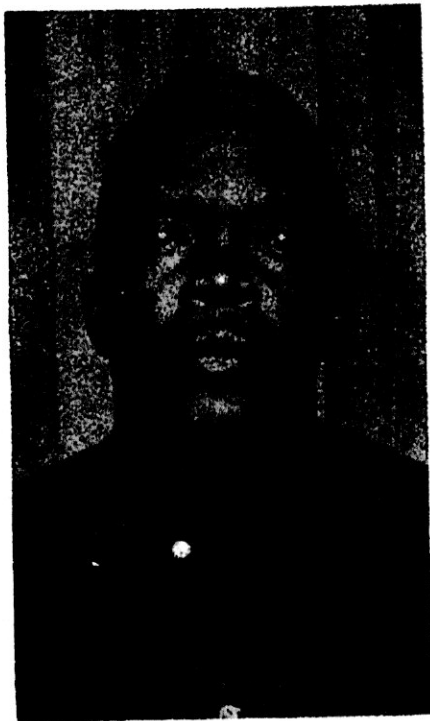


By William T. Blue, Sr.

# A Negro pastor looks at brotherhood

The Sting of Being Considered Inferior by Their Brothers  
Often Hampers the Worship Life of Negro Church Members



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As I start to write this article, I can glance out my window and see, across the street here in Pensacola, a housing development named "Attucks Court." This has been named after Crispus Attucks, a Negro, who was the first patriot shot down in our American Revolution—in the Boston Massacre, March 5, 1770.

For centuries the Negro has labored and fought thus for America, mostly without recognition, dignity, or anything close to just compensation. For 230 years or more his only "reward" was the lash and ignominy of bestial treatment. (My own great-grandfather was fed in a trough, like a pig.)

And now the American Negro is continuing his quest for freedom, as he strives for what is termed variously "tolerance," "desegregation," and "integration."

These words, and even the phrase "civil rights," have become inflammatory and controversial, especially here in the Deep South. What the Negro really wants to say is "Permit me to use and enjoy the freedoms I have already supposedly acquired."

In the actual analysis, we appeal to the principles taught by the Lord Jesus Christ, who was himself the great integrationist of all time, who said that right relationship was his meat and drink (John 4:34). When he was asked how to obtain eternal life, he said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

The question then was "And who is my neighbor?" Then came the answer that closes all means of escape from our responsibility to our fellow man—the parable of the good Samaritan.

Christ herein was describing an "interracial situation," dealing with the same basic problem as ours today. I hope we can understand his message concerning this, for when we can properly interpret this parable we will be on the verge of racial peace.

## The Church Is Reluctant

It appears to me (and I have an excellent vantage point!) that the church has shown a reluctance to face this



illustration: dale ballantyne

problem, especially on the local congregational and district level. A recent General Conference resolution is excellent, as it states, "The gospel is for all mankind. It knows no distinction of race or color" (G.C.R. 995-1956). But in the church we *do* continue to make very definite distinctions along this line, and they result in policies and procedures that illustrate the alleged inferiority of darker-skinned people. We have "white" congregations, and we have "Negro" congregations. We even see what our nation's highest tribunal has termed "immoral"—the spectacle of pews reserved (with labeling signs) for "colored" persons in our "white" churches!

Association with Jesus Christ is never "easy" for those who follow him. It is hard for *anyone* to be a faithful member of the church—but it seems tremendously harder for a Negro in America's beloved Southland. We feel so "left out." When a Negro takes his seat in a "white" congregation, he feels

the impact of 235 years of slavery, and 95 years of near bondage, with more than a few misgivings.

When we are ignored (almost as if we are invisible it seems, as our brethren stare right through us) it widens the breach and defeats the very purpose of our being there at all.

Imagine how it would be if *you* were greeted gingerly at the church entrance, then ushered to a pew reserved (with or without special "colored" signs) for *you*, solely because you are considered inferior. None of your lighter-skinned brethren will sit in the same pew with you, either for fear of what their friends might say or their own unsaintly taboos. Could *you* worship freely and ignore such a condition? Would *you* be able to concentrate on the message of God's servants? Or would you try to insulate yourself, as *we* have to do, and withdraw into a protective shell?

We do develop such a shell or crust. Sometimes we have it melted away, as some of our brethren allow God's grace to help them minister, but those experiences of fellowship at the Lord's altar are so rare.

Some say, "But we have state laws that require segregation." That's not true, except perhaps in South Africa. These "state laws" are only permissive at their strongest, and they certainly don't require segregation in houses of worship. (Here in Pensacola, Florida, such churches as the Episcopal Church continue to seat worshipers regardless of race.) And I feel that *our* church should be leading the way.

To the youth of the church, especially, I would like to say this: The time has come for us to realize the kingdom of God, placing his will and purposes *ahead* of outmoded customs

and traditions, and even "laws." Let us not be satisfied with things as they are but continue to grow up unto him who is the head of our church—Jesus Christ.

I believe the bringing forth of the church was for such a time as this. There are problems; there have always been problems. But this one—this challenge to develop racial harmony—is one of the world's most acute.

Shall we allow a senseless fear to prevent us from achieving the peace of Zion? Is our church seal a meaningless symbol? Shall the shed blood of Jesus—and all the martyrs, including Crispus Attucks and Joseph Smith, Jr.—be in vain?

If the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is anything, it is oil on troubled waters; it is an instrument of peace, as it is a battering ram against the gates of hell; it is a revelation, in us, of God's heaven on earth.

### Let's Grow Together

I am a Negro, and I am hampered. But *your* unhindered hands, my "white" brother, with mine, *can* lift up a standard to the warring world. It is your responsibility to demonstrate your brotherly love for me, and to permit me to do the same for you, until each of us is free in fact.

When we can stand side by side, as brothers before God, our heart-strings can then be tightened and tuned together; and upon us our heavenly Father can play the symphony of love for every ear to hear.

God bless the church. God bless us all and cause us more adequately to become free-flowing channels for his peace to come to all mankind.

By Don Booz



## A personal message to high school students

We Need People Trained to Help  
Meet the Needs of Our Society

Today's young people are deeply concerned about two important questions: Should I go to college, and if so, what college?

As high school students you feel the pressures exerted by these questions. You deserve a direct answer.

The facts show that our problems are increasing each year. Figures indicate that by 1970 the number of young people of college age will have doubled over the number in the early 1950's. These young people are now growing up. Moreover, there has been a steady increase in percentage of high school students going to college. Applications for admission to college are increasing much faster than college facilities are expanding.

In a situation like this, we must determine who should go to college and who should go to Graceland. I will speak very directly now and say that if you have average or above average ability, you should seriously consider pursuing your education beyond high school.

### Problem More Complex Today

The kind of education you seek will depend upon what you want out of life. For my generation, once you decided what kind of education you wanted, it was easy to gain admittance to college. But the problem is more complex today. Not only is it harder to gain admittance to college, but you may also be confused as to