of religious liberty turned to Dr. W. O. Lewis, Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance with headquarters in Washington, D. C., as being best qualified to fill this vacancy. Dr. Lewis, however, while placing himself at the disposal of the Committee for conference advised that his duties as Secretary of the World Alliance might conflict. With this declination before us we were fortunate in securing E. H. De Groot, one of the best qualified laymen in the Washington area. It is believed that with his assistance a closer collaboration between the co-operating Conventions will be advanced. The Sunday School Board has placed the sum of \$100 in the expense account of your Committee.

It is respectfully recommended that this Committee be continued in the exercise of its functions already conferred by the Conventions, and it is further recommended that the fullest co-operation with other duly constituted Baptist Conventions be maintained to the end that as to all matters entrusted to the committee, the Baptists of America may speak with one voice.

108. I. E. Reynolds, Texas, led in singing the Doxology and in prayer. The report of the Committee on Church Music and Worship was presented and discussed by E. L. Carnett, Louisiana, and adopted:

CHURCH MUSIC AND WORSHIP

For a discussion of worship we would recommend that our people read and have read the extended and masterful discussion brought by the committee last year at Birmingham, Dr. Dawson, Chairman. A part of which report is being incorporated in this report as follows:

"That conditions in respect to the demands of worship among us represent a low ebb must be generally admitted. Mournfully we confess that apparently we are in one of the historic, periodic slumps in true worship. There was such a decline in the time of the Old Testament prophets, again in the days of Jesus, later in Europe at the outbreak of the Protestant Reformation, yet again during the French Revolution, still again most grievously in England prior to the Wesleyan Revival, also notably in Russia beginning with the regime of Lenin, yet again tragically in Germany with the rise of Hitler, and now once more deplorably in America. . . .

"In seeking the right answer, we consider first what is a sound and Scriptural pattern of true worship. It would seem that an undoubted outline would combine the three elements of Adoration, Communion and Dedication. As to Adoration, the very word 'worship' means to adore, to exalt, to bow down to, to deify, to pray to. Our Saviour taught us to begin our prayers with the hallowing of God's name. Adoration, all agree, is a prime essential of true worship. The second element is Communion, that of our surrender to God, of whose presence we become vividly aware in our worship, by which communion God gives himself to us, speaks to us and endues us with his vision and power. The third element is Dedication. After first adoring the living God, then listening to his voice in Scripture, sermon, song, meditation and prayer, we come finally to dedication, wherein we gather the ragged ends of our lives together and say, 'From now on, O God, we offer ourselves and pledge ourselves to live and give that thy Kingdom may come and thy will be done on earth.'

"In order to realize and achieve to the fullest such meaning in our worship, pastor and people must make the best possible preparation. The preacher will seek by study and prayer to prepare his sermon, which in our conception can never be dispensed with or minimized, for preaching is ordained of God as one of the major means of his grace. Surely we are agreed that the sermon should be no sensation-mongering, no mere jabbering of current comment, no formless, shapeless gruel, peppered with personal anecdotes and sacrilegious use of the Lord's precious name, but an authentic message from God, wrought with the finest art of which the preacher is capable under the Holy Spirit.

"But the sermon is not the only part of the worship which should receive careful preparation. In our justifiable recoil from fixed, liturgical forms of

prayer prevailing in ritualistic churches, we may yet unconsciously lapse into slovenly habits of prayer-expression which are just as fixed, or else we may fall victims to a sloppy emotionalism. Avoiding these errors, there should be profound spiritual preparation for public prayer.

"In like manner much care should be given to the presentation of God's Word, whether it be in the form of responsive reading or by the minister alone. In any case it should be read as it was in the days of Ezra: 'They read in the book of the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. (Neh. 8:8).

"One of the most significant acts of true worship is the offering. Diligent preparation should be made to insure that it will serve as a means of worship. The negligible manner in which the offering is frequently taken tends to play it down miserably. Unashamedly, definitely let us make the offering a prominent, glorified part of our worship. When the wise men came to worship the newborn Christ, their offering of gold, frankincense and myrrh was the crowning act. 'When thou bringest thy gift to the altar' was in the forefront of the counsels of Christ. Some feel the significance of the offering so emphatically that they insist it shall always be the climax of the service, as the expression of dedication, positively registered. We would not demand that money-offering shall always culminate worship, though it may often well do that, but we consider that our accustomed call for the people to offer themselves in surrender to Christ for salvation and service fulfills the highest demand for dedication. One thing we would insist upon, and that is, if we are to magnify and sustain regular proportionate giving on our present budget plan of Kingdom support, we must greatly sanctify such Biblical giving by a more religious observance of it. Every pastor should summon his best thought to the best preparation for the best presentation of the offering as an act of worship.

"Concerning the ordinances, it need only be pointed out that they should be Scripturally interpreted and reverently, beautifully, meaningfully administered. While we do not attach any saving efficacy to the ordinances, we do conceive them to be dramatized, pictorial exhibitions of the glorious Gospel of our crucified, buried and risen Saviour who brings newness of life to the souls of believers. Since this is true, our pastors should study the best techniques, as of a divine art, for the administration of these two marvelous portrayals of the Gospel."

There have been many reports, resolutions, findings and memorials on this subject and all have had valuable influence. It is our desire to make a few observations and draw some conclusions. We do not feel it needful to discuss the need of better church music. That has been done many times. We agree to the need.

We would remind you that music is universal and a great medium of expression, and if it lives, will be an expression of ourselves. Music does not precede the activity of a nation, church or an individual, but expresses the life that exists there already. That being the case our church music problems cannot be solved until we do at least three or four things, viz:

I. Create within the hearts of our people a great religious and spiritual attitude, that which will love truth and the doctrines of Christianity as taught by the Bible, thereby ruling out of their lives that which is unwholesome and degrading.

II. Give to our constituency a type of church music, both in music and message, that will express this religious and spiritual condition. There may be some of our good church music which, either in words or music and sometimes both, does not reach a response from the heart, and if it does not, you may scold, abuse and even plead all you want, but to no avail. Congregations will not sing some music which many musicians tell us is good. Some there are who seem to hold some of our music in the same sphere of inspiration as they do the Bible. We may need some twentieth century, practical hymn writers.

III. A system of training sponsored by our denomination that will increase the appreciation of our laity along good, wholesome singable and expressive church music. In this connection we are glad to note several indications and movements. There have been held in several states and vicinities song and hymn festivals majoring in better church music. Also music training schools are being held and many churches are calling for someone to conduct music schools. Some articles have been written for the magazines and denominational papers. We thank these publications for their willingness to print such articles which we

feel are of tremendous importance. A very fine program was conducted at Ridgecrest last summer known as Church Music Emphasis Week and another one is to be conducted this summer on August 15-21. We heartily commend our Sunday School Board in the establishing of a Church Music Department with Mr. B. B. McKinney, Secretary. We feel sure the department will promote an educational program, not only in holding conferences, etc., but in promoting and conducting Church Music Training Schools all over our Southland, even though it may mean an enlargement of the Church Music department. We feel that this training must be taken to the churches if we are to make progress.

IV. We would urge that our churches give special attention to a period in the services for congregational singing and in so doing use many of the hymns and songs that are not used at all.

We would remind our constituency that all good church music should be used. The oratorio, cantata, anthem, hymn, gospel song and even the short chorus, that have a real message and are not trashy in their musical arrangement, should be freely used according to appreciation and ability. We believe in the graded choirs for Juniors, Intermediates, Young People and Adults. It not only helps in music training, but in evangelizing these groups.

We would also urge not only church hymn singing, but home hymn singing. In the rush of things and with the radio we have gotten away from church music in the home. Church music in the home:

1. Produces a good atmosphere
2. Makes it easy to have a family altar
3. Is a call to keep one from drifting
4. Helps mold character of loved ones
5. Makes it easier to lead lost loved ones to Christ
6. Helps us in time of trouble
7. Helps solve the problem of music in the church.

We feel that all church music should have as its ultimate goal, not just the artistic for arts sake, but to strengthen those who are saved, draw the drifting ones back to Him and cause the lost to feel their need of a Saviour and Lord, and to come to Christ. May God help us in our churches to have in preaching, music and order of program that which tends to elevate those who come to our services.

We recommend that a committee on Church Music and Worship be appointed again for next year, the personnel of which shall represent pastors, church music directors, evangelists, singing evangelists, colleges and theological institutions.

Respectfully submitted:

E. L. CARNETT, *Chairman*
W. P. MARTIN
E. P. LEE
MORRIS FORD

MRS. HARRY EDDINS
MRS. J. H. CASSIDY
JOE CANZONERI

109. On motion of Chairman Godbold for the Committee on Committees the revised Committee on Radio was approved:

Radio Committee (Revised)—S. F. Lowe, Georgia, Chairman; Harold W. Seever, Virginia; G. Kearnie Keegan, Texas; W. O. Vaught, Jr., Missouri; H. C. Bass, Alabama; J. O. Williams, Tennessee; Ed S. Preston, Georgia; M. E. Coleman, Georgia; R. C. Campbell, South Carolina; V. E. Boston, Tennessee; Ramsey Pollard, Tennessee; W. Perry Crouch, North Carolina; C. B. Waller, Arkansas; Ira D. S. Knight, Florida; Claude B. Bowen, Mississippi; J. A. Musgrave, Illinois; J. D. Brown, Louisiana; H. A. Zimmerman, Arizona; H. P. Stagg, New Mexico; Luther J. Holcomb, District of Columbia; C. C. Morris, Oklahoma; J. T. Watts, Maryland.

110. The report of the Education Commission was presented by Chas. D. Johnson, Texas, and adopted after discussion by Edgar Godbold, Louisiana.