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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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SEP 17 1982

September 16, 1982

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

Churches in the middle:
see pages 8-9





Been back to the neighborhood you grew up in lately? If you have, you probably are aware that it does not take many years for the face of a community to undergo a noticeable change. Most churches, however, are built to stay. When the shift in population brings about a drastic change in the racial, cultural or socioeconomic makeup, it can pose quite a problem for the congregation trying to maintain the status quo set up by the previous residents. See story on pages 8 and 9.

In this issue

8 Churches in transition

When one socioeconomic, cultural or racial group leaves a neighborhood and a new one takes its place, churches wanting to minister to the area find they too must change.

10 Drunk driving: part 4

ABN managing editor Betty J. Kennedy takes one last look at the problem of the drinking driver, describes some remedies already in use and lists what Arkansas Baptists can do.

What about Phoebe?

Your editorial, "The Function of A Deacon" in the Aug. 19, 1982 issue of the ABN, was very interesting. It revealed a popular bias.

The most significant deacon in my life some 27 years ago was not a man. She was a woman in the College Avenue Baptist Church (now Heritage Baptist Church) in Annapolis, Maryland. Such an impact did this deaconess have upon the college-age students in the community that last year the church, in conjunction with the BSU in the area, honored her with a very special reception.

This may bother some who interpret Scripture on the basis of bias rather than on what the Scripture actually says. In Romans 16:1, Paul calls the woman, Phoebe, "diakonon", which, as your editorial pointed out about the word translated "deacon", is also derived from the Greek word "diakonon."

The RSV, Phillips, Williams, Amplified, and NIV (marginal note) translations actually call Phoebe a "deaconess." I feel that the reason some translators call Phoebe a "servant" while at the same time translating the same Greek word "deacon" when used to describe certain men is based more on bias than on anything else.

This is evident in your editorial. There is not a single hint that there exists even the remotest possibility that a woman could ever be thought of as a deaconess.

I submit this as food for thought from my own experience with a wonderful, dedicated woman who was a deaconess. — **Chaplain William H. Simpson, San Antonio, Texas**

Disagreement not heresy

Please allow me a few words in regard to the recent charges of "heresy" of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Professor Dale Moody. Moody has been labeled as an heretic because of his unpopular position on the issue of apostasy. I submit that if disagreement with an article of the Baptist Faith and Message or Southern's Abstract of Principles constitutes heresy, that all of us are guilty. As a former student at the seminary, it has been my observation that Moody takes great pains to be biblical in his theology. His paramount concern is to agree with the revelation of God and not the creeds of humanity.

The faculty of the seminary is composed of men and women who are deeply committed to God, the Bible, and the task of preparing their students to minister to a lost world in the name of Jesus Christ. This is their mandate. I am thankful for their caring commitment to this calling.

I call on all Arkansas Baptists to put aside these petty theological quarrels and to do their utmost to support our seminary faculties and students. — **Alan J. Lynch, Conway**

Congress passes tax bill, church pension plans aided

WASHINGTON (BP) — Congress has completed action which will increase the ability of churches and denominations to provide more adequate retirement plans for their ministers and lay employees.

The noncontroversial changes in laws governing church pension plans were included in a controversial tax bill which will raise taxes by \$98.3 billion over the next three fiscal years. The measure, pushed by President Reagan as a means of reducing anticipated federal deficits, passed the House of Representatives 226-207 and the Senate 52-47 on Aug. 19.

Under the changes approved by Congress participants in church pension plans will be able to increase tax-sheltered retirement contributions in several ways.

Ministers and other church employees who made inadequate or no contributions to pension programs during their early working years will be given the same option for overriding the normal annual contribution limit that current law offers teachers, hospital workers and employees of home

health services.

The new act will treat all Baptist (or other denominational) employment as years of service with one employer. This change will benefit church employees because the annual limit on pension plan contributions is affected by the number of years in the present job.

Also for most ministers and church employees whose adjusted gross income is \$17,000 or less the new act will provide a minimum allowable contribution each year of \$3,000. The tax-deferred contribution cannot exceed the employee's compensation.

The act also provides an additional election for church employees which allows an increase in the contribution limit by up to \$10,000 for any year but subject to a \$40,000 lifetime cap.

It also specifies that church pension boards are authorized to issue tax-deferred annuities, a clarification church pension board sought after a 1982 Internal Revenue Service ruling that only life insurance companies could do so.



Anytime there is an economic recession, some churches have financial difficulty. Obviously, some of the loss of funds is due to the fact that church members have lost jobs or have been cut back on the number of hours they work. The major problem is that too few of our church members are practicing New Testament stewardship. Perhaps, these individuals have failed to bring material possessions into the proper perspective.

First, it is essential to realize that no one truly possesses anything. Each of us is but a steward or overseer of the possessions which God has entrusted to us. The psalmist set forth this principle as he declared, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1).

Basic in Christianity is the matter of giving. The Bible tells us that, "God so loved . . . that he gave" (John 3:16). God gave his "only begotten son" so we should respond by returning a portion of what we have to him.

Unfortunately, some people have the wrong motive for giving. Some seem to regard God as a policeman or bill collector. These people say, "If I fail to give, God will cause some calamity to befall me."

Still others give out of a sense of duty or from a motive of self-respect. They say, "It is my responsibility to give." Or, "What will others think if I don't give?"

A few give to the Lord's work as an attempt to make up for past or present wrongs. They believe, "If I give enough God will forgive my sins."

The New Testament teaches that the proper motive for giving to the Lord's work is love. The apostle Paul said we are to give, "not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7). The Greek word "cheerful" is "hilaron" from which our English word "hilarious" is derived. The idea is that we are to give from a heart overflowing with enthusiasm.

The question arises, "Is there any way a Christian can tell how much of his income should be given to the Lord's work? Or, should he simply give after all the bills are paid? In the Old Testament era, the followers of God gave a tithe (one-tenth) of their income to God. The first appearance of the tithe was when Abraham gave to God's priest, Melchizedek (Gen. 14:20).

Some maintain that we are no longer required to tithe because it was required under the law. It is true that the law demanded all Israelites tithe. But it should be noted that Abraham was tithing more than 400 years before the law was given by God through Moses. Further, Jesus put his stamp of approval on the practice as he said, "This ought ye to have done . . ." (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42).

If individuals were compelled to tithe under the law, we ought to do more under grace. A tithe is a good minimum standard, or starting point for all Christians. There are many, in this affluent society, who should give much more than 10 percent of their income to the Lord's work. When an individual prospers, he can give even a larger percent of his income.

Giving is encouraged when people understand where the money is going. A pastor said his church was below its budget in July. In August he made an intensive effort to inform the congregation as to how the money was used. Their August offering was the largest in the history of the church.

The money which our churches receive is used to carry on evangelism, missions, training and benevolent activities. This is true at the local, associational, state and Southern Baptist levels. Sometimes mistakes are made in the use of the Lord's money, but these are few. Budgets are checked and rechecked on every level.

Giving is a vital part of worship, since the money we give furthers the Lord's work. All through the Bible, worshippers of God gave of their material possessions. For example, the wise men who came to worship the newborn Christ brought expensive gifts (Matt. 2:1-12). The worship experience is more meaningful, if an individual seeks God's leadership regarding the exact amount to be given.

Fortunately, only a very few have experienced financial difficulty from the current economic recession. In most, if not all instances, the problem is not the financial difficulties of members but a failure to practice New Testament stewardship.

When a Christian follows the leadership of God in giving, he will know the joy which can only be found in obeying and worshipping the Master. In giving, we assure the spreading of the gospel at home and around the world.

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One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant/President, OBU

Trying to throw away old wisdom

Recently I was reminded that even in the worst piles of junk that collect in my office and at home, there are those little gems of wisdom that would be a shame to throw away. Mrs. Grant and I do not see completely eye to eye on this matter, particularly when she launches a housecleaning operation with considerable singleness of purpose. One of the occupational hazards of being a college president is not only having to give speeches, but having to listen to an abundance of them. I do a lot of note taking on miscellaneous scraps of paper, and they tend to accumulate around our house.

In the midst of one of those housecleaning operations not long ago, I found it very hard to throw away such quotable quotes as the following:

1. "The test of true religion is not how high you jump when you get it. It's how you run when you hit the ground."

2. "We were put here on earth not to see through each other, but to see each other through."

3. "The only time success comes before work is in the dictionary."

4. J. B. Phillips: "Trying to revise the translation of the New Testament is like trying to rewire a house without turning off the electricity."

I found two interesting comments on old age. Vance Havner said, "I'm glad to be here. At the age of 80, I'm glad to be anywhere!" Another said, "Do you know what it's like to be 60? You know everything; you've been everywhere; you've done everything; you just can't remember any of it."

I was impressed with these comparisons of the optimist and pessimist: (1) The optimist says, "It's always darkest just before dawn." The pessimist says, "It's always darkest before it gets pitch black." (2) The optimist says, "There is light at the end of the tunnel." The pessimist says, "The light at the end of the tunnel is probably an oncoming train."

Then there was the wise old deacon who counseled young preachers: (1) "Jesus did very little screaming and stamping. He taught by example." (2) "The trouble with some preachers is that they don't know how to drive a nail without bustin' the plank."

Several were strong on the use of the brain: (1) The safety sign in the factory that read "CAUTION: Be sure brain is in gear before putting mouth in motion." (2) "The most underestimated force in the world is stupidity." (3) "Horse sense is what the horse has that keeps him from betting on humans."

One other bit of trivia slipped through the "wisdom filter" of my filing system: "The Bible says concerning tennis: 'Joseph served in the courts of Pharaoh.'"

Surely all this wisdom is worth just a little more clutter around the house.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University at Arkadelphia.

Opinion

Hiding behind the cross

Slander: an oral statement of a false, malicious, or defamatory nature, tending to damage another's reputation, means of livelihood, etc. Label: a written statement or graphic representation, especially in published form, that damages a person's reputation or exposes him to public ridicule.

Hiding behind the cross can have two meanings. The one generally thought of is the act of seeking always to keep Christ and his truths foremost with self presented only as his spokesman or servant.

Another way that's becoming more evident nowadays is hiding behind the cross while hurling charges of liberalism and un-Christian conduct. Such hiding is done in this way:

Christian teaching discourages fellow believers from going to court against each other. A sweet Christian disposition and a desire to follow such teachings have probably kept some who have been falsely accused of liberalism and un-Christian conduct from going to civil court.

There's always a possibility that some day, somewhere, a person under slanderous or libelous attacks of being a liberal or less-

by Bob Parker

than-dedicated Christian servant is going to backslide from his sweet Christian disposition and bring to civil court such charges which are damaging to long-established reputations and means of livelihood or support. Also, it's conceivable there might be an instance where an individual or institution would take such civil action believing you aren't necessarily carnal or backsliding in doing so. They might well reason that anyone being libelous or slanderous is not to be considered a Christian brother, despite wearing the title. Therefore, it would not be un-Christian to sue such a person, damaging his reputation or means of livelihood.

It behooves us all to be extremely cautious in labeling fellow believers, for who wants to end up in civil court where such a suit could be especially embarrassing to the one sued? If there's a yen for fighting, be sure the real enemy is identified. Then roll up your sleeves and give the real Satan the effective, needed, continual pounding. Historically, God's true people have never been embarrassed when taken to trial by

the devil. You don't fight evil by combatting those who love Jesus, his church and his word as much or more than you.

I am amazed, after many years of association in military and civilian life with leaders of other religious groups, how some who are really liberal (not believing the Virgin Birth, the efficacy of Christ's blood atonement, the miracles, etc.) are often more "Christian" in the use of their tongue and pen than are those we would like to consider brother believers.

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are still fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions and envyings are still deeds of the flesh along with immorality and drunkenness. Practicing the Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12) and abiding by the first and second greatest commandments are also aids in resisting temptation to slander or libel.

Bob Parker is director of the Christian Life Council of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



Woman's viewpoint

Judy Kent

I like to go to church

"Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus ..." our daughter, Jodi, was reciting the books of the Bible as we were in our car headed toward church for Sunday School. The hurriedness of the Sunday morning was behind us. Breakfast had been a quick bowl of cereal instead of the bacon and eggs we would like to have had. A roast had been prepared to put in the oven while the children finished eating. The pretty ribbon now tied in Jodi's hair had been found in the back of the drawer where it had worked its way since the last time it had been worn. Our young son, Sam, had managed to locate both Sunday shoes in his closet after saying he couldn't find them. Beds had been made, all but one anyway, in an attempt to straighten up the house before leaving. A Bible had been misplaced in the hustle, but we had managed to find a replacement to avoid walking into Sunday School empty-armed.

"Joshua, Judges, Ruth ..." Jodi had begun learning the books of the Old Testament three weeks earlier, and she thought carefully as she named each one so she would not break the rhythmic jumping-rope-rhyme pattern. As she reached the last book she could recall, I named the next three and Jodi repeated the words several

times until she was comfortable with the pronunciations. Then she started at Genesis and recited the names through the last one she had just learned.

Sam waited patiently in the back seat of the car until Jodi had finished. A smile swept across his face as we began to sing, "I Like to Go to Church." He could always think of several activities at church that would fit the third line of the song. He chimed in, "There's lots of stories we can hear." Sam had begun learning at an early age that we really do like to go to church.

The 10 or 15 minutes we spend in driving to church has become a Bible sharing time for our family. We learn memory verses, discuss the day's lessons, or sing Christian songs. This special activity has an added benefit. By the time we have reached the church we have forgotten about the rush at home, and we are in the right spirit for worship as we enter our Sunday School classes.

Judy Kent is the wife of Wes Kent, precollege associate in the Evangelism Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. The Kents, along with their two children, attend Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, where they work with sixth graders in Sunday School. Her interests include playing mountain folk music and needlecraft.

Practical Questions for Christians

by Glenn D. McGriff

Dr. McGriff, could you give some suggestions to pastors with limited training that would help us in counseling?

Every pastor will perhaps find it necessary to do some formal counseling. By formal is meant that a time will be specifically requested and a definite place agreed upon. Informal counseling takes place as people approach the pastor with particular questions or specific situations.



McGriff

There are some general behavioral expressions that may be very facilitative in a counseling situation. First, it is important that the counselor be relaxed. An expression of relaxation will help promote an atmosphere of safety and freedom. Secondly, listening is a very significant factor. The person who comes to the pastor is entitled to be the focus of attention for the duration of the structured session. Understanding is also a vital factor in counseling. The counselee should know that what he/she is saying is important. If there is doubt as to the meaning of the message being given, the pastor should state the message he has heard and ask if that is accurate. A final expression that should characterize a counseling session is patience. The person who comes for counseling should be privileged to set the pace and not feel pressured to hurry or disclose things he is not ready to reveal.

The factors mentioned should promote a climate of acceptance and generate a willingness to return for counseling if the situation so demands.

Dr. Glenn D. McGriff is Director of Ministry of Crisis Support for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Inquiries, comments or questions to be used anonymously in this column should be sent to Questions, Ministry of Crisis Support, Medical Towers Building, Suite 660, 9601 Life Drive, Little Rock; AR 72205.

Wolfe visits Sunday School Board, urges Baptists to learn to trust

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptists must put aside philosophical differences, accept diversity that is inevitable in a 13.8-million-member denomination and begin to trust each other again, according to the president of the Southern Baptist Pastors Conference.

Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Church of Mobile, Ala., spent Aug. 23-24 in informal dialogue with Sunday School Board personnel. The visit was a follow-up to conversations earlier in the summer between Wolfe and Morton Rose, vice president for church programs and services, about the need for improved communication within the denomination.

Wolfe believes current divisions center primarily in philosophical differences about worship, how to carry out the mission of the local church and what evangelism is — not the Bible. He is confident major differences over the Bible were resolved at the 1981 Southern Baptist Convention in Los Angeles when Herschel

Hobbs affirmed that "truth without any mixture of error" in the "Baptist Faith and Message" statement referred to the entire Bible. Hobbs, retired pastor of First Church of Oklahoma City, chaired the group which drafted the statement of faith adopted in 1963.

"We didn't vote on the Bible at New Orleans and I'm glad," Wolfe said. "I believe 95 percent of us believe the Bible," he said. "I don't think we have to have the same methods or forms of worship or evangelism. We've got to start trusting each other again. We do have different philosophies and methods, but we always have."

To accommodate diversity, Wolfe said people must have the attitude "you can disagree with me and love the Lord as much as I do." He said he is optimistic Southern Baptist Convention President Jimmy Dyer can initiate communication among differing groups. "I don't think people are trying to manipulate and control the denomination," Wolfe said.



Basics of Sunday School Growth

by Millie Gill/ABN staff writer

William Lewis Kreis

is serving as director of missions for Faulkner Association with offices on Acklin Gap Road, Conway. He came there from a more than six year pastorate at the Paris First Church and has served other Arkansas churches including those at Joiner, Gosnell and North



Kreis

Little Rock. He has served in associational leadership positions, and has served on several state convention committees and boards, currently serving on the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board and Executive Secretary Search Committee. Kreis has led mission revivals in the Philippines, Michigan, Ohio and Arkansas.

He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College and the Rural Seminary of the South. He attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and has participated in a basic psychiatric study seminar at the University Medical Center Church Dynamic Institute in Louisville, Ky.

Brenda Gail Hufmeyer

has resigned as minister of youth at Paradise First Church to be married.

Phillip Powers

has joined the staff of Immanuel Church in Fayetteville as minister of youth. He is a senior church music major at Ouachita Baptist University. He is married to the former Carleen Corley of Prairie Grove. They have a son, Christopher.

W. J. Black

has resigned as pastor of the Pleasant Valley Church at Sidon following seven years of service there.

Robert B. Dickson

observed his 40th anniversary in the gospel ministry Aug. 22. He is pastor of the Evergreen Church in Pine Bluff. Dickson was licensed to the ministry Aug. 9, 1942, and was ordained June 30, 1943 by the First Church of Grenada, Miss.

Earl Robertson

is serving the New Haven Church in Pulaski County Association as part-time music director.

Charles O'Neal

is serving as pastor of the Temple Church of Searcy, coming there from San Antonio, Texas, where he served in the U.S. Air Force. His other experiences include several pastorates, seminary extension instructor and a military chaplain.

Terry Morris

joined the staff of Watson Chapel Church at Pine Bluff Sept. 3 as youth director. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

briefly

Hope First Church

honored Debbie Moore Aug. 29 in recognition of her recent appointment by the Foreign Mission Board to service in Liberia. She was honored with a reception and a "This Is Your Life" program in which family members, church friends and business associates participated. Her gifts were a money tree, basket of cash and bouquet of red roses.

Harmony Association

has organized a weekly ministerial support activity for the purpose of pastors, church staff members, retired ministers and guests discussing and probing topical interests, and for physical recreation. James E. Byrd is director of missions.

Leonard Street Church, Hot Springs

has purchased a 165 by 300 foot lot on the east side of their present location. Jesse Holcomb is pastor.

Weiner First Church

held a deacon ordination service Aug. 29 for Carlos J. Browndeville. Jimmy Garner, Trinity Association director of missions, was moderator and Pastor Joe Craft delivered the ordination message. Others on program were Rommie Ashcraft, James Ramsey, deacons of the church, and Charles Winters, pastor at the Greenfield Church.

Luxora First Church

held an August revival that resulted in 26 professions of faith and 29 rededications. Pastor Keith Mathis reports a total of 103 professions of faith in the past 15 months. Revival leader was Delton Dees of St.

Louis.

Sheridan First Southern Church

voted Sept. 1 to become the North Main Church of Sheridan, effective Oct. 1. Interim pastor Charles Holcomb says the change is to reduce confusion over the names of churches in the city and to provide location information.

Pulaski Heights Church

in Little Rock observed "Faith Alive '82" Sept. 12-14. Art Calandro, co-minister of Marble Collegiate Church in New York City, will be guest preacher.

Cullendale First Church

at Camden honored Pastor Jimmy L. Burks

Aug. 29 in recognition of 10 years of service. He was presented with a money tree and plaque.

Heber Springs First Church

will be host for a Divorce Adjustment Workshop Oct. 28-29. Ann Alexander Smith, consultant with the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board, will be leading sessions each evening at 7 p.m.

Cabot First Church

was in a recent revival that resulted in 44 professions of faith, five additions by letter and 10 rededications according to Pastor Keith Loyd. Rick Ingle of Denton, Texas, was evangelist.

And some . . . evangelists

Tony Weston and Billy Davis, recently named by Nettleton Church of Jonesboro as music evangelists, will continue their music ministry to the churches of Arkansas and surrounding states.

"Our church views this ministry of Weston/Davis, organized in 1980, as an extension of their local church and as a segment of our contribution to the Bold Mission Thrust. Although our financial support to them is limited, we endorse them enthusiastically and unreservedly," said Mikael Carrier, pastor of the Nettleton Church.

The two may be contacted by writing P.O. Box 1662, Jonesboro, Ark. 72401, or by calling (501) 932-4960.



Weston



Davis



ABN Photo/Boo Aam

Sunday, Aug. 15 was a big day for the members of River Road Chapel at Redfield. The congregation held an afternoon service to dedicate its first permanent building, celebrate its fifth homecoming and to say goodbye to its first full-time pastor, Billy G. West. Pictured with the new building and a portable chapel from the Arkansas State Missions Department, which has served as the congregation's home, in the background are (front from left) Gerald B. Cannon, Carolyn Bradley, Myrna Dobbins, all members of the building committee; West, and Wayne Myers, a member of the associational missions committee; (back) Robert Dew, chairman of missions committee; Jim Byrd, director of Missions for Harmony Association; Ron Condren, pastor of Lee Memorial Church, one of the churches sponsoring the mission, and Conway Sawyers, director of the State Missions Department of the ABSC. Other sponsors include Rison and Pine Bluff First churches.

Forrest City First Church

Youth were involved in numerous summer activities that included a week at Siloam Springs; a Current River float trip; a visit to the World's Fair where the youth choir performed at the Baptist Pavilion; a revival led by Dennis Baw; youth rec nites; and a fifth Sunday Singing featuring the J. B. Betts family of Memphis in concert. Doug Turner is youth/music director. Kerry Powell is pastor.

Malvern First Church

Youth and adults returned Aug. 10 from their second mission trip to El Paso, Texas, where they assisted with a Vacation Bible School in the Shearman Park area, sponsored by the El Paso Northgate Church. The group also assisted the International Baptist Bible Institute by painting a new classroom-dormitory building in Guadalupe, Mexico. Charles and Sarah Ashcraft, former Arkansans are on the faculty there. Zane Chesser is pastor of the Malvern church.

missionary notes

Mr. and Mrs. Paul A. Rhoads, missionaries to Korea, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: P.O. Box 5, South Taegu, Korea 634). He is a native of Little Rock, Ark. The former Lana LeGrand of Missouri, she was born in Poplar Bluff and also lived in St. Louis and Pilot Knob. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1973.

Indiana update

Shiloh, Texarkana goes to Plymouth

Seven persons from Shiloh Church of Texarkana had an average attendance of 71 in three Backyard Bible Clubs, did a community survey resulting in one profession of faith and reported 18 rededications from revival services following a week's work with Marshall Church in Plymouth, Ind. Michael Shy is pastor of Shiloh.

Springdale group goes to Indianapolis

Forty-eight youth and sponsors from Elm-dale Church in Springdale recently completed a 10-day mission trip to the Indianapolis, Ind. area. More than 100 children were enrolled in two mission Vacation Bible Schools with several making professions of faith. The schools were held in conjunction with Indiana's Central Association's effort to begin a new church in east Indianapolis.

A youth choir, ensemble, drama team and puppet team performed at two church-

es, in a city park, a parking lot in New Palestine and at an apartment complex. The Bible schools were held in city parks, both in neighborhoods with no existing Southern Baptist work near.

Warren First helping new work

First Church of Warren has taken part in supporting two works focused upon by Bartholomew Association, First Church of Middletown, Ind. and South Madison Mission in Pendleton, Ind. Several months ago the church sent \$750 to the Pendleton mission to help other churches meet a need of \$350 a month in supplemental funds.

In August, a group of four men from the association, including Warren pastor Glenn Morgan, provided volunteer labor on a new building under construction at Middletown. The Middletown congregation is sponsoring the new work at Pendleton, about 15 miles away, Morgan reported, but itself is not much stronger than the mission.

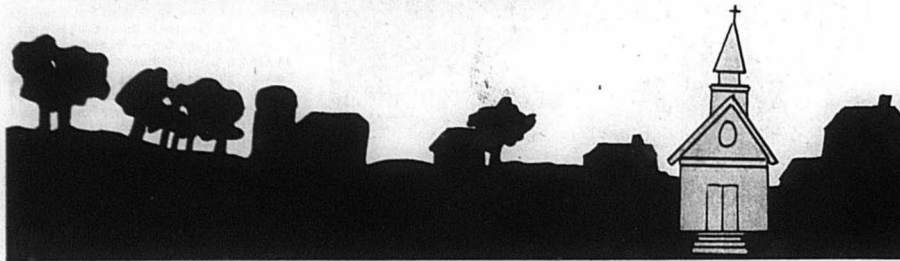
Forrest City First youth minister

Youth from First Church of Forrest City, members of the "Brothers and Sisters in Christ Ensemble," spent the week of June 19-26 working with the Gateway Church in Newburg, Ind. The group presented a concert, worked in Vacation Bible School, led three Backyard Bible Clubs and Teen VBS each night. A total of 250 were enrolled by the group, average attendance was 150 and seven were saved.

Hot Springs First helps out Yorktown

A group of 21 youth and adults from First Church, Hot Springs traveled north July 31-Aug. 7 to help with surveys and Backyard Bible Clubs with the local church in Yorktown, Ind. The group also led Kingston Avenue Church in Anderson, Ind. in worship while on tour.

TRANSITION:



Changing communities leave churches in the middle

Forty years ago, a group of Baptists in a small town west of Little Rock banded together to constitute the First Church of Douglasville. The community was ready, and the work took off. By the end of the first year, the church had baptized 43, was 250 members strong and had a Sunday School enrollment of 165. The pace quieted after that, somewhat, and like any other situation, the fellowship had years when it faltered. But as decade passed into decade, Douglasville First continued to progress, with 244 on the roll in 1950, 295 in 1955, 350 in 1960 and 389 in 1970.

Then, one day the members looked out their windows and found themselves in a different world. The city of Little Rock had continued its westward crawl until it had absorbed the village, finding the First Church of Douglasville attempting to run an old-fashioned country church program smack in the middle of a metropolitan environment.

By 1976 the church, which had reported its Sunday School enrollment as high as 305, was averaging 43 in Sunday School. Only 34 attended on an average Sunday in 1977. By 1980 it had slipped to 28 and the 1981 annual of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention listed average Sunday School attendance for the church as 22 and average Church Training attendance, seven.

Douglasville First is a transitional church.

Its predicament is shared, in some degree, by an estimated 56 percent of Southern Baptist churches in metropolitan areas. It is a concern, Christian social ministries consultant Dean Preuett says, that's time has come in Arkansas.

Preuett is presently working with two Little Rock churches in transitional neighborhoods. He says there are at least half a dozen others in the city, and more in other metropolitan areas around the state, which must eventually come to grips with a painful ultimatum: conform or die.

The Home Mission Board considers a transitional neighborhood one in which racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, lifestyle or population density change has taken or is taking place. A community is considered "pre-transitional" when the new group


comprises less than 10 percent of the population, but it is perceived their numbers will increase. When numbers increase until 10 to 50 percent of the population represent the new group, the community is "transitional." It becomes "post-transitional" when more than half are new residents, and is for practical purposes a new community.

The decades of the 1950s through the 1970s are remembered for the movement of lower income blacks into inner city areas. Some downtown churches chose to pull up stakes and go to their members' suburbs, but many of the larger ones had been drawing membership from the entire metro area anyway, and were not affected by population changes in the immediate vicinity of the church.



Gene Davis, a member at Douglasville First Church, leads neighborhood children in a Big A Club Bible study (above). Two students (left) read what Jesus had to say about judging others. Douglasville's Big A Clubs were held on Saturdays through the summer with an aim to reach young people and eventually their unchurched parents.





by Bob Allen

The more recent shift in suburbs, decreasingly middle class white and increasingly middle class black, has created more of a pinch for the smaller neighborhood churches dependent on the immediate geographical area for their members. Traditional church programs, many times, gradually fail to meet the needs of the new residents, and old residents slip away one by one.

The problem is not just racial, Preuett is

quick to point out. A sleepy, small town church met with a growing population of lifelong city dwellers is faced with the same question: What do we do to minister to them?

The first thing, Preuett says, is for the church to take a look at itself. He suggests the members write a mission for their church, examine their socioeconomic, racial and cultural makeup and identify their

specific ministries to members and others.

Next they look at the people in their neighborhood, and ask what their needs are. From there, Preuett says, the church can draw its own conclusions about what must be done to reach the community for Christ.

The answer Preuett suggests is service. "The church exists to serve and not to be served," he said. "The church exists in a community to serve the community."

Douglasville targeted two groups in its ministry area — a number of senior citizen shut-ins and a group of children from non-church homes.

For the former, the church, aided by Home Mission Board funds, set up a meals-on-wheels lunch program on Saturdays and Sundays to supplement a government-sponsored five-day-a-week program. For the latter, church members volunteered for a 13-week "Big A Club" type of Bible School for neighborhood children on Saturdays and on weekdays to work one-on-one with youth in remedial reading and mathematics instruction, through the summer.

The change at Douglasville in the first few months of putting into practice what it learned after a six-month self study, Preuett said, is little numerically. "But from the standpoint of a church doing things together," he said, a great deal has been accomplished. The church has a reason to exist — something it was beginning to grope for — and potential for the future — something it was beginning to lose.

"We think of Little Rock as a big old country town, but it's a metropolitan area," Preuett said. "Cities change people, there's no doubt about it. I think we need to have a metropolitan theology — a metropolitan psychology.

"Probably 90 percent of the whole process is just changing attitude."



Bob Lowe (photo at left) marks resident members of Hebron Church in west Little Rock on a map while John P. Gillen watches. (Below) Christian Social Ministries consultant Dean Preuett leads the men, two members of an ad hoc committee of half a dozen, in a self study of their church's ministry and how it relates to their neighborhood's needs.



Getting the wheels in motion

"It just seems to simple," he lamented. "Why can't we just get police officers to crack down on drunk drivers?" The young man punctuated the words "crack down" with his fist on the table. The discussion had centered, up to now, on the driving habits of his college buddies who emptied the kegs of beer at the party and drove home. "Sure, they are taking some risk to get behind the wheel, but they're extra careful after they've had a few drinks."

"What I'm really scared about," he interjected, "is those people who are really drunk, like staggering drunk, you know?" They're a real danger to the rest of us on the roads."

"Law enforcement officers in Central Arkansas coordinated efforts and just recently set up roadblocks for a crackdown," I reminded him. "Oh, yeh, right," he groaned. "But that's not going to keep those alcoholics off the roads. Most of the judges slap a little fine on them and suspend that mandatory sentence and they're right back on the highway."

"Slow down, friend," I interjected. "You're spreading the blame around fairly equally, but you forgot the prosecutors, the juries, and the people who make the laws. And how about the folks who elect the judges, the prosecuting attorneys, and the lawmakers?"

"Well, it does seem like there are problems all down the line. And those people do seem to pass the buck a lot," he mused. "I'm not sure we really can do anything permanent to stop those drunk drivers," he said.

"I'm afraid a lot of people arrive at that conclusion and get stuck there," I agreed. "But there's no excuse for refusing to try to do something." "Most people have some close contact with injuries or death from DWI before they go very far along in life," I explained. "Don't you know someone who has been a victim?"

"Sure do," he responded, slowly. "A friend's young daughter was killed... but, that driver was a first offender. How would anybody prevent that?" he asked. "The police wouldn't have him identified as a potential problem."

"At least you're beginning to look for solutions, like identification of problem drinkers," I allowed.

"There's one thing I would like you to understand from the first," I emphasized. "You don't have to be drunk to be dangerous behind the wheel. A driver whose blood alcohol content is 0.10 percent by volume is legally intoxicated, but any alcohol can impair judgment enough for you to make, pardon the cliché, the fatal mistake."

"So, you're talking about not just drunk

drivers, but, drinking drivers — anyone who drinks any and drives," he responded.

"Correct," I confirmed. "That makes the problem much wider in scope, but it also gives you a place to start preventing DWI drivers from becoming repeat offenders."

"Some folks see stopping drunk driving as the simple matter of jailing all drunks and teaching them a lesson," I noted, "but many law enforcement and judicial officers maintain it does not work."

"Then there are other areas of disagreement," I continued, "such as the costs of rehabilitation programs, the cost of jails and prisons to keep repeaters off the roads, the effectiveness of stiff and mandatory penalties and how to attach public stigma to drunken drivers."

"About the only common ground, I have found, is the general agreement that something needs to be done about drunk (and drinking) drivers," I concluded.

"Maybe fighting drunk driving is not so simple after all," the college student allowed, "but I wish someone would come up with some workable ideas." "I want to be realistic enough to be able to get something done," he concluded.

A similar conversation actually occurred, but some of the fallacies expressed by the young man are composites of misinformation uncovered in research. Before Baptist people can hope to have an impact on the drunk driver problem they need to do their homework, get their facts straight and set a realistic goal.

Drinkers in rehabilitation programs are given a healthy dose of reality, and citizens trying to influence the legislature, the courts and law enforcement agencies could well use the same eye-opening treatment, explains a Baptist legislator.

Judy Petty, State Representative from Pulaski County, has some advice for citizens who want to express their concern to their legislator for the January, 1983, session. First, she suggests, "use those magic words: 'I live in your district'". That's guaranteed to get his or her attention, she says.

She says cards, letters, phone calls to the lawmaker will answer what's sure to be a counter pressure by those who make money off the sale of liquor. Petty wants public support for doing something about drunk drivers expressed to the legislature before they meet in January.

But she cautions concerned citizens to be clear in their goal of getting drunk drivers off the highways. The lawmakers are not likely to debate the morality of the use of alcohol, she explains, but they might take action to support a better system of

This article is the fourth and final in a series on drunken driving. Other articles have looked at the criminal justice system and the results of the system's malfunction. The series is intended to give Arkansas Baptists perspective on the realities of the drunk driver problem while upholding Baptists' traditional stance of total abstinence for Christians.

dealing with the problems caused by illegal driving while drinking.

At present, Petty is chairman of the Governor's Commission on Drunk Driving, set up to study the problem and make recommendations by November. Petty hopes the commission will have a packet of "how-to" materials available for the public when they are through.

Already the study group has heard testimony that repeat offenders cause two-thirds of the DWI accidents and that attention needs to be paid to treatment of drivers who have problems with alcohol.

Actually, such treatment programs already are in place. And they work, explains Karen Keller, who directs Baptist Medical System's "Recover" program in Little Rock. Recover, a private program, and state/federal-funded agencies in every Arkansas county are available to "alcoholics," "problem drinkers" or "social drinkers" who face their problems after a DWI incident.

The alcoholic drinks compulsively, while the problem drinker consumes to get intoxicated, she explains. Both have to be faced with the hard choice, such as between jail or a rehabilitation program, before coming to grips with reality, she notes. Recover and the state's Alcohol Safety Program also work to educate the first-offender drinking driver and have a separate program for teen drinkers.

"Problem drinkers almost never get help without a push from family, employer or law enforcement," Keller maintains, "and law enforcement is the ideal system to screen for problem drinkers because of the blood alcohol content tests they give."

"The programs are available at low costs (by using mental health centers) in every county," Keller emphasizes. "The question is, why do judges not refer DWI offenders?"

Judy Petty, who has been instrumental in organizing a Central Arkansas anti-drunk driving group, sees the need to shape up the system. She thinks the standard must be to provide (1) certain detection, (2) swift judgement and (3) severe enough penalties.

A system already exists to deal with the drunken driver, but it must be made to perform. As Karen Keller says, "the police

have to arrest, the judges must refer and use penalties, and rehabilitation agencies must do their job." Then there is the bottom line: the community must be the watchdog.

Public outrage may be the fuel for reform, even revolution, but it must be accompanied by action. Listed here are some basic suggestions for action on the drunk driving problem. They are certainly not all inclusive and not in any priority order but are meant to be the start of action.

1. If there is a group in your area such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) or

Remove Intoxicated Drivers (RID), get involved and give your time and energy.

2. If there is not a local group, start one. Concerned fellow Baptists could be a starting point toward involving the entire community.

3. Study Arkansas laws on DWI. Get copies from a law library and get professionals to explain the laws, if necessary.

4. Inquire with local law enforcement agencies about their policies and procedures to deal with DWI drivers. Many officers will be glad to help your group because they are concerned too.

5. Monitor the courts, if you have to do it individually, although committees of persons would be better. Public records of DWI arrests can be compared to the judge's disposition of the cases. Keep careful records of the exact sentences, including fines, jail sentences and suspensions. Note and follow up on cases passed to a later time by the judge. Be considerate at all times in the courtroom. Some judges would prefer to be advised of monitoring activities beforehand.

6. Write your state legislators to express your concern about drunk drivers and the costs in human life, as well as the monetary costs. Suggest they at least find a way to get offenders to pay for what alcohol problems cost the state in safety programs and rehabilitation expenses. Avoid multi-copy letters: individually written ones are more effective.

7. Write for more information on the "Not sober . . . Pull over" slide set provided by the Arkansas Automobile Dealers Asso-

ciation. After Sept. 20 AADA will provide 15 sets to the mental health centers around the state, who will make presentations to groups. Write Steve Rogers, Arkansas Automobile Dealers Association, P.O. Box 3707, Little Rock 72203 for referral to the nearest center.

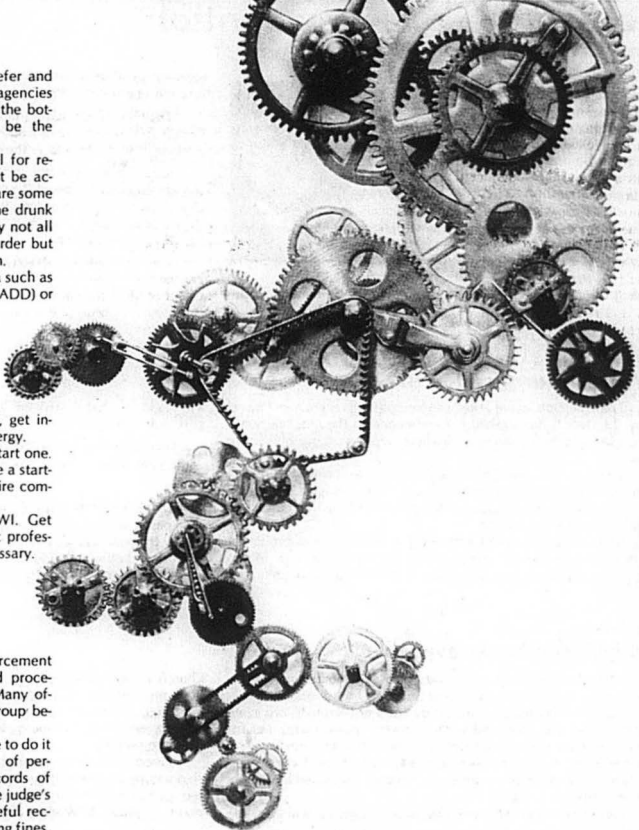
8. Write Robert Parker at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's Christian Life Council for materials and other help. His mailing address is P.O. Box 552, Little Rock 72203 and his phone is (501) 376-4791.

Now is the time to act. The President of the United States has appointed a commission to study drunk driving; citizens action groups are springing up all over; and Arkansas' governor has set up his own commis-

sion on drunk driving. And Governor Frank White added further weight behind the movement when he declared, on Sept. 8, that September is "Not Sober . . . Pull over" Month.

The fight is not exclusively the territory of Arkansas Baptists and Southern Baptists, but who is more uniquely qualified by faith and history of concern for alcohol issues? If we do not act, who will? While Baptists affirm their historic position of total abstinence as the ultimate answer to alcohol problems, we can still be salt and light to the rest of the world.

Betty J. Kennedy is managing editor of the "Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine".



Evangelism

Two CWT seminars in 1983

Many of our pastors are expressing an interest in the Continuing Witness Training seminar. These have a desire to start the training process in their own churches.

We have two CWT National Training Seminars planned for Arkansas in 1983. The first of these will be conducted at South Side Church in Pine Bluff March 14-17. Joe Atchison and his people are involved in the local church training process at this time. They will have equippers trained to assist in the on-the-field training process for our seminar.

Howard Ramsey, Director of Personal Evangelism for the Home Mission Board, will be leading in this



Shell

seminar. I will be assisting Howard, along with Brother Joe Atchison and one other pastor.

The second seminar is planned for Sept. 26-29 at Mount Olive Church in Crossett. Travis Roberts, outreach leader/bus director, is working with his people in the training process at present.

Remember, the pastor and one other staff member or lay person are required to attend the seminar. These go back to the local church and select two apprentices each to work with as they begin the training process. Pastor, if you have an interest in this training for '83 and have not contacted me, please do so in the near future.

God has called, charged and commissioned us to join hands and hearts to share Christ with every lost person in Arkansas. — **Clarence Shell Jr., director**

Family and Child Care Services

What is your secret?

That question I have asked of some pastors recently as I travel over the state. I have asked it in reference to the great response their churches have shown in financial support of our child care ministry.

The reply has been the same in each case. They have said "I just make my people aware of the need and they give."

I like their reply because it verifies what I have been saying. And we all like to be right.

Response grows out of awareness of need and a commitment to meet that need with resources God has entrusted to us. When the pastor is positive and consistent in informing the people they

will respond. That is why we have realized an increase in direct gifts year after year.

We are in need of \$375,000 from direct gifts from the churches this year. Most of this will come through the Thanksgiving Offering.

Thank you Arkansas Baptist for your response. Hopefully each pastor will present the needs of hurting children and families. During the past year we ministered to 457 children and hundreds of families and other individuals. If we may be of help please contact us. — **Homer W. Shirley Jr., director of development**

Stewardship

Budget workbooks available

Churches sometimes back away from budgets because members feel forms produce only more paperwork and red tape.

Budget workbooks, produced by Southern Baptists, are available through the Stewardship Department. Basic forms are for those churches that haven't developed budgets or churches with smaller budgets. A church with a \$9,841 budget can have a good budget form and focus on ministries. Request Simplified Budgeting for Ministries.

Larger churches who use line item budgeting will find the

Church Budget Development Workbook a very useful tool. The book provides a form for a giving profile of the church.

Suggestions are also offered on budget development with a ministry emphasis. Numbered line items in the workbook provide for large budgets.

Good budgeting procedures encourage responsible stewardship among believers. Request free forms for your budget committee members from the Stewardship/Cooperative Program Department. — **James A. Walker, director**

Student

Worth it all

As I sat down in the midst of 75 football players eating hamburgers and chips, I hoped some of them would get involved in our BSU program. Our BSU was sponsoring a banquet for the Arkansas Tech football team at our Baptist Student Center. Our goal was to acquaint the team with our activities.

I told one of the players, "I'd like to invite you to some of our activities." He replied, "I was hoping to find out about your program. My father is a Southern Baptist pastor in Tyler, Texas." One of the players near us heard him and said, "I wanted to find out what you did too. My brother is a Southern Baptist pastor in Grove, Oklahoma."

They both told me they would be back. Many other players also said they would be back. As I reflected on the hours of work by local churches, students, and myself in lining up cooks, securing

tables, picking up supplies, etc., I thought to myself, "It was worth it!" — **Steve Masters, director, Arkansas Tech**



Christian Life Council

The world is hungry

Every pastor in our Arkansas Baptist State Convention recently received comprehensive materials on the problem of hunger. This was gathered and distributed by the Christian Life Commission, Foreign and Home Mission Boards of the Southern Baptist Convention. These informative materials will be invaluable in promoting doing something regarding this extremely serious domestic and overseas problem.

If posters from these materials are not prominently displayed in your church building or if nothing is said from the pulpit regarding what can be done about alleviating world hunger, it's reasonable and right to encourage your church leadership to lead in this area of concern also.

Church Training

Church Training Convention

"Bold Growth in Discipleship" will be the theme of the annual State Church Training Convention on Oct. 26 at Immanuel Church in Little Rock. The program is planned for pastors and church staff members, Church Training leaders and associational leaders. In addition, there will be conferences for church secretaries and media-library workers.

The keynote speaker for the convention will be Dr. Robert Magee, pastor of Temple Church in Ruston, La. There will be conferences for general officers and for preschool, children, youth and adult leaders during the morning, afternoon and evening sessions. The Church Training Fair, an annual event at the convention, will feature the latest resources for training in a church.

The convention sessions will begin at 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. The Church Training Fair will be open for one hour prior to each of the sessions. Special features during the general sessions will include a showing of the film, "Passport to Discipleship," and an introduction to the Developing Believers Emphasis.

Dr. H. E. Williams is serving his fourth year as chairman of the Arkansas Baptist World Hunger Committee. He has given excellent leadership and it is hoped that the end results of our efforts to do something will be successful to the glory of God.

Don't forget Sunday, Oct. 10 is World Hunger Day. Many churches and individuals are regularly sharing material blessings with others. Why not try and do twice as much or more this year?

Arkansas Baptists join other denominations in Arkansas in reporting what has been done in 1982 at the annual Interfaith Hunger Task Force sponsored In gathering. This will be held as usual at the Arkansas State Fairgrounds. Plan to attend this year's event. — **Bob Parker, director**

Other special features will include a presentation on Baptist doctrine study, an introduction to DiscipleYouth and a luncheon for church secretaries. — **Robert Holley, director**



Discharged pastor's suit against church mistrial

ELKINS, W. Va. (BP) — A lawsuit against Elkins Southern Church by its former pastor has been declared a mistrial after the jury was unable to reach a verdict.

The unusual case of a discharged pastor bringing suit against a church alleging illegal dismissal lasted two weeks and was the longest case in recent history of the Randolph County Circuit Court, according to a court official.

The terminated pastor, James Gillespie, sued the church and three individuals as representatives of the church, a deacon, a trustee and the clerk, asking for reinstatement as pastor, 13 months back pay amounting to \$19,500, compensation for labor on a church building built during his tenure as pastor for an undetermined amount, \$35,000 for damage to his reputation and punitive damage as the court might determine.

Gillespie alleged the church dismissed him in an illegally called business meeting moderated by an illegal moderator and the church conspired against him, causing damage to his reputation by its action.

The church contended Gillespie, through

his activities, was hindering the ministry of the church and their action to dismiss him was in accordance with the church constitution, Robert's Rules of Order and Southern Baptist polity and practice.

Judge Jack Nuzum ruled the only question before the court was the legality of the termination of the pastor and that the church's constitution would be interpreted according to civil law and not according to church polity and practice. He also ruled the constitution and bylaws to be an explicit contract between pastor and church when there is no other written agreement.

Testimony showed a motion to dismiss Gillespie was presented at a church business meeting March 15, 1981, and that the meeting was presided over by the chairman of the deacons since the business under consideration dealt with the pastor. Gillespie said there were 10 votes to dismiss him and 30 to retain him. The attorney for church presented testimony that Gillespie "disrupted" the meeting which prevented the dismissal from being completed.

The deacons called a second meeting March 22 and since both the pastor and the

chairman of the deacons were involved in the conflict a non-church member, who has served as parliamentarian for the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptist, was asked to moderate. The vote at that meeting was 31-25 to dismiss Gillespie.

After approximately six hours of deliberation the jury advised Nuzum it was hopelessly deadlocked. The judge asked the contesting parties if they would allow the decision of a simple majority of the jury to prevail in order to resolve the impasse. Gillespie and his counsel agreed but those representing the church advised they could not make the decision without action by the church.

Nuzum took the response as negative and declared the mistrial. He indicated, unless the contesting parties were able to resolve the situation, the case will remain on the docket and another trial could be scheduled in late October or early November of this year.

The principals met briefly after court adjourned and both sides indicate they will explore an out-of-court settlement.

International

God gives Jacob a new name

by Don Hook, Little Rock

Basic passages: Gen. 27-28; 31-32

Focal passages: Gen. 32:9-12, 22-30

Central truth — Getting one's heart right with God is always a struggle, but a princely power with both God and man is the result.

Jacob's life was a long series of crises: (1) Gaining the birthright and incurring the wrath and hatred of his brother (Gen. 27); (2) Fleeing from home (Gen. 27:42-28:5); (3) His initial experience with God (Gen. 28:11-22); (4) His conflict with his father-in-law, Laban (Gen. 29-31); (5) A potentially murderous confrontation with Esau (Gen. 32:6-33:8); (6) His all-night wrestling match (Gen. 32:22-31); (7) His sons' shameful slaughter of the Hivites (Gen. 34); (8) His rededication and recommitment of life to God (Gen. 35:1-15); (9) Intra-family conflicts (Gen. 37-38); and (10) His flight from famine (Gen. 46-47). We deal with one of these crises in this lesson.

1. His first name "Jacob" meant "deceiver" and "supplanter". Jacob certainly lived up to his name. He deceived his father. He deceived his brother. He deceived his father-in-law. Whether deliberate or not, he tried to deceive God by making definite commitments to God (Gen. 28:11-22) and forgetting all about them for nearly twenty years.

2. Jacob's all-night wrestling match (Gen. 32:22-30). He wrestled with all of his deceitful past. He wrestled with the greatest experience of his life — his conversion. He wrestled with his conscience. He wrestled with God importunately (Gen. 32:26).

3. In wrestling with God he won by losing. He lost his old life with its deceit. He lost his old name. He won a new name, "Israel" which means "prince of God". He won a new power with men — Esau was reconciled with him (Gen. 33:1-15). He won power with God and became a worthy recipient of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 35:10-14).

A searching question, "What does our new name, "Christian" mean to us?

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Life and Work

Acceptable worship

by Homer W. Shirley Jr., Family and Child Care of Little Rock

Basic passages: Hebrews 4:16; 12:22-29; 13:15-16, 18-19

Focal passages: Hebrews 4:16; 12:22-29; 13:15-16, 18-19

Central truth: Faith in God expresses itself in worship of him.

1. It has been said that man worships because he cannot help it. The direction and demeanor of worship will be determined by the object or person in whom we believe. A very vital part of life is worship. The person who believes in God and has committed his life to him finds worship a spontaneous reaction of the soul. He desires to be near his heavenly Father. Like we desire to be near our earthly father whom we love and trust, we long to draw near to our heavenly Father. This is all made possible through Jesus Christ, God's Son, who has blazed the trail for us. Therefore we have free access to him.

2. What we believe about God will determine how we worship. A story is told of a small boy who stood with his face against the window during a severe thunderstorm. As the thunder shook the house the boy exclaimed "Bang it again, God, bang it again." To believe God to be ever present, all powerful, Creator, Sustainer, and Judge, wrings from the heart a sense of awe and reverence. As a result we lift our hearts in recognition and service.

3. Acceptable worship encompasses the entire personality. We lift our voices in praise. We confess our sin and our faith in him (Heb. 13:15). We go beyond the lips to practice good and the sharing with others. He is pleased when our verbal expressions of worship become standards of conduct toward others. Acceptable worship moves us to pray for others. It radiates a concern for the well being of others.

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Bible Book

Recognition of royalty

by Bob Wilson, First Church of Osceola

Basic passages: Psalms 2, 20

Focal passages: Psalms 2:1-3, 7, 12; 20:1-9

Central truth: God will carry out his own plans in spite of men's attempt to frustrate them.

1. Psalm 2 reflects the state to which human nature has tumbled since the fall of Adam. Ever since sin spoiled the image of God in man, man has been in a constant opposition to the divine program. The character of sin is illustrated here as man's futile attempt for dominance. This attempt is described as "devising a vain thing," — that which they cannot accomplish, that which will be unsuccessful.

2. Acts 4:25-27 gives evidence to the fulfillment of the psalmist's prediction as seen in the purposes of Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel in their rejecting Jesus and putting him to death. Man's failure to pay allegiance to "God's Anointed" has brought scorn from the living God. Failure to recognize his Lordship can bring only failure and heartache. Though one may get by for a time out of God's will and even give the appearance of success and happiness, this can only be short lived.

3. What are your personal goals in life? What course of action are you taking to achieve those goals? What place does God have in what you are trying to achieve in this life? Do your plans correspond to the principles he has set before us in his word? The psalmist exhorts us not to trust in our own devices, plans, and schemes, but to submit ourselves to the rule of God and walk in His ways.

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First Baptist Church of Pocahontas is accepting resumes for the position of Minister of Education and Youth.

Persons interested should mail resumes to First Baptist Church, Staff Search Committee, 507 Church Street, Pocahontas, AR 72455.

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'Old South' states dominated convention

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — A near record number of messengers from 46 states, Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico registered at the annual Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans in June but the numerical strength continued to reside in the states of the 'Old South.'

Lee Porter, registration secretary for the convention, reported 20,456 registered messengers for the gathering, second only to the 22,872 at the 1978 convention in Atlanta. "And we actually registered more people on-site in New Orleans because in Atlanta we preregistered 5,005 — something we don't do anymore," Porter said.

But with the 1983 convention scheduled for Pittsburgh it is interesting that Porter's figures show that six states provided more than half of the messengers in New Orleans, 10 states accounted for more than three-fourths of the number and more than 90 percent of the messengers came from only 14 states.

Texas (2,633 messengers for 12.87 percent of the total), Louisiana (1,676 and 8.19), Georgia (1,642 and 8.03), North Carolina (1,630 and 7.97), Alabama (1,586 and 7.75) and Mississippi (1,500 and 7.33) combined for 52.15 percent of the total number of messengers.

When the totals from Tennessee (1,438 and 7.03), Florida (1,137 and 5.56), South Carolina (1,131 and 5.53) and Kentucky (1,110 and 5.43) are added the top 10 states had 75.69 percent of the votes. The messengers from Virginia (974 and 4.76), Missouri (724 and 3.54), Oklahoma (688 and 3.36) and Arkansas (667 and 3.26) up that amount to 90.6 percent.

On the other hand Alaska, Delaware, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin were represented by fewer than 10 messengers while Idaho, Maine, North Dakota and Vermont did not have any voting representatives.

Porter pointed out four states that have shown outstanding increases in their attendance levels at the national convention. Georgia, with 8.32 percent of the Southern Baptist Convention's membership had averaged 5.87 percent of the messengers total the three previous conventions (Houston in 1979, St. Louis in 1980 and Los Angeles in 1981) but provided 8.03 percent of the total in New Orleans. Florida improved from a three-year average of 3.85 to 5.56 this year (compared to 5.88 percent of the SBC membership) and Mississippi went from 3.94 to 7.33.

Porter acknowledged the proximity of those three states to the host state of Louisiana helped swell the figures but is still pleased they have increased their participation level. West Virginia, a state that didn't benefit from geography, also drew Porter's attention. Though still too few to be a significant percentage, West Virginia has 70 messengers at the Superdome after averaging 38 the three prior meetings.

Porter also conducted a sampling to determine how the messengers were distributed among churches. His projection reveals 6,818 churches represented by an average of three messengers per church — up from the 2.5 in recent years. The maximum number of messengers (10) were registered by 322 churches while 4,989 churches were represented by one or two messengers.

Convention's vice president survives schematic coronary

EL PASO, Texas (BP) — Gene Garrison never got off the ground — a circumstance which possibly saved the life of the pastor of First Church in Oklahoma City and second vice president of the 13.8 million member Southern Baptist Convention.

Garrison, 51, had been the guest speaker for both services of the centennial celebration of First Church of El Paso Aug. 22, but he woke up at 4 a.m. Monday feeling ill. "I just thought I had the flu or some kind of virus so we went ahead to the airport and got ready to go back home," he said in a telephone interview from Sun Towers Medical Center in El Paso.

As the 11 a.m. flight taxied into position to take off Garrison hyperventilated and the pilot turned the plane around and went back to the terminal where an ambulance rushed the pastor to the hospital.

The first EKG indicated a heart attack and Garrison's blood pressure was 190/150.

"I have hypertension anyway and the doctors thought at first I had had a major heart attack," Garrison explained. But his own early morning diagnosis had been accurate — at least to some extent. "The doctor said I had a virus, his words were 'a real mean virus,' that cut off the oxygen to my heart and produced a schematic coronary — something that makes the EKG schematic read like a coronary when there hasn't been one," he explained.

Tests the next two days showed no signs of heart damage and 48 hours after stopping the flight just before takeoff, Garrison and his wife Martha planned to catch another plane for Oklahoma City. He is very aware of what could have happened if he had hyperventilated 20 or 30 minutes later while the plane was flying over the unpopulated stretches of West Texas.

"It could have been a bad scene," he admitted. "I'm glad the Lord was taking care of me."

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