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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Christ's Craftsmen

Arkansas Baptist

January 11, 1990



An
Urban
Future

In This Issue

Cover Story



Photo / Jim Veneman

An Urban Future 6

The challenge of missions is a challenge to win the cities to Christ, students were told at the MISSION 90 conference in Fort Worth, Texas, Dec. 27-31.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

From Students To Missionaries

DALLAS (BP)—A family from mainland China who came to the United States as students may go home as lay missionaries, thanks to the Good Samaritans at First Baptist Church of Carrollton, Texas.

Having completed college in Florida, the Chinese couple and their 25-year-old son were traveling to California to begin graduate studies there when an automobile accident stopped them near Dallas.

"They were traveling in two cars to carry all of their possessions," said John Yarbrough, minister of missions at First Baptist Church of Carrollton. "The car that the son was driving was hit in the rear, and it flipped over. Nobody was hurt, but the car couldn't be driven."

The police called Jim Cox, former pastor of the Cambodian mission of First Baptist Church for help.

Cox helped the family make a decision about where to have the car towed for repairs, and then he asked what they planned to do overnight. The father said they would have to sleep in their car to protect their property.

"You can store your belongings in my

van and come home with me," the retired pastor said.

The next day, the Chinese family had breakfast with Cox and his wife, Ida Mae, and lunch with the pastor of Carrollton's Chinese Baptist Fellowship. The mission pastor learned the mother was a Christian but the father and son were not.

The family learned that repairs would exceed \$1,000, and decided to sell the car to a junkyard and use the money to ship the family's possessions ahead to California.

"That night, I went by the Cox's house after supper to visit the family. I read the Bible with them and presented the gospel to them," Yarbrough said.

"Undoubtedly, the seeds had already been planted. The table was already set. I just had to present the gospel, and the father and son prayed to receive the Lord."

The next day, the family loaded into their remaining car and headed out toward California. Several weeks later, First Baptist Church received a letter from them.

"They expressed appreciation and said they were thankful for the way God had used their time in Carrollton. They indicated they may return to China in one year. Now we hope they will go back as Christian witnesses and missionaries."

GOOD NEWS!

The Man and His Servant

Luke 17:7-10

Perhaps in no other parable was Jesus as severe as he was in this one. George Buttrick said that this parable only proclaims a partial truth. He called Jesus' statement in Luke 12:37 "this parable's twin brother with a brighter face." In that verse the master with gracious mind girds himself and serves his servants.

Yet, partial truth that it is, it is nevertheless true. Often we take the matter of discipleship too lightly. This parable of Jesus was a caution against the flippancy with which we often approach our relationship with him. Jesus is our Lord and Master. That makes us his servants. It is to us as servants that Jesus spoke in this parable.

Debt impossible—No matter how much we do, we can never put God in our debt. All of our righteousness and right deeds cannot match up to the priceless gift of his Son for us. God does not owe us anything. Instead, we owe him everything.

Duty insufficient—There is a deeper

truth here in verse 9. The church is filled with those who do only the things commanded. The law is the irreducible minimum. The people will not go beyond it.

Life in the kingdom of God, however, is not a life satisfied by doing only what duty demands but a life of the second mile (Mt. 5:41).

A true disciple is not one who is satisfied because he has done all that he has to do but one who regrets that he is unable to do all that he wants to do.

Demand inexhaustible—Jesus never promised that his way was the easy way. Rather, he urged his followers to count the cost.

The demand of discipleship is not confined to one day of the week or an eight-hour day during each day. There are no set hours for fulfilling our responsibilities in the kingdom of God.

The emphasis of the parable is not to describe the nature of God but to reveal the nature of our response to God.

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Scriptural Ordination

J. EVERETT SNEED



Ordination is the process by which an individual is set apart for Christian ministry. Across the years it has almost universally been practiced by almost all denominations. Yet, even within Baptists, there appears to be considerable diversity as to the precise purpose of ordination.

The Bible is clear: all individuals are called for service in the very act of salvation. The Scripture further teaches that some are set apart by God to assist other individuals in more adequately utilizing the gifts that God has given to his people. Ordination, then, is simply a congregation recognizing what God has already done.

There are a variety of views concerning ordination. Some believe that ordination is absolutely essential if an individual is to be a proper Christian leader. Some see ordination as providing a mystical element which enhances an individual in his ministry. Individuals holding to this view believe that the act of ordination provides an individual with a greater understanding of the Scripture and enhances his abilities.

Still others have an institutional understanding of ordination. These individuals believe that it gives a man a new status or position among the people. They believe that simply because an individual is ordained what he says is of more importance than the views of those who are not ordained.

During the Middle Ages, some viewed ordination as being almost magical. Under this view, in ordination an individual received "Keys of the Kingdom." He acted as a priest to the people and almost denied any flaws in his personal character.

The mystical view, the institutional view, and the magical view all are foreign to the Word of God. As one studies the Scripture, he discovers that ordination has grown beyond the patterns that are laid down in the Scripture. The element that is common to the setting apart of God's servants throughout the Bible is the "laying on of hands" and prayer. In order to understand the true significance of ordination, an individual must study Scriptures which pertain to the "laying on of hands."

In the Old Testament, there were a variety of usages of the "laying on of hands." A father would lay his hands on his son to bestow a blessing on him. Also, the prophets laid their hands on individuals to set them apart as leaders in Israel. Most im-

portantly, individuals set apart for the priesthood were set apart for their task by the laying on of hands.

Apparently, Joshua was the first individual to be set apart publicly for leadership by the laying on of hands. This marked him as the leader to follow Moses. He had hands laid on him in the presence of Ezra and "all the community of Israel." He was commissioned for the new office by Moses. This apparently set the pattern for public ordinations throughout the Old Testament era.

In the New Testament, there are a variety of usages of the laying on of hands also. Laying on of hands was used for healing. Jesus often laid hands on the sick in the process of healing them. The laying on of hands also was used as a symbol of affection or blessing. In Mark 10:13-16, Jesus

laid his hands on the little children to show his love for them and their importance in the kingdom of God.

The laying on of hands in connection with leadership service are the most important passages to be noted. In Acts the sixth chapter, there were seven individuals selected to assist the apostles. After their selection, hands were laid on them. This was a way of sealing the church's choice of these new leaders.

In Acts chapter 13, hands were laid on Paul and Barnabas. This was a public commissioning of first century missionaries.

The word "ordained" (in the Greek *kathistemi*) is used only two times to designate church offices (Ac. 6:3; Ti. 1:5). These passages, however, give no real insight into the meaning of ordination.

There are several conclusions which can be drawn from the study of the Scriptures. Among these are: (1) it conveys no special status or authority, that is, a member of the clergy is not of a superior class in the family of God; (2) it involves a recognition of divine call to the gospel ministry; (3) it is a public recognition of the call that God has already given to an individual; (4) it is a declaration that the congregation setting apart an individual will pray for and support that individual; and (5) it indicates the congregation has examined and found the individual meets the scriptural qualifications as laid down in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

While ordination conveys no special rights or privileges, church members should remember that most pastors are completely committed to the Lord's work and serve sacrificially. Because of commitment, calling, and prayer, the leadership of these individuals should usually be followed.

Arkansas Baptist

VOLUME 89 NUMBER 2

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



I am dazed as I try to fathom what has been taking place in our world over the last few months. Two or three facts seem to be surfacing as timeless truths. The human spirit cannot be indefinitely enslaved. While all others of God's creation were made to be in subjection, those made in the image of God were to be in subjection to no principle, ideology, power or person than the Lord God. Neither physical, political or religious bondage can be tolerated.

Another fact is apparent. Communism has met its match. Our Southern Baptist reporters have been told that many of the protest marches that have swept over East Berlin had their origins in the churches following Monday evening prayer meetings. The cross of Christ is so powerful in transforming lives that communism is like a hollow echo in comparison. Just as the human spirit cannot be bound, the Word of God cannot be bound either (2 Ti. 2:9). Put the two together, and you have a dynamic that baffles the world. God has blessed the sacrifice and prayers of thousands of believers who for 40 to 50 years have been a despised, oppressed minority. The masses are being freed. Time always confirms truth!

However, in honesty we must admit that what the ideologies, death marches, slave camps, and brainwashings of communism could not enslave, drugs, alcohol, gambling, and immorality can enslave. Americans are needing deliverance from a different kind of bondage. We must be as vigilant in our prayers and as willing in our sacrifice as our Christian brothers and sisters in Europe have been. A Russian was quoted in the Dec. 4 issue of *Time*, "Everyone has realized that failures in the economy and politics are a result of ethical violations. We want a renewed sense of spiritual values." While our system is different, our society could be described by those same words. Our societal ills are of the same origin. We need the same intervention of God.

Now is the time for Christians to pray, to be more committed to global evangelism than ever, and to not surrender to the secular mentality that is sweeping our land. God send us revival in 1990!

Don Moore is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

BOB PARKER

Today's Issues

This Too Is Sodomy



Both the Old and New Testaments have many passages regarding caring for the poor. One is noted in Ezekiel 16:49, "Look, this was the iniquity of your sister, Sodom: She and her sister had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy."

Jesus defined pure and undefiled religion as "to visit the orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (Ja. 1:27)

Note that care for the poor is listed before being "worldly." We too often express extreme concern about such as homosexuality, alcoholic beverages and gambling, but fail to be really serious regarding the poor, the widow, the

orphan, the hungry and the homeless. We must keep our priorities in order as taught by James. That's not to indicate a lessening of concern and actions regarding such as sexual immorality, gambling and alcohol because such contribute to making folks poor and needy.

Dr. Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund and daughter of a Baptist preacher, reminds us that 40,000 babies born each year in the U.S. will not live to celebrate their first birthday; also, that despite our country's vast wealth and resources, 13 million children live below the poverty level.

Robert A. Parker is director of the Christian Life Council.

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'In the Image of God'

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Jan. 21

Few biblical phrases emphasize more strongly the holiness of human life and challenge more directly the practice of abortion in America than "in the image of God." Appearing in the first chapter of Genesis, it found the origin of the doctrine of human nature, points godward and manward, and speaks about a timeless truth.

The highest point of the divine drama of creation was the formation of human life. All creation was good. But the creation of human life represented the crowning glory of God's creation: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Ge. 1:27). God then looked upon what had been done, saw that "it was very good," and rested (Ge. 1:31).

With the divine image stamped on human beings came a special blessing and an important assignment. Human beings were given the task of caring for God's garden. "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth" (Ge. 1:28).

Human beings are created "in the image of God." Although the fall mars the divine stamp in human beings, it fails to erase it. We still have bestowed upon us unique dignity and have bequeathed to us dominion over creation.

How does the biblical phrase, "in the image of God," impact with the issue of the sanctity of human life?

First, "in the image of God" means that we are to reverence human life. We are to acknowledge that human life has sacred value because of God's action. The divine image was given, neither earned nor based upon human evaluations. As such,



Observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Jan. 21

Christian Life Commission

human life is a sacred gift to be treasured with a sense of awe.

Second, "in the image of God" means that we are to respect all human life. Stage of development, mental ability, skin pigmentation, and physical beauty should not determine how we see other human beings. We are to respect and protect all human life as sacred.

We protect human life when we seek to stop the killing of the unborn children in their mother's womb. We preserve human life when we support local church ministries aimed at helping people make life-affirming, rather than life-denying, decisions about human reborn life. We prevent the taking of human life when we work to alleviate those economic and social forces which pressure some into aborting babies.

We promote human life when we witness for Christian values related to human sexuality and marriage.

This Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, carefully consider ways in which God's declaration of humanity as "in the image of God" should challenge your attitudes and behaviors. Seek God's guidance in finding ways to witness and to act for life.

WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Hymns Baptists Sing



Higher Ground

In the early 1890s Johnson Oatman discovered his gift for poetic expression and began writing hymn poems. Several of the well-known gospel song composers of his day became eager purchasers of his lyrics.

Charles H. Gabriel, who lived in Chicago, purchased several poems from Oatman for what is believed to be \$1 per poem. One of these was "Higher Ground."

Gabriel wrote the tune that we associate with these words and sold the hymn—words and music—to a Philadelphia publisher for \$5. It was published in a songbook in 1898.

Following its publication, "Higher Ground" became a favorite in camp meetings in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. An observer at these camp meetings commented, "Nothing can bring forth more shouts at camp meetings of 'Glory' and 'Hallelujah' than the singing of 'Higher Ground.'"

Born and educated in New Jersey, Johnson Oatman joined the Methodist-Episcopal Church when he was 19 and was ordained to the ministry. Rather than accepting a church appointment, he remained a volunteer preacher, welcoming opportunities to preach in many churches.

While he was not a great singer and never achieved recognition as an outstanding preacher, Oatman preached through the words of his songs. Out of a large number of song poems he wrote, the ones we remember best are "No, Not One," "Count Your Blessings," and "Higher Ground."

William J. Reynolds is professor of church music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

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MISSION 90

An Urban Future

by Scott Collins
Baptist Sunday School Board

Fort Worth, Texas—"The Bible may begin in the garden, but it ends in the city," Dan Lindsay, director of missions for the Greater Detroit Baptist Association, told students attending at MISSION 90.

Lindsay and Dale Tucker, Southern Baptist missionary to Argentina, led seminars on outreach to cities in the United States and overseas. More than 180 seminars on varied facets of missions were offered during the national missions conference held Dec. 27-31 in Fort Worth, Texas.

The future for most college students is "an urban future," Lindsay said.

Not only are people migrating to urban areas, but Lindsay said American cities are presenting special challenges because they are becoming international communities.

"All of our cities are interconnected with cities overseas," Lindsay said. "Our cities in America are very much like the cities overseas."

Using international cities as examples, Tucker said Baptists "cannot continue to use our resources to build buildings in a lot of places."

To do that, Tucker said the city must be studied to be understood by church planters.

And while Southern Baptists become more involved in urban work, Tucker said they are learning that "what worked in small town rural areas will not work in urban areas."

Countering the idea that the world is a global village, Lindsay told students the planet is a "global city. We're living in an urban country."

Lindsay said the United States is the most urban country in the world, with more cities of 1 million or more people than any other country in the world.

Did the urban migration catch God off guard? Lindsay asked.

Answering his own question, Lindsay



Greg Ball, a woodwinds and jazz teacher at Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, helped set the mood for students attending the opening session of MISSION 90, where they explored the theme, "Students Touching the World."

said God has loved the cities since the beginning of time and has a plan for winning them to Christ.

That plan, according to Lindsay, is to use existing churches to plant new ones.

"You will no doubt serve in a city," Lindsay said. "Think about that."

MISSION 90 was sponsored by the student ministry department of the Sunday School Board in cooperation with the Brotherhood Commission, Woman's Missionary Union, Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board and six SBC seminaries.

Missions Up Close

by Susan Todd

SBC Woman's Missionary Union

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—It wasn't "just peanuts" to the students who tried to break the record at the MISSION 90 booth manned by Christy and Mark Edlund, Southern Baptist missionaries to Japan.

It was a test of skill in the use of chopsticks.

Students and missionaries alike tried to beat the clock as they picked up peanuts with chopsticks. Peggy Hooten, missionary to Kenya, left her booth long enough to try her hand. Her nine fell short of the record of 20 peanuts in 15 seconds.

"Coming from Africa, I've done pretty well," said Hooten.

More than 100 exhibits sponsored by Southern Baptist Convention agencies were featured in The Marketplace, which occupied 80,000 square feet of exhibit space during the four-day national missions conference in Fort Worth, Texas, Dec. 27-31.

There were more than 3,400 students registered for the conference, which was sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's student ministry department in cooperation with 10 other Southern Baptist Convention agencies—the Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood Commission and the six SBC seminaries.

Glynda Hall, Baptist Student Union director at Dyersburg State Community College in Dyersburg, Tenn., relived her memories of MISSION 80 at the "Write a Missionary" booth.

"I'm writing Susan Puckett serving in Taiwan," Hall said. "She was my BSU director when I attended MISSION 80. Through my time at Blue Mountain College I began to focus more on ministry and what I needed to do with my life.

"I owe a lot of who I am as a campus minister to her. I thought it would be appropriate to write her and tell her that," said Hall.

Other students made their own memories while exploring the corners of The Marketplace. And they also encountered people stationed in the hall to represent mission challenges.

"Mildred" the bag lady sat on a street bench as she asked passers-by for a quarter. In 40 minutes she made \$1.26.

Frank Wharton of Knoxville, Tenn., sold flowers, allegedly for the Unification Church. "I've gotten a lot of wide-eyed looks—some eyes as big as Buick hubcaps," he said. However, few people made an attempt to talk with him.

"People are making a wide berth for me. No one has even tried to witness to me," he said.

Beth Williams, also of Knoxville, had a totally different experience representing a drug abuser. "I don't think anybody in the SBC smokes because no one has had a lighter when I've asked for a light," she said fingering her fake joint of marijuana.

"I had three girls come back to me later and tell me 'You don't need this.' One girl asked me if I knew what was going on here." After the girl had shared her testimony, Williams said she had to confess to playing a part.

"I didn't want her to think she had failed, because I know how hard it is to witness," said Williams.

Other students used The Marketplace to explore ways in which they can respond to issues in the world.

Abortion was one of the first ministry booths students came to as they entered The Marketplace. Response to the need for abortion ministry was very positive, said Sylvia Boothe, Home Mission Board coordinator for Alternatives to Abortion Ministries.

"Mainly the students who stopped by wanted to affirm what I'm doing," she said.

"One young man stood and looked and wouldn't come in. I asked him if he wanted some literature on abortion. He said, 'It's too late for me, but I might take it for a friend,'" said Boothe.

Several students signed-on for missions while in The Marketplace.

Larry Bailey of the Home Mission Board said he had three students apply for the US-2 program during the first two hours the Marketplace was open.

"We've extended the Dec. 15 deadline because of this conference. We'll do the psychological testing on the applicants while they're here," he said.

Similarly, Foreign Mission Board personnel were pleased with the response they got from students. John Cheyne, director of human needs, said 10 students asked for immediate contact about volunteering for some assignment.



Roxanne Huntington of Ruston, La., found the computers which matched job skill with foreign missions personnel needs to be her favorite activity in The Marketplace.

"We came in here with all these questions about how we can be a part and found the answers," she said. "I've got a ton of stuff to read."

Huntington said she was surprised to learn all the ways Southern Baptists are sharing the gospel and the many locations in which they do it.

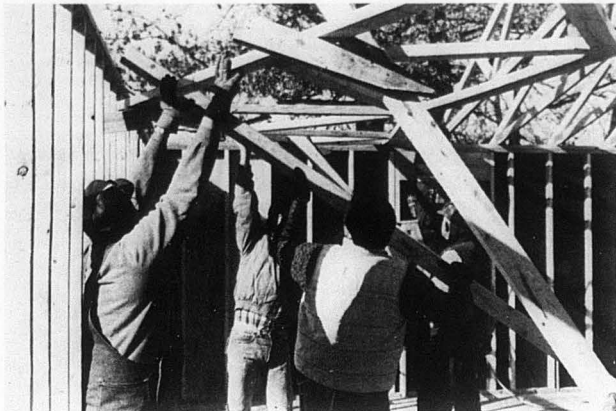
"I didn't know my money went so far. It makes me want to give more to the Cooperative Program," she said.

Photo / Jim Veneman



These two students were part of an exhibition on the homeless in America.

Photo / Jeffrey Rancudo



Nailbenders work on the new Marlbrook Church.

Christ's Craftsmen

by **Jeffrey Rancudo**
Special to the Arkansas Baptist

BLEVINS—When fire destroyed the Marlbrook Baptist Church two miles east of Blevins in October, there was a group of enthusiastic craftsmen who rushed to help.

And the "Nailbenders for Jesus" finished their work in early December on a new 220-seat auditorium. Work began in late November, according to Frank Allen, the group's coordinator for Arkansas.

Dale Wilson, chairman of Marlbrook's building committee, called the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for help. The Nailbenders, an arm of the Arkansas Baptist Men's group, was dispatched.

This organization, comprised entirely of retirees and their wives, travels throughout Arkansas building only Southern Baptist churches. With the completion of the Marlbrook church, the 14 workers and their wives will have completed nine buildings in the last year.

Workers come from every vocational area of life. But Allen, a 76-year-old retired captain in the merchant marine, insists they all have one goal—glorifying God by helping other Southern Baptist churches.

"This is what people who are retired should be doing," said Allen, who now lives in the Sharp County town of Williford, population 101. "When you're in the will of God, you're a happy man."

Allen started the group in May 1988, parlaying skills he had learned in the

previous years working for a Texas group called "Builders for the glory of God."

He sold the idea to the Arkansas convention, agreeing that the members would only build Southern Baptist churches on a "mission" basis, meaning the Nailbenders had to supply all the labor.

The Marlbrook church that burned was built in 1956. When the Nailbenders arrived, Marlbrook members had a foundation ready and had purchased materials. That routine is identical at every new site, Allen said.

The Nailbenders come with the

necessary tools and manpower and set up a camp with their wives, Allen said. "Grandmas on the Go" has been the name assigned to the wives, he said.

In this case, all the mobile homes were parked at one location. Each family is supplied with all utilities.

With a goal to build 12 next year, The Nailbenders are raising churches at a rate of two a month. The Texas group is making about four a month, Allen said.

Since beginning the Arkansas group last May, Allen estimated the Nailbenders have saved Southern Baptist churches \$1,250,000 in labor costs. All the work is done on a volunteer basis.

On this job, there were two lead carpenters and 11 workers.

For Allen, just being able to help a church in need is gratification enough. "This is a good way to live a long and happy life," he said. "There's good Christian fellowship."

Completion of the Marlbrook Church ended 1989's work, Allen said.

This year, the group's work included building the Center Ridge Church in Center Ridge; Millwood Church in Ashdown; Harmony Church at Paragould; New Hope Church and First Church, both at Jonesboro; the Elija House in Cass; and Myron Church.

The men workers in the group are lead carpenter Bob Nelson of Jonesboro; leadman Ken Clawson, finish carpenter Dennis Hill and Louis Cogburn, all of El Dorado; electrician Bill Curtis of Siloam Springs; plumber Maurice Nelson of Greengrass; Bob Cobb of Hot Springs; Jim Haley of Hot Springs Village; Clovis Syr and Charles Ratcliff, both of North Little Rock; Louis Kelly of Cabot; "Sarge" Mahan of Ashdown; McConnell and Allen.



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A Dramatic Revival

by J. Everett Sneed
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"The crusade impacted all of Booneville. People of all cultural levels and from a variety of denominational backgrounds accepted Christ as Savior," declared William Blackburn, staff evangelist for First Church, Fort Smith. Blackburn, currently interim pastor for South Side Church, Booneville, was commenting on a revival he conducted for South Side Church in which there were 124 people saved.

The crusade has had a dramatic impact on the South Side Church. Prior to the revival, the congregation was averaging 98 in Sunday School attendance. Now the church is running approximately 140 in Sunday School with slightly more than 150 attending the worship service. The church has baptized approximately 75 of those who were saved in the revival and approximately 100 people since Oct. 1. There were 50 individuals baptized on the first night after the conclusion of the revival.

Blackburn started as interim pastor at South Side in July, but didn't become full-time interim pastor until Oct. 1 because of revivals already scheduled.

The evangelistic effort consisted of two phases, a church revival held Oct. 29-Nov. 2 and a crusade for the lost conducted Nov. 5-9. During the church revival, Blackburn preached on subjects such as "What is a Backslider?" and "How Can a Church Have a Revival?" The church revival was conducted in the church house and directed at the congregation's membership. There were four professions of faith and approximately 50 rededications during this portion of the evangelistic activities.

During the crusade designed to reach the lost people, the congregation moved out of the church house into a tent, erected beside the church building, furnished by the ABCS Evangelism Department. During the crusade, Blackburn preached on subjects such as "Religious Hell" (the state of lost church members) and "Is There Really a Place Called Hell?"

Blackburn feels that there are several important keys to reaping evangelistic results. Among these are using a preacher who has the gift of evangelism, conducting revivals long enough to see true results, church people getting under the burden of the crusade with prayer, and utilizing musical groups which will draw individuals who might not be interested in preaching alone.

Preparation for the evangelistic harvest experienced by South Side Church began on a Wednesday night early in October. Blackburn felt impressed to have a prayer



Evangelist William Blackburn

meeting and call for an altar service. Approximately 65 people came forward and engaged in individual prayer for approximately 35 minutes. The next Wednesday evening, prayer lasted for about one hour. On the third Wednesday evening, the individual fervent prayer continued for more than an hour and a half. On the first Sunday after the first Wednesday night prayer meeting, 10 individuals made professions of faith.

During the week immediately preceding the church revival, the congregation conducted prayer meetings in the homes of members every night. During the week of the revival, the women of the church held prayer meetings from 9 a.m. to 12 noon each day. The men of the congregation conducted a prayer meeting each evening from 6 to 7 p.m. "These prayer meetings were the primary key to the evangelistic results which our church experienced," declared Blackburn.

"The people at South Side got serious about seeing people saved," Blackburn continued. "The people quit trying to do the work of the Lord themselves and allowed the Holy Spirit to bless."

Blackburn felt that having the revival in a tent helped to encourage non-Christians to come. He also had challenged the congregation to enlist non-Christians. As a result, the congregation made an extensive prayer list of lost individuals.

During the week of the crusade, the congregation used several musical groups to encourage people to come who might not be interested in hearing preaching. Among these groups were The Golden Harvest and the Glory Bound singers.

Blackburn feels that our state is on the verge of revival. He said, "If God's people will get serious about seeing the lost saved, we can experience revival all across Arkansas."

HSBYM Rally In Hot Springs

The HSBYM regional rally, to be held in Hot Springs on Feb. 23-25, will feature James Smith, Brotherhood Commission president; George Fields, a Christian entertainer from Louisville, Ky., and Dennis Swanberg, pastor of Second Church, Hot Springs.

The rally, which will be held at the Majestic Hotel in Hot Springs, will also feature Charles Corey, missionary to Guatemala, and Randy Foster, home missionary in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

March for Life In Little Rock

Baptists for Life are joining with Arkansas Right to Life in inviting all concerned Southern Baptists to join with them for a "March for Life" on Jan. 21 at 2 p.m. at Main Street in downtown Little Rock.

David Miller, director of missions for Little Red River Association, will address the crowd at the conclusion of the march. Last year, 7,000 persons participated in this event.

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—Bill Moyers

LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

Briefly

Springdale First Church mission team will leave in February for Togo, West Africa, where they will construct a pharmacy and first aid station in the Adja region.

Batesville First Church recently purchased a 1989 van to use for outreach ministries.

Clinton Immanuel Church recently ordained Hal Ward to the deacon ministry.

Rector Heights Church at Hot Springs Woman's Missionary Union has begun a new ministry to abused women that includes a Tuesday night Bible study.

Woodland Heights Church at Conway ordained Foy Brown to the deacon ministry Nov. 19 and ordained Jim Constable, minister of youth, to the gospel ministry Dec. 10.

Pleasant Valley Mission, sponsored by Centennial Church at Pine Bluff, was organized as a church Dec. 17. Bill Holcomb serves as pastor of the church, located on Highway 54 between Pine Bluff and Rison. Mike Holcomb is minister of music.

People

James Cannon retired as director of missions for Little River Association Dec. 31, following seven years of service. Prior to serving as a director of missions, he had pastored churches in Arkansas and Mississippi. Cannon may be contacted at 501-289-6331.

Terry Johnson is serving as pastor of Woodrow Church at Prim, coming there from the Whiteville Church near Mountain Home, where he served as associate pastor.

Eugene Irby is serving as interim pastor of Harmony Church in Faulkner Association.

William Buchanan will begin serving in March as pastor of First Church in Tyrone, following his graduation from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, La.

He also is a graduate of the University of Mississippi at Oxford.

Allan Aunspaugh will join the staff of Highland Heights Church in Benton Jan. 17 as minister of music and youth, coming there from Emmanuel Church in Huntingtontown, Md. He and his wife, Ann, have a daughter, Rachel Ann.

Ronald Long has accepted the call to serve as pastor of Providence Church in Fayetteville, coming there from Pleasant Hill Church at Rogers.

Tommy Reed has resigned as associate pastor of Glenwood First Church to move to Warren.

Ray Nicholas is serving as pastor of First Church in Genoa.

A.V. Smith has announced his retirement as pastor of Mount Zion Church at Doddridge.

Tom Cox of Mountainburg will lead his ninth annual crusade to India Jan. 19-Feb. 11. Arkansans accompanying him will be Mitch Odum of Fayetteville and Kari Fit-

zhugh of Perryville.

Mike Gilchrist began serving Jan. 7 as pastor of Matthews Memorial Church in Pine Bluff, coming there from Wills Point, Texas. He and his wife, Kerry, have two children.

Kent Holt has joined the staff of University Church, Fayetteville, as pastor to youth.

Charlie Winters is serving as pastor of Cedar Heights Church in North Little Rock, coming there from Jonesboro, where he served as associate pastor of North Main Church.

Robert Edward Reed died Dec. 23 in Washington Regional Medical Center in Fayetteville. His funeral services were held Dec. 26 at University Church in Fayetteville, where he served as administrator and minister to children. Survivors include his wife, Carolyn Helms Reed of Fayetteville; his parents, Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Reed of Camden; a brother, Richard Reed of San Antonio, Texas; and a sister, Alyce Abney of Portland, Ore. Memorials may be made to University Church organ fund.

Church and Community Ministries Workshop

for church staff and persons interested in or involved in church and community ministries

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Calvary Baptist Church, Little Rock

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Conference leaders: Ann Putnam, SBC Home Mission Board; Diana Lewis, Tommy Goode, Pete Petty, ABSC Missions Dept.; Sandy Woodside, Kansas City, Mo.; Glenda Carver and Barbara Russell, Arkansas

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Arkansans Graduate

Seven Arkansans were among the 288 graduates receiving degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, on Dec. 15.

Receiving the master of arts in religious education degree were:

Alfred Reid Cullum, son of the late E.R. and the late Sybil Cullum of Little Rock; son-in-law of late R.D. and the late Pearl Harris of Gotebo, Okla. His home church is Bethany Church in North Little Rock.

Timothy Joseph Moore, son of Charles M. Moore of Little Rock and Margaret Moore of Conway; son-in-law of Jerry and Linda Hogan of Costa Rica. His home church is Baring Cross Church in Little Rock.

Lowell Vernon Warren, son of the late Vernon and Bettye Warren of Brinkley; son-in-law of the late Clifton and Mildred Huey of Salado, Texas.

Receiving the master of divinity degree was Gregory Neal Blackman, son of Harry and Jane Blackman of Fort Smith; son-in-law of Don Dodson of Fort Smith and LaVon Smith of Fort Smith. His home church is First Church in Ozark.

Receiving the master of music degree was Billy Bob Dempsey, son of Billy Allen and JoAnn Dempsey of Fort Smith; son-in-law James and Chav-Laine Ralston of Saint Petersburg, Fla.

Receiving the master of arts in marriage/family counseling was Joe Michael

Young, son of Jack and June Young of Hope; son-in-law of Robert Hall and Marie Young of Prairie Grove. His home church is University Church in Fayetteville.

Receiving the doctor of ministry degree was Gary A. Smith, son of the late Thomas and Mary Smith of Hot Springs; son-in-law of the late Delmer and Kathryn Jackson of Enid, Okla. His home church is Park Place Church in Hot Springs.

Two Arkansans were among those graduating from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisiana.

Receiving the master of divinity degree were: Michael Nevin Grober, son of Glendon and Marjorie Grober of Little Rock. He is married to the former Dea Paula Alho of Santarem Para, Brazil. His home church is Immanuel Church in Little Rock.

Paul Brewster, son of Mr. and Mrs. John R. Brewster of Fort Smith. He is married to the former Deborah Sinkes of North Vernon, Ind.

W.O. Vaught Dies

Dr. W.O. Vaught, prominent Baptist pastor and long-time leader in Southern Baptist circles, died Monday, Dec. 25. He was 78. Born in Versailles, Ky., he grew up on a farm near Brooksville, Miss. He was a graduate of Mississippi College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Following pastorates in Missouri and Texas, Vaught came to Little Rock in 1945 to become pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, a position he held until April 1983. His tenure of 38 years in the Immanuel pulpit placed him in the ranks of less than 100 pastors of Southern Baptist churches who had been in the same pulpit for more than 35 years.

During his years at Immanuel, the church plant grew from one building to a complex covering two city blocks. For a number of years Immanuel led the state in contributions through the Cooperative Program, the denomination's funding arm for all convention-wide causes, and in gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, which provides one-half the total support for Baptist foreign missions.

More than 20 full-time churches grew out of the Immanuel fellowship during Vaught's tenure. The Immanuel tape ministry, begun eight years before Vaught retired, distributed 3 million sermon tapes world-wide. Following his retirement from Immanuel, Vaught



Vaught

conducted Bible conferences across the nation. He also authored three books; *Believe Plus Nothing*, *God's Calendar*, and *The Best Is Yet To Be*.

Vaught was a leader in state and national Baptist circles. He served as president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and as president of the Executive Board, ABSB. He also served on the Board of Trustees for Ouachita

University and the Board of Arkansas Baptist Home for Children. In 1955, Ouachita Baptist College (University) conferred on him the Doctor of Divinity Degree. Members of Immanuel Baptist Church spearheaded the endowment of the W.O. Vaught Chair of Bible at Ouachita University in 1983.

Vaught was a member of the Relief and Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), president of the Southern Baptist Pastor's Conference, and vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention. During his more than 16 years on the Foreign Mission Board, SBC, he served as chairman of the Building Committee when the present headquarters building was constructed in Richmond, Va.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Frances (Bostick) Vaught of Little Rock, a son, Carl Gray Vaught of Pennsylvania State University, Pa., and two granddaughters, Miss Jennifer Vaught of Bloomington, Ind., and Mrs. Cheryl Hile of Chicago, Ill.

Joy Explo Sets New Record

Joy Explo, the Arkansas Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference, set a new all-time record attendance when it convened Dec. 28-29 at the Hot Springs Convention Center.

About 3,600 persons registered for the event, which seeks to motivate Baptist young people to share their faith.

Rick Ousley, a youth communicator from Phoenix, Ariz., was the featured speaker for the theme, "Carry the Light." A music video, produced at Elm Springs, Ark., under the leadership of Christian musician Twila Parrish, also interpreted the theme.

In addition, the program included videotaped excerpts from testimonies by Arkansas Baptist youth. Youth from Little Rock's Geyer Springs First Baptist Church also staged a drama which featured Jamie Reyes and Jason Wood.

Alan Daniels of Marietta, Ga., was the program's worship leader. Two Arkansas youth ministers, Lynn Bullock of the Geyer Springs Church and Stan Coleman of Springdale First Church, also spoke.

Randy Brantley, an associate in the Evangelism Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, was enthusiastic about the response to the event. Besides the record attendance, he reported that 145 youth registered some sort of Christian decision.

Brantley said 23 youth recorded professions of faith, and one made a commitment to full-time Christian service.

Joy Explo is sponsored each year by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Evangelism Department.



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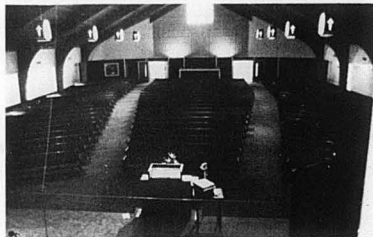
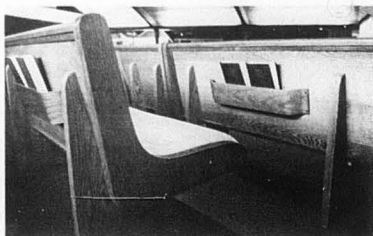
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Process Begins

Recommendations Sought for Key SBC Committees

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)—An open letter has been issued by Southern Baptist Convention President Jerry Vines seeking recommendations of people to appoint to key committees to serve at the 1990 SBC annual meeting in New Orleans.

"I am beginning the process which will result in my appointments for the 1990 Committee on Committees, Resolutions Committee, Credentials Committee and Tellers Committee," wrote Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla.

Vines, who was re-elected to a second one-year term as president of the 14.8-million member denomination at the 1989 annual meeting in Las Vegas, Nev., noted the people he appoints will serve at the first annual meeting of a new decade, the last decade of the Twentieth Century.

"I believe that the 90s may well be the greatest years in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention," Vines told Baptist Press. "Baptisms are moving up, if ever so slowly, and the last two months of Cooperative Program (unified budget) giving have been record breaking months."

"All of the vital signs are positive. I think the great need now is for spiritual revival in our hearts and our churches. To that end, I encourage our people and our churches to be very attentive to the calls for prayer on the part of our national prayer leaders."

Vines noted the appointments of the four committees are very important as Southern Baptists move into the new decade. He asked Southern Baptists to "join me in prayer that the Lord's will shall be done concerning these appointments."

"I am looking for good, committed, salt-of-the-earth Southern Baptist people to appoint," he said. "I want them to be Bible-believing, cooperating Southern Baptists."

Vines added he plans to follow a practice he established last year in appointing "as many new people as I possibly can," people who have not had SBC responsibilities before.

Vines will appoint slightly more than 100 people to serve on the four committees; last year he named 111.

Under the SBC constitution and bylaws, the SBC president appoints the Committee on Committees and the Resolutions Committee "in conference with" the two vice presidents; the Credentials Committee "in consultation with" the vice presidents; and the Tellers Committee "in consultation with" the SBC registration secretary.

The Committee on Committees, composed of a layperson and a clergyman from

each of the 33 eligible states, nominates the Committee on Nominations for the subsequent year as well as any other committee not otherwise provided for.

The Resolutions Committee, made up of 10 members, including three current members of the SBC Executive Committee, deals with all resolutions introduced during the annual meeting.

The Credentials Committee, which last year was made up of 22 members, oversees registration and deals with any disputed seating of messengers.

The Tellers Committee, which last year had 13 members, tabulates all votes at the annual meeting.

In seeking recommendations of people to appoint to the committees, Vines said he was "surprised" the number of recommendations he received in 1989 "were not larger. I received a good number, but not to the level that I anticipated."

He added he believes the process of appointment in 1990 will be "a bit simpler" this year because he has a year of experience. "I am not going to be any less serious or meticulous about it, but I do understand the process and the deadlines better this year."

"I hope I will do a better job this year because of what I learned last year. Last year, I received a very positive response to the appointments and that made my work a real pleasure," he said.

He asked people wishing to make nominations to send the material to him by March 1, 1990, at First Baptist Church, 124 Ashley Street, Jacksonville, FL 32202. The envelopes should be designated on the lower left-hand side, "SBC Committee Recommendations."

Vines said the process is made easier if specific information on the nominees is included.

The information should include:
— Whether the nominee has served on SBC committee or board previously, and whether any member of the nominee's church currently is serving or has previously served on a national committee or board.

— The full name, correctly spelled, of the nominee; complete mailing address, including ZIP code; home and business telephone numbers, including area code; whether the nominee is clergy or denominationally related or is a layperson. The correct title or occupation of the nominee should be included, as well as the complete business address.

— The nominee's church affiliation, in-

cluding the church mailing address and telephone number, total church membership, the amount the church gave through the Cooperative Program unified budget during the 1988-89 associational year and the percentage of the church budget the CP gives represented.

— The number of baptisms in the church during the 1988-89 associational year, whether the nominee plans to attend the 1990 annual meeting, and the state convention in which the nominee lives.

Vines asked that nominations include the nominator's name, title, mailing address and home and business telephone numbers.

Copies of a form on which to submit nominations are available from Vines church.

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BIVOCATIONAL MINISTERS

National Association Planned

by Jim Newton
Baptist Sunday School Board

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)—A national fellowship, the Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association, has been organized to encourage "tentmaker" ministries in the denomination.

About 30 bivocational ministers from throughout the nation voted to establish the fellowship during a meeting in Jackson, Miss., just prior to the annual sessions of the National Council for Bivocational Ministries this fall.

Ken Cook of Jackson, a bivocational minister who works with Mississippi Power and Light, said the two organizations would work together on similar objectives but would have different roles.

The association will sponsor an annual meeting, probably in connection with the Southern Baptist Convention, offering an opportunity for fellowship and affirmation of bivocational ministers.

Cook was elected chairman of a steering committee to draft a constitution and bylaws for the association and make plans

for future meetings.

The council gives guidance to the work of Dale Holloway, national consultant on bivocational ministries for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

During the council's meeting, board Vice President Charles Chaney announced that Holloway would become the first of seven regional consultants to coordinate an intensified emphasis on bivocationalism by the board.

"Bivocational ministries will occupy a more strategic place in the overall strategy of the Home Mission Board in the years ahead than it has in the past," Chaney said.

Chaney, vice president for extension, said the board plans to intensify use of bivocationalists to start new churches, especially in black and ethnic communities. One man, such as Holloway, cannot serve the needs of bivocational leaders across the nation, he noted.

"We need to move toward regional leadership in bivocationalism in the 21st century," Chaney said. "We need to think in terms of ethnic, racial and geographic

diversity."

In times of declining financial resources, the board will phase in gradual support of six or seven regional consultants to direct this work and will seek to involve men who are currently bivocational ministers in such roles, he said.

"It is almost impossible for a monovocational church leader to have the perception to discern the special problems and needs of bivocational church leaders."

Chaney emphasized the need for involvement of bivocational ministers in starting new churches, stressing, "To wait on full salary, buildings with ample land and full academic training to thoroughly evangelize and intentionally disciple North America is to wait too long."

Establishing 10 churches with 100 members each, led by bivocational pastors, is more effective than to have one church with 1,000 members led by a full-time pastor, Chaney noted. Bivocational strategy is four times more effective in evangelism and church growth efforts, he estimated.

About 65 people from 16 states attended the council meeting, a 25 percent increase over the previous high attendance. Sessions were held at Day Star Baptist Church in Florence, Miss.

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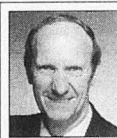
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Relief Efforts Begin

by Mary E. Speidel

SBC Foreign Mission Board

PANAMA CITY, Panama (BP)—The day after Christmas, Southern Baptist missionaries and Panamanian Baptists began relief efforts in Panama City following the U.S. military invasion Dec. 20.

Most combat in the capital ceased just two days after deposed Panamanian leader Gen. Manuel Noriega sought refuge at the Vatican Embassy Dec. 24, according to news reports. Civilian traffic resumed and Panamanians began returning to work. Southern Baptist missionaries said.

At least one Panamanian Baptist casualty has been reported, a teen-age boy who attended Las Mananitas Baptist Church in Panama City. He was killed Dec. 24 when one of Noriega's "dignity battalions" fired on him on the side of a road, said Southern Baptist missionary James Gilbert, from Jackson, Miss.

Church members were not able to travel to the nearest cemetery to bury the victim, so a member's parents donated land to begin a new cemetery in the neighborhood, said Gilbert. Pastor Nieves Ortega conducted the funeral on Christmas Day.

Members of the disaster relief committee of the Baptist Convention of Panama have begun food distribution efforts, said Gilbert, who directs the committee. Baptist volunteers obtained food from a U.S. government deposit Dec. 26 after it was made available to nonprofit organizations providing relief.

"Each day is better and we feel like the Lord has really answered prayer. We feel like the worst is over," said Gilbert. "We're thankful for the relief that's coming in and we hope to work with it as long as there's a real need here."

On Dec. 26, Baptist workers in vehicles loaded with food were stopped en route to Redemption Baptist Church, headquarters for the Baptist relief effort, said Gilbert. Troops rerouted the volunteers

because of continued sniper fire on some streets, he said.

Once food arrived at Redemption, Southern Baptist missionaries and Panamanian Baptist volunteers sacked the food to be given to the 44 Baptist churches and missions in the Panama City area, Gilbert said. An average of 20 sacks per church and 10 per mission will be distributed initially. Church members will take food from house to house to people in need in their areas.

"We're trying to meet some of the urgent needs until people can purchase food of their own," said Gilbert.

Gilbert said the Baptist mission and Baptist associations in the Panama City area have some \$14,000 immediately available in relief funds.

Gilbert's wife, Dorothy, also from Jackson, Miss., was among about 30 volunteers sacking rice, lentils, sugar, shortening, canned milk and salt at Redemption Church. Scripture portions and tracts were placed in each bag, she said.

Near the church, U.S. soldiers patrolling the area were well received by Panamanians, said Mrs. Gilbert. Panamanian Baptist volunteers gave cold drinks to soldiers in the street outside the church, she said.

All of the Southern Baptist workers in Panama except one couple have moved temporarily to Panama City to be closer together, said Joe Bruce, the Foreign Mission Board's area director for Middle America. A total of 15 Southern Baptist missionaries and three volunteers are currently in Panama.

Glenn and Pauline Nicholson remained in David, about 300 miles outside of Panama City, because the situation in that area was fairly calm, Bruce said. The Nicholsons are from Forrest City, Ark., and Cherry Valley, Ark., respectively.

Southern Baptist missionaries reported quiet Christmas observances.

Missionary Notes

Ted and Mary Stanton, missionaries to Argentina, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 5805 W. 56th, Little Rock, AR 72209). They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Arkadelphia and grew up in Little Rock. The former Mary Ridgell, she was born in Prescott and grew up in Little Rock. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1976.

Jon and Lisa Lord, missionaries to Tanzania, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 2717 Highway 15, Calhoun, LA 71225). He was born in De Queen. She is the former Lisa Steele of Louisiana. They were appointed in 1985.

J.O. and Mabalee Terry, missionaries to Asia, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 1742 Belmont Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70808). He serves as media consultant for Asia. He is a native of Louisiana. The former Mabalee Worthen, she was born in Fordyce. They were appointed in 1968.


Stephen and Kathy Dewbre, missionaries to Transkei, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service (address: P.O. Box 784, Umtata, Transkei). He was born in Memphis, Tenn., and considers North Little Rock, Ark., his hometown. She is the former Kathy Thye of Iowa. They were appointed in 1989.

Donna Rye, Baptist representative to Mexico, has arrived in the States for furlough (address: Rt. 2, Box 420, Westville, OK 74965). She was born in Little Rock. She was appointed in 1982.

Annie Hoover, missionary to Japan, has completed furlough and returned to the field (address: 1-28, S. 22, West 14, Chuoku, Sapporo-shi 064, Japan). A native of North Little Rock, she was appointed in 1949.

Harold and Rene Mitchell, missionaries to Tanzania, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 1103 West 6th Ave., Pine Bluff, AR 71601). They are natives of Pine Bluff. She is the former Rene Boschette. They were appointed in 1976.

Thomas and Margaret Smith, missionaries to the Philippines, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service (address: Box 183, Butuan City 8600, Agusan, Del Norte, Philippines). Both are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Little Rock and considers Lonoke his hometown. The former Margaret Bruce, she was born in Hazen and considers Hickory Plains her hometown. They were appointed in 1989.





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ROMANIA

Layman Risks Life

by Art Tolston
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Baptist layman Petria Traian, a Romanian refugee, spent his Christmas holidays delivering food and medical supplies to his homeland after thousands died in rooting longtime Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu from power.

Traian began making daily trips into Romania on Christmas Eve. He drove his personal van from Vienna, Austria, where he has lived a number of years, to Hungary's border to re-enter his homeland.

He has been purchasing food and medical supplies in Hungary with some \$2,000 in offerings from Baptists in Vienna and \$1,000 in Southern Baptist relief funds. He also has been delivering supplies provided by the Red Cross.

On Christmas Eve and Christmas, Traian went to Arad, his hometown. The day after Christmas, he went to Timisoara, where he had been a student. An estimated 12,000 of Timisoara's 350,000 people were killed in political violence in mid-December that marked the beginning of the end for Ceausescu, who ruled Romania for 24 years.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board on Dec. 28 allocated an additional \$100,000—\$50,000 in general relief funds and \$50,000 in world hunger funds to purchase food, medicine and other supplies needed in Romania, said Keith Parker,

director of Southern Baptist work in Europe. The board is working through Hungarian Baptists, who are mounting relief efforts for Romania.

One relief team is being organized by two brothers who are Baptist laymen and medical doctors in Szeged, a Hungarian town near the Romanian border, Parker said. Baptist churches in Budapest, Hungary's capital, are pulling together another relief team.

"This shows the effectiveness of our cooperative way of working with European Baptists," Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks noted. "We have ready-made channels for being certain that food and relief supplies get to needy people."

Parks voiced concern, however, that the \$50,000 relief allocation will reduce by more than one-third funds the board can use to respond to other catastrophes that may occur worldwide.

A Swiss businessman has advanced \$34,000 to the small Swiss Baptist union to launch a relief effort, Parker reported. Relief offerings also have been taken in Baptist churches in England and in English-language Baptist churches in Western Europe, according to David Borgan, a Vienna-based Southern Baptist missionary.

Both food and medical supplies were in short supply even when Ceausescu was firmly in power, Parker said. But the shortages were exacerbated, he added, when political violence erupted Dec. 17 in

Timisoara and spread throughout much of the country. On Christmas, Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, were executed after a trial sanctioned by the Romania's provisional government, the National Salvation Committee.

Telephone communication with Romanians proved nearly impossible in late December. But a call did get through to Nick Jheorghita, a medical doctor and lay pastor of Second Baptist Church in Oradea, a city of 300,000.

"Here... there was not any shedding of blood," Jheorghita said. "Of course, there are some tensions on the streets."

"The situation in our city is under the control of Almighty God," he continued.

Spiritual vibrancy, in fact, is one of the hallmarks of the Baptist Union of Romania, the second largest Baptist body in Europe behind only the Soviet Union's. There are some 160,000 Baptists in 660 churches among Romania's 23.2 million people. Baptist churches, despite severe religious oppression under Ceausescu, have been baptizing some 8,000 to 12,000 people each year, according to Parker.

Traian, the Baptist laymen venturing into Romania, is the caretaker of Mollardgasse Baptist Church in Vienna, Austria's oldest Baptist congregation. Beyond Mollardgasse's Austrian members, two other congregations meet at the location, one composed of Romanian refugees and one of English-speaking foreigners.

"He was on one of the first convoys that went in," reported Borgan, pastor of the English-language congregation at Mollardgasse. "He wanted to get the food there for them by Christmas and to help as soon as he could."

Borgan was impressed with Traian's wife, who stayed behind with their children. "She has supported him 100 percent. This was Christmas Eve and she was behind him even though she was hearing reports of all the shootings."

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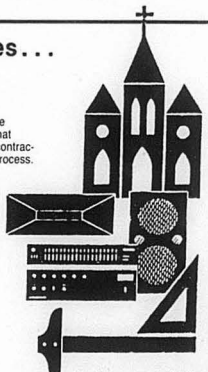
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(BP) photo / Joanna Pinneo



Throughout the world, God has opened doors, such as those in Eastern Europe.

Goals Achievable

by Brenda J. Sanders

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

KANSAS CITY, MO. (BP)—With God's help, Southern Baptists can achieve their Bold Mission Thrust campaign goal to share the gospel of Christ with the whole world by the year 2000, according to an administrator with the convention's Foreign Mission Board.

Harlan E. Spurgeon, FMB vice president for mission personnel, addressed Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary students on "World Missions Day," a quarterly event focusing on Southern Baptist mission work around the world.

Spurgeon, a former missionary to Taiwan and a Midwestern Seminary graduate, said the commitment Southern Baptists made in 1976 to reach the world for Christ by

the year 2000 still can be realized.

"If we include the year 2000, we stand now with only 11 years left," he pointed out. "The clock is ticking, and there remains a great deal to be done.

"How in the world are we going to do it?

"Perhaps it's fortunate that we don't always know the full implication of the kind of commitments we make. The more

we learn about what we've set out to do, the more impossible it seems. In fact, it is impossible save the grace of God."

Southern Baptists can learn a lesson about commitment from the apostle Paul and New Testament Christians.

"In the midst of overwhelming odds, they were able to take the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome in one generation," he noted. The early Christians were not ashamed of the gospel of Christ and were willing to pay any price to share that gospel with the world, he added.

"They were willing to walk through the doors of opportunity that God presented to them, and as a result, they did the impossible in their generation," Spurgeon said. "Now, how can we do the impossible in our generation?"

"I truly believe that if each one of us who call ourselves Christians in this day were to do what the early Christians did, the impossible would become possible.

"Around the world, God has opened great doors of opportunity to Southern Baptists in these days, and we need people to walk through these doors. God is giving us opportunities to reach the lost people of the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, in places that have been under communism for 40 years, the human heart is crying out after God."

"Where doors are closing, we are opening windows or going under the door," he said.

"God has been good to us. He's given us unlimited opportunities. Will you step through the door he opens to you?"

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LESSONS FOR LIVING

Convention Uniform

Bread that Satisfies

by Lawson Hatfield, Malvern

Basic passage: John 6:35-51

Focal passage: John 6:35-51

Central truth: The basic needs of life are found in Jesus.

This lesson centers on how Jesus meets the basic needs of life. Bread and water, what could be more basic?

Jesus said he was the bread of life, and he that comes to him will never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst (Jn. 6:35).

This statement came in response to the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 on the sea of Galilee. He fed them bread and fish from a lad's lunch (Jn. 6:9). But many followed him only for the food he provided. They had seen his miracle but believed not.

The purpose of Jesus was to do the will of his Father, and that he should lose none of them. This means Jesus would cause his disciples to be resurrected in the last day. The requirement for salvation and the resurrection was to be filled with the spiritual bread Jesus, not to be filled with physical bread (Jn. 6:36-40).

The unbelieving Jews murmured against Jesus for his claim to be the bread of life, the Son of the Father from above. They stated that he was but the son of Joseph, a son of a father and mother, whom they knew. They concluded in unbelief that he could not be the Son of the Father from above, for Joseph was his father. It never occurred to them that he could be from both an earthly and a heavenly family. Jesus was both divine and human. He was himself the greatest ever miracle.

In John 6:44-45, Jesus said that no man can come to him except the Father draw him. Those who are drawn of the Father come by their own choice. The Father does the drawing, the response of coming is on the human side. It is important to remember Jesus' promises in verse 37, that anyone who comes to him will not be cast out.

Again in verse 46 Jesus claims that intimate relationship he has with the Father. He said that no man hath seen the Father, except he who is of God, he (Jesus) has seen him.

As the climax of this lesson, Jesus promised that "he that believeth in me hath everlasting life." Also that "I (Jesus) am that bread of life."

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Life and Work

Public and Private

by Frank C. Gantz, Nall's Memorial Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Mark 1:29-30; 6:30-32

Focal passage: Mark 1:32-39

Central truth: Supernatural power comes from an intimate relationship with the Father.

Jesus had a tremendous public ministry. At this point in the gospel of Mark, an entire city has gathered at the door of the home in which Jesus was working (v. 33). He was doing that which was miraculous, and the crowds were coming in throngs. Jesus was casting out evil spirits and healing diseases.

It would have been easy for Jesus to set up camp and just remain in that city. He had a tremendous following. However, his purpose was not to one city (v. 38).

How could Jesus maintain such a pace? How could he demonstrate such power? We often speak of a powerful man as a "man possessed." What kind of power did Jesus have that could make a man possessed become calm? The answer is in the private moments.

Jesus prayed. Instead of resting his body a little longer, he prayed. Instead of rushing on to the next city, he prayed. It was a matter of priority to him.

The priority of this private time is evident by the emphasis on the time of day. "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day" (v. 35). This would have been during the fourth watch of the night or between three and six in the morning. He agreed with the psalmist, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up" (Ps. 5:3).

Jesus went to a solitary place. The term carries the idea of a desert region. Jesus was not in a geographical desert, but he was alone. The crowds were not clamoring. His disciples were not about him. In fact, they had to go look for him (vv. 36-37).

Perhaps we would find the source of mighty power from God if we spent that kind of time with the Father. Our power is at times so anemic. We are trying to tackle an out of control world with our skill and wisdom, when we ought to be strengthened by the hand of our God. Our public ministries would be powerful if we would learn from our Lord this one simple lesson. Pray.

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Bible Book

Crossing Jordan

by Tommy Cunningham, Life Line Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Joshua 3:3-5, 14-17; 4:21-24

Focal passage: Joshua 3:1-13; 4:19-24

Central truth: God always prepares his people for their mission and gives them a Gilgal.

One of the most assuring truths of the Bible is illustrated in Joshua, chapter 3. God always prepares his people for accomplishing his will. We can be confident that the preparation will equip us for victory.

The preparations made by Israel for crossing Jordan are in many ways an illustration of preparations we Christians make through our lives for doing God's will.

There are seven stages in the preparation process seen in Joshua 3. First, God's people had to face the difficulty (3:1). Second, they were required to observe the situation and to count the cost (3:2). Third, they waited for instruction (3:2). Fourth, they were commanded to sanctify themselves (3:5). Fifth, they saw their leader exalted. There was a reverence and submission to authority (3:7). Sixth, they obeyed the instructions for the crossing (3:11-13). Finally, they understood the meaning of divine intervention (3:9-13).

The act of crossing Jordan is pictured in verses 14-17. Note three significant truths. First, the time of crossing. It was harvest time, when the Jordan was overflowing its banks. Israel was being taught the lesson of obedience and trust. Second, the place of the crossing. They were directly across the Jordan from Jericho. God's people should never be filled with fear but rather filled with faith. Finally, the means of the crossing. Following the ark, they trusted God who opened up the Jordan and took them across.

Once in the promised land, a most significant act was commanded. A place of residence was to be established. Gilgal became the place of residence, the "headquarters" of Israel during the campaigns to conquer the land. A memorial was erected to remind future generations of the power and majesty of God.

In our spiritual pilgrimage, we need a Gilgal to remind us of the victories won and the promises given. Gilgal is a place of rest, meditation, and reconsecration.

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Convention Uniform

Truth Gives Freedom

by Lawson Hatfield, Malvern

Basic passage: John 8:31-47

Focal passage: John 8:31-47

Central truth: Abiding in Jesus' Word gives men moral freedom.

The lesson for Sunday is an account of a conversation Jesus had with Jews who said they believed on him. Was their belief saving faith or an acceptance of some of his teachings? Jesus accepted their belief as being conditional. He said that when truth is known, truth gives freedom (Jn. 8:31-32). Jesus qualified saving faith as the kind held by a disciple who abides or continues in his Word. There is a difference in head and heart belief.

False faith and fickle followers are often found in the Bible. Some examples are Balaam, Judas, and Ananias and Sapphira.

But what about real faith and sincere followers? The lesson this week teaches that freedom comes as disciples learn truth. Some claim to be free who are really slaves.

When the Jews to whom Jesus spoke heard him speak of freedom, they stated they were free sons of Abraham (Jn. 8:33).

Jesus then declared an eternal principle that whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin. In the light of this saying, a logical reaction today is that we do not see how anyone can be free. Even Christians are not totally free from sinning.

The Lord answered that dilemma by saying that the servant of sin does not have to abide in the house of sin forever, because the Son abides forever. If the Son makes you free, you are free indeed (Jn. 35:36).

In verses 37-44, Jesus acknowledged the Jews as being physical descendants of Abraham. Yet, they were trying to kill Jesus and he told them Abraham did not have the killer instinct they displayed.

At this point the Jews said they were not born of fornication. It was an ugly insinuation that Jesus was born of fornication. Their comeback was an attack on the moral and spiritual character of the Lord.

This unfounded and undocmented insinuation exposed their godless nature. For this reason, Jesus concluded that they were not the sons of father Abraham, not sons of the father God, but of their father the devil.

This lesson concludes with Jesus saying that the Jews would not hear God's Word from him because they were not of God.

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Life and Work

Opposition

by Frank C. Gantz, Nall's Memorial Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Mark 3:21-23; 6:1-6

Focal passage: Mark 6:1-6

Central truth: Opposition will occur whenever we are faithful to what God has called us.

Not many people like conflict or opposition. Some do. These folks must be miserable. Most of us, however, will go out of our way to avoid conflict. Yet conflict often comes to those who only want to serve God and enjoy the virtues of peace and love. Jesus endured these times of conflict and opposition. When we follow the pattern of ministry that Jesus demonstrated, we also will face some of the opposition that he faced.

Jesus faced opposition because he had a compassion for people. This compassion manifested itself in his healing of the sick and casting out of demons. In Mark 3, the Jewish leaders opposed him because he cast out demons. In Mark 6:5, he continued healing some even though the unbeliever of many limited his working. When we display genuine, godly compassion for a hurting world, we also will face the critics.

Jesus also faced opposition because of his convictions of the Word. His ministry was not in deed only. It was also in Word. He taught in the synagogues (Mk. 6:2). The teaching of Jesus was so different than what the people were accustomed to hearing. Many were left astonished at the authority with which Jesus spoke (Mk. 1:22). He did not merely quote other rabbinical writings. He taught the Word of God. When we stand up for what the Bible declares, some will be convicted of sin and convinced of the Lord. Many others, however, will become outraged. We must nevertheless continue proclaiming the truth with a compassionate heart.

Jesus also was opposed because of his relationship with his Father in heaven. In Mark 6:3, the people knew that such power could not come from a mere carpenter from Galilee. In fact, John 5:18 further identifies that they wanted to kill Jesus because of his relationship with the Father. Now we may not be the only begotten Son of God as was Jesus, but we are the children of God. He lives within us.

Remember that the opposition which Jesus faced was "because of their unbelief" (Mk. 6:6). Keep on laboring anyway.

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Bible Book

From Victory to Defeat

by Tommy Cunningham, Life Line Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Joshua 6:2-5, 23-24a; 7:11-13a, 24-25a

Focal passage: Joshua 6:2-16; 7:4-9; 7:11-15

Central truth: Victory depends upon following God's Word.

We come now to the conquest of Canaan (chapters 6-12). The conquest consisted of three campaigns: the central, southern and northern campaigns. Joshua had been given the battle plan (6:2-5) for Jericho. Victory was promised if obedience was given.

There were three requirements for conquering Jericho. First, there must be perception. The children of Israel were to march around the city for seven days. For one whole week, they would observe the enemy. They would perceive that only by God's power could they conquer Jericho (6:3-5). Second, there must be a passion among God's people to claim God's promise. They understood that Jericho was God's gift to them (6:2). Finally, they had to participate in the battle (6:20). These same requirements still apply to Christians today as we follow God's Word.

God's plans are supernaturally designed. Note three particular characteristics of this plan. First, the foolishness of the plan. The plan, humanly speaking, had virtually no prospects of success. Second, the wisdom of the plan revealed to the Israelites that only by obedience and trust in God would the victory be won. Third, note the position of the ark. The ark was placed centrally in the ranks of the Israelites (6:8). The ark represented the presence of God. Believers today can know that God's plans still bring victory.

We move from victory in chapter 6 to defeat in chapter 7. Ai was a small city, but it blocked the passage up the Ajalon Valley. This stronghold had to be conquered before Joshua could move God's people westward. The causes of the defeat are three: (1) no counsel from the Lord; (2) self-sufficiency; and (3) sin (7:1-4). The summary of Israel's failure is found in verse 11. One man's sin had touched the entire nation. Until the transgression and the transgressor were dealt with, Israel would be in a posture of defeat (7:11-14). The terrible cost of sin is pictured in Achan's judgment (7:24-25).

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(BP) photo / Warren Johnson



Parkinson's disease requires Mary Jo Geiger to devote time to exercising.

A New Ministry

by Art Toalston
SBC Foreign Mission Board

VINA DEL MAR, Chile (BP)—Mary Jo Geiger knows one of her most cherished abilities is in jeopardy because of Parkinson's disease.

"All the muscles of the body will be affected," she said, recounting medical literature she has read. "The facial muscles become rigid and do not move easily."

She then spoke of her ability to smile. "If I ever get to the place that my face cannot reflect the joy I feel in Christ, it would hurt very, very much."

Geiger, of Memphis, Tenn., and her husband, Bill, of Miami, have been Southern Baptist missionaries to Chile since 1966. She trusts her faith will alleviate much of the hurt if Parkinson's disease someday steals her smile. She was diagnosed with the disorder three years ago at age 48—relatively early for its onset.

Geiger first suspected something was wrong physically when she began feeling "clumsy" several years ago. "Anytime I would comment about it, everybody would say, 'Oh, that just comes when you get older.'"

Buttoning buttons and cutting meat became more difficult. "When we would go out to eat, I would feel like I was all thumbs. Getting up at night, I would just shuffle my feet along. I thought, 'That is so funny; I've never walked like that in my life.'" Puzzling over letters she had penned, she would think, "My goodness, I

didn't know I had written so poorly."

A few months later, she noticed her leg shaking during exercises at bedtime. "I didn't think anything about it at first... but I noticed every time I raised it, it would shake. I would raise my arm and it would shake. I would move my fingers and they would shake."

Increasingly concerned that only the left side of her body was affected by the shaking, she finally concluded something might be something seriously wrong. Tests with several medications confirmed Geiger was suffering from Parkinson's disease, which afflicts an estimated 1 percent of the U.S. population.

Parkinson's results from the degeneration of nerve cells in the brain that produce the chemical dopamine, which plays a key role in nerve signals that control muscle movements. Scientific studies have failed to find a cause for the disorder. It is treated with medications that compensate for the lack of dopamine.

The disease manifests itself in shaking, stiffened muscles, stooped posture and balance difficulties—conditions that, despite medication, become increasingly pronounced with the passage of time, ultimately disabling victims but allowing their intellect and senses to remain intact.

A regimen of exercise several times a day has become a vital part of Geiger's battle against Parkinson's. "The exercises help you feel good for three or four hours," she said. "The next day, you have to start all

over again."

The medication she takes to control her Parkinson's tends to hinder her mental faculties. But her husband observed, "It seems that everything related to the spiritual realm is almost more keenly remembered." She can cite verse after verse of Scripture that helps lift her faith.

Several months after being diagnosed with Parkinson's, Geiger went through an inner struggle, asking herself whether it was fair to ask the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to continue to employ her and Bill as missionaries in light of her disability. They drove to Santiago to meet with Bryan Brasington, who directs Southern Baptist work in Spanish-speaking South America.

"I told him, 'I just want you to know that any time the board would want me to go home to the States, I am willing to go. Sometimes I just feel so unworthy to continue here. I am so slow. It takes me twice the time to do anything that it used to take. It has become much more difficult to speak before groups,'" she said, explaining that Parkinson's was beginning to affect even the tiny muscles in her voice box.

Brasington's response: "It is true that your ministry may change. It may be the best ministry of your years in Chile."

Those words "just astounded me," Geiger recalled. "It was a challenge I couldn't forget."

After several minutes of discussing various possibilities with Brasington, he asked, "Have you ever thought about a ministry of intercessory prayer?"

"I said, 'Well, I know that is very important.' And he said, 'It is more than important. Everything that is done must be done in the name of Jesus and bathed with prayer or we're just spinning our wheels.'"

Brasington's words about prayer latched onto her spirit. Geiger began to take keen interest in prayer passages in the Bible and books on prayer.

"I need to grow so much more in prayer," she said. "I think the more we see the great necessity of prayer and the power of prayer, and the more we pray, the more we see how little we once prayed. The Lord has given us a command and a privilege, too, to pray for others."

Bill Geiger testifies to the power behind his wife's blossoming prayer ministry. The past year has been the most challenging he has ever faced in his Christian education work with the churches. "Yet it has been the best year for growing spiritually," he said. "I have felt a spiritual strength in the pulpit and in other activities that I have never experienced before."

The reason is clear, he added. "I know that when I leave the house, she is in her room praying for me."

THE 1990s

Freedom and Responsibility

(BP) photo / Warren Johnson



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The decade of the 1990s is ushering in a new era of political freedom. With that freedom comes new responsibilities in Christian witnessing and meeting physical needs, while the ongoing needs of those in other parts of the world continue. May we as Baptists strive to meet those needs with renewed commitment and compassion.

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Learning the Land

DAVAO CITY, Philippines (BP)—Despite a cutback on cultural and educational exchanges in recent months, the Vietnamese government allowed 19 Vietnamese farmers and teachers to study agricultural techniques at Southern Baptists' Rural Life Center in the Philippines for three weeks in November.

Vietnamese officials permitted the exchange because the project provided practical training in combating Vietnam's most severe problem—feeding its people. Providing food for nearly 67 million people is a constant struggle in Vietnam. Food shortages are complicated by depletion of natural resources — soil erosion, forest cutting and overworked land.

"We can ship tankers of feeding rice into Vietnam every year or we can try to do something about the root problem," said Marvin Raley, Indochina program director for Southern Baptists' aid organization, Cooperative Services International, which initiated the project. "The Vietnamese really don't want handout rice. They want to find solutions to their own problems."

That attitude was evident in the Vietnamese who came to the Rural Life Center to study ways to raise farmers' standard of living. They told project coordinators the training could make a significant contribution in helping alleviate hunger in Vietnam. The group included small-scale farmers, district agricultural officials and professors from five agriculture universities.

Vietnam's government "selected a good cross-section of agricultural people who weren't concerned with how they could make more money," said Jack Shelby, CSI's Hong Kong-based administrator. "The real concern was how to feed the nation. Their people are going hungry. As farmers and teachers, they see themselves as the solution to that problem if they can make better use of the soil and natural resources."

None of the farmers had traveled out of their provinces before, project coordinators said. Many came from northern Vietnam's Bac Thai Province, the cradle of the Vietnamese communist revolution. Mistrust of the United States and its allies still runs high in that region.

The exchange project, funded by Southern Baptist contributions to world hunger relief, took 18 months to plan. It involved CSI field personnel, Vietnamese officials, and Fred and Minh Kauffman, Thailand-based development specialists on contract with CSI. The project called for coordination efforts between religious and government officials in Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines. The Vietnamese and

Philippine governments required security checks on all participants.

"It was an extremely complicated thing to pull off," said Raley. "It required the Kauffmans working around the clock the last six weeks to make it fly. In the realm of the Holy Spirit, it came together at the last minute. It was not just our idea; it was meant to be."

The Rural Life Center, directed by Southern Baptist agriculturist Harold Watson, has developed several agricultural techniques suited to the tropical environment found throughout most of Southeast Asia. The center teaches SALT, or Sloping Agricultural Land Technology, involving use of sloping land, small animals and agroforestry land technologies.

The Vietnamese studied these techniques, as well as Watson's UPLIFT, or Using Properly Integrated Lowland Farming Technology, and FAITH, or Food Always In The Home, programs, which incorporate soil conservation and food production on small parcels of land.

They also met Philippine farmers, who face problems similar to those in Vietnam. The Filipinos—poor farmers like the Vietnamese—showed the delegation how they have improved their living conditions using techniques taught at the Rural Life Center. "That made a significant impact on these Vietnamese farmers," said Raley. "It meant something to the Vietnamese to see how Philippine farmers did things and to see they have many of the same problems. Sometimes it helps to see that other people have difficulties, too."

Soil erosion, especially in the hilly country that makes up much of Vietnam, is a major problem. Bombing during the Vietnam War destroyed much of the nation's rain forest. Vietnamese cut away most of what was left and sold it for lumber. The timber was not replaced, adding to erosion, and over-cultivation depleted the soil of valuable nutrients.

"All this together means a declining income for the farmer and declining food supply for the population," explained Shelby. "Vietnam's agriculture situation is one of the worst in the world. . . . The land is so worked out that it's not producing anymore."

Farmers from Vietnam's northern provinces are known as hard workers but still get substandard results. "Through their best efforts, most only make half the daily ration of rice the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization says is needed to sustain health," Raley said. "None of them attain the FAO's minimum requirements."