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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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'Do Not Be Conformed'

Arkansas Baptist

April 12, 1990





ABN file photo

Hundreds of Baptist young men and boys will descend on the Arkadelphia campus of Ouachita Baptist University April 27-28 for the annual Royal Ambassador, High School Baptist Young Men Congress.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

Cuba Allows Evangelism

HAVANA, Cuba (BP)—For the first time in more than 30 years, the government of Cuba has allowed Baptists to conduct a national evangelistic campaign in the country.

A team of hispanic Southern Baptists conducted simultaneous revivals March 2-13 in 38 Baptist churches in eight Cuban provinces, according to trip coordinator Bob Sena, pastor of First Spanish Baptist Church in Atlanta.

"The word needs to get out that there's a revival in Cuba. People are being saved. There's a hunger for the gospel," said Sena.

More than 825 people accepted Jesus Christ as savior during revivals led by 11 hispanic Southern Baptists from California, Florida, New Mexico, Georgia, Texas and Virginia. About half of the volunteers are native Cubans. Volunteers worked in cooperation with the Baptist Convention of Western Cuba, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and the National Hispanic Southern Baptist Fellowship.

Statistics do not reflect other professions of faith in Christ made during evangelistic outreach the government allowed in the streets and in homes, Sena said.

The group had "no restrictions whatsoever" in preaching the gospel, said Daniel Sotelo, president of the national hispanic fellowship and pastor of Templo Bautista in Fresno, Calif. "It was an incredible thing."

Jose Sanchez preached in his homeland for the first time since leaving Cuba in 1962. "I feel it's a historic time in Cuba. We're not having more freedom than ever before in Cuba to preach the gospel," said Sanchez, a Southern Baptist home missionary in Albuquerque, N.M.

"I have been in revivals in Mexico, Honduras and Panama, and I haven't seen anywhere more hunger for the Word of God than I saw in Cuba," he added.

Several volunteers presented Cuban authorities with a Bible to give to President Fidel Castro, who responded with a thank-you note to Sotelo. The Bible was the Reina-Valera Actualizada, a revision of the Bible widely used among Spanish-speaking evangelicals. The revision, the first in 30 years, was published by the Foreign Mission Board's Baptist Spanish Publishing House in El Paso, Texas.

Sotelo also told of preaching at a month-old Baptist mission at Boca de Jaruco. Sixty-four people packed into a 15-by-20-foot room where 15 people made professions of faith in Christ.

The mission meets in the home of a Baptist woman killed in a fire in January. Two weeks after her burial, her husband and 17 children helped start the Baptist work with the government's permission. "Her death drew them to the Lord, and they are reaching the community for Christ," said Sotelo.

"God is alive and well and working in Cuba," Sena said.

GOOD NEWS!

Believers and the Body of Christ

Romans 12:3-8

There is an interrelatedness in life. Our lives are bound up in others, and they are dependent on the services we provide. Paul wrote of the interrelatedness of believers in the body of Christ, the church.

The estimation—There is a temptation to overestimate one's own importance. Actually, there are three types of self-estimation: super, sub, and sane. Paul called for a sane self-estimation.

The standard for this estimation is the ability God has given to each man to know himself or the recognition that God has given the gifts we have.

The cooperation—The church is a body with many parts (vv. 4-5). There is both unity and diversity in the church. Each

member is to cooperate as a part of the body. It takes all members doing their part for the church to function as it should. This spirit of cooperation eliminates envy and pride. A person feels envy when he thinks of his role as being inferior to another, and one feels proud when he thinks his task is superior. However, each believer has a ministry to perform, and this rules out envy and pride.

The application—Each member has been given a gift for service. Paul presented seven gifts: three gifts of speech (vv.6-7), and four gifts of service (vv. 7-8).

These gifts are to be used for the good of the church. They are not for personal prestige or for boasting but for building up the church (1 Cor.12-7).

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Of Last Things

J. EVERETT SNEED

Christians across the years have held to a variety of eschatological views (the Doctrine of Last Things). Among Baptists there has been almost universal agreement regarding heaven, hell, the intermediate state of the dead, the resurrection and the reality of the return of Christ. However, there have been a variety of views concerning the events that surround the Second Coming of our Lord.

There are extremes that should be avoided regarding the events that are to transpire at the end of the age. On one hand, there are those who never study or discuss the events surrounding the end of this age. Some have jokingly said, "I am a pan-millennialist. I believe that it will all pan out at the end." Others have gone to the extreme that they have set dates for the coming of the Lord and all of their thinking centers around these events.

The greatest diversity among Baptists is in regard to the Second Coming of Christ. However, it should be remembered that Southern Baptists have never made any particular view of the Second Coming a test of fellowship. There are four basic views which have been held by prominent Southern Baptists.

The views center around an individuals belief about the millennium. The word "millenium" does not appear in the Bible. It is derived from the Latin, meaning "a thousand" and refers to a period of reign of Christ as suggested in Revelation 20:2-7.

The post-millennial view is rare today. The Greek prefix "post" means "after." Those holding to this view believe that Christ will return after a 1,000 year millennial period. This view was strong in the late 19th Century and until the time of the First World War. Those holding to this view believe that aggressive evangelism would win the world to Christ. Jesus would reign on earth at the close of a utopic period of a 1,000 years. At the end of this 1,000 years, Satan would make one last attempt to overturn God, but would be defeated. B.H. Carroll, founder of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, was a proponent of this view.

The amillennial view is the second interpretation of the Second Coming of Christ. The Greek prefix "a" means "no." The amillennialist believe that the millenium is not a literal reign, but rather represents the reign of God in the hearts of believers.



Amillennialists do believe in a literal return of Christ. Many of the numbers and events of Revelation are interpreted in a figurative sense. This view had its inception by Augustine in the fourth century. The view dropped out of popular usage at the beginning of the Reformation. Proponents of this view include Ray Summers, New Testament professor, who taught at Southwestern Seminary, Southern Seminary, and Baylor University, and Herschel Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Dispensational pre-millennialism is the third interpretation of the return of our Lord. The Greek prefix "pre" means "before." Those holding this view believe Christ will return prior to a literal 1,000 year millennial reign. Dispensational pre-millennialism divides history into dispensa-

tions (or ages) in which God works through many different methods. Dispensations include pre-Israel, Israel, the church age, the millennial kingdom and others. There is considerable difference of opinion on details, but all believe in the rise of an anti-Christ, a great tribulation period, the battle of Armageddon, a 1,000 year reign, the battle at the end of the reign, the judgment and a new heaven and a new earth. Great impetus was given to this interpretation by the Scofield Bible. Many Southern Baptists, including W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Church, Dallas, Texas, hold this view.

Historical pre-millennialism is a final interpretation which is gaining great popularity today. This view interprets many of the texts as the Christian world did from the period of the New Testament up to the time of Augustine. This view holds that Satan's power will become more evident with the passing of time. This view, like the dispensational view, holds to a literal anti-Christ which will deceive the world and have many followers. This will result in a terrible tribulation period for those who remain faithful to God. At the end of time Christ will return and believers will be captured to meet him in the air. Our Lord will defeat Satan in a literal battle called Armageddon and will establish a 1,000 year reign on earth. This view divides times into two periods: an old covenant and a new covenant relationship with God.

Whatever view an individual holds, it is essential for a Bible believing individual to believe in a literal return of Christ, a literal heaven, a literal hell, and a literal judgment. It is essential for individuals to study the Scriptures and have an understanding of biblical truths concerning the imminence of the return of our Lord.

Arkansas Baptist

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



Here are two very important statements from our Arkansas Baptist State Convention constitution. They are taken from Article VI, Section 2.

"The Executive Board shall be constituted and empowered by the Convention . . . to employ such paid agents as it may deem necessary in carrying out the missionary, educational, benevolent and financial enterprises of the Convention. The Executive Board shall raise, collect, receive and disburse all the funds of the Baptist Cooperative Program, for both state and Southern Baptist Convention causes."

Since I am the one chosen by the Executive Board to head up the above task, I cannot fail to do all within my power to educate our churches to the needs related to "missionary, educational, benevolent and financial enterprises." That is one reason why I talk about money a lot. I bear primary responsibility for raising, receiving and disbursing the funds that support all of our work. This is my job.

The other reason you find me mentioning money a lot is because I have a genuine conviction that all of our Baptist work is deserving of better support than it is receiving. Heroic efforts are being made by many individuals who work in our agencies and institutions. Personal sacrifice and commitment keep them there. I would like to see a time when those who choose to follow a vocation in a Christian institution would not be penalized because they obeyed the Lord.

Here is the bottom line. In 1988-89 total undesignated receipts given to our churches increased by 4.65 percent. The contribution from the churches to the Cooperative Program only increased by .32 percent. Inflation makes this a 4 percent loss of support. In the local church someone speaks on behalf of the youth, the bus ministry, senior adults or the choir, but who "goes to bat" for our mission boards, educational institutions and ministries? In too many churches the Cooperative Program is left without a single soul to represent the vast numbers of people who lay down their lives every day for Christ and for the Baptist witness. Think about it!

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

Letters to the Editor

The Third Mile

When we see pictures of starving people, we often fail to give anything to help them because many relief organizations collect money, but very little of it ever gets to starving people. We are fortunate because we can give to our church designating it for Baptist World Hunger and every penny of it will get to the starving people.

The Southern Baptists (the missions people) are different from other Baptists. Some churches known as Baptist give little or nothing for missions. More than half a century ago, our pastor said, "The church that does most for mission, does the most at home." I believe that is true in most cases.

In Matthew 5:41, Jesus said, "And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." I like to think of this in connection with our giving. The tithe is required (the first mile). Then there are special offerings for missions and other gifts that are over and above the tithe (the second mile). Then there is what I will call the third mile. If you are fortunate enough to have the money to pay the salary of an evangelist (church planter) or teacher to go into an atheistic country, that is a very worthwhile service. Most people have accumulated a little money or property. At death "we cannot take it with us." We have

a choice to leave it for the relatives to fight over, or leave it for the Foreign Mission Board, where it will be doing the Lord's work long after we are dead and gone. I hope that there are many people who will choose to go that third mile.

A long time ago, I heard a poem and each verse ended with this: "All that you can hold in your cold dead hands is what you have given away." Just remember that poem when making out your will.—**Ben Fried, Mena**

Decisions, Decisions

I always teach and preach, would gladly sing if only I could, for spiritual decisions. It thrills me when people tell me of various decisions they have been led to make for Jesus Christ and his cause. The truth of the matter is that I never speak to others for the Lord without these being decisions. The same is true of all believers. Everytime we Christians witness to others for the Savior with our lives, lips, and literature, decisions are made. No one ever sees Christianity being practiced, hears about the perfect Son of God, or reads about his sufficient provision for our sinful plight without making a decision.

No gospel presentation in any form has ever been given anywhere at anytime to other people without decisions. When

BOB PARKER

Today's Issues

Hell Hurts

On a recent trip, two relatively small roadside signs were seen which declared great biblical truths. Unlike Burma Shave signs of bygone days, they were several miles apart. Each had two words, one atop the other. The first announced the fact that "Hell Hurts." The second proclaimed "Hell Forever."

Several days later while reflecting on those two short sermons, I thought of the transfer many years ago of incorrigible prisoners from Alcatraz to a new prison near Marion, Ill. There will be no transfers from hell, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.

As one gets nearer, age wise, to life after this life, he should remember that the Lord Jesus spoke of the possibility

of every age group being saved or enlisted for service in his "vineyard" (Mt. 20:1-16).

God sends no one to hell; one chooses to be hurt forever by refusing to accept Jesus Christ as personal savior and Lord. Hopefully, the Holy Spirit will use the two roadside signs to convict many of sin, righteousness and judgment to come.

It's perhaps best for one to hear such important truths from a personal witness or in the context of a church service, but gratefully, God does work in mysterious ways such as roadside signs.

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



confronted with Christ, people always make decisions. Some decide to believe while others decide to disbelieve; some decide to follow him, while others decide to follow someone else.

What a privilege and responsibility we Christians have to witness to others for Christ seven days per week wherever we are. But we must not forget that God, and God alone, can really change a person's life and bring that individual to a genuine spiritual decision that will last through time and eternity. We must never try to pick "green" fruit or get "visible" results

in the forms of decisions until God does his supernatural work and produces his miracle in the lives of adults, teens, and children! We can only pray and witness; God alone can convict, convert, and save!

Let us be faithful in our task of witnessing to others for Christ. Let us be very clear in our explanation of the way salvation to any and all that will listen. If we are, God will honor his Word and produce permanent change in the lives of friends, relatives, and others. People will be genuinely saved and serve the Lord.—**Charles Rosson, Rogers**

WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Hymns Baptists Sing



Come, Holy . . .

"Come, Holy Spirit, Dove Divine"
Adoniram Judson,
the first Baptist

foreign missionary from the United States, wrote the baptismal hymn about 1829, during the time he was translating the Bible into the Burmese language.

The son of a Congregational minister, Judson and his wife Ann Hasseltine, felt called to be missionaries. They sailed for India in 1812, sponsored by the Congregationalist Board of Foreign Missions. Through his study of the New Testament teaching of baptism, on the sea voyage, he adopted the Baptist view. Upon his arrival in Calcutta, he was baptized by an English Baptist missionary.

Forced out of India in 1813 by the British East India Company, the Judsons settled in Burma, where they witnessed for six years before the first convert was baptized. Because of bitter conflict between the British and Burmese armies, Judson was imprisoned for many months.

By 1834 he had completed the arduous task of Bible translation. He returned to the United States for a year in 1845, and his presence resulted in a great increase in Baptist interest in missionary activity. During his latter years he completed a Burmese-English dictionary. He died while on a sea voyage for his health and was buried at sea in the Bay of Bengal in 1850.

Judson wrote several hymns, but best known of his poetical writings is his hymn, "Come, Holy Spirit, Dove Divine."

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

A SMILE OR TWO

So these parents are worried sick about their little boy—eight years old and he hasn't spoken a word. One day he looks up at breakfast and says, "Could I have a little more sugar on my oatmeal?" The parents are dumbfounded. They cry: "You spoke! You said something! Tell us, why have you waited all these years?" The little kid shrugs his shoulders. "Up till this, everything's been okay."

THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT: *Second in a series of four articles*

Confronting the Movement

It would be a mistake today to think that the New Age Movement is harmless to biblical and Christian faith. Caring Christians need to know about the New Age Movement.

Since the NAM strongly advocates many good things, such as clean air and good health, should our churches promote and support the NAM? Or, is the foundation so faulted to biblical truth that Christians should oppose the movement? How does one best understand the NAM and other cults?

Certain facts will help one make correct decisions. There are two main factors required to test or discuss a cult.

One, it is necessary for those in a discussion to have a common definition of terms. Without a definition of terms, a sensible exchange of ideas is impossible. All Christian cults use traditional Christian terms, but give some words new and false meaning. This factor makes it almost impossible for the untrained believer to carry on an intelligent conversation with a cultist, or effectively confront New Age advocates.

Two, the main test is to know what a cult teaches about Christ. It is essential to search cultic literature to know what they teach. What do they believe about the Lordship of Christ? What is the nature of Christ? Is he the unique, fully human, fully divine Son of God as he claimed?

The apostle Paul sought to lift the early churches out of the trap of false teachings. To help them overcome Gnosticism (salvation through elite knowledge) and the Judaizers (a return to the ceremonial law of Moses) Paul taught them concerning the nature of Christ (Ph. 2:5-11; Co. 1:15-20).

A grasp of the doctrine of the person and work of Christ is the basic teaching for Christians to understand in order to intelligently compare and interpret the New Age Movement. Understanding and applying this doctrine enables Christians to help people who are confused by cultic teachings.

Writers of our New Testament scriptures were alarmed by false doctrine. They spent much of their ministry in defense of a pure and plain gospel. They sought to correct errors among believers primarily by teaching them about the unique divine-human nature of Christ. They did not consider their defense as wasted time. It was a reason and opportunity to witness concerning the good news. This plain gospel was for all men based on justification by faith alone for salvation (Ro. 5:1 and Ga. 2:16).

Jesus himself was under constant threat of the religious leaders of his day. Jesus sought to correct their limited views of God, and the unique sonship he had to God the Father.

Untrained disciples are easy prey for heresy. Where biblical Christology is sure, error cannot long endure.—**Lawson Hatfield, Malvern**

Information for this series is based in part on a seminar conducted in February 1990 at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. Dr. David Fite, chairman, Dr. John Newport, leader. Tapes are available from Dr. Fite's office at the seminary.

How's the Temperature?

Dr. J. Clark Hensley, family ministry director for the Mississippi Baptist State Convention, made a profound statement some years ago: "The temperature of our churches is regulated by the thermostats in the homes of our members." In a day when 70 percent of all Southern Baptist churches are either in a plateau or declining growth mode, perhaps it is time we considered the significance of Dr. Hensley's statement. In a most crucial way, the church will never be any stronger than the families within that church are strong. What are we doing to strengthen families?

Paul's words to the Ephesians in 4:15 challenge us to "... grow up into him in all things... (including the family). We work so hard for church growth yet we often fail to recognize the importance of family growth. When families all around us are deteriorating, is it any wonder why the church also is declining? No two institutions are more biblically linked than the institutions of church and family. Paul called this link "a great mystery," yet one we can solve. Stated simply, a lost world should be able to observe the way family members respond and behave toward each other, and from that observation gain a picture of what it is like to have a personal relationship with Christ. What kind of picture are we painting?

Family ministry is a relatively new activity among Southern Baptists. It is still an often misunderstood ministry. Many churches and church leaders see this ministry almost exclusively as a therapeutic effort. Some have called full-time staff persons to counsel troubled marriages and families. Although there is a tremendous need for this type of family ministry, we miss our greatest potential because we are spending too much time treating the wounds and not enough time providing the vaccine. If we are ever to make a difference in the plight of the Christian home, we must place more

emphasis on a preventative approach to family problems. Educating family members in relational skills that enhance family growth is going to have to permeate every program ministry of the church.

A family growth conference is a unique opportunity to educate family members to develop their skills in effective communication, conflict management, needs negotiation, decision making, money management, parenting, and increase their knowledge of such important family issues as aging parents, divorce, remarriage, blended families, single parenting,

substance abuse, sexuality, and much, much more. Churches are encouraged to plan and promote such an event annually to involve their families in learning experiences that enhance growth and build intimacy between family members. Such efforts will go far in the challenge to strengthen families, and consequently, strengthen churches.—**Rick M. Smith, family life educator, North Little Rock**

The Discipleship Training Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention will sponsor a State Family Ministries Conference at Immanuel Church in Little Rock on April 27-28. For more information, contact Bob Holley at 501-376-4791.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION SUNDAY

'Do Not Be Conformed'

The little leaves of a slender plant grown in the mountains of South America have phenomenal power. They can stimulate a sense of confidence, generate untold riches, start war and demand ultimate devotion.

Coca is the plant. Cocaine is the drug extracted from the plant.

For centuries, the inhabitants of the Andes Mountains chewed the coca leaves as a tonic. The Spanish conquistadors began making fortunes from the leaves in the sixteenth century. Late in the nineteenth century, Americans sipped a few drops of cocaine in the popular soft drink Coca-Cola. By 1914, the United States outlawed cocaine, except for medical use.

Today, an estimated 6 million Americans smoke, sniff or inject cocaine. They derive a sense of confidence which temporarily counters the pressure, un happiness and meaninglessness of modern society. Some are willing to spend their entire paycheck on cocaine; others are willing to risk their lives for it.

America's addiction to cocaine has made some people at home and abroad fabulously wealthy. In the impoverished nation of Bolivia, coca revenues produce about \$600 million annually. Other South American nations use cocaine as a chief source of foreign exchange.

Accompanying wealth is intense violence. Cocaine cartels in Colombia have assassinated more than 30 judges

and an attorney general. Drug wars have made some American neighborhoods look like Beirut. The United States government has even named a drug czar and declared a drug war.

Beyond the wealth and violence is another aspect of cocaine. It demands ultimate devotion from its user. It has become a rival

god, calling its users to conform to the most base values of the present age.


Paul beckoned Christians in another direction. "Do not be conformed to this world," he urged, "but be transformed" (Ro. 12:2) Paul knew the dangers associated with conformity to the world's standards. He recognized that all sorts of things could become rival gods, competing with the real God. He wanted believers to have renewed minds to pursue the will of God.

With changed hearts and minds, we Southern Baptists need to change our society. We need to support efforts to interdict cocaine, to rehabilitate drug users and pushers, and to educate children about the dangers of illegal drugs. The alternative may be fatal.

Observe Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Sunday April 29. Think about the relationship between cocaine and conformity. Consider ways you can help others and our society to be transformed to pursue the will of God.—**Robert Parham, SBC Christian Life Commission**



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Sweeping Away the Cobwebs

by Charles Willis
Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE—When Donna Pool became director of her church's media library, the first thing she did was close the doors.

As the successor to the knowledgeable, long-time library director at First Baptist Church of Belton, Texas, Pool was experienced only in checking out resources for her own use. Her predecessor, Daphne Kerley, associate librarian at the University of Mary Hardin Baylor in Belton, had accepted a job in another city, preventing opportunity for a leisurely transition.

"So until I could recruit some help and take a crash course in how to run a library, I shut the doors," Pool recalled recently.

"Her educational approach was a self-study program through Sunday School Board-produced books.

As a free-lance professional photographer, Pool found an unexpected way to unite her vocational skills with her new church role during the transition.

"During one of my work sessions," she recalled, "I discovered this lovely cobweb on the bottom shelf in a corner of the library and ran home to get my camera before someone cleaned house! It was too good to pass up."

Pool's photograph, distributed nationally this year for Church Media Library Emphasis Week, came to the attention of Sunday School Board photojournalist Jim Veneman during a photojournalism

Photo / Donna Pool



Unused books mean missed opportunities

workshop at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary last year.

While Pool is new to media library work, her enthusiasm, combined with deep Southern Baptist roots, have made a significant difference at First Baptist Church, according to Charlie Robinson, minister of

education.

"Donna's efforts are right in step with the heart of our church right now to be equipped as effective servants," Robinson said. "We see the focus of the media library as being central to that effort."

Pool literally grew up with "Bro. Blotz" and "Petie the Partner," cartoon characters created by her minister of education father, Doug Dillard. Both characters addressed library topics during the 1960s, and Petie the Partner was almost exclusively a medium to deliver messages on library subjects.

Her experiences as the daughter of a church staff member included an interest in the library as a young reader. She recalls the limited resources of one church where she said she "read practically the whole library."

Today, she said her foremost interest is in meeting the needs of library users and in cultivating an appreciation for the variety of opportunities a media library offers.

"There are tremendous resources in the media library—all the wonders of God and all the spiritual treasures," she asserted. "We can use them or leave them on the shelf."

"Media Library Emphasis Week is sponsored in April by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Church Media Library Department. The 1990 emphasis theme is "Media Libraries... Touching Lives to Strengthen Ministry." Resources to support the emphasis in church are available through the board's toll-free, corporate order number.

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Reestablishing Trust

by J. Everett Sneed
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"My most important goal is to reestablish trust, friendship and a sense of common purpose among Arkansas Baptists," declared Mike Huckabee, president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. He believes that trust is being reestablished and is encouraged by the events which are transpiring in the state.

Huckabee feels that one of the important pluses which Arkansas Baptists have is the fact that "everyone knows everyone else." It is his purpose to focus on individuals working together, not on correcting errors in the lives of various individuals. "We all make mistakes, but we don't need to work on correcting these," Huckabee declared. He feels that the primary responsibility of the convention is to encourage pastors and church members to serve the Lord.

Huckabee and his wife, Janet, both grew up in Hope. Both of them attended Ouachita Baptist University. They started dating while they were seniors in high school and married in 1974. They have three children, John Mark, 13; David, 9; and Sarah Elizabeth, 7.

Huckabee's background is unique in that he surrendered to the ministry when he was 15 years of age and started preaching immediately in the Baptist Missionary Association. He said, "I felt that the Lord was dealing with me, but I was trying to make a deal with him. I told the Lord that I would be the best layman that he ever could find if he would allow me to enter into broadcasting or law, but this was not what the Lord wanted for me."

Huckabee surrendered to ministry on a Tuesday and his pastor had him to preach his first sermon on Sunday night. He pastored his first church (BMA), at age 18, while he was a student at Ouachita. The first year he was a student at OBU he worked at a radio station, as he had since he was 14 years old.

He graduated from Ouachita in slightly more than two years and went directly to Southwestern Baptist Theological



The Huckabee Family

Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, but didn't officially graduate from Ouachita until May of 1976 because the university only holds commencement in the spring.

During his last summer at OBU his wife of one year and four months was discovered to have cancer. "This was a very trying time for us," he recalls.

The physicians gave little hope for his wife when they first discovered the malignant tumor in the canal of her spine. Later, the doctors told the 20-year-old couple that she might live, but that she would be paralyzed from her waist down.

Huckabee recalls that this was a time of spiritual growth for him and his wife. He said, "this is when I learned that faith is not a desired result. It is not necessary to have things come out the way that you want them to. Faith is becoming a person. It sometimes brings healing, other times it brings death, but always Christian faith means total dependence on God."

He recalls that he went through all five steps of grief that individuals experience when a loved one dies, although his wife recovered from the malignancy.

When Huckabee went to Southwestern Seminary he made the jump from BMA to Southern Baptist. He said, "I had decided during my OBU days that this was what I needed to do, although my friends told me that I would never get a Southern Baptist church." It did require sometime for Huckabee to get work in Southern Baptist life.

Huckabee has a great appreciation for the BMA. He said, "The background that I have come from has had a major impact on the

way I respond to the current controversy in the SBC." In his former Baptist relationship there was a great deal of tension and controversy. People were divided over small things, such as: what version of the Bible should be used, the length of an individual's hair and whether or not there should be kitchens in the church.

Huckabee has definite feelings regarding the controversies that he experienced in the BMA. He said, "I don't want to give my energy to things as small as those that were debated over in the BMA. I think that legalism is as big a curse as liberalism. Both are devastating to the gospel of Christ."

While in seminary Huckabee worked for an unaffiliated evangelical association. He started out doing a variety of things, including the purchase of media time and janitorial services. Soon he became the director of the entire media activity for the organization. Huckabee chose to leave the association because he saw the inherent problems of ministry where there is no denominational affiliation.

Huckabee returned to Arkansas during the latter part of 1979. For a short time he held revivals, supplied pulpits and did free lance communication for churches and evangelists. "I had every intention of being in full time evangelism-communications. The two complement each other greatly."

Huckabee went to the Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff, as a pulpit supply and was invited to conduct a revival. The church then asked him to serve as interim pastor and after a month called him as pastor. Huckabee served the church for six years and the church experienced dramatic growth.

The church had experienced a 20-year decline. At the outset of Huckabee's pastorate at the church, the church was averaging slightly more than 180 in Sunday School attendance. When he left the church, the Sunday School attendance was almost 500. "We had steady growth and the primary instrument was the Sunday School."

Huckabee recalls that this was a learning experience for him. Previously he had felt that churches could be built through the preaching ministry, but he learned that Sunday School was the primary instrument for growing a church. Huckabee credits his former associational director of missions Freddie Pike, now the director of Sunday School work for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, with providing him information on church growth.

No one felt that Immanuel had a bright future when Huckabee became pastor. The pulpit committee asked him, "Do you think that our church can hold out for another five or 10 years before we have to

to disband?" Huckabee's response was, "I don't think that the church has to die at all. We just need to reach people."

The people at Immanuel knew that they could not continue business as usual and live. Huckabee believes that this was the turning point for church. He recalls that the people were willing to reach out in new areas.

Huckabee believes that each church needs to find its own unique role. He said, "If all a church is doing is duplicating what other churches are doing in programming and ministry, it is wasting its time and a lot of money. Every church needs to find its own unique ministry in the community."

Huckabee started an intensive advertising program in the community. The first stage of advertising involved the use of bus benches and a radio program called "Positive Alternatives." Later the church added ACTS (a television ministry) to its activities. Huckabee had been at the church only a few months when the first announcements of ACTS were made. From that moment he felt that this was what he had been searching for all of his life. Southern Baptists had not had anything which tied the local church and community together in this unique way.

When Huckabee first mentioned the possibility of a television ministry for Immanuel many in the community laughed. But in February of 1981 the church began working toward developing this ministry. Huckabee said, "The Lord overcame all the problems and the ministry became a reality."

When Beech Street First Church, Texarkana, approached Huckabee he was not

interested in leaving Immanuel. He told Beech Street that he was not interested unless they were willing to conduct a television ministry. The pulpit committee told him that this was the reason they had contacted him.

Under Huckabee's leadership, the Beech Street Church has grown from an average attendance of 505 in 1986 to more than 800. Average attendance for 1990 has been 818, with some Sundays having an attendance of more than 900. There are three basic areas which Huckabee has used to produce growth. First, is Sunday School which has served as the base for all the congregation does. Second is the development of a family activities center. The plans for this building had already been approved before Huckabee became pastor. But the money for the project needed to be raised. He feels that this has served as an excellent outreach tool.

Finally, the church has used television as a means of contacting many individuals. The church inserts 30 to 40 hours a week of local programming in the ACTS network. This includes programs about the school, sports, talk shows, Bible studies and worship services. Huckabee and the church staff work to provide wholesome information in which the community is interested, as well as opportunities for worship and spiritual growth.

Huckabee has positive feelings about the work in Arkansas. In addition to efforts to establish trust in our state, Huckabee seeks to undergird the Guatemala Partnership and work with Dr. Moore in finding new ways to reach people. Huckabee said, "the traditional ways that we have gone about

reaching people will no longer work. If we are to reach 'the baby boom generation' we must institute new methods. It is essential that we do whatever it takes to reach people for Christ."

Huckabee's goal is to involve churches with a "fresh joy." He said, "We need to put the tension of the past year behind us and work together as brothers and sisters in Christ. When we are true co-laborers with Christ we will see the lost saved and Christians maturing in the Lord."

Amon Baker European Tour

Amon Baker will be conducting his fifth European Mission Chorale tour July 18-Aug. 1. The purpose of the tour is to carry the gospel in a unique way to European churches and American military establishments.

The tour will encompass Holland, Belgium, West German, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. For more information, write Amon Baker, 10310 W. Markham, Suite 206, Little Rock AR 72205.

Baptist Men's University

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—Baptist Men's University, a specialized national training conference for Baptist Young Men and Baptist Men, will be held May 31-June 3 on the campus of Rhodes College in Memphis.

The university is designed to equip the leadership of these groups with the tools they need to have a successful program.

For registration information, contact the Arkansas Brotherhood Office at 376-4791 or write: Baptist Men's University, Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis TN 38104; telephone 901-272-2461.

Guatemala Notes

The following Baptist Student Union group went to Guatemala from March 10-19. They conducted a Spiritual Emphasis Week with missionary kids in grades 7-12 at the Inter-American School in Quetzaltenango. They were: Karla Elrod, Robert Inman, Patricia Knight, Kelley Campbell, Arliss Dickerson, Steven Thurmon, Lamar Murry, Holley Nobles and Michelle Shatley.



Mike Huckabee and the Beech Street Church mobile television unit.

LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

James W. Bryant, who served as pastor of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith from March 1983 to November 1989, will begin serving April 16 as executive director of The Shoulder, a non-profit Christian alcohol and drug rehabilitation center in Houston, Texas. He will be representing the institution to Houston-area churches, civic groups, foundations, and various governmental agencies. Bryant was also recently honored by Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary for his contribution as a trustee. He will be unable to complete his five-year trustee term at the seminary due to his job-related relocation.



Bryant

Vaughn Blue has resigned as pastor of Northside Church in Batesville to serve as pastor of McRae First Church.

Tony Cherry is serving as pastor of Newark Southern Church, going there from Diaz Church.

Craig Johnson, a member of First Church in Van Buren, was recently named Athlete

of the Year by the Arkansas Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Doyle and Marie Lumpkin, who have been serving the past 23 months as volunteers of the Foreign Mission Board, will return home April 17. They have been involved in establishing an English language church in the American military communities of Grafenwoehr/Vilseck, Bavaria, West Germany.

Barry Bates was recently ordained to the ministry by Hillside Church in Camden, where he serves as minister of music and education.

Pearl Deer of Little Rock, formerly of Blytheville, died April 1 in Little Rock at age 84. Her funeral services were held April 4 at Blytheville First Church, where she was a member. She was a former executive director of Mississippi County Tuberculosis Association. Survivors are a son, Philip James Deer Jr. of Little Rock; a daughter, Polly Goatcher of Lenexa, Kans.; five grandchildren; and a great-grandchild.

Nathan Redditt of Little Rock died March 31 at age 80. His funeral services were held April 3 at Markham Street Church in Little Rock, where he was an active member. Survivors include his wife, Opal; one son; two daughters; nine grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren. Memorials may be made to Markham Street Church Outreach Program.

Roy McLeod has accepted a call to serve as pastor of Reynolds Memorial Church in Little Rock, coming there from Waldo.

Briefly

Sulphur Rock Church broke ground March 11 for a new 4,335 square foot auditorium that also will house a 3,500 square foot basement which will provide room for a kitchen, fellowship hall, and educational space. Eddie McCord, director of missions for Independence Association, was speaker. David Coleman and Chester Miller are pastors.

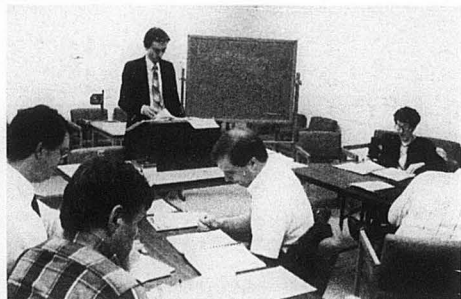
Arbana Church is planning an improvement program that will include an addition to the fellowship hall and kitchen. Hugh Davis is pastor.

Texarkana Trinity Church will present "That Day at Calvary," composed by Gary Lanier, minister of music, as an Easter cantata. Performances will be April 13-14 at 8 p.m. and April 15, at 7 p.m.

Cotter First Church held a "Here's Hope, Jesus Cares for You" revival March 18-23 that resulted in 10 professions of faith and two additions by letter. Ben Rowell, pastor of Rogers First Church, was evangelist. Sam



Pete Petty, associate in the ABCS Missions Department, pictured here as "Beep the Clown," assisted Neal Stephens, ABCS Church Extension field consultant, and Terry Bryant, Crystal Hill Church, in beginning a work in Southern Pines Mobile Home Park. Twenty-five children and parents attend the Saturday, March 10, program.



Jim Browning of Kansas City (standing) was one of the leaders of an Interfaith Witness Associate training session at Ouachita Baptist University. Nineteen people were given 12 hours of training in the March 8-9 conference. Subjects offered were New Age, Mormonism, and Cults and the Family. Pete Petty, ABCS Missions Department, directed the conference.

Wakefield, music/education director at Harrison First Church, directed the music. Don Corbitt is pastor.

Wilson First Church held its "Here's Hope, Jesus Cares for You" revival March 17-23. Homer Shirley, pastor of Siloam Springs First Church, was evangelist. Ron Marcum was music leader. Pastor Delton Cooper reported seven professions of faith and six baptisms.

Petit Jean First Church celebrated its third anniversary with homecoming April 8. Activities included a morning worship service, a noontime luncheon, and an afternoon program. B.L. Dorman is pastor.

Lavaca First Church held a groundbreaking service March 18 for a building program that is estimated to cost \$550,000. Members pledged over \$538,501 and a cash offering of \$236,460 was received on this special day. Members pledged more than \$302,000. Grant Ethridge is pastor.

Russellville Second Church Baptist Young Women are sponsoring a women's retreat April 27-28 at Camp Paron. Kay Kincl of Magnolia will be speaker.

Social Hill First Church will dedicate a new building April 15 with a service that being at 1:30 p.m. Gary Turner, pastor of Third Street Church in Arkadelphia will be speaker. Barry King is pastor.

Red to Conduct 'Celebrate Life'

Buryl Red, composer in New York City, has confirmed that he will conduct his musical, "Celebrate Life," at Music Arkansas on July 27. Music Arkansas is a camp for youth in grades 7-12 on the campus of Ouachita Baptist University, July 23-27.

When "Celebrate Life," a musical/drama depicting the life of Christ, was introduced in 1972 at a Church Training Youth Celebration, it was expected to be primarily a production for youth choirs. Seventeen years later the youth of the 1990s as well as the youth of the 1970s are continuing to present "Celebrate Life," making it one of the all-time, best-selling Christian musicals with more than 350,000 copies sold.

In October, it was updated with new orchestrations by Red. The new orchestrations present a more contemporary sound and break new ground for combining live and taped instrumental music. The music combines traditional instruments with synthesized sounds and instruments from the Orient and Middle Eastern countries.

Lester McCullough, director of the Church Music Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, said, "It is a singular honor to have Buryl Red work with the

youth of Arkansas Baptist churches and present his musical, 'Celebrate Life.' The musical is biblically based, Christ-centered and can have a life-changing impact on our youth."

Arkansas Baptist youth can find out about participation in Music Arkansas from their church music director or by contacting the Church Music Department.

Oasis Dedicates New Center

LITTLE ROCK—The Siebert Center dedication and open house is to be held at the Oasis Renewal Center on Easter Sunday April 15 from 3-6 p.m.

The Siebert Center, dedicated to retired Little Rock businessman Siegfried Siebert and his wife, Mildred, is the newest addition to the facility, located at 14800 Cooper Orbit Road in western Little Rock. The Oasis is an ecumenical Christian center on 41 acres offering seminars, workshops, support groups and retreats dealing with topics related to personal and spiritual growth.

For more information, contact the Oasis at 225-6890.

Quachita Paper Wins Awards

ARKADELPHIA—The "Signal," the weekly newspaper of Ouachita Baptist University, has been named as the nation's top tabloid-size college newspaper in the area of overall design. The award was presented to the newspaper staff by Edmund Sullivan, director of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA), at its annual meeting held recently in New York City.

In addition to the overall design award, the "Signal" staff won awards in seven individual categories, including one second place, three third places and three certificates of merit.

Coates New SBC Admissions Rep

Johnna Coates, a native of West Memphis, has been appointed admissions representative for Southern Baptist College of Walnut Ridge, announced Jeff Main, SBC admissions director.

Coates is a 1989 Southern graduate. As admissions representative, she will be responsible for student recruitment in eastern Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Missouri.



South Side Church in Fort Smith recently held a noteburning service, retiring a \$100,000 debt on construction of an educational building and renovation of a sanctuary. A campaign was begun to raise money to pay off the debt, make some needed repairs, and buy some equipment. The Hallelujah Goal was \$165,000, but the congregation pledged \$205,000, enabling the \$100,000 to be paid off in eight months. Participants included (left to right) Art Martin, "Together We Can" steering committee chairman; Blanche Sawyer, finance committee chairperson; Pastor John W. Horne; Ruby Hope, charter member; and Caleb Fitting, a youth member.

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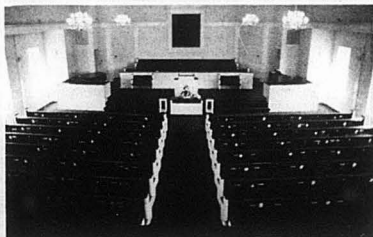
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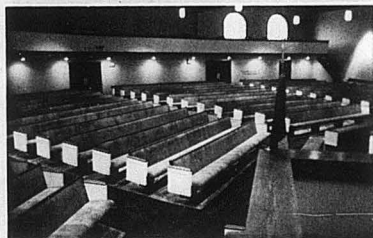
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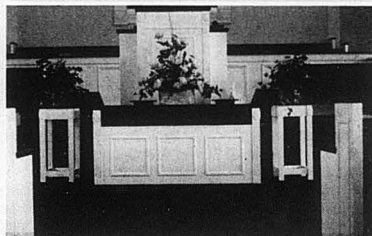
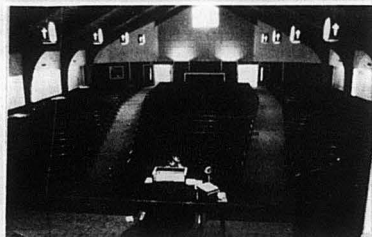
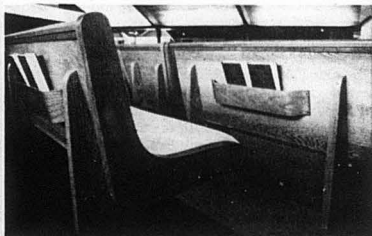
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CHILD-CARE

House Approves Bill

by Kathy Palen

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—The House of Representatives has approved child-care legislation that would establish a voucher system for parents, provide tax credits for low-income families and set up school-based programs for "latchkey" children.

The bill, which would cost an estimated \$28 billion over five years, represents a compromise between proposals by House Democrats on the Education and Labor Committee and the Ways and Means Committee.

Despite the threat of a presidential veto, the House approved the measure 265 to 145 after rejecting a White House-supported substitute.

As approved by the House, the legislation would:

- Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit to help low-income families obtain child care. The bill would increase the amount of the EITC—which is available only to working families with children—and adjust the credit for family size.

- Increase funding for the Title XX Social Services Block Grant program, earmarking those increases for child care. States accepting those funds would be required to establish child-care standards and training requirements.

- Establish a program that would use schools to provide care for pre-school children and before-school and after-school care for school-aged children. Most of these services would be targeted for children from low income families.

- Authorize additional funds to expand Head Start to a full-day, year round program.

- Provide money to states to improve the quality of child care.

- Offer incentives to encourage private businesses to provide care for their employees' children.

The House measure also incorporates provisions for sectarian providers from the child-care legislation passed by the Senate last June.

Under the House bill, states that receive Title XX child-care funds would be required to establish a system of child-care vouchers, which could be used to purchase care from church-based centers.

Although the measure would prohibit the use of Title XX funds for "any sectarian purpose, including sectarian worship and instruction," it would exclude assistance in the form of vouchers from that prohibition.

The bill would allow sectarian programs to require their employees to adhere to the religious tenets and teachings of the organization operating the program. It also would permit such programs to require their employees not to use drugs or alcohol.

Religious child-care providers receiving less than 80 percent of their funds from federal and state governments would be allowed to give preference in hiring based on religion, as well as to admit children on the basis of religious preference for slots not directly funded by Title XX.

The House rejected an amendment that would have prohibited the use of any federal funds—including vouchers—under the Title XX program for any sectarian purpose, including worship or instruction. The amendment would have allowed religious organizations to receive federal funds if they operated non-sectarian

programs.

Members also rejected an amendment that would have made voucher programs optional, not mandatory, for states.

In a 195 to 225 vote, the House defeated a substitute bill sponsored by Reps. Charles W. Stenholm, R-Texas, and E. Clay Shaw, R-Fla. The measure was supported by the Bush administration.

Although in some aspects similar to the House-approved bill, the Stenholm-Shaw substitute would not have authorized funds for school-based programs; would not have provided as much additional funding to Head Start and Title XX programs; and would not have required states to develop child-care standards.

The House bill now goes to a conference committee with the Senate. Once a compromise is worked out, it will have to be approved by both the House and the Senate before being sent to the White House for President Bush's signature. Should the president veto the bill, Congress would have to muster a two-thirds vote in order to override the veto and enact the legislation.

Church-State Problems, BJC Warns

by Kathy Palen

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

With the passage of the child-care vote in the House, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs continues to warn members of Congress and the Bush administration of potential church-state problems contained in proposed legislation.

"The BJC has consciously abstained from endorsing any particular child care proposal on the merits," said J. Brent Walker, BJC associate general counsel. "Instead, we try to critique the church-state aspects of all of the proposals.

"Premature endorsement of any bill—on the merits or otherwise—can be counterproductive because of the rapidity with which bills are amended and because such an endorsement can detract from our credibility when we speak to church-state issues, which are the core of our program assignment."

In the past month, Walker has met with President George Bush, the House Democratic leadership and congressional staff members to discuss the various child-care proposals pending in the House.

"We continue to oppose any proposal that would use federal tax dollars to fund sectarian child care, whether in the form

of vouchers or direct grants," Walker said.

"We do not oppose the use of non-discriminatory earned income tax credits as an aspect of child-care policy, because such credits do not have obvious church-state implications. This kind of tax credit is not a voucher."

Such provisions run contrary to the historic Baptist advocacy of church-state separation, he said. They also flout the will of Southern Baptists as expressed in a 1988 Southern Baptist Convention resolution and a half-dozen Baptist state convention resolutions passed during the last six months, he added.

Echoing those sentiments, Oliver S. Thomas, BJC general counsel, said: "Government funding and regulation of church child care is a bad idea. . . . The SBC in a nearly unanimous resolution called upon its churches to conduct their child-care programs 'without financing from the federal government.' Moreover, the resolution urged that any child-care bill 'include adequate safeguards to maintain the separation of church and state.'

"The recent 'qualified' endorsement by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission of a bill that so clearly contradicts one of the primary points of the SBC resolution is surprising, to say the least."

Trustees Approve Plan

by **Marv Knox**
Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—Trustees adopted a compromise faculty-selection process for Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary March 13.

Faculty selection has been the core of controversy at the Wake Forest, N.C., seminary since October 1987, when the trustees' new conservative majority changed the way the school picks professors.

Those changes reduced the faculty's influence and gave more power to the president, who reports directly to the trustees.

The newest selection process restores some of the faculty's influence. It begins with presidential/faculty determination of a faculty vacancy and its job description.

A focal point of the plan is provision for a search committee—comprised of the president, vice president for academic affairs, three faculty members and one trustee—to propose candidates for each faculty vacancy. A nominee must get a two-thirds vote of the committee to make the final list of candidates given to the

president.

Trustees ultimately elect the new faculty member, based on the president's recommendation. The president is not required to recommend someone from the search committee's list and/or someone endorsed by the faculty. But if he does not, he must tell the trustees the faculty does not concur and provide them with the faculty's objections.

The process will be implemented for a year and evaluated at the trustees' March 1991 meeting. Vacancies already have been declared for four positions: one in Christian education, one in New Testament studies and two in Old Testament studies.

The process represents "a compromise where generous concessions were made on both sides," said President Lewis A. Drummond. "It gave faculty a very significant role in faculty selection, where their input is taken seriously. But it preserved the trustee and administration's prerogative of the election.

"It is a document completely permeated with 'shared governance.' We strove for

that. It will satisfy our accrediting agencies, we hope."

"There was a swap-out—a spirit of conciliation," added trustee Chairman James R. DeLoach, an associate pastor from Houston. "The accrediting agencies and faculty have said we (trustees) do not need to be involved in the process too early, but we do need to be represented."

The faculty also approved creation of a committee to draft a response to the process to be presented at the April 18 faculty meeting.

Dilday Recovering From Surgery

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, is recovering in a Fort Worth, Texas, hospital following more than two hours of open-heart surgery March 28.

Doctors performed triple-bypass heart surgery to relieve blockage in three cardiac arteries when a balloon dilation failed to clear the blockage.

He is expected to resume his duties at the seminary in late April.

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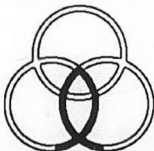
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Assemblies Bring Change

by Mark Wingfield
SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptist churches that have responded to a call for "solemn assembly" are reporting extraordinary results, which they attribute to prayer and repentance.

During the National Prayer Teleconference Sept. 17, six prayer leaders from Southern Baptist Convention agencies issued a "Call to Solemn Assembly and Prayer." Solemn assembly is an Old Testament concept of spiritual renewal based upon prayer and repentance.

Henry Blackaby of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, one of the six prayer leaders who issued the call, said what has happened since is extraordinary.

"At this point I can say that God is definitely expressing the greatest movement I've ever known," Blackaby said. "There is a profound moving of God."

COMMENT

In Pursuit of Better Television

In 1989, a coalition sought to eliminate indecent material from radio and television through legal action. This group included the American Family Association, Inc., several Baptist groups and many other denominational bodies. The court returned the effort to "enforce prohibitions against broadcasting indecency" to the Federal Communications Commission.

Currently the commission is seeking public comment regarding the validity of a total ban on broadcasting of indecent material. The deadline for receiving comments regarding the decision to be made by the FCC is April 19, 1990.

The FCC said, "The commission has longed believed that the broadcasting of indecent programs during times when there is a reasonable risk of children in the audience is inimical (detrimental) to the public interest."

We encourage our readers to write immediately to the Federal Communications Commission at 1919 M Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20054 to express their support of a ban on indecent programming that negatively impacts children.—Editor J. Everett Sneed

Blackaby said he has seen "an increasing number of leaders who are absolutely aware of that moving and adjusting their lives to what God is doing."

The response is forming "a crescendo from top to bottom" within churches, associations and state conventions, he explained. "God is moving out there in the hearts of common people."

That does not mean that every problem within the SBC and its churches will be solved overnight, Blackaby said. But response to the call to solemn assembly is further evidence of an emerging spiritual awakening in the nation, he added.

At least 10 state conventions already have had or are planning to have solemn assemblies, Blackaby said. Dozens of associations and churches have answered the call to prayer.

When asked to explain the results of their solemn assemblies, pastors, associational directors of missions and state leaders sometimes faced a dilemma.

"I feel it in my spirit, and I know it is happening, but I have difficulty explaining it," one director of missions said.

Others have seen more tangible results—sometimes immediately and sometimes after months of anticipation.

Kirby Kennedy, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Roswell, N.M., led his church into a time of prayer and repentance after hearing Blackaby speak.

The assembly began with the church's three staff members testifying to God's work in their lives and asking forgiveness of the congregation for wrongs committed.

"All across the sanctuary, people were sobbing as they were touched by God's spirit," Kennedy wrote in a recent issue of the *Baptist New Mexican*, newsjournal of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico. "Soon the entire front of the sanctuary was filled with people on their knees, sobbing and crying out to God in repentance."

"The aisles were filled with people going to one another asking for forgiveness and also forgiving. Never before have I seen an entire church body cleansed in one service, but to my knowledge that is what happened."

Since that time, the church has increased its average Sunday school attendance by 50, the pastor said. "We have seen people saved, needs being met, the needy being helped and many more people involved in prayer, visitation and ministry."

Associational director of missions Ken Robinson said the events at Calvary Church illustrate what is happening across Pecos Valley Baptist Association.

When the call went out, Robinson approached each church with the idea. The churches have not stopped with solemn assemblies, however. They have continued praying at special times daily or weekly.

"The Lord is doing something in our churches now. There's a spirit of optimism, of the awareness of the presence of the Lord wherever you go."

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'Appalling Crisis'

by Chip Alford & Scott Collins
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Churches need a reawakening to help meet the challenge of "an appalling crisis in our culture," the executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission told students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, March 28.

That crisis exists, according to Richard Land, because churches have stopped loving people.

"Their buildings remain intact. Their ministers minister and their congregations congregate, but their lamp stands have been removed," Land said during a visit to the school which included guest lectures in Christian ethics classes. "The church is plunged in darkness. It has no light because it has no love."

America is faced with crippling epidemics of alcohol and drug abuse, sexual immorality and pornography-fed violence, Land said. The homes and com-

munities of the nation "are buffeted by the centrifugal forces and are racked by life diminishing philosophies," he said.

The crisis is first a philosophical one in the realm of beliefs and ideas, Land said, claiming Americans have become "disinherited spirits" and "cognitive wanderers" without any spiritual roots or sense of community.

One negative result of the philosophical crisis, he said, has been the decay of the family.

"The nuclear family as we have known it in the Judeo-Christian West is so shattered that concerted efforts are being made to redefine it to fit the new reality," Land said. "The family has all but ceased to function in a nurturing, moralizing way in major segments of American culture."

Land said the church "must reawaken among believers an understanding and a practice of the Christian family. We have got to have family practice, not just family

preaching."

Next, Land said believers must reach beyond themselves to furnish the hurting with "a remedy for the hole in their hearts and an answer for the emptiness of their lives. We must be ready to tell them and to show them of a God who loves them, of a Jesus who died for them, and of an abundant life in which we are not the sum of our possessions."

The church, Land said, must share with the world the message that Jesus Christ is "the answer to their emptiness, a heal for their hurts."

"We do not live in a good world," Land told students in an ethics class. "We live in an evil world. This is not a neutral world. It is a world that is racked by spiritual warfare."

Countering claims by pro-choice groups, Land told students abortion is not a women's issue, but is about life. "Life is an inalienable right. We are the last defense in the battle for human life," he added. "All life deserves respect, but human life demands reverence."

"When a woman has an abortion, she is imposing her morality on that baby and it is fatal."

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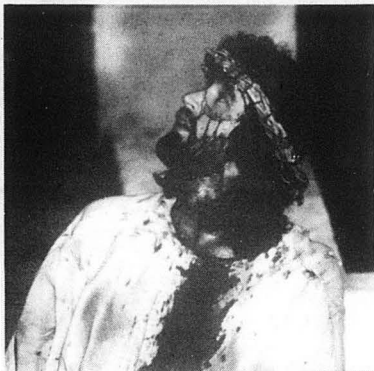
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Nominations Challenged

by Dan Martin
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP)—The report of the 1990 Southern Baptist Convention Committee on Nominations will be challenged by committee member David Montoya of Gravette, Ark.

Montoya is pastor of First Baptist Church in the northwestern Arkansas town. Within hours after the committee adjourned its March 22-23 meeting in Nashville, Montoya said he would present alternates to about half of the nominees at the SBC annual meeting June 12-14 in New Orleans.

"I was told before this meeting that this committee would be inclusive; I discovered that it was not," Montoya told reporters. "I was told the hard-line people would not be appointed this time and that we (the SBC) would be moving back to the center.

"But in this report you will find the hard-liners," he said.

Montoya is one of two Arkansas representatives on the Committee on Nominations, which nominates trustees to the national boards, agencies and institutions of the 14.9-million member SBC.

The Committee on Nominations has been at the heart of the 11-year theological political controversy in the denomination. Under SBC bylaws, the convention president appoints a Committee on Committees, which nominates members of the Committee on Nominations. The Committee on Nominations, after election by the convention, nominates trustees to be presented at the next annual meeting.

The election of "conservative" presidents—who appoint "conservatives" to the Committee on Committees, who nominate "conservatives" to the Committee on Nominations, who, in turn, nominate "conservatives" as trustees—has been a key strategy in the effort to redirect

the convention theologically.

Montoya said he had been "a soldier in the political machine created by a group of individuals who abused the inerrancy issue for their own advantage," from 1982, when he graduated from Criswell College, until August of 1989.

The leaders of the "conservative political machine," he said, "are men who are using the issue of inerrancy as an opportunistic base... to gain political power. They do not reward soldiers for their theological homogeneity, but rather for their political loyalty."

Montoya said he plans to present a minority report because he believes "there are other, more middle-of-the-road non-political Baptists out there who need to be appointed. I don't believe we are going to get anywhere with this controversy as long as we keep recirculating the same political leaders over and over again."

"There are those who will be angry because I have brought this out. I am sorry, but it needs to be brought out," he said. "There are some who will say my integrity is worthless because I talked with the press, but I say the Bible says, 'Whatsoever you do, don't do it in secret.' They are talking about being inclusive, but they are doing something else."

Montoya mentioned two examples he identified as "hard-liners" being named by the committee: Lee Roberts, a Marietta, Ga., businessman who led a challenge against Mercer University and its president, being named to the SBC Executive Committee, and Robert Tenery, pastor of Burkemont Baptist Church in Morganton, N.C., and editor of the "conservative" *Southern Baptist Advocate*, being named to the SBC Sunday School Board. Tenery rotated off the SSB in 1989 after serving an eight-year term.

Montoya said he would begin contacting state executives, denominational leaders and "anybody I can find" to begin assembling his list of alternate nominees. He said he would make them public in conjunction with the release of the report of the Committee on Nominations in late April.

After Montoya's news conference Barrett Duke, pastor of First Baptist Church of Highlands Ranch in suburban Denver, and vice chairman of the committee, also met with the news media.

Duke said "the large majority of the committee—most of the committee—is agreed on the work we have done and is satisfied with the work done. We are not talking about a large minority here.

"I feel comfortable with the work of this committee. I think it represents the constituency, and the nominations that come out will show that."

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LESSONS FOR LIVING

Convention Uniform

The Resurrection Is True

by Tom M. Deere, First Church, Plainview

Basic passage: John 20:18-31

Focal passage: John 20:18-31

Central truth: The resurrection is true for all the right reasons.

Centuries before the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Job asked the question: "If a man dies, shall he live again?" (Jb. 14:14). The Greek philosopher, Socrates, was asked the same question by his friends as he lay dying. His helpless answer was, "I hope so." He had no hope of the resurrection. Job, on the other hand, had faith that he would "see God, whom (he) shall see for (himself)" (Jb. 19:26-27).

Here we see a stark contrast between two people as they both pondered the same question: "If I die, will I live again?" What we find in the words of these two men express the same thoughts of the majority of people on earth. Christians believe they will be resurrected to everlasting life. On what evidence do Christians base their belief in a future resurrection? The Word of God—we believe it because God said it (1 Co. 15:12-20). John provides us with three reasons.

(1) The resurrection is personal (v. 18). The resurrection of Christ was a personal reality for Mary Magdalene. She saw him, and he spoke to her (Jn. 20:14-17). Although Christians today have not seen Christ and heard him physically, he is still personal. We see him with the eyes of faith, and we hear him because he speaks to those who have "ears to hear" (Mt. 13:9) the Word of God.

(2) The resurrection is persuasive (vv. 28-29). Thomas saw and touched the nail prints in Christ's hands. He put his hand into Christ's side. Thomas was persuaded by his physical sight and touch that this was his Lord and his God. Because Thomas was an eyewitness to Christ's appearance, we are persuaded to believe his testimony, as it is the Word of God. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (v. 29).

(3) The resurrection has a purpose (v. 31). Without the resurrection, the cross would have no power. The reason John wrote his gospel was to present Jesus as the Christ "and that believing (we) may have life in his name" (v. 31). This would be impossible if Jesus were not "the resurrection and the life" (Jn. 11:25).

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Life and Work

The Risen Christ

by Emil Williams, First Church, Jonesboro

Basic passage: John 20:1,11-18

Focal passage: John 20:1,11-18

Central truth: The great evidence of the resurrection is a personal encounter with the risen Christ.

The passage centers on Mary Magdalene's experience. She had received new life from Jesus during his ministry. Now she is seen as the first witness of his resurrection. Mary came to the tomb, not to meet a risen Christ, but to express her love for the one who was dead. The time of her visit fixes the resurrection early Sunday morning. She found an empty tomb.

In verses 1-10, she reported the empty tomb to Peter and "the other disciples," they hurried to the tomb and realized that the miracle had occurred. Mary, however, did not yet know of a risen Christ, only an empty tomb. A weeping Mary stood by the tomb, the possibility of his being alive had not occurred to her. Looking inside and seeing the two angels, her response to them was that she was grieving because the body had been stolen.

The empty tomb is a powerful witness, but what happened next is the heart of the resurrection event: She turned and saw the living Lord. He had come to her himself. The one who was raised from the dead was there for her. That she did not recognize him at first may indicate that his appearance was altered. Or, she simply did not expect to see him; she assumed he was dead. Recognition came as he spoke her name. It was not just the sound of his voice, but the familiar name that recalled the past relationship. As he used the familiar name for her, so she for him, "Rabboni." She apparently moved to embrace him, but Jesus stopped her. We understand his response in verse 17 to mean he had moved beyond the relationship they had shared. In a period of "transition," he was moving toward ascension; a new relationship would begin in which he would be spiritually present with her as the glorified Lord.

What lay ahead would be different, but the quality would be greater, not lesser. No wonder she ran to the disciples with a new joy. He was alive! He would always be present! She had met him! The personal encounter—greatest testimony of resurrection.

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Bible Book

Living Again

by Verne Wickliffe, First Church, Des Arc

Basic passage: Matthew 27:1-28

Focal passage: Matthew 27:57-60; 28:1,7,16-20

Central truth: Jesus conquered death so we may conquer death.

The widow, standing at the graveside with tears streaming down her cheeks, said, "How can I give him up." It was a statement not a question because she knew life had to go on without her husband. The cemetery is often referred to as the final resting place, a place to bury the dead and give them up. Similar thoughts were in the minds of Joseph of Arimathea and the other disciples when Jesus was placed in the tomb. In grief they were doing what we all do, giving him up and going on.

Using burial as a symbol of giving up and going on without someone or something, we might examine the cemeteries of our own lives. We all have real cemeteries, but we also have cemeteries where we have buried parts of ourselves. The idealism of youth is crushed by the restrictions of an adult world and we bury those ideals in our cemetery and go on without them. Those ideals are not forgotten but buried, and given up. We also bury the zeal we had for Christ right after our conversion, the spiritual high, rededications we've made, and the fruits of the Spirit. They are not forgotten, the cemetery is well marked, for some reason we go on without them.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to grieve on Easter morning. They were showing their love for Jesus who was buried, and beginning the long process of giving him up. To their surprise Jesus was not there, instead an angel announced that Jesus lives, there would be no giving him up. Jesus conquered death so that we can conquer death in his power and live eternally. Our resurrection does not wait until our physical death. Jesus enters our personal cemeteries where we have buried zeal, spirituality, rededication, and the fruits of the Spirit, brings them out of their grave and into our lives again. Part of the beauty of Jesus's resurrection is that he is at work in our personal cemeteries to resurrect the good gifts of God we have buried and bring us to full life.

Jesus lives and is working to resurrect our present death as certainly as resurrecting us to eternity.

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Convention Uniform

Pulling Together

by Tom M. Deere, First Church, Plainview

Basic passage: 1 John 1:1-2:26

Focal passage: 1 John 1:5-2:6

Central truth: Pulling together requires fellowship.

One day two mules ran into a perplexing dilemma. The farmer had been plowing with his team all morning, and it came time for lunch. Well, the mules also knew it was time to quit plowing. One headed toward the water trough, and the other wanted to go to the feed trough. Predictably, the two mules got caught up in a muddled mess. Having settled the ensuing ruckus, the farmer said to his mules: "You boys need to get in fellowship. Like two fellows in the same ship, you need to pull together."

When we are out of fellowship with God, we are like these two mules, pulling against God rather than working with him. The result will always be the same, broken fellowship with God the Father. There is a solution, however, as John tells us.

(1) Recognition of sin is the truth (vv. 5-6). Walking in the darkness of sin is incompatible with living in the "light" (v. 5). We either walk in darkness or we walk in the light. "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" (Am. 3:3). If we are not walking in the light, we must recognize the truth and face the following test.

(2) Repentance of sin is the test (v. 9). When we become aware of our sins, we have two choices. We either continue in rebellion against God, or we confess our sins and turn away from them completely. "If we confess our sins," God is "faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

(3) Restoration of fellowship is the triumph (2:5). With our sins forgiven and our unrighteousness cleansed, we can at last know with certainty that we are "in him," in the sphere of God's divine light. This is our triumph because fellowship with the Father has been restored. And how do we know when fellowship with the Father has been restored? When our hearts do "not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jn. 3:21-22). When we walk in the light, we are working with the Father.

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Life and Work

Preparation for Ministry

by Emil Williams, First Church, Jonesboro

Basic passage: Jeremiah 1:4-19, 17-19

Focal passage: Jeremiah 1:4-10

Central truth: Whom God calls, he equips.

We will simply follow Jeremiah's account of his experience of call.

God's call came through a word (vv. 4-5). The heart of the prophetic message was always the Word of God, a perception of God's message. That message was that God had a purpose for Jeremiah to fulfill that was in place before he was born and to which he was consecrated before his birth.

Jeremiah resisted the call with the excuse that he was too young and lacked the communication skills for such a responsibility (v. 6). He exaggerated his own inadequacy and underestimated the power of God.

God's response places Jeremiah's ministry and his call to all of us in its proper perspective (vv. 7-10): (1) He deals with Jeremiah's protest with encouragement not to underestimate his ability. (2) God has a definite purpose for Jeremiah which can be accomplished, his work is "do-able." (3) He promises his presence; therefore, there is no real reason to fear his adversaries. (4) God touches the prophet's mouth symbolizing his personal contact with him and the fact that it is God's Word that would be communicated ultimately, not Jeremiah's.

Finally, in verse 10, we see the real dimensions of the prophetic ministry, the importance of the task. It is no small task to which he calls his servants. The prophet, because of his messages and not because of his own personal power or ability, has a word to be heeded by the nations and the kingdoms of the world. That ministry is seen as two-fold, negative and positive. Negatively the talk is to "pluck up, break down, destroy, overthrow." These are things to be wiped away before the new work can begin, else we build on a foundation that will assure failure. The positive side, though, is to "build and plant." And in that is seen the ultimate goal of God for his servants—to be a part of establishing good.

All ministry can be evaluated in the light of that. It is often necessary to replace old structures, to clear the ground, but our best work is to build and to plant. God equips all his called and serving people.

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Bible Book

High Priest

by Verne Wickliffe, First Church, Des Arc

Basic passage: Hebrews 4:14-6:20

Focal passage: Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:8-10; 6:1-6, 17-20

Central truth: Jesus being our high priest gives us confidence in faith.

Having no priestly order in our church makes the priestly role of Jesus more difficult to understand. To facilitate understanding, I found it helpful to think in terms of a little boy and his big brother. A little boy is extremely limited in what he can do. Travel beyond the limits of the yard is forbidden, building a tree house is simply beyond the little boy's ability. The big brother has the capabilities the little boy lacks. Sensitive to the plight of the little boy the big brother invites him to come along beyond the yard, helps the little boy accomplish those things beyond his ability. We cannot enter into the presence of God and into his life on our own, it is beyond our ability.

Through Jesus we are priests able to come into the presence of God. But it is only through Jesus, and as lesser priests we are still in need of Jesus to make us righteous and acceptable to God. Therefore, Jesus is our high priest. God's plan for redeeming mankind was to provide our way to God through such a high priest, for this purpose Jesus was called by God to come to us (He. 5:8-10). Jesus has opened the way to God so that we may accompany him into God's presence and into life (He. 6:17-20).

An effective big brother and an effective high priest have in common a sensitivity for those who cannot do for themselves. This sensitivity makes the little boy aware he can come to his big brother for help, and makes us aware we can come to Jesus for help. Hebrews 4:14-16 reminds us of Jesus's sensitivity to our weakness. Because we have such compassionate help, we hold fast to our faith knowing Jesus makes useable. Because of Jesus's sensitivity we can also come boldly before God, asking for mercy and grace, or for the help we need. There is no reason for our faith to lack maturity, help is available, we need to grow to maturity (He. 6:1-30).

Hebrews 6:4-6 will no doubt be a topic of discussion. I feel that the writer was addressing Christians whose lives caused doubt about the reality of their salvation.

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LIBERIA

Missionaries Forced Out

by Donald D. Martin
ABC Foreign Mission Board

MONROVIA, Liberia (BP)—Most Southern Baptist missionaries in the Liberian cities of Yekepa and Zwedru left for Liberia's capital, Monrovia, March 30 because of an upsurge in fighting in the area.

Six Southern Baptists were in the eastern Liberian region, where fighting has intensified between government and rebel forces.

Missionary administrator Bradley Brown in Monrovia said five of the personnel were in Yekepa March 29, only a few miles from the Guinea border. Brown arranged to fly them to Monrovia March 30.

Brown arranged the evacuation after learning of heavier fighting in the area and the deaths of missionaries Tom and June Jackson of the United Liberian Inland Church. The Jacksons were reported killed when they tried to drive to safety from their home in Bahn.

The Jacksons' vehicle was found on or around March 24. Their bodies were found March 28. Jackson, an American, and his wife, who was British, had worked in Liberia for 40 years. Press reports said other missionaries in the area believe guerrillas shot the couple accidentally when they were leaving their village home in eastern Nimba County.

Southern Baptists in the area include career missionaries Earl and Jane Williams of West Monroe, La., and Knoxville, Tenn., respectively, and their 9 year-old son, Kenneth; journeyman Lynette Sneed of Liberty, Mo.; and volunteers Cecil and Ellajane Suttley of Arkadelphia, Ark.

Sneed, the Suttleys, Mrs. Williams and her son left for Monrovia March 30. Earl Williams elected to stay in Yekepa.

Missionary Margaret Fairburn of Tyler-town, Miss., arrived in Monrovia by plane March 29 from her home in Zwedru.

United States authorities began urging U.S. citizens to leave Nimba County March 27 when fighting increased between the army and rebels, who are trying to overthrow Liberian President Samuel Doe.

The U.S. Embassy in Liberia had earlier said Yekepa was safe, but U.S. officials began advising Americans March 28 to leave that city also. Yekepa is where Southern Baptist missionary Libby Senter and her 10-year-old daughter Rachel were murdered in 1986 in an incident unrelated to the current fighting.

About 50 Americans live in Nimba County. Some 6,000 Americans live throughout Liberia. Fifty-four Southern Baptist workers are assigned to the country.

Liberia, founded in 1847 after being settled by freed American slaves in the 1820s, has seen sporadic fighting since

rebels entered the country from Ivory Coast Dec. 24. President Doe, who has ruled since a coup in 1980, charged some of the rebels were trained in Libya.

More than 150,000 Liberians have left Nimba County since the rebel offensive started. About 60,000 refugees have fled to Ivory Coast and more than 80,000 have sought refuge in Guinea. Others have fled into the bush.

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Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABC office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. A check or money order in the proper amount, figured at 85 cents per word, must be included.

Next Issue

The next issue of the *Arkansas Baptist* will be published on April 26. Sunday School lesson commentaries for April 12 and April 19 are contained within this issue.

— SIXTH ANNUAL —

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WORLD

Evangelizing Eastern Europe

Ironically, Mood Bad for Evangelism

BUDAPEST, Hungary (BP)—East Germans are so captivated by open borders, new freedoms and reunion with West Germany that evangelism is much more difficult, said Ulrich Materne, general secretary for East German Baptists.

Materne spoke in a Baptist meeting in Budapest, Hungary, before the first democratic elections in East Germany March 18, in which candidates favoring quick unification with West Germany won victories.

East German Christians now are free to evangelize as much as they like, Materne said: "In relation to evangelistic work, we can do anything. There are no barriers or limitations on us any more."

Ironically, the climate for evangelism is bad now. "People seem to be totally encompassed and obsessed with the outward aspects of life, travel in the West and so forth, and are not thinking of inner dimensions," he said.

Observing how quickly events have moved in East Germany, Materne said church leaders dared not think about German reunification as late as December. Now the main question is how long reunion of the countries—and the church groups within them—will take. "But with these thoughts, there's lots of fear, lots of problems and lots of uncertainty," he said.

Besides considering reunification with West German Baptists, East German Baptists are eager to relate to Baptists in other lands as well. "To understand yourself, you must see yourself mirrored in other people. The important thing is to help find God's will," Materne said.

Immediate Action

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Southern Baptists have been encouraged to launch an all-out effort to evangelize Eastern Europe and help keep the world's newest mission field from falling into the hands of Eastern religions and cults, a West German Baptist official said during a recent visit to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

"East Germany and other eastern European countries are in a very devastated shape," said Hans Guderian, director of the church growth department of the West German Home Mission Board.

"We, as West Germans, are willing to help, and it is our responsibility to help. But the task before us is so big that we as 71,000 West German Baptists cannot do it alone. And if we do not do it, then Eastern religions and cults will."

Baptists from around the world must come together "to build a real church infrastructure for doing the task of spreading the gospel in these countries," he said.

Guidieran is one of 13 German Baptist leaders visiting Southern Baptist churches and agencies in four states to learn about church growth. The group visited Southwestern Seminary as guests of the school's World Mission and Evangelism Center.

Outreach is a new concept for East German Baptists, said Wolfram Hosche, a member of the visiting group who is pastor of a Baptist church in Sonneberg, East Germany.

"We can express ourselves freely now, openly, even in the newspapers," Hosche said. "We have all these possibilities, but we haven't had a chance to think about all of them yet; there are so many."

Missionary Notes

Darrel and Judy Garner, missionaries to Malawi, are on the field and may be addressed at P.O. Box 224, Balaka, Malawi. He lived in Huntsville while growing up. The former Judy Brown, she was born in Independence County and lived in Walnut Ridge and Fayetteville. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1969.

Elton and Dottie Gray, missionaries to Japan, are in the States for furlough (address: 806 Cedar Ridge Dr., Little Rock, AR 72211). He is a native of Tennessee, and she is the former Dottie Evanson of Mississippi. They were appointed in 1970.

Ron and Jan Langston, missionaries to Zimbabwe, are on the field and may be addressed at P.O. Box 183, Stand Number 117, Beit Bridge, Zimbabwe. He lived in Etowah, Keiser and Osceola while growing up. The former Janice Wilmoth, she was born in Jonesboro and considers Etowah her hometown. They were appointed in 1983.

Carl and Twila Lee, missionaries to Indonesia, are on the field and may be addressed at Trömomplos 1077, Jakarta 10010, Indonesia. He is a native of Texas. The former Twila Turner, she was born in Texarkana. They were appointed in 1967.