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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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January 16, 1975
Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE



Paris Church is 100
page 6



I must say it

Charles H. Ashcraft/Executive Secretary

Where is the punch line?

The word of God needs no alteration. The gospel has not changed. The doctrines remain inviolate. Jesus is not different today from what he was yesterday.

Why then has the effectiveness of the message been so negligible that there is more evil in the world today than was there the day Jesus died to change people? The solution lies not in a changed message but in its arrangement, emphasis, a cent, and punch line.

The success of preachers, prophets, pastors and professors lies in their ability to place in arrangement, prospectus, and focus these unchangeable truths so they will not be self-negating.

The punch line tells the story. The able preaching of the word represents God's greatest artistry and it is helpful indeed when the preacher allows himself to be made the artist. Preaching the word is not common labor.

There is an arrangement, a sequence, and a priority scale within this body of truth which, under the proper conditions, will overcome the world. Many preachers have evaluated such a task, not as a hobby but a fulltime profession.

This artist allows God to instruct him how he can preach free forgiveness of sins without suggesting the sinner increase his sins so he can enjoy more forgiveness. He will preach a free salvation but so as not to have it considered cheap.

He will preach salvation by grace, not by works but in such a manner works would follow as an expression of gratitude. He would hit the dominant chords and put minor music in a minor place. His people would hear a note which would "send" them, not confuse them (Titus 3:9; I Tim. 1:4).

The reason the troops have not prepared themselves to battle is they have not heard the right sound (I Cor. 14:8). The reason there is more evil in the world today than the day on which Jesus made the supreme sacrifice for sin, once and for all, is that the people at large have not found the punch line.

May I suggest you make your own survey. While you are waiting in the doctor's office, or waiting for your car to be delivered, or having lunch, just listen to the people around you. You will hear about the split rapture, the latter days, the plight of Israel, the apostasy of the church, the latest evangelistic group, or the signs of the times, but who is talking about the Good News? The Good News is Jesus. Guilty sinners need this Good News.

Someone has missed the accent and his message is no more effective than the latest joke of an uncertain punch line. The gospel has not lost its power and it will only be as effective as is its presentation by an enlightened, quickened, anointed artist who insists that every scripture has a punch line and, by God's grace, he will find it (II Tim. 2:15).

I must say it!

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Arkansas Baptist

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J. Everett Sneed

The worst of them all

Recently there has been much concern over drug abuse and tobacco use. Every thinking person must agree that the concern is justified. Obviously many of the drugs used for experimental purposes can and often do completely destroy the human mind. But it is, indeed, ironic that the most deadly drug of all, alcohol, goes almost unnoticed.

When the Surgeon General's report declared smoking injurious to the health, laws were passed requiring a solemn warning to be placed on every package of cigarettes. Federal funds are being used to purchase radio and TV spot announcements to encourage smokers to quit.

But what about alcohol? One would suppose that there was absolutely no harm in the use of this drug. There are now approximately nine million Americans who are excessive drinkers, according to an independent agency which condones the use of alcohol. It is a well established fact that an alcoholic shortens his life by 10 to 12 years.

The self-inflicted harm of alcohol is only part of the story. In recent times there have been about 55,500 automobile deaths per year. At least half of these are directly related to the use of alcohol. No other drug is so deadly, destructive or harmful to the innocent public.

Again alcohol is related to overall crime. Presently three-fourths of all prison inmates committed their crime after using alcohol.

Many of us have been horrified by the birth defects produced by drugs, and many of these have received wide publicity. But though the University of

Guest editorial

What makes it Southern Baptist?

What makes a church a Baptist church? It is not the use of the name "Baptist" on the church bulletin board or on the cornerstone of the building, but rather the doctrinal position and practice of the congregation.

What makes a church Southern Baptist? It is not the use of the name on the church bulletin or throughout the community, but rather the denominational affiliation and cooperation of the congregation. Simply using the name does not in itself create a Southern Baptist church.

A Southern Baptist periodical or publication is not created by an individual or group of individuals who use the name "Southern Baptist" in naming their publication, even though every individual involved in the publishing process may be a member of a Southern Baptist church. For a publication to be properly called Southern Baptist, it must have some official connection with the denomination at some point.

Such a relationship involves a degree of accountability on the part of the writers and editors of the publication. Even though the degree and use of editorial freedom has always been a controversial matter, still Southern Baptists have never been willing to compromise this principle of accountability. There is no

Washington has discovered a close connection between birth defects and alcoholic mothers, no secular newspaper has carried this information.

Finally, alcohol is the number one drug used by our youth. More and more young people are turning to alcohol. There are several reasons: (1) It is easily accessible, (2) their parents often use it, (3) other young people are using it and they think that they must drink to be a part of the group, and (4) it is glamorized on TV, in the movies and in popular magazines.

Why is so little being done? Perhaps, the most significant reason is the power of the liquor industry. Its influence extends to all levels of our society. One of the best trained and most powerful lobbies in Washington is the one which works for alcoholic beverages.

The continual presence of alcohol has dulled our sensitivity to its awesome effects. Many denominations are silent on the subject and some support it.

The most important question is "How can we stop this deadly killer?" First, we must recognize its danger. We will not act unless we see beverage alcohol, in all forms, for what it is.

We should, also, support organizations such as the Christian Civic Foundation which opposes this evil. Without organized effort nothing can be accomplished.

Finally, we should urge our representatives and senators to label alcohol beverage as injurious to the health. Currently a bill remains in committee which calls for such labeling. Please take time to write your congressmen concerning this important matter. Our concerted voice can be heard.

provision for such accountability when a free-lance publication, purporting to be Southern Baptist, operates outside the framework of Southern Baptist polity.

Some educational institutions have tried to enlist students or financial support by claiming to be Southern Baptist, when the only thing Southern Baptist about the organization was the church membership of its faculty members. But that does not make a school a Southern Baptist school.

Southern Baptist operate schools through the election of trustees, either at the state convention level or at the Southern Baptist Convention level. In most cases the elected messengers from the churches determine who the trustees will be, and the messengers can change policy or personnel indirectly through the election of trustees sympathetic to the majority position.

Southern Baptists have always insisted upon the right of controlling their own agencies, even in the case of agencies that are not supported by Cooperative Program funds, as is true of the Sunday School Board. Nevertheless, there is still a full degree of control exercised by the denomination through the elected trustees.

(Continued on page 4)



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant / President, OBU

The 'Mabee challenge' and the 'must-be response'

I have tried to stop talking about how long I have been president of Ouachita Baptist University. For the first two or three years I talked a lot about the "honeymoon period" during which the Board of Trustees, faculty, students, parents, alumni, pastors, and denominational leaders, were expected to be nice to me. Now that I have been president for almost five years, honesty requires me to confess that I have decided that there never really was a

What makes it Southern Baptist?

(From page 3)

Therefore, unless the denomination has some voice in the operation of the school, it cannot properly be called Southern Baptist.

From time to time various privately owned and operated companies have, in their advertising, implied some connection with the denomination. One insurance company which specializes in service to Southern Baptist churches and agencies has used the name Southern Baptist in such a way as to create the impression of a direct relationship. One bond promotion agency in Arkansas has a name that in itself has led many to think it has some connection with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Whether such misleading usage and advertising is done deliberately or inadvertently, carelessly or ignorantly, is not the point here; the point is that such firms are not Southern Baptist agencies unless and until they are owned, controlled, or operated by the denomination.

Occasionally an idea or technique is pirated from Southern Baptist life for use in some commercial venture. In most cases the use of some such technique, if not copyrighted, is not illegal, but it is highly unethical when the technique is represented by the commercial firm as being Southern Baptist. In at least one known instance a private fund raising organization operating in Arkansas was represented as being Southern Baptist in its program, though not in name.

Dr. Charles Ashcraft has an interesting way of summarizing the problem. He asks, "If a Southern Baptist layman builds a moonshine still, buys all of his supplies from other Southern Baptists, sells his product only to Southern Baptists, and openly refers to himself as a Southern Baptist, does that make his operation a Southern Baptist moonshine still?"

All of the situations described in this article have occurred in Arkansas, and many of them will continue to occur. Perhaps it is a compliment to Southern Baptists that the use of our name, or some relationship to the denomination, is coveted and used by those outside. Nevertheless, Southern Baptists should be careful to investigate and validate the claim of any individual, or church, or publication, or school, or company that represents itself as being Southern Baptist. - Roy F. Lewis, Secretary of Stewardship Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

honeymoon at all. All these groups were not simply being polite or courteous to a newcomer. These groups continue to work together in support of Christian education at Ouachita because of a firm and sustained belief that we need this kind of institutional witness today more than ever before.

While we are on the subject of honest confessions, I must confess that there was one thing I had serious doubts and uncertainties about even as I accepted the presidency of Ouachita. This was the question whether Arkansas Baptists could and would provide enough financial support to make Ouachita a truly strong Baptist university. I knew that I had never personally been a fund raiser and this certainly did not contribute to my sense of security and confidence. My confidence was in God's call and this left me clinging to a blind, or at least dimly lighted, faith that the financial resources for Ouachita would be provided.

Even after the history-making success of the Ouachita-Southern Advancement Campaign and related campaigns and spin-off gifts such as the 1972 grant of \$300,000 from the Mabee Foundation, I found myself wondering if our financial miracles were over and our progress would dwindle or come to a halt. The paradox of sharply increased operating costs during a time of national recession provided no encouragement.

The Mabee Foundation has just recently supplied part of the answer to that question, and I believe Arkansas Baptists will provide the rest of the answer. This good news came in the form of a challenge grant for \$500,000 on the one condition that it be matched dollar-for-dollar by Aug. 31, 1975.

You might say we have a "Mabee challenge" and a "must-be response."

If we are to claim this half-million dollars and build the much-needed classroom building and finish the other projects connected with the Ouachita "megastructure," it will be because Arkansas Baptist pastors and their churches step forward and provide second-mile pledges for one, two, three or more years. Many pastors have already told me they are confident their church will extend their pledge to help us meet the challenge, and several churches have already taken official action to this effect.

August 31 is not far away, the economy is taking its lumps, and the strong temptation is to undertake nothing new for God. However, if the Mabee Foundation of Tulsa, Okla. has that much confidence in Arkansas Baptists and Ouachita, I suspect that God has even more confidence in us. I prefer to think that we have only just begun to see the miracles that happen when Arkansas Baptists work together unselfishly in such causes as missions, evangelism, and Christian education.

Where we got our Bible

by Ralph W. Davis
(28th in a series)



Davis

We do not have today any original manuscripts of the Old Testament or New Testament. They have long perished. "It is probable that not a single autograph survived to see the middle of the second century" (Dana, *The Science*

of New Testament Interpretation, p.14). That does not affect the authenticity of these books of the Bible. Ancient people guarded such precious documents as accurately as humanly possible. Since no two manuscripts are alike, is there any possibility of arriving today at any trustworthy text? With the development of what is known as "textual criticism," scholars have arrived at the most accurate text possible for each book.

Sir Fredrick Kenyon makes the claim that no single doctrine of Christianity rests upon a disputed text in Scripture. Wescott and Hort, two of the greatest textual critics, write that the proportion of words about which there is no reasonable doubt is not less than seven-eighths. About one-sixteenth of the words of the New Testament are subject to doubt and most of these are of little importance. We can be assured that our New Testament text is accurate in about 999 out of every 1000 words. Such a

result is amazing, little short of miraculous.

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew except a few verses that were written in Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek, the language of that day. As Christianity penetrated into the Graeco-Roman world, it reached people who could not read the Greek language. Thus translations had to be made. "Such translations began to be made probably as early as 150 A.D." (Dana, p.16).

The earliest translation of the New Testament was produced in Eastern Syria. The first Syrian translation was a continuous record of the life of Christ made by piecing together selections from the Four Gospels. It was made not later than A.D. 170.

Latin versions came next. "We find probable traces of a Latin version of the New Testament in the writing of Tertullian, early in the third century" (Dana, p.17) There were quite a considerable number of these versions by the end of the fourth century. In order to bring together these various translations into a single text, Damascus, bishop of Rome, instructed Jerome to make a revision based upon them all. This was the Vulgate (common) version of the Bible, completed about 358 A.D. The first English Bible was translated from this version in 1382.

Next issue: *The Bible in English*

New Orleans awards degrees to three Arkansas students

Three students from Arkansas received degrees at the 57th annual commencement exercises at New Orleans Seminary Dec. 20.

Mr. and Mrs. Ron Madison both received masters degrees. Madison, from North Little Rock, got the master of

divinity degree, while his wife, the former Charlotte Bryant, was awarded the master of religious education degree.

Burney Whitfield of Lonoke, received the master of divinity degree. Whitfield is presently serving as pastor of Ridge Memorial Church, Slidell, La.

News briefs

□The Indianhead Mission, North Little Rock, will be constituted into a church on Jan. 19 at 3 p.m. William L. Kreis, pastor of the Calvary Church, North Little Rock, will be the featured speaker for the occasion. A reception will follow the service. Herb Prince is pastor of the mission and Arnold Teel is pastor of Amboy Church, North Little Rock, which sponsored the mission.

□On Nov. 24 Union Avenue Church, Wynne, licensed to the gospel ministry Dean Holbrook and Steve Davis.

□Five seconds after midnight Sidney

M. Coryell III was born. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney M. Coryell II of 4502 West 29th Street, Little Rock, are members of the First Church, Little Rock.

□Immanuel Church, Little Rock, set records in the Lottie Moon Christmas offering, in the amount of \$32,500. Their total church budget for 1974 was \$748,486.19, and their cooperative program giving in 1974 was \$101,525.95. This is not only the largest Lottie Moon offering for the church in its history, but the largest in each of these areas for the state of Arkansas.

Rison Church is first in second mile pledge

The Rison Baptist Church has become the first church in Arkansas to respond to the \$500,000 Mabee Foundation challenge pledge to Ouachita Baptist University. It is the home church of Dr. Ben M. Elrod, vice president for development at OBU.

The Rev. J.T. Harvill, pastor of the Rison church, said his church will finish a five-year pledge to the Ouachita-Southern campaign in July 1975 and will immediately begin payments on the "second-mile" pledge.

A graduate of Ouachita, Rev. Harvill said the church voted on Sunday, Dec. 8 to respond just two weeks after the Mahee Foundation challenge was announced.

Dr. Elrod said the Rison pledge was "especially meaningful" since his home church was the first in the state to respond to the challenge.

"I'm sure I speak for the entire Ouachita institutional family in expressing our appreciation. It isn't the first time by any means that this church has been supportive of Ouachita, but we particularly appreciate the timeliness of this pledge."

The \$500,000 Mabee challenge has been granted to Ouachita to complete the megastructure, which now consists of Evans Student Center, Lile Hall and the Mabee Fine Arts Center. The grant, however, is conditional upon OBU matching it dollar for dollar by Aug. 31, 1975.

During the annual convention of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention in November, a resolution was passed urging the churches to "go the second mile" in helping Ouachita to claim the challenge, the largest foundation grant ever offered to the school.

Foreign mission briefs

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic--Howard L. Shoemake, Southern Baptist missionary who is pastor of Central Baptist Temple here, has been listed in the 1974-75 38th edition of *Who's Who in America*. He is also pastor of two missions of the church, vice-president of the National Rehabilitation Association and a member of a commission to supervise and reform the country's prison system, appointed by the country's president. Shoemake and his wife, the former Dorothy Dell Moore of Cleburne, Tex., were appointed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in 1947. He is a native of Port Arthur, Tex. They served in Barranquilla, Colombia, and Guayaquil, Ecuador, before going to the Dominican Republic in 1962.



The church's first building (left) and the present one.

Cover story First Church, Paris, celebrates centennial

First Church, Paris, celebrated their centennial September through October. The first Sunday of the event was September 8, designated "Hallelujah Day." There were 708 present for Sunday School and approximately 750 for the worship service.

Pastor J. Ben Rowell spoke on the opening Sunday of the celebration. He emphasized the great history of the church and challenged the members to rededicate themselves to the building of a great evangelistic church.

When the morning service was over, the congregation moved to the city park for an old-fashioned picnic, followed by sack races, pancake races, and horseshoe pitching. Even carnival rides were provided for the children. The nostalgia of the day was completed by the wearing of old fashioned clothing.

In the weeks that followed the congregation heard former pastors. Among those speaking were Tommy Hinson, pastor of First Church, West Memphis; Don Hook, pastor of the Crystal Hill Church, Little Rock; W.T. Holland, pastor of First Church, Cape Girardeau, Mo.; Jack Porter, pastor of First Church, Salem; and Harold White, Director of Associational Missions for the Harmony Association.

The Paris Baptist Church was organized on the third Sunday of October, 1874, under the direction of Elder G.W. Burns, who became the church's first pastor. The eight charter members who were present that afternoon were John McKinney, J.A. Hanner, Manda

Hanner, Joseph Williams, W.C. McKinney, T.A. Bunch, and L.J. McKinney. W.C. McKinney was elected as the first church clerk.

Services were held in the homes during the first four years of the church's history. The first building was erected on the present education building site in 1878. It was a small, one room, frame building.

In 1917 L.P. Gutherie was called to pastor the church. From the very beginning, he had a vision to build, but was unable to lead in making the move until on a Sunday afternoon, the little, old church building was crowded for a funeral, and one of the floor sills broke. This near calamity, of necessity, thrust the church into a building program. The new building was completed in 1918 with a stucco exterior finish. A grant of \$350 was made to the church by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention to aid in the building program.

Additional departments were added to this building and a brick veneer was completed in 1933 under the leadership of E.S. Elliott. A small, frame primary building was also built in the late 20's. A large dwelling house that was used for several years for the intermediate department was purchased about 1940.

The building program for the present education building was launched on the evening of Nov. 9, 1944, when Pastor Harold Seefeldt led the church to begin a building fund. This building program was



Ben Rowell is pastor.

encouraged during the ministry of Don Hook, and was constructed by James H. Smith in 1953.

On Nov. 3, 1968 construction on the present sanctuary was begun under the direction of Pastor Jack Porter. The building committee consisted of C.E. Anderson, chairman, Kenneth Moore, Gene Davis, Wyley Elliott and Bill Daniel. On Sunday, Aug. 3, 1969 the building was dedicated. The new building has been acclaimed as one of the most beautiful churches in Western Arkansas. Constructed of buff brick to match the existing education building, the building consists of 8,325 square feet with a seating capacity of 500 on the main floor, 200 in the balcony and 40 in the choir (seating approximately 740.)

In 1961 construction was begun on the present parsonage. An open house was held May 20, 1962, upon its completion.

In November of 1972 a three bedroom home was purchased on Zeiler Street to serve as the home for the music director.

Pastor Rowell believes the church has a great future. "The future of First Church is tremendous," he said. "Our area is growing and will be open in the future to growth in Sunday School, Church Training and all of the other organizations. We feel that we have only touched the hem of the garment in the matter of reaching people for our Lord and Savior. Our Centennial Celebration was pleasing to all of us but our eyes are truly upon the future."

State Executive Board holds meeting

The Executive Board of the Arkansas State Convention held a regular meeting on Dec. 10. Cline Ellis, pastor of First Church, Fordyce, was elected vice-president of the board. Ellis presided in the absence of Board President Wilbur Herring.

Among the notable actions of the board, Roy Lewis was promoted from assistant to the executive secretary to associate executive secretary-treasurer. This action involved no change in duties but in title only.

The committees of the executive board were named for 1975. The operating committee will consist of chairman Loyd Hunnicutt, Hoyle Haire, Mason Craig, Wilbur Herring, Don Moore, Coy Sample, Paul Dodd, John E. Miller, Mrs. George Tharel, and Leslie Riherd. Chairmen of other committees are James A. Griffin, program committee; Andrew Setliffe, finance committee; and R. Wilbur Herring, executive committee.

The board also voted to grant Dewey Hart's request for early retirement in April of 1975.

The board voted to look with favor on updating the history of the Arkansas State Convention. The last history of the convention was published in 1948.

H.D. McCarty made a motion that the Executive Board extend fraternal greetings to the Mid-America Seminary. The motion passed with some opposition.

Sam Turner, who has now returned to Kenya, expressed his appreciation for the year's service through the Stewardship department. He presented bookends to Executive Secretary Ashcraft and to Roy Lewis. He also presented a tea service to Miss Nancy Cooper. All of the gifts represent African culture.

Roy Lewis announced that Lehman Webb, missionary to Singapore, has accepted the position of missionary in residence for next year and will begin his work in March 1975.

Miss Nancy Cooper, retiring executive secretary of the Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, was recognized and commended for her 26 years of devoted service. In a brief response Miss Cooper said that she was looking forward to the opportunity of working in her local church in things that had not been possible for her to do while she was serving as the executive secretary of the WMU.

Board members gathered at Immanuel Church, Little Rock, for the meeting.



Board Vice President Cline Ellis presided.



Mrs. Nadine Bjorkman read minutes.



Executive Secretary Charles Ashcraft was presented African carved bookends by Missionary Sam Turner.

Church Efficiency Conference emphasizes sharing his love

The annual Church Efficiency Conference sponsored by Southern College was conducted on the Walnut Ridge Campus in December. Billy Walker was the conference director. The Bible conference attracted ministers and lay people from neighboring states as well as

from all sections of Arkansas.

The program personalities included Ronald Dunn, pastor of McArthur Boulevard Church, Irving, Tex. Dunn, who is in demand for revivals and Bible conferences throughout the nation, challenged each minister to always be at

his best. In one message from Jeremiah 29, Dunn said that each servant of the Master should seek the Lord exclusively, earnestly, and expectantly. "When we do this," he said "we will be revived, relieved, and restored."

The theme of the conference was "Sharing His Love." This was developed by each of the speakers. Dr. D. Jack Nicholas, president, Southern College, spoke on the subject "Sharing his Love through Stewardship."

Bobby Moore, pastor of Broadway Church, Memphis, Tenn., spoke on sharing his Love through Evangelism." In a message based on Genesis 13:1-6, he dealt with the problems confronting the preacher. He said "Every preacher I know has problems. The problem is the same that faced Abram and Lot, that is the goats and sheep are running together. Each preacher has an option. You can choose a spiritual opportunity or a carnal one." In conclusion he emphasized the contrast between Abraham and Lot. He said "Lot lost his witness as he chose what he thought would be the easy road. But Abraham made the right decision and received the blessings of God and the victory."

Don Moore, pastor of Grand Avenue Church, Ft. Smith, and current president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, spoke on "Five Characteristics of an Ideal Church," from Acts, the ninth chapter. He said that a church was to rest in the Lord, to edify the Lord, to walk in the fear of the Lord, walk in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and they were to multiply. In conclusion he challenged each preacher to remember that it is normal for a church to multiply. He said "Some churches are emphasizing the edification of Christ while others are promoting evangelism. We must have a balance between the edification and our outreach. A true New Testament Church will be involved in both."

Dr. Jimmy Millikin, professor of Bible, Mid-America Seminary, Little Rock, taught the Book of Acts in the absence of Roy Hilton who was ill. Millikin also spoke on "Personal Witnessing, and Preaching."

Others on the program included Wayne Allen, pastor, East Park Church, Memphis, Tenn., and J. Everett Sneed, editor, *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*. Editor Sneed spoke on "The Bible for Today's World."

The entire endeavor was highlighted by outstanding music. Bobby Barnett, minister of music, Fisher Street Church, Jonesboro, was in charge of musical presentations.

Billy Walker



Ronald Dunn



Bobby Barnett



Don Moore



Woman's viewpoint

Iris O'Neal Bowen

On following the rules

In any activity we take part in, we have a set of rules we have to follow, or eventually everything goes wrong!

When God made man in his own image, He meant for him to be a companion to God - then man sinned. He thumbed his nose at the first "thou shalt not" God ever gave him and men have been breaking rules ever since.

After a few hundred years of man's existence, the world became so wicked, God sent the flood to cleanse the earth. And that didn't work. Soon people were sinning again.

Then God, though discouraged, tried again. This time He called Moses up into the mountain to give him the first formal set of rules for his people to follow. Even as God was recording these commandments on stone, the Israelites were down in the desert, melting gold to form a golden calf, and living in flagrant disobedience.

Had it not been for Moses' intervention, God would have then destroyed his chosen people. However, he gave them chance after chance to turn to Him. He warned them over and

over, as we warn our little ones, that some day his patience would run out.

Sure enough, it did. They were overcome by their enemies; they were taken into slavery, they lost their precious Jerusalem - all these punishments befell them - and still they did not learn.

Finally, God sent his Son, his ultimate effort to bring people back to him, but the rule of Christ was not written on stone. It was written in blood on the cross, and it is written in the hearts of those who have accepted him.

Christ fulfilled, or completed, the great laws God had given his people so many years before. I like to think he amplified, or clarified the ten commandments, in that he revealed the deeper meanings of each of them.

Adultery, Christ said, could even be lustful thoughts.

Loving your neighbors was not enough, but you must love your enemies, also.

Following rules brings its compensations, too, for which we can all be thankful!

Southwestern Seminary sets far-reaching long range plans

FT. WORTH (BP)—Trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary approved a far-reaching long range plan affecting development of the world's largest seminary, authorized a special salary supplement for faculty and staff, approved a major revision in a degree program and elected a new faculty member.

A Long Range Planning Commission, formed by the trustees last year to study and establish 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25-year goals for the seminary, said the seminary, now numbering more than 2,500 students, could achieve a peak student enrollment of 4,000 students by the mid-1980s.

Although projected annual enrollments will increase and decline, the commission reported the seminary could expect an average annual enrollment of 3,500 students through the year 2000.

The 100-person commission—made up of trustees, advisory council members, alumni, administrators, faculty and students—presented a plan to develop a

core concept in campus planning. The concept calls for keeping all academic facilities confined to the center or core of the main campus of Southwestern Seminary, one of six seminaries affiliated with the 12.3-million member Southern Baptist Convention.

Housing and recreation areas would be assigned to the perimeter property of the campus, and the report suggests that trustees use restraint in planning future building additions.

The plan does, however, establish campus priorities to be a physical fitness center, a maintenance building, more student and faculty housing, additional parking areas, landscaping and additional space for library facilities, offices and academic areas.

The commission's report included a request to develop a major fund raising campaign because of projections the seminary will need to increase endowment funds, now over \$10 million, to \$19 million by 1980, \$36 million by 1990 and an estimated \$75 million by 2000.

Staff changes

Phil Hardin has joined the staff of First Church, Siloam Springs, as minister of music and youth. He holds the bachelor of music degree from Ouachita University and a master's degree from the University of Texas. He is married to the former Shirley Grant of Arkadelphia.



Hardin



Holcomb

Jesse Holcomb is serving as pastor of Leonard Street Church, Hot Springs. He comes to the church from First Church, Green Forrest, where he served for three years. During his ministry there the church received 84 by profession of faith and baptism, called an associate pastor and youth director, and expanded and improved the church's facilities.

Bruce Rodtnick has been called as minister of music by First Church, Beebe. He comes to the church from a similar position with Lee Memorial Church, Pine Bluff. He is a native of New Jersey and is a junior music student at Ouachita University.

News about missionaries

Mrs. Gordon Wayne Cagle, recently employed missionary associate to Kenya, will attend the 14-week orientation program beginning Jan. 6 at Callaway Gardens (address: P.O. Box 535, Pine Mountain, Ga. 31822). The former Mildred Dawson, she is a native of Arkadelphia, Ark. Before she was employed by the Foreign Mission Board in December, she was a secretary and licensed agent for an insurance company in Arkadelphia.

Miss Judy Robertson, missionary appointee to Taiwan, will attend the 14-week orientation program beginning Jan. 6 at Callaway Gardens (address: P.O. Box 535, Pine Mountain, Ga. 31822). She is a native of Fayetteville, Ark. Before she was appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in October, she was a student at Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Worth, Tex.



50th ANNIVERSARY

James T. Draper Jr. to speak at Conference

James T. Draper Jr., Associate Pastor of First Church, Dallas, Tex., will speak twice at the Statewide Evangelism Conference to be held at First Church Little Rock, Jan 20-22. He will speak on "Growing an Evangelistic Church" and a message of his own choice.

He has served as pastor of churches in Texas, Missouri and Oklahoma.

On March 15, 1970, he became pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla. The church has been a perennial leader in baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention having led the convention in baptisms twice since 1968 and has led the Oklahoma Baptist Convention in baptisms every year since 1966. This church averages 12 to 14 people being saved and baptized every week of the year. Under his leadership First Southern Baptist Church increased in Sunday School attendance from 1285 in 1969 to 2200 in 1973.



Draper



Lindsay

For the last few months Brother Draper has been associate pastor of First Church, Dallas. For the first time in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention, one of our churches, First, Dallas, had 10,278 in Sunday School Oct. 6. Their undesignated income that day was more than \$250,000. This was the occasion of the Thirtieth Anniversary of Dr. W.A. Criswell as pastor.

Homer Lindsay, Jr., Pastor, First

Church, Jacksonville, Fla., will speak at the Statewide Evangelism Conference also.

Under Lindsay's leadership the Jacksonville Church has increased its enrollment in Sunday School from 2700 to 6860 and the average attendance increased from 1400 to 2936. The Sunday School and Church Training program are the second largest in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Dr Lindsay will speak twice at the conference on "Growing an Evangelistic Sunday School" and "A Witnessing Church"

Other personalities on the program include Bob Woolley, Secretary of Music, Missouri Baptist Convention; Kendell Black, pastor, Eagle Heights Church, Harrison, will give a testimony on Lay Evangelism Schools; Commander Eugene McDaniel, U.S.N. will give his testimony on "The P.O.W.'s Faith Tested"; Wilbur Herring, pastor, Central Church, Jonesboro, and president of the Executive Board, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will speak on "Return Unto the Lord."

The nursery will be open and the public is invited to the conference which will close noon Wednesday, Jan. 22—Jesse S. Reed, Director.

The church's responsibility for total communication-part II



Parrish

The interpreters or other leaders of a church's ministry to deaf will usually become aware of deaf infants. They need to maintain a list of these. Contacts may be made through county health departments, superintendents of schools, doctors,

where parents can get information regarding deafness, total communication, and resources. It should be possible to work with and through other institutions in the community such as schools for the retarded, and extend this ministry to the parents of these children.

The church should provide pastoral counseling to the family through the use of an interpreter as needed. There should be materials developed to guide the pastor as he counsels parents of a deaf infant.

A Christian program for deaf children should include hearing children from a family where there is a deaf child.

Materials needed for a parent-infant education program include:

- (1) Materials for training workers who would make the home contacts.
- (2) Materials for use in home contacts by hearing or deaf people.
- (3) Materials for training people to conduct sign language classes.
- (4) Materials for use in conducting sign language classes.
- (5) Materials for pastor in counseling parents of siblings of the deaf child. (One possible item to use in this would be "Principles and Techniques of Counseling of Deaf People" published by New York University.
- (6) Materials for distribution to parents at the agency in the community.—Bob Parrish, Director of Deaf Ministries

etc. Churches can establish training opportunities for parents on a one-to-one basis in their homes or in small groups at the church. Deaf people can be used to teach these classes. Classes can be established for deaf children in a small group in the church or in someone's home. It may be possible to assimilate one or two deaf children into a church's kindergarten or nursery school program. The church should accept the responsibility of reimbursing any worker's expenses for developing a program for preschool children and their parents.

There needs to be a statewide planning program for people who are involved in the parent-infant education. Sign language classes might be conducted in community colleges or in other state and city facilities. There needs to be some materials developed for training these workers.

The church may be the only place

State Pastor-Deacon Retreat

The pastors' preaching ministry and the deacon's caring ministry will be the subject of the State Pastor-Deacon Retreat to be held at Camp Paron on May 23-24. Personnel from the Church Administration Department at the Sunday School Board will lead conferences for pastors and deacons, helping them sharpen their skills in these important areas.

There will also be a family ministry emphasis during general sessions. An overview of the church's role in family ministry will be presented. Resources for ministering to families in a church will also be presented during the conference.



One Lord
one mission
one people

Declaration of Cooperation

50th Anniversary Sunday
April 20, 1975

Indian preacher will speak



Anderson

Dreams! James Anderson, Creek Indian and college senior, dreamed of becoming a commercial artist, singing on television in an all-Indian quartet, and maybe even going into show business. But God had another dream for him, a

dream of an Indian preacher in an Indian mission.

Jimmy Anderson grew up in Holdenville, Okla. His favorite activity was attending Many Springs Indian

Baptist Church. Often he and his friends played "cowboy and white man" until the deacons would have to make them go to the church services. Jimmy became a Christian when he was 13, but he did not want to be a preacher. Many years passed before he accepted God's dream for him.

Now he knows God's dream is best. He is a home missionary for the Shawnee, Kickapoo, Pottawatomie, Sac, Fox, Creek, Seminole, Arapaho, and other Indians who live near Shawnee, Okla.

Jimmy Anderson's love for fun makes him a popular speaker for youth. He will be speaking for older Acteens at ACT II in Hot Springs, Jan. 31-Feb. 1.

Educational ministry is topic of conference



Ratton

Houston, Tex will host RE new '75, a national conference on church educational ministry

The conference is scheduled to begin on Feb. 17, with registration from 4:00-7:30 p.m. at the Rice Hotel or First Church. The first session begins at 7:30 on Monday evening, and the conference closes at noon, Friday, Feb. 21.

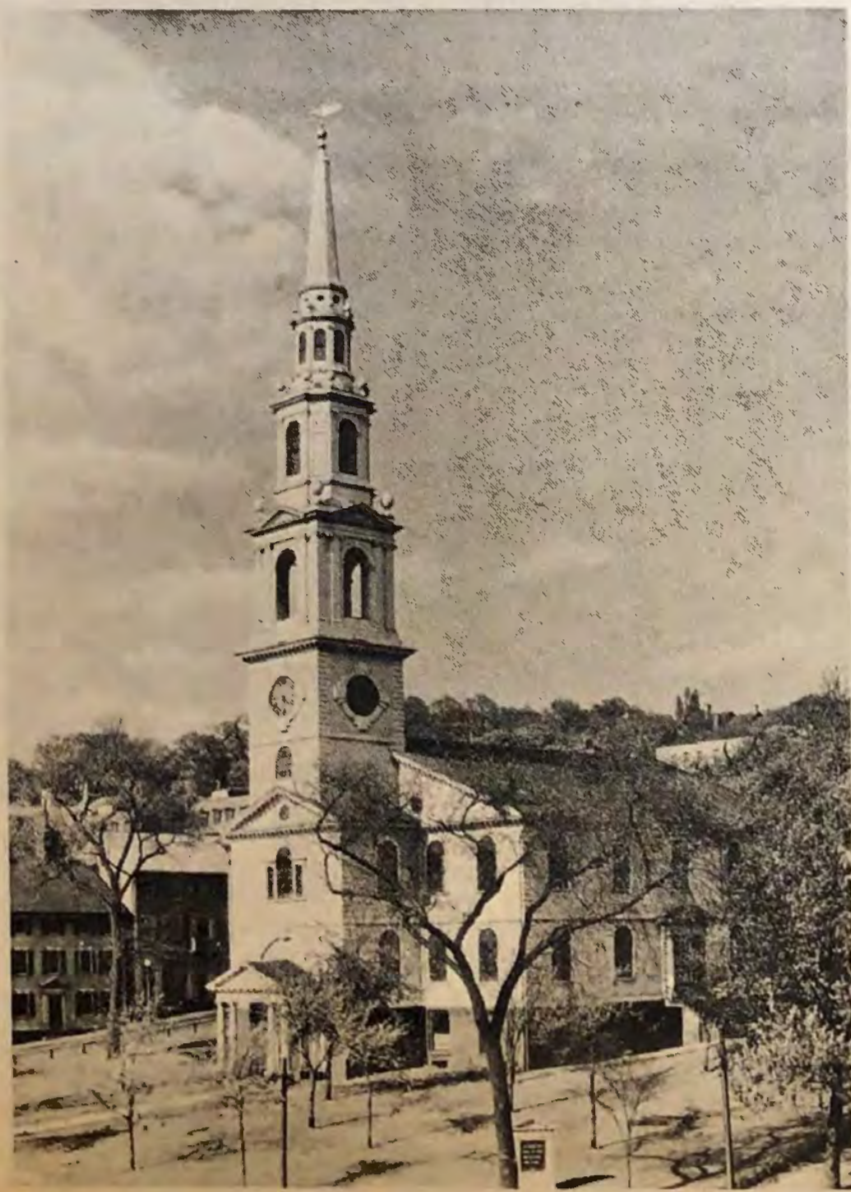
RE. new '75 is for pastors; assistant pastors; ministers of education; vocational church age-group staff members; missionaries; associational, state, and denominational staff; institutional leaders; chaplains; and seminary and college professors and students.

The program includes messages by Findley Edge, Keith Miller, Allen Comish, Grady Cothen, and Harry Piland.

The focus of the conference is on the church's educational ministry. The heart of the conference is the involvement of each conferee in one of 45 work groups designed to focus on a specific topic. The work groups will be led by skilled leaders and knowledgeable resource persons.

The purpose of the conference is to provide each who has any type of responsibility in the ministry of education the opportunity for inspiration, fellowship, involvement in reviewing a prepared overview paper on one of 45 topics and assisting a group in preparing a "viewpoint paper" on one of 45 assigned topics growing out of a group study.

For more information, write or call the Church Administration Department, Baptist Sunday School Board, 127 Ninth Avenue, North, Nashville, Tenn. 37234. -- Pat Ratton, Sunday School Department



AMERICA'S OLDEST BAPTIST CHURCH is First Baptist, Providence, R.I., founded by Roger Williams in 1638. The present meeting house was built in 1775. The church is observing a two-year bicentennial--commemorating the 200th anniversary of the building in 1975 and of the nation's birthday in 1976. Brown University's 200th commencement exercises will be held in June in the historic meeting house. (BP) Photo.

Jimmy Carter to seek Demo bid for Presidency

WASHINGTON (BP)—Declaring that "Americans are concerned about the basic integrity of government," Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter announced in Atlanta his decision to run for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1976.

Carter, a Baptist layman who currently serves on the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, made his announcement over live television and to an audience of more than 2,000 supporters.

He becomes the second publicly announced candidate for the Democratic nomination, the other being Congressman Morris K. Udall of Arizona. Several other candidates are expected to enter the running soon, including U.S. Senators Henry M. Jackson (D., Wash.) and Lloyd M. Bentsen Jr. (D., Tex.), and former U.S. Senator Fred R. Harris of Oklahoma.

In his announcement, Carter made

Part-time, volunteer musicians retreat

Come aside and spend two days with us at Camp Paron on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 7-8. We promise you a refreshing time of learning and fellowship.

Doyne Robertson, pastor of Ebenezer Church, El Dorado, will lead four and one-half hours of Bible Study for our guest pastors. They will also have opportunities for dialogue with outstanding music leadership who are sensitive to the music needs in small churches.

Cliff Holcomb will be with us again, sharing from his rich background of making music more effective in the smaller church. He will review some of the material from last year and will present much new material that looks very helpful. He always does a fine job in the "how to do it" sessions.

Mrs. Don Johnston will conduct the sessions for accompanists. Both organists and pianists are urged to attend. More emphasis will be placed on materials this year. Everyone should go home with plenty of new materials and ideas of how to use them best.

Music department personnel will round out the staff for our Workshop-Retreat this year. It looks like a great program and I don't want you to miss it. Remember...one director and one accompanist may come from each church. Bring your pastor as your special guest, and we'll pay the expenses of all three.

Additional music leaders attending from any church may do so, if there is room, at a cost of \$7.50 each. Look for reservation information in your mail this week. Ervin Keathley

reference to recent developments which have sapped the people's confidence in government and expressed his determination to avoid abuses "that have caused our people to question the basic integrity of our political system.

"One of the most serious defects in public life in recent years has been a slow deterioration in our standards and a subtle acceptance of mediocrity or failure in government which would be contrary to the best hopes and ideals of individual human beings as they shape and reshape and re-examine their own lives in their homes among people that they love, in their places of worship where they re-establish their relationship with God.

"I want to see the government of this nation exemplify in the purest and highest way, the hopes and ideals of the American people," Carter said.

He promised that within the next several weeks, he will announce "a complete code of ethics: to characterize his bid for the presidency. "Like most Americans," he said, "I was taught that just staying within the law is not enough. Just staying within the law is certainly not enough for one who seeks to be President of the United States."

His announcement also indicated that the Georgia governor, whose term of office expires in January 1975, will stress his experience at all levels of government and particularly his record as governor.

Carter's tenure as chief executive of the southern state has been characterized by an overall streamlining of the state's government and by efforts at reforming the budgeting and judicial systems.

Carter said his campaign, "will not be predicated on massive expenditures of money, nor reliant on a diverse, large, paid staff. We can't afford it, and that's not the way we want it. This campaign will have to depend on people like you who have confidence in me, who have confidence in our country." Carter said he had "no interest whatsoever" in the vice presidency but he said he would not rule it out if it were offered to him. He said, "I have a total commitment" to running for the presidency.

A few hours before his announcement as a candidate, Carter addressed the National Press Club in Washington, where he sounded the same themes. "Our people are hungry," he declared, "for integrity and competence in government."

He identified himself as a farmer (he raises peanuts), an engineer, a businessman, a planner, a scientist (he is a physicist), a governor, and a Christian.

"With the shame of Watergate still with us," he said, "and our 200th birthday

just ahead, it is time for us to reaffirm and to strengthen our ethical and spiritual and political beliefs."

He continued, "In our homes or at worship we are ever reminded of what we ought to do and what we ought to be. Our government can and must represent the best and the highest ideals of those of us who voluntarily submit to its authority."

Carter tackled a whole series of national and international problems in his National Press Club speech. He said that "the biggest waste and danger of all" is the proliferation of atomic weapons in the world and called for accepting an ultimate goal to eliminate nuclear weapon capability "among all nations."

The Southern accent

Scholarship established

by Jim E. Tillman

The Cooperative Program is not limited to the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention. This concept was utilized in a very practical way here at Southern Baptist College during the Christmas Season. The Faculty Wives organization worked together in sponsoring a "Christmas Home Tour" in the community of Walnut Ridge.

The tour called for the cooperation of four families in the community. These people opened their homes to the public in the name of the College. The families involved took pride in decorating their lovely homes for the holiday season.

Individuals from Jonesboro, Batesville, Hoxie, College City, Paragould, Newport and Walnut Ridge visited the homes of Mr. and Mrs. Danny Manning, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hutcherson, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rainwater, and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Shell. Members of the Faculty Wives organization and selected students served as hostesses in each of the homes.

This cooperative effort resulted in the establishing of a scholarship fund for a deserving local student to attend Southern Baptist College. Mrs. Jack Nicholas, leader of the wives group, indicates the success is being measured by the excellent cooperation expressed as well as the funds for the scholarship.

The Cooperative Program continues to bear fruit in the Lord's work for the whole world. This sounds like a general statement, but takes on a personal tone with a single worthy project such as the "Christmas Home Tour." A new year's prayer, "Lord, give to all of us, a renewed spirit of cooperation in our work for you."

Seizing a unique opportunity

January 19, 1975

Esther 3:1-5; 4:13, 14; 7:1-3, 8:7, 8



Dodson

Our study concerns itself with Esther, who in a time of crisis acted with great courage to claim an opportunity to save her people, the Jews. From this study we hope to convince the Christian that the fulfillment of his mission depends

upon bold action in seizing opportunities for service.

The setting of the story is Susa, the capital city of Persia. Having conquered the Babylonians, Persia was in control of the Jews in captivity. King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) ruled a vast territory from India to Ethiopia during 486-465 B.C. In the third year of his reign he deposed his queen, Vashti, and replaced her with Esther, an orphaned Jewess who had been brought up as a daughter by her cousin Mordecai. Mordecai was a man of strong character and religious convictions. Undoubtedly, he instilled those qualities in Esther. While Esther was being considered as a replacement for Vashti, Mordecai instructed her not to identify herself as a Jewess. This was done probably because he knew that she would not become queen if it were known that she was a Jew. Esther's rise to the position of queen and Mordecai's report of the plot to kill the king set the stage for the crisis which Esther had to face with courage.

The crisis (3:1-5)

The villain of the story suddenly appears. Haman, a self-centered egotist, becomes the king's first minister. His position required everyone to bow before him as he passed. Mordecai refused to bow in reverence before Haman. Being a faithful Jew, Mordecai would show such reverence to God only. He was a law-abiding man but he would not violate his conscience toward God. As those about Mordecai watched his refusal to bow before Haman they warned him that everyone was doing it and he would be wise to do likewise, otherwise they would report him. Conform or suffer the consequences! Nonconformity always exacts its price.

It seems that Haman was unaware of Mordecai's actions until they were reported to him. When he saw for himself, he flew into a rage and condemned to death a whole race to get even with Mordecai. Chafing under his confrontation with Mordecai, Haman

precipitated a crisis that would culminate in the extermination of all Jews in Persia unless someone intervened.

Haman cast "Pur" to promote his plot. (3:7-15) For 12 months he and his colleagues cast lots until they came up with what they considered to be divine sanction of their scheme. The author explains that this was called "Pur" which points out the origin of the Feast of Purim (9:26). This is an example of how men keep trying and twisting the truth until they come up with a way of saying that God approves of their plans.

All Jews were to be annihilated in one day, the 13th day of the 12th month, and their goods plundered. The king was approached with the charge that there were a people dispersed in the land with ways that were different and therefore they were dangerous to the kingdom. That status-quo always seems to hold that to be different is to be dangerous. Too, Haman offered the king 10,000 talents of silver, which was a large sum of money. Without investigating the charge the king gave Haman his approval and told him to keep the money. Thus, as it happens today, the acceptance of an unsubstantiated accusation leads to the condemnation of the innocent. After Haman secured the king's approval of his plan they sat down for a moment of pleasure while the city was perplexed. (3:15)

Esther's choice (4:13,14; 7:1-3)

Upon the deliverance of the decree throughout the land, the Jews mourned in sackcloth and ashes. Learning that Mordecai stood in such a manner outside the palace, Esther sent clothing to him. When he refused the clothes, Esther dispatched a servant to determine the cause of his conduct. She learned of Haman's plot and Mordecai's plea for her to go before the king in behalf of the Jews.

At first Esther hid behind court regulations, which prohibited anyone who had not been invited from appearing before the king. For 30 days she had not been in the king's presence and to go before him uninvited would put her life in jeopardy. Too, how could she, a woman in a man's world, alter a situation which by law could not be changed? She, like most of us, could rationalize failure to do her duty.

Bluntly, Mordecai reminded her that as a Jewess she would be no safer in a palace than the Jews in the provinces when the violence came. Then he pointed out that deliverance would come

by other means if she refused, but she and her family would perish in the process. Finally, he asked, "who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Divine providence is proclaimed without a mention of God's name. In fact, the name of God does not appear anywhere in the book of Esther, but his presence prevails. Jewish deliverance coming from "another place" and Esther's destiny refer to the divine presence and performance.

Esther is confronted with a choice. She must decide whether her position will serve to deliver her people or to damn herself. She accepted the challenge and committed herself completely to it with the cry, "I will go the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish."

Realizing that certain preparation must be made before action could be taken, Esther called upon her people to join with her for three days of fasting. Prayer is implied in the fasting. Here again is a recognition of God's presence and power.

Following the preparation period Esther went to the king's court where she was received by the king. There she requested the king and Haman to have dinner with her. At the dinner she invited both the king and Haman to a banquet. Meanwhile, Haman, anticipating the fulfillment of his plan, had gallows erected to hang Mordecai. That night when the king was unable to sleep, he had some records read to him whereupon he was reminded of Mordecai's part in saving his life. Upon learning that Mordecai had not been rewarded for his good deed, the king was prompted to do something about the oversight. After seeking Haman's suggestions as to how he might honor someone, the king shocked Haman by conferring upon Mordecai the honor Haman thought he was to receive.

At the queen's banquet Esther revealed Haman's plot for the destruction of her people (7:4). When the king perceived the truth of the plot against the Jews he ordered Haman to be hanged upon the gallows which had been built for Mordecai. Haman's property was turned over to Esther. Upon learning of Mordecai's relationship to Esther, the king gave him the position that Haman formerly occupied and Esther set him over Haman's estate.

Cause for celebration (8:7,8)

In spite of Esther's victory over Haman, the royal edict contrived by against the Jews was still in effect and could not be

(Continued on page 14)

The lord of life

John 11:17-27



Overton

The audacity of the man! A beloved brother is dead—has been dead for four days—and he says, "I am the resurrection and the life myself. Whoever continues to believe in me will live right on, even though he dies, and no person who continues to live and believe in me will ever die at all" (*The New Testament, A Private Translation in the Language of the People*, Charles B. Williams. All quotations in this lesson are from this translation). What kind of comfort is this to a sorrowing sister? The man must certainly be stuck on himself.

Laying aside 19 centuries of Christian experience and viewing the above statement of Jesus causes us to wonder about him. Is he the world's greatest ego-maniac or what? This claim to be the "Lord of Life" must either be rejected or accepted. Let us study these verses to see whether this claim is true or no.

Jesus and his disciples have fled from the growing opposition of the religious leaders into the district of Perea east of the Jordan. While here, he receives word that Lazarus is ill. The message is received with the comment, "This sickness is not to end in death, but is to honor God, that the Son of God through it may be honored." What a message to take back to the sisters. It is probable that Lazarus was already dead when Jesus got the news of his illness.

Jesus remained in Perea for two more days and then returned to Bethany. One interesting sidelight to our present consideration is the picture we get here of Thomas. When Jesus announces his intention to return to Bethany, Thomas declares, "Let us go too, and die with Him." He was convinced that the opposition of the Jews in Jerusalem would bring about the death of Jesus but he was going with him anyway. Not the usual idea we have of "Doubting" Thomas is it?

The encounter of Jesus with Martha on his arrival is very dramatic. Somehow she hears of his approach and goes to meet him outside the village. Martha has suffered in the eyes of many because she was such a practical person. What we remember most about her is her fussing about Mary's not helping in the preparation of the meal when Jesus was visiting. But let us take a good look at this experience.

Martha expressed the wish that Jesus

had come sooner, for "If you had been here, my brother would not have died." She knew of his ability and past record of healing and felt that he would have been able to stem the ravages of the disease. How many times "if" is a part of our own call on God. If only things had been different. Martha believed that the love Jesus had for her family would have had its claim on his compassion.

But Martha goes a step further. She said, "But even now I know that whatever you ask God for He will give you." What does she imply? That Jesus would raise Lazarus from the dead—he had raised the daughter of Jairus and the widow's son at Nain? Is it possible that he would raise the dead again? We do not know what she was thinking.

The reply of Jesus does not seem to give Martha very much encouragement. "Your brother will rise again." Martha takes it to mean that on the last day he would rise. Then Jesus makes this great self-disclosure to her. He has not revealed this to any other before. Will Martha understand? Does she have enough faith to accept its significance? "I, myself, am the resurrection and the life." He is saying, "I am the lord of Life! NOW! Not at some future date in the sweet bye and bye, but now. Martha, you don't have to wait until some future end time to have life. I am, now, the life. If you accept me you have life now and shall never die. Those who have already died (physically) live now. Do you believe this?"

Perhaps the greatest confession of faith recorded in the New Testament—exceeding that of Nathaniel, Peter and others—is this one of Martha's. Her answer to the question of Jesus is, "Yess, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world." This was the answer which came from her heart and was the expression of one who had been completely comforted. It was the expression of confidence that whatever Jesus did would answer her need. She then turned to report to her sister that Jesus had come.

Is he the Lord of Life? Does his claim stand up? The verses following our lesson passage for today support his claim without question. Lazarus, buried four days, as Martha puts it, already stinking, is called forth from the grave and restored to his sisters.

This demonstration of his power over death in the physical realm supports his claim to be able to give life, spiritual life, to all who come unto him by faith. Add to this his claim before Pilate, "You would have no power at all over me, if it

had not been given to you from above." (John 19:11a).

Is he the Lord of your Life?

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Life and Work Lesson

(From page 13)

rescinded. However, it was made inoperative when the king authorized Morecai to issue a new edict giving the Jews permission to defend themselves to the point of slaying those who attacked them and plundering their goods. The Jews thus emerged victorious over their enemies and the Feast of Purim was instituted to celebrate and perpetuate the observance of the deliverance. At this feast the book of Esther is read and the people rejoice in the achievement of Esther, a woman who took an obstacle as an opportunity to serve God and save her people. In 10:1-3 the book ends with the lesson that one must be faithful to God and his covenant people during evil days as well as in good days. Romans 8:28 is a good summation of the content of the book and the main object of the Purim celebration.

Conclusion

We, today, may not have as dramatic a role as Esther but we do have a mission to fulfill. Each of us should seek to seize our opportunities and fulfill our mission. Shakespeare said "There is a tide in the affairs of men, Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries."

Do you have a unique opportunity that God has prepared for you? To what extent are you responding to it? Are you willing to fulfill God's purpose in your place or position? What preparation are you making whereby God's presence and power will be a part of your performance?

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BIBLE
We Are Ambassadors for Christ
Through the Cooperative Program

Attendance report

January 5, 1975

Church	Sunday School	Church Training	Church Additions
Alexander, First	79		3
Alma, First	383	88	2
Alpena	63	33	
Augusta, Grace	89	57	
Bentonville, First	287		1
Berryville			
First	172	75	
Freeman Heights	144	61	3
Blytheville, Clear Lake	111	62	
Booneville, First	255	218	
Concord, First	103	26	
Conway			
First	622	109	
Second	339	98	
Des Arc, First	174	49	
El Dorado, Trinity	164	82	
Forrest City, First	777	205	1
Ft. Smith			
First	1301	254	6
Grand Avenue	787	235	
Moffett Mission	16		
Temple	167	88	1
Trinity	177	69	
Windsor Park	710	196	11
Garfield, First	90	27	
Gentry, First	173	73	
Grandview	74	53	
Greenwood, First	302	104	3
Hampton, First	155	86	
Harrison			
Eagle Heights	341	132	
Woodland Heights	88	49	1
Helena, First	272	70	1
Hope			
Calvary	182	80	2
First	451	100	2
Hughes, First	195	75	
Hot Springs			
Grand Avenue	390	290	6
Leonard Street	96	65	
Memorial	116	53	
Jacksonville, First	428	154	2
Kingston, First	52	34	
Lavaca, First	349	111	1
Lexa	158	73	2
Little Rock			
Crystal Hill	137	58	
Geyer Springs	808	231	2
Life Line	576	206	3
Martindale	106	86	1
Magnolia, Central	629	166	1
Monticello			
First	303	66	
Second	285	86	
North Little Rock			
Gravel Ridge	200	96	
Levy	528	117	1
Park Hill	764	44	2
Paragould			
Calvary	203	162	
East Side	216	105	
First	502	134	
Paris, First	400	72	
Pine Bluff			
Centennial	199	70	1
East Side	209	121	1
First	662		
Second	148	56	
South Side	654		4
Oppelo	18		
Tucker	11		
Watson Chapel	377	108	
Prairie Grove, First	183	74	
Rogers			
First	538	138	1
Immanuel	518	122	4
Russellville, Second	151	59	
Sheridan, First	302	96	
Springdale			
Berry Street	97	59	4
Caudle Avenue	125	38	
Elmdale	329	102	1
First	1249		9
Texarkana, Trinity	368	200	5
Van Buren, First	503	187	
Mission	31		
Vandervoort, First	47	25	
Walnut Ridge, White Oak	84	66	
Wooster	105	80	
West Helena			
Second	202	113	7
West Helena Church	295	97	1

A smile or two

A man in a rural county down south was campaigning for a seat in the Senate. One rainy, miserable evening, there was a knock on the door. A man he had never seen before stood outside, soaking wet. "I need help," the man said. "My car is stalled down the road. Will you help me?"

"Sure," said the candidate. When they reached the disabled car, the owner got in, turned the key and the car started immediately.

"There was nothing wrong with your car," the would-be senator said.

"I know I also know that this state needs a good man up there in Washington," he explained. "I just wanted to know if you were the kind of man I could vote for. Now I know."—*From Inklings* reprinted in *Brief Cases*

Sometimes when a person thinks his mind is getting broader, it is just his conscience stretching.

Old mailmen never die—they just lose their zip.

Reprinted from 'Quote' Magazine

Retreat Center

Fairfield Bay, Arkansas

Located on the Northshore of Greers Ferry Lake

The Fairfield Bay Retreat Center was established to meet the ever increasing need of church groups for suitable accommodations and meeting facilities for retreats, conferences, encounters, group meetings and workshops.

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Heath will help small Sunday Schools



Heath

NASHVILLE--
Daryl Heath, children's work consultant for nine years, has been promoted to consultant in small Sunday School work in the Sunday School department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board here.

In his new position Heath will work with state Sunday School secretaries and associational leaders to help meet the needs of small Sunday Schools in the Southern Baptist Convention.

There are 20,000 Sunday Schools with enrollments of 150 or less according to Heath whose work will include providing better ways to meet literature needs for these Sunday Schools.

A native of Missouri, he holds the bachelor of arts degree from William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., and the bachelor of divinity degree from Golden Gate Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. He has done additional graduate work at the University of Tennessee at Nashville, and at Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro.

Before coming to the Sunday School Board in 1965, Heath was associational missionary for the Delta Valley and East Contra Costa Associations near Stockton, Calif. Prior to that, he was pastor of Faith Church, Antioch, Calif., and First Church, Patterson, Calif. Also, he has held a number of pastorates in Missouri.

Japanese show interest in variety of religions

by Lois Whaley
For Baptist Press

TOKYO, Japan (BP)--Japanese people are looking for something to believe in, and many are turning to religion.

There is a renewed interest in Christianity, but there is also a renewed interest in traditional Japanese religions characterized by the community shrines.

With a lively revival of festivals all over the country this year, community shrines have organized the most colorful parades seen in modern Japan. The sound of temple drums and voices chanting can be heard almost daily as gaily dressed groups pull portable shrines through the streets.

Newspapers report record participation and stores dealing in religious articles are doing a prosperous business. All of this creates an atmosphere of festivity which is infectious and impossible for the average child to resist.

Christians differ concerning the influence of these activities. Some say this is simply an aspect of Japanese culture and should be regarded as just another game, a club activity or an athletic meet. They contribute to the community shrines and allow their children to participate in the parades and bazaars, although they say it has no religious significance for their family.

But Mrs. Soeda, a pastor's wife, writer and mother of a well-known sociologist, does not agree. "It is not just a game for children," she said. "It is the gateway into a lifelong commitment, and Christians should be very careful of the effect on their children."

There may be many reasons for this new interest in traditional religions. The government's efforts to re-establish a national Shinto shrine in the center of Tokyo is a major cause. This has been controversial, with Christians speaking out strongly against it.

They fear a return to a national religion which would make it difficult for Christians to practice and preach their convictions. Already government sanction and public opinion encourage the renewal of these traditions. Christians may be fighting a losing battle.

A worthwhile wave of nostalgia may also be a reason for this revival. Tired of the noisy, impersonal cities, people long for the happy camaraderie of their

childhood. The festival songs and dances bring back memories of carefree days in quiet villages. It is a touch with the past when they knew who they were and what they believed.

Financial insecurity also affects the mood of the people. Japan has also felt the "oil shock." Inflation at home makes Japanese products abroad more expensive, and they suffer in a competitive market. Bankruptcy and unemployment make personal incomes uncertain. With the shiny world of materialism tarnishing, they grasp for some constant value.

Japanese people also have a very sensitive, artistic nature. They have always been appreciative of spiritual discipline. After an extended period of material pursuits, it is only natural that the reasonable man return to a time of meditation.

Lonely, uncertain people seek answers for life in a complicated world. Many of them prefer the hope and promise of life they find in the Christian gospel.

The churches are aware of this and almost every congregation is excited about finding and winning these people. Autumn is a popular time for evangelistic meetings, and already churches in every area are reporting good results. In fact, some churches which haven't had additions for years, are baptizing new Christians.

The 55-member Okubo Baptist Church in Tokyo recently planned and organized home meetings, team visitation and prayer meetings to prepare for their fall "revival." Sixty-six decisions for Jesus Christ were reported during the week, with Pastor Arase of Mt. Zion Baptist Church of North Kyushu preaching. Eleven persons asked for baptism, another 28 requested special instruction leading to baptism and others signed statements promising to attend services and study Christianity.

The harvest will continue for months as the Christians lead and teach these new prospects. But already the results are exciting.

What is the future of Christianity in Japan? It may be difficult, but it can be victorious as His disciples do His bidding and preach the gospel.

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