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**January 12, 1989**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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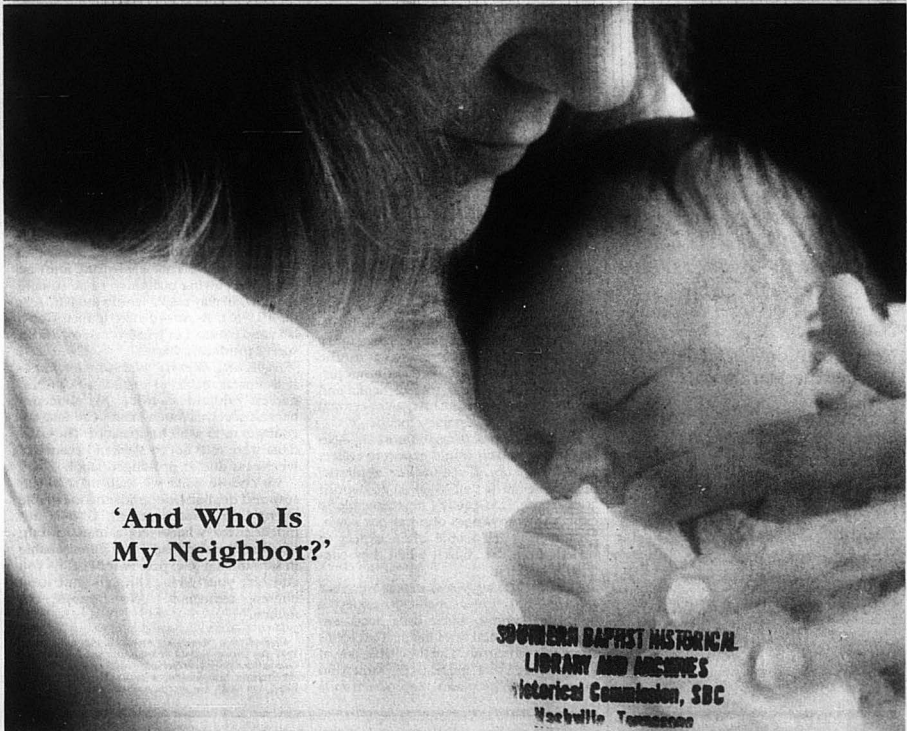
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**Ready to Explode**

# Arkansas Baptist

January 12, 1989



**'And Who Is  
My Neighbor?'**

**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee**

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## IT'S UPLIFTING

### Right Place, Right Time

DALLAS (BP)—Four juvenile delinquents and their probation officer came to Christ because a Rio Grande River Ministry summer worker was "in the right place at the right time."

Brenda Stovall of Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church, Dallas, served with the River Ministry last summer as a youth worker in the Rio Grande Valley. In a store there one day, she saw a 15-year-old boy accused of theft being confronted by his parole officer.

The 21-year-old missions volunteer, who was at that time majoring in criminal justice at Eastfield Community College near Dallas, quickly intervened.

"I said to the probation officer, 'You don't really want to take him in, do you?' Then I asked him to give me a week to work with him," she recalled.

Stovall, who had worked with troubled young people through the Positive Alternatives for Youth program at Buckner Baptist Benevolences in Dallas, talked to the teenager and promptly enrolled him in Vacation Bible School at a local Baptist church. By the end of the week,

he had made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

"Within a few weeks, three of his friends who had been in trouble with the law also accepted Christ," Stovall said.

"Later in August, the probation officer called saying he wanted to talk with me. He said, 'Those boys had been the horror of my work before. What has happened to them?'"

The youth had committed their lives to God and become born again Christians, Stovall explained. The probation officer said that he was a Catholic and that he knew God, but he still couldn't understand how such a radical change could take place.

"You know about God, but you don't know God personally," Stovall told the officer, asking him if he would like to know Jesus as his personal savior. The officer responded positively, praying to accept Christ as Lord.

Seeing the young people and the probation officer accept Christ as a result of her ministry was a life-changing experience, Stovall said.

"God really opened my eyes to the possibilities that are always around me," she said. "It was clear there. The Lord put me in the right place at the right time."

## GOOD NEWS!

### No Deposit, No Return

Galatians 6:6-10

Emblazoned in bold letters on a bank billboard was the message: "No Deposit, No Return." There in simple language, a bank had given a clever twist to the popular message imprinted on nonreturnable bottles. What is true of banks and bottles is also true in a Christian's personal stewardship. It is a parable of life.

*Expecting something for nothing*—No reasonable person would expect to collect a deposit from a vendor for a plastic, disposable bottle that required no deposit at purchase. It is equally unreasonable to expect to reap where one has not sown. Absurd as it is, people often expect to benefit from the church when they contribute nothing.

*Sowing sparingly and expecting great returns*—It is unreasonable to expect a bountiful harvest when little seed was sown. Agricultural laws in spiritual terms show this to be true: The inevitable law of kind indicates that one reaps the same kind of things that he plants. Reproduction is

always in like kind. The law of increase states that one will see a harvest of thirty, sixty, or one hundred increase from one seed (Mk. 4:20). This is why one must be careful in sowing malignity, since sowing to the wind may reap a whirlwind (Ho. 8:7; Ja. 1:15-16). A person may ignore God's laws and nature; but whatever is sown with surely produce a harvest.

*Expecting harvest without sacrifice*—It is unreasonable to expect a bountiful harvest without sacrifice. An abundant harvest receives much labor. The text encourages us to work for the Lord. The Galatians were told not to slacken because of weariness due to prolonged labor.

We choose what we shall or shall not sow and do, but God sends the inevitable harvest! "Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is unreasonable in stewardship to expect otherwise. As you consider your giving through your local church, remember: "No Deposit, No Return."

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# Doctrine Study

J. EVERETT SNEED

It is almost impossible to overemphasize the importance of doctrine. Wisely, the Church Training Division of the Sunday School Board has chosen "The Doctrines Baptists Believe" as the theme for its 1989 Doctrine Study. Every Baptist church in Arkansas should conduct this study.

This study is vital for many reasons. First, a thorough knowledge of Bible truths is essential for strength in Christian life. The well-being of a church, too, is dependent upon members who are familiar with and committed to the teachings of the Scripture. Yet, all too often our members know very little about the great concepts of the Bible and what Baptists believe.

Sometimes it appears that certain other denominations are more effective in training their membership than we are. Their people are seemingly quite ready and willing to express their views. How can this be when independent evaluations have shown Southern Baptist curriculum materials and methods to be the best?

There are a variety of reasons for our difficulty and the apparent success of others. Many of these groups are teaching only a small number of doctrines to their members. Baptists, on the other hand, attempt to communicate all the major teachings of the Bible.

Some of these groups go so far as to insist that one can only be saved by doing or knowing certain things. If one is convinced that his eternal destiny is contingent upon the acquisition of a limited amount of knowledge, he will learn it. Works salvation motivates many of these groups.

Baptists, however, should not take comfort in these comparisons. Our concern must be the development of churches which are pleasing to Christ. If we are to be successful, our members must be convinced of the importance of Bible doctrine (or teaching).

Paul urged the Christian: "Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Ti. 2:15). The word "study" means total commitment. A Christian should be committed mentally, physically, and spiritually to the acquisition of the Word of God.

Our Arkansas Church Training Department, under the direction of Robert Holley, is making every effort to promote this important doctrinal study. The doctrinal



study will be previewed in conjunction with the State Evangelism Conference Jan. 30 at First Church, Little Rock. The leader of the preview study will be Glenn Smith, consultant in the Church Training Department at the Baptist Sunday School Board. The preview study and the evening meal are scheduled between the afternoon and evening sessions on Monday of the evangelism conference.

The doctrines included in the 1989 Baptist Doctrine Study are at the very heart of the Christian faith. This series of studies will strengthen, encourage, and uplift Baptists, from the newest to the most experienced among us. The doctrines to be studied are: the Bible, God, man, Christ, atonement, salvation, Christian life, the church and "last things."

The Church Training Department is also

offering a workshop to prepare associational leaders to lead an associational doctrinal study clinic. This workshop will be offered Wednesday, Feb. 1, the day following the Evangelism Conference. It is the desire of the Church Training Department that every association have an individual in this workshop who will return to his own association and offer training to those who will lead the study in local churches.

Our churches must utilize every opportunity possible to provide proper teaching for the members. *The Doctrines Baptist Believe* by Roy T. Edgemon, director of the SBC Church Training Department is an excellent vehicle for capsuling basic biblical teachings.

In order to have a successful doctrinal study, churches should first of all decide to have it. This involves picking a proper time in the church calendar to maximize attendance. The suggested week for the training is April 17-21. But the important thing is for a church to prepare for this study and carry it out.

It is also essential that teachers be well prepared for the study. This means they should have all the materials they need and should attend one of the training sessions.

Finally, it is essential to publicize and encourage church members to attend this study. This means that church members should know what the study is about, when it will be taught, and for whom it is intended. They should be encouraged to clear their own personal calendars for this important study.

This should be considered one of the most important possible activities in which a church can engage in 1989. A good doctrinal study will pay positive dividends for years to come.

## Arkansas Baptist

VOLUME 88 NUMBER 2

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# SPEAK UP

DON MOORE

## You'll Be Glad To Know

The Executive Director and his wife have not been forgotten at Christmastime. It is true that most relationships are a little more distant than they are in a pastorate. The number of



people involved and the distances and infrequency of meetings makes it impossible to develop the kind of relationships you have in a local church. We knew it would be this way when God called us to this position. However, we have been surprised and unbelievably blessed. The multitude of remembrances have filled our hearts and met our needs. Thank you for being thoughtful and caring!

As we look further into the new year, several great concerns, beyond those discussed last week, are before us. The baptismal records from the churches reflects that our churches should prayerfully look at what they are doing toward reaching the unsaved of their communities. The major source of our baptisms seem to be those coming from other denominations, those making a second profession of faith, and those of our own children. This leaves the major field, the outright pagan population, basically untouched by our gospel witness. This should be a concern to every pastor, deacon, committee person, Sunday School teacher, and every pray-er.

Have we lost our aggressiveness? Do we secretly believe that somehow or other everyone is going to be saved whether we do anything or not? Something that has driven us to witness in the past is not driving us today. Could it be we have resisted, grieved and quenched the Holy Spirit so much that we are no longer "constrained" by the love of Christ?

How is it that the Moslem missionaries have come from other parts of the world and are building their mosques in Arkansas? How is it that Buddhists have come to Arkansas and can gain a following sufficient to build their temples? Jehovah's Witness, Mormons and other cults thrive in the very communities we seem unable to reach.

We have the truth. Apparently we do not have a burning passion to please our Lord by bringing the people to Him. Toward correcting this we do not need thoughts. We need actions.

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

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE SUNDAY

## Who Is My Neighbor?

*"And who is my neighbor?" (Lk. 10:29, RSV)*

Few questions have been asked more often, sparked more turmoil, and produced more excuses than the question, "Who is my neighbor?" It is a deeply troubling question, for the answer demands so much from us at such inconvenient times.

An already tough question becomes even more jarring when it is asked in the context of a crisis pregnancy. The answer jolts us into a new awareness about how the second great commandment to love our neighbor applies to the issue of abortion.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is a time which Southern Baptists have set aside in 1989 to think about the relationship between the national crisis of abortion and the Bible's mandate to love our neighbor.

Think about how you would answer the following questions: Is the unborn child a neighbor? Is the teenager in East Tennessee who is pregnant and homeless a neighbor? Is the professional woman in Georgia who has just had an abortion a neighbor? Is the male college student in Texas who refuses to bear any responsibility for an out-of-wedlock pregnancy a neighbor?

Next, think about how you can love your neighbor who faces the issues of abortion. Can you speak in defense of the unborn child in a society that places little value on children? Can you open your home to a teenager who wants to carry her child to term but has no home of her own? Can you offer forgiveness without guilt to a woman who has had an abortion? Can you love an irresponsible male college student who views women as sexual objects and refuses to accept any responsibility for his sexually permissive behavior? Can you accept someone who disagrees with you on abortion?

Think about a statement adopted in 1987 by a diverse group of Southern Baptists:

- Human life from conception is sacred. . . .
- Abortion at any stage of pregnancy is ending human life. . . .
- In those incidents in which this divine deal is not fulfilled, there can be redemption in God's grace. Therefore:
- Let us speak . . . against abortion on demand and . . . encourage alternatives to abortion.

—Let us pledge ourselves to be compassionate, aggressive agents of God's grace in nurturing human life. . . .

Not only is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday a time to think about abortion and love of neighbor, it is also a time to commit oneself to concrete action: Educate your children about Christian values concerning sex. Work at a Baptist home for children. Lobby for restrictive abortion laws in your state legislature. Support a special emphasis in your church on the sanctity of life. Offer financial support to those facing crisis pregnancies.

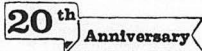
On Sunday, Jan. 15, 1989, think about the relationship between abortion and love for your neighbor. Then act! — Robert Parham, SBC Christian Life Commission.

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# Letters to the Editor

## *Uninformed' or Deliberately Deceptive?*

The letter by Jim Glover in the Oct. 27 ABN should not go unanswered. He states conservatives have been in control of our Foreign Mission Board for less than 10 years and moderate/liberals previously were in full control. This is exactly the kind of uninformed or deliberately deceptive statements that have become common under the leadership of the Pressler-Patterson Political Coalition.

We should look at the people he has labeled. If the FMB was liberal before 1979, it would imply Dr. James Sawyer and Mrs. Jewel Moore, Arkansas's representatives, would be included. W.O. Vaught of Arkansas was chairman of the board during this time. A liberal board would have a liberal chairman. Baker James Cauthen, former missionary to China and leading Southern Baptist statesman, was president of the board during this period. Surely he too must be included in this accusation. We

must also include the 2,912 missionaries under appointment in 1979. I have met each of the persons I have named and all I know about them tells me they were conservative theologically and dedicated to missions. If Mr. Glover has evidence of the liberalism of any of the above-named persons, he should present it or publicly apologize.

Many fine conservatives have been appointed in the last 10 years, just as they were before 1979. However, I would also like to dispute his implication that since 1979 Southern Baptist boards have been more conservative. One need only look at page 17 of the Sept. 19 ABN and the remarks of Curtis Caine of the Christian Life Commission to see an example of what has happened to our appointment process under the Pressler-Patterson Coalition and recent convention presidents. Mr. Caine was obviously not appointed because of his conservative theology, but because of his New Right political views and because he could be counted on to support the political organization that appointed him.

I believe every board member and trustee in our convention should be a theological conservative who believes the Bible is the Word of God. They should represent Southern Baptists and not special interest groups. —Ron West, Booneville

## *Striving Results In Dissension*

The study of John's Gospel this year is very timely for Baptists. In his early association with Jesus, John was intolerant, hard-hearted, and self-seeking. For instance, he forbade another man who was working miracles in Jesus' name because he was not one of the apostolic band. On another occasion, along with his brother James, he wanted Jesus to help him destroy the Samaritan town which refused him lodging. Thinking that Jesus was going to establish an earthly political kingdom, he and James sought the chief places for themselves.

To his everlasting credit, John stayed close to Jesus and through long years of growing in grace became the humblest, most loving of all the apostles and gave us the greatest and most spiritual gospel.

If pastors and church and denominational leaders would emulate John, they could eliminate the name-calling, intolerance, and self-seeking that is hurting our fellowship. For just as John and James' selfish request caused hostility among the other apostles, such striving for power and places of authority always results in dissension.

Sweet fellowship, good preaching, brotherly love, and mutual encouragement should be the touchstones of our Baptist denominational life, rather than the striving for power that has emerged among us. Those who do not hold our theological stance we brand as "liberals," "modernists," even "skunks."

We can learn from John, or even from President-Elect George Bush, whose goal for America is to make it a "kinder, gentler nation." If we fail to do this, our denomination may become like the barren fig tree. — Walter H. Watts, Fort Smith.

## **No ABN Jan. 19**

Because of continuing financial constraints brought on by postage increases, the *Arkansas Baptist* will not be published the week of Jan. 19. We regret the inconvenience.

## Today's Issues Alcohol and Honesty

BOB PARKER

Dr. Robert Stivers, medical examiner in Fulton County, Ga., indicated in the spring of 1984 that pathologists have said for years that alcohol involvement in fatal motor vehicle accidents is far more than generally publicized. Today the American public is told by the news media and public service radio and TV. spots that only 50 percent of fatal traffic accidents involve alcohol. Dr. Stivers was among three medical examiners who provided statistics suggesting that alcohol is involved in up to 90 percent of those accidents.

In Arkansas, for a driver to be legally intoxicated his blood alcohol content has to be at least .10 percent or one part alcohol per 1,000 parts of blood. Many fatal



traffic accidents involve less blood alcohol content. That in no way lessens the sorrow and pain produced for loved one and friends.

In relating current society to the number one drug problem of our state, nation and world, we owe it to our children and youth especially to be honest in presenting the facts about alcohol.

By the way, it's very interesting to note that two of the fastest-growing religious groups, Islam and Mormonism, strongly

teach total abstinence regarding alcoholic beverages. Perhaps those of us who believe our beliefs are more in keeping with God's will in Jesus Christ should be more honest and realistic in considering the growing problems related to alcohol. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Pr. 20:1).

Those who use such scriptures as "take a little wine for thy stomach's sake..." (I Ti. 5:23) to justify drinking alcoholic beverages need to consider that Paul wrote, without condemnation, to both slave owners and slaves. We need to interpret God's will in the context of the times in which we live.

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



BSB photo / Jim Veneman



Elaine Keisling works with children in Sunday School.

## Ready to Explode

*Denver Congregation Set to Claim City for Christ*

by Linda Lawson  
Baptist Sunday School Board

DENVER—Changing might best describe the 35-year history of Riverside Baptist Church in Denver, as the congregation has had four pastors, three locations and two names.

Began in 1953 in a hard-to-find section of South Denver by a group of transplanted Texas and Oklahoma Southern Baptists, the church now sits on a hill overlooking the downtown skyline, less than a mile from the home of the Denver Broncos, and includes approximately 3,000 members.

Rufus Warren joined Riverside, then called South Denver Baptist Church, the first time he attended, six months after it was established in 1953. He views the changes since that inauspicious beginning as God's direction and leadership.

"The greatest blessing besides salvation I have received is God placing me in this church in its infancy and seeing the things he did through the leadership at specific times," said Warren, 70, retired from a career in labor relations.

As Warren sees it, the first pastor, Roy Sutton taught the church the importance of stewardship; the second, Glen Braswell, the value of organization; the third, Bob McPherson, was a builder not only of facilities but of a congregation.

Enter, in 1986, the fourth pastor, David Bruce, born the same year as the church. A North Carolina native, he came to the

church after four years with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

A man who exudes enthusiasm whether he is preaching or talking on the telephone, Bruce describes his first 20 months at Riverside as "laying down some pilings," strengthening foundations as preparation for penetrating the city with the gospel.

Bruce's first emphasis was missions through the Lottie Moon Christmas offering and, more recently, the starting of a Hispanic mission.

Increased emphasis on Southern Baptist heritage and belief—missions, evangelism, discipleship, prayer and Bible study—has also been a focus of Bruce's efforts. People migrating to Denver today are less likely to come from areas of the country where Southern Baptists are strong.

"I think our people trip over the word 'Southern' in Southern Baptist Convention," said Bruce. "To people living in the South, the word 'Southern' means heritage, missions and vision. But to people out here it means accents, regionalism and culture. We have to filter out some of the cultural baggage and emphasize the heritage."

A third focus by Bruce has been to "deepen and strengthen" the church's educational ministries. One major step was the calling of Riverside's first full-time minister of education, Sam Ligon.

Ligon came to the church with 30 years' experience leading educational ministries.

Reorganization of some Sunday school

classes, adding two members to the educational staff, enlisting additional Sunday school leaders and leading all age groups to use Southern Baptist Sunday school curriculum have been among projects Ligon has been involved in during his first year.

"I have seen that a core curriculum keeps you going in the same direction as a body of believers in the local church," said Ligon, who is also associational Sunday school improvement support team leader for the Denver association. Also, "using Southern Baptist literature we have a sounding board to complain when we don't like something."

For Elaine Keisling, director of children's ministry for the past nine months, the Foundation Series of Sunday school curriculum helps parents and workers "see that we are building a foundation and that there is continuity of education. They see the value of children getting a good foundation and understanding of the Bible in six years."

She praised the spirit of the Riverside members.

"The Sunday School is the cornerstone of our ministry here," said Keisling. "The most encouraging thing to me is that people are very open and excited to do something new and that we have a goal and a purpose."

Phil Sallee, director of youth ministry for two years, said the strength of the youth Sunday School division, which includes three departments and approximately 150 youth, is the bond and common sense of purpose among the workers.

"They are my friends," said Sallee. "They understand the total period teaching philosophy and plan incredible Sunday sessions."

As part of training efforts, 58 workers attended a Gloriaeta Sunday School leadership conference in 1987 with 32 going in 1988.

"The Sunday School Meeting of the People Challenge in 1987-88" is the theme for the church year which began with Preparation Week in which leaders set goals for enrollments, attendance, professions of faith and leadership diplomas.

Ligon described the educational ministry as "beginning to jell, but it has been a gradual process of teaching the leadership and loving them along the way. Redemption in leadership is very important to me. People work with me in spite of my warts."

Bruce predicted that the strengthening of foundations currently underway will enable the church "to explode and claim a large part of this city for Christ."

And Warren described his feelings as "expectantly frightened. I believe this church is just now what God had in mind for reaching this city when he established it 35 years ago."

# Learning to Give

## Christmas Program Teaches Importance of Giving

First Church, Forrest City, held a Children's Christmas Store Saturday, Dec. 17. The approximately 230 children who came to the store purchased their gifts with "Christmas Love Bucks."

The bus ministry children earned the "Love Bucks" during a seven week period through personal attendance, friends attendance, parents attendance, grandparents attendance, and by memorizing Scripture. The children are able to earn gifts for others as well as for themselves.

The Children's Christmas Store is not a budgeted item. The gifts come entirely through donations. Some of the members give money, while others purchase new items to be given to the children. Still others give used items which are in good condition.

On Dec. 17 the church buses ran their regular routes and picked up the children. Upon arrival each child was given a sack containing the "Love Bucks" which he had earned during the seven week period. Each child was assisted by an adult in picking out gifts for parents, brothers, sisters, and friends. The Christmas store featured items such as gloves, socks, scarves, household utensils, and toys.

Larry Plummer, associate pastor in charge of bus and children's ministries, said, "Each child picked out gifts for others before choosing one for himself or herself. One of our purposes is to teach the



A young shopper in the Christmas Store children the importance of giving to others."

After the gifts were picked out, each child went to the wrapping table where the gifts were wrapped and tagged ready to go under the Christmas trees. The children

picked up their gifts on Sunday, Dec. 18 at the close of the morning worship service.

Plummer observed, "The program had several purposes. Among these were to encourage Sunday School and church attendance, to learn the importance of giving to others, to encourage the memorization of Scripture, and to provide opportunity for children to trust Jesus as Savior."

There were 19 children saved during the seven week period. Six of these have been baptized and others will be baptized after follow up and counseling. None of the children are baptized until follow up counseling has been conducted with both the children and their parents.

## CHURCH BUSES

### Driver Safety Workshops Set

Four workshops for drivers of church buses and vans will be offered in Little Rock during the months of January and February.

The workshops, hosted by Little Rock's First Baptist Church, will cover both safe driving techniques and bus maintenance and policies, according to Terry Cable, director of transportation for First Church.

The program is certified by the National Safety Council and will be led by Cable and Bill Mullenax, president of Safety Services of Arkansas, a licensee of the National Safety Council. Cable is responsible for First Church's 48 drivers and a fleet of 10 buses which service both the church and its private school. Mullenax, a retired post commander for the Arkansas State Police, has been active in driver safety education for 14 years.

According to Cable and Mullenax, the workshops are being offered partly because churches for the first time must meet certain guidelines set forward by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Those guidelines require certification of drivers of all vehicles carrying 16 or more passengers.

The workshops also will cover state laws specifically dealing with operation of church buses. Completion of a workshop will count on a driver's record with the Arkansas Department of Revenue, but will not satisfy the DOT certification requirements. Additional training toward that certificate is available through Safety Services of Arkansas.

The workshops will be offered at First Baptist Church on Jan. 21, Jan. 28, Feb. 4, and Feb. 18, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cost of the workshop will be \$20 per person. Participants must pre-register and may do so by calling 227-0224.

## TRUSTING GOD in ADVERSITY

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# LOCAL & STATE

## Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

### People

**John Matthews** will begin serving Jan. 15 as pastor of Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro, going there from Ozark where he served for seven years as pastor of First Church. In his years at Ozark, he led the congregation to baptize more than 300 persons and increase Sunday School enrollment to more than 900.

**Clara Shell** was recognized Jan. 1 by Owensville Church for 25 years of perfect Sunday School attendance, 25 years of service as Sunday School secretary, and for service as Sunday School pianist, a choir member and a member of the women's quartet.

**Pyxie Hooper** of Rosie died Dec. 16 at the age of 74. Her funeral services were held Dec. 19 at Rosie Church where she was a member. Survivors include five daughters, three sons, six sisters, and two brothers.

**Cline Ellis** recently resigned as pastor of First Church of Kingsland and announced that he would retire in Fordyce. He may be contacted by writing Box 556 Fordyce, AR 71742 or calling (501) 352-5541.

**Dr. and Mrs. Tom Cox** of Van Buren First Church, **Mitchell Odum** of Parks First Church, and **Ida Walker** of Mulberry First Church will return Jan. 26 from a mission trip to India where they assisted with medical and dental clinics and led evening evangelistic crusades under the direction of Cox who was directing his eighth mission effort to India.

**Barry Baker**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Windon Baker of West Helena, received the master of divinity degree Dec. 16 from Mid-America Seminary in Memphis.

**Kevin Kellogg** received the master of divinity degree Dec. 16 at Mid-America Seminary. He is married to the former Judy White of West Memphis.

**James Kinnebrew**, former pastor of New Providence Church of Leachville, was



Matthews



Shell

graduated Dec. 16 from Mid-America Seminary with a doctor of theology degree.

**Barry Morgan**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Cole Morgan of Sherwood, received a master of divinity degree Dec. 16 from Mid-America Seminary.

**Mike Phillips**, youth pastor at Wheatley Church, received the master of divinity degree Dec. 16 from Mid-America Seminary.

**Hershael York**, who is serving as interim pastor of Marion First Church, received the master of divinity degree Dec. 16 at Mid-America Seminary.

**Garey B. Scott** has resigned as minister of education at Immanuel Church in Pine Bluff to continue work on a degree at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. The couple plans to eventually apply for missionary associate appointment with the Foreign Mission Board.

**Ted Houston** has resigned as pastor of First Church in Marianna.

**Eleanor Bricker** recently was recognized by Mount Zion Church of Doddridge for 40 years of continuous service as a Sunday School teacher.

**Tom Collie** is serving as pastor of Brumley Church, Conway.

**Dane Dover** has resigned as pastor of North Side Church of Star City to serve as pastor of Prairie Grove Church near Monticello.

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**Richard Nuckolls** of Gore, Okla., is serving as pastor of Emmanuel Church, Batesville. He is a former pastor of Zion Hill Church in Rocky Bayou Association.

**Ron Mimms** has resigned as pastor of Viny Ridge Immanuel Church to serve as pastor of Mount Tabor Church in Elkton, Ky.

**Alan Ellen** resigned Dec. 31 as pastor of Bryant First Southern Church.

## Briefly

**Northside Church** of Batesville ordained L.B. Ray and Dorman Menard to the deacon ministry Dec. 11. Pastor Vaughn Blue questioned the candidates and R.A. Bone preached the ordination sermon.

**West Side Church** in Little Rock hosted a Christmas party for 30 students from the Arkansas School for the Blind.

**Prescott First Church** Girls in Action sponsored a fund raising program which resulted in a \$65.04 contribution to the Lottie Moon Christmas offering.

**Lincoln First Church** recently had 10 professions of faith as the result of a ministry to the Spanish in the area. Currently there are 10 enrolled in a Spanish Sunday School class with Marsha Walker as the teacher. This class was the outcome of an English class that is held at the church two nights a week for the Spanish speaking. Ron Davis teaches this class along with two other instructors.

**Broadmoor Church** in Brinkley observed "Focus on Foreign Missions" Dec. 4-14 with programs which featured Glendon Grober, Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood director and former missionary to Brazil; John Floyd, former missionary to the Philippines; Don Moore, ABCS executive director; Jack Bledsoe, an SBC Foreign Mission Board trustee; and M.K. Anita Sutton as speakers.

**Union Church** at Harrison ordained Bill Cone to the preaching ministry Dec. 11. Cone serves as pastor of Marble Falls Church.

**Eagle Heights Church** of Harrison ordained Tim Bartlow to the deacon ministry Dec. 11.

**Bear Creek Springs Church** recently licensed O.D. Chaney Jr. to the preaching ministry.

# Southwestern Grads

Eleven Arkansans were among 298 December graduates of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Receiving the doctor of philosophy degree was: Ronald Layne Bracy, son of the late Richard and Nora Bracy of Batesville.

Receiving the master of divinity degree was Bobby Bruce Berry, son of Robert and Esther Berry of Newport.

Receiving the master of arts in religious education degree were: Elizabeth Alene Yates, daughter of Jim and Bobbie Belue of Osceola. Her home church is First Church of Osceola.

Amy E. Summers, daughter of Carter and Pauline Tucker of Dumas. Her home church is First Church of Dumas.

Steven Clem Haley, son of Norman and Jane Haley of Little Rock and son-in-law of Harry and Patsy Rounsaville of Little Rock. His home church is Life Line Church in Little Rock.

Jim Fred Carty, son of the late Fred and

Maie Carty of Mulberry.

Louis Edward Davis, son of Herbert V. and June Davis of Fort Smith. His home church is First Church of Fort Smith.

Malcolm Brent Fields, son of Bill R. and Ailene Fields of Jonesboro. His home church is Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro.

Receiving the master of arts in communication degree was: Clay Henry Grizzle Jr., son of Clay H. and Irma Grizzle of North Little Rock.

Receiving the master of music degree was David Alan Moore, son of Jewel V. and Betty Moore of Hope. He is serving as minister of music and youth at South Highland Church in Little Rock.

Receiving the associate of divinity degree was Charles Eugene Bradley, son of Clyde Bradley and the late Horace E. Bradley of Moro and the son-in-law of Viola Gross of Brinkley and the late Perry Gross Sr. His home church is First Church of Marianna.

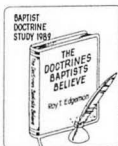
## Baptist Doctrine Study Preview

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**A Call to Baptist Basics**

RETIRED MISSIONARY SAYS

## 'We Must Give More Effectively'

by J. Everett Sneed

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

William H. Berry, 94, is the oldest living foreign missionary to have grown up in Arkansas. He may be the oldest foreign missionary currently living. He is presently residing in Memphis, Tenn. His son Edward G. Berry is also a retired missionary, living in Benton.

Dr. Berry worked in Brazil during a period of great missionary activity and the time in which Baptists made great progress. The 41 years of his missionary work (1922-1963) covered several types of activities. He served many of his earliest years as a pioneer missionary. His activities included evangelism, education, and later publications and publicity. For a number of years he was director of the department of history and statistics for the Baptist Sun-

day School Board of Brazil.

As director he made various surveys of the Baptist work in Brazil and prepared statistical tables which were used by both the Brazilian Baptist Convention and the Foreign Mission Board of the SBC.

Dr. and Mrs. Berry arrived in Rio de Janeiro, March 1, 1923. In his autobiography Berry said, "The trip had been as comfortable as could be expected for our first voyage."

In Rio de Janeiro, the Berrys began the process of learning the Portuguese language and preparing for missionary activity. But not all of the Berrys' time was spent in work.

The first assignment for the Berrys after language school was in Curitiba where the Berrys were to open a school. Berry said, "We didn't really start a school as it was already in existence as a small private school."

The Berrys arrived in July, 1923, and by January of 1924 they had succeeded in renting an adequate building and preparing for enrollment of new students. The classrooms were ready and the teachers were in their place. In a short time there were approximately 40 students enrolled.

While serving as the director of the school, Berry also participated in various evangelistic activities in the state of Parana. There are many small streams in the area and basically Berry traveled up and down these streams where he preached regularly to the small churches located near by the streams.

Berry indicates in his autobiography that missionaries encounter the same problems

on the foreign mission field that pastors and churches encounter in America. The depression of the late 20's and early 30's had a devastating effect on the work of the missionaries. At times even the foreign missionaries became despondent. Berry says of these periods of despondency, "Then something new would be offered, our spirits would be rekindled, and we would work with a new zeal."

The final phase of Berry's work involved laying the groundwork for what is today the Radio and Television Commission of Brazil. This facility is enabling Brazilian Baptists to spread the gospel more effectively than was possible in the early days. Even in the interior, most Brazilians today have radios, making it possible to communicate the gospel message to remote areas where it is extremely difficult for missionaries to go.

Berry emphasizes the importance of the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon offering. He observed, "Even during the dark and difficult days of the depression, Southern Baptist missionaries had a security that missionaries working with independent groups did not have. If, however, our work is to grow as God would have it to grow, Baptists here at home must give more effectively."

"One disturbing thing to me," Berry continued, "is the fact that our mission budgets around the world have been cut by 12 percent. This means that much of our work will have to be eliminated or curtailed. Such reductions are not necessary if Baptists will follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit."

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# 'Centrist' Coalition Formed

by Dan Martin  
Baptist Press

DALLAS (BP)—About two dozen Southern Baptists from around the nation—saying they represent the mainstream in the Southern Baptist Convention—met in Dallas in mid-December to form what they call a "centrist" coalition.

The organization, called Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention, also hired a full-time "coordinator," David Currie of Paint Rock, Texas, to "get the movement underway in the states."

A news release issued by Currie after the Dec. 15-16 meeting said the group will "direct its message toward the 'broad center' of Southern Baptists who are disenchanted with the fundamentalist takeover of the convention and yet do not wish to abandon the convention or start a new denomination."

Winfred Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, called the December meeting and will be chairman of the group. An executive committee will be named later, he said.

Moore, former first vice president of the SBC and twice candidate for president, said: "We are traditional, mainstream, conservative Southern Baptists who are deep-

ly committed to this convention and its historic principles. These principles, which are our heritage and legacy, and which must be preserved if our convention is to survive, include the priesthood of the believer, the autonomy of the local church, the separation of church and state and cooperative missions.

"Surely Southern Baptists can stop fighting and unite under these principles which have historically defined us as a group.

"With contributions down, baptisms down and unity shattered, enough is enough. Southern Baptists want and deserve a group to lead us out of this despair, a group which is truly committed to all that Southern Baptists have been in the past and which has a vision of cooperative mission for the future which includes all Southern Baptists.

"We support the restoration of our convention, not its destruction."

Although the news release said the group formally organized at the December meeting, a group also calling itself Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention sent out a mass mailing to more than 34,000 Southern Baptist churches in advance of the 1988 SBC annual meeting.

The mailing included a 10-minute recorded cassette tape from Moore and a brochure produced by Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention. The mailing stirred controversy in the SBC because of various charges the brochure made against conservative leaders.

Paul Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge who was specifically mentioned in the brochure, responded to Baptists Committed by noting: "It appears to be a reorganization of the same people who for 10 years have been resisting a return to biblical theology.

"Baptists need to be working together to promote the Cooperative Program, evangelism and missions, not starting new political organizations that will be divisive and counterproductive to the welfare of the convention."

John Baugh, a Houston businessman who has been active in Laity For the Baptist Faith and Message, one of the founders of the coalition, said the name comes from "two things: first, Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention means we are Baptists committed to being a part of the SBC and assisting in causing it to be what it should become. Second, without any doubt, the people whom I know in that group are traditional, mainstream Southern Baptists."

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SOUTHEASTERN SEMINARY

# Missing the Mark?

by Marv Knox  
Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary does not conform to some accreditation standards in three of four areas of institutional life, according to an accrediting agency report.

A special study committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' Commission on Colleges visited the Wake Forest, N.C., school Sept. 14-16, and seminary officials released its report in December.

Both of the seminary's accrediting agencies—the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada—are investigating the Southern Baptist Convention school.

The Southern Association committee's report says Southeastern does not conform to some elements of its accreditation criteria with regard to faculty selection, academic freedom, and organization and administration. And while it does not cite violations of its criteria concerning the effectiveness of the institution, it raises "serious questions" concerning that issue.

Southeastern President Lewis A. Drummond was out of the country and unable to comment directly on the report. However, seminary administrators released a prepared statement in which he said: "The report is very thorough and makes several suggestions . . ."

"It is our desire to follow these recommendations as forthrightly as possible in the light of our commitment to Southern Baptists. The report is being carefully considered. Each recommendation will be discussed individually by the administration and trustees."

The statement also included comments made by trustee Chairman Robert D. Crowley, pastor of Montrose Baptist Church in Rockville, Md.

"We want to cooperate in all reasonable matters to keep accreditation in conjunction with the mandate of the Southern Baptist Convention, which founded the school, purchased the campus in 1950 and substantially supported the institution since then, having contributed over \$4 million in the current year," Crowley said. "That mandate calls for institutions and agencies of the convention enthusiastically to support the doctrinal statement entitled the Baptist Faith and Message of 1963.

"We desperately want peace in the SBC and peace on the campus of SEBTS with the teachers and students, but not, of course, at the cost of action which refuses to honor its commitment to the parent

organization, the SBC, which faithfully supports it each year with tithes and offerings."

Crowley also expressed the desire to maintain both accreditation and loyalty to the convention: "We want very earnestly to keep our relationship with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. We will do everything we can to work out the difficulties within their principles of accreditation and the commitment we have to the owners of the school, the Southern Baptist Convention."

Faculty leader C. Michael Hawn praised the Southern Association's report.

"The faculty was very pleased with its fairness and with the outcome. We felt like we were heard," said Hawn, who is a professor of church music at Southeastern and president of the seminary's chapter of the American Association of University Professors.

He said faculty feel several key issues now confront the seminary: selection of the dean of the faculty, a similar investigation being conducted by the Association of Theological Schools, the trustees' March meeting and their response to the SBC Peace Committee, student and faculty morale, enrollment and seminary finances.

"Those all point to the big issue," he said. "What is going to be the nature of education at Southeastern, and how will we survive?"

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# LESSONS FOR LIVING

## Convention Uniform

### *Forgiveness*

by **Norene A. Reed**, Bartholomew Association, Warren

**Basic passage:** Luke 5:17-26

**Focal passage:** Luke 5:17-26

**Central truth:** Jesus has the authority and power to forgive sins.

The reputation of Jesus was spreading. Religious leaders of the day, the Pharisees, and teachers of the law, came to see for themselves the basis for the excitement of the people. They watched as Jesus taught in a house crowded with listeners.

Several men joined together to bring a paralytic on a mat to Jesus for healing. They were not stopped by the inability to get through all the people. In their determination they carried the man to the roof, opened a hole, and let the man down in the presence of Jesus. Faith becomes visible as it works. The friends demonstrated their faith by bringing the man to Jesus. There also must have been faith in the sufferer.

The man's physical condition was bad, but Jesus knew his greatest need was the forgiveness of sin. When Jesus declared his sins forgiven, the scribes and Pharisees reasoned this to be blasphemy. Forgiving sins was a function of God. Who was this person to wield the authority of God? Jesus knew their thoughts. They were implying that his words were false because forgiveness is not apparent to other people—in their minds he was just saying words.

The forgiveness of the man's sins may not have been evident, but when Jesus told him to arise and walk, he immediately complied. There could be no question of Jesus' ability to heal. The Savior had the power to make a paralytic walk and also the authority and power from God to forgive sins. God is worthy of the praise given to him by the healed man, his friends, and those who observed the miracle.

The power and authority of Jesus is working today. It is visible through eyes of faith. One can openly see the answers to prayers made in secret communion with God. The salvation of loved ones or friends who had been lifted to God in prayers of faith should lead a person to recognize Jesus is continuing to forgive sins. At other times one may see Jesus' authority as he deals with physical conditions and personal relationships of family and profession.

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## Life and Work

### *Spiritual Growth*

by **Don Moseley**, Sylvan Hills First Church, Sherwood

**Basic passage:** I Corinthians 2:2-5, 12-16; 3:1-3

**Focal passage:** I Corinthians 2:5

**Central truth:** Spiritual growth occurs when we choose to follow God's wisdom over man's wisdom.

The Apostle Paul knew that if a man responds to persuasive speech that when another messenger comes along with greater ability to persuade he may be enticed to follow that messenger. That is why Paul was careful to come "not with excellency of speech or of wisdom" (v. 1). He kept the message simple. He came "in weakness, and in fear" (v. 3). He came in fear because he sensed the serious responsibility that was his to communicate the "testimony of God."

Paul did not seek to impress men with philosophic reasoning, but emphasized the regenerative power of the Spirit (v. 4). In verse 5, Paul shares that his strategy was that in the Corinthians "faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God."

Paul expressed that the wisdom of God had been received of the Holy Ghost. Who had received it? In verses 12 and 13 Paul says, "we have received," "that we might know," "given to us of God," "which things also we speak," as he points to the fact that the apostles have been given the wisdom of God by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

Paul hastens to show that illumination of the Holy Spirit must accompany God's wisdom if it is to be understood. And only the believer who has the Holy Spirit residing within him can have this illumination. For God's wisdom is foolishness to the lost man or "natural man." God's thinking and God's ways make no sense because they must be "spiritually discerned."

Having just explained their position as spiritual, Paul quickly lets them know they are not responding as spiritual men (3:1). He describes them as immature "babes in Christ." He indicates that they are walking in man's wisdom and the result is "envying, and strife, and divisions" (v. 3). They are not experiencing spiritual growth simply because they are making wrong choices about the wisdom they will walk in. We, too, are faced with a choice.

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## Bible Book

### *Opportunities of Service*

by **Timothy L. Deahl**, Olivet Church, Little Rock

**Basic passage:** Acts 3

**Focal passage:** Acts 3:1-12

**Central truth:** Christians need to awaken to the opportunities around them.

The sad truth is that many of God's people are not aware of the daily opportunities around them. As a result, they come together week after week feeling spiritually useless, inadequate, and defeated. They, unlike the New Testament apostles, have neither the divine appointments nor miraculous power so readily available to first century Christians. Or so they think.

Acts 3 uncovers some amazing truths for those who feel that few, if any opportunities for witness are available. The lesson to learn is one of recognition. Peter and John did not create this encounter; they were accosted by a person in need. The human tendency is to turn the head, walk the other way, ignore the interruption. Peter and John recognized that here was a person in need. Is it really any more difficult for Christians today to recognize that people have needs? Prompt recognition of needs which we can meet is essential to effective sharing of the Gospel.

However, recognition of a need which can be met must be followed by both a willingness to give and a realization that we do have something to offer. Many do not understand that they have more to give than the world can afford. The fact that the disciples did not possess that which the beggar requested did not deter them from offering something far better. Far from concluding that he has no civil obligation, the Christian understands that he must not ignore the greatest need of every person. The gift Peter and John gave not only allowed this man the opportunity to earn a wage and thereby assist others monetarily, but also provided him the privilege of sharing with others a spiritual gift of eternal value.

One thing more must be recognized from this text: the capability to share in this manner is dependent, not on human, but on divine ability. The gift was offered in the name of Jesus Christ, a fact which the disciples quickly pointed out (v. 12). The Christian has a responsibility to share the love and healing power of Jesus Christ, but he does so on the basis of God's sufficiency.

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## Convention Uniform

### *Love Expressed*

by Norene A. Reed, Bartholomew Association, Warren

Basic passage: Luke 7:36-50

Focal passage: Luke 7:36-50

**Central truth:** Faith leads to forgiveness of sins which results in a response of love from the person forgiven.

Jesus taught great spiritual truths through ordinary activities. Simon, a Pharisee, invited him to dinner and Jesus accepted. It was the custom to eat reclining on a couch with the head toward the table. Also, it was not unusual for neighbors or people passing by to wander through the room, observing the meal. A woman well-known as a sinner came behind Jesus and began wiping his feet with her tears and drying them with her hair. She poured perfume on his feet, continually kissing them.

Pharisees felt it was not right to associate with sinners and avoided the touch of a wicked person or a Gentile. Jesus did not drive the woman away. Simon thought Jesus must not be a prophet or he would have known the condition of this woman.

In conversational tones, Jesus presented Simon with an illustration about two people who owed a man money and neither one was able to pay. One debt was 10 times larger than the other and each was forgiven. Jesus led Simon to realize that the one who owed the larger debt would be more grateful and more expressive of love. He pointed out that when he arrived Simon did not offer a common hospitality of water to wash his feet—the woman used her tears. Simon did not anoint his head with inexpensive oil—the woman used expensive perfume on his feet, she was too humble to approach his head. Simon did not greet him with a kiss—the woman kissed his feet. Simon had shown little love—she had shown much.

The woman gave evidence that her sins had been forgiven. Her actions came from a heart of humility and gratitude. The reassuring words of forgiveness gave a freedom from the distresses experienced as the result of sin. She had peace.

Jesus has given proof he is God and man. As God, he can forgive sins. To receive salvation one needs to turn to him in faith and accept his forgiveness. The realization of the Lord's peace makes hearts overflow with love toward God and man. As a Christian matures this love should multiply.

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## Life and Work

### *Church Discipline*

by Don Moseley, Sylvan Hills First Church, Sherwood

Basic passage: I Corinthians 4:18-5:8

Focal passage: I Corinthians 5:1-8

**Central truth:** Much immaturity among Christians is due to the fact that we do not love each other enough to confront lovingly one another in discipline.

Moral discipline in the church is virtually a lost art in America today. Paul confronted the failure of the Corinthians to deal with immorality in their fellowship.

The Apostle Paul wrote with a heavy heart to those he considered his own spiritual offspring. In chapter 4:14 he says, "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you." Paul loved them enough to confront them.

Paul refers to "fornication" that is going uncorrected in the Corinthian church. The word "fornication" comes from the Greek word "porneia." This is not the word for adultery. It is a much broader term. Any sexual impurity was referred to as fornication, including adultery. The word "fornication" was used here because a greater perversion was being committed than adultery and that was incest. As pagan as the Roman world was, they strictly forbid incest. The Corinthians were tolerating it.

In verse 2 of chapter 5, Paul deplored their lack of shame. While they made no effort to discipline, they were at the same time bragging about their knowledge, their leaders, and their spiritual gifts in an effort to impress men with their spirituality.

The church is trying to survive in a pagan world much like that of Paul's day. The sexual revolution of the sixties is still impacting the church. Man's wisdom and "what I want" seems to be more important than God's wisdom and "what is right." Too many moral decisions are being based on emotion rather than God's truth.

Paul warns, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (vs. 6). Paul challenges their pride. He used the analogy of leaven which they well understood. As leaven permeates, Paul suggests that their tolerance of open immorality will soon influence the whole church.

"Purge out therefore the old leaven. . ." (vs. 7). Paul was saying, "Don't bring sins from your old lifestyle over into your new life."

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## Bible Book

### *Standing First for the Truth*

by Timothy L. Deahl, Olivet Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Acts 4:1-31

Focal passage: Acts 4:1-20

**Central truth:** God's truth will be opposed by those who refuse the Gospel.

Unfortunately, one of the first things a new Christian learns is that not everyone is excited about his change of life. Satan works overtime to assure that this "fired up" convert is cooled off quickly. Often he uses some very religious people.

In Acts 3, Peter and John had been used of God to bring healing to a cripple, now they are confronted by the religious establishment for their deed. It appears that the world and the carnally-minded are invariably more concerned with the way things are done than in what has been accomplished. A life-long cripple is restored physically and a beggar is enabled to be a contributor, but the religious leaders are upset. What generated their jealousy and irritation?

First, they were disturbed because this healing and the disciples' subsequent teaching were done in the name of Jesus (vv. 2, 10). History confirms the religious propensity of mankind and testifies of many attempts to establish grounds for unity. However, the message of God's Word is clear: there is salvation in no one other than Jesus Christ. If the Christian abandons this truth, he abandons the label Christian and, worse he abandons the only hope of mankind. This truth may not be popular, but it is biblical and right.

Second, the religious leaders were irritated that Peter and John attempted to saddle them with responsibility for Jesus' crucifixion (v. 10). Peter draws a sharp contrast between their action (crucifixion) and God's counteraction (resurrection). Angered by the implication, the religious leaders tried to silence the message (compare Ac. 5:28). The correct response is illustrated in Acts 2:37, by those who undoubtedly were less directly responsible for Jesus' crucifixion.

Third, these leaders were unnerved by the confidence of Peter and John. These unqualified disciples presented a case which could not be shaken. Peter and John were convinced that they had to declare what was true. God's message and God's miracle could not be softened, sold, or silenced.

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## New 'Circuit Riders'

by Marty Croll  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

BANGKOK, Thailand (BP)—Four Southern Baptist missionary couples will adopt an itinerant ministry similar to the early American "circuit riders" in order to enter limited-access Asian nations and help Christians there.

Three of the missionary couples most recently have worked in Indonesia, which has closed its doors to most missionaries with 10 or more years of experience in the country. The fourth, Bob and Margie Wakefield, have been traveling throughout southern Asia helping to equip local Christian leaders.

In December, Foreign Mission Board trustees officially formed the Southern Asia and Pacific Itinerant Mission, separate from its other geographically based mission organizations. This mission is different; these missionaries have no home.

They will travel a circuit between several southern Asian nations where governments have begun to curtail traditional missionary work. "Without this limited presence in these countries, we wouldn't have people available to train pastors and lay leaders, coordinate evangelism and church-growth

projects, and provide resources such as media-type tools," said Jerry Rankin, director for Southern Asia and the Pacific. The new work promises to be exhausting, and it requires missionaries willing to pay the price, Rankin said.

"We came out of India recently, and we were tired," wrote Bob Wakefield. "We had been ill and constantly on the move, eating bad food, riding all night on noisy buses and traveling on bad roads, arriving at our destinations just in time for our meetings to begin. We slept wherever we could, occasionally resting on mats placed on the floor of little mud church buildings.

"In addition to being sick and tired, we were suffering from a severe case of loneliness," but, "the people we meet and serve... see us as spiritual giants, warriors of God's elite army."

The idea for the new mission evolved from a project called National Indian Ministries, which the Foreign Mission Board set up in 1982 to help Baptists in other parts of India besides Bangalore, the one southern city where missionaries lived. Volunteers and personnel assigned to other countries came to work on a temporary basis with Indian Baptists.

But their visits were sporadic and defied long-term planning, said Rankin, who directed the work for a time from a base in Bangkok, Thailand: "We feel like that was a very successful plan, but it had these limitations. That's why we're moving to full-time assignments in this category of work. The other way was somewhat unreliable."

Rankin foresees a dire need for such strategies if Southern Baptists are to reach southern Asia for Jesus Christ. "We face an awesome challenge in the task of evangelization due to the population of the countries in the area and visa restrictions being imposed on missionaries," he told Foreign Mission Board trustees in December.

The population exceeds 1.4 billion in the 15 countries of the region where Southern Baptist missionaries work. "But there are 40 countries in the area with absolutely no missionary presence," Rankin said. "We see this new itinerant mission as a kind of task force that would be able to go in, survey and research, and identify if there are any groups in a country we can network with, to meet their needs somehow."

The director of the new mission will be Clyde Meador of Albuquerque, N.M., who worked in Indonesia for 14 years.

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## Soviets 'Free,' She Claims

ABILENE, Texas (BP)—Although religion has been ignored in the Soviet Union for most of this century, people there now are free to visit churches, a Soviet citizen told students at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas.

Churches always have been open, but they were ignored after the Bolshevik revolution separated church and state in 1917, Tatiana Nikitin said during a visit with her husband, Sergei, to the Texas Baptist school.

Soviets could choose their religion, but no one cared to help them, Mrs. Nikitin explained.

"Now the situation is more lucky," she added, "...because our government understands that only in connection with our church and our believers can we overcome every difficulty in our lives, especially in our spiritual lives."

"We are not believers. We are not atheists, too," her husband said. "We believe that after death, the soul of some person will live in memory of rest of people, in their souls. So if you live not only for yourself, but for other people, you will live after your death. Maybe; we'll see about it."

Addressing a student's question about religious freedom in the Soviet Union, Nikitin said: "If you read our constitution, you will find all groups' rights. The problem is to combine this constitution's words and reality."

The Nikitins visited Abilene as part of the "Soviets, Meet Middle America" program. They are research physicists and folklore singers.

## Funding Tops FMB Questions

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Questions and concerns about foreign missions funding accounted for nearly half the calls received by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's special "AnswerLine" telephone service, designed to counter rumors and misinformation about missions.

AnswerLine, which operated from Nov. 14 through Dec. 16, enabled the mission board to receive "a different kind of telephone call in which people expressed concerns and feelings," said Bob Desbien, assistant vice president for public relations. It was one way the board could say it is open and accessible, he said.

Through AnswerLine, 89 callers posed 113 questions, Desbien reported.

Forty-two calls focused on concerns

about cuts being made in mission operating budgets overseas for 1989, or questions about the two key channels of foreign missions funding, the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget and the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Several callers, for example, asked whether missionary salaries are being cut. According to Carl Johnson, vice president of finance, missionary salaries have been frozen since 1987. And salaries of both missionaries and home office workers will be frozen in 1989. The only adjustments up or down in current support for missionaries are the ongoing cost-of-living adjustments related to fluctuations of currency and inflation in the countries where missionaries work, Johnson said.

Seven calls focused on the dismissal of missionary Michael Willett last July over doctrinal questions. Willett had been in language study in Costa Rica preparing to teach at a Venezuelan Baptist seminary.

## Parolee Charged With Murder

SAN ANGELO, Texas (BP)—San Angelo police have charged a 35-year-old parolee from Houston with murder in the Nov. 9 strangulation death of Mrs. Ona Jones.

Jerry Don Faye, 35, was arrested Dec. 20 on a burglary warrant in an unrelated case but gave a voluntary statement about the death of Mrs. Jones. Faye is being held in Tom Green County Jail on charges of murder and burglary of two other habitations.

Mrs. Jones, 57, a retired Southern Baptist missionary who served 32 years in Zimbabwe, was found dead in her burning house at the Baptist Memorial Geriatric Center in San Angelo shortly before 3 a.m. Nov. 9. Her husband, Sam, was away attending a Bible conference at Alto Rio Encampment.

At first it was thought she was a victim of the fire, but San Angelo fire investigators determined the blaze had been deliberately set and an autopsy revealed Mrs. Jones had been strangled to death.

Faye was arrested on a charge of burglary of a habitation following a Dec. 18 break-in of a house occupied by a 76-year-old woman, said Detective Robert Martinez, who had been investigating the Jones death.

Martinez said Faye told Detective Jerry Cornelius, who had arrested him on the burglary charge, about the Jones death. Faye is also accused of unlawfully entering the home of another 72-year-old woman.

Faye is being held in lieu of a \$450,000 bond.