

Minorities Absent Among Missionaries

BY ISAAC BIVENS
NEW YORK—One of the most ignored problems in our church is that of the virtual absence of minority people among missionary workers. We have generally assumed that the lack of minority representation among the legions of helpers in the church's missionary force was a fact of nature.

Only recently have we raised the question of minority recruitment with the desire to seek answers. We have become embarrassed by questions from the church overseas. We have tried and failed to find comfortable answers to such questions as: Why are there so very few blacks, Spanish or Indian American missionaries? We have said that they do not apply or do not qualify.

There are scores of reasons some people would give for the exclusion of minority persons from the staff and the missionary force of the church. These cannot be dealt with in a rational way, for most of such reasons are highly personal and subjective.

But the church is more than the sum total of the opinions and personal conclusions of its members. And because society and justice and love via Christ have an inextricable claim upon us we must aid the church to be of all men as well as for

all men. The church must not be rich men who are for poor men, or free men for enslaved men, or the white man who is for the black man. It can be rich men together with poor men or free men together with enslaved men for mankind!

It is here that we have failed. We have been content to let our beneficence toward others be determined by a comfortable status quo adjustment to economic and social pressures. Thus we have been willing to help minorities but we have not attempted to make them our peers.

Full enlistment or recruitment efforts of minority people is an indication that we want them as peers. It is precisely the appearance that we do not want them as peers which makes the task of recruitment very difficult at the moment.

Recruitment should be more than acquiring a body or a brain to do a job. Recruitment for missionary service demands a depth level involvement. Do we want to "get involved with minorities?" If so, there are several problems we must deal with.

The most obvious one confronting persons recruiting minorities for the church is the image created by the traditional churchbuilding located

in the ghetto. One frequently hears the following statement: "The man (white man) wants me to serve his God in his way and in his church house." When the white people come to visit or "inspect" the minority church this serves to point out even more clearly the involvement of the church with the predominantly white ways of society. It does not give a witness of true unity as we once foolishly said it did. The minority person has seen, lived and experienced a separated Christianity. He wonders if the church which has been a party to this experience can comprehend the nature of the problems of his people.

A black student once asked me, "Does the church want some nice niggers to say 'Yes Sir Jesus' and ignore what it and all of society is condoning in our schools, in housing patterns and in job discrimination? I mean, look Dad, we ain't got time for that jive stuff. The people in the street are hungry, their babies are hungry. Does the church know that?"

"How can I volunteer; I have volunteered all my life--worked for nothing, paid more for worthless clothes, paid the highest prices for the worst meat. Does the church want a cross-bearer? Man, that's us in the ghetto. Does the church board that sent you out want to help us? Where they been, man? You all been hiding some place?"

The student is really asking us if we know the models of community action which are effective in the minority community. He wants to be free to do his creative deed.

Can the church help this young man and thousands like him to formulate their insights and frustrations and fear and hurt into a creative reformation of our society? Prospective minority candidates are raising these questions. They must raise them. It is their way of protecting the only investment they have—their lives and talents.

Until minority persons are convinced that the church will aid them in the achievement of self-determined goals, it will have only modest success in recruiting them for service. We must begin to trust minorities. We must stop asking them to participate in our programs and instead seek participation in theirs. Dr. Dan Dodson reminds us that minority people in the United States are no more moral than members of the majority group, but that their cause is!

Besides the obstacle of the church's poor image there is the tremendous economic problem habitually present in the minority community. Minority young people state emphatically that they cannot afford to volunteer for our programs. Many of them are still the first of their families to go to college and are heavily in debt for their education. After graduation they are under pressure to "get a good job," for they must prove to the family and community that education pays off.

MEDITATION

A SERMONETTE
BY COLIN DOUGLAS

"Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called sons of God." —Matt. 5:9.

Whenever you find that there is inharmonious and discord in your environment, you can help to establish harmonious and happy relations by turning to God in prayer, and then allowing His love to express itself freely through you toward all persons and toward all circumstances.

By making a big effort to see others through the eyes of God, with His love in your heart, you will then be able to recognize everyone as a child of the One Father, and consequently no one's behavior will have the power to make you unhappy, resentful, or to disturb the peace in your world.

Regardless of how disagreeable conditions may seem to be in your work or how difficult you may find another person to live with, you may be sure that persons and conditions cannot help but respond to love you express toward them. Unhappy conditions are blessed through your being patient, tolerant, and understanding.

By keeping our attention close to God's presence within and about us, we shall become so filled with peace and calm that no condition, no situation, no problem in the world, will cause us to be perturbed, fearful, or anxious. As we stay near Him in prayer and thought, He will speak words of assurance and comfort to us, and with these words in our hearts, we can transmit only love and kindness to others.

In this way, we are doing our bit to help establish peace. The greatest good we can do for the world at this time is to keep our minds and hearts free from fear and hate, to trust God, to know that He will care for His own, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee," because he trusteth in Thee." Trust ye in Jehovah." — Isaiah 26:3, 4.

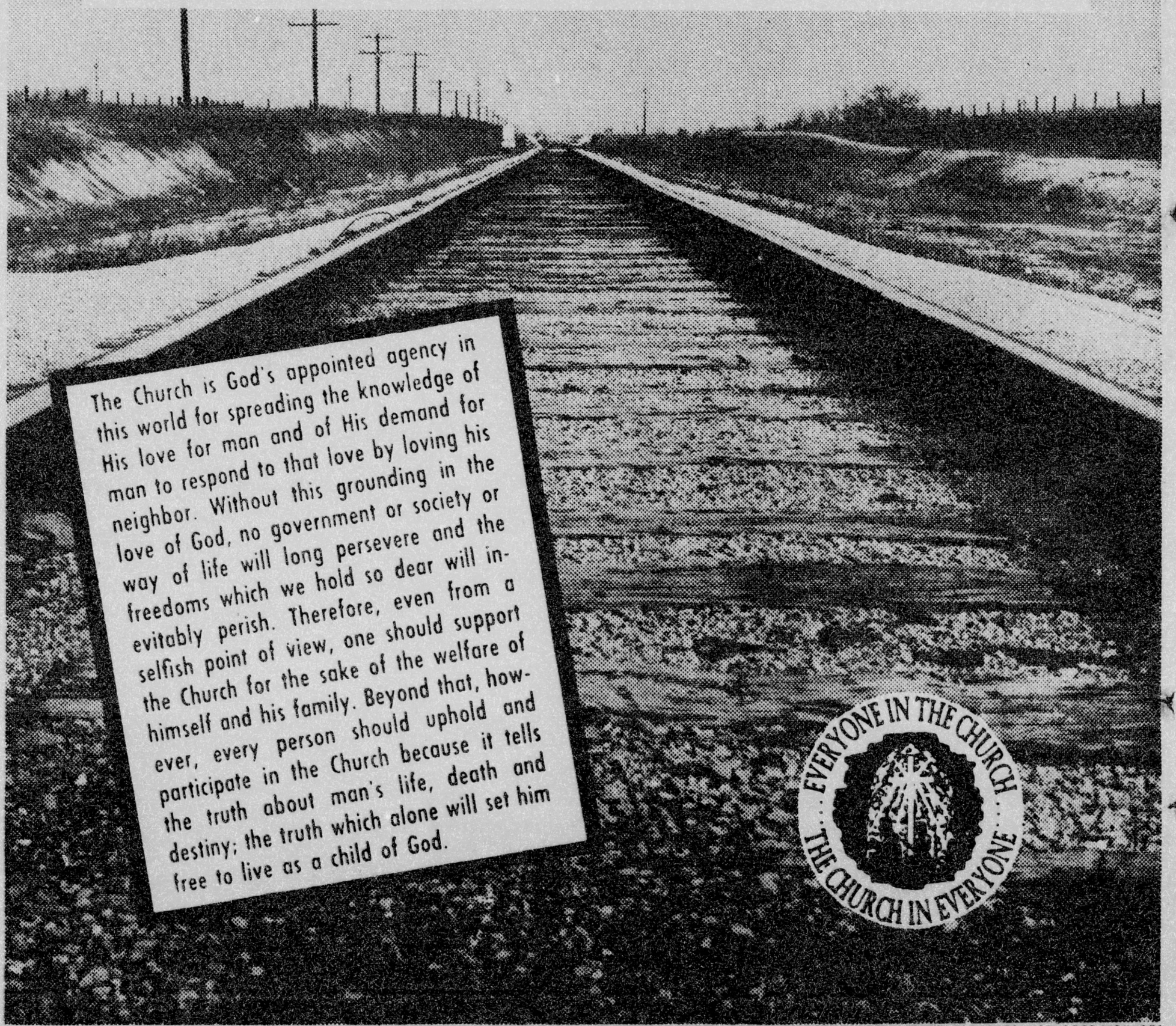
An investment in Your Future

ATTEND CHURCH

Where to...?

Did you ever look down railroad tracks and wonder where they went... or put your ear to the track, listen to the hum, and try to guess when the train would reach you? These questions we may have asked when we were children, but as adults it is time to ask... Are we headed in the right direction? Are we prepared for things in the future regardless of when they will arrive? Choose now the path you will take. Let the church help guide you.

"Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!"



The Church is God's appointed agency in this world for spreading the knowledge of His love for man and of His demand for man to respond to that love by loving his neighbor. Without this grounding in the love of God, no government or society or way of life will long persevere and the freedoms which we hold so dear will inevitably perish. Therefore, even from a selfish point of view, one should support the Church for the sake of the welfare of himself and his family. Beyond that, however, every person should uphold and participate in the Church because it tells the truth about man's life, death and destiny; the truth which alone will set him free to live as a child of God.



TWO MINUTES

WITH THE BIBLE

BY CORNELIUS R. STAM, PRES.
BERNAN BIBLE SOCIETY
CHICAGO 35, ILLINOIS



BUY THE TRUTH AND SELL IT NOT --Prov. 23:23

Every true Christian should understand that the truth costs. If you don't think so, make it your own, value it, defend it, stand for it, and see if it doesn't cost. Before you are through it may cost you far more than you had thought--hours of ease and pleasure, friends and money. Yes, the truth costs. Salvation is gloriously free but the truth costs--that is if you want it for yourself. Many who know the truth won't buy it. They won't pay what it costs to say: "This is what I believe. This is my conviction." The truth isn't worth that much to them.

But God's Word urges us: "Buy the truth!" Not, "Buy it if you can get it at bargain; if the price is not too great." No, "Buy the truth!" Buy it at any price. It's far more valuable than anything you can give in exchange for it.

And when you have bought it--"sell it not." How many, alas, have bought the truth only to sell out again. For awhile they valu-

ed and defended some God-given light from His Word, but presently they sold it again for something that seemed more valuable. Perhaps it was peace with others, or position, or popularity or some other temporal gain. They still gave mental assent that it was the truth, but it formed no part of them. It was no longer a conviction. Such should read again the Spirit's counsel: "Buy the truth, and sell it not." He does not say: "Don't sell it unless you can get a very good price for it." He says: "Sell it not." Sell it not at any price. But if, no matter what it costs and when it is yours do not sell it for any price or under any consideration.

It is because the truth is so little valued in this different age, that many of God's people have become so spiritually powerless. They hold opinions instead of convictions, because the infallible, unchangeable Word of God is given little place in their lives. But God uses those who "buy the truth and sell it not."

Mrs. T. C. Lennon Speaker At First Bapt. Woman's Day Sun.

Mrs. Thelma Cumbo Lennon will serve as guest speaker for the Sunday morning service, October 26, at First Baptist Church, Wilmington Street, at its annual Woman's Day observance.

A native of Raleigh and a product of First Baptist Church, Mrs. Lennon is the daughter of the late Mr. Benjamin F. Cumbo and Mrs. Kattie N. Cumbo, who resides at 113 Lincoln Court.

She was educated in the public school system of Raleigh.



MRS. THELMA C. LENNON

Her undergraduate work was completed at North Carolina Central University, Durham, where she received the B.S. degree. She received the Ed. M. degree from Boston University, Boston Massachusetts, and pursued further training in Guidance and Counseling at Howard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

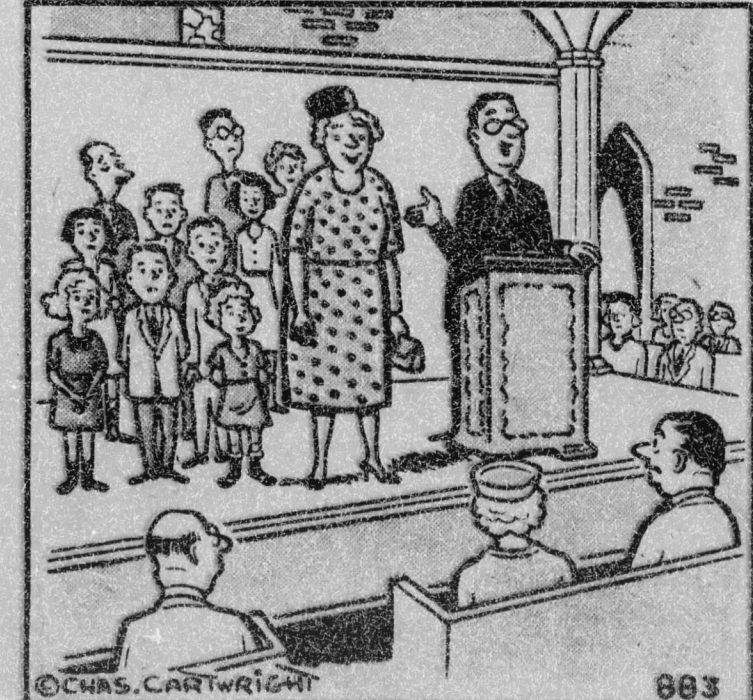
Mrs. Lennon has served as an instructor at Saint Augustine's College, Raleigh. Dean of Students at Allen University, Columbia, South Carolina, and Acting Counselor-Educator, North Carolina Central University at Durham. She joined the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction in 1961 as Guidance Consultant and served in that capacity until May, 1967.

During the summers of 1964 and 1965, Mrs. Lennon served as Head Counselor at the Governor's School of North Carolina for gifted and talented children. At present, she is Supervisor of Guidance, Counseling and Testing, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

She is married to John D. Lennon, Dean of Students, N. C. Central University, Durham.

The public is invited to attend this service.

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