BAPTISTS IN
LA. GROW TO
220,000 IN '45

Increase In Membership
Of Church Cited By
Dr. Stagg

The growth and achievements of Louisiana Baptists in the last century were discussed last night by Dr. W. L. Stagg, Jr., pastor of the First Baptist church in Lake Charles and president of the Louisiana Baptist convention, at the First Baptist church in Shreveport. Last night was Louisiana Baptist night in the centennial celebration of the Shreveport Baptist church.

"One hundred years ago," said Dr. Stagg, "Louisiana was a wealthy state but it was a wicked state. The Baptists were a feeble force. We had no colleges, no Baptist convention, no Bible institutes." He gave the number of Baptists in the state a century ago, 3,000, and the number in 1945, 220,000. The Louisiana Baptist convention, Dr. Stagg related, was organized in 1848, two years after the First Baptist church in Shreveport was founded, with 13 messengers present. The first convention session was held in 1854 at the Shreveport church.

Dr. C. Oscar Johnson of St. Louis, who spoke Sunday and Monday night, spoke again last night, making the subject of his sermon the importance of remaining cheerful through the dark days of war and the means of finding this cheer. He urged the church to follow the example of its founders and to continue the work in the next century that it had done in the past.

A luncheon was held Tuesday at noon in the church dining room for the church members prior to 1912 and was in charge of Dr. M. E. Dodd. The Wednesday evening program, which commemorates the actual founding date of the church, will include greetings from Dr. John Cayler, president of the Baptist Pastors' association in Shreveport, and the Rev. Stanley E. Wilkes, moderator of the Caddo Baptist association.

Churches which have been organized by the First Baptist church are Parkview, 1879; First Baptist church, Bogue City, 1909; Queensborough, 1913; Southside, 1914; Highland, 1915; Ingleside, 1925; Calvary, 1926; Broadmoor, 1930; Caddo Heights, 1931; Elm Grove, 1932; La Chute, 1935; Barksdale, 1936; Trinity Heights, 1941; Emmanuel, 1941; Lakeshore, 1941; Rocky Mount, 1942; Mildred Crowe Memorial, 1942.

Dr. Johnson will bring his final message at 7:30 Wednesday night. The luncheon for the church official family will be held at noon today in the church dining room. Dr. Johnson will be guest speaker. The Thursday night program is designated "Civic Night and Other Churches" night. The guest speaker, Gov. Thomas L. Bailey of Mississippi, will be introduced by Gov. Jimmie H. Davis.