the Cloth." He gloried in the fact that he had patterned the structure of Barbados Government after that of the United States of America in that it was to function under two legislative branches. In accepting the American federal system, he was eager to transplant the philosophy of government in the American style. Since then Barbados has become a haven for the tired, defeated and despondent, and has provided the means for new vigor to be implanted into the weary so that they may begin life again.

The impact of the United States on Sir Grantley Adams opened up new roads of understanding between our peoples through a clearer conception of the idea of the independence of the Caribbean people. Not only was he a pioneer of that mutual understanding which must galvanize our intent, but he pursued it to the very end of his political career.

NATIONAL BAPTISTS MAKE A NEW THRUST IN BARBADOS

The National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. makes no claims to any of the labels of Fundamentalism, Conservatism, or Liberalism. Baptists cannot and should not be rigidly classified into such limiting categories, for freedom is a broadening and progressive enterprise—an ever-expanding legacy of thought and action. By no means, can we be adamant against change. We devoutly believe in certain concrete tenets of the Christian Faith, and our Christian Faith leaves open for us every possible avenue for change and progress. We are requesting to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:18). St. Paul, the greatest proponent of the Christian Faith never closed the door on the ever-increasing knowledge of Jesus Christ, for he prayed, "...being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen" (Ephesians 3:17-20).

Hence, no sect, no so-called "select group," no elite chosen ones, has the last word on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ through the interpretations of the Scriptures. As in a mirror blindly, partially, dimly, we behold this great mystery of godliness, St. Paul tells us again: "...For now we see in a mirror, dimly; but then face to face: Now I know in part; then shall I understand fully, even as I have been understood" (I Corinthians 13:12). So, any all-conclusive idea of closing the Book is contradictory to the ever-revealing, expanding, unfolding word of God. So, Conservatism is left wanting in its relationship to the effervescent flow of the Spirit of God in His dealings with human recovery, liberation, salvation—Redemption. "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Too often some sycophant forgets that the cornerstone of the Reformation was the right and freedom of believers in Jesus Christ and His Cause to interpret the Scriptures according to the independent enlightenment which was the individual's right and legacy through untrammeled searching and discovery. The lucidity of Scriptural interpretation springs forth from the supervision and guidance of the Holy Spirit, Who alone is the key to the Scriptures. Hence, there is always room for new light to shine upon the old moss-covered paths and for fresh air to come into the mouldy, cob-webbed houses, when the windows and doors are thrown open to the invitation and welcome of God. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Revelations 3:20-22).

If we think in terms of New Dispensations, there must be New Dimensions and New Directions of our dreams for the unity of the races that have been severed and scattered apart too long through man's sins—the sin of covetousness, the sin of greed, and the sin of selfishness. Today, we are trekking back to our Father's House as did the Prodigal Son, through the United Nations and through our ecumenical endeavors so that there may be an umbrella for the protection of all God's children. Those who are striving to hold on to their divisive measures of separation, discrimination, and ostracism will and must be crushed by the rushing avalanche of change and progress. "It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, and many nations shall come, and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift up swords against nations, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever" (Micah 4:1-5).

It is time for us to stop this sparring at each other in terms of labels and nomenclature and get down to the business of the ecumenical agenda. There is too much unconquered territory for us to be at the mercy of the call of old shibboleths, that have been projected and have prevailed among people of a common faith and have paralyzed our progress toward unity, for far too long.

DR. WALTER L. HARDING

A Local Pastor for Forty-Seven Years

—by Rhoda Janet Rhodes—

The United Missionary Baptist Association and the Baptist Ministers' Conference of Greater New York and Vicinity is honoring Dr. Harding on May 11, 1985, with a Saturday Afternoon Fellowship Luncheon at Alex & Henry's on Courtland Avenue in the Bronx starting at 12:30.

The celebration will be an appreciation tribute for the distinguished ministerial leadership Dr. Harding has given the total community as the pastor of St. Luke Baptist Church of Harlem since 1983, and member of the Association and Conference.

St. Luke has grown from the struggling organizational membership of twelve in 1937 to a faithful congregation of hundreds of Christians from various Metropolitan neighborhoods and suburban communities. The church is a supporting member of the Empire State Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention of the U.S.A., Inc.

Dr. Harding is a respected senior member and former secretary of the Ministers' Conference. He is a former vice president of the Empire State Convention and Finance Chairman of the United Missionary Association.

Dr. Harding's ecumenical and community outreach includes membership in: the Inter-faith Ministerial Association, the Tri-County Ministerial Alliance, the Urban League, the NAACP and various neighborhood projects and organizations.

He is an active supporter of African American Political Empowerment and was a campaigner for the late Baptist Minister and Congressman, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. in all of his campaigns. He is a yearly supporter of the United Negro College Fund and other church related colleges.

Dr. Harding and Kathryn Robinson were married in 1946. They are proud parents of three daughters and a son. Mrs. Harding is an accomplished musician and Shaw University Valedictorian of the class of 1951. She is a past president of the Baptist Ministers' Wives and Widows of Greater New York and Vicinity and Parent Teachers Association of Central School in Glen Rock, N.J.

Dr. Harding will be celebrating his 55th Anniversary as a Baptist pastor in November. Included in the thousands of sermons he has written, and preached, is a challenging address he delivered as the guest speaker of the Rotary Club of New Jersey.