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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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New Orleans Report

Arkansas Baptist

June 21, 1990



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Under Control

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SBC photo

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The SBC's "conservatives" demonstrated they are firmly in control of the convention during the 133rd annual meeting June 12-14 in the Louisiana Superdome at New Orleans.

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Notice

The next issue of the *Arkansas Baptist* will be published on July 5. Sunday School lesson commentaries for July 1 and 8 are published in this issue.

IT'S UPLIFTING

'God Worked A Miracle'

FREDERIKSTED, St. Croix (BP)—Annette Gereau will never forget the storm at night—or the volunteers in the morning.

The 34-year-old St. Croix resident lives with her sister, Edith, who has six children. When Hurricane Hugo started, they huddled in a closet.

The hurricane pulled everything out of one room. Another bedroom saw everything go but the bed frame. Water stood knee deep in the house.

"I didn't know which way to turn," said Gereau, a schoolteacher. She couldn't afford repairs and they had no insurance.

St. Croix is in the U.S. Virgin Islands about 75 miles southeast of Puerto Rico. As a U.S. territory, victims received federal emergency relief grants.

But some contractors cheated residents. Gereau paid her grant money in advance to a contractor who said he needed it for supplies. She never saw him again, and he left only part of the materials.

Several months passed with the family

living under a plastic covering. During rain storms, the children, ages 7 and younger, would sleep in two old cars.

Recently a group of 57 Baptist Men volunteers were in St. Croix helping repair storm damage when Gereau asked for help. The men agreed to assist but found more problems than expected. Rafters needed replacing. Wiring was fouled. Trash remained from the storm and supplies weren't enough to finish the job.

The volunteers contributed about \$300 for the remaining supplies and arrived at 8:15 on Saturday morning. Four hours later the roof was on, the house was clean and even the family grave out front was filled where it had sunk during the storm.

A number of women volunteers cleaned the house. They removed all the trash and debris, making a pile that would fill three pickup truck loads.

Neighbors would stop by during the project wondering how Gereau, who now attends Grace Central Church with her family, could afford all the workers.

"They volunteered to do it," she told them. "God worked a miracle in my life."

GOOD NEWS!

The Lord's Presence

Isaiah 6:1-8

God comes to us in worship. Isaiah's friend, King Uzziah, had died. It was then that the young courtier had a vision of the King of kings. It occurred as he was at worship in the Temple. Note his response: "Woe is me! . . . for I am a man of unclean lips" (v. 5, RSV). When we approach holy God, we know ourselves to be sinners. An angelic figure touched Isaiah's lips with a live coal from the altar and said, "Behold, . . . your guilt is taken away and your sin forgiven" (v. 7, RSV). Next, the voice of the Lord asked, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah responded, "Here am I; send me" (v. 8).

Isaiah found God present in his worship in the Temple. The two from Emmaus knew the Lord to be real to them at their dinner table. They realized that their guest was none other than the risen Christ when he broke bread in their home. Who can forget their spiritual "heartburn" at being in the presence of the Lord?

Saul encountered the risen Christ on the road while traveling to Damascus. His response was much like Isaiah's, "Lord,

what will you have me do?"

We may meet the Lord in our worship: in the place of worship, in our homes, or on the road. Worship is both corporate and private.

Worship's function is twofold: to comfort us and to confront us with the claims of the gospel and Christian ethic. Therefore, preaching is both priestly and prophetic.

Worship means to ascribe supreme worth to God. Our word comes from an old Anglo-Saxon root worth-ship. Worship is our offering to God (Ro. 12:1-2).

Read in unison William Temple's definition of worship: "Worship is the submission of all nature to God. It is the quickening of the conscience by His holiness; the nourishment of the mind with His truth; the purifying of imagination by His beauty; the opening of the heart to His love; the surrender of will to His purpose—and all of this gathered up in adoration, the most selfless emotion of which our nature is capable and therefore the chief remedy for that self-centeredness which is our original sin and the source of all actual sin."

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The 1990 Convention

J. EVERETT SNEED



Like many conventions, the 1990 assembly of Southern Baptists had both positive and negative aspects. Among the positive events was the excellent attendance, the outstanding preaching, the great music, a great theme, and fine reports from many agencies and institutions. Negative events included the drastic reduction of the funding of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and the fact that many of the messengers showed little or no interest in any aspect of our convention's activity except the election of convention officers.

Jerry Vines is to be commended for an outstanding presidential address. His illustrations, alliteration, and excellent delivery made his sermon challenging and easy to remember. Vines also is deserving of congratulations for his choice of this year's biblical theme: "The Churches: Edified. . . Multiplied."

The election of Morris H. Chapman, pastor of First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, assures a capable president for the SBC. Dr. Chapman is an excellent preacher and his administrative skills have been proven by 11 years as pastor of this great church.

Other high points of the convention were the centennial report of the Sunday School Board, as well as the stirring reports from the Home Mission Board and the appointment service of the Foreign Mission Board. The unusually fine centennial report of the Sunday School Board was pretty well attended, with approximately 17,000 present. The attendance for the HMB report was deplorable, with only about 2,000 being present to hear about the activities of this vital portion of Southern Baptist work. Even the commissioning service of the FMB drew only about 12,000 people. On Thursday the convention was unable to conduct any business because there was not a quorum present. Less than 5,000 (some estimated it as low as 2,500) were present on Thursday morning.

While we can be pleased that more than 38,400 messengers were registered, it seems that our priorities are misplaced. It appears that many of our messengers come only for the election of the officers and, when this is complete, they have no interest in the mission and evangelistic activities of our denomination. Actually, the points of lowest attendance represented the most im-

portant activities of our convention. In the past, Southern Baptist messengers came primarily to hear the reports of the mission boards. Today our priorities seem to be electing the president and vice-presidents.

Perhaps our greatest disappointment was the drastic reduction in the funding of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. A positive note, however, the \$50,000 support which the SBC will continue to provide for the BJC assures that we will have a small part in all the excellent work which is done by this organization. It is likely that the approximately \$340,000 reduction by the SBC in the funding the BJC will be made up by state conventions and churches. Already Texas, Virginia, Missouri, North Carolina, and South Carolina have indicated that they will assist in restoring

the lost funds to the BJC.

The designating of funds to the BJC is both a positive and a negative. On the positive side, it will provide funds for the excellent work done by this organization. On the negative side, however, it may give more impetus to the trend of designating funds. The Cooperative Program has served Southern Baptists well since 1925. Careful thought should be given to any activity which will weaken this important part of Southern Baptist work. Let's not scrap it.

How can we resolve the tension that exists in our convention? First, we need a conscious effort to be more inclusive in our appointments. We are not recommending the appointment of individuals who do not believe in the integrity of the Bible. Repeatedly past presidents have said that 90 percent of Southern Baptists are committed to the Word of God as being perfect, infallible and without flaw. Our personal experience indicates that the number is much higher than this. If this is true, every effort should be made to include a wide spectrum of these individuals in the work of the convention. A person should not be excluded because of his friends or how he has voted.

Second, every effort should be made to remove all political activity from the convention. We agree with Dr. Chapman who said it was his desire to "keep theological parameters in place and remove any political parameters."

If Southern Baptists are to be a mighty force for God, we must be inclusive rather exclusive. We need everyone who believes in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and will work to implement this philosophy at home and around the world.

Arkansas Baptist

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Under Control

*Despite a Year-Long, All-Out Effort by 'Moderates',
SBC 'Conservatives' Prove They are Firmly in Control*

by Mark Kelly
Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

NEW ORLEANS — The Southern Baptist "conservative" organization cemented its control over the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination June 12-14 at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans.

Decisive ballot box victories brought "conservatives" not only their 12th presidential victory and another slate of nominees to SBC trustee boards, but also one prize which had eluded them: the virtual defunding of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

More than 38,000 messengers registered for the three-day meeting, making it the third largest in SBC history. Only the 1985 meeting in Dallas and the 1986 meeting in Atlanta brought out larger numbers of Southern Baptists to voice their opinions on what course the convention would steer.

Many observers felt it was appropriate that the "conservative" victory should be sealed in New Orleans. It was in 1978, in a cafe in that city's French Quarter, that Paul Pressler, a Houston state appeals court judge, and Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Bible College in Dallas, met over coffee and French pastry to draft a strategy for the denomination's "redirection."

The key to that strategy was the election of the convention's president, whose appointive powers would in three years give them control of the denomination's

nominating committee. That committee's powers, in turn, would deliver the convention's trustee boards within 10 years, and trustee control would free them to influence Southern Baptist institutions and agencies as they saw fit.

That agenda was completed at the 1989 annual meeting in Las Vegas, Nev., and the New Orleans meeting was the first which saw "conservatives" firmly in control of every aspect of Southern Baptist institutional life. Perhaps most significant was the overwhelming adoption of two recommendations from the "conservative"-controlled Executive Committee that transferred \$341,796 and the denomination's religious liberty program assignment from the Washington, D.C.-based Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs to the SBC Christian Life Commission.

The Baptist Joint Committee, a cooperative effort of nine Baptist bodies, had represented Southern Baptist religious liberty concerns in the nation's capital for more than 50 years. But the organization's outspoken director, James M. Dunn, had angered "conservative" leaders over his public opposition to proposals such as a school prayer amendment and tuition tax credits for parochial schools, proposals, which they favored.

Success in removing the primary religious liberty funding and responsibility from the Baptist Joint Committee came to "conservatives" only after they had

gained firm control over the Executive Committee's program and budget process. Several earlier attempts to defund the BJC — brought as amendments to Executive Committee budget proposals — had failed by substantial margins.

But the only failures in New Orleans were those of the convention's "moderate" camp, which after a year-long, all-out effort could not elect one officer, eliminate one trustee nomination, or turn back the tide on the Baptist Joint Committee.

Tuesday morning

On Tuesday morning, messengers moved steadily toward their seats in the cavernous 70,000-seat stadium, which was the first facility since 1984 to prove adequate for the crowds that have swelled annual meeting attendances as high as 45,519.

Many observers had predicted a large registration for the New Orleans meeting, based on the proximity of the meeting site to Southern Baptist strongholds and several issues expected to draw heated discussion and close votes: the presidential election, the BJC defunding, and a recently-renewed controversy at Southern Seminary.

Registration Monday morning stood at 29,601, slightly ahead of the 1988 San Antonio convention but well behind the 35,721 registered on Monday morning at the 1985 Dallas meeting.

The choir and orchestra of Jacksonville, Fla., First Baptist Church provided music for inspiration as the hour neared for Southern Baptists to convene their momentous 133rd annual meeting.

SBC President Jerry Vines gavelled the opening session to order at 8:43 a.m. Convention Music Director John McKay led the assembly in a series of lively choruses, and Robert Covington, a layman from Fayetteville, Ga., voiced an invocation.

Homer Lindsay Jr., who serves with Vines as co-pastor of First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla., brought the first of three interpretations of the convention theme: "The Churches: Edified... Multiplied."

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New SBC officers are (left to right) Second Vice-President Fred Lowery, President Morris Chapman, and First Vice-President Doug Knapp.

Executive Committee Report

At 9:40 a.m., SBC Executive Committee President Harold Bennett introduced the committee's report. Messengers waved directly into controversy on the first recommendation: a proposed revision of the Christian Life Commission's program statement that would add religious liberty to the agency's moral and social agenda.

The recommendation was a prelude to the approaching budget vote, which contained the massive transfer of religious liberty funds.

As previously announced, Frank Ingraham, a Nashville, Tenn., attorney and long-time member of the Executive Committee, brought a substitute motion to the floor. Criticizing the proposed revision as "fatally flawed," Ingraham moved to strike Recommendation 1 and leave the CLC program statement intact.

Messengers cast ballots on the substitute motion and moved on to adopt without debate six other Executive Committee recommendations. One vote amended SBC Bylaw 16 to prohibit the convention's nominating committee from recommending a member's spouse for a position on an SBC trustee board. Another authorized special events celebrating the convention's 150th birthday at the 1995 annual meeting in Atlanta, Ga.

Motions and Resolutions

Messengers then turned their attention to the introduction of business from the floor. Thirteen motions were introduced, among them calls for direct balloting by

local churches on annual meeting business, establishing an internal accrediting agency for SBC seminaries and colleges, prohibiting campaigns for the convention's presidency, acknowledging the sin of racism and incorporating a time of repentance in the 150th anniversary celebration, and providing a role for state conventions in the SBC nominating process.

Forty-three resolutions were read into the record. The items dealt with theological issues such as baptism and the priesthood of the believer, moral issues such as AIDS and sex education in public schools and child pornography, national concerns such as Middle East hostages and a national lottery, and local church matters such as discipline and soulwinning. A record 87 resolutions were submitted by messengers this year.

President's Address

After another interlude of special music from the Jacksonville First Church choir and orchestra, Jerry Vines delivered his second and final President's Address.

Preaching from Ephesians 3:20-21, Vines expounded on "the glory of the church" in four aspects: the church universal, local, denominational, and eternal.

Christians must understand that the universal church, which consists of all the regenerate of all the ages, is not a monarchy ruled by a pastor, an oligarchy governed by deacons, or a democracy run by the masses, Vines said. Rather, it is a living body that has the Lord Jesus Christ as its head.

Jesus Christ leads the church, Vines said, "by the leadership of a pastor, with the assistance of deacons, through the concurrence of the membership."

As a local body, the church is "a mystery in heart of God," Vines added. It has a twofold ministry of building up other Christians and reaching the lost.

The denominational church exists for and answers to the local churches, and not other way around, Vines continued. Local churches must never allow "bureaucratic bullies" to browbeat churches for their choices of literature and programs, Vines said.

Furthermore, local churches must always be alert to a denomination's becoming a bureaucracy infested with doctrinal error, Vines said. He predicted a bright future for those denominations that affirm the inerrancy of scripture, and said all others are destined for "the garbage dump of denominations."

"It is better for Southern Baptists to debate and settle the issue of scriptural inerrancy today than to someday debate whether homosexuals are suitable in our pulpits," Vines declared.

The eternal church is destined for victory and heavenly glory, Vines reminded his audience. While local churches and denominations may fail, the church eternal is always victorious, rising over those who would destroy it, he asserted. Vines gloried in the future splendor of the church and pointed to scriptures that say Christ's own will be presented to God "without wrinkle or spot."

Prior to adjourning the morning session, Registration Secretary Lee Porter brought messengers an updated report on registration and the balloting on the substitute motion regarding the Christian Life Commission's program assignment.

Porter said that 27,417 messengers of the 32,193 registered at the time of the balloting had voted 14,788 (53.9 percent) to 12,629 (46.1 percent) against the substitute motion, which would have left the convention's primary religious liberty assignment with the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Tuesday afternoon

Although thousands of messengers thronged stadium concession stands and nearby restaurants, most chose to remain in their seats during the two-hour lunch break. They enjoyed performances by a wide range of evangelistic singers and musicians.

The afternoon session opened with a hand-clapping round of choruses — "I'll Fly Away, When the Roll is Called Up Yonder,

and When We All Get to Heaven — led by Jim Bob Griffin of Rusk, Texas.

At 2:20 p.m., President Vines opened the floor for motions from the messengers. Nine items were introduced, and messengers agreed by common consent to consider one that called for the employment of a handicapped individual each year to assist with convention arrangements for the disabled. Messengers approved that suggestion on a show of ballots.

Two motions dealt with the health insurance crisis and the lack of small church participation in the annual meeting. One called for an independent accounting firm to monitor ballot tabulations. Another suggested raising the minimum messenger age to 18 years.

One messenger raised a question regarding the fitness of Roland Lopez, pastor of Immanuel Church in McAllen, Texas, to serve as chairman of the Committee on Nominations.

Messengers from Lopez' congregation earlier had agreed to surrender their credentials on the grounds that the church had contributed nothing to missions through the Cooperative Program during the last year. The SBC Constitution and

Bylaws require churches to be in "friendly cooperation" with the SBC before messengers will be seated.

The messenger questioned the legality and propriety of allowing an individual to serve as chairman of an influential committee when the congregation to which he belongs is not cooperating with the convention.

President Vines informed the messengers that no constitutional provision requires a committee member be credentialed as a messenger.

Questioned further, Vines later also ruled that Lopez had been elected at the annual meeting in 1989, when his church was contributing through the Cooperative Program. Despite shouts of disagreement, Vines moved the agenda along, and the floor was opened for nominations for the office of president.

Presidential Nominations

By this time, messengers had filled the stadium's two lower levels and spilled over into the upper tier of seats. More than 38,000 messengers had registered, making the New Orleans meeting the third largest in convention history.

The first name brought to the floor was

Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in Atlanta and the candidate of the "moderate" organization. Vestal was nominated by Phil Lineberger, pastor of Richardson Heights Baptist Church in Richardson, Texas, and president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The second nomination was for "conservative" candidate Morris Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas. Chapman's name was brought by John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church in Houston.

With no more nominations at hand, messengers cast their ballots and turned their attention to the report of their nominating committee.

Committee Chairman Roland Lopez took the podium and announced four changes in the printed report. Two changes involved replacing the names of members of his own Texas congregation, which had been criticized moments earlier for making no contributions through the Cooperative Program in the past year.

An abortive attempt to amend the nominating committee report failed overwhelmingly, and messengers adopted it on a show of ballots in spite of substantial opposition.

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Executive Committee Report

After a break for congregational singing, messengers picked up again with recommendations from the Executive Committee. They quickly adopted the Christian Life Commission's program statement revision and approved another proposal to delete the lengthy program statement of the SBC Public Affairs Committee, which also addresses religious liberty concerns. The Executive Committee recommendation explained that, as a standing committee, the PAC has no need for a program statement.

Another substitute motion came to the floor, however, when messengers came to the proposed 1990-91 Cooperative Program budget. That budget contained the funds transfer connected with the Christian Life Commission's expanded program statement.

Just as he had challenged the CLC program expansion, Nashville attorney Frank Ingraham also brought a motion to amend the budget proposal. His amendment called for each SBC entity — including the CLC, BJC, and PAC — to receive a 1.89 percent increase from the 1989-90 budget. The result would be that the Baptist Joint Committee not only would retain the \$341,796 proposed for transfer to the CLC, but also would receive a slight increase.

President Vines ordered messengers to cast their ballots on the amendment. They then adopted a resolution of appreciation for Darold H. Morgan, who retired in March as president of the Southern Baptist Annual Board.

Presidential Election Results

After a brief interlude of praise songs led by Philip Griffin of Laurel, Miss., Registration Secretary Lee Porter took the podium to announce the presidential balloting results.

Porter told the assembly they had elected Morris Chapman by a margin of more than 5,700 votes. Chapman's 21,471 votes represented 57.68 percent of the total

ballots cast, Porter said. Daniel Vestal's 15,753 ballots accounted for 42.32 percent of the total.

After President Vines declared Chapman's election official, Committee on Order of Business Chairman Dwight Reighard read into the record another set of resolutions submitted by messenger. The resolutions dealt with the sanctity of life, obscenity in art, prayer for denominational reconciliation, political uses of the pulpit, and euthanasia.

Next on the agenda was the report of the convention's Committee on Committees, which nominates members for the next year's Committee on Nominations.

The committee was closely questioned by one messenger as to whether or not its report was in harmony with the SBC Peace Committee's 1985 recommendation that nominations reflect the "diversity" of the denomination. The committee was unable to report what percentage of its nominees held to minority views identified by the Peace Committee report, and the messenger suggested that demonstrated a failure to observe the Peace Committee's recommendations.

However, when the question was called, messengers adopted the report on a show of ballots. Opposition was scattered.

Johnson Removal

Perhaps the most notable stir of the afternoon came when the floor was again opened for miscellaneous business. W. Lamar Wadsworth, a messenger from Baltimore, Md., moved that Jerry Johnson be removed as a trustee of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Wadsworth's motion resulted in a sustained ovation from the floor, which lasted nearly a minute. The applause reflected disapproval of Johnson, a 25-year-old Colorado pastor, who had presented to seminary trustees a 16-page article charging Southern President Roy L. Honeycutt and five seminary professors with liberalism.

Other motions introduced called for denominational subsidy of the convention's health insurance plan, asked that the Committee on Order of Business have a woman member each year, and suggested that 100,000 New Testaments be printed and offered to the 8,000 Southern Baptist churches which reported no baptisms last year. Another motion requested the convention establish an office to assist congregations which sponsor Christian day schools.

Messengers received two nominations for the convention's first vice-presidency. Messengers cast their ballots for Doug Knapp, a former missionary to Tanzania, and Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler,

recently-retired executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC.

Messengers streamed toward the exits as Dwight Reighard read another batch of resolutions into the record. With two officer elections and the CLC program statement revision behind them, messengers literally emptied the vast auditorium in a matter of minutes.

J.L. Hendrix, a layman from Winnsboro, La., pronounced the benediction.

Chapman Press Conference

After the session had closed, President-Elect Morris Chapman told reporters in a press conference that peace in the troubled convention depends mostly on the 42 percent of messengers who voted against him.

A Baptist Press report quoted Chapman as saying: "The large majority of Southern Baptists believe the issue is settled. Whether or not the issue is settled in practical form is largely up to those who have been voting otherwise, who have insisted that we are not a group who have believed in the inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible."

Chapman repeated a familiar assertion that, despite the size of the opposition among messengers to SBC annual meetings, at least 90 percent of rank and file Southern Baptists believe in inerrancy. He said Southern Baptist institutions must reflect that conviction.

Chapman said he wants to remove political barriers between Southern Baptists and enhance cooperation without compromising biblical truth. During his presidential campaign, he had said repeatedly he wanted to "enlarge the tent" in the convention and bring into the fold those whose differences with the "conservative" organization have been political, rather than theological.

He also said he wants to visit with the presidents of each SBC agency and institution during the next year in order to "listen to their heartbeat and let them hear mine." He said fewer press conferences and more personal conferences between elected officers and salaried officials would enhance understanding and promote peace and harmony.

Tuesday evening

Only the few hundred messengers who returned early from the evening meal break were able to enjoy a performance by the choir and orchestra of First Baptist Church in Springdale, Ark. After the inspiring 30-minute prelude, John McKay returned to the platform to lead the assembly in congregational singing.

Interested in a Ministry of Love?

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Registration Secretary Lee Porter informed messengers they had elected former missionary Doug Knapp as their first vice-president. Knapp polled 16,348 (60.47 percent) of the 27,036 ballots cast. His opponent, former WMU, SBC Executive Director Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler received 10,688 votes (39.53 percent). Seventy percent of the 38,406 registered messengers had voted in the election.

Porter also told the assembly the attempt to amend the 1990-91 budget proposal had failed. Opponents of the amendment had cast 17,915 ballots (56.83 percent), compared to 13,608 votes (43.17 percent) for the amendment. Eighty-two percent of the registered messengers voted on that question.

At that point, President Vines opened the floor for nominations for second vice-president. Three names were brought to messengers: Raymond Boswell, a layman from Shreveport, La., Fred Lowery, a pastor from Bossier City, La., and Steve Tondera, a layman from Huntsville, Ala.

With those ballots cast, messengers heard a second interpretation of the convention theme, "The Churches: Edified. . . Multiplied." Larry Wynn, who pastors in a rural northeast Georgia farming community, told messengers church growth is not a matter of location or resources.

Wynn, whose small congregation has experienced explosive growth, said, "The God who is Lord of the harvest in metropolitan areas is also Lord of the harvest in rural areas." He contended churches can grow if they will observe certain principles. He said churches must (1) agonize in prayer over people and their needs, (2) let the power of God overcome obstacles, (3) catch and spread a spirit of celebration, and (4) make soulwinning central in church activities.

Bold Mission Thrust Report

Ernest Moseley, executive vice-president of the SBC Executive Committee, delivered a report on Bold Mission Thrust, the convention's stated goal of giving every person in the world an opportunity to receive Christ by A.D. 2000.

Moseley said Southern Baptists face an opportunity to rise to "unprecedented faith and works" in bringing the world to Christ as they enter the last 10 years of Bold Mission Thrust. He challenged messengers to reaffirm and renew their commitments and boldly face the challenge of worldwide evangelism.

Statistics indicate that Southern Baptists have basically met or exceeded Bold Mission Thrust goals related to church starts, new missionaries, and short-term volunteers. However, they have failed to meet goals regarding baptisms; enrollments

in Sunday School, Discipleship Training, and mission organizations; and overall percentage increase in giving to missions through the Cooperative Program.

Registration Secretary Lee Porter informed messengers they had elected Fred Lowery as their second vice-president. Lowery received 6,347 (63.90 percent) of the 9,932 ballots cast. Raymond Boswell collected 1,407 (14.17 percent) votes. Steve Tondera garnered 2,178 (21.93 percent). Porter noted that only 25.85 percent of the 38,421 messengers registered at the time participated in the balloting.

Four reports filled out the rest of the Tuesday evening session: the Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary, brought by Arthur L. Walker, secretary-treasurer of the SBC Education Commission; the Historical Commission report, delivered by Executive Director Lynn E. May Jr.; the Radio and Television Commission report, brought by President Jack Johnson; and the Home Mission Board report, brought by President Larry L. Lewis.

Home Missions Report

Fewer than 6,000 messengers were in the stadium for the Home Mission Board report, which was the primary focus of the session. HMB trustee chairman Ralph Smith began the presentation by telling messengers Southern Baptists had started 1,300 new congregations in 1989.

HMB President Lewis told the assembly that the 2,132 chaplains endorsed by the convention had won more than 74,000 people to Christ in the last year. He also noted that 14,072 homes had been contacted during the weekend soulwinning blitz held prior to the convention. Lewis explained that fewer persons had volunteered to help with the visitation than volunteered for the pre-convention project last year, but more professions of faith had been registered in New Orleans than in Las Vegas.

As a result of the door-to-door canvassing, 575 persons made professions of faith and 2,833 prospects were discovered for New Orleans congregations, Lewis reported.

Lewis also observed that the 351,107 baptisms Southern Baptists recorded in 1989 marked the second consecutive year of increase after several years of decline. He noted that at least 175,000 professions of faith were made in the Here's Hope simultaneous revivals this spring.

Southern Baptists are starting new congregations at a rate of three per day, Lewis said. With 43,694 congregations in place and a goal of 50,000 by A.D. 2000, the convention is slightly ahead of its Bold Mission Thrust goals for new work.

However, Lewis expressed concern about the fact that the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions suffered a decline of almost 10 percent from the previous year. He said the offering fell \$1.4 million short of its goal.

Lewis then presented a plaque of appreciation to Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church in Phoenix, Ariz. That congregation has led the Southern Baptist Convention in baptisms for seven of the last 10 years, Lewis said.

After four home missions testimonies and a performance by Kidsville, a children's choir from a New Orleans Baptist center, messengers heard a challenging message from Charles Chaney, Home Mission Board vice-president for church extension.

Chaney estimated that as many as 170 million people in the United States do not

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truly know Jesus as savior, although a majority claim a nominal connection to a church. Such a statistic means that the U.S. is one of the truly great mission fields of the world, he said.

Because of the lostness of America, Southern Baptists must plant new churches, Chaney argued. He contended Southern Baptists have a unique responsibility to evangelize the U.S. because they alone have the numerical strength, ethnic diversity, and geographic dispersion needed to accomplish it.

Even though Southern Baptists are starting three new congregations each day, they will have to increase their church starting activities to four a day if they are to truly reach the nation for Christ, Chaney said.

He challenged the estimated 2,000 messengers who had remained for the missions service to make a prayerful commitment to help start a new congregation during the coming year. Messengers prayed about their commitments to new church starts while an orchestra played "Send Me, O Lord, Send Me."

The benediction was voiced by Bill Purvis, pastor of Cascade Hills Church in Columbus, Ga.

Wednesday morning

The fourth session of the annual meeting opened with an half hour of inspirational music performed by the choir and orchestra of Cottage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala.

After a round of congregational singing,

messengers turned their attention to a slate of seven reports from SBC agencies and institutions. Because not enough messengers had trickled in to constitute a quorum, a scheduled election of officers had to be postponed, and messengers launched into a marathon series of seven reports.

Stewardship Commission President A.R. Fagan focused on the commission's 1990-95 emphasis, Witnessing-Giving Life. He noted that, if the level of Cooperative Program giving last year had been same as that 10 years ago, an additional \$50 million would have been available for worldwide mission causes. He called upon Southern Baptists to respond sacrificially to the "doors of opportunity opening all over the world."

Southeastern Seminary President Lewis A. Drummond told messengers that student enrollment is beginning to recover after a serious decline following controversy between the school's faculty and "conservative" trustees. He also noted progress on accreditation problems and pledged Southeastern "is going to be the Bible-believing, Christ-centered seminary you have said you want us to be."

Midwestern Seminary President Milton Ferguson told messengers the seminary is "in the business of reconciliation... because God is in the business of turning enemies into friends." He said small groups, workshops, and personal conferences are being used to enhance understanding and build trust among trustees, administrators, and faculty.

Education Commission Executive Director Arthur L. Walker noted the agency is

celebrating its 75th anniversary. "Education has been part of the work of the Southern Baptist Convention since before the inception of the convention itself," he said. "As we see so much of education coming under the influence of secular institutions, it is even more important for Southern Baptists to emphasize their educational institutions."

Southwestern, Southern Reports

About 10,000 messengers were in the hall when Southwestern Seminary President Russell H. Dilday Jr. rose to deliver his report.

Dilday declared that, in spite of "criticism and unfounded accusations," Southwestern Seminary's faculty continues to serve in an exemplary fashion "with an uncompromising commitment to scripture." He noted with pride that Southwestern had been ranked as the best evangelical seminary by interdenominational readers of *Christianity Today* magazine.

After Dilday's report, a messenger asked the seminary president whether he had labeled as "satanic" actions taken by messengers the previous day.

Dilday replied: "The comment I made was that the methodology used in the takeover of the convention in the past 12 years — the crass, secular, political methodology — does have satanic, evil qualities to which I am desperately opposed." He added that, if Satan were interested in destroying the work of an evangelical body such as the SBC, the tactics he would employ would be much like what has happened in the convention.

In response to Dilday's bold assertions, about one-fourth of the messengers present came to their feet in sustained applause.

A similar ovation greeted Southern Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt when he came to the microphone to present his report to the messengers.

Honeycutt told messengers that the seminary, which had just observed its 165th commencement, would continue to build on commitment and loyalty to the convention and the churches. "No seminary should be an island unto itself," Honeycutt declared. Southern's "only reason for existence" is to serve the churches which have a world vision of the gospel, he said.

Following Honeycutt's comments, a messenger questioned the seminary president about charges of "doctrinal infidelity" recently raised by a 25-year-old Southern Seminary trustee. Had not the Peace Committee cleared the seminary of those charges in 1986, he asked.

Honeycutt acknowledged that those concerns had previously been brought to

seminary trustees, who he said "treated them seriously." After 43 faculty interviews, trustees voted 41-11 that nothing in the allegations was worthy of dismissal.

That reply sparked another demonstration of sustained applause, which continued even as Fred Gilbert of Lake Jackson, Texas, came to the platform to lead a period of congregational singing.

The final agency report of the morning belonged to the Baptist Sunday School Board, which is celebrating 100 years of service this year. The report included a parade that featured a Dixieland band, historical figures related to the board, and children from Vacation Bible School groups from around the country. The report also featured an historical presentation using multimedia, dramatic, and choral elements.

Board President Lloyd Elder told messengers that, while the board's mission "is as old as the Great Commission," its future depends on the support and prayers of Southern Baptists. He asked messengers to join the Sunday School Board in its commitment to "reach men, women, boys, and girls with the good news of Jesus Christ."

Business and Elections

At 11:10 a.m., the assembly turned its attention once again to matters of business. The floor was opened for nominations for recording secretary. Messengers received the names of Martin Bradley, who has served in that position for 13 years, and David Atchison, a Nashville, Tenn., layman and son of Joe Atchison, director of missions in northwest Arkansas' Benton County Association.

With that ballot cast, messengers were ready to complete their consideration of the 1990-91 budget proposal. President Vines announced no debate would be heard on the matter, and messengers adopted the new budget on a show of ballots. Only slight opposition was registered.

The new budget calls for \$137.3 million in basic operating expenses and \$22.9 million for capital needs at eight institutions and agencies. Most entities received a 1.89 percent increase, except for Christian Life Commission, Baptist Joint Committee, and Public Affairs Committee. The CLC budget increased 40.7 percent, the BJC budget decreased 87.24 percent, and the PAC budget increased 5.47 percent.

Committee on Order of Business Chairman Dwight Reighard reported to messengers on the referral to agencies of nine motions that had been made earlier. He then informed the assembly the committee was recommending that the motion by Lamar Wadsworth regarding the removal of a Southern Seminary trustee be ruled out of order.

That report was greeted with both loud booning and scattered applause until Reighard said the matter had been discussed with SBC attorney James Guenther and Southern President Roy Honeycutt. Both Honeycutt and Guenther addressed the crowd, and Wadsworth accepted the opportunity to move the referral of that item to the Southern Seminary board of trustees.

The messengers adopted that motion and heard an additional list of items ruled out of order, among them the motion prohibiting presidential campaigning.

The floor then was opened to nominations for registration secretary. In addition to Lee Porter's renomination, messengers received the name of Bob Mowery of Nashville, Tenn. Those ballots were cast, and the report of the Resolutions Committee was brought to the floor.

Resolutions

Resolutions Committee Chairman Mark Cortis informed messengers they had submitted 87 resolutions for the committee's consideration, a record number. Messengers then adopted without debate the first two items in the report.

The first resolution adopted condemned child pornography as "an essential ingredient to child molestation" and noted that the U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled that private possession of child pornography is not a constitutionally-protected right. It called upon federal and state governments to pass laws make such material illegal and challenged Southern Baptists to insist on vigorous enforcement of obscenity laws at all levels.

The second resolution was entitled "On Environmental Stewardship." It noted that the earth was God's creation and that humanity has an obligation to preserve it. The "endangerment of the earth by pollution, human extravagance and wastefulness, soil depletion and erosion" were

identified as the consequences of human sinfulness. Southern Baptists were challenged to "make an environmentally responsible ethic a part of our lifestyle and evangelistic witness."

Convention Sermon

Prior to the Convention Sermon, the choir and orchestra of Cotrage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala., presented special music. Then the congregation's pastor, Fred Wolfe, rose to preach.

Speaking from Zechariah 4:1-10, Wolfe declared that Southern Baptists face three mountainous obstacles: desertion, decline, and division.

Wolfe identified as desertion the troubling fact that on any given Sunday only about 4.5 million Southern Baptists can be found in church. The convention's 37,000 churches claim more than 14 million members.

Add to that the decline which Southern Baptists have been experiencing for more than a decade and the division which has troubled the convention within and without, and you have a series of obstacles that human power can never overcome, Wolfe said.

He compared the Southern Baptist dilemma, however, to that of Zechariah, whose small band of Jewish exiles set and out and failed to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Wolfe reminded messengers that it took an angel to communicate to the prophet that such as task can be accomplished "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Wolfe praised Southern Baptists for having the courage to confront incipient liberalism in their institutions but said, "As a convention we have spoken. Let's move on to reach this world for the gospel!"

"We need to quit questioning each other's motives," Wolfe added. "We may not agree, but we don't have to say it is

PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

Three Arkansans Elected

Three Arkansans were elected officers of Southern Baptist auxiliary groups in meetings immediately preceding the Southern Baptist Convention June 12-14 in New Orleans.

• Glenn Hickey, director of missions for Pulaski Association in Little Rock, was elected first vice-president of the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Director of Missions in a meeting at the Landmark Hotel in Metairie, La.

• Robert Turner, director of the Baptist Student Union at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia, was elected vice-president of administration of the Association of Southern Baptist Campus Ministers in a meeting at the Quality Inn in New Orleans' Midtown area.

• Lynn Madden, minister of music at Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, was elected vice-president of the local church division of the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference at New Orleans' First Baptist Church.

satanic in the eyes of God." His comment apparently referred to Southwestern Seminary President Russell Dilday's condemnation of the "crass, secular, political" methods employed by "conservative" leaders to gain control of the denomination.

Wolfe said he still sees hope for the convention, but only as Southern Baptists genuinely repent of pride and self-sufficiency and give themselves to prayer.

gregation singing several favorites: Give Me That Old Time Religion, I've Got a Home in Glory Land, I'll Fly Away, When the Saints Go Marching In, and Amazing Grace.

The invocation was voiced by Don Sharp, pastor of Faith Tabernacle Baptist Church in Chicago, Ill. Sharp confronted the tensions of the controversy by asking messengers to join hands while he prayed for spiritual healing and a love of the

SBC photo / Mark Sandlin



SBC President Chapman and family at post-election press conference

The conclusion of Wolfe's sermon was greeted by a sustained standing ovation from the audience. When it subsided, Lee Porter announced that David Atchison had been elected recording secretary over 13-year veteran Martin Bradley by a vote of 9,206 (53.37 percent) to 8,044 (46.63 percent). Bradley then took the microphone to announce that Porter had retained his office against challenger Bob Mowrey by an impressive tally of 13,242 (72.40 percent) to 5,048 (27.60 percent). Porter was the only individual elected to office who was not nominated by the "conservative" organization.

Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, Ark., offered the benediction.

Wednesday evening

The fifth session of the annual meeting opened with music for inspiration provided by the choir and orchestra of Dauphin Way Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala. At 6:30 p.m., an estimated 12,000 messengers enthusiastically received the Cathedral Quartet of Stowe, Ohio, which performed 30 minutes of Southern gospel music. The gospel theme continued with the con-

brethren. After his prayer, Sharp asked each messenger to hug his neighbors.

The convention's third and final theme interpretation was delivered by Ron Lewis, a church growth consultant from Nashville, Tenn. Lewis told the assembly that building up the body and multiplying believers are both necessary components of life in Christ. He pointed to several events recorded in Acts where trauma to the body of Christ was followed by an explosion of growth and new life.

The first order of business was the election of a convention preacher and musician for the 1991 annual meeting in Atlanta. Messengers elected Tom Elliff of Del City, Okla., and Jack Price of Vienna, Va., to those positions. Ronnie Floyd of Springdale, Ark. was elected as the alternate preacher.

Before messengers settled into the main focus of the evening — the report of the Foreign Mission Board — they received reports from the Denominational Calendar Committee, referred a set of motions to the relevant agencies, and heard introductions of the local arrangements committee, former SBC presidents, and their new officers.

Foreign Missions Report

The report of the Foreign Mission Board included the appointment of 34 candidates for overseas service. Among them were six Arkansans: Lloyd and Betty Farmer, who will serve in Malawi; Jim and Margaret Hunt, who will serve in Nigeria; and Thomas and Sharon Nowlin, who will serve in Japan. This was only the second time a missionary appointment service had been held in conjunction with an SBC annual meeting.

FMB President R. Keith Parks told the assembly "the time is right according to God's calendar" for Southern Baptists to reach out and evangelize the world. However, he said the effort will require a new level of sacrifice.

Reminding messengers of the epochal events in Eastern Europe, Parks said, "This is God's right time. We must not do wrong." He warned that history is replete with examples of God opening a window of opportunity and his people failing to take advantage of it.

Parks recalled how Romanian dictator Nicolai Ceausescu lived in obscene luxury while his people starved, and he compared it to American Christians who have the world's wealth at their disposal but refuse to spend it on winning the world to Christ.

As God judged Ceausescu's wantonness, so he will judge Southern Baptists, Parks warned. The difference, he said, is that "we will be more guilty. . . . We shamelessly wallow in self-indulgent luxury while a lost and dying world goes in to eternity with no knowledge of Jesus Christ."

"I ask you one question tonight," Parks concluded. "Did the Lord Jesus Christ die for all of the world? Did he command every one of us to take the gospel to all of the world? Are you carrying out God's command to the ends of the earth? Do you want to send a message to the villages of Africa, to the cities of Asia: 'Tell them we are coming! Tell them we didn't forget! Or shall we simply send them a message: 'There's no one here to come.'"

The stadium filled with the sound of tearing paper as Parks challenged each messenger to make a commitment to career or volunteer missions and register that commitment on a card printed in the evening's program.

As the congregation stood to sing, the newly appointed missionaries joined hands across the stage, and people by the dozens began streaming toward the exits, where career missionaries collected the commitment cards.

(Continued on p. 14)

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Thursday morning

A French Quarter cafe could have held the messengers who turned out for the annual meeting's sixth session. The numbers were so sparse that business had to be postponed because a quorum was not present. The situation did not improve as the morning wore on, and messengers found themselves unable to conclude the business that had brought them to New Orleans.

Twelve of the 14 resolutions painstakingly drafted by the Resolutions Committee fell by the wayside for the lack of a quorum.

Convention Parliamentarian John Sullivan chastised the absent messengers before the faithful few when he said, "It's my conviction that, if our churches and institutions send us to the convention to do business, we should be as interested in doing business today as any other day of the convention meeting."

Among the resolutions not considered were items on tax relief for families, government sponsorship of offensive art, homosexuality and civil rights, alcoholic beverage advertising restrictions, and endangerment of religious liberty.

What messengers did do was buckle down and conclude their entire morning and afternoon agenda in one sitting. They heard 13 reports and a sermon before adjourning.

Golden Gate Seminary President William O. Crews told messengers the school plans to offer a new degree — a master of divinity with an emphasis in church planting — beginning with the fall semester.

Richard Land, executive director of the Christian Life Commission, asserted there has never been a time when the nation needed the witness of Southern Baptists on moral and social public policy issues more than today. He pledged the CLC would do its best to maximize the new resources messengers had given it and take seriously the new religious liberty program assignment.

In response to a question from the floor, Land assured messengers the CLC would oppose any direct use of public funds for sectarian or religious education. Such entanglement of church and state, he said, would inevitably lead to state control over Christian education, resulting in that education being "less Christian than supporters would want it to be."

He also expressed delight but not surprise over the U.S. Supreme Court's recent affirmation of the Equal Access Act, which guarantees the right of public school students to voluntarily exercise the freedom of religion in any school which allows other extracurricular clubs to operate. Land said he believed a "brooding

hostility" toward Christianity had developed in the public schools, but that the Equal Access legislation will now protect student religious freedoms from being unconstitutionally restricted.

Southern Baptist Foundation President Hollis E. Johnson III brought a bright report to the floor. He informed messengers the agency's assets had increased last year by 41.4 percent, to a total of

been pastorless for three years and was in such financial difficulty that he served for three months without salary. Apparently the church had voted prior to his coming to divert budget funds from the Cooperative Program to help support a new mission start. Given the fact he was a new pastor and the church was already in financial straits, he could do little to alter the circumstances, messengers were told.

New Orleans Seminary President Landrum P. Leavell II said the seminary's enrollment is up slightly this semester, in contrast to generally declining enrollments elsewhere. He reassured messengers that there is "absolutely no question" about his faculty's commitment to the Word of God.

James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, reviewed areas where the BJC is at work in Washington: opposing legislation which would support church-operated child care programs with tax dollars, lobbying for a charitable contribution deduction for non-itemizing taxpayers, appealing for the Supreme Court to reconsider a recent decision declaring religious expression a merely "subsidiary" right under the First Amendment, and evaluating the recent Supreme Court decision upholding the Equal Access Act.

Responding to a question about the impact of Southern Baptist budget changes on BJC operations, Dunn replied that the agency would have to restructure its board and staff, but would continue strong nonetheless. He said, "Baptists at the local church level believe not only in religious liberty but also in the nonpartisan, non-political posture" the BJC has taken through the years. "We are going to serve Southern Baptists whether they ask us to or not," he concluded.

Paul W. Powell, the recently-elected president of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, responded to concerns about turmoil in the convention's ministerial health insurance program by pointing out that the board last year paid out \$33 million more in claims than it received in premiums.

Premium increases are unavoidable in such a situation, he said. In fact, other denominations have been forced to drop their health insurance programs entirely in recent months, because of escalating claims and costs. Rapidly rising medical premiums simply reflect the nationwide health care crisis, he noted.

In addition, Southern Baptist ministers are not good health risks because of the stress they endure, he observed. "Insurance companies are not standing in line to underwrite the SBC," Powell said. The agency recently decided to switch to Prudential because the Actna program was failing, and Prudential was the only major,

SBC photo / Mark Sandlin



Joy Martin (center) of Calvary Baptist Church in Paragould, Ark., and Louisiana Baptist Convention employee Mary Pennington (right) witnessed door to door in New Orleans prior to the SBC.

\$95 million. Furthermore, the foundation's assets have grown at annual rate of 20.8 percent over the last five years, he said.

Brotherhood Commission President James H. Smith said more than 500 volunteers are expected to assist in reconstruction projects on St. Croix in the wake of Hurricane Hugo. He introduced a video presentation featuring the Gaiher Vocal Band that focused on Baptist Men mission activities.

Lopez Explanation

As an aside, messengers heard an explanation of the circumstances that resulted in their nominating committee chairman coming from a church that had made no contribution to missions through the Cooperative Program during the past year. The situation had caused quite an uproar when called to messengers' attention Tuesday afternoon.

According to the explanation, Roland Lopez had only recently accepted the pastorate of the congregation, which had

acceptable company willing to bid on the package, he noted.

Messengers also heard reports from the American Bible Society, the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists, the Baptist World Alliance, Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, and the SBC Public Affairs Committee before Jay Strack, an evangelist from Dallas, Texas, delivered the meeting's final sermon.

Fred Allen, church relations director for the American Bible Society, expressed his organization's deep appreciation for the contribution Southern Baptists make toward worldwide Scripture distribution.

The Southern Baptist Convention gave \$297,989 to the American Bible Society in 1989. That represented 13.2 percent of the organization's \$2.26 million 1989 income, which was 32 percent greater than the previous year.

The American Bible Society is affiliated with the United Bible Societies, which maintains a program of Scripture translation, production, and distribution in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. In 1989 Bible societies throughout the world distributed 666.7 million Scripture portions in 1,928 languages.

Allen Smith, executive director of the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists, told messengers Canada's new Baptist seminary graduated its first students last month. He said each preacher in the class had been called to serve a congregation before graduation.

Canadian Southern Baptists also will appoint their first foreign missionary couple this year, Smith said. The couple will serve

as agricultural missionaries in western Nigeria.

Archie Goldie of the Baptist World Alliance informed the assembly that more than 1 million people were baptized into Baptist churches last year. Currently the BWA consists of 144 members unions and conventions that represent 136,154 congregations worldwide. As of December 1989, those churches reported 35.9 million members.

Messengers also heard the president of the Korean Baptist Convention invite them to attend the 16th Baptist World Congress Aug. 14-19 in Seoul.

Dellanna W. O'Brien brought her first report as executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC. She succeeded Carolyn Weatherford on Sept. 1, 1989, after Weatherford retired to marry James Joseph Crumpler, a pastor from Cincinnati, Ohio. O'Brien is the sixth executive director of Woman's Missionary Union.

O'Brien said Baptist women must renew their efforts to increase mission organization enrollments for the sake of the worldwide missionary enterprise. She said that will require exposing mistaken stereotypes about WMU, such as "WMU is only for older women" or "WMU only meets on Tuesday morning at 10 a.m."

In fact, half of WMU members are young women, O'Brien said, and a great many innovative approaches to WMU are being used. Women must do a better job of telling the WMU story, she urged.

However, Monte Clendenning of Southwestern Seminary said during the WMU annual convention Monday afternoon that she sees two danger signs that could stymie Bold Mission Thrust.

Clendenning said 88 percent of the convention's reported 14.9 million members are not enrolled in any missions education organization. Furthermore, Southern Baptists have struggled or failed to reach their mission offering goals for several years in a row, she observed.

Consequently, WMU must go "back to the basics" by concentrating on missions education, mission action, and mission support, she said.

Public Affairs Committee Chairman Albert Lee Smith warned messengers that Christians in America no longer have religious liberty. What the United States has, he said, is merely religious toleration, which leads eventually to religious persecu-

tion. America needs separation of state from church, he said.

But he also warned of the danger of individual Christians separating themselves from the state. Quoting Edmund Burke, Smith said: "All that is needed for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." If Southern Baptists wish to retain their religious liberties for their children, "we must express ourselves on religious liberty issues and wake up the sleeping Southern Baptist giant to educate and motivate people to address critical legislative and administrative issues," he said.

Victor Walsh, a layman from McComb, Miss., led in a moment of prayer before Jay Strack took the pulpit.

Strack expounded on the psalmist's plaintive cry: "No one cares for my soul." He said the most serious issue before Southern Baptists is the size of their hearts.

"Millions of people are trapped and feel no one cares about them," he declared. "They go to bed weeping while we go to bed indifferent and dry-eyed."

He speculated that some Southern Baptists have forgotten the consequences of a lost soul. When Jesus said "No man comes to the Father but by me," he literally meant "no man," Strack said. "Perhaps we have gotten over the doctrine of hell," he added.

Some might also need to be reminded of the Great Commission, Strack said. "We have forgotten how to spell 'go.' If we spent as much time visiting and telling others about Jesus as we spend on other church activities, our churches would be filled to overflowing," he chided.

Strack called on messengers to ask themselves how many more nights they would go to bed dry-eyed while so many cry themselves to sleep because no one cares for their souls. He challenged messengers to return to their homes determined to say, "I care because Jesus cares."

After a benedictory prayer by Steve Hensley of Asheville, N.C., President Vines gave the annual meeting to a close at 12:43 p.m., and John McKay led the congregation in singing God Bless America.

The total unaudited registration for the New Orleans convention was 38,478. The 1991 annual meeting will convene June 4-6 in Atlanta, Ga.

Uth Replaces McCarty at Siloam

David Uth, pastor at Camden First Church, will be the youth pastor at Arkansas Baptist Assembly July 2-6. Uth replaces H.D. McCarty of Fayetteville University Church, who had a scheduling conflict.

Uth is an Arkansas native and a graduate of Southwestern Seminary.

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I need to speak plainly and forcefully at this point. We have had a large church and a large association to seek insurance elsewhere because there was a cheaper premium with another company. The new company carried them a year or two and then dropped them without any appeal on the part of the church or association. All of these will have to prove insurable with a waiting period for preexisting conditions if the Annuity Board carrier will cover them at all. Some will have lost coverage indefinitely. In today's market, the most risky economic condition a family can know is to be without adequate medical insurance coverage.

Churches need to protect themselves by providing medical insurance coverage for their pastors and staff. Last year 99 claims covered by our insurance cost the company over \$50,000 each. Five were liver transplants. They paid almost \$6 million in medical benefits for only 32 people. What if you had been the patient whose costs over the last few years had been \$823,209 or \$753,000? Neither you, your relatives nor your church could have covered this. Our insurance did. Churches should see to this protection rather than give an amount to the pastor or staff person to do as they please. Most have such pressing day to day needs that they will not get coverage or buy inadequate coverage. This is not good for the church nor the employees.

Premiums collected last year for medical insurance was \$56.1 million. The insurance company (Aetna) paid out \$64.2 million. It should be the goal of every church to help their pastor and staff to have medical insurance coverage.

July 1, the Annuity Board will change from Aetna to Prudential for our coverage. No benefit changes will occur.

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

RANDALL O'BRIEN

A Pastor's Perspective



Goodness or Germs

Picture this scenario: A church member whom you trust as a friend spreads harmful accusations about you in the church. Rather than explode and respond with ill will, you pray for that person and speak lovingly of his or her good attributes. Then you are "rewarded" with increased protection from the next germ that comes your way.

Poppycock? Don't be so sure. Long ago, Jesus taught all who would listen of the mysterious correlation between spiritual and physical wellness. "Hate or Health... choose," he all but said. "Love and Live!" Jesus encouraged.

Now comes the result of recent scientific studies on the subject. Conclusion? The brain is more involved in physical health than ever before realized. And, a caring brain promotes good health!

In their book, *The Healing Brain*, Drs. Robert Ornstein and David Sobel offer laboratory proof of the connection between goodness and wellness. For instance, David McClelland, Ph.D. at Harvard, studied the effects the good deeds of Mother Teresa had upon students,

who simply watched films of her in action with the poor. The result? Elevated levels of immunoglobulin A (germ fighting substance) in the students' saliva.

On the other hand, studies revealed low levels of immunoglobulin A in persons who need to dominate or control others.

"Love your enemies, do good to those that hate you... Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you," Jesus said. "For the measure you give will be the measure you get back" (Lk. 6:27, 31,38).

Certainly bad things do happen to good people, as the Book of Job and experience teach us. "Jesus or germs," may be carrying it too far. Nevertheless, it seems both science and Scripture are trying to whisper to us humanoids a new old truth:

Something inherent in the human make-up needs to be good.

Randall O'Brien is pastor of Calvary Church in Little Rock.



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JOHN FINN

The Lottery: A Moral Issue

The recent efforts by supporters of state lottery gambling has given rise to personal attacks on any who would reflect the proposal on moral grounds. Lottery supporters have denounced those who have a value system based on biblical principles as "hypocrites" and "do gooders."

A sensible person would not place child abuse, spouse abuse, drug addiction, aging, ecology, prejudice, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, teen pregnancy and poverty outside the witness of the church. Likewise, the church must address the gambling issue.

Those of us who base our opposition on moral grounds must not be apologetic or hesitant to state our convictions. Neither should we beat a hasty retreat before any person who states, "you can't legislate morals or attempt to force others to adopt your value system." This is a smoke screen designed to force their value system upon us.

It is not written in the Bible. "Thou shalt not gamble." However, scriptural principles can be cited as the basis to our opposition to legalized gambling.

First, the Biblical principle of work affords no room for the practice of gambling. The Scriptures endorse the work ethic (Ex. 20:9; Ep.4:28; 2 Th. 3:10-12). Gambling erodes the work ethic.

We are the "salt of the earth." Our influence is to be exerted in a positive and aggressive manner. It is not to be hoarded or hidden. We are to help build a society in which the young and the weak, poverty stricken, the aging and the needy are protected. Gambling does not contribute to the common good. It undermines values, mocks work, finances crimes, contributes to corruption, robs children, enslaves addicts and subverts government. Gambling is a parasite thriving on the earnings of others.

Second, the Bible indicates specific uses of money which are in accord with the intentions of God. We may use our money to provide basic needs (2 Th. 3:10), support one's family (1 Ti. 5:8), contribute to the Lord (1 Co. 16:1-3). Meet human needs (Eph. 4:28, 2 Co. 9:6-15), give to the poor (Jn. 13:29) and pay taxes (Mt. 22:21; Ro. 13:7).

Third, a central moral imperative is love—love of God and love of neighbor (Mt. 22:37-40; Mk. 12:28-34). Who is our neighbor? The answer is set forth in Luke 10:30-37. Love demands that we seek the welfare and interest of others over self-interest which exploits and manipulates others. Gambling is the exploitation of the many by the few.

It is time for the church to express our moral convictions. Our voices must be heard as we refuse to sign petitions that would increase gambling opportunities. We must speak at the ballot boxes on election day and our voices must ring out in committee rooms and the halls of government.

John Finn is executive director of the Christian Civic Foundation.

WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

Hymns Baptists Sing



Send Me, O Lord

"Send Me, O Lord, Send Me"

In October of 1955, two newly appointed missionaries walked the streets of Surabaya, Java. The atmosphere of this land, with its sights and sounds, was unlike anything they had ever known.

Ross and Doris Coggins were from Texas. A graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Seminary, Ross had served in the Student Department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and as student director at North Texas State University.

The call to missions had been vivid and now it was reality. The strangeness of the language made communication difficult. On the first Sunday morning in this new land, the Coggins attended worship at the Immanuel Baptist Church of Surabaya.

Though they did not understand the words, the warmth of the hymn singing was evident. The melody of one of the unfamiliar hymns lingered in Ross's mind, and to this tune he wrote three new stanzas, affirming his own commitment to the will of God.

First used in Texas student meetings in the summer of 1956, the hymn became the theme song to the World Mission Conference for students in Nashville in December of that year. At the Baptist Youth World Congress in Toronto in the summer of 1958, it was sung at the close of every session.

Across the years "Send Me, O Lord, Send Me" has been sung in our churches, as we borrow these words written in a foreign land that remind us of our commitment to be witnesses.

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

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MILLIE GILL

People

Robert Russ Christian began serving June 17 as pastor of Riverside Church in Maumelle, coming there from Metairie, La. A native of Louisiana, he is a graduate of Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, La., and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. For the past three years, he has served as assistant pastor for evangelism in the First Church of New Orleans. Christian is married to the former Debra Tipton of Shreveport, La., a graduate of Louisiana Tech University.



Christian

Tim Hight has resigned as pastor of First Church in Lepanto to serve as pastor of First Church in Newport.

Anita Murdock, a senior at Ouachita Baptist Church, is serving as summer youth minister at First Church in Pangburn.

Bob Johnson has joined the staff of Harlan Park Church in Conway as minister of music and youth, going there from First Church in Atkins.

Kerry Sutton, a senior at Baylor University, is serving Temple Church in Searcy as summer youth director.

Randy Smith, chairman of the psychology department at Ouachita Baptist University, has been elected president of the Southwestern Psychological Association, a nine state regional association of the American Psychological Association.

Ronnie W. Floyd, pastor of First Church in Springdale, recently was awarded an honorary doctorate of sacred theology by Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo. The presentation was made at the university's commencement service for which Floyd was speaker.

J.W. Koonce is serving as pastor of Blaney Hill Church in Conway.

Rusty Havener has joined the staff of Beech Street First Church in Texarkana as summer intern in the television ministry. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University, majoring in television communications.

Brian Miller is serving as summer youth worker for First Church in Augusta. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

Buddy Fisher is serving as pastor of Harmony Church in Perryville, going there from Bluffton Church.

Wilbur Herring of Jonesboro began serving June 17 as interim pastor of First Church in Lepanto. He is pastor emeritus of Central Church in Jonesboro.

Barbara Long recently celebrated 20 years of service on the pastoral staff of Second Church in Little Rock when the church held a surprise appreciation service for her.

Dan Perryman has joined the staff of First Church in Springdale as director of communications. A graduate of John Brown University, he has served in the church for the past year as a volunteer coordinator in technical areas.

Al Sparkman, retired pastor, has completed his service as interim pastor of Faith Church in Sandusky, Okla. He resides at 5308 Pleasant Ridge Road, Rogers, AR 72756; telephone 501-925-2945.

Carol Moody, a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, is serving as summer youth minister at Calvary Church in Little Rock.

Charles D. Elrod II has resigned as minister of youth at Second Church in Hot Springs.

Ric Hunt recently observed one year of service as minister of music at Central Church in Jonesboro. Melva Cooper has completed eight years of service at pastor's secretary and Eric Isbill has completed six years of service as maintenance supervisor.

Donoso Escobar, former Spanish pastor at Lakeshore Drive Church in Little Rock, has been promoted from assistant professor to associate professor of social work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Barry Patrick Smith will begin serving July 1 as pastor of First Church in Magnet Cove. A native of Springdale, he is a recent graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Ken Roy recently observed his fifth year of service at minister of music and associate pastor for Ozark First Church.

Shelley Gauntt, a student at Ouachita Baptist University, is serving as summer youth worker at First Church in Waldron.

Johnny Thomas of Heavener, Okla., is serving as pastor of Hon Church, Waldron.

Gene Gullick is serving as pastor of Ione Church, Booneville.

Rick Melick is serving as summer youth director for First Church in Flippin. Melick and his wife, Joy, are students at Ouachita Baptist University.

Blake Krumalis has resigned as assistant pastor in charge of music and youth at First Church in Helena to move to Orlando, Fla.

Ron Lace is serving as pastor of Second Church in Forrester City.

Roger Robbins is serving as pastor of Vann Dale Church, coming there from Griffithville Church.

James Tallant is serving as interim pastor and Woodie Sanders is serving as interim associate pastor and youth director at Union Avenue Church in Wynne.

Andy Pettigrew, a student at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, is serving as interim pastor at Widener Church.

Briefly

Valley View Church at Harrisburg recently celebrated homecoming with regular morning services, followed by a potluck luncheon and afternoon musical program. Jimmie Garner, director of missions for Trinity Association, was speaker.

Marianna First Church honored Pastor Michael Montalbano and his family June 3, in recognition of his first year of service.

Van Buren First Church will celebrate 105 years of service with homecoming June 24. Activities will begin with the morning worship hour, followed by a potluck dinner and a 1:45 p.m. worship service. Andrew Hall will be speaker.

North Arkansas Association will conduct its fifth annual children's daycamp Saturday, June 30, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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The camp will be at the fairgrounds in Harrison for children grades one through six. Dean Smith, pastor of Alpena Church, will be camp pastor. Harold Gateley, director of missions for Washington-Madison Association and a former missionary to Korea, will be speaker. Other program guests will include Dick and Connie Sager of Grandview Church, and Jackie Scott, ventriloquist from Batavia Church. Delores Atchison is camp director and her husband, L.B. Atchison, is director of missions.

Russellville Second Church celebrated the four-year early payment of a \$290,000 indebtedness on its sanctuary and education building June 3. Pastor David McLemore led the noteburning service which was held in the evening service.

Rogers First Church youth left June 11 for a trip to Florida retreat led by Bill Brown. Enroute they presented musical programs both in Florida and Mississippi.

Conway First Church youth returned June 17 from a mission trip to Wichita, Kans.

Central Church in Magnolia will dedicate its new educational/activities building June 24 with activities, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and concluding a 6 p.m. Bud Fray from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, a former interim pastor, will be speaker.

Bloomer Church at Charleston will hold its 17th annual God and Country Service July 1 plus dedicate a new debt free education building. Ferrell Morgan, director of missions for Concord Association, will be speaker for the patriotic service and James Walker of Muncie, Ind., will be dedication speaker.

Hardy First Church honored Juanita Rees May 27 in recognition of 19 years of service as church treasurer. She was presented with a gift.

East Side Church in Osceola celebrated its annual homecoming June 3. The church, organized in 1969 with 42 charter members, today has a membership of 393. Homecoming activities included Sunday School, morning worship, a potluck noon meal, an afternoon musical program, featuring the Starkley Family. Pastor J. Wayne Moore was speaker.

Waldron First Church launched a summer Kid's Morning June 12 which will meet each Tuesday morning throughout the summer. A God and Country Celebration has been planned for July 4, beginning at 6 p.m. on the church grounds. Nelson Wilhelm is pastor.

Henderson BSU Reunion

A reunion for Henderson Baptist Student Union members is being planned for Saturday, July 7, at the BSU building in Arkadelphia. The reunion will be for all members who were involved in the BSU during the years Nancy Philley Russ was director (1962-1968).

Registration will be at the Baptist Student Center on Saturday afternoon from 2-5 p.m. Refreshments, informal socializing and a tour of the campus will be held in conjunction with the afternoon activities. A dinner is being planned for Saturday night at the Holiday Inn on Interstate 30 and Highway 7.

Former students and teachers who were involved in the BSU during those years may contact Patt (Wasson) McCain for more information regarding registration. Contact her at 110 Northgate Circle, Hot Springs, AR 71913; telephone 501-767-8339.

Midwestern Graduates

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—Seven persons with ties to Arkansas were among 113 individuals receiving degrees during May 26 commencement services at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Receiving the master of divinity degree were:

Danny P. Carroll, son of Lois Carroll of Harrisburg.

Wesley J. Hodges, son of James and Beatrice Hodges of Harrison.

Steven P. Unger, son of Mack and Lewa Unger of Springdale.

Receiving the master of divinity-correlated degree were:

John E. Savage, son of E. Fred and Nellie May Savage of Walnut Ridge. He was a bivocational pastor in Arkansas for many years and served on the administrative staff at Ouachita Baptist University.

Steve D. Sullivan, son of Joe and Dot Sullivan of Little Rock. Sullivan was one of two Midwestern graduates to receive the Broadman Award, an award that is presented annually by the Broadman Press to the graduate who achieved the highest grade point average.

Receiving the doctor of ministry degree were:

Randy B. Shipman, son of Joyce Still of Yellville and Burl Shipman of Florida.

Stanley W. Wilson, son James and Janice Wilson of Beebe. He currently serves as a chaplain at the Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock.



Otter Creek First Baptist Church in Little Rock sponsored a Mother-Daughter Tea for the congregation's Acteens on Sunday, June 3. The program included a solo by Lisa Selby and testimonies from the Acteens group members. Susan Townsend is Acteens director, and Barbara Jolliff is Baptist Women president. Reed Bethel is pastor.

Classifieds

Position Available—Crow Mountain Baptist Church (Mission of Second Baptist Church of Russellville) is in need of a pastor/bi-vocational. Anyone interested in a New Church Start please send resume to P.O. Box 782; Russellville 72801 or call 967-4085. 7/5

Part-time Youth—Second Baptist Church of Russellville, Arkansas is seeking a part-time Minister of Youth. Please apply by sending resume to P.O. Box 782; Russellville 72801 or call 967-4085. 7/5

For Sale—Baldwin piano. Call 224-5857. 8/21

Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABN office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. A check or money order in the proper amount, figured at 50 cents per word, must be included. Multiple insertions of the same ad must be paid for in advance. The ABN reserves the right to reject any ad because of unsuitable subject matter. Classified ads will be inserted on a space-available basis. No endorsement by the ABN is implied.

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LESSONS FOR LIVING

Lesson
Date: July 1

Convention Uniform

Benefits of Wisdom

by Harrison Johns, retired pastor, Harrisburg

Basic passage: Proverbs 4:1-13

Focal passage: Proverbs 4:8

Central truth: The stated benefits of wisdom is certainly a powerful incentive to "get wisdom" (v. 7).

The results of applied "instruction" is related to the value of that instruction. If instruction is in agreement with the teachings of God's Word, the benefits will be good.

God has a good plan for communicating wisdom. A father has the God-given responsibility to give instruction to his children (v. 1; Dt. 6:7; Ep. 6:4). Children likewise have a responsibility to give attention and know understanding. We need to take care that it is good (godly) doctrine (v. 2). God's teachings are to be passed on from one generation to another (vv. 3, 4).

Favorable response to godly instruction is life (vv. 4, 13) "and the years of thy life shall be many" (v. 10). This speaks both to the quality of life and the quantity of life as a result of wisdom.

Godly wisdom put into action "shall preserve thee" and "shall keep thee" (v. 6). The lifestyle of godliness contributes to good health of spirit, soul and body. Thus good health, generally, is a result of wisdom. Good health tends toward long life.

Exalt wisdom, "and she shall promote thee; and shall bring thee to honor" (v. 8). "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk. 2:52). These statements parallel. Note in Luke the reference "with God and man." This may also be understood in the proverb. God can so use wisdom in the life of the one accepting the wisdom God offers. The Holy Spirit can cause us to hunger and thirst after wisdom. He can also inspire and instruct us to seek wisdom from God; the source of wisdom. The Holy Spirit can guide us in the exercise of that wisdom to the glory and praise of God. God and wisdom go together.

The benefits of wisdom listed in this passage are not exhaustive. One fellow said, "God is not only blessing me in the matter about which I am praying and trusting him. He is blessing me in every part of my life." So it is: God is interested in the whole person and blesses every part of our life as we give ourselves to him.

This lesson treatment is based on the International Bible Lesson for Christiana Teaching, Uniform Series. Copyright International Council of Education. Used by permission.

Life and Work

Snobbery in the Church

by Joe Jones, Markham Street Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: James 2:1-13

Focal passage: James 2:1

Central truth: We must not esteem one person above another.

The world system has always placed a distinction between people. The most common distinctions in our society are economic, social, and race or nationality. Even children become aware of this at an early age. Too often this worldly thinking crosses over into our churches with ungodly results.

Our focal passage states plainly that we are not to hold one person in higher esteem than another person. That is, we are not to profess faith in Jesus and at the same time be a spiritual snob. There should be a uniqueness among Christian fellowship that has no equal in the secular world. At the time that James was writing this epistle, the world was very sharply divided. There were the Jews and Gentiles; the free men and slaves; and Roman citizens who had more liberty and protection by law than did others. The early church broke down these barriers. Although, in our country we do not have slaves and we are all protected equally by law, we still are dealing with social, economic, and race distinctions.

Churches can make an impact in our world by breaking down these barriers. As individuals, we need to dare to step out of the comfort of our little groups and reach out to others. This involves being with them at our church fellowships and spending time talking to them and building a relationship with them. If we, as Christians, will learn to do this, then the barriers will break down and we will be richer in our lives because of it. Churches are also guilty of this sin. I do not think that Paul would go around today saying, "Let's build a white collar church here and a blue collar church there or a white church here and a black church there." Yet, we sometimes get together in our churches and "target" certain groups of people for our church. How about the committee and deacon selection process. Has it turned into a popularity contest?

If one comes among us and he is a Christian, we are to treat him as as brother in Christ, not discerning his social, economic, or any other distinction.

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Bible Book

God's Devoted Helper

by James C. Walker, Archview Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Ruth 1:1-22

Focal passage: Ruth 1:1-22

Central truth: Through Ruth's devotion, God provided help for Naomi's need.

In those days in the history of Israel when men did what was right in their own eyes, God's judgment brought famine to the land. While most of the population seems to have elected to remain in their place, Elimelech of Bethlehem in Judah decided to take his family to the pagan land of Moab.

It was there, among these worshippers of Molech who burned their children as sacrifices, that Elimelech and his sons died.

With the death of her last son, Naomi was left to the mercy of the world. And an aging Jewess would find little mercy among the Moabites. It was only natural therefore for her to make the decision to return to her homeland.

Under the customs and mores of the age, the normal thing for Naomi's widowed daughters-in-law to do would be to return to their own families. Convinced by the logic of her mother-in-law, Oprah did just that.

In the case of Ruth however we see a different and wonderful thing. First, there is her steadfastness in relation to Naomi. Obviously the older woman had made an impression of her daughter-in-law that went far beyond the normal. The suggestion that she "go home" was met with the firm implication that her "home" was with Naomi. Second, it is apparent from her statement the Ruth had already decided to cast her eternal lot with the god whom she had met through her mother-in-law.

The statement of Ruth's devotion and commitment found in verses 16-17 is used so often in connection with modern marriage ceremonies that here is a danger that we loose sight of the fact that this was not the statement of a young bride to her husband in a flower strewn scene of great joy and gladness but of a young widow to her aging, widowed mother-in-law on a dusty road side in abject poverty.

It is not surprising that God would honor such faith and commitment by allowing Ruth the privilege of being part of the line through which his Son would be brought into the world.

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Convention Uniform

Wisdom is of God

by Harrison Johns, retired pastor, Harrisburg

Basic passage: Proverbs 8:22-36

Focal passage: Proverbs 8:35

Central truth: Wisdom is demonstrated in all the activity of God.

There are at least two major interpretations of this passage of scripture. One is that wisdom is here personified as an attribute of God. The other interpretation is the personal pronouns foreshadow Christ. Paul may offer a resolution in 1 Corinthians 1:24 where he states Christ is "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Thus, the two interpretations may be more complementary than conflicting. Wisdom is of God either way.

The sovereign wisdom of God is identified in the beginning before creation (vv. 22-30). Wisdom was daily God's delight (v. 30). Wisdom was always rejoicing before God (v. 30).

As believers and followers of God we do well to daily delight in God's wisdom exercised by us through faith.

The doctrines of God as holy, pre-existing before creation, and as Creator may be clearly seen in this passage. Likewise this passage leaves no doubt as to the creation being the work of God. God, in wisdom, caused it to happen.

One of the ways in which man is created in the image of God is man's God-given ability to combine the creations of God. God created from nothing. The works of man begin with what God created. Wisdom from God enables man to do marvelous things. People of faith give God the glory for what he enables men to do. People are truly blessed and are a genuine blessing who hear the wise instructions of God (vv. 32-34). To find wisdom is to find life and favor with the Lord (v. 35), understanding that wisdom is received and exercised to the glory of God.

The folly and tragedy of living independently of wisdom from God is declared (v. 36). Soul-sickness and death are companions with the absence of wisdom from God. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (Ja. 1:5). Believers have a valuable treasure in having access to wisdom from God. It is to be received with thanksgiving and shared liberally in life and service.

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Life and Work

A Manifestation of Faith

by Joe Jones, Markham Street Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: James 2:14-26

Focal passage: James 2:26

Central truth: Our faith will be manifested by good works.

It has been said that there is a contradiction between Paul and James concerning salvation. They say that Paul in Ephesians 2:8 states we are saved by grace apart from works—while James in James 2:17 states that we need both works and faith for salvation. However, the above Scriptures taken alone do not fully explain Paul or James' statement in the matter. If we keep these scriptures in the context of the scriptures surrounding them, we will find both men say the same thing (read Ep. 2:10). Paul and James are stating that works are evidence of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We, as Baptists, have preached hard that salvation is by grace alone and has nothing to do with works. As a result, I fear we have many on our church rolls who claim Jesus only for "fire insurance" to keep them out of hell. James is making it clear that true faith in Jesus is going to be manifested by works. Yes, we are saved by faith in Jesus, but works will follow as a result of our faith.

Suppose you were to go to the airport and board a plane for a trip to New York. As you sit down in your seat, the pilot comes over the PA system and announces that the plane was checked out and was determined to be in good shape to fly. However, he then proceeds to say that although the plane is safe, he's not going to fly it! I don't think I would believe the pilot had faith in his aircraft, would you? Likewise, if a man tells me he has faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior, yet there is no evidence of that faith in his life, I don't believe he has the same kind of faith of which Paul and James spoke.

James gives us several examples of works wrought by faith. One example in verses 15 and 16 tells us if we fail to meet the needs of our brethren when it is in our power to help, but instead just give lip service, then our faith is of no profit to anyone. We need to be asking ourselves this question: Is our faith in Christ producing good works of his glory? "For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Ep. 2:10).

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Bible Book

God's Abundant Help

by James C. Walker, Archview Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Ruth 1-23

Focal passage: Ruth 1:23

Central truth: God helps those who trust and obey him.

The attitude of Ruth is a perfect example of one who, doing what she could from a humble and willing heart, received God's abundant help. It is significant that she did not sit in idleness. Rather she took the initiative to go out into the fields to do what she could to feed herself and her aging mother-in-law. This servant attitude is all too rare in many today who, rather than go out and glean their own grain, seem to expect God to drop the fresh baked bread into their laps as they sit comfortably in the shade.

On the other hand, Naomi is an example of divine help for the helpless. Though her situation is not specifically stated, it seems that she had come to the point at which she could do little to help herself. God's help comes to her, therefore, without effort on her part.

The provision these two women receive is a beautiful picture of two great forces in action. One is the clear and simple movement of God in the lives of his people. Two women alone, cast upon the rocky shore of poverty, are cared for by God's providence through God's man, Boaz. On this basis, let us be reminded that God does care about his people.

Another great force for good at work in this passage is that of family commitment. Ruth is the first and most obvious example in her willingness to attempt to provide for herself and Naomi.

As we saw in last week's lesson, Ruth had chosen, against custom, to remain with her mother-in-law. Now she extends herself to do what she can to care for her. Such commitment always brings good.

However, positive family influence does not end here. The man Boaz exceeds what would have been thought strictly necessary by showing favor to Ruth. It appears in the beginning his reason for doing so was based on what he had heard of Ruth, her care for Naomi, and her conversion to faith in God. He also is willing to come to their aid because he is their kinsman.

God's help—to those who help themselves? Oh yes! But also to all in need who receive his aid in humility.

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Clearing the Air

Parks Speaks Frankly to FMB Trustees

by Robert O'Brien

Foreign Missions Board

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—An air-clearing address by Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks ended in prayer rather than confrontation during a meeting of the board's trustees June 9 in New Orleans.

Trustee chairman William Hancock of Louisville, Ky., called staff and trustees to prayer after Parks spoke frankly about ill will he felt had arisen among some trustees following an open letter he wrote May 15 to Southern Baptists.

The letter urged Baptists to rise above their continuing controversy or risk losing opportunities to reach 3.5 billion people for Christ worldwide. It said the controversy was eroding missionary support and appointments, taking the focus off missions and creating an image of Southern Baptists as a people of controversy rather than evangelism and missions.

Trustees, both openly and behind the scenes, had questioned the conclusions and timing of Parks' letter, written about a month before the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention June 12-14 in the Louisiana Superdome.

Paul Sanders, pastor of Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock and one of Arkansas' trustees on the Foreign Mission Board, said, "I feel very positive about the work of the FMB. God is doing many great things around the world. Among these are the placing of the greatest number of missionaries on the field in the history of the SBC; the greatest number of countries being served; Cooperative Program gifts are up which gives additional support to foreign missions, and we have reached our goal for the year 2000 of volunteer missionaries serving around the world. While these things may not be all we want them to be, they are certainly extremely positive things that Southern Baptists are doing together."

In his address, Parks defended the statements he had made in his letter.

But he sought to give trustees insights into his lifelong commitment to the Bible and missions, clear up misunderstandings, and remove animosity.

Before trustees and staff prayed in groups all over the room for about 10 minutes, Hancock urged all who held animosity toward another to reconcile it "before this day is done."

Asked later if Parks' address and the prayer session ended rumored trustee action on Parks' letter, Hancock said, "As far

as I'm concerned, it's history. I've been praying the Lord would give us the wisdom to bring a positive response rather than reaction."

Parks' address directly responded to views expressed by some trustees that his letter was political, that it seemed to blame them for the crisis in missions, and that it seemed to indicate he placed missions ahead of biblical teaching and correct doctrine.

He assured trustees he did not say and did not mean that the trustee board itself was to blame for the problems. "That has never been in my heart, and I want you to accept that and believe that," he said.

As for politics, Parks said: "If I'd wanted to be political I would have done a much better job than that. I was not trying to be political. I was trying to say to Southern Baptists that missions, in my estimation, is hurting. And every time we get together and irresponsibly tear at each other until our image is again negative to the world, this hurts our witness again. And somehow, some way, Southern Baptists, let's quit doing that. That's what I'm trying to say."

Parks told trustees of his personal spiritual development, noting: "I'm putting my heart out here and letting you look at it."

He outlined his call to missions and said it has been rooted in Scripture since he was 12 years old. Everything the Foreign Mission Board does, he said, "is biblically based." The board's main purpose "is evangelism that results in churches" and it seeks missionaries committed to the Bible and evangelism, he said.

"I am as aware and committed as anyone among Southern Baptists to the fact that you cannot have strong evangelism and missions without sound biblical doctrine," he said. "Make no mistake about that. That's who I am."

But he warned that Southern Baptists must maintain both strong biblical belief and the cooperative missions approach which was the reason for the formation of the SBC in 1845.

"I'm coming today to say solid biblical belief and strong commitment to missions are both essential if we are going to continue to be who we have been," Parks said. "We cannot have only one. We must have both."

Parks noted that some trustees felt "I was saying that everything that is wrong in the world and in foreign missions is because of the controversy. That's not so at all. I

did say, and I believe very, very deeply that the controversy is hurting missions. I think it's hurting a lot of other things.

"I say that as a description of what I see happening, rather than as a judgment on what I see happening," Parks continued.

"Somehow, some way, we must deal with our differences in a Christian way that will not say to the world these who are telling us that God loves us don't even love each other."

At a dinner honoring trustees completing service, Parks and C. Mark Corts, immediate past trustee chairman, joined arms in a gesture of friendship. Corts, who had responded to Parks' open letter to Southern Baptists with one of his own, said he wanted to "reaffirm to all of you my love and appreciation for Keith Parks."

In a letter responding to Parks, Corts said: "I join with Dr. Parks in calling for an urgent recommitment from all Baptists to share Christ with the whole world. While I deeply respect him and his sacrificial commitment to world missions, I question both the timing and conclusions of his letter, though certainly not his motives. No doubt, the SBC controversy has taken some focus off missions, but it may be unfair for the controversy to be the scapegoat for our failure.

"If major supporters of cooperative missions," Corts continued, "are no longer supporting missions because they feel excluded, their very withdrawal proves they may not actually be supporters of cooperative missions. I appeal to them to take an inclusive approach to missions and continue support for missions in spite of the temporary controversy rather than because of it. In the past when many conservatives felt systematically excluded, they were exhorted by many to continue their support for missions in spite of their concerns. If it was appropriate then, cooperative support for missions is appropriate now."

Parks, who presented the Winston-Salem, N.C., pastor with a plaque for 10 years of service on the board, praised Corts for his cooperative spirit and hard work on behalf of missions.

Both Parks and Corts appeared to be reassuring trustees and others there was nothing personal about differences expressed in the two open letters. Corts' letter questioned some of Parks' conclusions and the timing of his letter.

In farewell comments, Corts urged both trustees and staff to overcome suspicion by learning to "put yourself in other people's shoes," focus on the priority of winning the world to Christ, and share openly their feelings and convictions.

Ultimately, Corts said, "when you've done all you can do, you just have to put it in God's hands."

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NEW ORLEANS

FMB OKs Czechoslovakia

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—Responding to new opportunities in Eastern Europe, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board voted June 9 to establish fraternal relationships with Soviet Baptists and authorized opening of work in Czechoslovakia.

The board, meeting on the Tulane University campus just before the annual Southern Baptist Convention, approved the transfer of George and Veda Rae Lozuk from South America to become fraternal representatives to the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in Moscow. The Lozuks, along with six couples being sought to work in Czechoslovakia, are among 88 new, full-time workers the board is seeking to reinforce its present force of 10 now assigned to Eastern Europe ministries.

Harriet Gilbert of St. Simons Island, Ga., vice chairman of the board's Europe, Middle East and North Africa committee, said the vote was especially meaningful to her because her own son-in-law, Petr Macek, a Czech, was pastor of a Czech Baptist church for 17 years.

In other actions the trustees voted to take about \$800,000 from current cash on hand to make up the shortfall in the 1989 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, which closed May 31 at \$80,197,870.78. The full \$81 million goal had been budgeted, said Carl Johnson, vice president for finance, and transfer of the funds will enable the board to fund all overseas capital projects set up under the budget.

The board also transferred \$3 million into a global fund from which missionary housing and strategic capital projects will be funded worldwide. Johnson said the money was part of that originally budgeted for new missionaries. It became available because fewer missionaries have been appointed than anticipated when the budget was adopted.

The board's strategy committee adopted a statement affirming the importance of missionary wives "in their biblical role of Christian homemakers and in their God-called responsibilities as missionaries."

The statement, approved in committee but reported to the full board, said the balance can be seen clearly in the New Testament, citing 1 Timothy 5:14, Titus 2:5, Acts 2:17-18 and Galatians 3:26-29.

"In the determination of missionary deployment," the statement said, "the Foreign Mission Board has stated, 'Adequate care and attention for children is of primary spiritual importance.' This statement will be given full weight in assisting all missionary parents, and especially mothers, in defining the use of their time."

As the board has sought to concentrate more of its missionary energies directly toward evangelism and starting of churches, some missionary wives have felt torn between the needs of their family and their desire to be more involved with their husbands in starting of new churches.

Another aspect of the role of women on the mission field was addressed in a report by Harlan Spurgeon, vice president for mission personnel. Citing the significant evangelism contributions made through the board's history by such women as Josephine Ward and Bertha Smith, Spurgeon said "the issue of women's ordination has built walls in human hearts that are harmful to Christ's mission.

"The Foreign Mission Board has repeatedly stated that ordination is not an issue in the appointment of missionaries," he said. "Yet many consecrated women do not believe that they have a place in the world mission enterprise because of the garbled messages they have heard."

He concluded: "I urge you to join with me in blowing a trumpet, with no uncertain sound, that Southern Baptists are continuing to send both women and men, married or single, to share the gospel with a lost and dying world."

Lottie Moon Gifts Miss Goal

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptists gave about \$80.2 million to the 1989 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, which pays nearly half the cost of running the denomination's world mission program.

When financial books closed May 31, Southern Baptists had sent \$80,197,870.78 to help finance mission work throughout the world. The amount represents a 1.79 percent increase over 1988 receipts and is the highest total yet for the annual offering, which generally is given in local churches during December.

Even so, the total missed the \$81 million goal. The increase in 1989 over 1988 also failed to keep pace with the 4 to 5 percent inflation rate in the United States and even higher inflation rates in many countries where Southern Baptists missionaries live and work.

The last time the offering total reached or exceeded its goal was in 1981. To reach the 1990 goal of \$86 million, Southern Baptists will need to increase their giving by about 7.2 percent this year.