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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Living water
for thirsty souls!
pages 8-11

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November 13, 1986

Arkansas Baptist
Newsmagazine



(FMB) photo by Mike Chute

This Brazilian boy basks in what much of the world takes for granted: water. In Brazil, "agua viva" means "living water." In North Brazil, it also denotes a project in which missionaries are helping bring new life to a region by digging wells, building reservoirs, and laying pipe for municipal water systems. Through their gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Southern Baptists not only provide drinking water, they also help supply the "living water" of new life in Christ to the world's millions (pp. 8-11).

Missouri executive Rheubin South dies

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (BP)—Rheubin L. South, executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention, died Nov. 6 at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis following a battle with leukemia.

South, 64, was executive director for almost 12 years. Previously, he was pastor of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, Ark., for 23 years.

South distinguished himself in several areas of Southern Baptist life. In Arkansas, he was president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, chairman of the state convention Executive Board and trustee of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia and Baptist Medical Center Systems in Little Rock.

For 14 years, South was a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. He also was national president of the alumni association of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and was a trustee of school at the time of his death. He was the immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Association of State Convention Executive Directors.

Under South's leadership, Missouri Baptists nearly tripled their state convention budget, growing from \$5.75 million in 1975 to a \$15 million goal for 1987.

He also led Missouri Baptists in a three-year partnership mission program with Baptists of Taiwan and a statewide evangelistic effort called Good News Missouri, which resulted in the highest annual number of baptisms in more than 20 years. Under his leadership, membership in Missouri Baptist churches grew from 555,711 to 614,072.

South had been a chaplain in the National Guard and retired with the rank of colonel. He also held several honors for his service as an Air Force bombardier during World War II.

A native of Oklahoma, South was educated in Portales, N.M. He graduated from Eastern New Mexico University and Southwestern Seminary.

South is survived by his wife, the former Verna Lois Roberts; three children, Gregory, a physician in Decatur, Ala.; Sharon, the wife of Mark Coppenger, pastor of First Baptist Church, El Dorado, Ark.; and Diedra, and seven grandchildren.

Two memorial services are planned for South. First Church of Jefferson City, Mo., where South was a member, was the site of the first service Nov. 7. The following day, a second memorial service was held at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock. Burial was in North Little Rock.

The family has asked that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to a student scholarship fund at Southwestern Seminary, which is being established in South's honor.



South

In this issue

7 soup weather!

As the weather cools, our thoughts turn eagerly to the hot, hearty meals of winter. This week's "Food and fellowship" offers a recipe for a delicious beef vegetable soup.

12 salvation the issue?

The primary issue confronting Southern Baptists is not the Bible, but our views of salvation, a church historian asserts.

Conference for pastors of farmers

I have been told that years ago my grandfather, for whom I was named, planted cotton in the central Arkansas river bottoms as much as three times in one year. Remembering him basically as a cheerful person, such flooding must have taken the grin off his face.

For various reasons at the present time, farmers all over Arkansas and throughout our country are having "grin removing" bad fortune.

A fine effort to help the pastors of farmers in Arkansas minister during these difficult times is being sponsored by the Pastoral Care Department at the Baptist Medical Center in

Little Rock. This will be on Monday, Nov. 24.

Among the program speakers are Bill Hefernan, farmer and professor of Rural Sociology, University of Missouri, and Max Glenn, executive director of the Oklahoma Conference of Churches, which has sponsored 17 regional conferences on crisis in rural Oklahoma. These men also will be on the Interfaith Hunger Taskforce Annual In-gathering program on Nov. 22 at Philander Smith College.

Pastors who desire to be a part of the conference on the 24th at the Medical Center are urged to contact the Pastoral Care Department by calling 227-2569. Registration is limited to 150.

John McClanahan, pastor of First Church, Pine Bluff, will lead the group in worship during the closing hour.—**Bob Parker, director, Christian Life Council**



Parker

Music scholarship auditions to be held at Ouachita

ARKADELPHIA—The School of Music at Ouachita Baptist University will hold three auditions for music scholarships to be awarded for the 1987-88 academic year on Dec. 6, 1986; Dec. 13, 1986; and Feb. 7, 1987, according to Charles Wright, dean of the Ouachita School of Music.

Scholarships are available in voice, piano, organ, strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion.

Persons interested in auditioning or seeking more information, should contact Wright at OBU, P. O. Box 3771, Arkadelphia, AR 71923, or by calling (501) 246-4531, ext. 129.

The 'continuing' Christian life

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



Among the greatest deterrents to the spread of Christianity are the lives some Christians live. The Bible continually emphasizes that a child of God is to be a changed person. Yet, all too often, there is little or no difference between the Christian and the non-Christian.

When a lost person is approached about his spiritual condition, too often he points to someone in the church and chides, "I'm as good as he is." Admittedly, sinners choose the worst examples of Christians possible. But the point is that those redeemed by Christ are required to be different.

The problem emerges for several reasons: (1) a few church members apparently have never had an experience with the Lord; (2) some have a misconception of the Christian life; and (3) there has sometimes been a failure to emphasize the continuing growth and struggle of the Christian life.

That some have had no initial experience with Christ may be the result of an overemphasis on emotion, or a lack of proper instruction and counseling. The possibility of such an occurrence places a heavy responsibility on pastors and church leadership to assist in the initial experience of salvation.

Much of our problem grows out of the meaning of salvation and the Christian life. W. T. Connor, noted professor of theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas, set the concept in perspective when he wrote, "It will help us to keep in mind that salvation is an act, a process, and a consummation. We might put the matter in the form of a question. Is a Christian saved, is he being saved, or is he to be saved in the future? It is abundantly clear in the New Testament that it is all three: saved, being saved, and going to be saved" (*The Gospel of Redemption*, Broadman Press, 1945, p. 139).

We generally state clearly and correctly the initial act of salvation. Most of our people understand how to accept Christ by faith. We also have taught our people that salvation is consummated in the presence of God at the end of one's life. The problem lies in the act of living out our salvation. The early Christians understood the continuing aspect of the Christian life. Luke said of the early church, "Then they that gladly received his Word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about 3,000 souls. And they 'continued' steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers" (Acts 2:41-42). Salvation, then, is definite. It has a beginning. But it is like an ocean voyage. We get on a ship, we move forward, but we have not arrived at our destination.

Satan is continually present to tempt an individual. James, the

half-brother of our Lord, draws a clear contrast between testing times and temptation. He said, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (Jas. 1:13).

God permits testing for at least two reasons. First, testing times give a Christian opportunity to show the genuineness of his faith. Testing times may become tempting times if a believer mishandles them. Yet, it is essential that a Christian should never blame God for the temptation that comes into his life. God is the absolute antithesis of every form of evil.

Second, testing times provide opportunity for Christian growth. When difficulties arise in the life of a Christian, he recognizes his insufficiency in dealing with them and turns to God. In relying more fully on God, Christian growth is produced.

When an individual succumbs to temptation, he must recognize that he and he alone is responsible for the sin he has committed. Ever since Adam blamed Eve, people have shown an innate tendency to shift the blame for sin to someone else. In today's world, family, society, and lack of education all are given for the sins individuals commit. James placed the blame where it belonged, directly on the sinner.

It is essential in the crucible of every day life that a Christian prepare in advance for both testing times and temptation. When sin confronts a Christian, the decision already should have been made. For example, if a Christian has an opportunity to steal a large amount of money, his decision should not require a great deal of thought, for he knows that it is wrong to steal.

Second, when confronted with temptation, a Christian should know that our Lord was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin (see He. 4:15). Since Christ was totally human, as well as totally divine, the temptations were real.

Paul makes it clear that God always provides a way of escape from succumbing to temptation. He said, "There is no temptation taken you but that such that is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it."

The New Testament pictures the Christian life as a warfare. We can only be successful soldiers of the Master through a lifetime of commitment and dedication. Jesus told his followers, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mt. 16:24). It is a continuing struggle to the high road of effective Christian service. Let each of us, with God's help, pursue it!

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Letters to the editor

Comforting his people

I am aware we preachers stand with the populace in oversimplification of problems and solutions. In my study for a sermon, it came into my mind what could be one step toward the solution of our denominational problem. Two scriptures focused my attention. Isaiah 40:1-2 says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." I believe this is basic for pastors, teachers, and leaders.

Corinth was the city where the New Testament Church had many and deep problems. Paul had written a lengthy thorough letter in I Corinthians. He will try again to find a solution to the problems. In II Corinthians 1, the first eleven verses stress "comfort." Verse 3 he speaks of "the God of all comfort." Verse 4, "Who comforts us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in trouble, by the comfort where with we ourselves are comforted of God."

I believe in evangelism. We must reach out to the lost. I believe in stewardship. We do not have the person until his pocketbook is converted. I believe in missions. Our mis-

sion is into every nation.

Our troubled pastors need comfort. Our troubled people need comforting. People of the Southern Baptist Convention need comforting. I dare suggest a new major emphasis— "Comfort ye my people."

I have served Southern Baptist churches since I was 20 and enrolled at Ouachita Baptist University. My thinking today is the comfort I need as a pastor will return from my people when I comfort his people. I will not have time to kick my brethren when I am comforting the people.—**John S. Ashcraft, Little Rock**

Remembering Billy Sunday

In the late 1890s and early 1900s, Billy Sunday was a great evangelist for the Lord Jesus Christ, and it saw many people come to the Lord in salvation and no doubt many saved ones rededicated to the Lord.

Billy Sunday was a professional baseball player, and held the world record for many years being the fastest starting at the home plate and circling the bases.

Somehow he got saved and his wife en-

couraged him to do Christian work, but of course baseball wanted him to stay with them. A Presbyterian preacher who was an evangelist had Billy Sunday to go ahead and make arrangements at the next place he would hold the meetings and the evangelist told him he would not need him anymore as he was going to be a pastor or minister and Billy stated he did not know what he would do, but almost at once he received a notice from a church they wanted him to hold a revival at their church, and then for about 20 years he held revivals and was very successful.

The liquor crowd hated to see him arrive in their city, for many of their stores had to close, on account of no business while he was holding a meeting.

William Jennings Bryan attended some of his meetings, and Mr. Bryan was not ashamed of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If we Baptists would write our Congress to stop the commercials on TV and radio about the beer, they would do it for surely others would help on this.—**FW. Finch, Monticello**



The Southern accent

Paul A. Rhoads

Prayer: the breath of life

A majority of Christians do not pray unless: (1) they are called on in church, (2) are in a meeting where everyone else is praying, or (3) are desperate and can think of no one else to turn to. Few ever pray, even irregularly, on their own. Most Christians claim to believe in prayer and the power of prayer but it simply is not a part of their Christian life.

In the Bible, prayer is such a basic part of a person's relationship with God that it is not regarded as duty but as a basic part of life, like breathing. Nowhere in the Bible are God's children commanded to pray, it is taken for granted that God's children will want to talk to their Father. Breathing is not commanded in the Bible either but is

likewise taken for granted that it will be done. Prayer, daily communion with God, should be such a basic part of the Christian's spiritual personality that it is seen as inseparable from his daily religious life.

Communication with a friend is not that difficult and prayer is communication with a friend. But we forget, we get too busy and we don't pray. Prayer should be as natural as breathing and as easy as talking to a friend, never something that we have to force ourselves to do and never something that we are uncomfortable doing. Breathing is something we don't think about doing and talking to a friend is something we look forward to doing. We should daily com-

municate with the Father just as easily as we breathe and we should look forward to it like we look forward to a chat with a close friend.

Like a conversation with a close friend, prayer is our sharing with God whatever we are facing that day. Study the Psalms of David as a good example. Prayer does not have to be limited to certain "approved" topics or only certain "theological concepts" but is anything we are facing and everything that is on our mind. God is interested in the complete lives of his children.

Paul Rhoads, a former SBC foreign missionary, is on the faculty of Southern Baptist College.

missionary notes

Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Cartwright, missionaries to Burkina Faso, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: Mission Baptiste, BP 580, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso). He is a native of Texas and she is the former Kay Goodwin of Oklahoma, but both consider Bella Vista their hometown. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1982.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Hampton, mis-

sionary associates to South Africa, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 7266 Brentwood Stair Rd., Fort Worth, TX 76112). He was born in Fordyce, and she is the former Evelyn Harden of Helena. They were employed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1976.

Shirley Jackson, missionary to Brazil, has completed furlough and returned to the field (address: Caixa Postal 950, 20001 Rio de

Janeiro, RJ, Brazil). She was born in Bentonville. She was appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1956.

Mr. and Mrs. Leon R. Johnson, missionaries to Zimbabwe, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 2258 Palolo Ave., Honolulu, Hawaii 96816), their hometown. He was born in Piggott, and she is the former Kathryn Kumabe. They appointed in 1982.

Don Moore

You'll be glad to know...

... **It isn't long now!** Our annual convention will be here next week. Geyer Springs First Church will be breaking their backs to help us have a good convention. The officers will be at their best. The recommended business will come from large groups of people who have spent many long hours in trying to discover what God would have them recommend to you. The power rests with the people. You have the privilege and bear the responsibility for making decisions that affect many thousands of people, involve many thousands of dollars, and involve many years to come.



Moore

It isn't easy to be a good messenger. It takes discipline. It takes prayer and study. It takes spiritual sensitivity. It takes a lot of time and "stick-to-it-iveness." I hope we will have a record number. I hope everyone of you will be a good, conscientious messenger. Those charged with teaching and preaching will stay before God until they have his message. It will need to be delivered, heard, and obeyed. Pray for these special times.

The reports need to be heard. Make notes. Be informed. Tell the people back home who may not have the privilege you have of attending the convention.

Enjoy one another. We need this time together. Refresh, renew and refurbish your friendships, make some new friends. We should make a special effort to welcome and to get to know those who are newcomers to our state.

Get in on the extras of the convention: the Pastors' Conference, Ministers' Wives meeting, and the Religious Education Association meeting. These are all planned for your added enrichment. Go to the alumni meetings. They help us stay in touch with the schools God has used to bless us.

You will love the dreams and challenges we face together. A new and better day awaits us if we catch the vision and accept the challenge together.

I can hardly wait to see you all there. May God be pleased to meet us all there with the abundance of his love, mercy, peace, and power.

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

Second of four articles

Tax Reform Act of 1986: An overview

by Larry Page

This second article highlights the Tax Reform Act of 1986 and how it treats some of the most common deductions taxpayers have traditionally used.

State and local taxes. The new law retains the right to deduct state and local income and property taxes. However, the sales tax deduction is repealed as of Jan. 1, 1987.

Interest deductions. The new act prohibits deductions for personal interest, such as interest on credit card balances, car loans, personal loans and interest on underpayments of income tax. The elimination of this deduction is phased in over five years; the amount of interest allowed in each of those years is as follows:

65 percent in 1987
40 percent in 1988
20 percent in 1989
10 percent in 1990
0 percent in 1991 and thereafter

Mortgage interest deductions are retained by the new law, but may be limited by certain factors. For mortgages prior to Aug. 17, 1986, the interest on debts secured by principal residences and second homes remains deductible to the extent that the amount of the debt does not exceed the home's fair market value on the date the debt was incurred.

For mortgages created after Aug. 16, 1986, the interest is deductible, but only to the extent that the mortgage does not exceed the basis, or the home's fair market value, whichever is lower.

Medical expense deduction. The tax act keeps the medical expense deduction, but raises the floor at which the deduction is permitted. In order to use this deduction, a taxpayer's medical expenses must equal or exceed 7.5 percent of his adjusted gross income as compared to 5 percent under the current laws.

Two-earner deduction. This deduction, which allows a working married couple to deduct up to \$3,000, will be abolished Jan. 1, 1987.

Employee business expenses. These expenses, which include such things as subscriptions to publications and professional dues, are added in with miscellaneous itemized deductions, such as tax preparation fees and investment expenses, and are deductible as a single category to the extent they exceed 2 percent of adjusted gross income. This new treatment of employee business expenses begins Jan. 1, 1987.

Self-employed individuals' health insurance costs. Self-employed persons will be allowed to deduct up to 25 percent of amounts they pay for health insurance for themselves, their spouses and their dependents. The deduction is not limited to taxpayers who itemize, but the amount of the deduction cannot exceed self-employment income for the year.

The deduction will be disallowed for any taxpayer who can participate in his employer's subsidized health plan or a spouse's health plan. These changes also take effect on Jan. 1, 1987, but will expire on Dec. 31, 1989, if not extended.

Business meal and entertainment expenses. Only 80 percent of otherwise allowable business meal and entertainment expenses will be deductible under the new law. As of Jan. 1, 1987, deductions are prohibited for: costs of attending conventions or seminars other than for business purposes; educational travel expenses; and charitable travel expenses if there is a significant element of personal pleasure, recreation or vacation in the travel.

Income tax charitable deduction. For taxpayers who itemize their deductions, these type deductions remain unchanged. Gifts of long term appreciated securities and real estate continue to be deductible at full fair market value.

For nonitemizers, 1986 will be the last year in which they will be permitted to deduct any charitable contributions in addition to the standard deduction.

Estate tax charitable deduction. The tax reform act makes no changes in the deductibility of property received by a charity from an estate. Regardless of the size of an estate, all property given to charity is fully deductible.

Ministers and military personnel. Ministers given parsonage allowances and military personnel receiving tax-free housing are permitted to take mortgage interest and real property tax deductions for their personal residences.

The next article in this series continues the analysis of the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

Larry Page is vice-president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

Arkansas all over

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people

William Hester is serving as pastor of Smackover First Church. He moved there from El Dorado, where he had served as associate pastor of First Church. He is a graduate of Southern Methodist University in Dallas and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is currently enrolled in the doctor of ministry program at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His wife, Mary Julia, is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. They have a six-month-old daughter, Katie.

Thomas J. Cunningham has accepted a call to serve as pastor of Life Line Church in Little Rock, effective Nov. 23. He will move to Little Rock from Memphis, where he has been serving as pastor of Hickory Ridge Church for four years. A native Arkansan, he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Mid-America Seminary and Luther Rice Seminary. He also studied at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and the University of Central Arkansas. He and his wife, Susan, have two children, Tom, 17, and Rebecca, 11.

Bill Burnett of Beebe is serving as interim pastor of Riverside Church in North Little Rock. He has served as pastor of several Arkansas churches and more recently retired as director of missions of Calvary Association following 17 years of service. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, East Texas Baptist College, the University of Arkansas and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Nancy, have three daughters.

Elmer F. Cox died at his home in Omaha Oct. 29 at age 89. A native of the Harrison area, he had served as pastor of Lakeland Church since 1976. He was a veteran of World War I and had served as pastor of Hopewell, Union, Omaha, Alpena, Bellefont, Yellville, Cotter and New Hope Churches. He had served as missionary for Crooked Creek and Boone-Carroll Associations. He was a state missionary for seven years. Survivors include his wife, Gertrude Grace Beck Cox; a son, Michael Gene Cox of Omaha; two daughters, Carolyn Littleton of Lee's Summit, Mo., and Doris Ann Cox of Omaha; three sisters; and six grandchildren.

C. Lamar Lifer has resigned as pastor of Olivet Church in Little Rock to serve as pastor of Calvary Church in Winter Haven, Fla.



Hester



Cunningham

James Criswell is serving as pastor of Spring Valley Church at Springdale.

Ken Evans was recently commissioned by University Church in Fayetteville as a volunteer consultant for Mission Service Corps. He will serve in Washington-Madison Association, working with both the Home Mission Board and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Evans and his wife, Mary Lou, have led in mission endeavors in Oklahoma, Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras for the past 15 years.

Mark Oaks was licensed to the preaching ministry Sept. 21 at Quitman Church.

The son of Pastor and Mrs. Fred Oaks, he was presented his certificate by his father. Oaks is a freshman at Southern Baptist College.

Ranse Oswald has joined the staff of Freeman Heights Church in Berryville as minister of youth and education. He is was a member of Eagle Heights Church, Harrison.

briefly

Eden Church at Hamburg ordained Danny Roberts to the preaching ministry Oct. 26. Roberts serves as pastor of Antioch Church near Hermitage.

North Little Rock First Church is sponsoring a "Love Plus" family seminar Nov. 13-16. Paul and Patsy Bellington of Dallas, Texas, will be seminar leaders. Paul Daniel is pastor.

Marion First Church ordained Eugene Ward and Bobby Wheeler to the deacon ministry Nov. 2. Pastor Eugene Ray served as moderator.

Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock observed Royal Ambassador Recognition

Photo by Tammy Smith, Jonesboro Sun



Minister recognized—John M. Basinger of Jonesboro was honored Oct. 21 by Mount Zion Association when the association presented him with a plaque during its annual meeting at North Main Church, Jonesboro. A native of Hackett, Basinger's first message was preached at age 16 at Ozone Church while he was a student at Hagarville Baptist Academy. A graduate of Mountain Home Baptist College, Ouachita Baptist College, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, he has served as pastor of numerous Arkansas churches and of Panama Church in Oklahoma. He has served on the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board and as moderator of three associations and as clerk of four. Since his retirement from the active ministry in 1970, he has served as interim pastor 21 times in the Jonesboro area. He currently assists Emil Williams, pastor of Jonesboro First Church, and is chairman of two associational committees.

Day Nov. 2, recognizing members and their counselors, Greg Gann, Chuck Homan, Lewis Crane, Jim Caton and Jim Eubanks. R.A. members served as ushers for the morning worship service.

Perryville First Church broke its previous all-time high Sunday School attendance record Nov. 2 when 298 were present. Ken Stewart, director, reported this exceeded the previous record by 70. Horace Gray is pastor.

Woodland Heights Church in Harrison recently honored Mae Loe, age 90. Loe, the church's oldest charter member, was presented a portrait and plaque which will remain in the education building. She also was presented with honor gifts of over \$1,000 for an auditorium window project.

Bald Knob Central Church dedicated a new building site Oct. 19. Pastor Jim Box reported building construction will begin in early 1987 with Larry Kircher serving as steering committee chairman. Participants in the dedication included music director David Jackson, Box, and deacons Glen Reed, Wendell Nier, and Melvin Cooley. The church was in a recent revival that resulted in 73 professions of faith and 57 other decisions. Mark Jobe of Euless, Texas, was evangelist.

Star City First Church will present its first "Singing Christmas Tree" Dec. 7 at 7 p.m. Repeat performances will be on Dec. 10 and 13.

Grace Chapel at Strawberry was recently constituted into a church and renamed **Strawberry Church**. Mike Newberry, a student at Southern Baptist College, is serving as pastor.

Huntsville First Church recently ordained Harry Waggener, Jack McCarty, Jim Owens, and Sam Storey as deacons. Seibert Haley preached the ordination message and Pastor Leslie Elam presented the ordination certificates.

Springdale Elmdale Church ordained Mike Taylor to the preaching ministry Oct. 26. Taylor has been called to serve the Gracecom Church in Tulsa, Okla.

Indianhead Lake Church in Sherwood is sponsoring a youth-led revival Nov. 14-16. A Baptist Student Union team from Southern Baptist College will present the gospel in drama, testimony, song, and sermon, according to Pastor Jack Kwok.



Food and fellowship

Virginia Kirk and Jane Purtle

Soup

Since the time Esau was irresistibly tantalized by the appealing odor of Jacob's potage, people have been drawn to the smell and taste of homemade soup. Nowadays, a number of good canned and dried soups are available in stores, but there is still no substitute for the homemade variety simmering on the back of the stove.

Whenever a good soup maker shares her recipes, the process sounds easy and simple. Yet, if you have tried to make soup as good as mother's and grandmother's, you know there's a lot that can be learned through practice. Perhaps a cold winter day is the time to start.

A good, rich stock is the base of hearty soups like vegetable, bean, and split pea. Cook the bony pieces of chicken, beef bones, or ham bones with some onion, garlic, salt, and pepper until you have a stock to your liking. The beef and ham will take longer than the chicken. I like to add some herbs such as thyme or bay leaf and occasionally carrots or parsley, depending upon what type of soup I plan to make. After the stock has been cooked down, remove the bones and cut off edible meat to be added to the soup later. Refrigerate the stock so the fat will rise to the top and can be removed. After the fat has been discarded, freeze the portion of the stock which will not be used immediately.

Vegetable soup is good made with any stock. If you don't have time to cook down a good stock, try this ground beef vegetable soup which is my mother's speciality. Although I have given some specific measurements, almost everything in soup making is by guess. So taste and adjust seasonings to your liking. One of my mother's secrets is the use of leftovers. She freezes odds and ends of vegetables, rice, spaghetti, baked beans and slips them in the soup just before it is done. No two pots are ever the same, and she can never tell us the exact secret of her delicious soup.

Ground beef vegetable soup

1 pound ground beef
1 large onion, chopped
1 tablespoon flour
1 tablespoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
2 bay leaves
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
Water as necessary
for desired thickness

2 cups stewed tomatoes
(more if desired)
vegetables (any combination of these: fresh, canned, or leftover carrots, corn, beans, peas, okra, cabbage, potatoes)
pasta or rice
(leftover or raw)

Brown ground beef. Drain fat and add onion. Brown slightly. Stir in flour, sugar, seasonings. Add tomatoes and water. Add fresh vegetables such as carrots which need longer cooking time. Allow to simmer for 45 minutes to one hour. About 20 minutes before serving time, add rice or pasta and vegetables like fresh okra and cabbage. Leftover vegetables should be added about 5 minutes before serving time.

Virginia Kirk, professor emeritus at Arkansas College, is a member of Batesville First Church. Jane Purtle teaches at Lon Morris College in Jacksonville, Texas. They have enjoyed cooking together for several years.

Three Arkansans receive scholarships

Three Arkansans were among the 12 recipients of the Sybil and Rufus Higginbotham Presidential Scholarship at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Kenneth R. Lovelace is a 1986 graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. He is the son of Mrs. and Mrs. Jerry Lovelace of Whitehall. He enrolled this fall in Southwestern's master of divinity program.

Randy Paul Magar is a 1986 graduate of Southern Baptist College. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Magar of Batesville. He enrolled this fall in Southwestern's master of divinity program.

Fred Melvin Pearrow is a 1986 graduate of Southwest Baptist University. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Pearrow of Springdale. He also enrolled this fall in Southwestern's master of divinity program.

WE MUST MAKE CHRIST KNOWN

NOW is the time.
Next year may be too late.

The headlines tell the story:

“20,000 reported dead,
25,000 hurt as
Colombian volcano erupts”

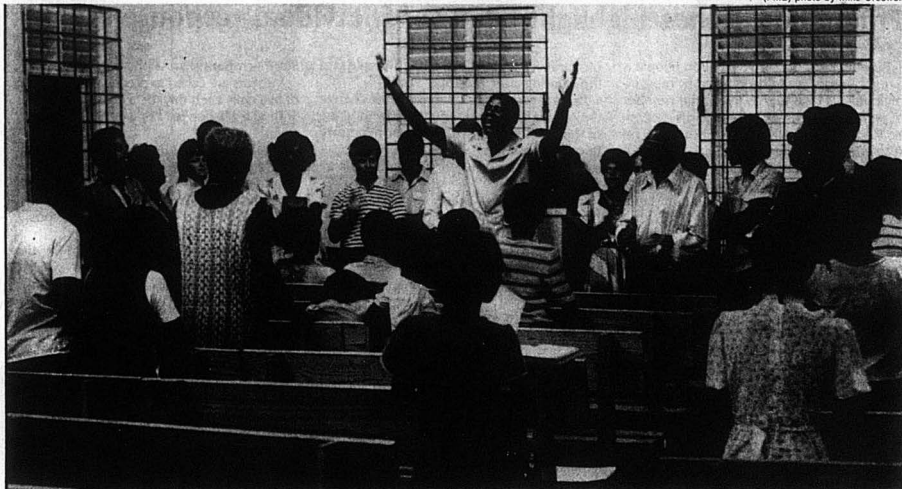
“Civil wars
keep African nations
from overcoming famine”

Many in our world must hear about Christ today, if they are to hear at all. But it is up to us. We must make Christ known.

(FMB) photo by Joanna Pinneo

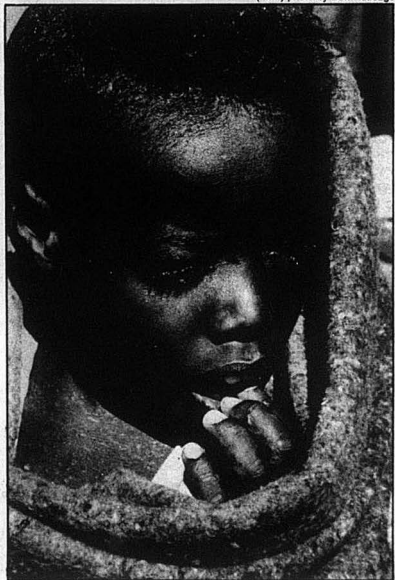


This man's home near Amero, Colombia, was destroyed by mudslides following a volcanic eruption. Here, he searches for his homesite to erect a cross in memory of those he lost. Missionaries and Colombian Baptists helped make quake victims know that many in that country are searching also for Christ.



(FMB) photo by Joanna Pinneo

(FMB) photo by Don Rutledge



(Top) Jon Singleton, Southern Baptist missionary, concludes a week of evangelistic services in Vieux Fort, St. Lucia, by asking those who want to be part of a Baptist church here to come forward. When the invitation ended, more than three-fourths of the congregation were standing around the pulpit. Most were not Christian believers—yet.

(Above left) Young people, like these in Korea, make up a growing majority of the world's population. And they're often open to the gospel while they are young.

(Right) When the starving children of Ethiopia tugged at the world's heart-strings, Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers were there to help feed the hungry and show them a loving Christ.

Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions Nov. 30 - Dec. 7, 1986
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering Goal: \$75,000,000

Population trends highlight need for individual response

by Craig Bird

Birmingham, Ala. — Five billion people is a number too vast to be grasped by most individuals. Yet on July 7, 1986, the number of people living on the planet Earth exceeded 5 billion, according to the Population Institution in Washington, D.C.

Seventy-five million dollars, the 1986 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal, sounds like a large number too, until it is compared to those 5 billion people.

Southern Baptist foreign missionaries are well aware of both the relentless rise in the numbers of those needing to hear the claims of Jesus Christ and the need for greater spiritual and financial resources to share those claims.

"We have no choice. We cannot say, 'I might do it.' We must do it, and we must do it now and with all possible haste," explains Charles Collins, Guatemala.

Stunning statistics from the Population Reference Bureau underscore Collins' words. Each hour of 1986 the population is increasing by more than 9,000. Each minute 258 people are born and 101 die (21 of them children). By 1995, and each year thereafter, there will be at least 136 million children who need to be told the story of Jesus for the first time.

Christianity is on the move, impressively so in many places, according to Foreign Mission Board figures. There are Christians and Christian congregations in all 223 countries of the world.

Persons who identify themselves as Christian comprise the majority in two-thirds of the world's countries.

In many parts of the world, notably Korea, and sections of Africa and South America, the growth of Christian churches is stunning. But the growth isn't keeping pace with the population increase. Today it is estimated that 32.8 percent of the world's population could be considered Christian — down from an estimated 34.4 percent in 1900. And the gap appears to be widening.

Against this backdrop, Southern Baptists are being challenged on both spiritual and financial levels during the 1986 Week of Pray for Foreign Missions and the parallel Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Despite the unmet financial needs on every mission field, the need for a spiritual commitment is priority.

Southern Baptists must get under a "prayer burden" if they expect God to use them in winning the people of the world to Jesus Christ, insists R. Keith Parks, FMB president.

On the financial level, the goal of \$75 million for the Lottie Moon offering (up \$5 million from the 1985 goal and \$8.1 million more than 1985 receipts) yields some more interesting numbers.

More than 36,500 churches are affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and membership is in excess of 15 million. An average of less than \$5 per member and ap-

proximately \$2,000 per church would put the offering over the top.

Parks says Southern Baptists must change their focus from the overwhelming numbers of the goals to the basic number necessary to meet those goals: one. "The urgency of telling all the world about Jesus must grip all earnest Christians," he says.

It is the individual prayer commitment, the individual decision to contribute to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, the individual response to become a missionary which translates into the big numbers of the

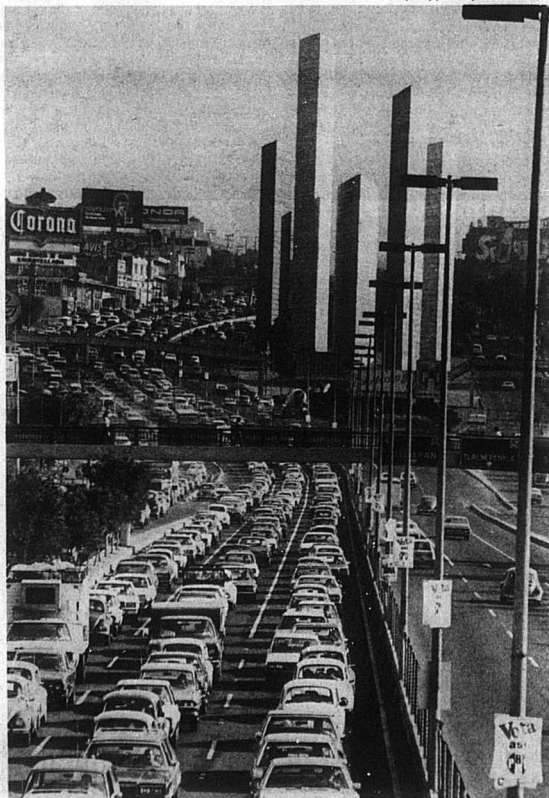
Southern Baptist missions effort.

Muslims are called to predawn prayer (one of five calls each day) by a chant that closes with the challenge, "Prayer is better than sleep."

Southern Baptist missionaries in 107 countries agree—and are hopeful—that fellow Southern Baptists in the United States will awaken to the power of prayer and let it influence how they live and give missions.

Craig Bird writes for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

(FMB) photo by Joanna Pinneo



Rush hour traffic is bad in any large city, but Mexico City can expect it to get worse. This city is predicted to be the world's largest by the turn of the century. As Southern Baptists try to reach Bold Mission Thrust goals for sharing the gospel with everyone in the world by that time, they must send more missionaries to growing world cities where people live.

WE MUST MAKE CHRIST KNOWN

Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions

Nov. 30 - Dec. 7, 1986

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering Goal: \$75,000,000

Prayer for missions: a window of hope for tomorrow's world

by Albert McClellan

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Foreign missionaries have intense, life-changing calls. They are called to be ambassadors for Christ among people of other tongues and customs. They live and work in strange lands, often under adverse circumstances.

They give up the closeness of family ties and the security of their homeland. Sometimes, due to the lack of adequate schools, they are separated from their adolescent children, occasionally for months or even years.

Church members also have missions calls, all too often unheeded. First, there is the call to interest. Simply becoming interested is a first step toward missions commitment. This can come with growing awareness of the full implication of the gospel, which Paul described as a mystery now made known.

He said "the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ" (Eph. 3:4-5). This implies that God included all mankind in his plan for the ages. This thought should impel us to study missions and to know missionaries.

"The renewing of Southern Baptist interest in missions is one reason that the great weeks of prayer are lifelines to the Southern Baptist missions programs. When missions dies

in a church, it may be due to the members' lack of interest.

Interest leads to the call of commitment. For Christians, commitment is always present in a general way. It is written on almost every page of the New Testament. It also comes in a personal way, as a still, small voice calling their names and showing them their private mission in the world.

Stirred up by reading and preaching, the still, small voice is the speaking of the Spirit. Christians should understand that to be a Christian means to be a witness for Christ to all mankind. The call to commitment is to love, and out of love comes prayer.

The Christian's missions call is also a call to prayer. First, this means prayer for missions understanding. Then, this call is to prayer for the knowledge of one's personal obligation to missions.

Christians are also called to prayer for courage and faith in meeting our personal obligations. Finally, Christians are to pray for the missionaries and the mission fields. Prayer leads to giving of ourselves and our means to missions, and to being missionaries, even while we sit at home in our armchairs.

Money has a way of going where we can't go. This thought should prepare us to hear

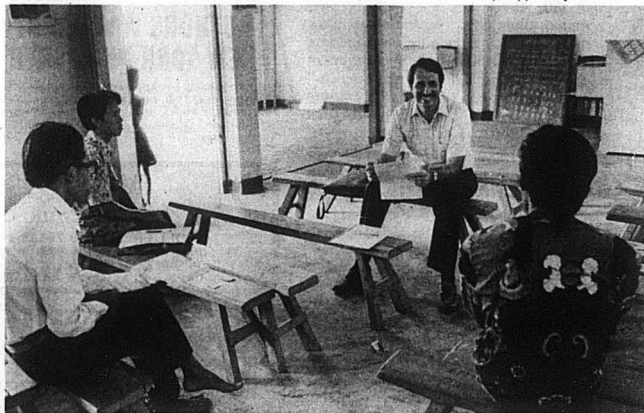
more clearly God's call to giving. Usually, our interest and our prayers follow our gifts. When Pharaoh offered to free the Children of Israel if they would leave their treasures in Egypt, Moses refused. He knew that the people's minds and hearts are with their possessions.

It is unthinkable that prayers for missions would not follow gifts to missions. Giving strengthens the giver, just as it reinforces the missionaries. Church members may not be asked to live in strange lands and be separated from adolescent children, but still their consecrated giving is costly. Costly, but enriching.

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions is one of God's windows of hope. Let us all kneel in submission to that hope, and pray for a peaceful world in which the Father's kingdom will come. Let us, through prayer and giving, take wings and fly through the window of hope into God's glorious tomorrow.

Albert McClellan is the retired associate executive secretary and program planning director for the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. He is the author of numerous books and articles on denominational life.

(FMB) photo by Joanna Pinneo



Every year, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering gifts meet the vital need of providing vehicles for missionaries. An automobile for Clyde Meador enables him to continue Theological Education by Extension classes such as this one at the Bundi Sembung Baptist Church in the village of Karang Sembung, Indonesia. By taking the extension classes to the students, missionaries enable growing Baptist leaders to get theological training while living at home, supporting their families, and leading their churches.

Historian says rebaptism is major question for SBC

by Joe Westbury

PRESTONSBURG, Ky. (BP)—The major question confronting the Southern Baptist Convention today is not belief in inerrancy of the Bible but how evangelism is viewed, a Southern Baptist church historian observed.

"The pressing issue facing us today is less of what we (Baptists) believe about the Bible and more of what we believe about the process of salvation," said Bill J. Leonard, professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

"The question of biblical inerrancy is a symptom of a much larger identity crisis facing Southern Baptists," he said.

Leonard made the comments to about 120 pastors and directors of missions attending a conference on missions in central Appalachia sponsored by the rural-urban missions department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. The three-day meeting was held in Prestonsburg, Ky.

Many Baptists seem to feel "it is no longer enough to just believe in Jesus as Savior," Leonard said. "They feel you have to believe as well in an increasing number of doctrines about Jesus in order for your salvation to be valid."

He pointed to several signs to verify this, including the relationship between the baptisms of children and adults and a rebaptism phenomenon that appears to be sweeping the convention.

Leonard explained the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination is experiencing a greater number of adults who were converted and baptized as children but are questioning that salvation experience when they reach adulthood and asking for rebaptism.

"They are confused today because they often feel they didn't understand what they were doing as a child," he said. "We need to find some way to help converted children grow up in the faith without making them start all over again by rebaptism. "It's very natural when they become adults for them to have a different understanding of sin and the meaning of salvation," Leonard said. "But this does not mean they were never saved to begin with."

"In spite of our (Southern Baptist) emphasis on the eternal security of the believer, we seem to have a lot of Southern Baptists who live on the edge of doubt," he added. "I have no doubt there are church members who have not experienced faith in Christ," he added. "But multiple baptisms (rebaptism) may serve to confuse the issue further."

For a long time, Leonard continued, Southern Baptists stressed "heart religion. It was less what you believed about the Bible and more about the truths of the Bible at work in you. It was experience-centered, the experience you had with Christ that formed your understanding of specific doctrines and governed the way you lived."

Increasingly, a growing number of doctrines about Jesus are becoming prerequisites in the minds of some Baptists for a valid personal salvation experience. Leonard warned this is a recurring theme in church history among all denominations.

"If the (Southern Baptist) convention holds together, I see a growing reaction against dogmatism and a renewal of experiential faith. Historically, sooner or later all Christians grow disillusioned and turn away from such a propositional faith—one that sets guidelines to validate one's salvation experience—back toward an experience with the living God.

"Mental consent to doctrines about Jesus can never be a substitute for a personal faith as nurtured by the Holy Spirit. Only faith in Christ as Savior is fundamental to a salvation experience," he asserted.

"What does it take for a person to be a disciple of Jesus? It is, as Jesus himself said, that we deny ourselves, take up the cross and follow him," Leonard said.

"In Christian history, the more the church depends on elaborate doctrines about Christ, the farther it seems to get from experience with the living Christ himself," he concluded. "Isn't that what the Protestant Reformation was all about?"

Joe Westbury is associate news editor for the SBC Home Mission Board.

Annuity trustees give retirees raise for 1987

DALLAS (BP)—Southern Board Annuity Board trustees, have voted to increase monthly checks to 13,000 retired Southern Baptist annuitants and credit earnings to Plan A accounts of members not yet retired.

Annuitants who retired before Jan. 1, 1980, who participated in Plan A will receive a 16.66 percent increase in their monthly checks on Jan. 1. While they will receive a 13th check this year, the permanent increase will replace the annual bonus. Persons who retired after Jan. 1, 1980, will be granted a 6.66 percent increase.

Members in Plan A who have not retired also will receive an increase at retirement reflecting the fund's income growth beyond that required for the original defined benefit.

Darold H. Morgan, president of the Annuity Board, said an estimated \$2 million per year will be credited to 13,000 members. The increases are possible because of high

earnings of the retirement fund.

"We are here to serve Southern Baptists. So when we are successful, we pass our success on to our plan members," Morgan said.

He noted some annuitants' government assistance was reduced the month they got their 13th check because their income exceeded allotments. The increases allow members to enjoy more retirement income all year and permit annuitants in government assistance programs to collect their full benefits. The board's third quarter income was up \$3.2 million, bringing the net total income for 1986 to \$36.8 million.

Total assets increased 18.8 percent last year to \$1.8 billion. Assets in the Insurance Fund increased 21 percent to \$101.6 million.

In other business, trustees promoted Mac Perkins, assistant director in insurance services, to director of that department.

Morgan to serve as annuity panel chairman

DALLAS—Darold H. Morgan, president of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, has been elected chairman of the national Committee on Gift Annuities. He has served on the 25-member committee since 1972.

Organized in 1927, the Committee on Gift

Annuities researches and recommends the range of earning rates for charitable gift annuities. About 1,300 sponsoring organizations voluntarily accept the committee's recommendations. The panel also recommends methods for computing yields in pooled income fund agreements.

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High court confirms decision in state funding, abortion

by Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U. S. Supreme Court has affirmed a lower court decision that the Arizona legislature may not withhold state funding from an agency simply because that agency provides abortion services, counseling or referrals.

By a 5-3 vote to affirm, the nation's highest tribunal elevated the lower court opinion, giving it precedential effect throughout the United States rather than only in the circuit in which it was decided. Three members of the court—Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and Justices Byron R. White and Antonin Scalia—indicated they voted to schedule oral arguments in the case, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor did not take part in the action.

In 1980, the Arizona legislature appended a footnote to its appropriations act stipulating that no state money could be spent on "abortions, abortion procedures, counseling for abortion procedures or abortion referrals." The footnote also mandated no state money could be given to "agencies or entities" that offered any of those services.

Two Arizona branches of Planned Parenthood sought state funds to provide family planning services. Those state funds would

have constituted a 10 percent matching grant to accompany a 90 percent grant already provided by the federal government.

When state funds were denied Planned Parenthood, the non-profit corporations, joined by medical director Jack Bashaw, filed action in the federal district court for Arizona.

The district court found the state law to be unconstitutional on First Amendment and vagueness grounds and enjoined state officials from refusing to pay state funds to Planned Parenthood.

Upon appeal by the state, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the district court decision on the vagueness issue and held the state could promote "choice" for childbirth by withholding information about abortion. The appeals court, however, remanded the case to the lower court with instructions to determine whether "withdrawing all state funds from Planned Parenthood was the only way to ensure that Planned Parenthood would not use state funds to support its abortion-related activities."

The district court again held the entire state law unconstitutional. The appeals court affirmed that decision, citing the state's ability

to monitor and prevent misuse of its funds rather than to withdraw all funds.

In their appeal to the Supreme Court, attorneys for the state of Arizona argued such monitoring would place an "onerous and impossible burden on the state."

They also contended the state law did not interfere with Planned Parenthood but simply provided that no state funds should go to the agency because it engages in abortion and abortion-related activities. "Planned Parenthood has no constitutional or statutory right to state funds, nor is the state obligated to contract with them," they wrote.

Attorneys for Planned Parenthood asked the high court to affirm the circuit court's decision, arguing the "Arizona statute imposes a classic penalty." They contended the law would force Planned Parenthood both to give up its freedom of speech that enables it to discuss abortion with clients and to forfeit federal funds that require it to make all medically necessary referrals, including abortion referrals (86-369, *Babbitt v. Planned Parenthood*).

Kathy Palen writes for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Texas Baptist churches start record number of new works

DALLAS (BP)—Texas Baptist churches reported a record number of new mission/church starts in the first year of Mission Texas: 305 new churches and missions during the period from Oct. 1, 1985, to Sept. 30, 1986.

Mission Texas is a five-year emphasis on reaching people, developing believers and strengthening missions that has as one of its goals starting 2,000 new churches and missions in the state by 1990.

"This unprecedented response to the mission challenge in our state means that a new

church or mission was started every 30 hours," said J.V. Thomas, coordinator of the church extension section for the Baptist General Convention of Texas. "The record number of new mission/church starts shows that more of our existing churches are recognizing the biblical model of churches starting churches as God's timeless and eternal strategy for growth."

"In spite of the troubled state economy and the problems that many churches are having meeting their basic budget requirements, Texas Baptist churches are demonstrating their continued commitment to missions by starting new churches and by

giving sacrificially to the Mary Hill Davis Centennial Offering for State Missions," said Charles McLaughlin, director of Texas Baptists' State Missions Commission.

Of the 305 new churches started in the past year, about 40 percent were Hispanic and another 40 percent were Anglo. Sponsoring churches ranged in size from some of Texas' largest congregations to churches averaging less than 75 people in attendance.

Nationwide, Souther Baptist officially started 1,805 new churches and missions—including Texas' 305—during 1985-86, according to the denomination's Uniform Church Letter statistics.

Clergy seeking refunds must file amended returns

by Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)—Ministers who have been ineligible to claim mortgage interest and property tax deductions and wish to take advantage of a provision in the new tax revision must file amended income tax returns by upcoming deadlines.

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 revoked Revenue Ruling 83-3, an Internal Revenue Service ruling that froze the ability of ministers receiving tax-exempt housing allowances to take deductions on mortgage interest and real estate taxes if they own their homes.

Since the new law makes that revocation retroactive, ministers who have been unable to claim those deductions since 1983 are eligible to file amended tax returns seeking

refund of taxes overpaid.

The statute of limitations, however, requires amended returns for 1983 to be filed no later than April 15, 1987. Amended returns for other years must be filed within three years after the date the original return was due.

Persons filing amended returns should use Form 1040X and attach an amended Schedule A. Most states also will require the filing of amended state income tax returns.

Specific questions may be directed to the IRS, the appropriate state tax agency or a qualified accountant.

Kathy Palen writes for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

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A promise of return

by Erwin L. McDonald, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine editor emeritus

Basic passage: Zechariah 8:1-17

Focal passage: Zechariah 8:3-13

Central truth: God always call us to build Christian character on a world-wide basis, promising his presence and help.

Jeremiah had prophesied (Jer. 25:11-12) that the Babylonian exile would last 70 years. Actually, the return began after 50 years and continued until after 70 years. The truth of the matter is that many of the Jews in exile were doing so well, materially, by the time the restrictions on them were lifted that they had no desire to return to their homeland.

(1) Peace restored to Jerusalem (Zech. 8:3-6)

God used his prophet to help the remnant of returnees from Babylon to understand that he was in control of the situation and to assure them it was safe to move back to Jerusalem. As the Living Bible Paraphrased puts it: "The Lord of Hosts declares that Jerusalem will have peace so long that there will once again be aged men and women hobbling through her streets on canes, and the streets will be filled with boys and girls at play (Zech. 8:3).

(2) A promise in fulfillment (Zech. 8:7-8)

The key to God's restoration is found in verse 8b: "...and they shall be my people... in truth and righteousness." This is the requirement, not only for ancient Israel but for God's people in our own time. In God-blessed America, where we are free to worship and serve God "according to the dictates of our own conscience," the hindrance is not an unfriendly government but a too-friendly world tempting us always to live for "the pleasure of sin." We need to hear again God's formula for revival: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their iniquity, and will heal their land" (2 Chr. 7:14).

(3) Encouragement to build (Zech. 8:9-13)

God promised the returnees his presence and blessing if they would "let their hands be strong" in doing the work he had assigned them to do—rebuilding the Temple.

God's call for his people to build does not always involve architecture and construction, as important as these are in their place. But he is always calling for us to build Christian character, on a world-wide basis, promising his presence and help (Mt. 18:18-20).

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Life and Work

Obedience

by Bradley A. Rogge, Brookwood First Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Genesis 6:1 to 7:24

Focal passage: Genesis 6:5-9, 12-14; 7:5, 23

Central truth: God uses obedient persons to accomplish his purposes.

Being a parent can be the most difficult part of adult life. We watch our children go from the smiling innocence to a very worldly set of values. If things go well, as it does in most cases, our children will grow up and be responsible adults.

It is unfortunate that not all children become responsible. When God looks upon the earth and sees his children and their sin, like any parent, he grieves.

When God looked upon the earth in the days of Noah, God was hurt. Remember we are made in God's image. If we feel joy, we can know God feels joy. If our children's disobedient behavior hurts us, can you imagine the hurt God must feel? The plain truth is when we sin, we cause God pain.

But we can be thankful for one thing. God has always provided grace to man. In the days of Noah, God honored the righteous and obedient Noah. There has never been a time in the history of man, and there never will be a time, when God does not provide grace and mercy for the obedient.

Verses 5 and 23 of chapter seven point out the contrast between those who obey and those who choose not to. Those who obey, God uses to fulfill his purpose. Those he cannot use, God must "blot out from the earth."

It has always been God's will that man have a personal relationship with him. Today God has chosen the church as his lifeboat for mankind. We must gather men unto the church. We must point the lost toward salvation. We must point the saved toward a more perfect relationship with him.

If you are reading this lesson, you have shown you care for God and His Word. Now carry this one step further. Care enough to share the message of God with a sinking world.

We are always looking for heroes in our world today. The ones that are given to us are not very good examples. But to follow the example of Noah would not be a bad idea. His faith overcame the world. So could ours.

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Bible Book

Jesus' unique authority

by Woodrow W. Dishongh, Lancaster Road Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: John 5:19-47

Focal passage: John 5:20-24, 26-29, 36-40, 46-47

Central truth: Jesus' declaration of his unique authority anticipates a response to him as savior, revealer of God, and judge of people.

Jesus begins to refute the charge against him, that he had made himself equal with God. Jesus identifies with God in that what God does he does. If we want to know how God feels about us and how he reacts to sin, we need only look to Jesus.

His identity with God is based not only on his being equal with God, but on his obedience to and his love for God. The will of Christ was completely submitted to his Father's will. He was to God as we should be to Christ. Submission should be based on love. The unity between God and Jesus was a unity of love. Here is a love between father and son so intimate that they are one.

Here God gives the total process of judgment to Jesus. Jesus is not only the life giver, but the bringer of judgment. Jesus is the touchstone by which all men are tested and our reaction to him is the real test by which all men are divided. Jesus, by being himself and confronting men with himself, brings them to judgment. If you hear and do not believe you are judged and if you hear and believe you pass from death to life. The man into whose life Jesus has come has found life anew, is recreated and changed.

Jesus relies chiefly on the witness of the Father. John's testimony that Jesus was "the lamb of God," all the wonderful works, and the miracles witness in unison to the divine origin and mission of God's incarnate son.

The prophets had born witness and they had believed and seen Christ's day, but these critics had not responded favorably. Jesus challenged them for following a false Messiah and not following him.

The false provides an easy way to satisfy self, while Jesus offers a hard way, the way of the cross. The false perishes while Christ lives on. These Jews had the word on parchment and memorized it, but it had no place in their hearts. As is true in our day, it brought no disturbance to their conscience. We are challenged to learn through the word and to commit ourselves to participation in Bible study.

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Leaders to discuss teen suicide on BTN

by Frank Wm. White

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The best and brightest of America's teenagers are killing themselves, according to the author of a book on teen suicide.

"Teen suicides are most frequent in middle- and upper-class families. There are Christian kids committing suicide. You can't say with any certainty that any teen doesn't have the potential," said John Baucum, a Chattanooga, Tenn., psychologist and author of *Fatal Choice: The Teenage Suicide Crisis*.

Baucum recently participated in the videotaping of a panel discussion on teen suicide which will air in January on the Baptist Telecommunication Network. Other panel members are Larry McGuire, minister of youth at First Church, Plano, Texas; Jimmy Hester, design editor of family ministry products in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department; and Jim Hightower, pastoral ministries consultant in the board's church administration department.

Douglas Anderson, director of the family ministry department, which produced the program, said his department is focusing on teen suicide because it is the second-leading cause of death among America's youth.

Suicide could become the number one cause of teen deaths in 1987 if the trend is not reversed, Baucum said, adding, the churches can help by providing significant adult relationships that teens are missing.

"Make the assumption that every teen you deal with is not getting enough attention," Baucum said. The average parent spends only seven minutes per week in one-on-one contact with each child, he added.

"If churches can help parents relate to teens more effectively, they can help the teen

have a healthier relationship with God," Hightower said.

Ministers may spend their time more effectively by training parents and church youth workers to develop relationships with teens rather than trying to develop those relationships themselves, he added.

McGuire said when he went to Plano nearly four years ago, he was aware of the urgent need to address the issue of teen suicide. The community already had made national headlines with a rash of teen suicides. He immediately began basic discipleship training with youth, emphasizing self-worth.

Developing leaders among the teens who could help others and training teachers to maintain relationships with teens have been crucial elements of the youth ministry there, said McGuire. The church also has developed a network of relationships between teens and senior citizens. Hightower pointed out networking also can be a crucial factor in giving teens a sense of belonging.

"Students remember people who take a close personal interest in them. There is no magical quality to it," Baucum said. "The burden has to be on the general population, not ministers and psychologists. The vital relationships which can be developed through Sunday school and other church activities are the key elements teens cannot find elsewhere."

The one-hour discussion will air on BTN on the monthly program, "Ministering to Families Today," on Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 10:45 a.m. (CST) and repeated Wednesday, Jan. 21, at 11:30 a.m.

Frank Wm. White writes for the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Executive urges leaders to learn problem-solving

by Karen Benson

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Problems can be turned into positive opportunities if church leaders know basic problem-solving principles, Bobbie Sorrell, associate executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, claimed.

Speaking recently to WMU leaders attending an advanced leadership training seminar, Sorrell urged local church leaders to combat problems with proven problem-solving techniques.

"Acknowledge that problems exist and will always exist," she said. "Treat them as positive opportunities."

When they do exist, such problems as declining membership in church organizations, lack of interest in training by leaders, lack of funds or irregular attendance can start to be remedied, she said.

"Problems cannot be ignored. They normally will not go away," Sorrell said. "Learn to anticipate possible problems and be ready to handle them."

A problem might be prevented through good planning, she said, noting, "If you have planned well, the experience is usually a very good one."

Always separate problems from persons, Sorrell urged. "Confront the problem, not the person. Prayer and the Holy Spirit in our lives can make us better able to do this."

Sometimes, problems need to be solved alone. But at other times, "you need to involve other persons," she said. "You must decide whether to go it alone or with others."

Regardless of how difficult the situation might seem, "problems can be solved," she said. "Learn how to find creative alternatives and to decide on and implement a plan of action."

Sometimes, she said, "all it takes is to sit down and talk to the other person."

Karen Benson writes for Woman's Missionary Union, SBC.