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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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October 31, 1985

Arkansas Baptist

Newsmagazine



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'Make January Bible Study
a true Bible study'
pages 8-9



ABN photo / Millie Gill

Arkansas Baptists, like Southern Baptists all across the country, are gearing up for the 1986 January Bible Study. This year's adult study, "Hepbrews: Call to Commitment," is available at the Baptist Book Store, along with materials for all age groups. An article on pp. 8-9 by North Carolina pastor Alton H. McEachern offers suggestions on making January Bible Study a memorable event.

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Next month in Arkansas

November 1-3, International Student Conference, Camp Paron. Students from more than two dozen countries meet annually for fellowship and inspiration. Student Department, Woman's Missionary Union and State Missions Department sponsor the conference.

November 1-2, Small Church Pastor / Director Workshop, Cedar Glades Camp near Imboden. Help in yearly planning and evaluation for the small church Sunday School. Sponsored by the state Sunday School Department.

November 3-9, National Royal Ambassador Week. Individual churches will focus on RAs during the week, and activities will culminate Saturday, Nov. 9, with a statewide RA fellowship luncheon in North Little Rock. Sponsored by the state Brotherhood Department.

November 4, January Bible Study Clinic, Harrison First. Sponsored by the state Sunday School Department to prepare pastors and others to teach the study "Hepbrews: Call to Christian Commitment."

November 5, January Bible Study Clinic, First Church, Forrest City. Help for those teaching the annual study.

November 7, Language Leadership Conference, Baptist Building, Little Rock. The meeting will orient language congregation pastors to the state convention. Different departments present their resources each year, and the pastors have a chance to inform state convention personnel about the needs of their Southern Baptist congregations.

November 7, January Bible Study Clinic, Hot Springs First Church. A state Sunday School Department conference preparing teachers of the study.

November 8, January Bible Study Clinic, Van Buren First Church. Third clinic to aid in preparation for the study.

November 9, Tiger Tunes, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia.

November 18-19, Arkansas Baptist Pastor's Conference, OBU Physical Education Arena, Arkadelphia. This meeting will include speakers, inspirational music and testimonies preceding the ABSC annual meeting.

November 18 and 19, Arkansas Baptist Religious Education Association, First Church, Arkadelphia. The meeting will include speakers and business and begins with a dinner Monday evening.

November 19, Arkansas Baptist Ministers' Wives, Evans Student Center Banquet Room at OBU. Speakers will include Laura Fry Allen for the midday program and luncheon.

November 19, Associational Directors of Missions meeting, Banquet Room of Evans Student Center at OBU, beginning at 5 p.m.

November 19-20, annual meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, Ouachita Baptist University Physical Education Center, Arkadelphia. Business and inspiration for messengers from local Baptist churches.

November 23, Homecoming at Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia.

November 23, Interfaith Taskforce Hunger Ingathering, Philander Smith College, Little Rock. Conferences on hunger-related subjects and informational exhibits. The Arkansas Baptist World Hunger Committee and Christian Life Council cooperate with the Taskforce.

November 24, Child Care Day. Emphasis on services Arkansas Baptists provide to families and children through area offices, a group home, emergency receiving homes and the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children. Local churches are asked to focus on the ministries of Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services.

In this issue

4 Arkansas Journeymen

Four Arkansas young adults have been approved by the SBC Foreign Mission Board for overseas service as Journeymen.

7 murder suspects

Two men reportedly have been arrested in Mexico City for the murder of Southern Baptist representative James Philpot.

Arkansas Baptist nurses organize fellowship

Baptist nurses used to be one of several medical specialties combined under the umbrella of Baptist Medical / Dental Fellowship. Now they have their own national organization, and Arkansas has its own chapter of the Baptist Nursing Fellowship.

The state chapter, like the national group, exists for fellowship, professional improvement, and service opportunities, according to state chairperson Lola Selph of Little Rock.

The national fellowship is two years old and the state group was organized Sept. 12 by eight persons. Marsha Skinner of Little Rock was elected secretary at that meeting, and Irene Brannum, a retired missionary

nurse, will serve as advisor.

Nurses will look for service opportunities, including providing medical care at missions camps and volunteer mission projects in the U.S. and foreign countries.

At this year's annual meeting of the state convention in November, the Fellowship will staff a booth offering free blood pressure checks. They also hope to promote the BNF to convention visitors.

The state organization has received the informal support of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union. The national group is aided by the Southern Baptist Convention Woman's Missionary Union.

Making a happy home

Perhaps at no point in human experience has the ancient proverb, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," held more truth than at the point of making a happy home.

Life's greatest joy is reserved for people who learn the fine art of living happily with others. That it can be learned, millions of people have proven. That many have not learned it, millions of broken hearts testify. The ideal place to practice happy living together is in the home.

The idea that love professed at the marriage altar will automatically solve all the difficulties between two people has been responsible for more heartaches than can be counted. The words spoken at the marriage altar do not change people, they simply set up a new relationship.

Each couple should face the fact they will have differences of opinion. We have never been impressed by the statement of people who have lived together for many years and say, "We have never had a fuss." If it is true, the marriage is simply a stoic endurance contest.

It is normal for people to have differing opinions. And in the home, many decisions must be made every day. The important issue is how couples cope with these differences. The Bible says, "Let not the sun go down on thy wrath." This scriptural injunction, when heeded, can be of tremendous assistance in the marriage relationship.

The adversities of life may serve to make firm the love marriage partners have toward each other. Disappointments, heartaches, sorrows and suffering are the raw material out of which life is made. When problems are handled properly, marriage partners can say, "We've been through a great many things together."

Home is fundamental in life. It was the first institution created by God. All else in society depends upon it. If one fails in the domestic relationship, it will color all other relationships of life.

One of the most distressing things in our contemporary society is the breakdown of home life in America. In recent years, more than twice as many homes have been broken by separation and divorce as by death. This is a disturbing fact at the very heart of our society. Not only is the life of the husband and wife forever affected, but in many instances the lives and destinies of children are involved. Society also reaps the fruit of juvenile delinquency, crime and low moral standards.

We often fail to prepare our young people for a happy home life. We teach our children the art of cooking, sewing, agriculture, finance and practically every phase of life, but take it for granted they know how to make a home.

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



A tragic attitude has developed toward marriage in recent years. Many young people say, "We'll get married, and if we don't like it we'll get a divorce." Such an attitude is a step toward disaster. Marriage is an adventure, but it is never an experiment.

A lack of religious training constitutes one of the greatest weaknesses in our contemporary society. Millions of children in the United States are totally without religious training. Marriages fail because people fail; and usually people fail because they live without God.

Preparation for marriage starts with children in the home. It should be remembered the greatest teaching done in the life of any individual starts in the home. Parents cannot delegate their responsibility in training children to anyone else.

First, children are prepared for marriage by the example set by their parents. When parents emphasize the permanence of marriage and set an example of mutually working out problems together, this same attitude will be copied by children. Second, children need to learn a great many problems can be solved through prayer. The old saying, "The family that prays together, stays together," still has a great deal of merit. When people earnestly seek the leadership of the Lord, often solutions can be found to serious problems.

The question arises, "How can a couple build a happy home?" The statistics are clear: there are 18 times as many divorces of individuals who are not active in church work. Without the hope Christ and the church offer for the life to come, the facts indicate an almost hopeless situation.

If there is any one ingredient that is the key to a good marriage, and to existence in general, it is balance. Balance is discipline with flexibility. A couple with a good sense of balance will have relationships straight with the Lord, each other and their children.

Further, those who have experienced unfortunate marriages have the best opportunity for healing, help and security for future happiness in the church. From the Christian perspective, "shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Yet, the Scripture teaches churches are to offer help and healing to hurting individuals.

The secret of a happy home is found in allowing Christ to lead at the marriage altar, in the bridal journey, when the new baby comes, when the baby dies, when hard times come, when times are plentiful, when the couple walks toward the sunset gates and when they walk toward eternity.

Only the home that finds its common tie in God has assurance it is built on an eternal foundation, for God and God only is love.

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NUMBER 42

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Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double-spaced and must be signed. Letters must not contain more than 350 words and must not defame the character of persons. They must be marked "for publication."

Photos submitted for publication will be returned only when accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Only black and white photos can be used.

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Four Arkansas young adults appointed as Journeymen

RICHMOND, Va. — Four Arkansans were among 43 young adults approved for training as Journeymen during the October meeting of the Foreign Mission Board.

Phil Brown, most recently employed as minister of music and youth at Unity Church, Arkadelphia, was assigned as a minister to singles and youth in Madrid, Spain. A 1985 graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, he is the son of the late James W. and Evelena Brown, formerly of Nashville.

Boyd and Rhonda Hall, both 1985 graduates of Ouachita Baptist University, were assigned to Mbabane, Swaziland, where he will be a youth worker and she will assist with the Bible Way Correspondence Program. He has been youth director at Salem Church, Benton. Hall is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy F. Hall of Jonesboro. She is the daughter of Robert Dismuke of Pine Bluff and Mrs. Neva Cheney of North Little Rock.

Kari Utley, a 1982 graduate of Arkansas



Phil Brown



Boyd Hall



Rhonda Hall



Kari Utley

Tech University, Russellville, was assigned as a community center worker in Fajara, The Gambia. Most recently employed as a graduate assistant and activities advisor at Arkansas Tech, she is the daughter of Bob Utley of Cabot and Dorothy R. Utley of Alexander.

Those approved represent the 23rd group of college graduates under 27 years old

going overseas to work two years alongside career missionaries. Coming from 30 states and the District of Columbia, candidates will fill assignments as teachers; as youth, music and student workers; and in clerical positions, among other areas of work.

Those who receive medical clearance and complete training will be commissioned April 4.

Acts schedules 25 specials for Christmas season

FORT WORTH—Twenty-five upcoming Christmas specials on the American Christian Television System will help remind viewers of the true spirit of the season.

Beginning Monday, Dec. 15, ACTS will pre-empt much of its regular family entertainment programming to carry the holiday specials. Most will be repeated during the two-week period before Christmas.

Highlighting the list of specials is "Yeshua and the First Christmas" and "Yeshua: The Land and the Promise." "Yeshua and the First Christmas" is a factual narration of the events and facts of the birth of Christ, presented against a background of scenes from Bethlehem and the surrounding Holy Lands.

"Yeshua: The Land and the Promise" is a narration of the history of Abraham and his descendants with sites from Ur of the Chaldees through Rome, Egypt and other areas pertaining to Christ's life.

"Yeshua and the First Christmas" will be seen Dec. 17 at 11 p.m.; Dec. 18 at 3:30 a.m. and 8 a.m.; Dec. 24 at 6:30 p.m. and on Christmas Day at 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. "Yeshua: The Land and the Promise" will be aired Dec. 19 at 7 and 11 p.m.; Dec. 20 at 5:30 and 11 a.m.; Dec. 23 at noon and 6 p.m. and Dec. 24 at 6:30 p.m.

Centers accepting summer applications

NASHVILLE—Ridgecrest and Glorieta Baptist Conference Centers are accepting applications for employment on the 1986 summer staffs.

Available positions at both conference centers include food service, day camp, preschool, recreation, housekeeping, registration, business offices and auditorium and conference room operations.

The conference centers provide a program

of activities for their staffs during their off-duty hours, including Bible study, family groups, recreation, music, sports and local mission opportunities.

Information may be obtained by writing to Summer Employment, Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, P. O. Box 128, Ridgecrest, N.C. 28870; or to Summer Employment, Glorieta Baptist Conference Center, P. O. Box 8, Glorieta, N.M. 87535.

Christian entertainment programming carried on 175 cable TV systems in 58 communities and 4 TV stations across the country. The network, operated by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, reaches more than 3.5 million homes.



Chaplain commissioned—Scott Gardner and his wife, Linny, of Little Rock, were commissioned by the Home Mission Board for the military chaplaincy during the board's October meeting in Atlanta. Gardner is a chaplain at the Little Rock Air Force Base in Jacksonville. He was among 25 chaplains commissioned.

You'll be glad to know . . .

. . . We have completed our third year as your servant-leader. The resistance and aversion I had toward being considered for this position is humorous to us now. As always, when God calls you to do something, he enables you to do it and to even enjoy doing it. This is true with me and Shirley as we look back over the past three years. It has been a real joy to serve the Lord by serving the people of our convention.



Moore

We thank you for the warm hospitality constantly extended to us. The love, respect and appreciation you have shown to us have been most gratifying. We thank you! It has been spiritual fun to share so many high and holy hours with you. Thank you for wanting us to be a part! Your prayer support has been amazing. Thank you! Your cooperation with what we are trying to do and your financial support also are very significant. Thank you!

We owe such a debt of gratitude to our fellow workers of the Executive Board and our agencies and institutions. Everyone has been so gracious as we have walked together in these days of ministry. Their understanding, cooperation and fellowship have been most meaningful. Thank you, blessed co-laborers!

My role under God is to help his churches succeed. The role of all of our convention agencies and institutions is the same. It is a high and holy privilege and responsibility! Pray for us that our sufficiency may be "in the Lord" always. May his love, grace and power abound in all of us effecting "unity in the bond of peace" and glorious fruitfulness in our fields of labor!

A quick note of appreciation of all who are now involved in Scripture distribution and People Search. God bless you for doing it. I hope every church will do this before the year is out. Alert! Do not delay the processing of the sacred information gathered on those cards! Eternal destiny is the issue. To delay in processing results is certain delay on follow-up. Begin immediately cultivating every prospect. By "Good News America" revival time, many already will have been saved. Others will be ready to be saved. I'm so excited to see God bless you in this matter!

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

'No excuse nor escape'

In the Oct. 17 issue of the ABN, Bob Parsley says John Sullivan's opinion, "divorced persons who ask forgiveness for the sin of divorce and remarriage are not living in adultery" is in line with the biblical model of the Adulterous Woman (Jn. 8:3-11). Please, read it again! Jesus acknowledged that sin when he said, "go and sin no more." In other words, do not continue to live with the man not her husband.

In John 4:17-18, the woman at the well said, "I have no husband." Jesus was telling her that though she had married five times, they were not her husbands. Therefore, she was living in adultery.

In I Cor. 7:10-11, Paul said not I but the Lord commanded not to depart from one's spouse, and if he did, not to remarry. He was giving them God's Word.

Lets face it, people, it is the carnal man—the lusts of flesh—the desires of the physical body that brings man into sin. God wants a people willing to deny themselves (Gal.

5:24 "And they that are Christ's have crucified (killed) the flesh with the affections and lusts"). Until the Adam in you dies, you make excuses in order to fulfill your fleshly desires. If you are in Christ, you will walk in his Holy Spirit and not in the lusts of your flesh.

Divorce is not the sin here. Adultery is. And a true Christian has no excuse nor escape. He has to admit his desire for divorce stems from his desire to comfort his flesh in some way. Rather than say, "I can't stand this any longer," why not ask Jesus if he can? If he lives in you, there is a solution! If the marriage has problems, it is sure indication there is some burning of the chaff going on.

Isn't it time we stop being good little Christians only when things are going good and start "standing in prayer always," that we may escape these things that shall come to pass (Luke 21:34-36)? — **Geraldine E. Donaldson, Kingston**

Children's sport camp to be held at Ouachita

NASHVILLE—Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., is one of seven locations for Crosspoint, a new sports camp for children and younger youth, to be held for the first time during the summer of 1986.

Sponsored by the Sunday School Board's church recreation department, the July 7-12 camp will offer skill development in one of six sports for boys and girls who have completed the fourth through eight grades.

Sports include basketball, baseball, football, tennis, gymnastics and soccer.

According to Don Mattingly, Crosspoint coordinator, Bible study, devotion and worship times also will be provided.

Cost of the camp is \$195 for all expenses except transportation. For more information about Crosspoint, contact the Church Recreation Department, MSN 166, 127 Ninth Ave., North, Nashville, Tenn. 37234.

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



Noteburning—First Church, Mayflower, burned a note Oct. 20 on a 1975 loan of \$20,000 for the completion of the church's sanctuary. The church currently has \$22,000 of \$35,000 being raised for the construction of a new educational facility in the spring. Pictured is Jim Harris, chairman of the building committee (left), and Mayflower pastor Marshall Boggs.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people

W.E. Perry of Little Rock died Oct. 19 at age 82. He was a retired Southern Baptist minister. He had served as pastor of Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock and other Arkansas, Tennessee and Texas churches. Perry was a graduate of Union University at Jackson, Tenn., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was a member of Little Rock First Church. Survivors are a daughter, Frances Crutchfield of Russellville, two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Leonard Herring has resigned as pastor of Burlington Church at Harrison.

Jimmy Gilbert has resigned as pastor of Eureka Springs Church to serve as pastor of a church in Joplin, Mo.

John Stoner is serving as pastor of Bethany Church at Georgetown.

Don Rose is serving as pastor of Jasper Church. He recently served as pastor of

a Missouri church while attending Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

James Harmon is serving as pastor of Valley Springs Church, moving there from Kentucky where he was serving as a mission pastor.

Ira Upton resigned Oct. 6 as pastor of Vine Prairie Church at Mulberry.

Terrell Wallace will begin serving in December as pastor of Malvern Trinity Church. He will move there from Hermitage upon completion of a church building program.

Don Hook has resigned as interim pastor of Indianhead Lake Church in Sherwood.

Jerry Wilcox will begin serving Nov. 10 as pastor of Trumann First Church, moving there from Little Rock where he has served for 14 years as pastor of Lakeshore Drive Church.

Homeer Haltom resigned Oct. 6 as pastor of Bates Church to become pastor of Woodland Church at Clarksville.

briefly

Mountain Home First Church ordained John H. Dillard, Phil Fleming, Earl Hanlin, C. B. Ross, Lane Strother and Art Wallace to the deacon ministry Oct. 20. Pastor Roy A. Fowler moderated the service, which was followed by a reception honoring both the new deacons and their families.

Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock will hold its annual Brooks Hays lecture series Nov. 15-17. Charles V. Petty, a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, will lecture on issues of interest to single adults, to families and to senior adults.

Parthenon Church ordained pastor Gilbert Mussman to the preaching ministry Oct. 20.

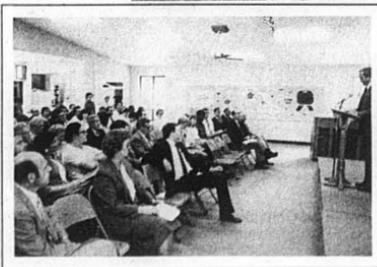
Woodland Heights Church in Harrison recently sponsored a booth at the Northwest Arkansas District Fair in which 40 members ministered to both fair goers and carnival personnel.

BSU Center dedicated at Southern Arkansas University

The new Baptist Student Center at Southern Arkansas University (right) was dedicated recently. Presiding at the dedication (bottom left photo) was Jon Stubblefield, pastor of First Church, Magnolia, and co-chairman, along with Tommy Robertson, director of missions for Liberty Association, of the project building committee. SAU President Harold Brinson, himself an SAU / BSU officer during his student days, spoke, as did ABSC Executive Director Don Moore. Present for the dedication were two BSU presidents (bottom right photo): Kathleen Church Hill, the first president of the SAU / BSU in 1933, and Russ Sherrill, current BSU president.



Photos by George Sims



Two suspects arrested in killing of SBC representative

MEXICO CITY (BP)—Mexican police have arrested two suspects in connection with the murder of Southern Baptist representative James Philpot.

Mexico state police informed Southern Baptist representatives they arrested two men Oct. 14 in connection with the killing of Philpot, who was shot in the head Oct. 11 after the car he was driving was sideswiped by another car. A Mexican man with Philpot was shot and seriously injured. Two men in the other car, one of whom fired the gun, escaped before police arrived.

Police said a witness near the scene of the shooting took down the license plate number of the car containing the two men as it sped away. The license number led to the arrest of the two suspects.

"We presume (the suspects are) the two men in the car, but that's still in police hands," said Don Kammerdiener, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board director for Middle America and the Caribbean, who went to Mexico immediately after Philpot's death. "All the police have said to us is that

they have picked up two suspects."

Police have not released the names of the suspects in custody, nor have formal charges been filed publicly. "They cannot do anything that would damage the investigation procedure to document the matter," said Guy Williamson, acting chairman of the Southern Baptist organization in Mexico. "They said just as soon as they had anything documented they'd share it with us."

The gray or light blue Volkswagen carrying the man who shot Philpot had not been located Oct. 18. Baptists don't know whether the murder weapon has been recovered. Mexico state police inspector Damaso Tostado Salazar told Kammerdiener the empty shell casings found at the scene indicated the gun was a nine-millimeter pistol.

Abel Hernandez Figueroa, shot two or three times in the stomach, remains in a military hospital in the Mexico City area. Reports of his condition vary, but he apparently has not been able to give police any substantial information on the shooting.

Meanwhile, a different account of the car accident that preceded the shooting has emerged. Williamson initially reported the car Philpot was driving was sideswiped as the Volkswagen attempted to pass it on the right at high speed. Subsequent reports indicate the Volkswagen emerged from a one way street as Philpot was driving past. It struck Philpot's car on the right and came to a stop on the curb.

After the shooting, the two men reportedly fled in the Volkswagen, speeding the wrong way back down the one-way street from which they came and nearly colliding head-on with another car. The driver of that car identified the Volkswagen's license plate number.

Kammerdiener emphasized no evidence has emerged to support a motive for the killing other than rage over the car accident. "Up to now the facts as we know them do not warrant any sort of interpretation other than what we know: that the two cars hit and a man jumped out and started shooting," he said.

Lebanese Baptists begin radio work in Beirut

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)—Lebanese Baptists are launching a radio station in Beirut as part of a continuing ministry in the midst of their country's 10-year-old civil war.

The 2,000-watt FM stereo station will provide evangelical programming. There are about three dozen radio stations in the Beirut area, most operated by the government or competing Islamic and Maronite Catholic political groups.

The station, to be operated and primarily financed by the Lebanese Baptist Convention, has a potential for reaching 1.7 million people in the Beirut area, where there are seven Baptist churches.

Its programming, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day, will include semiclassical music; seven-minute Christian teaching sessions on the hour; two-minute Bible reading segments on the half hour; public service announcements, such as locations where drug abusers or people with physical injuries can receive rehabilitation; and special programs, such as Bible correspondence courses and live broadcasts of worship services.

These worship service broadcasts ultimately may bolster church membership, according to Pete Dunn, Southern Baptist missionary who directs the Baptist Center for Mass Communications in east Beirut. "A lot of people will never go into a Baptist church because they're afraid of it. But if they can hear and see that it won't 'bite' them, then maybe doors will open for our churches.

"We're going to try to present what Baptists believe," Dunn added, "but in the context of the Lebanese Baptists."

Five Baptist nationals are being trained as full-time workers, two others as part-time.

The station will be housed in the basement of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in east Beirut.

In another area of Baptist ministry in the city, Dunn works with two Baptist relief committees, one in east Beirut and one in west Beirut.

Throughout Beirut, there are refugees "everywhere," perhaps as many as 200,000 who have been left homeless during the course of the 10-year civil war, Dunn said.

"We've got a lot of people here who are in desperate need. Now, how to meet those needs in a short time and on a long-term basis is our problem. And this is a problem faced by the government as well as relief agencies. If there were some light at the end of the tunnel, we would sort of know how to get towards that light. But at the present time, it's a dead end.

"They (refugees) are taking over old buildings... abandoned buildings... buildings that have been bombed out," Dunn said. "Some are living in quite squalid conditions, but at least they're covered. And they're trying to get food as best they can."

Refugees being sheltered in Baptist facilities are primarily from the Mio-Mio Church. The Baptist congregation of 30 to 40 people was scattered when Shiite Muslim and Palestinian forces stormed Sidon and surrounding villages after Israeli troops vacated the south Lebanon area earlier this year. An estimated 100,000 Lebanese were left homeless.

One Mio-Mio church family, for example, lost a home and grocery store. One widow lost a home which had cost her life savings to build.

"They got out... with the clothes on their backs," said Ed Nicholas, chairman of the Southern Baptist missionaries in Lebanon.

Badar Street Church in east Beirut and Bikfaya Church in the village of Bikfaya about 20 miles north of Beirut have taken in some of these refugees.

Some Mio-Mio church members fled to the south, along Lebanon's border with Israel. There has been no contact with them, Nicholas said.

Fighting in Tripoli, to the north of Beirut, had Baptists in Beirut wondering about the welfare of members of the Tripoli Church and their pastor, Elias Saleeby. Through early October, no word had been received from him for about six weeks.

Nicholas believes Saleeby and others have sought refuge in a mountain region near Tripoli, as they did once before in the face of intense fighting. During September, more than 500 people were killed and 1,000 wounded.

The scattering of the Mio-Mio congregation is the most severe setback to Lebanese Baptists since the early days of the civil war, 1975-77, when several churches closed, had their buildings seized or looted and, in one case, saw their pastor flee for his life.

Today, minimal numbers attend the Riyak Church because of continuing tension in the Bekaa Valley east of Beirut. And turmoil in west Beirut has resulted in many members of the Ras Beirut Church moving to east Beirut.

Even so, Ras Beirut, which had about 55 members, has provided finances pivotal for getting the new FM station on the air, according to Dunn.

Make January Bible Study a true Bible study

by Alton H. McEachern

In my opinion, January Bible Study is one of the best ideas ever promoted by Southern Baptists. This annual emphasis on studying an entire book of the Bible has called churches back to serious Bible study.

One of my seminary professors accused pastors of being "itsy bitsy" preachers of short texts and phrases. He called for us to treat paragraphs, chapters and entire books of the Bible in our teaching and preaching. January Bible Study gives us the opportunity to study an entire book of the Bible over a brief period of time. In 1986, (Jan. 6-10 is suggested) the Epistle to the Hebrews will be the focus for adults.

Values of JBS

Other advantages in January Bible Study can be noted.

- The pastor can lead his people in serious study of a book of the Bible. He also may choose to preach from key passages of that book during the month.

- The pastor's library is enhanced as he acquires the best commentaries on the particular book of the Bible to be studied.

- The focus on January Bible Study provides an opportunity to involve the entire church family. Studies and resources are available for all age groups.

- The rotation of the Bible books to be studied disciplines both pastor and congregation to study books which they might not otherwise choose. This approach helps ensure balance in our study of the Scriptures.

- Splendid study guides are written for our use. These are prepared by outstanding Southern Baptist scholars and pastors and are a rich resource for Bible study.

Study aids in addition to the books also are available from the Sunday School Board. They include such items as filmstrips, tapes and posters. Use of these materials can enliven teaching.

- Having thousands of Southern Baptist churches studying the same book of the Bible each winter is a unifying factor that undergirds our common commitment to the Word of God.

- The church can promote interest in this special Bible study event and achieve significant attendance and involvement of Sunday School and church members and prospects.

- There is an advantage in learning the theme and message of a book of the Bible as a whole. Too often our teaching and preaching features the familiar, easily-memorized great texts of the Bible, such as Psalm 23 and John 3:16. Our teaching may not provide members with a larger picture of these familiar passages. We may be tempted to focus only on these favorite passages and neglect their context or other themes in that book of the Bible.

As we learn something about the author and recipients, as well as the background

and setting of the book, the message is set in a larger context. Our understanding of the biblical material thus is enhanced.

How we do it

As a pastor, I have varied our approach to January Bible Study across the years.

When I teach the adults, I begin early in the year to gather commentaries on the book of the Bible to be studied. As soon as the study book/guide is published by Convention Press, I get a copy and read through it carefully.

If the book of the Bible to be studied is short, I read it each week for five or six months, using various translations. It is amazing how fresh insights keep occurring as I read and reread the Scriptures. When the book is longer, I read through it several times using different versions.

I outline the study and then work through the passages and commentaries, noting various interpretations of difficult passages. The resource material helps the teacher to put "meat" on the outline and to make the study come alive. When the pastor makes preparation over several months, he can be on the lookout for good illustrative material. Planning ahead gives the Holy spirit a larger part of our conscious mind.

I consider interesting ways to present the scriptural truths. When we studied Philipians, we had a man and a woman in costume to read the Epistle at one setting. They played the roles of Lydia and Epaphroditus and read the Scripture alternately, from "scrolls" that contained J.B. Phillip's translation of Philipians.

Some years I have introduced the study with a dramatic monologue. Helpful suggestions also are found for making the study interesting in the study guide.

We have promoted attendance at January Bible Study in several ways. An attractive poster can be made by attaching a copy of the study guide and a photograph of the teacher to poster board. We keep the wording simple, announcing the dates of the study and giving the teacher's name and identification.

We begin announcing the study in the church newsletter and make available copies of the study guide a month in advance. Sunday School and church members are urged to buy and to read the books before the study. As the week approaches, we make brief promotional announcements in worship service.

We also have given, in the midweek prayer service several weeks in advance of JBS, Bible knowledge tests on the book to be studied. This can help create interest. Having a competent outside guest teacher gives additional opportunities to promote January Bible Study. When we have a guest teacher for January Bible Study, I also preach from that book of the Bible for four to six



Sundays. Most of the books are so extensive that I can consult with the guest leader and preach from passages that will complement, rather than duplicate his or her teaching.

Promotional announcements may be made in Sunday School department periods and worship services by someone dressed in costume as an appropriate biblical character. Announcements also may cite some of the great themes of the book to be studied. Or they may raise interesting questions that will be dealt with during the January Bible Study.

Another method of promoting attendance is to pre-enroll persons. Have them sign up and purchase a copy of the study book. Invite them to fix the dates of the study on their calendars. Advance enrollment, which can be conducted in Sunday School and worship services, helps obtain a commitment from members to participate.

Our "typical" January Bible Study schedule may be as follows:

Friday evening we meet from 7 to 9. On Saturday morning we begin with a continental breakfast. The study lasts from 9 a.m. until noon, with a midmorning break.

The Sunday schedule may consist of adults meeting together in the sanctuary for 50 minutes of Sunday School time. This is followed by the morning service, in which the music, Scripture readings and sermon all focus on a passage from the book being studied. On Sunday evening, we may devote two hours to the conclusion of the study.

There is value in making January Bible Study a true Bible study focused over a brief period of time. Such concentration gives a continuity that is lacking when the study is too spread out.

Important to all age groups

I feel that January Bible Study is important to the Sunday School. It provides an opportunity for in-depth Bible study with a greater emphasis, in a larger group, than can be



given on Sunday morning in a Sunday School class or department. Also, it is good for the church to have this added emphasis on Bible study led by a competent outside teacher or to see their pastor in the role of Bible teacher.

This study has encouraged many of our Sunday School teachers to become more mature Sunday School students. They have acquired their own Bible commentaries and are making greater use of the materials provided in our church media library.

Youth may hold their study according to the format for January Bible Study. We have used these study materials for youth retreats and in youth forum. The JBS materials are rich resources that are not dated. Helpful guides and study materials are provided for both teachers and pupils.

Children's department may meet during the January Bible Study schedule.

Our workers with children have used the January Bible Study material in three-day summer retreats and in extended sessions for children during church revivals.

As a pastor, I consider January Bible Study an important opportunity for the church to engage in serious study of the Scriptures. Across the years it has been increasingly popular with our people. Outstanding scholars have brought us fresh insights into God's Word, and we have gained an enduring devotion to its guidance in our lives. I would encourage every pastor and church to take advantage of this denominational emphasis—one of the Southern Baptists' finest.

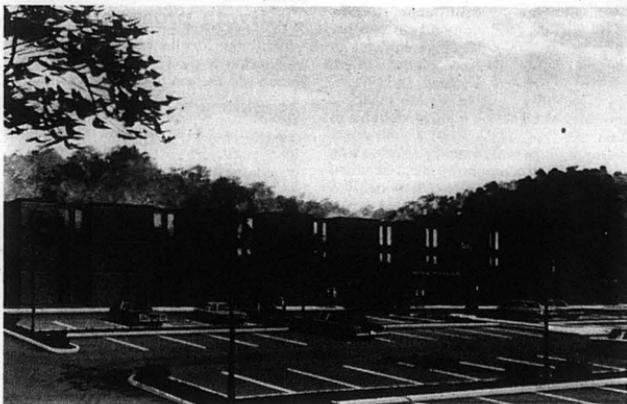
Alton H. McEachern is pastor, First Church, Greensboro, North Carolina.

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Your state convention at work

Student Ministries Theology 101

I was at a camp near Atlanta for a meeting of the New Convention Support Committee, a committee of state BSU



Logue

directors, Home Mission Board personnel, and National Student Ministry personnel charged with trying to find ways to strengthen fledgling BSU work in new convention states. (College students in New York, New England, and California alone compose one third of all the college students in America.)

Our eight-person committee started with a share time. Imagine my surprise when Charles Johnson, director of National Student Ministries, reminisced about a retreat at which I had spoken over 30 years ago. He even remembered my three suggestions for students: (1) take Theology 101, (2) buy the textbook, (3) get to know the author of the textbook.

I still believe after all these years that discovering God is the greatest discovery on any campus. And BSUs on 27 Arkansas campuses are committed to helping students find and serve God through Jesus Christ.

Thanks, Charlie, for remembering and for reminding me to keep saying that to today's students as I did at your retreat so long ago. — **Tom J. Logue, director**

Church Administration Career assessment

Fred McGehee, consultant in the Career Guidance Section of the Church Administration Department at the Sunday School Board, will be in Arkansas to lead a Career Assessment Seminar on Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 2-3. The sessions will meet at the Baptist Building in Little Rock beginning at 10 o'clock on Monday and continuing until 4 p.m. on Tuesday.



McGehee

Career assessment provides an opportunity for pastors and staff members (and, when feasible, their spouses) to engage in a process of self-evaluation of life purposes and ministry directions. Participants will clarify calling, assess ministry strengths and weaknesses and their sense of career directions.

An assessment experience will enable

pastors and staff members to choose meaningful, fulfilling career goals in personal consultation with an experienced pastor-counselor. The cost of the Career Assessment is \$35, which includes materials. When spouses participate, there is no additional charge.

For reservations or additional information, contact Robert Holley, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, or call 376-4791. — **Robert Holley, director**

Evangelism Cultivate prospects

Many non-Christians discovered through the sharing of God's Word in the People Search will be won to Christ and brought into the fellowship of a church. Some will respond immediately to a simple presentation of the gospel. Many others will respond only through a cultivated relationship. Cultivation is an essential part of the process in reaching people for Bible Study, salvation and church membership.

The first visit should be made in November. This visit is made to get acquainted with the prospect. The visitor will share with the prospect the things of common interest. Their family and work are items of interest that are easy to talk about. The visitor may talk about the New Testament that was left as a gift for them. You may ask them to read suggested passages that are marked to help them understand salvation.

A second visit should be made in December. At this time, you may discuss with them their spiritual background. When they attend church, where do they attend? Have they been a member of a Sunday School? Have they ever gone to Vacation Bible School? You may discuss with them the assigned passages in the New Testament. Do they have questions? You may share your personal testimony. The discussion can be closed with prayer and an invitation to attend Sunday School and church. — **Clarence Shell, director**

Family and Child Care Word power

The Old Testament concept of a spoken word was that once a word left the lips of a person, it had a power all its own and could not be recalled. That is one reason why Isaac could not recall the blessing he gave to Jacob, which was really Esau's.

It is obvious that word power has potential for good and bad, and today I am

grateful for the good. Time and again the Group Home has had needs, and once they were known by Arkansas Baptists the needs were met. The word for help was spoken at First Church, Jonesboro, and in two weeks \$3,200 had been given to cover expenses. They have been so faithful in their commitment to the work of the boys' home.

Many others have been faithful also. Several churches give a love offering every month. Some Sunday school classes give special money every month. One church gave a school supply shower several weeks ago. Many other W.M.U. groups, Brotherhood groups and Sunday school classes do special projects. For instance, a group of ladies from one church quilted the boys their own personal quilts and others have made birthday cakes on a regular basis.

I am saying, "Thank you, Arkansas Baptists" that our words sent out for help do not come back void. We are grateful to God and to you for our joint efforts of ministry. — **Tom Stafford, director, Jonesboro area office.**

Missions '3 to 1 for 3'

Several people have suggested a plan whereby several churches would join together to sponsor one mission. The need for such a plan is becoming evident.

In the "3 to 1 for 3" plan, three churches will join together to sponsor one church-to-mission for three years. New congregations in Arkansas average being missions three years before becoming consituted churches. Each church will be asked to contribute at least \$100 per month to support the mission. Churches may also send groups to assist the mission. Other involvement may take place. The program will be called the Macedonian Mission Plan.

We feel this plan will give many churches who could not bear the full load of mission support an opportunity to sponsor a mission. — **Floyd Tidsworth Jr, church extension director**



Tidsworth



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Housing forms opened for SBC annual meeting

ATLANTA (BP)—Requests for housing for the 1986 Southern Baptist Convention were opened Oct. 9, filling all the rooms available through the Atlanta Housing Bureau.

"It all went very smoothly this year," said Tim A. Hedquist, convention manager for the SBC. "Since all of the available rooms have been filled, there is no need for potential messengers to send additional forms."

All of the rooms were filled with requests postmarked Oct. 1 and 2, Hedquist said. "They were opened Oct. 9 in order to allow people in California the same opportunity as those who live in Atlanta," he added.

Hedquist said most of the forms were filled out correctly and mailed on either Oct. 1 or 2. "There were only about 50 postmarked before the Oct. 1 date. They were all put

behind the Oct. 1, 2 or 3 postmarks. Therefore, people who mailed requests early did not get rooms," he said.

This year, he added, only a few attempts to "short circuit" the system were found. "One man sent in 50 requests, all in his own name. The very professional staffers at the Atlanta Housing Bureau discovered this very quickly. The man did get one room, but that's all," Hedquist said.

The system of housing requests was established several years ago primarily to benefit individuals seeking room reservations. Therefore, each of the requests is handled individually, even if 10 or 12 come in a single envelope, he explained.

Since a majority of the housing requests listed a first choice of the Westin Peachtree

Plaza Hotel—the convention headquarters hotel—only "about one in eight" got the first choice. Attempts were made, however, he said, to put the people in second or third choice hotels.

Hedquist said the 10 hotels included in the Housing Bureau block have been notified and are expected to send confirmations soon.

For those who did not get rooms through the Housing Bureau, Hedquist said there should be no problems in obtaining reservations for the annual meeting, scheduled for June 10-12.

"There are 23,000 hotel rooms in Atlanta," Hedquist said. "We have prepared a list of 100 hotels and will be happy to provide the list to anyone who requests it."

Religious distinctives must be safeguarded, educator says

WASHINGTON (BP)—Safeguarding religious distinctives is the most important task faced by evangelical Christian colleges, a leading Southern Baptist educator said.

Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention Education Commission, told presidents of the Christian College Consortium at their annual meeting in Washington Oct. 16 that Christian colleges must clearly define their distinctives.

Walker pointed out distinctives of Christian colleges often are not recognized, even by their own constituencies. "Even church leaders are not convinced there really are differences between religiously-related institutions and all other institutions of higher education."

He noted several problems which make "safeguarding religious distinctives" a complex task. One major item, Walker said, is a growing lack of sympathy with religious beliefs that tend to distinguish a group from the general society.

"If a belief is contrary to 'public policy,' it is untenable in today's society," he said.

According to the SBC agency head, such public policy arbiters have forgotten the struggle for religious freedom. "What's dif-

ferent between the divine right of kings and the divine right of Congress? Can Congress tell you what to believe religiously?" he asked. Yet, that is what is being faced today, Walker said. "Any position contrary to public policy is unacceptable in law today."

Walker said church-state relations are unsettled because of the difference in understanding of "freedom of religious expression and association, government's respect for religious-based conscience and government's appropriate relationship to religion."

The politicization of issues which previously had religious motivations, thus catching some institutions and religious figures in political crossfires, is another roadblock to safeguarding religious distinctives, Walker said.

He cited issues now being heard by courts that could have a profound impact on Christian educational institutions, including limitation of tax-exempt status for all religious groups and preferential hiring, the policy of hiring only those with the same religious beliefs.

Walker also pointed out the problems for institutions which claim to be "pervasively religious," yet accept financial assistance.

While such schools claim to accept no federal aid, Walker said the Supreme Court has ruled aid to a student enrolled at a college is aid to the college (Grove City Case, 1984).

"Christian educators must realize that we are not going back to the 'good ole days,'" Walker said. The only time religious institutions can be totally free from government regulations is when they are totally free from government finances, he added.

For institutions to safeguard their religious distinctives, they must begin a massive public relations effort, Walker said.

Christian institutions need a strategy that will give attention to legitimacy and credibility. Both of these elements, he contended, seem to have been lost in today's society by religious colleges.

He also noted emphasis needs to be placed on "reverse communication." Religious institutions must find out if the message they are sending is the same one their constituencies are receiving.

And finally, Walker said, religious colleges must look at issue management. "Religious institutions must analyze particular issues important to their specific audiences, and then speak directly to those needs."

Justices accept second pornography dispute for review

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court announced Oct. 21 it will hear a second case this term testing local communities' legal ability to limit the sale and distribution of pornographic materials.

Already set for argument next month is review of a Seattle suburb's zoning ordinance forbidding adult movie theaters within 1,000 feet of residences, churches, parks or schools. A federal appeals court ruled the ordinance violated the First Amendment and held Renton, Wash., failed to establish "substantial governmental interest" in restricting freedom of speech.

The new case pits local officials in Erie County, N.Y., against a chain of stores sell-

ing pornographic video cassettes. Nearly two years ago, the local sheriff obtained a warrant for seizure of several video films depicting a variety of sexual activities, including intercourse and oral sex. Local officials then used the films to charge the stores' owners on several misdemeanor counts of violating New York state's obscenity law.

But before the case could come to trial, the store owners successfully sought suppression of the evidence, convincing a state court judge the sheriff's office did not have probable cause to seize the films. Two other state courts—including New York's highest appeals panel—agreed. The county then

appealed to the nation's high court, which is expected to decide the case sometime next spring.

Current constitutional doctrine on pornography and obscenity dates to a 1957 case, Roth v. U.S., in which the court set down the foundational principle that obscenity is not protected by the First Amendment.

Another landmark decision, Miller v. California, rendered in 1973, held that local communities may set their own standards to define what is obscene material. Nationwide standards, the court ruled then, are inappropriate because views on the subject vary so widely from place to place.

South African Baptists urge end of 'evil' apartheid

GEORGE, South Africa (BP)—As a dove swooped symbolically overhead, the Baptist Union of Southern Africa took historic action at its annual assembly to urge South African President P. W. Botha to lead in abolishing "evil" apartheid "as a matter of extreme urgency."

The secret ballot total, released Oct. 21, showed 156 for, 51 against and 13 abstentions out of 250 delegates who met as their nation underwent racial turmoil. About 600 people attended the assembly, including Southern Baptist missionaries who work under the Baptist Union.

The assembly also affirmed an Aug. 24 letter from union officers to Botha on the same subject. Botha granted their request for union representatives to meet with him to discuss the crisis at a future date. Informing Botha of its action, the assembly said it would pray for God's guidance for him and other leaders and emphasized it doesn't have the expertise to dictate the exact route the government should take.

But, in language much more blunt than the officers' letter, the assembly labeled apartheid, "an evil which needs to be repented of." It called it a non-Christian,

unbiblical stance for a nation which "claims to be committed to... Christian principles as found in Scripture."

The assembly called for termination of the government-proclaimed "state of emergency" which has surrounded ethnic townships with heavily armed police and military. It said the state of emergency has failed to halt the unrest "because basic causes of the unrest remain unaddressed and therefore basic problems remain unsolved." The assembly also said the emergency "hinder(s)... the possibility of finding solutions" in many areas.

Romo cites crucial need for SBC refugee sponsors

ATLANTA (BP)—It has been ten years since the fall of Vietnam, but the need for sponsors for Indochinese refugees is still crucial, the director of the SBC Home Mission Board's refugee resettlement program said after a three-week tour of refugee camps in Thailand, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

Oscar I. Romo, director of the HMB language missions division, which coordinates efforts to find Southern Baptist sponsors for refugees, made an appeal to Southern Baptists to respond to the need as he reported to the board's language missions committee about his trip.

"When you see the needs of these people in the refugee camps and their intense desire to live in peace and freedom, you come away feeling God is saying something to us," Romo said in an interview.

"Maybe God brought them out (of Indochina) for some reason, and maybe we can reach them here (in the United States) when we couldn't reach them over there," Romo said.

Romo and Wallace W. Buckner, director of multi-ethnic ministries for the Home Mission Board who traveled with Romo to the camps, both said they were surprised that conditions in the refugee camps were not as bad as they had expected.

"Some of the camps were in better shape than some of the migrant farmworker camps in the United States," Romo observed.

It was the first time Romo or any Home Mission Board refugee resettlement official had toured the refugee resettlement camps in Southeast Asia for a first-hand look at conditions. The trip was under the auspices of the United Nations, which operates the camps in cooperation with the host governments.

The visit to the camps "gave us a better understanding of where these people (refugees) are coming from and what they have faced," Romo said. "We hope it will help us in the selection of sponsors and the mesh of sponsors and refugees."

Buckner added it harder now to enlist Baptist churches and individuals as refugee sponsors because the plight of the refugees is not currently receiving heavy media coverage. Buckner said the HMB is planning

to produce a new packet of materials helping build awareness of the need for refugee resettlement, and how an individual can lead a church to sponsor a refugee.

Romo said he and Buckner came away from the visits feeling "we've got to do something to help these people." But they also struggled with the questions: "How much can you do, and for how long?"

After interviewing dozens of refugees in the camps, Buckner said he is convinced they did not leave their homeland primarily for economic reasons to find a better life, but rather for political reasons. "They have left their homeland to find peace and freedom and live in a place where they can enjoy basic human rights," Buckner said.

Buckner said he was more depressed by conditions at the Chimawan Center in Hong Kong than any other place they visited. About 10,000 refugees, most of them boat people, are in Hong Kong's "closed camps" and are not allowed to leave the barb-wire enclosed facilities. Buckner said they have little hope of ever being resettled, since only 50 to 100 per month are allowed to go to the USA.

"We struggled with what motivates people to go by boat from Vietnam for 19 days and then be put into a prison-like camp and told there is no hope for resettlement. Yet they still want to stay," he said.

Buckner added one of the major problems the boat people face is pirates who sail the seas between Hong Kong and Vietnam, attacking the boats and kidnapping the women for sale into prostitution.

In Thailand, sometimes as many as 500,000 refugees are living in three different types of camps, called border camps, holding centers and transit centers, Romo and Buckner reported.

Thailand officially closed its borders to refugees in 1982, explained Buckner, but the refugees continue to come. So the Thai government, in cooperation with the U.N., allowed them to stay in border camps just inside the Thailand/Kampuchea border.

Only refugees cleared by the United Nations can stay in the holding centers and transit center camps located further interior. "They may have the opportunity to be pro-

cessed and resettled, and have more hope than those in the border camps," Romo said.

To qualify for resettlement, the refugees must be interviewed by United Nations officials and be approved for refugee status. In addition, priority is given to refugees with family members in the United States, families with Amerasian children and refugees with special status.

Since most refugees in these categories already have been resettled, the majority of refugees still in the camps have been there for six years or longer, Buckner added.

Refugees who can qualify for resettlement eventually may be able to go from the transit centers to the resettlement center in Ba-taan, Philippines, or to Canada, Australia or Europe, Romo and Buckner said.

The camp in the Philippines is the best run and most encouraging of all the camps they visited, said Romo and Buckner, because there the refugees have hope for starting a new life. The Philippines camp has taken over responsibility handled in the mid-70s by the refugee resettlement camps at Camp Pendleton, Calif.; Fort Chaffee, Ark.; Elgin Air Force Base near Fort Walton Beach, Fla., and Indiantown Gap, Penn., all now closed.

In the Philippines, about 17,500 refugees spend 15 weeks going through intensive English language, vocational training and cultural orientation classes.

Romo praised the Baptist Refugee Ministries vocational training program led by Steve Allen, a SBC Foreign Mission Board Mission Service Corps volunteer. The program teaches the refugees vocational job skills such as carpentry, electrical wiring, maid service and ways to get a job in the United States.

About 1,000 refugees per week complete the training in the Philippines and are resettled in the United States, Buckner said.

But no refugee is allowed to enter the United States without a sponsor, Buckner and Romo said. And that is how Baptists can help most—by agreeing to sponsor a refugee or refugee family, they said. Baptists interested in serving as sponsors should contact the SBC Refugee Resettlement Office at 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, GA. 30367, telephone (404) 873-4041.

Panel votes to retain non-itemized deduction

WASHINGTON (BP)—The House Ways and Means Committee has voted to retain, with limits, the charitable contribution deduction now allowed non-itemizing taxpayers.

The committee's action came in response to a provision in President Reagan's tax reform package that would remove deductibility for contributions made to charities by people who do not itemize their deductions.

Under the committee's agreement, non-itemizers would be able to deduct in full their contributions above \$100 a year. The committee's vote also would make this provision permanent law.

Current tax law allows non-itemizers to deduct 50 percent of all charitable contributions made during 1985, with a 100 percent deduction on such contributions scheduled for tax year 1986. The present provision for non-itemizers is to expire at the end of 1986. The Reagan plan would repeal outright the 1986 deduction.

Rep. Harold E. Ford, D-Tenn., proposed an amendment in the committee to make permanent such a deduction. After several revisions, a version offered by Rep. Jud

Gregg, R-N.H., was adopted.

Gregg's version would offset the loss in revenue caused by maintaining the deduction for non-itemizers with a reduction in the standard deduction earlier approved by the committee. Under Gregg's amendment, however, taxpayers using the standard deduction would still get a larger deduction than they do now.

"I agree with the need for tax reform and simplification, but we must be fair to all Americans," Ford said. "The Reagan proposal didn't treat all Americans fairly because it discriminated against non-itemizers. As we continue the process of tax reform, we must recognize that all tax deductions are not bad. Simply put, a tax deduction for a donation to a soup kitchen is not the same as a deduction for a three-martini lunch and should not be treated as such."

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs Executive Director James M. Dunn hailed the Ways and Means Committee action but warned that the battle to save deductibility for non-itemizers has only begun. "Action on this item involves at least three more major steps in the congressional process, so

those interested in the outcome should stay in touch with their members of Congress," Dunn explained.

He added: "The churches are not seeking privileged treatment or operating as one more special-interest group pursuing a tax advantage. Baptists would oppose vigorously such self-serving activity. Rather, for hundreds of years tax laws have distinguished between those segments of society which exist for a profit on one hand and all people-serving, non-profit charitable entities on the other. To honor charitable deductions for non-itemizers simply extends that time-honored distinction."

Last June, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a resolution urging Congress to continue current policies permitting charitable contribution deductions for itemizers and non-itemizers alike. In similar action, the Baptist Joint Committee's executive committee recently adopted a resolution supporting the continued allowance of those deductions. Both resolutions emphasized the ill effects repealing the deduction for non-itemizers could have on all non-profit organizations.

Volunteers carry hope to Baptists in Europe

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — "Our churches need hope," Scottish pastor Noel McCullins told 111 Southern Baptist volunteers.

The Baptists traveled to Scotland in September to work with 17 churches in partnership evangelism services, witnessing opportunities and home visitation.

McCullins, who leads a church in southern Scotland, told the American visitors at the outset of their Sunday-through-Sunday efforts that they would be sharing hope with Scottish Baptists.

In five other European countries, an additional 252 Southern Baptist volunteers were at work during September in Foreign Mission Board-coordinated partnership evangelism campaigns. The effort was in response to requests from the organization of Baptist churches in each country.

In some European locales, many Baptist churches are small and somewhat discouraged because they are a minority, explained Bill Peacock, FMB consultant for partnership evangelism. "People do not readily respond to their gospel presentation," he added.

Thus, partnership evangelism groups from the United States can be a source of Christian support, Peacock said. For many European churches, it's "an encouragement to know that there are other people in the world who are concerned and are praying for them."

A team of several volunteers assigned to a church often helps foster a new emphasis on evangelism, Peacock said.

Besides the volunteers in Scotland, another group of 111 Southern Baptists, many of them from the Gaston Association in North Carolina, worked with 17 churches in England. Seventy-five volunteers worked with 16 Baptist churches in Sweden; 29 worked in nine churches in Norway; 24 in five churches in Denmark, and 13 in three churches in Finland.

Most of the volunteers in Sweden, Denmark and Finland were organized by the Illinois Baptist State Association, and most of those in Norway were channeled by the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention. Forty-five volunteers in Scotland were organized by Ron Barker, associate pastor of the Prairie Creek, Plano, Texas.

In all, 18 states were represented among the volunteers.

One team in Finland had the unusual opportunity of sharing their faith in a bingo hall. For about 10 minutes, the crowd listened to testimonies by Larry Trotter, a pastor, and Lurline Sharp, a nurse, both from Chicago, Ill., and heard songs from the Americans. Gospel tracts also were distributed. The bingo players responded with applause.

"I shall return home ready and willing to be a bolder witness for Christ," Sharp said after the experience.

Another nurse, Carol Creech of Springfield, Ill., had the opportunity to address a group of doctors and nurses at a hospital in Jakobstad, Finland. She made note of "how the Holy Spirit uses me in my work to show the love of Jesus."

Dale Van Blair of Belleville, Ill., reported a man in Vaasa, Finland, who attended some of the evangelistic services, died of a heart attack the night before the visitors left, but not before telling his wife he had entrusted his life to Jesus.

In Malmo, Sweden, one team of clown ministry participants from Illinois donned their costumes to roam the streets and visit in schools.

In several countries, in fact, schools were open, and one team made 16 class visits.

Melody Mosley of Springfield, Ill., said it was "astounding to realize the number of teenagers in Sweden who have never heard the story of Jesus 'coming alive again.'"

Richard Hazelwood of Nebo, Ill., appreciated that the Malmo Church "didn't worship by the clock, but rather worshipped with the Spirit."

For Helen Turner of Bowling Green, S.C., insurance money from the accidental death of her husband provided financing for the trip to England for her and her 14-year-old daughter, Jennifer. After seeing Jennifer speak to other youths in Worcester, England, Mrs. Turner said, "Her father would have been very thankful for this."

Perry and Marie Huffstetler of Gastonia, N.C., stayed in the home of a woman whose husband had left her and the pastorate of a church in Birmingham, England. "I believe God used us not only to help her but to encourage the small church to forget the past and press on to greater heights," Huffstetler said.

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"Serving those who serve the Lord."

International

Confronting false teachers

by James McDaniel, First Church, Brinkley

Basic passage: 1 Timothy 1:4; Titus 2:1-5

Focal passage: 1 Timothy 4

Central truth: The most effective way to combat false teachings is by faithfully teaching, preaching and practicing the Word of God.

In 1 Timothy 3:15, the church is described as holding the very pillar and ground of truth, the Word of God. The antithesis to truth is Satan, described by Jesus in John 8:44 as a liar and the father of liars. Any individual or church that declares the Word of God as truth without any mixture of error should expect an assault from Satan.

False teachers abound throughout the world, our nation and in our own state. Some are making a frontal attack on Christianity, declaring themselves opposed to all Christian influence. Their effectiveness can be witnessed by the continual lowering of moral standards in our society: increased use of vulgarity, sexual permissiveness, increased use of alcohol and drugs, gambling, etc.

Others are more subtle in their attack. They assent to many Christian truths but will deviate from portions of Scripture. Their subtlety leads many unbelievers far from the truth and cripples multitudes of Christians.

How do we protect ourselves from counterfeit teachers? A good illustration for combating them is the way the U.S. Treasury Department trains its agents to recognize counterfeit money. They spend some time teaching how counterfeit money is made, but the majority of their time is spent learning the construction, feel and appearance of genuine money. It is said that when an agent learns the genuine article he becomes adept at spotting counterfeits.

In 1 Timothy 4:15, Paul says to "meditate upon these things," referring to verse 13, "give attendance to teaching, exhortation, to doctrine." The best way to protect ourselves from counterfeit teaching is to build the Word of God into our lives. As we engrain that which is the truth into our very being, we will become adept at identifying error with our spirit.

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Life and Work

Keeping our commitments

by Erwin L. McDonald, ABN editor emeritus, North Little Rock

Basic passage: Joshua 23:1 to 24:33

Focal passage: Joshua 23:11-16

Central truth: Clear commitments allow God's people to live creatively amid radical cultural changes.

As we study the problems and opportunities facing the Israelites as they entered the promised land after 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, we will see many lessons for us in our generation.

In his closing address to the people, nearing the end of his life, Joshua emphasized what God had done for his people, what Israel should do and what God could be expected to do in the future.

(1) Loving God in a new environment (Josh. 23:11)

Joshua was calling for the people to "put first things first," as he urged them to "take good heed" that "ye love the Lord your God." God's promises to Israel were conditional. He would continue to bless his people if they kept their commitment to him. And the best assurance of this was to be sure their love for God continued bright.

(2) The consequences of disobedience (Josh. 23:12-13)

Israel was to refrain from intermarriage with the pagans whose land God was giving them. Joshua's concern was not racist; he was seeking to protect his people against heathen religions. He warned if the people did not remain true to God, they would lose the gift of God himself.

(3) God keeps his word (Josh. 23:14)

Joshua was coming to the end of his long and faithful life, and much land remained still to be possessed. So he reminds the people God never fails to keep his promises and they must continue to look to the Lord for direction in their new and changing surroundings. It is thrilling to recognize God is available to us in our own changing world.

(4) Failure to keep commitments leads to discipline (Josh. 23:15-16)

A situation such as the Israelites faced in occupying the promised land affords God's people great challenge and equally great opportunity. If they remained true to God, he would continue to bless them. But if they worshiped false gods, he would destroy them. God still disciplines his people when they fail to keep their commitments.

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Bible Book

God's patience ends

by Carroll Evans, First Church, Hughes

Basic passage: Ezekiel 20:1 to 24:27

Focal passage: Ezekiel 20:7-11; 36:39; 24:13b-14

Central truth: Ezekiel's prophecies show that, although God is merciful, continued unfaithfulness to God and unwillingness to repent lead to inevitable judgment.

One hundred years before Ezekiel prophesied, the prophet Isaiah had warned the people of Judah to seek the Lord while he might be found and to call upon him while he was near. This implied a time would come when God could not be found and his ear would no longer hear their cries (Isaiah 55:6). In chapters 20-24, Ezekiel declares the end of God's patience has come. He turns from allegory to historical fact.

Israel's long, sordid history of idolatry and rebellion against God is recited. Over and over, there is the heartbreaking litany of God's assertion, "I called them, I led them, I protected them, I blessed them; but the house of Israel rebelled against me." During all of this time, God held back from making an end to the nation, but now he will bring destruction upon Jerusalem and the Temple and scatter the people among the nations.

God's judgment will sweep across the land like a forest fire (20:45-48), sweeping everything before it. Since every section of society is guilty, the rulers, priests, prophets and common people alike will suffer (ch. 22).

How can tragic situations such as this be avoided? Does God have a remedy for nations and individuals that continually try his patience and presume upon his mercy? Yes, again we let Isaiah speak: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord; and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God; for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

We are constantly in danger of being unfaithful to God. Hence, we need to evaluate our lives for any evidence of rebellion against the will of God and deal with it immediately.

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Palau preaches at Baptist rally in New York City

NEW YORK (BP)—Argentine-born evangelist Luis Palau told a predominantly Southern Baptist crowd in the nation's largest city he has observed "a great thirst and hunger for God in America," and that "only Jesus satisfies the soul."

More than 1,000 attended the rally at New York's historic Riverside Church sponsored by the Metropolitan New York Association.

"Psychologists can analyze guilt, but only Jesus can cleanse the conscience," Palau said.

The bilingual, Argentine evangelist now based in Portland, Ore., traced the

breakdown of American families to mankind's quest for eternal life, for satisfaction, for fulfillment and for love apart from a relationship with God.

Palau, sometimes described as "the next Billy Graham," has preached to more than five million persons in 37 nations, in both Spanish and English.

Dennis O'Neil, evangelism chairman for the Metro New York Association, described the rally as "one of the best evangelistic meetings our association has ever sponsored." The association includes about 150 churches in three states.

Learning not just child's play, Rigdon tells educators

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)—When it comes to formal education, most adults act like children, a Southern Baptist educator told correspondence program officials.

"Most adults assume responsibility for every other area of their lives before they assume responsibility for their formal learning," said Raymond M. Rigdon, executive director of the Seminary External Education Division (SEED) of the Southern Baptist seminaries. "Long years of dependency on the educational system have given them a continuing dependence on any educational system in which they enroll."

Adult education programs often encourage this dependency, Rigdon charged. "Adults in these programs simply are not given either encouragement or the oppor-

tunity to become self-directed learners."

Rigdon addressed the annual educational directors' workshop of the National Home Study Council, meeting in Montgomery, Ala.

Besides learning how to learn, adults need to organize their learning within goals that are meaningful to them, Rigdon said. The role of the distance educator is to serve as a resource for adult learners. Contrary to long-standing tradition, he contended, adults do not have to be in the physical presence of a teacher in order to engage in significant learning experiences.

The Seminary Extension Independent Study Institute, the correspondence component of SEED, has been an accredited member of the National Home Study Council since 1972.

Association team builds three Iowa churches

MARIETTA, Ga. (BP)—What started as a mission trip to construct a new building for one Iowa church ended with a team of Georgia Baptists building three churches in nine days, though some said it couldn't be done.

The mission project was accomplished by a 47-member building team from Noonday Association, with offices in Marietta, a suburb of Atlanta.

"We originally intended to build one church in Adel, Iowa," explained Bob Franklin, director of missions for the association. Later the group was asked to complete a church building in Waukee, 10 miles from Adel, and build a church building in Monroe, 65 miles from Adel.

Hugh Roberts, a general contractor from Marietta and a member of Eastland Heights Church, agreed to be the "foreman." He decided the team could do the work on all three churches.

Roberts, a veteran of mission trips through Carpenters for Christ—a national, non-denominational organization—had dreamed of leading such a group from his association.

"We have become complacent in the South. We have everything at our fingertips. It's good to be part of Southern Baptist work in a place where nothing is taken for granted. It brings churches together," he said.

The group included members of 13 churches: Blessed Hope, Cloverdale, Eastland Heights, Kennesaw Avenue, Locust Grove, Milford, Noonday, Rose Lane, Smyrna First, Stilesboro, Wildwood, Woodstock First and Zion. They built the church building in Adel from the foundation up. Only the basement was dug before they arrived.

They completed most of the Monroe church, and put the finishing touches on the Waukee church, which had been started by two other mission crews from Tennessee and Missouri.

It was the first church building for each of the three Iowa churches, with total membership less than 50 each.

Most team members were inexperienced in building, as well as mission trips. "This is the first time the association has sponsored a mission trip," said Bob Franklin. "And it's already caused more discussion than anything else we've done."

Bud Garvin, a member of Locust Grove Church, recalled his visit to the Sand Lumber Company near Adel. "We told the guy who owned the lumber company what we were doing. He said we couldn't do it, but that he wasn't going to be the one who stood in the way." The owner provided an employee to run errands for the team whenever they needed lumber or supplies.

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