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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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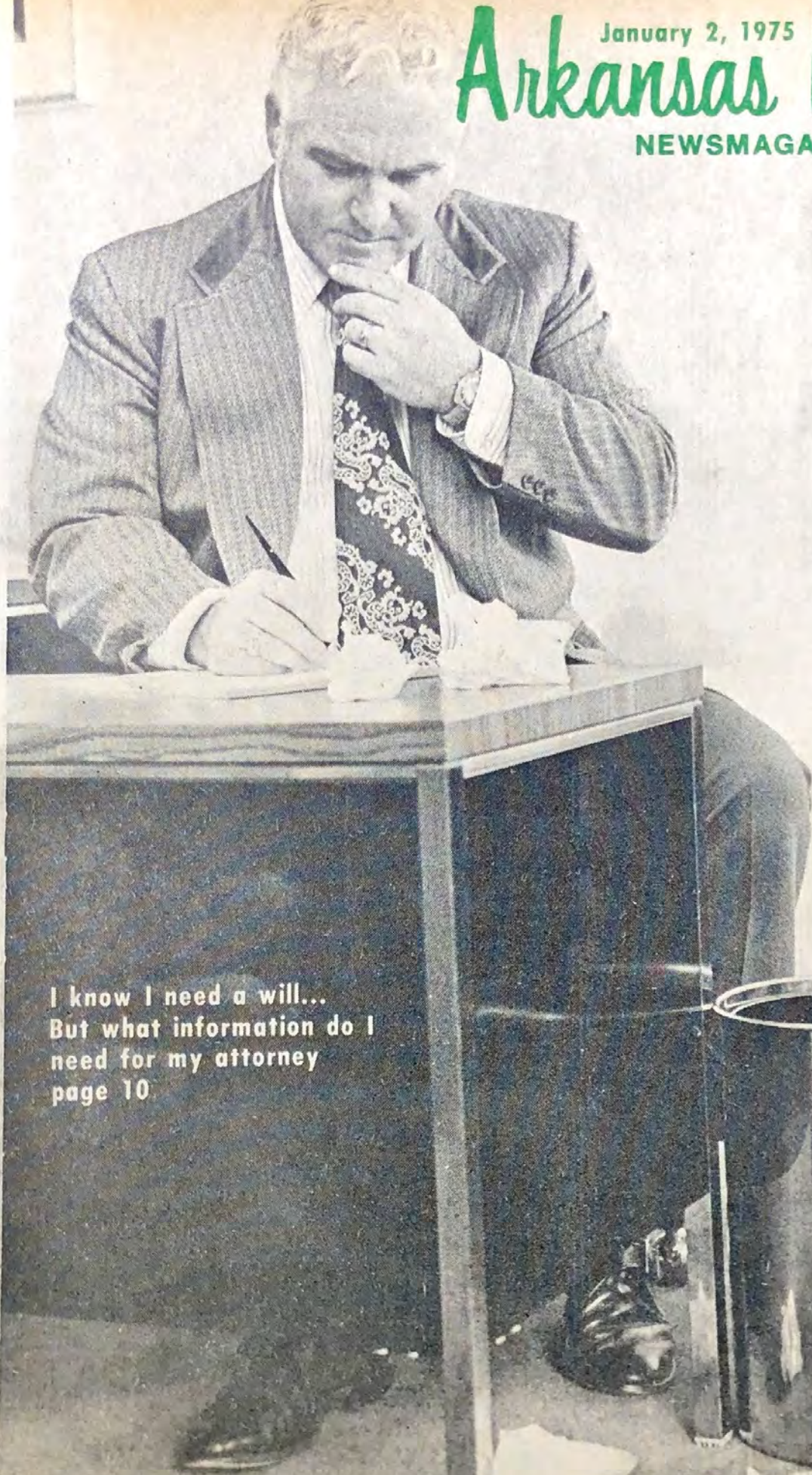
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January 2, 1975

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE



I know I need a will...
But what information do I
need for my attorney
page 10



I must say it

Charles H. Ashcraft/Executive Secretary

What manner of spirit

There is enough truth in the gospel to go around. There is enough need in the world to tax every person who seeks to meet the needs. No person or group has a monopoly either on the supply or demand made of the gospel.

No messenger owns the message or the God who gave it. God needs all muscles, voices and all of us to get the message out. The message is of greater importance than the messenger in the sense that a telegram gets a rating above the boy, any boy, who may deliver it.

There are enough devils in mens' lives to allow everyone a chance to exercise his gifts at casting them out. God only gets the glory any way so why does it bother evangelicals when other evangelicals come to the front?

Why do people react as did the disciples in Luke 9:49, "We saw one casting out devils and we forbade him, because he followed not with us."

Organizations, affiliations and associations are important but they should never exclude, discourage or destroy the good efforts of others. God never seems to pose all virtues in one group or one place.

He never deposits all his grace in one bank. He doesn't depend on one investment to extend his cause. He is the God of us all who are in this special redemptive business.

He does not suggest all the sheep have to be in one pasture to qualify for his fold but there are a lot of things we could do for each other if we had the right spirit. (Luke 9:55)

The right spirit would rule out calling fire down from heaven to destroy all who do not see it our way or walk with us. The right spirit would prevent us from opposition to or getting in the way of those equally adept at reaching people.

The right spirit would encourage all who name the name of Christ to enter the ripe fields of harvest and be on with the job of evangelizing.

There is no plea here for union, organic or otherwise, with other groups but there can be no compromise with the right spirit of evangelizers with evangelizers.

If Christ were limited to one village, one island, one county or one country, the philosophy of the Great Commission may be read in such limited fashion but when it becomes unmistakably clear that Christ is for all nations (Matt. 28: 19-20) we had better solicit, involve and encourage all who love Christ to enter the fields of harvest.

I must say it!

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Members of First Church, Ft. Smith, again celebrated Christmas by giving money and gifts for needy families. The annual White Christmas service brought in cash donations of more than \$11,000.

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This week's cover reminds Christians of the need for a will.

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

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J. Everett Sneed

Fadism in our churches

Over the years Southern Baptists have held many fine leadership conferences covering nearly every area of personal and church need. We have had leadership clinics, evangelism workshops, and Bible conferences. Certainly, we endorse all helpful training or teaching efforts, whether or not they are held under Southern Baptist sponsorship. Recently, however, a few church members have come to consider themselves authorities on a subject because of conferences they have attended.

Many such conferences really do meet needs. The problem, then, centers around the attitudes of those attending. These people, who are seeking something which they believe to be excitingly different, rush out to avail themselves of the latest fads in Christian development. Many even like to think of themselves as accomplished Bible scholars because of one study session. Others erroneously believe that only a particular individual, often one not connected with the church or denomination, is a worthy teacher.

Occasionally these people become so engrossed with one personality that they substitute his taped messages for Sunday School lessons or Church Training programs.

A good teacher will know his pupils. This means that the lesson must be shaped to meet the individual needs. It is impossible for a taped address, no matter how dynamic, to fulfill this requirement.

A good teacher will stimulate his pupils to think by providing opportunity for dialogue. A taped message discourages discussion.

Furthermore, a person obsessed with the latest fad

tends to regard others as inferiors. He may even believe his pastor's dedication or knowledge to be inadequate. Most experienced preachers are aware of the danger of over-emphasizing a single doctrine to the exclusion of others since many strange sects have emerged from such distortions.

The leadership of the pastor should be honored. Usually the church is his whole life - his vocation and his worship. The counsel of God's servant should be carefully considered because of his calling, his experience, his education and his dedication.

Perhaps the most crucial question is, "How should we view non-Southern Baptist conferences?" If the material is good and meets a need we might attend and use it. However, a person should never believe himself an authority in a given field because of having attended certain conferences or workshops.

We also should explore our own Southern Baptist resources. Often we will discover that the content of these conferences were first developed by our own leadership. We have led in the development of most techniques and our resources are vast.

Finally, we should never become obsessed with a single emphasis. No matter how scriptural the teaching, a single doctrine should not be pursued to the exclusion of all others. Following the latest fad is very dangerous. Paul warned Christians "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and the cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Ephesians 4:14)

Guest editorial

Why help raise \$23 million?

The Lottie Moon Christmas offering goal for foreign missions is \$23 million. It is a tidy sum, but hardly staggering for a 12-million-plus denominational membership.

Whether the goal is big or small, nothing of importance will be done individually or collectively without the right motive. Giving to hold back the jaws of inflation on the mission fields leaves me cold. It is a reason or helpful result, but in my opinion it is not the real motive.

The prospect of appointing more missionaries or paying the ones we have greater salaries doesn't particularly challenge me either. I would like to see it done, but I need a deeper motive.

Why should I extend myself to help raise \$23 million for missions? What will cause me to "shell out"?

Some part with their resources because of an emergency. Hospitals are full of patients who didn't intend to be there. Hospital and doctors' bills are no respecter of pocketbooks when a crisis comes.

We give up "filthy lucre" when *compelled to*. Taxes come to mind in this category, plus groceries and gasoline. Robbers too can be extracting.

A recent newspaper story told of a geologist traveling

in an Arabian state with his wife. Their car broke down and the husband walked a few miles to get help. When he returned he found that marauders had cut off his wife's head to get the gold fillings in her teeth. Apparently there is more than one way of losing your head over gold!

At Christmas *sentiment* puts a hand in our pockets to separate us from hard-earned cash. Christmas trappings, trees and Santa Claus, with a little help from children and grandchildren, cause us to be overly generous. The feeling may be good, but a particular season and sentiment will hardly raise the necessary funds needed for missions.

The question is, "Why does God want sinners saved?" Is it because of the worth of the individual soul, the inevitable bliss of association in heaven, the terrible interminable length of eternity, the awfulness of everlasting hell? While all of these reasons are valid, we must understand that God just *loves to save sinners*. For God so loved that He gave us the golden thread that sews it up. Love is the motive, love is the theme. We must love to see lost people saved, then we will give cheerfully and generously.—Edgar R. Cooper in the "Florida Baptist Witness"



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant / President, OBU

Rethinking my annual New Year's Resolution

Just as I was about to get myself in a mental state of preparedness for making a New Year's resolution—the same one I make each year—an interesting news event caused me to rethink the whole thing.

One of my greatest needs is for more hours in the day. I have been trying for some time to start a movement to change our outmoded pattern of 24-hour days to a more workable arrangement of, say, 30-hour days, so that I could get most of my mail answered, telephone calls finished, and conferences completed before the end of each day. It seems like a fairly simple change and I have never understood why I have had so few supporters in Congress or the Arkansas Legislature for my idea.

Even my wife has withheld her support from the proposal. She has even gone so far as to say that a better solution would be for me to use my time more wisely in the existing 24-hour day. With her annual encouragement I have made a New Year's resolution each year to make better use of my time. The only problem

is that I seem to fall into that famous pattern of "the hurrier I go the behinder I get."

It was against this background that I read the news story recently that separate research teams of nuclear physicists on the East and West Coasts have discovered two new and mysterious "subnuclear particles that do not fit into any of the theoretical schemes physicists have constructed to explain the nature of matter." I am told the atom is composed of a nucleus of protons and neutrons with electrons in orbit around them, much like the planets orbiting around the sun. But one group of Stanford University researchers and another group of Massachusetts Institute of Technology researchers have found these strange new particles by raising the energy level in an accelerator, or atom smasher, to 3.7 BFV (Billion Electron Volts).

Although I am impressed with any discovery of a new particle of matter, there was one characteristic of the new particle, as reported, that I found just a little overwhelming. According to one of

the physicists, "One of the surprising and mysterious properties of the newly discovered particles is that they have a relatively long lifetime before they decay—100 billionths of a billionth of a second!" It boggled my mind to try to comprehend just how short a length of time 100 billionth of a billionth of a second actually is, as well as for this to be called a relatively long life.

Just as the concept of eternity, or everlasting life, defies the understanding of finite mind, so an infinitesimally small fraction of a fraction of a second is equally impossible to imagine.

I put the newspaper down and breathed a prayer of thanksgiving to God who both creates and understands the shortest and the longest periods of time.

I also resolved again to make better use in 1975 of all of the priceless time that God gives me.

Evangelism Conference

Begin: Jan. 20, 1:45 p.m.

Close: Jan. 22, noon

First Baptist Church
62 Pleasant Valley
Little Rock, Arkansas



The president speaks

Don Moore / President, ABSC

Our vocational volunteers

This is my first opportunity to thank all of you for your strong support during the past year and during the recent convention. You have been patient, prayerful and helpful. This is true of our laymen, pastors and their staffs and our college and university people. Your confidence in electing me to a second term is inspiring. Please pray more fervently than ever. My own dear people; our God-blessed convention and the '76 Life and Liberty Campaign will make large demands this year. I want to be God's man in these particular areas.

Now, about our "Vocational Volunteers", let me say a word. These are our students at OBU, SBC and our State Schools who are preparing for church-related vocations. What a night! In our Wednesday evening session of our recent Convention Arkansas Baptist's saw firsthand the tremendous potential entrusted to us by the Lord. OBU, SBC and

BSU brought their vocational volunteers to be honored guests of the convention. How impressive! Ouachita has 299 preparing for Christian service; Southern has almost 100 and BSU has at least 100. These constitute one of our largest and most promising investments. May it please God to anoint everyone of these with gifts and power equal to the needs of our churches and our world.

When will they serve? Some may not serve until after college and seminary days. I want to encourage Arkansas Baptists to let these gifted young people serve now! They can't do everything. They can do some things and do them well. Yes, there are hazards in their inexperience. Experience has not eradicated the possibility of misjudgment or misconduct from any of us. The benefits outweigh the liabilities very much. Provided with loving encouragement, counsel and patience, a

student will make a happy and effective worker in many of our churches. While men are discouraged from ordaining a novice, God is free and often disposed to put a special anointing upon a man or woman in their youth.

Students come to our rural church regularly. A number of us were inspired to consider "fulltime Christian service" by their bright lives. They provided activities and training which we could not have had otherwise. Students are courageous soul winners. God blesses the gospel whether delivered eloquently by the experiences or haltingly by the inexperienced. The countries of the world have been blessed by missionaries whose first missionary journey was from the college campus to some local church assignment. While helping us, how can we estimate the value of the help given the student by the church. The three years I attended Ouachita I worked as minister of music and youth with pastor Dale Taylor and First Church, Smackover. I will be eternally grateful for this experience. I have pastored four fulltime churches. Each call from these churches can be clearly and directly traced back to my experience as a student worker at Smackover.

I and II Timothy encourages us not to "despise thy youth" and tells the youth how to conduct themselves so as to win the confidence and blessing of God and the people. Our attitude will help the vocational volunteer to "soar or sour."



OBU President Daniel Grant (right) presents a plaque to Carl Bunch in recognition of his being named Superintendent of Missions of the Year.

Bunch named Superintendent of Missions of the Year by OBU

ARKADELPHIA--J. Carl Bunch, superintendent of missions for the Mt. Zion Association, with offices in Jonesboro, was presented the Ouachita University "Superintendent of Missions of the Year" award Dec. 3 at OBU's Evans Student Center.

Jesus Christ Power and Light Co., a religious folk singing group performed for the 38 missionaries.

The recipient of the award is selected by a committee composed of representatives from OBU, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and the two previous winners of the annual recognition.

Bunch has served in his position for a total of 21 years. Major accomplishments of the association include the erection of a new associational office complex and the development of an associational youth camp. Other achievements include providing space for the Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services at Jonesboro, conducting five weeks of camp programs annually in addition to various retreats, and supporting the Baptist student work at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.

He received his education at Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, at ASU, Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

In addition to his associational work, Bunch has pastored Nodena Church and First Church in Nettleton, Rowe's Chapel Church and First Church, Hornersville,

Mo.

Bunch is a native of near Gurdon. He is married to the former Alice Jackson. Rev. and Mrs. Bunch have six children and 11 grandchildren.

R.H. Dorris, director of the missions department of the Arkansas State Convention spoke at the Dec. 3 meeting of the OBU Ministerial Alliance immediately following the Missionary Appreciation Banquet.

This program was designed to inform the students about the associational missionaries, their work, and how the ministerial students can aid them.

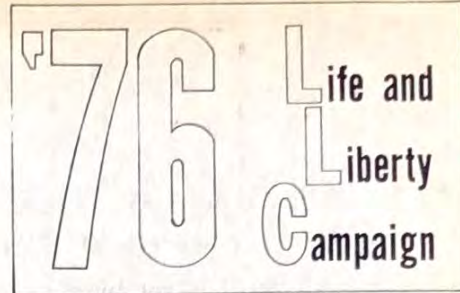
Dorris spoke on the changing status of the rural church in Arkansas. Carl Bunch also spoke on the relation of the young minister to the association. A panel of several missionaries answered questions at the close of the meeting.

OBU registration set for mid January

ARKADELPHIA--Spring registration at Ouachita Baptist University will begin in Lile Hall Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 9:30 a.m. and continue through Wednesday afternoon, Jan. 15.

Registration will be by I.D. number. Each student must have a trial schedule signed by his advisor before he can register.

The last day to register or add a course is Jan. 31. The last day to drop a course is Feb. 28.



by R. Wilbur Herring



Dr. Herring

The main thrust of our campaign is personal evangelism. Personal evangelism is flanked by prayer and public proclamation. If you will refer to Ephesians 4:11-12, you will notice that the work of evangelists, pastors

and teachers is that of equipping the saints for the work of "deaconing." This is all done for the purpose of building up the body of Christ.

The pastor and his staff are responsible for training and otherwise equipping the Lord's people for the purpose of adding to the body of Christ.

It is better to put ten men to work than to try to do the work of ten men. The wise leader will train the men, women and youth of his church to become soulwinners. This is the lasting work on the field that he can do. It is always a compliment to a pastor when he leaves finished soulwinners in the field when he moves to another place of service.

The main emphasis in 1975 must be that of enlisting and training personal workers to send them into the field.

Soulwinning Commitment Sunday, January 12, should be a wonderful starting point for every church. It is suggested that you make your own commitment card to get your people committed to witness and then you ought to have definite plans for following up in the training of these willing workers. The WIN program and the WOW program are ideal vehicles to be used in training your people. Bro. Jesse Reed and Bro. Neal Guthrie of our Evangelism Department can assist you in scheduling a training session for your people. Or if you will write to Bro. Don Moore, pastor of Grand Avenue Church, Ft. Smith, Arkansas or to Bro. Johnny Jackson, pastor of Forest Highlands Church in Little Rock, they will give you some constructive suggestions in the training of the people you get committed to witness in 1975.

Brother Pastor, what is your goal as to the number of people you desire to have committed and trained in 1975?



Woman's viewpoint

Iris O'Neal Bowen

Farewell, Crystal White!

When was the last time you saw a bar of good, old-fashioned laundry soap? You don't remember? Well, you just don't see P and G or Crystal White soap any more. The last time we had P and G in our store, a man came up to the check-out stand loaded down with all we had left, and he was real excited at his find.

"My daughter will go wild!" he said. "Did you realize this stuff is collectible?"

Of course, liquid detergents have replaced the bar variety, which we no longer need for that old ailment with a new name, "Ring Around the Collar." That sad ailment has been here ever since farmers started wearing work shirts, but the usual cure was the rub-board, a bar of soap, plenty of elbow grease and a trip aboard the wash pot.

I think my mother was the originator of liquid soap. Every wash day she slivered a bar of soap into a pan of water and cooked it till the soap melted. This she hustled to the tub before it could coagulate, and things went smoothly from there on.

I think the Lord put it in us to want to be clean, but we have become obsessed with cleanliness. Our houses must be showcases for dustless furniture, floors you can skate on, dishes you can use for mirrors.

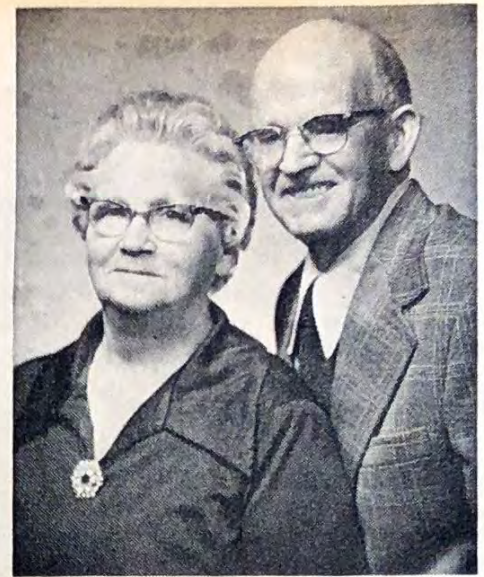
Our bodies must also be showered once a day and powdered, perfumed and deodorized, and that is just a small start at using everything the medias tell us we must use, or else...

Our nation would be in better shape if we worried as much about our inner cleanliness as we do our exposed surfaces.

David put it right when he said, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart..."

Six-year-old had said something ugly, and Mother hadn't reprov'd her, Four-year-old took it upon herself to do the job.

"Clean up your heart, Michele, clean up your heart!" she told her.



Rev. and Mrs. Dugger

50th anniversary

Rev. and Mrs. H.M. Dugger celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a reception at Mt. Hebron Church at Joy on Dec. 29. They were married Jan. 3, 1925, at Union Valley.

Dugger and his wife, the former Ava Barrentine, are the parents of a son and a daughter, who gave the reception.

Dugger was ordained to the ministry by the Union Valley Church in 1931, and has pastored the following churches: Union Valley, Mt. Springs, Crosby, Pleasant Valley at Sidon, Ravenden Springs, Liberty at Walker, Baugh Chapel, Mt. Sidon, Quitman, and Mt. Hebron. He also served as associational missionary in Big Creek Association for six years, and in Little Red River Association for nine years.

Letters to the editor

Aid from churches

Messengers attending the Southern Baptist Convention last June instructed the Annuity Board to write churches asking for financial assistance for needy retired ministers or their widows who had served them.

We were not aware at the time the SBC mandate was given how difficult an assignment this would be. Many of the churches we must reach no longer exist. Other have changed names, moved or merged, making it almost impossible to locate them.

Requests for relief grants have increased in recent months primarily because of inflation, which now is tragically in the double digit range. The Annuity Board through the special allocation in the Cooperative Program does provide some assistance. However, the funds are not sufficient to provide adequately for all applicants.

Through this open letter we hope to reach churches that fit in the categories mentioned, especially if they were not participating in the Annuity Board's Protection Program before 1950. The majority of the persons who need financial help served before 1950.

Churches may send their gifts directly to the Annuity Board and designate them for specific ministers or widows if they wish.

We appreciate any help you can give us in reaching these important churches as we try to fulfill our obligation to the SBC - and even more important, as we attempt to help in some way many retired ministers and widows who are trapped in today's economy with inadequate incomes. Darold H. Morgan

Seeks assistant pastor

We are looking for a man as assistant pastor in charge of youth ministry. This includes all phases of the youth work. He would be a full-time man on our staff.

We would like for you to put an article or whatever is needed for the people to read in your weekly state paper. We have exhausted every lead thus far.

If anyone is interested please send a resume. Thank you for this service.—Sid Peterson, pastor, Stine Road Baptist Church, 3001 Stine Road, Bakersfield, Calif. 93309

Little Rock man heads OBU board

ARKADELPHIA--Dwight Linkous of Little Rock was elected chairman of the Ouachita Baptist University Board of Trustees at the Dec. 12 meeting.

Earl Verser of Eudora was named vice chairman of the board of trustees and chairman of the executive committee, and Mrs. Clarence Anthony of Murfreesboro was elected secretary of the OBU board.

Giving the gospel a voice

The people to people method of reaching the world for God is at its best through the efforts of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. Radio-TV Commission programs are heard on radio or television and reach people in 40 countries, in 14 different languages. These programs give the Gospel a voice in Russia, China, and many other countries where Christian missionaries are not welcome.

Gifts were placed under a Christmas tree by some members of the church.



First, Ft. Smith, holds white Christmas

An impressive part of First Church, Ft. Smith eighth White Christmas service, was the parade of the flags of the nations. The flags furnished by the Foreign Mission Board represented the countries in which Southern Baptists have mission work.

The service observed on Dec. 8 gave opportunity for the church to support the Lottie Moon offering and to provide Christmas gifts for needy families.

The church received \$11,089 of their \$16,500 goal. Over the years the congregation has given nearly \$100,000 in White Christmas services. Pastor William L. Bennett said that the Sunday School attendance of 1,371 was the largest the church had registered for this occasion.

Bennett's message was based on Matthew 28:16-20. He said "The mission of the church and Jesus are synonymous." He emphasized: (1) The mandate of Christ's mission, (2) the magnitude of Christ's mission, (3) the message of Christ's mission, and (4) the missionaries of Christ's mission.

"Of the 500 people to whom Christ gave the Great Commission," Bennett said, "only 12 were preachers. There is, therefore, no question but that we are all called to carry the message of Christ."

In conclusion Bennett challenged the congregation to respond to the Great Commission by witnessing locally, by praying for our work around the world and by supporting our mission efforts financially.



Music by a handbell ensemble was a part of the White Christmas program.

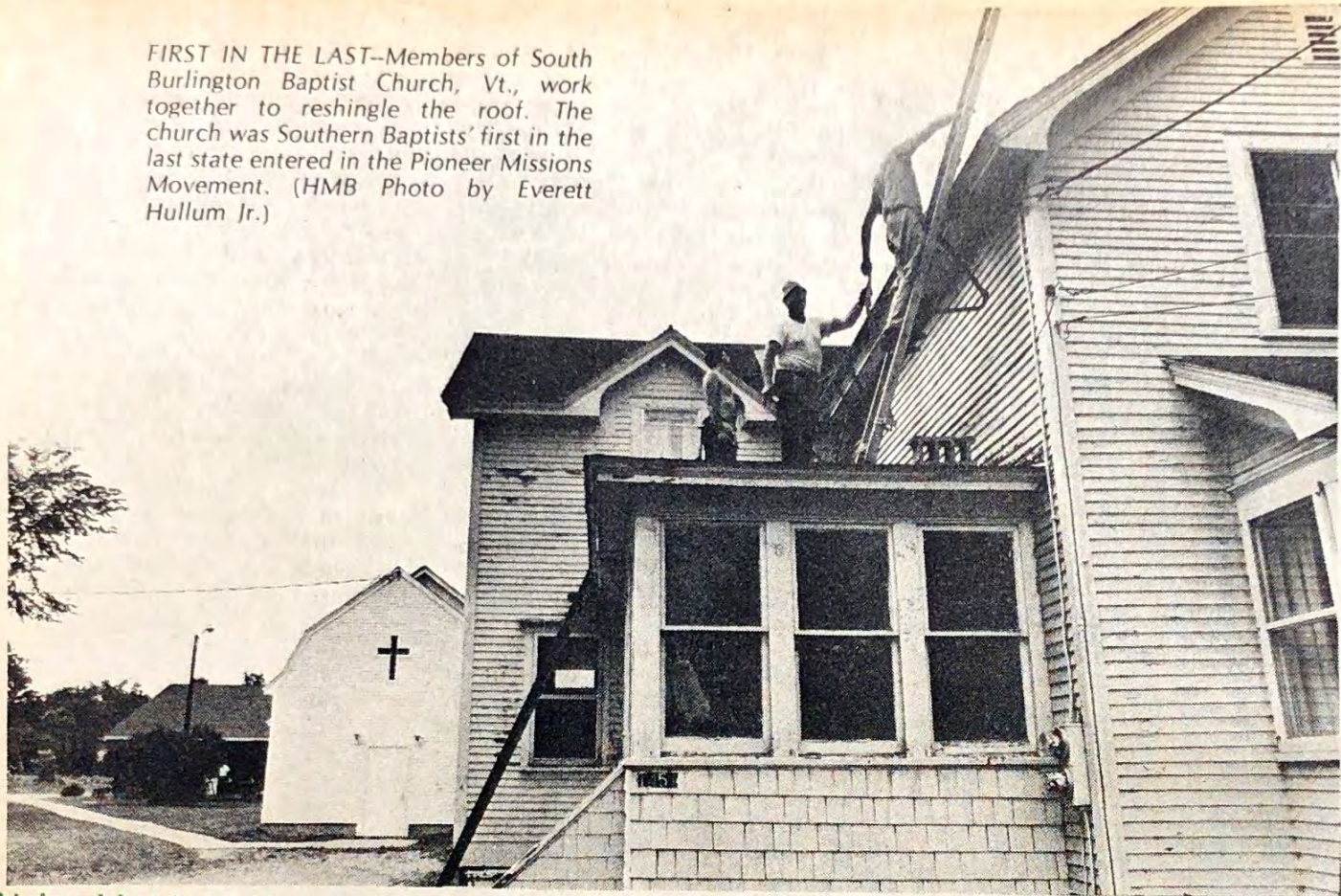


Pastor William L. Bennett brought the missions-oriented message.



Flags representing the countries where Southern Baptists are on mission were displayed.

FIRST IN THE LAST--Members of South Burlington Baptist Church, Vt., work together to reshingle the roof. The church was Southern Baptists' first in the last state entered in the Pioneer Missions Movement. (HMB Photo by Everett Hulum Jr.)



Third and last in a series

The SBC 'pioneer movement:' the move east

by Everett Hulum Jr.
and Kim Watson
for Baptist Press

The story of expansion eastward represents an ambitious leap forward in the Southern Baptist Convention's historic "Pioneer Movement", which spurred its growth from a rural, old South setting to a nationwide denomination with 33 state conventions covering 50 states.

Growth westward, the SBC's first real effort at spreading its wings to evangelize America, had eased into a fairly well-honed rhythm; its phase one, easy-growth period was ending.

And the recognition of the shift to indigenous missions was already being felt in California, for example. But in the land east of the Mississippi River, the heady phase two of the Pioneer Movement was just beginning.

Beginning in the late 1930s, Southern Baptist churches had spilled across the Ohio River to begin missions in Indiana and Ohio. Now new jobs, created by the war industries and continuing in the boom that followed, magnetically drew hundreds of Southern Baptists from Appalachia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas; they flooded the northern rims of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, poured into Michigan and western Pennsylvania and western New York.

In 1952, Ray Roberts, a steady, strong-willed SBC Home Mission Board missionary, went to start churches in Ohio. When he arrived, the state had one association with 19 churches -- six of which were actually in Indiana. Two years later, with the number of churches grown to 39 and membership totalling about 10,000, the Ohio Baptist Convention was formed. Roberts became its first secretary.

Southern Illinois, a state convention since 1907, meanwhile was spreading its influence northward into western Indiana.

From these two expanding epicenters, the Great Lakes pioneer thrust groped out in an unstructured, unorganized, uncoordinated sort of pincer movement.

Illinois Baptists began answering calls from as far as Keosha, Wisc., and as close as Decatur, just across the comity agreement line that had separated Northern and Southern Baptist churches. The Pioneer Movement resulted in the Illinois convention growing to a statewide body from its original foothold in southern Illinois.

In less than 20 years, the 16 churches of northern Illinois grew to 160. The one association that had encompassed much

of the Great Lakes region had been broken into seven.

Simultaneously, Ohio was reaching into Indiana and Michigan. Drawing from the strength of these two conventions, plus support from Kentucky and Arkansas Baptists, Indiana formed a state convention in 1958. With 111 churches and about 20,000 members, it organized as one of the strongest conventions in the region.

Michigan had constituted as a convention the year before with 52 churches, a four-fold increase in the six years since the first Michigan Baptist association had formed.

By the late 50s, Ohio also was moving eastward, sponsoring missions in western Pennsylvania and western New York.

By 1970, the Pennsylvania-South Jersey Convention formed with 50 churches and 9,000 members.

The Home Mission Board launched work in New York City in 1958, with the emphasis in Manhattan.

Ohio Baptists had earlier -- in 1955 -- helped Alabama pastor R.Z. Boroughs, who moved to Niagara Falls in 1954 to minister to some of his non-resident members, organize the first Southern Baptist church in New York. By 1969 the

work had grown to 70 churches and 10,000 members; the New York convention was constituted with Paul James as its first executive secretary.

The Manhattan congregation, although never numerically strong, was a vital factor in what might be called the final thrust of the Pioneer Movement — the penetration of New England — serving as the source of many of the leaders.

The same year the Manhattan church was begun, 1958, Screven Memorial Baptist Church in Portsmouth, N.H., was experiencing birth pangs. Three years later, 1961, the first page of the final chapter of the Pioneer Movement story was written when Rosco Anderson, a layman from Florida, moved to Burlington, Vermont, on assignment from the Home Mission Board to begin work in the 50th state. In 1963, South Burlington Baptist Church was constituted and Southern Baptists became truly a national convention.

The pace of work in New England has been slow by most SBC standards, but it's progressing. The fellowship, now affiliated with the Maryland convention, numbers 39 churches and 6,000 members. Elmer Sizemore, who has led work there since 1962, estimates it will be five years before it's ready for regional convention status.

When it comes, the New England convention will join a phalanx of other Southern Baptist state or regional bodies in the east which grow stronger by the

year.

From humble beginnings have come the Illinois Baptist State Association, now with 888 churches and more than 200,000 members; the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey, with 62 churches and almost 11,000 members; the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, with 242 churches and 61,000 members; the Baptist Convention of New York (including New York state, northern New Jersey and a small part of Connecticut), with 91 churches and more than 14,000 members; the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, with 389 churches and almost 100,000 members; the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists, with 53 churches and some 15,000 members; and the Baptist State Convention of Michigan, with 180 churches and 38,000 members. (All figures came from the 1974 SBC Annual).

Once "pioneers," they have become part of the warp and woof of the nationwide Southern Baptist fabric.

The fabric, however, has experienced periodic internal tension (now the subject of study by a seven-person committee authorized by the SBC last June in Dallas) to change the name of the convention to something more representative of its national scope.

Most resistance to change comes from the older, mainline SBC states, although differing opinions exist among Baptists in

both older and newer areas. So far efforts at change have failed.

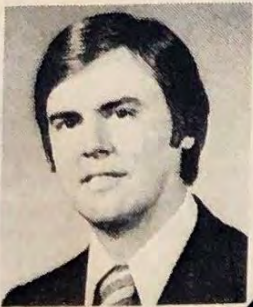
Many reasons are given but, basically, some contend the name "Southern Baptist" represents a theological position which transcends its regional connotation; others claim its geographical "parochialism" hinders their outreach.

At least two state conventions, Illinois and New York, have recently passed resolutions asking the committee to suggest a name more appropriate. At least one other, also in annual session, the Mississippi convention, resolved to oppose any change.

Regardless of what it's called, though, the SBC continues, page by page, to bring its Pioneer Movement saga to a conclusion.

Someday, historians may date the close of the Pioneer Movement when Iowa, the Minnesota-Wisconsin region, New England and possibly northern and southern Nevada (now associated separately with the California and Arizona conventions) achieve conventionhood.

On one level, the historians may be right. But, in some ways, the movement won't end until Southern Baptists have reached their goal of strengthening pioneer area work — some still relatively weak in light of potential outreach — to the point of having an SBC church within reach of every family in the United States.



Rich Dodd

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**I know I need a will...
But what information do I
need for my attorney**

There are many reasons why people don't have a will. Some seem to think they will live forever. Others think they don't have enough to need a will. Probably the most prevalent reason is they don't know how to get started.

The Arkansas Baptist Foundation has a questionnaire designed to assist you in getting the information your attorney will need to write a proper will. Through this process a Christian has the unique opportunity of planning the orderly distribution of accumulated possessions.

A properly drawn will can say two things. To the world it can say, "Christ is Lord." To the family it can say, "I love you".

For further information write Harry D. Trulove, Arkansas Baptist Foundation, Box 58, Little Rock, Ark. 72203.

**OBU sets church
music workshop**

ARKADELPHIA--The sixth annual Ouachita Baptist University Church Music Workshop, featuring Mable Sample, Phillip Landgrave, Jack A. Coldiron and Nathan Carter, will be held at OBU Feb. 27-March 1, 1975.

This workshop for ministers of music and interested students will have classes on children's choir, composition, voice and conducting.

Dr. Sample, the speaker on children's choir, teaches music education at Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pa. She has also taught at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and at Youngstown University of Youngstown, Ohio. Dr. Sample has written several books on children's choirs.

Dr. Landgrave, professor of church music at Southern Seminary will be leading discussions on composition. Dr. Landgrave's composition of a "sermon-cantata," "The Call," will be presented during the workshop.

Dr. Coldiron, associate professor of voice at Southwestern Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth, Tex. will be leading a class on voice. Dr. Coldiron teaches voice and liturgies, along with directing the Chamber Choir at Southwestern. He obtained his bachelor of music degree from Stetson University in De Land, Fla. in 1953 and his master of church music degree at Southwestern in 1960.

Nathan Carter, conductor of the college choirs at Morgan State College in Baltimore, Md., will be the convener of a seminar on conducting. Carter has been on the MSC music staff since 1969. He was graduated from Hampton Institute in Hampton, Va. He received his bachelor and masters degrees from Julliard School of Music in New York, N.Y.

**Hobbs says average American
is more military than moral**

"The average American is more concerned about the nation's military power than its moral purity," said Dr. Herschel H. Hobbs.

Hobbs, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, has been speaker for "The Baptist Hour" for 16 years. "The Baptist Hour" is the flagship program of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, which syndicates it on more than 396 radio stations weekly.

Hobbs warned his listeners that "economic strength receives more attention than ethical standards and the temperament of the nation reacts more acutely to the changing stock market reports than to the eternal Spirit's regeneration."

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Barriers missionaries face wider than rivers or oceans

by James D. Watson

VERACRUZ, Mexico (BP)—I have been a little self-conscious because I have not crossed a vast amount of water to be a foreign missionary.

The water we crossed was the muddy Rio Grande River and, as best as I remember, the river was almost dry.

I thought about many of my missionary friends in various parts of the world who spent hours in airplanes and some even weeks on a boat. Also, I remembered their chiding that we had only second-class dedication because we were so close to home.

It was all in fun, of course, and we soon realized that even though the body of water was narrow and muddy, instead

of wide and salty, Mexico is as foreign as any country I have ever visited.

The distance in today's world is the easiest part of foreign missions. Technology has diminished the distance of all of our missionaries to a matter of hours from home. The danger is nil compared to our forerunners who traveled dangerous weeks and months when arriving on the field was a feat in itself.

Since arriving here and spending our first year on our field of Veracruz, we have found that 1,800 miles of salt water does not make a missionary; it is the last 18 inches that count.

There has been no technology to help

the missionary span the last 18 inches between himself and the man he came to win to Jesus. The barriers are just as wide and dangerous as ever and are as evident in those countries close to home as those far away and sometimes even more so.

Aside from barriers of culture, customs and communication that are evident to all missionaries, we have one other in Mexico that affects our work here as much as all others.

That barrier is history. Mexico does not have a tomb to the unknown soldier that stirs the patriotic hearts of its citizens, but it does have an impressive monument to its boy heroes. There are five tall marble columns, a memorial to each of the young cadets who alone were left to defend the country against the invading American forces in 1847.

Rather than surrender to the "gringos," they wrapped themselves in Mexican flags and plunged to their deaths from the tower of Chapultepec Palace in Mexico City.

One of the preaching points we attend here in Veracruz is named "Colonia 21 de Abril." What happened on April 21? The United States Marines in 1914 invaded Veracruz and again the city's defense was in the hands of the naval academy that was here then.

Some of the cadets gave their lives, including the nephew of the then president of the Republic. All school children have a holiday every year on this day, honoring the boy heroes of Veracruz.

Then, too, we have to try to answer questions like, "Who are the poor in the United States?" and "Why does the Negro and the Mexican-American have such a hard time there?"

Many Mexicans still look longingly at Texas and realize that it once was a part of Mexico. They know nothing of the Alamo, just that the North Americans defeated them at San Jacinto and Santa Anna gave Texas away.

These are real barriers. One cannot cross them with technology nor in a matter of hours, weeks or months and sometimes not even in a matter of years or a lifetime.

There is only one bridge across the last 18 inches. That is the convicting power of the Holy Spirit and the message of love in Jesus Christ.

We may walk the 1,800 miles, but it is the Lord that took the step that bridged the last 18 inches on the Cross of Calvary and through the Resurrection Tomb.

James D. Watson is a Southern Baptist Representative to Mexico under the sponsorship of the Foreign Mission Board. He is stationed in Veracruz.

Doctrinally speaking

Progressive revelation

by Ralph W. Davis
(26th in a series)



Davis

Progressive revelation does not mean that any part of the Bible is uninspired or untrue. "All the Bible is the Word of God. While it was progressively revealed so that there is a higher concept of God in John than in Genesis, it is all the

revelation of God to men. Progressive revelation does not refer to God's inability to reveal but to man's inability to receive the revelation." (Hobbs, *Fundamentals of Our Faith*, p. 8) Jesus tells his disciples in John 16:12, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Progressive revelation means that there is an incompleteness in the Old Testament compared with the completeness in the New Testament.

Every leading idea of the biblical revelation has undergone change in growth in the course of history. For example, the conception of Jehovah himself was first thought of in terms of power. Then we come to Isaiah who portrayed Jehovah as infinite and yet full of grace and love. In the New Testament we have the highest revelation of God as the Father who sends his son to redeem the world. (See Mullins, *The Christian Religion in Its Doctrinal Expression*, p. 146.)

The principle of gradual and progressive revelation gives us the key to interpreting many Scriptures in the Old Testament. The Old Testament law of divorce is not the same as we find in the

New Testament. In Matthew 19:8, Jesus says that "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." God had to deal with people where he found them morally and spiritually. In the Old Testament we find wholesale destruction of enemies at God's command. The psalmist considered it would be a pious thing to destroy the infant children of his enemies. (Psalms 137:8, 9) Compare that with the statement of Jesus to "love your enemies." "Now all of these facts can be understood if we think of the Bible as the record of God's self-disclosure to a people incapable of more rapid development...The book of Hebrews is an elaborate and formal argument to show that the Old Testament revelation was preparatory rather than final." (Mullins, p. 147)

Why must God's revelation be gradual and progressive? "Because the giving of a revelation on God's part is morally and spiritually conditioned on man's part." (Conner, *A System of Christian Doctrine*, p. 117). This principle also explains God's delay in his revelation in Christ. Paul says that Christ came in "the fullness of time." (Gal. 4:4) "If Christ had come at the beginning of the revelation, the moral and spiritual preparation necessary on the part of the people would have been wanting. No doubt he came as soon as the incarnation could prove effective for the end in view." (Mullins, p. 147)

God's revelation climaxes in Jesus Christ. Christ does not "make" a revelation of God. He "is" the revelation of God.

Next issue: Various views of inspiration

BAPTIST BOOK STORE
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Jan. 5, 1975

The master teacher

Matthew 5:17-20; 7:24-29; 13:33-35



Overton

Jesus is the master teacher! It is impossible to call into use enough superlatives of language to adequately express this truth. So, let us just leave it simply, "Jesus is the master teacher." He was simple in his approach. Yet, beyond

the simple stories he used from everyday life in Palestine in his day, there was a profound message and truth to be gained if one would take the time to look with spiritual eyes.

The three passages for our lesson today give us a view of the teaching of Jesus from three different angles. Let us look at them briefly.

The passage in Matthew 13:33-35 reveals the method Jesus employed much of the time in his teaching. He used the form of a parable. In one's study of the parables of Jesus, he must be careful to remember that they are used to illustrate one main point.

There are probably two reasons for the use of parables by Jesus. One, the story would be easily recalled and so the point of the story would be there for guidance to the hearer. Another reason was to conceal the truths of Jesus' teaching from his enemies and make clear the message to those who heard him interpret the parable. So Jesus could use a simple story or a metaphor and hide the meaning from the religious leaders who were hostile to him. Later he would reveal the truth to his disciples.

Jesus' use of parables were perfect in their instruction in truth. This method was not new—the rabbis had used it for centuries. But no one had mastered its use like Jesus.

The parable recorded in this passage is one of a series of parables in this chapter having to do with the kingdom of God. The picture of the leaven—or yeast—working in the dough is used to picture the kingdom as permeating all of the life of the individual as well as that of the whole of society. It does not work explosively but quietly.

The quotation Jesus used in verse 35 is from Psalm 78:2.

The second view of Jesus in his role as master teacher is found in Matthew 5:17-20. Here Jesus tells his hearers that the coming of the Messiah (though he did not use this term here) did not nullify the law or the teachings of the prophets. His coming was to bring full meaning to their message.

The only portion of the law which came to an end in Jesus was the ceremonial law. These regulations governing the sacrifices and other ceremonies culminated in Jesus' coming. He was the lamb of God, the one who was pictured as sacrificed for the sins of the people in the sacrifices of the Old Testament and of the day of Jesus in the Temple. Since the perfect lamb had come and was slain, there is no more need for the substitute.

To the Jew the law was the highest point in Old Testament teaching. Some may have thought that the Messiah's coming would release them from some of the rigorous requirements of the law. Jesus startled them by teaching that there was a deeper and more meaningful standard to the law. What he interpreted in the law was that their attempts to modify the law's requirements was to lower the standard.

It would be well for us to remember today that the moral laws of the Mosaic code are still binding and the Christian is under obligation to keep them, not in order to salvation or to retain salvation, but because we have been saved.

Jesus said that the overt act has its roots in the desires and thought of the heart and mind and these were the important areas of life in relation to the law. Control these and the overt acts will take care of themselves.

Verse 20 seems a little harsh. The scribes and Pharisees were meticulous in their keeping of the forms and ceremonies of the law. If one of them moved into our community nearly every church would seek him out for membership. Their lives were clean; their practice of tithing going so far as to tithe the value of the wild herbs growing in their gardens; their attendance at church was regular as the doors were open. Yet Jesus said, "Unless your right standing with God exceeds this kind you won't get into heaven."

He referred to their practice of religion as simply a matter of form. So he was saying that the right standing which God accepts is the right standing (righteousness) of the heart.

The third view of Jesus as a master teacher is the view of his authority. What he had to teach he expected man to do. This may seem egotistical in a day like ours. We, like the Jews of Jesus' day, are called upon to cite our authority for our teaching. Who else agrees with your position? If you are unable to cite an

unimpeachable source, your teaching is called into question.

Yet Jesus was saying that the very foundations of life are characterized by man's relationship to his words. Unless you build life upon my teachings and their truth you build upon shifting sand. Life brings to all—Christian and non-Christian alike—storms and stresses. These can be withstood by those whose lives are built upon the teachings of Jesus.

The religious leaders of his day questioned the authority of Jesus. But the common people heard him gladly, though they were amazed at his teaching.

They said, "He teaches as if he had authority." The scribes and Pharisees had to cite their supporting authority. In the fifth chapter of Matthew, Jesus introduced his teachings with the words, "You have heard that it was said.... But I tell you." No hesitation in his words. He said in 7:24, "Everyone who listens to my words and practices their teaching..." will be a wise man, but those who do not are foolish.

This is an extravagant claim unless one can back it up. But the manner of his teaching and the magnetism of his personality lent authority to his words.

Jesus is the master teacher. May we sit at his feet to learn of him. May we learn what he teaches and put into practice in our own lives these truths. Then may we go to others in the simplicity of these teachings and lead them to become learners also.

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Staking all on God

January 5, 1975

Genesis 12:1-4a; 15:5,6; 17:1-5; 21:1-3; 22:10-12



Dodson

This month's unit of study, "People of faith finding their mission," considers four people from the records of the Old Testament - Abraham, Moses, Esther, and Nehemiah - who found and fulfilled their missions for God. Our purpose in the study is to discern some basic factors in finding and fulfilling one's mission for God. The first lesson, which considers Abraham, challenges us to follow God into the unknown and to trust him in what seems to be the impossible. We learn that trust in God's faithfulness is essential to finding and fulfilling our mission.

The call to faith (12:1-4a)

The call to faith came about 2000 B.C. to Abram in Ur of the Chaldees, the center of moon worship. Though living in an idolatrous world, which was ignorant of the one true God, Yahweh, Abram heard and heeded him. (Hebrews 11:8) God's call to Abram required him to forsake the familiar, secure environment of family and friends and follow God's leading to another place to fulfill a divine purpose. The call required absolute confidence in God. Recalling the close relationships of ancient families with the rights and responsibilities those relationships involved, we realize how difficult it must have been for Abram to forsake them and follow God forth into the unknown.

The credit to faith (15: 5,6)

In verse 1 we are told that the word of the Lord came unto Abram after "these things" After Abram had defeated Chedorlaomer and his allies, it is likely that he had made some bitter enemies, who would be seeking revenge. Thus, an alarmed and apprehensive Abram needed and received a word of reassurance from God: "Fear not Abram: I am thy shield...." Too, on his way home after his victory Abram refused to keep the spoils of war offered to him by the king of Sodom. So God made it up to Abram: "Fear not Abram: I am thy exceeding great reward." Here is an important principle for us to ponder. God provides rich reward to those who turn from the world's fare to experience his favor through faith. (Heb. 11:25, 26)

Note Abram's reaction which could be restated: "Promises! Promises! Promises! What good is another promise? I have no

son and I am an old man. Give me something besides promises." When Abram left Haran for Canaan he was 75 years in age. After becoming established in Canaan and getting on in years he became concerned about an heir. For 10 years he had built altars in Canaan and yet had not realized the fulfillment of God's promise. Weary from waiting, his faith began to falter. According to the custom, if he died without an heir, his steward would become his heir. When Abram asked God about the situation he was assured that his steward would not be his heir. His heir would be of his own flesh and blood. (5:4) Showing Abram the stars, God compared them to the number of Abram's seed. Today we know that the true seed of Abram are numbered according to the followers of Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:29), which are a multitude that no man can number. (Rev. 7:9) Learning the lesson from the stars, Abram regained his hope for an heir and took heart. Abram believed God! Paul related his faith to God's ability to give him and Sarah a son in their old age. What was humanly impossible, Abram accepted to be within God's purpose and power. (Rom. 4:16-25)

Abram's trust in the trustworthiness of God, not just in the promise, caused God to impute righteousness unto him. "And he counted it to him for righteousness." Abram's faith enabled God to credit righteousness to his account. This verse formed the basis for Paul's theology on justification. (Rom. 4:3,9,22; Gal. 3:6)

The covenant of faith (17:1-5; 21:1-3)

After God's promise and Abram's response of trust, years passed with no evidence of fulfillment. When he was 86, Abram and Sarai attempted to run ahead of God and provide an heir through Hagar. (Gen. 16) It was disastrous. The Middle East still suffers from the Ishmael-Isaac division. That act was an act of unbelief in God's intent or in God's ability to do what he had promised. If one stakes his life on God he must trust, wait, and obey. In his own time and way God honors his promise.

Thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael, God appeared to Abram again with a renewal of the promise. Even though Abram and Sarah had not waited in faith upon God, God still honored his promise and his part of their covenant. (2 Tim. 2:13; Heb. 10:23)

For the first time God referred to himself as "the Almighty God." This was his way of reminding Abram as to who was God. To promise and to perform is God's part. To exercise patience in faith is man's part. God's delays are often in

order to enable us to see his delivering power more clearly, whereby he may be more deeply appreciated.

"Walk before" in verse 2 is suggestive of a child running ahead and playing in the sight and security of his father. Abram was to walk before God, conscious of God's presence, confident of God's promise, and blameless in God's sight.

To assure his servant, God gave Abram (exalted father) a new name - Abraham (father of a multitude). Likewise, God gave Sarai a new name - Sarah (mother of nations).

Both Abraham (99) and Sarah (90) laughed when they heard of God's promise of a child. (17:7; 18:11) But Isaac was born when Abraham was 100. Isaac - "laughter" - was to be a lasting reminder of their laughter in unbelief. Though on occasion they doubted, they still possessed the disposition to believe and God honored it.

The compliance in faith (22:10-12)

Abraham lived among the Canaanites, who practiced child sacrifice. God tested Abraham at this point. "Did tempt" means to test or to prove something true or false. Satan tempts to destroy, but God tests to develop or to determine as true. Clyde Francisco states in the "Broadman Bible Commentary," "The test recorded here is different from the others recorded in Genesis. In chapter 12 Abraham was asked to give up his past. This he did without hesitation. In the years that followed he was expected to give up his anxiety about God's keeping his word. In chapter 15 he passed that test. Now he was asked to give up his future. This, although the most painful decision of all, he was also ready to do. Trusting God, he would follow where he led, for the future was in his hands."

This was a real experience in Abraham's life. As God stayed Abraham's hand, it is evident that he did not approve or require child sacrifice. What God was seeking was realized in Abraham's heart when he drew back the knife to plunge it into Isaac. God sought not the sacrifice of a son but the submission of a servant. The "angel" was God himself as "me" in verse 12 indicates. In the urgency of the situation God repeated Abraham's name and revealed that the test had been met as God had come to know by experience that Abraham feared God. Abraham would follow God in complete trust and thus he confirmed God's confidence in him. Hebrews 11:17-19 indicates that

(Continued on page 15)

Attendance report

December 15, 1974

Church	Sunday School	Church Training	Church Additions	Church	Sunday School	Church Training	Church Addns.	Church	Sunday School	Church Training	Church Addns.
Alexander, First	80	55		Hope				Booneville, First	258	232	
Alma, First	367	91	2	Calvary	171	90	2	Camden, Cullendale	516	112	4
Alpena	97	38		First	270	125	2	Concord, First	109		
Augusta, Grace	108	50		Hot Springs				Conway			
Bentonville				Grand Avenue			16	First	591	151	
First	270			Leonard Street	87	69		Second	258	71	1
Mason Valley	84	43		Memorial	116	56		El Dorado, Triniity	158	75	
Berryville				Park Place	374	123	1	Ft. Smith			
First	155	56		Hughes, First	200			First	1225	302	5
Freeman Heights	135	67		Jacksonville				Grand Avenue	754	203	31
Booneville, First	292	250		First	425	105	2	Temple	169	66	
Cabot, Mt. Carmel	241	105	5	Marshall Road	241	105		Trinity	193	73	
Camden, Cullendale	538	152	1	Kingston, First	56	43	2	Garfield, First	95		
Conway				Lavaca, First	323	111		Gentry, First	136	76	
First	655	205	2	Lexa	144	82	2	Grandview	76		
Second	334	71	2	Little Rock				Greenwood, First	270	110	
Crossett, Mt. Olive	387	171	1	Cross Roads	112	107	3	Hampton, First	127	54	
Des Arc, First	172	48	2	Crystal Hill	164	46		Hardy, First	101	35	
El Dorado, Trinity	147	71		Geyer Springs	827	272	4	Harrison			
Ft. Smith				Life Line	532	168	2	Eagle Heights	326		
East Side	277	100	6	Martindale	123	57		Woodland Heights	84	56	
First	1303	291	9	Shady Grove	79	65		Helena, First	233	93	
Grand Avenue	802	253	4	Woodlawn	120	49		Hope, Calvary	173	89	1
Moffett Mission	18			Magnolia, Central	634	222		Hot Springs			
Temple	162	71		Monticello, Second	313	100		Grand Avenue	493	215	8
Trinity	184	74	2	Mountain Home, First	378	155		Leonard Street	84	84	2
Windsor Park	746	208	5	North Little Rock				Memorial	97	56	
Garfield, First	88	33		Calvary	434	123	2	Park Place	351	101	
Gentry, First	166	76		Levy	462	94	2	Hughes, First	156	34	
Grandview	81	61		Paragould				Lavaca, First	315	130	
Greenwood, First	288	106	1	Calvary	239	179		Little Rock			
Hampton, First	134			East Side	208	108	3	Crossroads	110	117	
Hardy, First	124	35		First	463	132	2	Life Line	528	85	
Harrison				Paris, First	417	77		Shady Grove	77	54	
Eagle Heights	314	139		Pine Bluff				Woodlawn	138	71	
Woodland Heights	76	52		Centennial	164	68	1	Melbourne, Belview	126	200	
Helena, First	279	80		East Side	208	107	1	Monticello			
				First	666			First	216	57	
				Green Meadows	76			Second	307	100	
				South Side	642	186		Murfreesboro, First	118	54	
				Tucker	10			North Little Rock			
				Oppello	18	11		Calvary	423	127	3
				Watson Chapel	327	96	1	Gravel Ridge	201	100	
				Prairie Grove, First	168	79	1	Levy	455	102	8
				Rogers				Paragould			
				First	517	167		Calvary	228	235	2
				Immanuel	501	135	5	First	473		
				Russellville				Paris, First	417	70	2
				First	511	101	1	Pine Bluff			
				Second	147	80		East Side	170	101	
				Sheridan, First	273	90		Second	128	49	
				Springdale				Rogers, Immanuel	539	109	
				Berry Street	121	12		Russellville, First	464	42	3
				Caudle Avenue	133	45		Springdale			
				Elmdale	351	88		Berry Street	93	70	
				First	1157		11	Caudle Avenue	121	45	
				Texarkana, Trinity	366	173		Elmdale	339	116	
				Van Buren, First	551	193		First	1234		3
				Mission	24			Van Buren, First	570	350	
				Vandervoort, First	41	30		Mission	29		
				Walnut Ridge, White Oak	75	54		Vandervoort, First	57		
				West Helena, Second	187	123	4	West Helena, Second	186	76	
				Wooster	116	93					

Dec. 22, 1974

Augusta, Grace	99	72	
Bentonville, First	259		1
Berryville			
First	170	86	
Freeman Heights	139	60	1

Life and Work lesson

(From page 14)

Abraham believed, if necessary, God would raise up Isaac from the dead to fulfill the promise. This the author saw as a "figure" of the resurrection of Christ.

Conclusion

There are two fundamental factors in a dynamic relationship with God. They are revelation and response. Faith is complete trust in the God who makes himself known to us and calls us to follow him into the unknown. It was Helen Keller who said, "If the blind put their hand in God's, they find their way more surely than those who see, but have not faith or purpose."

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World men's conference urges new partnership concept

HONG KONG (BP)—After four days of messages emphasizing that all Christians are called to be "ministers," the First World Conference of Baptist Men ended here with a plea for a new partnership between the pulpit and the pew.

From beginning to end, the conference, which attracted 482 registered participants from 25 countries, was filled with addresses stressing that "laymen" are called to be ministers just as much as pastors.

Southern Baptist missionary, Leslie Hill, of the Philippines, called for the conference to "join me in stamping out laymen, or at least the concept of laymen."

Hill said there were three good reasons for eliminating the "crippling adjective, 'laymen', from Baptist vocabulary."

First, he said, it implies laymen are not "competent" in an age of professionalism.

"Certainly if you were sick, you would not want a layman, you'd want a physician, a professional," he pointed out. "A sick world...has no place for Christian laymen--only competent Christians, belonging and skilled, can help."

Secondly, the concept of "laymen" is unbiblical, Hill claimed.

"The New Testament does not classify the people of God into classes of laity

and clergy. The word, laos (laity) means 'the people of God,' and these people are the ones charged with the task of ministry."

Third, said Hill, the concept of "laymen Christians" leaves us with too few ministers to reach the three billion people in the world, 800 million who live just across the Hong Kohn border in China, who do not know Jesus Christ.

Hill urged Baptists to accept the concept that it is the work of the "people of God" (the laity) to perform the ministry of the church, and the work of the "minister of ministers" (the pastors) to train and equip the ministers of the church.

"Once you realize that your personal gifts alone determine your area of ministry, many things you said were the pastor's job obviously become yours," he told the conference.

"My message to the preachers here is simply, 'Loose your Baptist men from the lifeless graveclothes of misunderstood responsibility and let them go to the task of ministry in the world.'"

Glendon McCullough, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention's Brotherhood Commission, said, "There is no person in this room whom God cannot use as his minister," McCullough spoke to a large audience at Kowloon City Baptist Church.

"Unfortunately, many of the cultures from which some of us come and the hierachies of the churches from which others of us come do not agree with the theories proposed here," McCullough warned.

"They, like the leaders of the synagogues of Jesus' time, are sometimes threatened," he said. "Many organizational and church leaders are afraid of that which they cannot control. Many of our clergy are no more ready for all Christians to be ministers than the Roman church was ready for Martin Luther to proclaim 95 theses on the door of the church in Whittenburg, Germany."

McCullough called for the kind of relationship between the ministers of the pulpit and the ministers of the pew demonstrated by Jesus in his examples of the relationship between sheep and shepherd.

"The good shepherd, recognizing the value of the sheep, will protect them from the enemy, guide them to watering places and green pastures; but will rightly leave the lamb-bearing to the sheep," he said.

It is the role of the pastor, as shepherd, to motivate, protect, enable, equip and lead the sheep. "These and their ministry are of utmost importance," said McCullough. "What we have neglected is

the importance of the sheep and the realization that all are ministers."

Most of the six-day conference, sponsored by the men's department of the Baptist World Alliance, was devoted to an emphasis on training Baptist men in personal witnessing and evangelism, and to workshops on more effective involvement of men in the total life of the church.

C.B. Hogue, director of the evangelism division for the SBC Home Mission Board in Atlanta, said evangelism is the axis around which the total life of the church revolves. Hogue stated that evangelism is not a "take it or leave it affair," but a "must in the life of the Christian's day-to-day experience."

A black Baptist executive with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in Kansas City, Kan., Walter Cade, urged the conference participants to return to their homes and go out into the subways, factories, offices and shopping centers and "testify in a triumphant chorus that we serve a risen Savior."

McCullough said that "the scandal of this century is that Christians have allowed so much of our world to go hungry."

"It is difficult to tell a person dying from starvation that 'I love you and God loves you and I want to witness to you about Christ,'" he said.

He said the funds Baptists have given to the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) World Relief program have been pathetically small. He said he had heard a lot of discussion during the week about need for witnessing, but that Christ did not ignore man's physical condition.

"Jesus developed a perfect balance between witness and action," McCullough said. "We have not done so well. Some of us emphasize one to the neglect of the other, and some aren't concerned about either."

McCullough said the minister in the pew has the resources and talents to deal with the great social, physical and spiritual problems of the world, and can financially undergird the effort to show mankind that we really care about the whole man.

Former Southern Baptist Convention President Owen Cooper, a retired fertilizer manufacturer from Yazoo City, Miss., led the meeting in taking up an offering on the final night to be used to fight hunger and malnutrition through the BWA relief program.

McCullough charged the conference participants to return to their homes, their churches, and their work to lead the ministers in the pulpit and the pew in writing a new book—the book of Acts of the 20th Century Apostles.

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