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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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LET CHRIST'S

New SBC Officers
page 19



June 19, 1975
Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE



I must say it

Charles H. Ashcraft / Executive Secretary

The people who run it

An organization is only as good as the people who run it. Whether it be the army, a hospital, the corner service station, the government, school system, the United Nations, supermarket or the Kingdom of God. The organization cannot rise above the stature of the attendants in charge.

One discourteous service station attendant can drive 30-year customers away by one unfortunate altercation. The image of a great hospital can be damaged by one careless aide who gets the wrong identification bracelet on the right baby. One erring pastor can destroy the witness of a generation in his village by one senseless immoral escapade. The reputation earned over a century of excellence by a noble institution can be marred in a single hour by the wrong people.

Executives, administrators, managers and personnel chiefs are struggling day by day to get the right people to run the business. They are embattled by scores of people who need a job but whose skills and potential for excellence is wanting. Public opinion exerts a great force on employers to hire people on the basis they need a job moreso than a certain enterprise needs them. Fast personnel turnovers in business places does not always admit to warm personal relationships at the bank, the license department, the corner drug store, or the service station.

What does this mean? It means there must be a continuous educational program and an increased effort at public relations, all of which are expensive, time consuming and laborious. Wage scales, self-improvement, learning sessions and prayer meetings are all in order. The dignity of every person, knave or master demands personal concern and attention. The high school kid earning pocket money who puts the wrong oil in your car and forgets the upper ball joint grease fittings still deserves a chance to grow up and to earn a buck doing so. The empty headed, young thing who fouled your whole computer system, is somebody's darling and does not deserve to die so young. The parking attendant who banged in the door of your Mark IV should only have a suspended live sentence. The interior decorator who painted your canary along with your walls does not deserve the salt mines of Siberia forever. Even Jonah whose compass needed adjustment was given a second chance. (Jonah 3:1-2)

The second chance does not solve any problems unless the slothful servant gets the message. The public is almost at the point of violence in response to the untidy services for which they pay tidy money. There is a limit to the patience of the public. They deserve better services. Services will be improved or else the master and servant will occupy the same paupers cell together. Blessed indeed is the person who serves well his fellow man knowing his fellow man may in turn be able to serve him more acceptably. If the business goes bankrupt there is no payroll for employee or employer, all lose.

I must say it!

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Arkansas Baptist

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NO. 25

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Anniversary of Cooperative Program celebrated at convention

The 1975 Southern Baptist Convention was concerned with a host of minor issues. Many of these matters of discussion had been presented in some form at the previous convention.

One of the highlights of the convention was an address by President Jaroy Weber in which he called for greater lay involvement in the spiritual and social problems of the world.

Weber challenged Southern Baptists to have a greater impact on the country. "Never have we been told so much and offered so little," he said. He cited a poll which, he said, questioned the Biblical view of marriage, showed a general distrust of businessmen, reflected little or no confidence in the Presidency and Congress, and indicated at least 63 percent didn't believe what they heard or read through mass media.

Weber expressed concern over a report that 1,000 Baptist preachers are leaving the ministry each year. He said "I call our convention to be understanding, forgiving, redemptive, rather than critical and derogatory. If they (preachers) are to be restored, they must have a helping hand.

"Some agencies of our convention ought to develop a redemptive center, a restoration clinic, and a rehabilitation clinic for those in true repentance. If what we preach about God's forgiveness is true, let us practice it."

The messengers overwhelmingly adopted reports of the Committee of Seven appointed last year to study the possibility of changing our name and to study and evaluate the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. Although far more attention has been given to the name change, the study of the Executive Committee is of much greater importance.

Baltimore Pastor Donald Brown's efforts to get the convention to consider the name "Cooperative Baptist Churches," failed, receiving very little support.

The Committee of Seven requested an additional year to study the Executive Committee. They noted that the Executive Committee "Provided checks and balances to protect the historic principals of Baptist liberty and autonomy."

The proposal to direct the profits of the Sunday School Board to the Cooperative Program rather than to assist in the cooperative education and promotion in the states, was referred to the Sunday School Board for study and to report to the 1976 convention.

Without opposition, the convention sustained the Home Mission Board's new structure of evangelism. The plan makes the director of evangelism a part of the Board's Executive Committee. It also provides for evangelism to have an increased budget. The move should prove advantageous to our over-all work.

Debate arose over the Christian Life Commission

report. Wade Johnson objected to the section of the report which gave information on the activities of the Commission on abortion. Bill Sherman of Tennessee, pointed out that the report contained no recommendation and said that the Christian Life Commission "will continue to point people toward the resources of the Christian faith as the best guide for dealing with abortion." The report was strongly adopted.

Mrs. Richard L. Sappington made a motion authorizing the president to call a meeting of men to present supplemental statements to the "Baptist Faith and Message." The motion requested information and guidance on the distinct role of men and women. After considerable discussion the motion was tabled.

Resolutions were adopted on a wide range of subjects. Reports of the American Bible Society and Christian Citizenship were endorsed by the convention. Another resolution abhorred the emphasis placed on violence and "bad language," on television.

One of the most impressive times of the convention was on Tuesday evening when the 50th Anniversary of the Cooperative Program was celebrated. The program began with a message by Duke McCall, president of Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky. McCall suggested that the convention's beginning was not in Augusta (1845) or Philidelphia, but rather in a baptistry in Calcutta, India, when Luther Rice committed himself to Baptist mission causes.

"Baptists, need to get together to carry out God's intentions. We don't stay together long because we like each other or agree with each other. We all add our energies together for the propagation of the Gospel," McCall said.

The celebration of the 50th year of the Cooperative Program, was highlighted when a Royal Ambassador brought in the torch from Memphis, Tenn. running down the aisle and onto the stage of the Miami Beach Convention Center before the cheering messengers.

More than 2,153 Southern Baptist RA's had carried the torch 1,468 miles, reported Glendon McCullough, executive director of the Brotherhood Commission.

The torch symbolized the Cooperative Program, "born" by convention action in Memphis on May 13, 1925.

Also during the celebration, executive secretaries of the state Baptist conventions signed the 1975 "Declaration of Cooperation," a document pledging support of the Cooperative Program.

Louis D. Newton, Atlanta, Ga., former SBC president, retired pastor and retired Baptist state paper editor, asked "What is the secret of it all?"

(Continued on page 4)



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant / President, ORU

The forgotten minorities: Baptists and left-handed persons

Every now and then an old word takes on new meaning. This happened to me recently when I received a petition signed by an unusual group of Ouachita Baptist University students. Although I welcome petitions as one of many ways of communicating how students feel on some particular matter, I really prefer that they simply come in and talk about it.

That probably was not possible in this particular case because it was a very diverse group of students that probably had never held a meeting together in their life, and doubtless never would. For purposes of this petition they had only one thing in common. They are left-handed. I am assuming that, from the 1100 students who eat at Birkett Williams Cafeteria, there were 36 left-handed students who suddenly discovered a petition that expressed their frustration at being a member of this unusual minority group.

The language of the petition was respectful and persuasive. It recognized the remarkable progress made in recent years at Ouachita in new building construction and remodeling, as well as the purchase of new classroom furniture. It pointed out one failure in all of our careful long-range planning: not a single student armchair for left-handed persons has been purchased for any of the new or remodeled buildings. In this modern day of special concern for minority groups and their unique needs, it is remarkable that no one said a word to us about the contortions a left-handed person must go through in order to take lecture notes or write an exam paper on the right-hand side of a

student armchair. I believe we can help this minority.

In one of these remarkable coincidences, on the evening of that very same day I heard a rather startling assertion that we all are in a minority group. It was a statement by Phillip Parker to the annual brotherhood dinner of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. He began with a statement that surprised no one, that black Americans are a minority of some 20 million persons, with the remaining 190 million being in the majority. He then referred to the minority of six million Jews, with a heavy majority of more than 200 million non-Jews. Next came the Catholics as a minority group, but then he referred to some thirty-five million Baptists as a minority group with the overwhelming majority of Americans being non-Baptists. Before finishing he made his point clear that all Americans are in some kind of minority group.

It is possible to accept the little mentioned fact that Baptists are also a minority group without learning the lesson the speaker had in mind. If we fail to work diligently at the job of protecting legitimate minority rights of Jews, Blacks, or Catholics, it is not at all unlikely that the rights of a Baptist minority will some day be in jeopardy. Baptists in Arkansas or Texas may well sound like a majority occasionally, but that certainly is not true for the nation or the world.

After a day of special awareness of left-handed and Baptist minority groups, I decided that all of us minority groups had better stick together.

News briefs

Watson Chapel Church, Pine Bluff, has honored their pastor, Edwin L. Hinkson, with a trip to the Holy Land. The gift was presented as the church celebrated the pastor's third anniversary with them.

Paul Stockemer, pastor of First Church, Alma, has been awarded the doctor of theology by Luther Rice Seminary, Jacksonville, Fla. Stockemer and his wife attended the graduation ceremonies and then went to Jackson, Miss. where they sang in the choir during the Billy Graham crusade May 12-16.

University Church, Fayetteville, honored their pastor, H.D. McCarty, with a reception May 4 in celebration of his tenth anniversary with the church. University Church has developed a large and well known collegiate ministry during McCarty's pastorate.

First Church, Forrest City, broke ground May 18 for an administration-education complex. The structure will contain staff offices, secretarial offices, library, bookstore, audio tape production area, and conference rooms, as well as space for two Sunday School departments. Redecoration on the sanctuary and landscaping is also planned.

Wilmot Church had ordained as deacons Austin Bordeaux, Eugene Chandler, Thomas W. Chapman Jr., Bobby Foster, and Bobby Pack.

First Church, Arkadelphia, is holding Sunday evening vesper services at DeGray Lake during the month of June. For the second year, the church is sponsoring recreation activities, a picnic and then the services at a picnic area each week.

Anniversary of Cooperative Program celebrated at convention

(From page 3)

Answering his own question, he said "Remember how the Cooperative Program was born in prayer, has grown in prayer, and will continue to be the lifeline of the Southern Baptist Convention through prayer."

Porter Routh, executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee, concluded "As we come to the climax of the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Cooperative Program, we need to

remind ourselves that the Cooperative Program is a channel through which we respond to the challenge from God to share Christ throughout the world."

The overwhelming concern of the 1975 Southern Baptist Convention was missions around the world and the providing of proper support to carry out this evangelistic task. We have little to fear so long as this remains our priority.

Staff changes

Second Church, Hot Springs, has called **J. Sidney Sample** as pastor. Dr. Sample comes to the church from New Pisgah Church, Spartanburg, S.C. He also has served churches at Augusta, Ga.; Dothan, Ala.; Panama City, Fla.; and Donaldsville, Ga. He has studied at Samford University, Southeastern Seminary, and Luther Rice Seminary. He holds the doctor of theology degree. Dr. Sample was ordained to the ministry in 1953. He has served in associational and state denominational posts in Florida. Dr. Sample is married to the former Mary Patterson of Clanton, Ala. He is a native of Chilton County, Ala. The Samples are the parents of two sons.



Dr. Sample



Lewis

Bill Lewis has accepted the pastorate of North Main Church, Jonesboro. He has been in full-time evangelistic work but is cancelling most of his 1975-76 revival engagements.

Thoughts on worship with Vietnamese

"He leadeth me, He leadeth me; By His own hand, He leadeth me. His faithful follower I would be, For by His hand He leadeth me."

This we sang at the worship service Sunday evening, May 27. Not a word of it did I understand, but the melody and the spirit of worship were easy to understand. I listened prayerfully as the gentle dark-skinned Vietnamese man preached a 45 minute sermon. About 100 people worshiped there, and I was the only American present. They all listened intently and prayerfully. As in our services, some in the audience were called upon to lead in audible prayer. About 10 of them responded at the conclusion of the service. I do not know what they said or what was their experience. They waited at the altar as the others of us moved out of the chapel. Apparently the minister waited to counsel with them.

The elderly were there, and the young were there. It seemed that some whole families were present. One family of three children with their parents appeared to be about the same ages as my grandchildren. I wondered what it would be like for my children and grandchildren to be going through this experience. What were their thoughts, I asked. What hopes? What memories were going through their mind? What about the place in Viet Nam where they once worshiped? What loved ones did they leave behind? What of the hopes of ever seeing them again? Will they see them again this side of heaven?

Some gave evidence of sadness, some of joy, and some were obviously confused. Some were seen wiping tears away. But all seemed to be striving to "worship in spirit and in truth."

Their words I did not understand. My words they did not understand. But God's word we all understood. For God's word was not written (only) upon tablets of stone (or paper) but deep in the heart. And the melody of His message, like the melody of our hymns, is a common melody, sweet and easy to comprehend.

So they must be somewhat sincere when they (these Vietnamese) sing: "Content whatever lot I see, Since 'tis my God that leadeth me." Their lot now and in the future may be a difficult one. But if they can truly have the faith that sings: "By waters calm, o'er troubled sea; Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me," they, and we, can claim the victory of victories, "Christ is all and in all." - Wilson C. Deese

Doctrinally speaking

The church: Its meaning and organization

by *Ralph W. Davis*
(50th in a series)

A church is a local body of believers baptized upon profession of faith in Christ, voluntarily banded together for the promotion of Christ's redemptive purposes for mankind. The Greek word for "church" is "ekklesia," which means to "call out." The church consists of the "called out" people.

H.E. Danain *A Manual of Ecclesiology* states that there are four ways in which ekklesia is used in the New Testament. Six times it is used in its classical Greek meaning (Acts 19:32, 39, 41, 7:38; Heb. 2:12; 12:23.) Three times it is used in the generic sense (Matt. 16:18; 18:17 twice.) Twelve times it represents the idea of spiritual Israel or a universal or spiritual body. All but one of these passages are found in Ephesians and Colossians. Ninety-three times out of 114 it is used to mean a local body.

Although the church is an organism—a living body—it is also an organization.

The New Testament churches had stated meetings (Acts 20:7); elections (Acts 1:26); officers (Phil 1:1b); ordinances (Acts 2:41a, 1 Cor. 11:23-26); and they made contributions (Rom. 15:26).

The membership of the church consisted of regenerated, baptized people. Since the church is a Christian institution, only Christians could properly be members. (See Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4.) On the day of Pentecost, those who gladly received his word were baptized. Without a single exception, baptism in the New Testament was upon a profession of faith.

The officers of the church were pastors and deacons. Three terms are used to designate the person whom we now call "pastor." In Acts 20:17 Paul called the elders (presbuteros) of the church. In verse 28 they are designated as overseers (KJV), but the correct word is bishops (episkopos), and their work was to

"feed" (to shepherd) the church of God. The verb "feed" corresponds to the noun, "pastor." Thus we see in Acts 20:17, 28 that the leader was called elder, bishop, pastor. In Titus 1:5 and 1:7 "elder and "bishop" apply to the same office. In 1 Peter 5:1 Peter addresses the elders, and in verse 2 he tells them to feed the flock which means to "pastor" or "shepherd" the flock. Because of the respect of this office, he was called "elder"; because of his function as a supervisor, he was called "bishop"; and as a spiritual caretaker of the flock he was called "pastor."

The other officer was the deacon. In Philippians 1:1 Paul addresses his epistles to the saints, bishops and deacons. Qualifications for deacons are found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The Seven elected to assist the apostles, as recorded in Acts 6:1-6, were probably the first deacons, though they are not called deacons.



by R. Wilbur Herring

Most of us have more work to do than we can possibly get done. We are our own worst critic. When we fail to make headway with the massive amount of work before us, we get what one little kindergarten child called "the nervousies."

How do we organize better to care for our daily chores? In our article last week we discussed briefly the matter of organizing or budgeting our time. None of us can take another person's time schedule and adopt it in toto for oneself, but at least it helps us to find a starting point. After we refine our own work schedule of budgeting our time we will discover that we have a lifestyle of work.

Let's start with two premises. First, it is generally agreed among Bible students that there are four major functions of a local church; namely, worship, evangelization, education and ministration. Second, the pastor of the church is responsible for the successful operation of the church in all four functional areas.

While giving direction to the entire corporate worship, the pastor's primary task in this area is that of preaching the Word of God. To do this effectively week in and week out, the pastor must do a lot of studying and praying. Why not give top priority to this pulpit ministry? Why not do like all of the great expositors have done in times past and give the morning hours for study and prayer. Give at least three hours each morning to prayer and study.

Give at least three hours each afternoon to administering the programs of evangelism, education and ministration. In this time counselling and hospital visits could be included as well as conferences with your lay leaders or staff members.

At least two hours each night are budgeted for meetings, visitation and weddings. There should be one definite night set aside for soul winning or prospect visitation. If you don't have a designated time, you will never be allowed to get to such a responsibility. If someone asks me to do something on Tuesday night, I can truthfully say that I already have a commitment. That is prospect visitation night.

In your busy schedule make some time

And some evangelists..... (Eph. 4:11)



Applegate

Henry D. Applegate has entered full-time evangelism. Applegate has been serving as a pastor for 28 years and has served New Liberty Church, Blytheville; Ingram Boulevard Church, West Memphis; Trinity Church, Blytheville; Calvary Church, Osceola; and Armored Church. His most recent pastorate was First Church, Hamburg.

Jack Auten, pastor of First Church, Marmaduke, says "Brother Applegate will contribute immensely to our Lord's evangelistic program as he is an excellent preacher and loves people greatly. His messages are straightforward, truthful and easy to understand. He is a dynamic preacher who has but one desire and that is to see souls saved."

Applegate's address is Box 112, Harrisburg, Ark. 72432, or phone 578-5741 or 578-5188.

Trends to watch

Decision making

by T.B. Maston

(Sixth in a series of seven)

One of the generally recognized problems among Southern Baptists is the lack of lay involvement in our work. This is evident on the local church level and in various aspects of our denominational life. A major responsibility for this lack of involvement rests on the laymen themselves. Many of them would rather pay a professionally-trained staff member to do the work for them than to do it themselves. But, one of the main tasks of staff members is to get laymen involved.

The lack of lay involvement is evident in the decision-making process. On the local church level, the larger the church the more the inclination of the staff to work out all programs and plans. The members of the church are then asked to approve and promote a program that few if any of them had any voice in shaping.

This procedure may and usually will mean a better planned and coordinated program. Few if any laymen will object. It is possible, however, that the lay members of the church could make some distinctive contributions to the planning of the program. They at least should have freedom to evaluate and make suggestions concerning that which has been planned by the staff.

It is recognized that many decisions have to be made by the pastor and staff. Also, it is their responsibility to provide leadership for the church which involves program planning and promoting, and decision-making in general. Unfortunately, some pastors, particularly of larger churches, become little less than dictators. When this happens it usually means that the individual either has an exalted opinion of his ability or has a sense of insecurity. All of us should recognize that there is a fine but important line of distinction between positive leadership and dictatorship.

What has been said concerning some larger churches could be said about some of our denominational agencies and institutions. There is a tendency in some of them to concentrate decision making and planning too largely in the staff. The chief executive or head of an agency may tend to become a dictator. In too many cases, boards of trustees have relatively little voice in the decision making for the agency. This is not healthy for the agency and is not good for our denomination.

The concentration of the decision-making process in the hands of a "professionally-trained" staff on church or denominational level, as suggested previously, may mean a more efficient program but it does not contribute to the development of a maturing lay leadership. It should be remembered that the people involved in a program are more important than the program itself. Also, involvement in the decision-making process is essential for the health and vitality of our democratic way of life in local churches and in our denomination.

for the work of evangelism in connection with the '76 Life and Liberty Campaign. It is one of the main functions of the

church. We are helping one another as together we strive to present the gospel to every person in Arkansas.

Too much plush?

by Erwin L. McDonald
Editor Emeritus,
Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

What ever happened to the gospel tent and the sawdust trails which were once so much a part of our way of life here in Arkansas and across the South?

Apparently they have, like the horse-and-buggy and the palmleaf fan, long since vanished before the New Technology.

Just a few years ago there were almost innumerable evangelists equipped with their own sawdust and tents. And a few decades ago, there were the even more abundant brush arbors housing summer "revivals" in every nook and cranny at some time or other during the summer months.

Back then, most of us Southerners were still engaged in dirt farming, and August was pretty universally Revival Month. That was about the only month of the year that farm families had both the time and the energy for day-after-day and night-after-night religious services.

By August, crops were "laid by"—you had either made them or missed—and just any family was about as well off from the standpoint of natural groceries as it would be all the year.

Abundant gardens added their provender to the year-round supply of home-produced milk-and-butter and home-cured pork. And there was nearly always a new generation of Domineckers, Rhode Island Reds or other varieties of tasty fowl ready to "enter the ministry," as visiting clergy took turns at being entertained from house to house.

For most communities, the summer revivals were highlights of the year, featuring Bible preaching, gospel singing, and socializing at the highest level of good fellowship. There was not much competition, for radio, television and worldliness in general were not the dominant factors of life that they are today.

People were much less hurried—and harried—then than now. When you had a revival meeting in your community, there was time for it. No self-respecting pastor or church would have considered trying to have a revival in less than two or three weeks, back in the '20s or '30s. And two-week revivals were

still pretty much the pattern even into the '40s and '50s. (Now we seem to be changing from 8-day to week-end meetings.)

The old-time revival tents and-or brush arbors were objects of necessity. They came into existence and filled their needs when church buildings were far less numerous and decidedly less comfortable than today.

In former times there often was neither a church, a school, nor a vacant store building available for the use of an evangelist in summer revival. A tent or an arbor that could be hurriedly erected on some vacant lot was frequently the only housing to serve the purpose.

And back in the days of B.A.C. (before Air-Conditioning), most of the churchhouses were unbearably hot in summer. Brush arbors were frequently constructed alongside church buildings because of the greater comfort their ventilation afforded on summer nights.

In the past decade or two, we have seen a remarkable revolution in church building. Now just about every church, including the little frame structure at the crossroads, has wall-to-wall carpeting and central air-conditioning.

Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Assembly of God folks—everybody—seem to be agreed on one permeating "doctrine"—what's good for the supermarket, in creature comforts, is good for the church.

Mark Twain's hog can no longer find a cool spot up under the churchhouse in summer. But the church is "20 degrees cooler inside."

We learned a long time ago that people can be saved at other times than "the second week in August," and without "walking the sawdust trail."

Now one time is about as good—or bad?—to have a revival as another. But in our new sophisticated way of living, all of our carpets and "cool" notwithstanding, we sometimes seem to be too comfortable. We just don't seem to need the Lord as much in our plush as we did in our tents.

Arkansans appointed by Home Mission Board

ATLANTA, GA.—James and Betty Walker of St. Joseph, Mich., have been appointed missionary associates by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. They will serve in Michigan's Bay Area.

James Walker, a native of Franklin, Ark., attended Central College, Ouachita University and Southern Seminary. He was ordained in 1951. He served in the Army in 1945-46, and has been a pastor in Illinois, Indiana and Michigan.

For the past decade, he has been pastor of Niles Avenue Church in St. Joseph.

Betty Koontz Walker is a native of Flora, Ill., and holds degrees from Ouachita University and Western Michigan University. She has worked as a librarian and administrative secretary in Illinois and Indiana and as a teacher in Michigan.

The Walkers have one son.

Death

Homer A. Bradley, 56, pastor of First Church, Des Arc, died June 5. He recently resigned as a chaplain at Memorial Hospital in North Little Rock after serving there six years. Bradley had been a minister for 34 years, serving churches at Eudora, Pine Bluff, Earle, DeWitt, and Crawfordville. He was a member of the American College of Hospital Chaplains. He was a native of Jonesboro and had attended Ouachita University and New Orleans Seminary. Bradley is survived by his wife, Mrs. Martha Bradley; a son, Carey Dale Bradley of Colorado; a daughter, Mrs. Stanely R. Webb of Virginia; a sister, Miss Garnet Bradley of Jonesboro; and two grandchildren.

Early education workshops

NASHVILLE—Two "Summer Weekday Early Education Conferences," nationwide Day Care and kindergarten workshops held each year, will be conducted at Ridgecrest and Glorieta Baptist Conference Centers, August 2-8 and August 16-22, respectively.

These conferences are designed mainly to train Weekday Early Education teachers and directors, according to Howard B. Foshee, secretary, church administration department, Sunday School Board. Teachers and directors of Day Care, kindergarten, Mother's Day Out and other weekday programs will study their role as classroom facilitator during the week-long sessions.

"Provisions are available for all teaching levels—birth through five years of age—using demonstrations, small group work and resource speakers," states Foshee.

A Sunday School growth campaign that works

(Fourth in a Series)



Hatfield

ACTION is the title of a Sunday School growth campaign developed primarily in the Riverside Baptist Church, Ft. Myers, Fla. Andy Anderson is pastor.

ACTION is not a one-time, short-in-the-arm project. ACTION is not a

gimmick. ACTION is a hard work prospect-search led by the pastor which produces positive results. So far every church that has participated has experienced numerical growth in Sunday School enrolment, attendance and in church growth through additions by letter and increase in baptisms. Other positive results include increase in growth in other organizations and activities in the churches and an increase in budget receipts. This literally makes ACTION an outreach ministry at home and to the ends of the earth.

Skeptics may say such a campaign will not work. Skepticism is to be expected, for often projects have been proposed that have failed in outreach. But skeptics can be wrong.

Of course, ACTION will fail in any church where dedicated hard work is not the pattern and example of the pastor in leading the essential function in ACTION. This essential function is the work of the task force, a group of church members trained in their distinctive activity.

How can one be so dogmatic concerning positive results? First, because the essential function is so firmly the practice of New Testament Christians.

Secondly, because the experience of record keeping churches today proves it works.

ACTION is not a fragmented outreach campaign. It is not primarily a preschool or children's enrollment plan, nor does it concentrate only on youth or adults. It does not require, but may be strengthened by a bus outreach ministry.

It may include a pastor's Sunday School class and a telephone enrollment support, but these are not always included in every participating church.

There is really one basic essential. A task force.

Smile, growth is on its way.—Lawson Hatfield, Sunday School department.

Child Care

Birthday Club aids children's home

I am very happy about the response to the letter promoting our Birthday Offering last year. We had more than 100 cards returned and a number of interesting letters. I would like to have your address on our Birthday list, if you have not sent it.

One of the Little Rock R.A. groups wrote asking what they could do for the Children's Home. I suggested that they promote the Birthday Offering in their church. I hope other G.A. and R.A. groups will take this as a mission project.

The amount of money from the Birthday Offering last year was worthy, but a larger contribution than the income is the caring support of Arkansas Baptists. The Birthday Offering keeps the child care program in the hearts of our people. We feel we need your prayerful concern throughout the year. Most groups remember to pray for our program

as they pray for individuals who have birthdays.

The Birthday Club is made up of church groups which take birthday offerings for their members. Many groups remember their members by letting them give a birthday offering. The offering is followed by the song, "Happy Birthday to You", and a prayer for the individual and the Children's Home. It is a personal way to remember the individual and it keeps our work on the hearts and minds of Baptist people. We desire the prayer support of all Arkansas Baptists.

A beautiful brochure of the Children's Home will be sent to those groups which indicate they are sharing in the Birthday Club for Arkansas Baptist Home for Children.—Charlie Belknap, Superintendent, Arkansas Baptist Home for Children.

Cooperative Program

More on leaders and stewardship

Last week in this column some statistics were given from a stewardship survey of 66 churches made by a sister state convention. This column will present some additional facts revealed by the survey.

In the 66 churches surveyed the total Sunday School workers represented 14 percent of the total church membership, but the Sunday School workers gave 27.5 percent of the total income of the churches.

The deacons in the churches surveyed represented only two percent of the total membership, but they contributed 18.7 percent of the total income of the churches.

This means that these two groups of church leaders represented only 16 percent of the total church membership, but provided over 46 percent of the church's financial support. This has both a positive and a negative implication. On the positive side is the fact that this group of church leaders demonstrated

strong support of the church through their financial support.

Negatively, it also indicates that the church leadership has not succeeded in enlisting the remainder of the church membership significantly in the support of the church; and, consequently, the leaders are carrying a disproportionate share of the financial load.

A leader does not really lead unless someone follows. A teacher has not really taught unless someone has learned.

This could mean that Sunday School workers need to be more concerned about the example which they set before their class members, particularly in stewardship (although the same reason might apply to other things as well.) It might also mean that the deacons need to spend more time influencing other people and less time concerned with routine business matters of the church.—Roy F. Lewis, Secretary, Stewardship-Cooperative Program Department

Did you know...

that there are over 7,603 Baptists in Rhodesia, as a result of your Cooperative Program supported foreign missions?

that many of the 2,581 baptisms in East Africa are a result of preaching supported by your Cooperative Program?

Family enrichment: mission of family ministry

NASHVILLE — "The family has become the social and moral crisis of our time," says Joseph W. Hinkle, supervisor, family ministry section, Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. "Mobility, alternate marriage styles, uncoupling, and unhealthy parenting styles are placing serious stress upon the family."

In light of these developments, today's family is in dire straits. Half of all Americans change residences every five years. By 1980, this figure will increase to 75 percent for the American metropolitan population and 80 percent by the year 2,000 A.D.

"This migration forces family lifestyles to change radically," Hinkle observes. "The need for community, identity and fellowship is, in too many cases, not being met in this type environment. Feelings of isolation, frustration, loneliness and futility add stress to family relationships."

Divorce is fast becoming a socially acceptable way of uncoupling a marriage. In 1900, there was one divorce for every 13.3 marriages; in 1972 there was one divorce for every 2.7 marriages. Now between one-fourth and one-third of all marriages end in divorce. The number of parents who are forced to raise children without a husband or wife has increased to more than 10 million. Ten percent of all children under six years old, 2.2 million in 1970, are living in a single-parent family. One child in six lives in a one-parent family before his eighteenth birthday. This rate is nearly double the rate 10 years ago.

America's economic situation makes it

necessary for both parents to work outside and away from the home in many cases, states Hinkle. In many situations, children spend more time with a passive babysitter than with a participating parent. Between 1965 and 1970, the number of children in day care centers doubled. "Parents are spending less time teaching and disciplining their children," adds Hinkle.

The average Southern Baptist family feels the pressures upon it and is trying to equip itself to cope with the dangers lying ahead, Hinkle explains. That's where the churches, family ministry section and the board enter the battle.

"In light of the many pressures upon the family today, the major concern of the family ministry section is family enrichment," says Hinkle. "Instead of waiting until the crises occur, we seek to help persons cope with family situations before they become problems."

"Family Life Conferences," "Marriage Enrichment Retreats for Couples," and "Christian Sex Education Workshops" are provided throughout the Southern Baptist Convention and at Ridgecrest and Glorieta Baptist Conference Centers by the section. Dates for the summer conferences in 1975 are Aug. 2-8 at Ridgecrest and Aug. 16-22 at Glorieta during the Bible-Preaching Weeks. "It is not too late to make plans to bring the entire family to Ridgecrest or Glorieta this summer for a week of family enrichment," adds Hinkle.

Each spring, churches throughout the Convention conduct a "Christian Home Week." The family ministry section

produces the study materials and makes program and promotion suggestions for the churches to use. Two new programs, "Christian Parenthood Workshops" and "Retreat for Engaged Couples," are currently being field-tested and will soon be offered Convention-wide.



**The
Southern
accent**

Worth a million

Testimonies are always influential, and we are all happy to hear a positive declaration. Recently, a former student came back to Southern Baptist College, bringing a prospective student, and gave such a testimonial. As the college staff was thanking him for his continued support, he blurted out, "this school is worth a million dollars to me and my family."

I'm sure he was using this expression as a figure of speech, but it makes one stop and think. When it is all said and done, the foundation in a college education is worth a great deal. This is the purpose of our state convention owned junior college here at Walnut Ridge.

As a student makes the decision to enter college he is staggered by the cost of such a venture. He sees several thousand dollars being needed. It is difficult for the young adult to see at this beginning point the worth of such an expenditure. The cost is not all in dollars and cents. There is the leaving home, friends, and comfortable surroundings to be considered.

It needs to be seen by the college freshman and the family that this is not a cost, but rather an investment. The dividends from this investment of money is returned many times with interest. The investment of setting up a temporary residence is repaid with new friends, and future business associates. These friends are very special, and remain true down through the years.

When all these dividends are totaled, it may well be more than just a figure of speech, a college may be "worth a million." Many young people will be tempted to say this Summer, "I can't afford to go to college." Before this temptation is yielded to, it will be worth it to "count the cost" if not going to college.

"We cannot go back and make a new start but we can start today and make a new end."

The Southern Accent is on "counting the cost."—Jim E. Tillman Director of Development

WMU

GA campers will hear foreign missionaries



Miss Glass

Miss Lois Glass, Taiwan, who has also served in Japan and China, will be one of the missionary guests at GA Camp, July 7-12. Miss Glass teaches English and Bible and works with the Christian student organization at Chung Yuan

Christian College of Science and Engineering in Chungli, Taiwan.

Miss Glass was born in China where her parents served as missionaries. She is the sister of Mrs. Baker James Cauthen, wife of the executive secretary of the Foreign Mission Board.

Also at camp will be Miss Becky Nichols, MK, and a student at Ouachita University. She will share about our mission work in Paraguay where her parents serve as missionaries.

Each week campers will hear much about Baptist mission work from missionary guests. Other missionaries to be at camp are Mrs. Call Hall, Kenya, and Miss Martha Morrison, Malaysia.

There is still time for girls in grades 4-6 to register for GA Camp, July 7-12 or July 28-Aug. 2. The second week (July 14-19) is full! Don't delay as your girls could miss out on a week of mission activities, worship experiences, fun times, and fellowship with girls from all over Arkansas. Send registrations NOW to State WMU Office, P.O. Box 550, Little Rock 72203.—Julia Ketner, GA Camp Director



DUAL OPENING—Mrs. R.L. Mathis (l), president of the Woman's Missionary Union, shared the podium with James Pleitz of Pensacola, Fla., president of the Pastors' Conference, Sunday night (June 8) in a joint opening session of the two organizations. (SBC Photo by Warren Johnson)

WMU, pastors meet together to hear Florida governor, see commissioning

MIAMI BEACH, June 8—A standing-room-only crowd of almost 10,000 persons attending a joint session of the Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting and the Southern Baptist Pastor's Conference at Convention Center here Sunday night witnessed the commissioning of 18 missionaries to serve overseas and heard Florida Governor Reubin Askew call for greater commitment to Christian witnessing in the United States.

In urging the crowd to take more initiative in expressing their faith, Governor Askew said, "Time and time again we call upon ministers and missionaries to do our job.

He said Christians are willing to sell almost anything—automobiles, washing machines—but sometimes we're too reluctant to share the greatest thing that ever happened to us.

"I wouldn't get by without Christ, and I wouldn't try," he shared. "...We try to run our lives without the greatest thing Christ has given us—prayer."

He related his own experiences with prayer when he first began to feel the pressures of the governorship.

"I was spinning my wheels trying to do too much myself."

Askew told of rising early in the morning to pray.

"Then I started realizing how much I had missed in trying to carry it all myself. I have found that starting off in the morning made a great difference during the day."

While acknowledging his strong belief in the separation of church and state, Askew reminded that "citizenship cannot be separated from Christianity. What may be wrong with this nation is the sum total of what's wrong with us as individuals.

"I stand before you not as the governor of Florida but as a Christian," he said.

Baker J. Cauthen of Richmond, Va., executive secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, opened the missions emphasis by presenting red roses on behalf of his agency to Mrs. R.L. Mathis, of Waco, Texas, outgoing president of WMU. She is completing her 12th year as head of the Baptist woman's auxiliary.

Cauthen challenged the crowd to support the 18 missionaries and examine their own relationship with God for their own personal response to needs overseas.

"Surely as these lay their lives on the

altar, it's a moment for us to commit ourselves afresh to God," Cauthen said. "How do you know that Christ isn't saying to you, I want you too? The answer might be to be a more faithful pastor or worker wherever you are. Somebody here in this congregation one year from tonight may well be standing here."

Among those commissioned were Gwen Crofts of Phoenix, Ariz., appointed to Hong Kong; Mr. and Mrs. James E. Crittendon of Ninety Six, S.C., to Philippines; Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Townsend of Valparaiso, Fla., to Indonesia; Mr. and Mrs. Michael O. Canady, of Maplewood, La., to Malawi.

Also, Mr. and Mrs. James G. Banks of Coweta, Okla., to Guadeloupe; Mr. and Mrs. Jerry L. Harris of San Jose, Calif., to Windward Islands; Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy L. Barrentine of Crystal Springs, Miss., to Paraguay; Robbie Crissey of Kingsland, Ga., to Brazil; Mr. and Mrs. W. Ronnie Reynolds of Milton, W. Va., to Argentina; and Mr. and Mrs. Luther Williams of Danville, Va., to Brazil.

They join about 2,600 other foreign missionaries currently serving in 82 countries.

Virginia woman president of WMU

MIAMI BEACH, June 9—Mrs. A. Harrison Gregory of Danville, Va., was elected president of Woman's Missionary Union here Monday at the annual meeting of the Baptist woman's auxiliary in Convention Center.

Mrs. Gregory, wife of the chief engineer for Dan River, Inc., succeeded Mrs. R.L. Mathis of Waco, Tex., who stepped down after 12 years as president.

Born in Greenville, S.C., Mrs. Gregory taught school at Cowpens (S.C.) High School in 1942-43 and Greenville (S.C.) Junior High School in 1944-48.

Mrs. Gregory also served as religious education director at First Church of Greer, S.C., in 1943-44 and held the same post at First Church in Danville in 1948-50.

Currently, Mrs. Gregory is president of the WMU in Virginia and a member of First Church, the Wednesday Club, Book and Art Club and the Ladies Benevolent Society.

The new WMU president is a graduate of Winthrop College in Rock Hill, S.C., with a bachelor of science degree. She is the mother of three sons.

Woman's call between her and God, new WMU president feels

by Theo Sommerkamp

MIAMI BEACH, June 9—The new president of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union said Monday she respects the right of women to seek ordination as pastors when they feel this is God's will for their lives.

Mrs. A. Harrison (Christine) Gregory of Danville, Va., in her initial news conference after being elected to lead 1,115,000 Baptist women and girls, also described objectives for the WMU to pursue and discussed the women's rights movement.

Speaking "as an individual and not as president of WMU," Mrs. Gregory said "I would never seek ordination (for myself)."

She added, however, "God created every individual with the right of choice. We do not have the right to judge them on their purpose in choice" when women follow what they see as God's will in seeking ordination.

"If a woman feels she is called to be a pastor, this is between her and God, and it should not be our prerogative to deny her," Mrs. Gregory continued.

She acknowledged this viewpoint would not be shared by all WMU members, and insisted she was speaking as an individual rather than a WMU officer.

One of her personal friends, she pointed out, is a Southern Baptist woman in Virginia who has been ordained to the ministry and serves as chaplain in a penal institution.

Mrs. Gregory, president of the statewide Woman's Missionary Union for Virginia Baptists, became president of the national WMU organization Monday. She succeeded Mrs. R.L. (Marie) Mathis of Waco, Tex., who has served 12 years as president during two non-successive terms.

As her husband looked on at the news conference, Mrs. Gregory said she would prefer to be known as "Mrs. A. Harrison Gregory" rather than "Mrs. Christine Gregory."

She said she had lived "in a male dormitory for a number of years," referring to her husband and their three sons. Her husband is chief engineer for Dan River, Inc., a large textile factory in Danville.

She said women in the churches should first use the abilities they have to

the utmost before seeking greater responsibilities in church life.

Greater responsibilities will come to women when they exercise their abilities to the fullest extent, she believed.

"I hope women will be accepted for their ability and not just because they are women," Mrs. Gregory went on.

While she anticipates no change in the WMU chief emphasis on praying, giving, and studying, Mrs. Gregory said, "One of the basic aims of WMU will be on flexibility.

"The president of WMU does not make individual goals for the organization," she explained, but pointed out that the organization will explore new ways of meeting the needs of people around the world, as well as new means of attracting young women into membership and participation.

Rather than constituting a change in the nature or purpose of WMU, this is simply another way of affirming what WMU has been about all along, she contended.

Hundreds of young women are becoming involved in WMU and other church activities as they see the church as an organization reaching out into the world, becoming involved in every segment of society, Mrs. Gregory said.

A new generation of WMU members must be permitted to try new and different ways of doing things. They are entitled to their successes and their failures, just as the older generation has encountered its own successes and failures, she declared.

Concerning the women's rights movement, Mrs. Gregory said she believed this effort has given women confidence in themselves.

A woman sees that "she has all the abilities in the world at her fingertips," Mrs. Gregory explained.

Questioned about her attitude toward women's movements stressing the necessity for women to be submissive to their husbands, Mrs. Gregory countered without hesitation:

"You remember the Bible also says husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church. If a husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church, she will be submissive to him any day."



FIRST ADDRESS—Carolyn Weatherford, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union since Nov. 1, gave her first address to the annual WMU session Monday morning. (SBC Photo by Jim Newton)

MIAMI BEACH, June 10—The president of the Southern Baptist Convention called on messengers here Tuesday morning to speak to the spiritual and social problems of the world through greater lay involvement, special days of praying and fasting, an emphasis upon new church growth, and expressions of compassion.

America is living in an integrity and belief crisis, said Jaroy Weber, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lubbock, Tex., in laying the groundwork for his proposals.

"We are seeing a culture developing which accepts lying, cheating and stealing as an acceptable practice in life to accomplish human goals," the Baptist preacher charged.

"Watergate, pardon my mentioning it, has underscored the importance of honesty. I feel that we are becoming a nation of dishonest people."

Weber said the American people also have lost their ability to believe or have faith in anything.

"Never have we been told so much and offered so little,"

SBC president offers tools for solving spiritual, social ills

said Weber. He cited a poll which, he said, questioned the Biblical view of marriage, showed a general trust of business men, reflected little or no confidence in the presidency and Congress, and indicated at least 63 percent didn't believe what they heard or read through mass media.

"To regain our Christian hope demands more than a renewed patriotism to a troubled nation. It demands a dynamic encounter with a transcendent God who is alive in history and awaits his wandering children to come home."

Weber said Southern Baptists need to have a new world vision.

"Christians cannot be isolationists, comfortably speaking religious terms to each other at eleven o'clock Sunday morning. The whole church of God must go with the whole gospel to the whole world."

The Baptist leader likened the whole gospel to a coin with

two sides—personal faith and social action which "must go together like faith and work in the New Testament.

"We used to be told it was no use preaching the gospel to men with empty stomachs. It is now found that men with full stomachs do not even bother to listen.

"We must speak to the social problems of the world but our speaking must be in the context of Biblical revelation and not from the lips of liberal sociologists, philosophers or theologians."

Weber said all Southern Baptists must get involved in the effort.

"We can no longer wait for a specialized task force of professional missionaries to win this world to Christ. Some practical plan must be adopted and propagated by the Foreign and Home Mission Boards to involve lay persons in our direct mission task.

"Lay persons are ready and willing to become a part if we are willing to innovate our strategy to include them."

The denominational leader said he was advocating a cooperation of spirit which would send Baptist messengers home with "a tear of compassion rather than a trauma of tension."

Weber also asked the messengers to do something positive.

"I would like for the convention's Resolutions Committee to bring a resolution asking our people to set aside at least one day a month for fasting and praying for our nation and for the starving multitudes of the world.

"I would also challenge every church to have at least one church-wide offering to feed the hungry of the world, and help develop to a greater degree the self-reliance of people on their own resources."

In a plea to build churches, the Texas preacher said Southern Baptists need to rethink their priorities, redesign some of their strategy, call upon the divine power of God, and move forward.

At the same time Southern Baptists need to be as concerned about living the Bible as defending it, Weber said. He expressed particular concern about a report that 1,000 Baptist preachers are leaving the ministry each year.

"I call upon our convention to be understanding, forgiving, redemptive, rather than critical and derogatory. If they (preachers) are to be restored, they must have a helping hand.

"Some agency of our convention ought to develop a redemption center, a restoration clinic, and a rehabilitation clinic for those in true repentance. If what we preach about God's forgiveness is true, let us practice it."

The messengers also heard annual reports from the first of their 20 agencies.

The report of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission told of the construction of a multi-million dollar videotape production studio and training center in Fort Worth.

The center will enable the agency to keep pace with the demands of the broadcasting industry for new programs and will cut the cost of producing television programs, said Paul M. Stevens, agency president.

The report said the commission's programs drew 257,000 written responses last year with 3,079 persons making religious decisions.

The agency produces 39 formats and distributes 3,730 programs weekly for broadcast throughout the world to an estimated 100 million listeners and viewers, Stevens said.

Reports from the denomination's six seminaries told of record enrolments, new building construction, and long-range studies.

Six related Baptist groups wound up specialized meetings preliminary to the opening of the SBC sessions.

One of the largest, the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, elected Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church of Memphis, Tenn., as president.

Rogers replaced James Pleitz, pastor of First Church of Pensacola, Fla., as head of the 25,000 member organization.

\$51 million dollar budget adopted by messengers

MIAMI BEACH, June 10—Without a dissenting vote, the Southern Baptist Convention Tuesday morning adopted the largest budget in its history: \$51-million.

The budget, accepted during the first business session of the annual meeting here, is more than 25 per cent above the 1974-75 budget of \$49 million.

Much of the increase is reflected in the "challenge portion" of the budget, which is \$8,920,000 for 1975-76, as compared with \$3 million last year.

The challenge phase of the budget is in addition to the operating budget and provides extra funds for agencies, institutions and commissions.

Under the budget—which will go into effect October 1—the basic operational expenditures will be \$41 million; capital needs, \$1,080,000, and the challenge budget \$8,920,000.

It compares with last year's operational budget of \$36 million; capital needs of \$1 million and the challenge budget of \$3 million.

The new budget will coincide with the Bicentennial Year of the United States and the 50th anniversary year of the Cooperative Program, the Baptist method of supporting its work.

The budget was adopted by messengers without debate.

Prior to its adoption, messengers were given a visual presentation of the institutions to which the funds will go.

Thomas Downing of Baltimore, Md., a member of the Executive Committee which made the presentation, said the organizations "represent missions, education and benevolent work done on behalf of your church."

The budget provides:

Foreign Mission Board, \$20,480,400;

Home Mission Board, \$7,680,150; Annuity Board, \$250,000; Southwestern Seminary, \$2,379,827; Southern Seminary, \$1,884,198; New Orleans Seminary, \$1,499,187; Southeastern Seminary, \$1,265,651; Midwestern Seminary, \$790,494; Golden Gate Seminary, \$782,323;

Southern Baptist Foundation, \$108,091; American Seminary, \$113,780; Brotherhood Commission, \$409,608; Christian Life Commission, \$278,781; Education Commission, \$187,737; Historical Commission, \$159,292;

Radio-Television Commission, \$1,934,260; Stewardship Commission, \$201,000; Baptist Joint Committee, \$171,241, and SBC Operating Budget, \$424,000.

The only recommendation from the Executive Committee—which operates the convention between annual sessions—to draw fire was a proposal concerning composition of boards of trustees for boards, agencies and commissions.

The recommendation related to so-called "local boards" of SBC institutions and agencies. The local board arrangement allows a portion of the trustees or directors to be from the city or state in which the organization is located.

Last year, the executive committee was instructed to study the local board arrangement. Its recommendation Tuesday morning was made in response to that motion.

However, the recommendation reduced the number of local members on boards, but did not eliminate them.

Kenneth Barnett, a pastor from El Reno, Okla., challenged the recommendation, charging that the "stage coach, covered wagon and railroad train have gone, but the SBC is not sensitive to change in the space age...."

Barnett charged the agencies "do not want the changes...are resisting these changes...."

"Under this plan, one church in the Southern Baptist Convention can have more representation on a Southern Baptist board or agency than the combined conventions of Alabama and Florida together," he charged.

Barnett, who said he is a trustee of the Oklahoma Baptist University, has appeared several times in the past to challenge the local board arrangement.

Presiding officer Steward B. Simms of Greer, S.C., first vice president of the convention, called for a voice vote on Barnett's motion to send the recommendation back to committee. When it appeared evenly divided, he called for a standing ballot.

Simms declared the motion lost, but was drowned out by a host of calls for a ballot.



HISTORICAL MESSENGER—Sam R. Eden of Rome, Ga., Route 3, resident manager of Floyd County Association Baptist Camp, made Southern Baptist history Monday morning. Eden became the 500,000th messenger to register at the convention since 1845 when the SBC first met. W. Fred Kendall (L), SBC registration secretary from Nashville, Tenn., welcomed Eden to the 118th meeting. (SBC Photo by Jim Lee Young)

Convention sermon

Mighty deeds with meager resources

by Jimmy R. Allen

Scripture: John 6:1-14

JIMMY R. ALLEN, pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, is a native of Hope, Ark. He is a graduate of Howard Payne College and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served as pastor of churches in Texas and is former secretary of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission and former president of Texas Baptists. He is the author of a weekly news column in San Antonio, "Down to Earth" and gives moral commentary on a local television station. He has written widely.

Introduction: A great American Philosopher, Mr. Walt Kelly, draws the comic strip, Pogo. In it he has the little possum saying to his fellow creatures of the swamp, "The only trouble with our country is that we are surrounded with insurmountable opportunity." The Apostles must have felt a similar sense of being overwhelmed by opportunity when Jesus posed the question, "How can we feed this multitude of famished men?" They had come out of their spiritual hunger to hear of the Bread of Life. Now they are suffering from physical hunger and Jesus cares about both dimensions of man's need. The response of the Apostles has its modern counterparts. Phillip incredulously looked about and said, "why with all we have we could just give a bite apiece. What good would that do?" Andrew timidly comes forward with the lad's lunch and says, "Here's a little food, but what is that among so many?"

The feeling of being overwhelmed by a tidal wave of need is a familiar one. Those who labor to stretch meager resources around a globe whose map has been rewritten dozens of times in recent years are keenly aware of the forces which engulf us. Dr. C. W. Black, an eloquent preacher in our city, said to a conference of black preachers at Bishop College some time ago, "The church always operates out of meager resources. If it waits until its inventory shows it has adequate food in its warehouses to feed the multitudes, it never feeds anyone."

What Jesus does on that ancient hillside is more than an event revealing his power and compassion, it is a pattern for action and a promise for fulfillment. Let us look together at the scripture to discover the shape of our opportunity, strategies for response, and the Spirit of God who does mighty deeds with meager resources.

1. The Shape of Our Opportunity

1. The Shape of Spiritual Hunger

The five thousand were in that wasteland because of spiritual hunger. Disillusioned with the dead religion of their day, despairing of the emptiness of following their political leaders by appeasing the powers of Rome, they were spiritually curious and seeking. That same spiritual hunger exists today. It is reflected in the very apathy about which we are complaining. The apathy of urban man is one of disillusionment with the promises of yesterday's messiahs. There is, as Os Guinness has said, a "dust of death" on a decade of activism. The smug smile of secular man who thought he had "come of age" and did not need God has been replaced by a worried frown. Spiritual hunger has broken out in unlikely places. Technological man is attending seances, looking for an exit to the East in mystical and meditation religions, reading his horoscope. He is an Urban Orphan looking for a Father and a Family. He is a systems man whose systems are not working. Stagflation is sapping his economic strength. Skepticism has sapped his spiritual strength. Chemicals of drugs

and sensations of sex have failed to satisfy. He is searching. Around the world this hunger is found.

The fresh voice of God comes from Jesus the Same Yesterday, Today and Forever.

2. The Shape of Physical Hunger.

Famished men stirred the compassion of a caring Christ. Those tears must be flowing today in a world in which nutrition experts are seriously debating what they call "triage". That's a term for separating nations into three groups: those whose food needs will be met no matter what we do, those whose food needs cannot be met no matter what we do, and those who might be helped by a maximum effort. The suggestion is to write off a third of the world as unsavable and work only on those whose long range needs can be met. The cool calculation of that reasoning is as frightening as listening in on a statistics discussion by the operators of Dachau. The stark facts are that "of the 60 million deaths recorded each year, about 70% are due to hunger or to problems arising from hunger . . . The UN Food and Agricultural Organization estimates that an average of 15,000 people die of malnutrition daily, 10,000 of them children." (Post American, March, 1974, p. 4)

The task seems overwhelming, but the urgency of need demands a Christian conscience response. We must be at the task of demonstrating the validity of our love in very practical ways. "I was hungry and ye fed me" is the recurring theme of a gospel that is good news. Jesus is careful to point beyond a miraculous deed or a temporary meal to eternal power and the bread which lasts. (John 6:27) We must demonstrate love through helping men to eat. We have not met their deepest need until we lead them to the Eternal Bread.

3. The Shape of Sagging Morality

In a book called "Our Depleted Society" Melman Seymour described the inevitable ruin of a throw away culture depleting its resources. We are challenged by a society passing through a cycle of depleting our spiritual heritage. In this bicentennial year, we are celebrating our freedoms. Separation of church and state has created an atmosphere of voluntary response to God which has fostered the strongest religious life of any nation in the world. In the last few decades, however, we have followed a path of license rather than liberty, of unrestrained greed breeding injustice, of political leadership by deception. Families fragment in a society in which non-marriage has become a defensible life style. Trust erodes. Corruption at the top layers of leadership in business, labor, and politics creates a stench of death in the air. Into these graveyards of rotting corpses of consciences mutilated and eternal principles rejected, we are called to go with a resurrection message. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are to call from the grave ideals, long dead, now alive in men who have come to new life.

Few experiences top the thrill of a pastor sensing the Spirit of God challenging and changing men in this dimension of life. In the past few months, I have seen that challenge being met. A business executive calls to say, "Pray for me tomorrow, I'm going to tell them about the slush fund I inherited when I took this job. I may not have a job tomorrow night." A government official says, "I've been studying the book of Amos, and I cannot remain silent about the practices happening in my structure of government." A corporate executive says, "Pray for me. Human lives are at stake in the mess I'm called upon to clean up. I want to discern

the lines between justice and mercy in such a way as to salvage people." Sagging morality becomes one shape of our overwhelming opportunity.

II. Some Strategies for Response

Mark recounts the detail of Jesus set about feeding the five thousand. The task was too massive. Twelve men could not feed five thousand. He began by getting the task into pieces they could handle. Breaking the groups into fifties and hundreds, he set out the strategy for dealing with their hunger. Overwhelming tasks can only be tackled by breaking them up into sections and going to work on each piece of it. Winning America to Christ is an overwhelming task. Witnessing to a weary and warped world is an overwhelming task. These are as impossible as feeding five thousand men with a little hand full of disciples and a lad's lunch. We must somehow get hold of it.

Shortly after the Peace Corps was founded, a fifty-two year-old Black school teacher named Madge Shipp volunteered. When asked why she would leave the security of home for a tiny atoll in which she would be the only American, she said, "When I see the big complicated problems of our world I know I can't understand them, much less solve them. I want to take them and smash them down into little tiny pieces and get a fragment I can hold in my own two hands. I want to work on that."

Let's see how we can get the fragments into our own two hands. What can we do about the strategies to face the overwhelming opportunity of our nation and world? Strategy should include several steps.

1. Assess our Resources

The first instruction of Jesus was, "Find out how much food we have." It looked pitifully small, but the first step was an honest assessment of what he had to work with. Southern Baptists count twenty million persons, institutions, churches, talented young people, thousands of retired skilled persons, financial resources. Over against a world or a nation, it looks pitifully inadequate, but the first step is to see what we have to work with.

We started out in our church family to discover our community needs and work from that. We discovered soon that these needs were limitless. Hurting humanity was on every hand. No matter what we did, we would be swept away on that tidal wave. Then we discovered that the place to start is with the gifts and skills of the people. That's where we must begin. What are the gifts of the fellowship? God has a place for every gift. They fit together in his sovereign plan. This is what Elizabeth O'Conner calls, "The Eighth Day of Creation." It is fitting the gift to the opportunity.

We are blessed in a day of tremendous financial problems with some of the best financial minds in the nation. In a day of surge of creativity in the arts, we number some of the finest talent in communication skills among our number. In a time of crisis of the drug culture, God has gifted us with psychologists and counselors. Persons of political skills sit in our church pews. Teachers and doctors sit beside plumbers and electricians. Let's find out what we have to work with and design our response to a needy world to that pattern. It can be done in the churches and in the larger fellowship. Our computer technology could build the largest skill bank in the world if our imagination and dedication could be fired up with that vision. The question to Moses "What is that you have in your hand" is more than an ancient inquiry on a wilderness hillside, it is the key question of our day. That tool of his daily work, given to God, became the instrument of deliverance in one of the miraculous movements of ancient history. What can God do in our contemporary world if we

discover the tools of our lives and make them available unreservedly to His work!

2. Attend to the Fundamentals

All the talent in the word is to no avail unless we attend to the fundamentals of leading men to Christian experience, nurture, acceptance of the authority of God's Word. Those who think they are going to create new spiritual life styles while ignoring birth are as wrong as those who think that whole of the Christian life is spent in the O.B. ward. Birth is essential to life but it is not all of life. Bill Glass, ex all pro-football player, helped me understand something when he explained why the professional football teams seem to do so much in the last two minutes of the game. The two minute drill amazes me. He says that the coaches' instruction in the furious pace of disorder and bedlam at the closing moments of the game is simple. When everything is falling apart and the pressure is on, get back to the basics. Just remember your basic job and do it. Pay no attention to the frills and fancies. Back to the basics of blocking, tackling, running, passing. In a world gone wild, we need to be back to the basics of what it takes to meet God, to grow in God, to depend on God, to expect from God.

3. Attempt the Innovative

One of the great steps Baptists have taken in recent years has been to begin to risk failing without fearing that we would be failures. We are not as good in our cities and in our world mission witness with the understanding that we can't just do yesterday's methods faster and meet today's challenge. It is sometimes a painful process. It is always an exciting one. Some of our finest moments are coming under creative leadership which is willing to attempt something different. We are beginning to reject what Ralph Neighbour calls the "Church's Seven Last Words." "We've never done it that way before."

In international missions we are discovering the day of Lay Involvement in missions, acceleration of crusade evangelism utilizing laymen, natural disasters as days of opportunity for service and change in strategy, and hunger as an urgent responsibility. Our strength as Baptists has always been the openness of our people at the grass roots to sense the wind of the Spirit and respond. That breath of mission awareness and willingness to give of themselves is moving in fantastic proportions. If we miss opening the channels for it, we will eternally regret it.

A solemn word must be uttered. Tokenism may be our undoing. By tokenism I mean, we see a vast need or a new strategy. We assign a man, open an office, issue a press release, print a program, and assume we are doing something. It is significant that Jesus instructs his men to pick up the overflow and they gather twelve baskets of food. There is a total response by Jesus, not a token one.

In national missions we are discovering new urban strategies, openness of the mass media to direct confrontation with the gospel, designing the style of programs to the various publics we discover in our communities. The opportunities are immense. God has gifted us with fantastic resources if our imagination can conceive of the means for harnessing them for the Gospel. Accelerating what we are doing, we can develop lay Christians to impact each public in the Master's name.

We are already developing a Phillip People, (Acts 8:26) lay witnesses who sense the Spirit of God guiding them to Gaza roads to share Jesus with searching people.

We need to develop Titus People; those who are laboring in the tough places of racially changing neighborhoods and inner cities. They are the ones who should be brought to feel the support of the whole family. "For this cause" Titus, "I

left you in Crete." (Titus 1:5)

We need a network of Samuel People standing beside the decision-makers of the political life of our land to say "God forbid that I sin against you by ceasing to pray for you" (I Samuel 12:23), to counsel "To obey is better than to sacrifice" (I Samuel 13:22), and to add the counsel of Christian conscience to the formulas of public decisions. Men need to know "Ebenezer . . . hitherto the Lord has helped us." (I Samuel 7:12)

We need to take our creative artists and musicians seriously in the witness to our contemporary world. A Jeremiah People of Baptist Christians could dramatically portray the message of God in every media. A whole network of dinner theaters and other types of dramatic groups could witness to groups of persons never touched in stained glass atmosphere. This age of spiritual awakening is providing the stimulus of creativity, as the Holy Spirit always does. We simply need to provide the vehicle to channel the gospel through it.

We need a new emphasis on the Lydia People whose hearts the Lord opens (Acts 16:14). Women of leadership and executive skill can mean the break through into new continents of need. The seller of purple businesswoman was a prototype of persons of great potential sharing Christ in every layer of contemporary society.

To these can be added many other forms of challenge. A Cornelius People could supplement the work of Chaplains in a network of nature to those in military service and law enforcement service. A Timothy People (II Timothy 2:2) who take truth and share it with men who in turn teach others could be dealing with the educational world with the thrust of the truth of God. A Luke People could accelerate medical ministries in the name of the Great Physician.

All of this has risk to it. Some of it we are doing. More than this must be done if the mighty deeds necessary to our day are to be done.

III. *The Spirit Must Be Breathed Upon Resource*

The key to the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand was not in the gift of the lad's lunch. Nor was it in the handling of the crowd. The key was in the breath of Jesus blessing the resources to match the need. He looked up into heaven and blessed it before it was distributed to the people. (Matt. 14:19) These are days in which the Spirit of God is breathing afresh across our world. It seems to be in pockets of spiritual hunger. The moving of God is very profound and electrifying. Whenever he moves, he not only transforms he also opens doors and resources for the forwarding of his reign in the affairs of men.

1. He requires an utter dependence upon Him

Desperation seems to be the key to His moving. The disciples were utterly dependent upon him. They had no way to meet the needs of the hungry multitudes. They could be His instruments of distribution, but they could not create the food. They had no answer.

Across the land men with no answer become fertile ground for God to move. Like Lepers in the siege of Samaria, they are desperate enough to go out into the darkness to find out if anyone is out there. I know what that personal desperation means. I know what that desperation for a family of faith means. It is only in that attitude of absolute dependence that God is freed to move in mighty ways to meet our needs. Our greatest danger is that some successes will sap our awareness of need. He moves to banish our fear, provide for our hunger, change our circumstances, create our victories only when we are aware that we can not do it ourselves.

I have walked in that wilderness longing for the assurance of God. Like Moses one cries for God to let him see His face.

Then one asks for a road map that will let him know the way. The answer of God to the desperate spirit is to ignore the request for maps and reject the special privilege of seeing his face. The answer, however, is also to discover the shekinah glory of God in that infilling and to find his footprints all around. And that is Glory!

It is glory to discover God at work convicting of sin and turning people to himself. Young people trusting us because we don't ask about how they look on the outside but what they are on the inside . . . at a World Crossroads because of military training programs we discover God at work among men and women of many cultures bringing them to trust His Son with their lives. Fragmented and broken people are being made whole. In the mystery of His moving, we become aware that the cup of cold water In His Name creates responses around the world.

Desperation knows no class. Rosargentina Pinel-Cordova Smith came from one of the leading families of Honduras. Consul General of Honduras in our city, she is in touch with political power in her country. She had sought God all her life. Two years ago she was desperate. Circumstances closed in on her life. Faithful to the rituals of her religion, she felt abandoned and defeated. A Southern Baptist Missionary, Ralph Wilson, came to get papers cleared. He sensed her yearning and suggested she contact the pastor of the First Baptist Church. She came to church first. The Holy Spirit was powerfully moving. She was at the altar weeping out her need to God. He transformed her into a bold witnessing Christian. The Hurricane Fifi hit Honduras. In its aftermath, God has powerfully moved through her life to touch people of every rank and station in that country.

Desperation knows no class. A fragmented and lonely lady whose husband had abandoned her watched on television. She works at a warehouse in manual labor. She began to write signing her name only as "The Misfit". Weekly letters came from the Misfit. She poured out her hurts and pain. One day she signed a name along with the P.O. Box number through which we had corresponded. Eleanor Weaver was on her way to a family! Gradually, months of contact with our helping people, watching on T.V., and four months ago, Eleanor celebrated new life in baptism. Alienated and alone, she now has a family of faith and an experience of God. The struggle with her feelings will continue, but she is not alone. The Spirit of God has breathed upon her.

Can a denomination of Christians become desperate enough to free the Spirit to move? A church can. Surely a fellowship can. Surely a city and a nation can. Spiritual awakening depends on it. Famished men are desperate for it. Let it be! O, God, let it be!

2. He requires an unusual faith in Him

It looked very foolish to the disciples to be organizing five thousand for a feeding program when the only food in sight was a lunch for a little boy. They knew better than to reject the command, however, because they believed in the Man who told them to do it.

Can we structure ourselves for tackling a whole world . . . a whole nation . . . a whole city and claim it for God. It sounds presumptuous to say it. It sounds like a Messianic complex to expect it. So let it be. We are captured by the greatest Messianic Complex in History . . . the Messiah Himself has told us to do it. Get ready for the miracle. Get ready for the event. Faith is believing that God knows what He is doing . . . and acting on that belief. He cannot use us while we are calling discussion sessions on whether He cares that the multitudes are hungry. He cannot use us while we remain comfortably captured by stained glass approaches to life. He can only use us when we are on tip toe of alertness

Mighty deeds with meager resources

for the slightest movement of his direction. When we accept His instructions whether we understand all He is up to or not, we have the joy of helping Jesus perform His wonders in our world.

Conclusion

One night recently the telephone rang as it is wont to do in the wee hours in a pastor's house. This time a sobbing voice was shrieking out drunken, "I need someone to touch me . . . I just need someone to touch me. I'm so alone. I'm so desperately alone. I need someone to touch me." After I could get her calmed down enough to talk, I asked God to

make me the instrument to help her. Holed up in a cheap apartment not far from our church house was this lonely aching woman. I was later to discover that in an earlier, sunnier day, this very woman had edited a book entitled "Hope for a Broken World."

I think I hear in the echo of that shrill cry, the hungry multitudes of our world. No longer experts on hope for a broken world, they are broken themselves. Their cry in the night is "I need someone to touch me." And the mighty Miracle of God is that He can take our meager resources and through us he can do just that. In his touch is Hope for a Broken World.

Religious educators told not using women waste of God-given talent

MIAMI BEACH, June 9—Members of the Southern Baptist Religious Education association Sunday were urged to re-think the role of women in their field and in the denomination.

Cliff Elkins of University Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas told the group, "when we speak of women in religious education in the broadest sense, we must recognize the tremendous contribution women have made to the cause of Christ throughout the history of Southern Baptists.

"Can you imagine our mission work without the contribution of women? Can you imagine what the educational organizations in our church would be like without women?

"We preach that God is no respecter of persons, we preach that all our talents belong to God, we preach that all should respond to the call of God to make the best use of our talents—yet we then put limitations as to how far a person can go in leadership in our churches, in our institutions, agencies and boards—based to a great degree on the sex of the person."

Elkins charged that many times, knowingly, a different standard is set in pay, fringe benefits, retirement benefits, including retirement age.

"We still cast women in the historic and cultural setting of the past," he said. "By our man-made limitations we waste, discourage, and limit a vast reservoir of

God-given talent."

He suggested that the organization, and local churches, take a "page" from the operating manuals of government and business which has "learned that women can do more than type, make coffee and keep an appointment book."

Elkins suggested ways the local church could improve the status of women. He said it should:

- Examine its staff structure to encourage women to participate in the decision making process at a staff level;
- Correct present inequalities where men and women are being paid different salaries for substantially the same type work;
- See that all administrative staff members — male or female — have the same access to secretarial work;
- When an opening occurs, look for the best qualified person, regardless of age or sex;
- Become familiar with the government's laws and regulations in the area of women's rights and respond, not because of the law of the land, but because of the love of God.

Elkins reminded that the "basics" for the person whose personal commitment is to Christ and His way are still powerful forces for following those suggestions.

Elkins prefaced his comments with statistics from a survey which he said, showed that women are discriminated against in hiring and in salaries.

He told of one woman religious educator who wrote him, "The pastor of my church has attempted to relegate me to secretarial status, has told me he 'let' the church call a woman so the salary would be less than if they called a man, and that he believed women should not hold places of leadership in the church."

Elkins was followed by Dr. Ralph C. Atkinson Jr., professor of religious education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, who reminded the group that only one-fourth of the people working in religious education are members of the SBREA.

Tracing a history of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association, Atkinson said the organization needed to look at ways of cooperating with other organizations within the denomination, seek ways of organizational growth, and establish standards of professional ethics. He also urged the group to seek ways of disseminating information about religious education methods and to establish a structure adequate for future needs.

MIAMI BEACH, June 5—Convicted "White House hatchet man" Charles Colson told more than 13,000 Southern Baptists here Monday night how he found Jesus Christ.

Colson traced a life of ambition, of striving for attainment, of achievement and success, leading to his post as one of the top five advisers to President Richard M. Nixon.

The dark-haired man told of leaving the White House in the weeks before Watergate broke and of meeting an old friend who had become a Christian.

Colson said he did not accept Christ just then, but he began to see the temples he had built "slipping away."

It was on an August night in 1973, that Charles Colson wept as he sat parked in his friend's driveway in Washington. Soon, he "asked Jesus Christ to come into my life.

"It was as you all so well know not the end of anything except my old life. It was only the beginning—starting out on a long, hard journey."

The journey led through derision, laughter and "poooh-pooohs."

It led through courts and grand juries and congressional testimony. It wound up with Colson stripped naked, a prisoner in Maxwell Federal Prison Camp in Montgomery, Ala., where he served seven months for disseminating derogatory information about Daniel Ellsberg.

Colson told of the degradation of prison; but also of the "wonderful joy of seeing Christ at work" in the lives and circumstances of the men imprisoned with him.

The former lawyer talked of his dream of working with people in prison.

"If I have anything that I can leave with you, it is the appeal, the crying I heard of hundreds of thousands of men and women who sit tonight frightened, forgotten and alone in the dark concrete holes of American prisons...

"I can only speak to you of the suffering of men's souls, of our less fortunate brothers who need us, who need God's work and Christ's love."

He added he counts it all loss—"the White House, the limousines, the yachts, the six figure income, all the temples of wealth and power, all of it loss compared with the joy of being able to walk this life with Christ Jesus and for this night that you have allowed me to be here with you to experience the joy and glory we share together in knowing his Life."

Colson, the key speaker in the annual pastors' conference which featured sessions Monday morning and afternoon as well as the night session, drew a standing ovation when he completed his talk.

During the meeting, Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn., was elected president, replacing James Pleitz, pastor of First

Baptist Church of Pensacola, Fla.

Rogers is a director of the Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship, a group dedicated to exposing "theological liberals" the denomination employs as staffers and teachers.

Joe Crumpler, pastor of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio was elected vice president, and Andrew Hall, pastor of First Baptist Church of Delray Beach, Fla., was named secretary-treasurer.

A bevy of top speakers, including three former Southern Baptist Convention presidents, treated the pastors to sermons on the "High Calling of God."

W.A. Criswell of Dallas, Carl Bates of Charlotte, N.C., and R.G. Lee of Memphis, Tenn., spoke on the various aspects of the pastor's life.

One speaker flailed the "pharisaical creedalists" of the SBC.

Russell Dilday, pastor of Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church of Atlanta, Ga., noted there is disagreement within the convention and said "inability to handle them in a Christian manner often threatens the fellowship of the convention and churches."

"I believe we have too many groups checking on the orthodoxy of other groups. I believe we have too many pastors lurking to catch their brother pastors in some error. I believe we have too many pharisaical creedalists wasting precious time in a 'ministry' of casting the mote from other people's eyes."

John Claypool, pastor of Broadway Baptist Church, Fort Worth, urged the ministers to get more actively involved in their communities. He called this activity essential for authentic ministry.

'White

House

plumber'

gives testimony

by Dan Martin



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Christian High Adventure is spiritual retreat through mountaineering and wilderness exploring. Personal growth through Bible study, reflection, rap sessions, private counsel. Activities include backpacking, camping, fishing, bouldering, rope climbing, environmental care, snow and survival techniques. Sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission and Sunday School Boards. Four expeditions in Wyoming, New Mexico and California, July and August.

Contact: Chuck Clayton, Christian High Adventure
P.O. Box 317, Carnelian Bay, Calif. 95711

Directors of missions re-elect Arkansan

MIAMI BEACH, June 9—The Southern Baptist Associational Superintendents of Missions, in their annual meeting preceding the Southern Baptist Convention, approved a proposal for a Southern Baptist Associational Emphasis Week, adopted a new constitution for the national organization, and heard four speakers challenge them to carve out a national mission identity.

The group, meeting Monday at Miami Beach's DiLido Hotel, also elected their immediate past vice-president as president, chose a president-elect and re-elected three other officers. Among those re-elected was Ray McClung, director of missions for Pulaski County Association.

The proposal for time on the official SBC calendar is the latest in a three-year effort by the group to gain such an emphasis on associational missions.

The proposal approved by the missions directors would set aside the third week in May as "Associational Emphasis Week." Such a week, according to the adopted motion, would be sponsored by the Home Mission Board's Program of Associational Administration Service and involve all SBC agencies and programs. Each state convention, association and church would decide how to relate to the emphasis.

In an answer to a question from the floor, outgoing President S. Lawrence Childs Jr. said that, although some associations might take a special offering in conjunction with the week, an offering was not the primary purpose of the emphasis.

It was out of concern over the possibility of such an offering competing with current ones for state, home and foreign missions that prompted the denomination's laymen's organization, the Brotherhood Commission, to decline sponsorship of such an emphasis last year.

The proposal will now be brought before the convention's calendar committee for consideration.

The new constitution establishes the name of the organization as the "Southern Baptist Associational Directors' Conference," establishes a three-member nominating committee appointed by the president to bring nominations for officers and committee members, and changes the office of vice-president to that of president-elect.

The organization elected Richard G. Bryant of Miami Baptist Association as president, chose John Brown of Norfolk, Va., as president-elect and re-elected secretary Ray McClung of Little Rock, treasurer Robert Helmich and newsletter editor D.E. Strahan.



NEW OFFICERS—Southern Baptist directors of missions elected new officers in their annual session June 9. They are (l-r) Richard Bryant, director of associational missions for Miami (Fla.) Baptist Association, president; John N. Brown, executive secretary of the Norfolk (Va.) Baptist Association, president elect; Ray McClung, director of missions, Pulaski County Association, Little Rock, Ark., secretary; and D.E. Strahan, director of missions, Central Baptist Association, Wisconsin, editor. (SBC Photo by Fon Scofield)

On the cover



SBC OFFICERS '75—Officers elected by the 118th Southern Baptist Convention are (l-r) President Jaroy Weber, pastor of First Church, Lubbock; Hunter Riggins, a layman from Poquoson, Va., first vice-president; and James Monroe, a pastor from Fort Walton Beach, Fla., second vice-president. (SBC Photo by David Clanton)

The HOME MISSION BOARD — Spreading the Word at Home



through evangelism and language missions

The Home Mission Board, supporting a well-trained mission force of near 2,200, works at home in America to take the gospel of Christ across hampering barriers. Whether establishing missions and churches in pioneer areas, teaching new methods in lay witnessing, producing musical dramas and other evangelistic programs, or working with language and ethnic minority groups, the Home Mission Board gives YOU the opportunity through gifts to the Cooperative Program to help them help other Americans.

Evangelism—A Primary Emphasis of the Home Mission Board.

In a time of national crisis the Home Mission Board seeks to meet deep—and often neglected—spiritual needs of many of our nation's people. Through its evangelism program the Board assists churches with lay training, revival ministries, new methods in witnessing, and in efforts to extend the Good News of Christ beyond the church to the community. As part of this effort the Board, in an innovative move, recently produced the first evangelistic TV variety series, "Spring Street, USA."

Another major emphasis of the Board centers in its work with language and ethnic groups. In this area it assists in establishing new missions and churches; in providing specialized ministries; and in supplying literature, hymn books, Bibles in various languages, and other helpful materials.

In crisis troubled America the Home Mission Board strives to hear the spiritual outcries of people and give them answers. Your church contributions through the Cooperative Program allow you to play a vital role in voicing those answers. Remember, you provide the *MEANS* to the *WAY*.



COOPERATIVE PROGRAM 50th ANNIVERSARY

Third in a series of twelve ads on the Cooperative Program.

Is the Bible relevant

Psalm 19:7-11; Matt. 4:1-10

The answer that one gives to the question of biblical relevance will depend on that person's point of view. The Christian believer might answer the question both academically and experientially, and in each instance the question gets a resounding "yes." One's academic answer might run like this: the Bible is relevant, i.e., it speaks to modern persons and helps to enrich their lives because (1) wisdom is packed into these ancient writings. The modern person is able to deduce eternal, universal principles from the scriptures; which principles can then be applied to contemporary situations. (2) The Bible also speaks to us because God's Spirit makes use of the scriptures as an instrument through which he speaks to us.

John Calvin, the great Protestant reformer, stressed this second point: he said that when the word of God, i.e., the message of God as contained in the Bible, accompanied by the Spirit of God, speaks to the human heart it becomes the living word which is able to bring about regeneration and conversion.

Although the Holy Spirit is not confined to the written word and may speak directly to us through other media, or immediately, his favorite method seems to be to convey his message through some passage or passages of scripture.

The Christian's experiential answer to the question of scriptural relevance might run like this: The Bible is relevant because (1) we can see the wholesome effect of the Bible on western civilization. The uplifting influence of the Bible on art, music, culture, public and private morality, and government cannot be denied.

(2) The Bible is also relevant because we who are believers have followed its central guidelines to find meaningful and satisfying experiences.

The disbeliever might be inclined to argue against all these answers because he has not found them to be corroborated in his own experience. The Bible has something to say to such a person: "Taste and see that the Lord is good." (Ps. 34:8)

Jesus made good use of scripture in his successful struggle against the temptations prompted and promoted by the devil (Matt. 4:1-11) He found that the word of God was equally effective in helping him to see the issues clearly, and in beating back the onslaught of Satan.

(1) The first temptation was directed to his physical appetite. Jesus recalled a

passage which helped him to see the issue: "Man shall not live by bread alone" (Deut. 8:3) The Lord saw that there are deeper needs in one's life—needs that cannot be satisfied on the physical level. He had given up his place in glory to identify with created humanity in which a person must depend on God for daily sustenance: therefore, it would have constituted a breach of covenant to call up his divine power and assert authority over nature in satisfying his own needs. Other persons trusted in God to satisfy their needs, and he would, too.

Furthermore, the passage which he quoted reminded him that he could not satisfy the deeper needs of the people he came to serve by providing bread for them.

(2) The thrust of the devil's second temptation was directed at his religious life, in an effort to get Jesus to make a wrong use of his faith. Having discovered in the first round that the scriptures could be employed quite effectively against him, Satan sought to use a passage for his own benefit.

Again, Jesus called up a passage from Deuteronomy which helped him see clearly the issue: "You shall not tempt the Lord your God." (6:16) Had he yielded to this temptation, the sin would not have been in trusting God to send his angels to uphold him; it would have been in deliberately thrusting himself into a position of danger while putting God to the test to see if he would intervene to protect him. God does not play games.

The relevance for us of Jesus' second round with the devil is precise: we must not play games with our Christian faith. The person who deliberately defies natural law and endangers his life in an effort to demonstrate faith is a fool. A person has all the opportunities one needs for showing faith in the normal experiences of life, in making the daily rounds and performing daily duties.

(3) The third temptation was aimed at Jesus' normal human ambition. In all serious-minded human beings, ambition has two essential elements: one wants to develop and make full use of his assets in attaining selfhood, realizing self-fulfillment; also, one wants to do all the good he can in society, making a better world.

This third temptation appears to be more appealing if it is considered a satanic suggestion that Jesus channel all his talents into world politics, thus gaining and exercising control over all the earth; but the text states that the

devil laid down a strong condition: Jesus was to fall down and worship Satan. In essence, the inducement was designed to persuade the Lord to set up an earthly, political kingdom and avoid the route of suffering and death. But Jesus was so fully committed to the will of the Father that to abandon God's plan would have meant to rebel against God and to acknowledge the lordship of Satan. The third passage quoted from Deuteronomy drew out the issue precisely: "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve." (6:13)

The account of the final temptation, as recorded by Matthew, is fully relevant for twentieth century believers. It helps us to find an answer for these questions: To whom shall we listen for life's directions? Whom shall we obey? Whom shall we worship? Is life to be lived out in pursuit of earthly ambition, or in line with a life commitment to duty?

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Church vocations conference

NASHVILLE--The "Horizons Conferences," scheduled for Glorieta and Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Centers this summer, will be open to youth and young adults interested in knowing more about church vocations as well as those already committed to those vocations, says Howard Foshee, secretary of the Sunday School Board's church administration department.

The conferences will be conducted during the Bible-Preaching weeks at the conference centers. Dates for the two weeks are Aug. 2-8 at Ridgecrest and Aug. 16-22 at Glorieta.

This is the first large-scale meeting of its kind at the conference centers, adds Foshee. The conference is designed to give those interested in church vocations a foundation for making the right decisions for the work that God is calling them to do. Planning and preparation for church vocations will be among the topics surveyed.

June 22, 1975

In missionary outreach

Acts 13:1-3; 14:8-20



Fischer

Did you hear about the church in Texas that discovered oil on the church property? The story goes that the people promptly closed their membership and began paying members monthly royalty checks. If this widely

circulated story is true, we can all point a finger of reproof and offer many critical remarks about their attitude. But in our Bible study for Sunday, let's measure our own church with this first century congregation.

A commissioning at Antioch (vv. 1-3)

The church at Antioch had grown and developed as believers had boldly witnessed to the Gentiles. The church now included prophets and teachers. (v. 1) This list of leaders indicate that the church had truly become cosmopolitan. Barnabas was a Jew from Cyprus. Simeon was a Roman name, but was also called Niger, and could well have come from Africa. Lucius of Cyrene was from North Africa. Manaen was a member of the court of Herod, probably moving in aristocratic circles. Saul, of course, was a Jew.

It was these men from such varied backgrounds who were worshipping the Lord and fasting. We can imagine they were especially concerned about their native countries as they prayed. These leaders knew of the need and were earnestly praying that God would send the right people to preach the Good News.

The Holy Spirit said to them, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." This is the beginning of the first missionary journey of the New Testament Church. Heretofore the disciples were scattered by persecution. Here the Holy Spirit is calling out men to spread the Gospel to those who have never heard.

After fasting and praying and the laying on of hands, the two men were sent on their way. This missionary journey was to last two years. Their first stop was at Salamis, located on the east coast of the island of Cyprus. They next visited the island city of Paphos. A boat then transported them to Asia where they traveled to Antioch of Pisidia. Following their stay there, they went to Iconium, and then south 20 miles to Lystra.

A new approach (vv. 8-18)

We pick up their journey at Lystra (v. 8), a city in Lycaonia. It was here that Timothy, his mother Eunice, and grandmother Lois lived. Paul and Barnabas became participants in a healing miracle. This man who had never walked before now leaped to his feet and walked. This event caught the attention of the city. The people immediately thought that Paul and Barnabas were gods come down in the likeness of men. (v. 11) This verse indicates the people spoke the language of Lycaonia. This being a foreign language to them, Paul and Barnabas did not immediately realize that the people were preparing to offer sacrifices and worship them.

An explanation of the people's behavior lies in a historical legend of Lycaonia. The story goes that Zeus (Jupiter) king of the gods, and Hermes (Mercurius) god of speech and the messenger of the gods, came to earth, but received no hospitality. Finally there were two peasants, Philemon and his wife Baucis, who received them. The gods later destroyed everyone except this one couple. So when Paul and Barnabas were part of this healing miracle, the people of Lystra thought these were the gods returning to earth.

Notice in verse 13 that the priest of Jupiter, whose temple was at the entrance of the town, brought oxen and garlands to the city gates in order to join the people in offering sacrifices. Everyone must have been very much excited to think the gods had come to Lystra. With the priest of Jupiter involved, we can visualize a great celebration taking place.

Barnabas and Paul discovered the intents of the people and immediately tore their clothes in protest and ran out among the people (v. 14). They said, "Why are you doing this? We are men like yourselves, and bring you good news. Turn away from these foolish and vain things and worship the living God."

Since these people were not familiar with Jewish background, Paul started discussing the works of God through nature. He gave witness to the things all men knew about — the sky, the earth, the sea, rain, harvest, nourishment, and happiness. After his explanation of their mission and the work of God, verse 18 indicates that there was still some difficulty in preventing the people from offering sacrifices to them.

The stoning of Paul in Lystra (vv. 19-20)

These next two verses (19 and 20) are almost incomprehensible following such adulation by the people. We see some Jews arriving at Lystra from Antioch and Iconium (these are the two previous towns Barnabas and Paul had visited on this missionary journey.) They may have been following just to undo the work of Barnabas and Paul. Hearing of the excitement caused by these two missionaries, the Jews branded them as liars and persuaded the people to revolt against them.

The people stoned Paul and afterward dragged him out of the town, leaving him for dead. Lystra was a Roman outpost, and after they had stoned Paul they realized the consequences of killing a Roman citizen. So they left him outside the city gates in order to escape Roman justice. The disciples of Lystra, which Barnabas and Paul had made, now stood around Paul. Regaining consciousness he got up and went back into town! What courage we see in this act of Paul. Instead of remaining outside the city, he walked directly into the face of his persecutors. That surely gave the followers of Christ added courage for the future.

Conclusion

These verses have given us a brief history of the calling out and work of Paul's first missionary journey. The growth and excitement in the Antioch church might well have caused the leaders to keep their emphasis at home, but instead they prayed for a world vision. Missionary outreach is the lifeline to the lost of our world. So much of the time we present the plan of God to those who have already committed their lives to Him. We ask people to make commitments that have already made the decision, while large numbers of people never hear the Gospel of Christ.

How can you and I in our church reach out and touch the lost? We must find and fulfill our mission in today's world.

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A smile or two

The teacher, to impress on his pupils the need of thinking before speaking, told them to count 50 before saying anything important, and 100 if it was very important. Next day he was speaking, standing with his back to the fire, when he noticed several lips moving rapidly. Suddenly the whole class shouted: "98, 99, 100, Your coat's on fire, sir!" — *Baptist Courier*.

A 102 year old man took his first trip out of the mountains and saw his first automobile and died. He didn't see it in time. — *Leo Aikman*.

The teacher was telling her husband about the excitement when classes dismissed for the summer vacation.

She said, "There was foot-stomping, table-banging and all-around rejoicing." "Real wild, huh," commented the

husband who had lived with nine months of nightly reports on conduct in the classroom.

"It sure was wild!" his teacher-wife agreed, adding, "And that was just in the teachers' lounge."

One day instead of serving the usual hot meal, the school cafeteria handed out peanut butter and jelly sandwiches as the entree. After lunch, a satisfied first grader marching out the door complimented the cafeteria manager: "Finally, you gave us a home-cooked meal."

Riding in a propeller airplane, the passengers saw first one and finally three of the four engines conk out. The cabin door opened and the pilot appeared with a parachute on his back. "Keep calm folks and don't panic — I'm going for help."

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Attendance report

Church	June 8, 1975 Sunday School	Church Training	Church Adm.
Alexander, First	90	45	1
Alma, First	334	40	
Alpena	84	26	1
Augusta, Grace	105	57	5
Bentonville			
Central Avenue	76	31	
First	230		
Mason Valley	91		
Berryville			
First	139	57	
Freeman Heights	145	34	4
Rock Springs	74	42	
Booneville, First	246	205	
Bryant, First Southern	70	45	
Camden, Cullendale First	504	109	
Clinton, Friendship	95	49	3
Concord, First	90	37	1
Conway			
Pickles Gap	201	113	7
Second	263	40	
Crossett, Mt. Olive	387	103	
El Dorado, West Side	345	343	3
Forrest City, First	597	72	
Ft. Smith			
First	1093	247	10
Grand Avenue	821	202	1
Adoffett Mission	20		
Temple	129	64	
Trinity	149	63	3
Windsor Park	797	238	1
Gentry, First	151	51	
Gilham, First	90	47	
Grandview	47	44	
Greenwood, First	226	79	4
Hampton, First	153	81	
Hardy, First	114	28	1
Harrison			
Eagle Heights	284	152	
Woodland Heights	97	60	
Helena, First	304	61	1
Hope, Calvary	172	91	2
Hot Springs			
Grand Avenue	401	192	10
Leonard Street	106	55	3
Memorial	105	43	5
Park Place	313	77	1
Hughes, First	178	60	
Jacksonville			
First	414	72	
Marshall Road	258	76	2
Jonesboro, Nettleton	223	86	
Kingslon	54	31	
Lavaca, First	201		
Little Rock			
Cross Road	124	78	
Crystal Hill	110	61	1
Geyer Springs First	718	162	1
Martindale	120	63	
Woodlawn	127	45	
Magnolia, Central	551	152	2
Monticello			
First	236	42	1
Second	240	90	
Murreesboro, First	116	46	
North Little Rock			
Calvary	420	109	1
Levy	377	71	1
Park Hill	634	52	
Paragould			
Calvary	240	250	1
East Side	154	59	
First	461	106	2
West View	177	109	
Paris, First	393	57	
Pine Bluff			
Centennial	144	60	
East Side	180	107	2
First	309	53	1
Second	124	77	
South Side	732	136	1
Tucker	5		
Oppelo	13	10	
Watson Chapel	322		
Prairie Grove, First	149	38	1
Rogers, Immanuel	468	77	1
Rover	88		2
Russellville			
First	432	41	6
Second	157	53	1
Sheridan, First	216	73	6
Springdale			
Berry Street	107	49	
Caudle Avenue	132		3
Elmdale	289	78	1
First	1096		6
Texasiana, Trinity	424	187	11
Vandervoort, First	69	39	
Walnut Ridge, White Oak	83	53	
Ward, Cockleburr	44		
Warren, Southside	60	52	2
West Helena	202	101	
Woolster	107	130	

SBC dateline

Summer missions projects

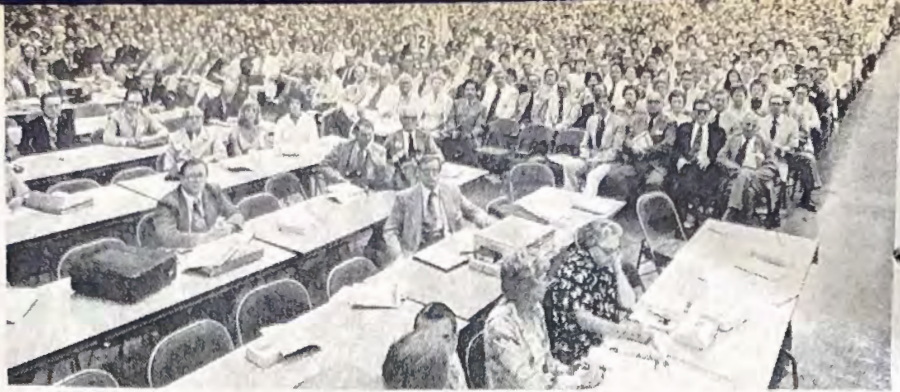
ATLANTA, Ga.—Backpacking, musical drama, deaf work and prisoner rehabilitation are some of the special projects in which the Home Mission Board will involve student, summer missionaries in 1975, according to Emery Smith of the HMB's Department of Special Mission Ministries.

The 610 student summer missionaries named by the HMB will join 223 summer missionaries appointed by the state Baptist Student Unions and 200 students who will work in their home states through their state student departments in a variety of ministries across the country. All are college students who work ten weeks.

This year special skills of the students will be used in particular ministries in HMB work. A group of students will lead backpacking expeditions of young people in the California wilderness and the Wind River Canyon of Wyoming. Christian High Adventure, directed by Chuck Clayton will "relate the adventure of Christ life to the adventure of the wilderness experience."

Students with experience in communicating with the deaf will work in projects in Virginia, California, Michigan, Louisiana, and Kentucky, and a special communications team in journalism and photography will be continuing its second summer relating to the Kansas-Nebraska Baptist convention.

**More
SBC
people**



SBC MESSENGERS (LEFT)--The left side of Miami Beach Convention Center was filled with messengers and guests from around the 12.5-million-member Southern Baptist Convention at the opening session on Tuesday morning. (SBC Photo by Doug Brachey).



PLAYING FOR CHRIST--University of Oklahoma Quarterback Steve Davis gave his Christian testimony before the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference on Monday. (SBC Photo by Floyd Craig)



WMU OFFICERS--Officers serving the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union for 1975-76 are (l-r) Mrs. William Ellis, Shelbyville, Ky., recording secretary, Mrs. A. Harrison Gregory, Danville, Va., newly-elected president and Executive-Secretary Carolyn Weatherford, Birmingham. (SBC Photo by David Clanton)



PASTORS' OFFICERS--New officers elected for the Pastors' Conference Monday afternoon include (l-r) Andrew Hall, pastor of First Church, Delray, Fla., secretary-treasurer; Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church, Memphis, Tenn., president, and Joe Crumpler, pastor of Mount Carmel Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, vice-president. (SBC Photo by David Clanton)

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