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November 8, 1990

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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'Combination' Growth

Arkansas Baptist

November 8, 1990



1990 ARKANSAS BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION
'Building God's Family'

STATE CONVENTION

ABN photo / Millie Gill



Arkansas Baptist Ministers' Wives convened for their annual conference Oct. 29 at Immanuel Church in Little Rock with Lisa White presiding. A conference first was the recognition of charter members Audrie Cantrell, Agnes Whitlow, Geneva Dorsey, Juanita Hatfield, Sue Williams, Mary Francis Vaughn, Thelma Lee Crofts, and Ruby Hook. Elected as 1990-91 officers were (left to right) Marcie Hatfield of Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock, vice-president; Kathy Tippitt of Flanna Hills Church, Fort Smith, secretary; and Kay O'Brien of Calvary Church, Little Rock, president.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



Arkansas Religious Education Association convened for its annual session Oct. 29 in the chapel of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, with Bob Ed Sbotwell, minister of education and administration at Hyde Park Church in Austin, Texas, as speaker. Elected as officers for 1990-91 were (left to right) Phil Hardin of Central Church, Magnolia, second vice-president; John Dresbach of Osceola First Church, president; Bobby Dusek of First Church, Benton, first vice-president; and Carolyn Porterfield, ABSC Baptist Women/Young Women director, secretary-treasurer.

ABN photo / Millie Gill

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ABN photo / Millie Gill

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All three convention officers were reelected to their posts for 1991. (L to R) Vice-President H.E. Williams, President Mike Huckabee and Vice-President Daniel Grant.

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Cooperative Program Awards were presented for 1989 gifts in the Tuesday evening session of the 1990 Arkansas Baptist State Convention. In presenting the awards, Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director, stated that the presentation was not only to just honor a few select churches, but in a sense was a recognition of many churches that are faithful in their Cooperative Program support. Those receiving awards were (left to right) Ray Huddleston of First Church in Almyra, the number one percentage giving church with a membership of 300-1,000; David Laird of Maple Avenue Church in Smackover, number one in per capita giving for 1989; David Napier of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, number one in total gifts; and David Newberry of First Church, Crossett, number one church with a member of over 1,000. Not represented were Calvary Church, Lepanto, number one of churches with a membership of 50-300; and Fulton Church, number one church with a membership of 50 or less.

The Best Ever

J. EVERETT SNEED

The 1990 Arkansas Baptist State Convention was the best convention that we have ever been privileged to attend. It was characterized by great preaching, good music, and a spirit of harmony. There were many factors which contributed to this outstanding convention.

Arkansas Baptists owe a debt of gratitude to President Mike Huckabee. Much of the harmony that our state convention enjoyed was a direct result of the excellent spirit and good natured humor displayed by President Huckabee, who was ably assisted by vice-presidents Dan Grant and H.E. Williams. All three men were re-elected to second terms.

Huckabee's presidential message placed the controversy confronting the Southern Baptist Convention in proper perspective. Since the Newsmagazine space is so limited that we will not have opportunity to print his address, we are sending it to each associational director of missions. We would suggest to individuals that they contact their own associational office for a copy of this address. In the event that an individual is unable to get a copy from his associational DOM, he may send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the ABN and a copy of the presidential message will be sent. This is an address that every Arkansas Baptist needs to read.

This year's convention had two unique elements which perhaps accounted for much of the unity and harmony. President Huckabee asked that every speaker use a portion of his time to give his own personal salvation experience. These were both rewarding and heartwarming.

A second factor was the fine emphasis on prayer that was brought by Esther Burroughs, national evangelistic consultant with women, evangelistic section, Home Mission Board, Atlanta, Ga. Not only were her messages challenging, but each was concluded by a directed prayer time. This emphasis on prayer not only assisted in producing unity in our convention, but should help long range benefits.

The Immanuel Church, Little Rock, deserves the applause of Arkansas Baptists. Pastor Rex Horne and his staff provided well for all of the needs of the messengers and guests.

The passage of the budget by the convention means all that Arkansas Baptists are doing together in our state and around the



world will continue in 1991. The 1991 budget is approximately a 4 percent increase over this year's budget and will send 41.50 percent to SBC mission causes. It should be noted that Arkansas is increasing to the SBC

Cooperative Program by a minimum of .25 of 1 percent each year. Greater increases will occur if churches increase their giving to the Cooperative Program.

The convention also passed the 1991 priority projects. Among these is the Witnessing Giving Life. This project is an effort to increase the witnessing and giving of committed Christians in the local churches. It is the first time that stewardship and evangelism have been tied together. Since witnessing and giving are two important indexes of the Christian life this project is extremely important to the life of Arkansas Baptists.

Another priority goal which was adopted, was the "One For All—A Cooperative Program Promotion Plan." Currently the Executive Board is working with Stan Madden, director of marketing for Baylor University, Waco, Texas, to encourage Cooperative Program giving. The plan is to have a Cooperative Program advocate, with the pastor and church's permission, in each congregation. The *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* will also be featuring churches which significantly give

to the Cooperative Program during 1991. It is our hope to show that churches and individuals who give to world missions receive the blessings of the Lord.

The only point of disagreement which occurred during the convention was in relation to the resolutions. Messengers, however, conducted themselves in a truly Christian manner.

Lester McCullough, ABSBC music secretary, and the musicians enlisted to participate in the convention are to be commended for outstanding musical presentations. The music was inspiring and thrilling and gave support to the convention program.

The Bible study, led by William B. Tolar, provost for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, was truly outstanding. At the outset of each session, Dr. Tolar gave a theme interpretation which emphasized unity and harmony, as well as giving insights into the Word of God.

The challenging messages of Paul Powell, president of the SBC Annuity Board, Dallas, Texas; Paul Sanders, pastor of Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock; and Executive Director Don Moore spoke to the hearts of all of those who were present.

This year's convention should assist Arkansas Baptists in moving forward in service to the Lord during the coming year. If we can strengthen the Cooperative Program, encourage more participation in direct missions, and involve more people in witnessing and giving, we will move forward for the Lord. Our success, as always, depends on our working together and allowing the Holy Spirit to be our guide in every area of life.

Arkansas Baptist

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know

Change is a word that brings nervousness to most of us. In studies of stress, social behaviorists provide a long list of experiences that may cause stress and ask for them to be ranked in the order of their impact. All of these experiences involve change. The change doesn't have to be for the worse for it to cause stress. It simply has to be some alteration of patterns of activity, location, relationships or behavior for it to cause stress.

Change is probably more difficult in the church than in any other area. Our God said, "I change not" (Mt. 3:6). That may have been adopted as a motto for many churches. No truth of God changes. No doctrine changes. We might also say no schedule of services, no order of service, no programs, no attitudes, no goals, no activities change in many churches. None of these are doctrinal in nature, but have come to be so revered that any attempt to change them is viewed almost as an attack upon the fundamentals of the faith.

Changes may involve new names and faces. They may involve new expenditures. They may involve building changes. Ruts are safe but boring. We had rather stay in them than run the risk of something happening we have not had happen before. We like for things to be predictable and acceptable. The result of what we have always done is both predictable and acceptable. "Why do anything different?"

Could this mindset have anything to do with why two-thirds of our churches are not growing? Could this contribute to the fellowship crisis more than 55 percent of our churches have faced in the last 10 years? Could this forecast the future of many of our churches? Unless we begin to see where we need to change and open up to change, we can expect more of the same dismal results and increasing numbers of young adults leaving our churches.

Change in churches has to be led by both pastor and lay people or chaos follows. I hope both will accept this challenge. Change has to have a solid basis and an organized approach. Let's change!

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



RANDALL O'BRIEN

A Pastor's Perspective

Love Comprehended . . . at Last



"He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crouched for our iniquities. . . by his wounds we are healed" (Is. 53:5).

Love Comprehended: Fatherhood

Not until Alyson was born, then Shannon, and Christopher, could I fully appreciate God's love for me. Why then? Because of my new perspective: How could a loving father willfully allow the death of his child? For any reason!

Since I love no human enough to sacrifice Alyson, Shannon, or Chris, it dawned on me: I am that human that my heavenly Father loves just that much. For God to give his only Son to die for Randall O'Brien could mean only one thing: God loved me beyond my own ability to love. Or comprehend. So, in not being able to comprehend God's love, and in realizing it, I at last comprehended grace. No other way to put it.

Love Comprehended: Brotherhood

Not until our medical mission trip to Guatemala could I understand how Jesus would be moved to die so that we might live. One might die for his mother or his child, but for countless others?

Then I watched Rudy practice dentistry, crisis dentistry, with the precious

children of Guatemala. Mothers there unknowingly cause massive tooth decay, even eventual abscess, by putting sugar in their babies' milk. It is not uncommon for these little ones to have seven or eight teeth pulled at one sitting.

The fear and pain of the shots, as well as the extractions, caused some of the children to cry and scream horribly. Something happened to me.

I wanted to take their place. Their shots. Their abscesses. Their pain. I found myself mumbling to no one in particular, "If I could take their place I would. If it would only make them well."

Seeing children suffer messes with you. Big time. Your head. Your heart. Your soul. It just messes with you. Beats you up emotionally.

If I, a selfish sinner, could be so moved to wish to be a substitute for suffering little ones, then the path Jesus walked makes sense to me. He could take my place and I be well. Take my place and I live. God said he could. Love said he would.

Ah, sweet grace. . . understood at last.

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



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Third in a Series of Seven Articles on Church Growth

'Combination' Growth

by J. Everett Sneed
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"Our church's growth is a combination of many different things," declared Don Nall, pastor of First Church, Batesville, a county seat town congregation. In the last 17 years, the church has moved from an average attendance of approximately 120 to an all time high of 309 this year.

The church was established in 1845. Records are somewhat incomplete

until after the Civil War. The church was located at its present site in 1880.

The church lost its building, due to indebtedness, during the Civil War. From 1865 until 1885 the church was without a building, although services continued without interruption at various locations.

Church attendance was virtually static for many years. Under the leadership of Joe Shaver, who served as pastor in 1949-1950, the church grew to an average attendance of approximately 300. After Shaver reentered evangelism, the church began a steady decline.

The church's decline continued from 1951 until 1972. Under the leadership of Bob Parker a new spirit developed in the church and the Sunday School started to grow. Dr. Nall observed, "The greatest thing that Parker did for the church was to develop a spirit of unity."

For approximately six years, under the leadership of Nall, the congregation grew at an unusual pace. In 1982 the church was averaging almost 300. From 1983 until 1988 the church plateaued and experienced very little growth.

In 1989, the Sunday School attendance increased 22 and in 1990, the church has reached a per Sunday high with an average of 309. In a two-year period the church grew 42 in Sunday School average attendance. The church also has had the highest attendance of a single Sunday in its history this year with 384 in Sunday School.

Both Pastor Nall and Minister of Music/Education David M. Tate agree that there are many factors which have produced growth in the county seat town First Church. The congregation's basic evangelistic emphasis is through

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



Pastor Don Nall and Minister of Music/Education David Tate display the church's attendance growth chart.

Evangelism Explosion. The staff enlists people to be involved in this ministry through an annual banquet. The banquet is well planned and has entertainment, usually Christian music, a presentation of the basic ingredients in Evangelism Explosion, a inspirational message or film, and a challenge by Pastor Nall. The goal is to conclude the entire activity, including the meal, in about an hour and a half.

Associate pastor in charge of youth and outreach, Erby Burgess leads a presentation of the involvement required in EE. His presentation takes approximately 10 minutes. Those in attendance are then given an opportunity to ask questions.

After a brief, inspirational presentation, Pastor Nall concludes with a challenge. Individuals are given until the next Sunday to sign up. Those who are willing to become involved in Evangelism Explosion begin their on-the-job training approximately one month later.

The church also uses a somewhat different approach to visitation. On the last Tuesday evening of each month all of the Sunday School classes are encouraged to visit absentees and prospects.

The monthly visitation program starts at 6:45 p.m. Assignments are made and the individuals leave to visit in the homes by 7 p.m. The workers return to the church for refreshments and reports by 8:15 p.m.

"The reports are the highlight of the evening," declared Pastor Nall. In any visitation program there will be those who have failures and those who have excellent success. Nall observed that the workers were always able to leave with a good feeling because there was always someone who had had the opportunity to lead

someone to the Lord or to discover a family that would unite with the church.

Another key to the church's growth is the Deacon Family Ministry Plan. The church has posted on the wall, in the educational building, the families with whom each deacon ministers.

The deacons meet at 8 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month. Seldom is there any discussion of business. The deacons pray for the families whom they serve and talk about reaching individuals who are lost or unchurched from each of these families. Nall said, "Our deacons are extremely effective in reaching lost and unchurched members of the families they serve."

Tate feels that another key to the church's growth is Nall's excellent expository preaching. He said, "If people don't get fed they won't come back to church."

The church also has majored on fellowship. Both Nall and Tate indicated that a major key in the church's growth was the fellowship and caring of the congregation for one another. Tate said, "If one of our members is hurting others will minister to both the physical and spiritual needs of that individual."

The fellowship and openness of the congregation reaches to all kinds of people. The congregation has black members, Vietnamese members, Korean members, low income people, and divorcees.

Nall believes that another key to the church's growth is the music. Tate said, "We try to have something for everyone. Our music ranges from Handel's *Messiah* to the *Old-Fashioned Singing* by Gene Bartlett which includes "I'll Fly Away."

The major emphasis of the church in music is contemporary, but on Sunday evening and Wednesday evening choruses are frequently used.

The church also uses special events effectively. One of these is Friend Day. Promotion of Friend Day starts eight weeks ahead of the event. A sheet is distributed in which people will list friends at work and in their neighborhood. These are to be friends who are not involved in anyone's church. A "Friendly Contract" is distributed to the members of the church which encourages each individual to have a guest to sign up to come to church with him on "Friend Day." Last year the church had its largest attendance in history with 384 in Sunday School.

In conclusion, Nall said, "The goal of the staff of First Church is to meet the needs of our congregation and the lost of Batesville. We are totally committed Southern Baptists, but we view the numerous programs provided by Southern Baptists as a cafeteria line. We pick, choose, and adapt these programs to meet the needs of our people. God is blessing this approach."

'Building God's Family'

Personal Testimonies Hallmark of Harmonious Convention

by Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist

"When I was 12 under the brush arbor. . . ." "When I was nine in a two-week vacation Bible school. . . ." "After a stint in the Navy. . . ." "My pastor prayed with me. . . ." "My father. . . led me to the Lord."

These are some of the key phrases from the conversion testimonies given in the 1990 Arkansas Baptist State Convention. President Mike Huckabee, pastor of Beech Street First Church, Texarkana, requested that every participant in the 137th session of the convention given an account of his or her initial encounter with Christ. This became the hallmark of the most harmonious annual meeting held in years.

Tuesday Morning

The theme of the convention, which met Oct. 30-31 at Immanuel Church in Little Rock, was "Building God's Family." The session commenced at 8:30 a.m. with congregational singing led by Charles Vance, minister of music at Beech Street First Church in Texarkana. After leading a stanza of "The Family of God," he paused to give a remembrance of his childhood salvation, and continued a hymn medley.

In the first of four emotionally moving prayer emphases, Esther Burroughs, national evangelism consultant with women, evangelism section, SBC Home Mission Board, came to the platform. Her first emphasis encouraged messengers to pray for a world that is lost and hurting. "Ask God to change your vision to global vision," she said. She closed by asking each person to pray with the one beside him.



Burroughs

Building upon the theme, "Building God's Family. . . by unselfish cooperation with each other," William B. Tolar, provost and vice-president for academic affairs, and professor of biblical backgrounds, from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, began the Bible study.

Using as his text 1 Corinthians 3:9, he pointed out that we are co-workers with

God, and that this capacity to labor together is a sign of true spirituality.

Lack of spirituality, he continued, is noted by two signs: jealousy and strife. Even though we are still carnal, worldly beings, we need to be respectful of each other and reduce competition.

In order to reduce divisiveness in the body of Christ, Christians need to be able to disagree on issues without taking it personally.

At 9:15, in a full auditorium and practically filled balcony, the 137th session in the 142nd year of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention was called to order by President Mike Huckabee. At this point he noted he had asked all program personalities to share their testimonies, opened the floor to any person bringing business, and gave the story of his own personal salvation.

Rex Horne Jr., pastor of the host church, welcomed the messengers in traditional fashion and commended Buddy Sutton, chairman of Citizens Against Legalized Lottery, for his efforts.

After members of the convention committees were announced by Huckabee, Credentials Committee Chairman Dillard Miller of Mena enrolled the 1,232 messengers seated at that time. The messengers then adopted the order of business presented by C.A. Johnson of Paragould. After receiving instructions from Tellers Committee Chairman James Guthrie of Gurdon, a number of resolutions were presented by Resolutions Committee Chairman Clyde Jones of Pine Bluff, who then opened the floor for more resolutions. C.A. Johnson then returned to the platform and brought a resolution on CP support, and shared his testimony. Marilyn Simmons of Little Rock brought three more resolutions, for a total of 13.

Betty Harp of North Little Rock, acting as a substitute for Constitutional Commit-

tee Chairman James Pate of Russellville, who was out with a back injury, notified messengers that they would be voting on a constitutional change from using *Kerfoot's Parliamentary Law* to *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* for future convention proceedings.

Charles Vance then returned to lead another "Family of God" hymn medley, after which President Huckabee took the platform for an unscheduled prayer.

Traditional announcements and recognitions of representatives from Baptist hospitals, former state convention presidents, retired Baptist workers and new Arkansans followed. Ray Branscum gave a humorous rendition of his salvation and introduced W.O. Taylor of Melbourne, who is 100 and the oldest minister in the SBC. Taylor's introduction brought messengers to a standing ovation.

At mid-morning, William R. O'Brien, executive vice-president, Foreign Mission Board, brought the board's report. He said that the hallmark of the SBC is being about missions together. Southern Baptists traditionally have two loves: freedom and missions, he commented. The struggle is to give up just enough freedom to work together, and that is the principle of carrying out our work throughout the world.

Glendon Grober, coordinator of the mission partnership between Arkansas and Guatemala, came to the platform and presented Huckabee a gavel made with wood from the Arkansas house in Guatemala. Five people who had been to Guatemala shared moving accounts of their personal journeys.

Vice-President Dan Grant asked the messengers to extend the session for 15 minutes, and the congregation was once again led in song by Charles Vance. Special music by Young Adult Ensemble, from Beech Street First Church in Texarkana,

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followed, using a theme of letting the Christian light shine in the world.

In what was to become the most heralded message of the convention, Mike Huckabee rose to deliver the President's Message.

Entitled "The 10 Commendations," Huckabee began his address by pointing out the failure to communicate. "We haven't communicated very well with each other," he said, "We've said a lot about each other, but not enough to each other."

The first commendation he cited was "Thou shalt love like a family." He firmly stated, "Should our denomination go through a divorce, no one wins and everyone loses."

The second commendation was "Thou shalt live by faith." He asked, "How much of what we do requires God?" He cautioned against mistaking retreats for spiritual renewals.

The third commendation cited was "Thou shalt be found faithful." He said, "Perhaps we've come to worship at the altar of success rather than the altar of sacrifice." The hall broke into applause when he stated, "The greatest work among us is probably (done by) . . . the bi-vocational pastor and the pastor who serves as his own staff."

The fourth commendation was "Thou shalt lift up the fallen." The mark of a strong Christian," Huckabee said, "is that he seeks to restore his brother—not remove him."

The fifth commendation was "Thou shalt learn from thy forefathers." He com-

mended scholars who had stated a clear position on God's Word, and followed by saying, "It doesn't embarrass me one bit to let you know that I believe that Adam and Eve were real people. What does embarrass me is when we draw lines of fellowship over the application and interpretation of the Bible rather than over the authority and inerrancy of the Bible."

The sixth commendation was "Thou shalt not listen to factions." He stated that, "With the leadership of the Holy Spirit, we can come to a decision without consulting some other human being...."

The seventh commendation was "Thou shalt not lead by force." He illustrated his point by saying, "Jesus did not demonstrate his authority by taking a gavel in his hand; he demonstrated his authority by letting spikes be driven in his hand."

The eighth commendation was "Thou shalt not look for fault." He noted, "Trying to decide who's wrong or even who's most wrong won't solve our crisis."

The ninth commendation was "Thou shalt not lack in forgiveness." He pointed out that God will not bless bitterness.

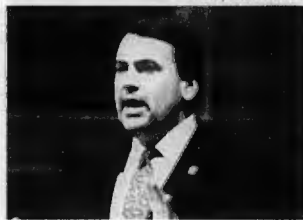
The final commendation was "Thou shalt not limit thy brother's freedom." This means, he stated, "that we can break rank with the prevailing opinion of a budget item and yet still break bread with each other when the vote is over."

He concluded with the moving story of Debbie Wood, a young mother from Batesville, who lost her husband, Randy, in the January crash of an Eastman Kodak corporate jet. For a reason known to God

and her alone, she prayed that his body be left intact. Amidst miles of twisted wreckage, God granted her wish; Randy's body was held together as if made of steel. In June, Debbie attended her first Southern Baptist Convention, and was taken aback by the evident conflict. The Lord gave her a burden to pray, and she realized, "God can hold together whatever is in his hand."

Huckabee concluded, "Our greatest need is to be in God's hand. The God who

ABN photo / Mike Gill



Mike Huckabee

kept the body of Randy Wood intact through a storm and a crash can keep Arkansas Baptists intact. As the Lord demonstrated so vividly to Debbie Wood, I pray he will reveal to us: God can hold together whatever is in his hand."

The messengers, who had filled every available seat and stair and were sitting in the aisles, rose for a prolonged and heartfelt standing ovation. Jimmy Shults, from Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff, closed the morning session with prayer.

**BOYD
PRO SOUND**

5702 West 12th Street • Little Rock, Arkansas 72204

Benton Senior High School

Office of the Principal, Benton Arkansas 72015

Mr. Ken Newberry
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Little Rock, AR 72204

March 16, 1990

Dear Mr. Newberry:

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Principal



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PEOPLE TO DEPEND ON

Tuesday Afternoon

Messengers returned from lunch to the rousing sounds of the Arkansas Music Men Brass led by Glen Ennes, who then also led congregational singing.

Esther Burroughs brought her second emphasis, requesting prayer for our world and our nation. She cited statistics that 69 percent of the U.S. population is lost.

William Tolar delivered the second of his thematic Bible studies, "Building God's Family... by unlimited commitment to global missions." He spoke from two texts, Acts 4:12 and Matthew 24:14.

He cited a classroom illustration about salvation. A student had said to him, "Christians are bigots (in believing the only salvation is through Christ) because all religions are valid." Tolar inquired of him, "Do all physical roads go to the same place? Do all moral roads lead to the same place? If not, then all spiritual roads do not lead to one place. At one time in history a virgin conceived and gave birth without a human father. This boy grew to manhood without sin, was crucified and rose from the dead." "Examine the evidence," he said, "the issue is veracity, not bigotry."

The first part of the Williams Baptist College Report was by Kenneth Startup, chairman of humanities, who enthusiastically

asked the messengers to enter into a spirit of celebration with the college family, as they commemorate WBC's Golden Anniversary. Chancellor Jack Nicholas brought the annual report, citing featured activities for the year.

President Huckabee led in an ovation of appreciation for H.E. Williams and Nicholas. Under miscellaneous business, Don Moore presented plaques to those retiring during the year: Robert Parker, former director of the ABSC Christian Life Council; John Finn, director of the Christian Civic Foundation; and Conway Sawyers, director of the ABSC Missions Department. Katsy McAlister of El Dorado, chairman of the World Hunger Committee, also gave an appreciation plaque to Robert Parker.

Ric Hunt, from Central Church, Jonesboro, led the congregation in a majestic version of "Ali Hail the Power of Jesus' Name." Special music was then brought by Mike Bedford, minister of music, University Church, Fayetteville, and members of his family.

Harry Trulove came to the platform to present the Arkansas Baptist Foundation report. "How does the ministry of the Foundation fit into a 'Building God's Family' theme?" he asked. By taking care of your own family and God's family through careful estate planning. He then presented action on a bylaw that requires the board to meet during convention, putting a strain on the staff.

The Nominating Committee report was offered to the messengers by committee

Chairman Ben Rowell, pastor of First Church, Rogers. Members of the committee stood on the platform as the messengers adopted the nominations.

Executive Board President Jim McDaniel, pastor of First Church, Brinkley, brought the board's report. Jeré Mitchell, pastor of First Church, Fayetteville, brought the budget for consideration. There was one question regarding the percent of the budget sent to SBC causes, which was answered by Don Moore, who informed the messenger it was 41.50 percent. The members then adopted the budget. Associate Executive Director Jimmie Sheffield presented the "Building God's Family Emphasis" for next year which is to support missions and the executive board program of work.

Ric Hunt again led the congregation in singing with "Blessed Assurance" and "Revive Us Again."

The report of the seminaries was presented by Phil Roberts, associate professor of Evangelism and Church Growth, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C. He said that news from his own campus is hopeful, and that many faculty concerns have been answered. He said that the seminaries, as a whole, were holding their own.

The Christian Civic Foundation Report was given by Director John Finn, who presented a plaque to Buddy Sutton, chairman of CALL, for his efforts in defeating the pro-lottery forces in the state. Sutton rose to an standing ovation for his efforts, which were carried on in spite of heavy

ABN photo / Millie Gill



ABSC Executive Board officers for 1990-91 will be Eddie McCord (left), director of missions for Independence Association, Batesville, vice-president; and Jim McDaniel (right), pastor of First Church in Brinkley, president.

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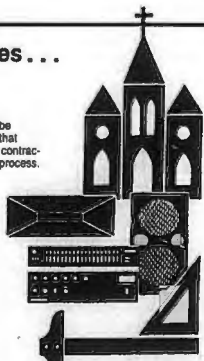
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William Tolar and Rex Horne

criticism. Sutton spoke of the lottery "war" and gave credit to the leaders in education who spoke up against the lottery.

Huckabee then recognized denominational guests, followed by special music from Christi Freel, First Church, Nashville, who gave a beautiful rendition of "So Send I You."

Paul Powell, president of the SBC Annuitiy Board, came to the platform to give the evening's address. Working from the text of Matthew 16:18-19, he spoke on the "Church that Jesus Built or the Church We Ought to Be."

Powell said that the church is the movement that Jesus left on earth to represent him and bears the stamp of divinity upon it. He pointed out three symbols in the Scripture passage: the rock, representing the foundation; keys, representing the church's commissioning; and the gates, representing destiny.

First, he said, the church is founded

upon a great truth. It is not built upon Simon Peter the man, but upon the great confession that he made: "Thou art the Christ."

Second, the church is commissioned to a great task. The keys represent access and opportunity, which open the way of salvation. In noting that in today's world we also need to use the keys of the kingdom, he cautioned that we had "become keepers of the aquarium, not fishers of men."

Turning to the third symbol, he said that the gates mean the church is destined to a great triumph, because "the gates of hell will not prevail against it."

The afternoon benediction was delivered by Rick Hyde, pastor of First Church, Murfreesboro.

Galatians 5:13, Tolar noted that the lberly Paul is talking about is the freedom from having to earn our salvation.

He noted an additional Scripture text, Matthew. 20:26-28. He said that the theme of the passage is loving and serving. This is the kind of love that comes ultimately from God himself, and results in service, as the indwelling Holy Spirit generates it.

Ben Elrod, president of Ouachita Baptist University, came to the podium to give that institution's report. He intrigued the audience at what seemed to be a warning about a strong force getting ready for takeover of America: its communications and news media, its transportation system, education and government. This, he stated, was not an external enemy, but the army of young people of our nation who will ultimately guide the nation in its destiny as far as human effort is concerned. He then went on to point out that the direction of that force can be molded by Christian higher education.

Cooperative Program awards were presented by ABCS associate Executive Director Jimmie Sheffield (see p. 2).

Joe Francis then led the congregation in singing "He Lives." Special music was brought in the form of melodic harmonies by the Arkansas Singing Women, under direction of Jean Pilcher of Little Rock.

The Baptist Sunday School Board report was brought by James D. Williams, executive vice-president of the board. He noted that the board is celebrating its centennial year, and that proclaiming and sharing God's Word is the foundation of

Tuesday Evening

After a dinner break, messengers reconvened with congregational singing led by Joe Francis, minister of music from Second Church, Jacksonville. The Ouachita Baptist University Concert Choir, led by David DeArmond, presented special music.

Ester Burroughs' prayer emphasis was on the stewardship of our gifts and hunger needs. She noted that 97 cents of every dollar stays in the local church, making us rich Christians in a world that is poor. She then led the congregation in prayer.

William Tolar came to the platform to direct the Bible study on "Building God's Family. . . by uncompromised conviction to love one other." Based on the text of

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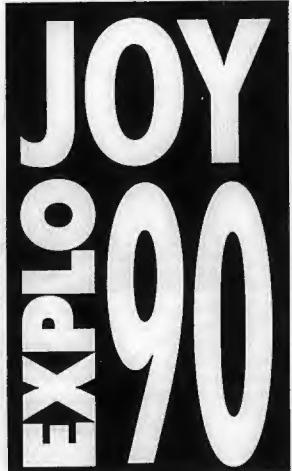


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what the board does. The board has grown to become the world's largest producer of religious literature, he said, noting that "Heritage and Hope" is the centennial theme. He also noted work on new products such as the New American Commentary and the Baptist Hymnal, which will soon be released. He then showed a video portraying the work of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Bold Mission Prayer Thrust was presented by state coordinator Carolyn Porterfield. She noted that Jesus' disciples asked him to teach them one thing: to pray. She pointed out the need to petition for ourselves and intercede for others.

ABSC Music Department Director Lester McCullough led the congregation in singing, "Come Christians, Join to Sing." He then turned to lead the Arkansas Singing Men in a diverse selection of special music.

ABN photo Mike Gill



Don Moore

Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Director Don Moore came to the platform to deliver the evening's address. Speaking from Luke 19, his theme was "Last minute lessons for last day living."

In the setting of the Scripture passage, Jesus was in his last days, Moore noted. Jesus had stayed away from Jerusalem for many months because of intense criticism, so his followers thought he was on the verge of a special announcement: that he was the king.

They also thought that, following the announcement, the kingdom of God would immediately appear. From this parable, Moore extrapolated four lessons, the first being that while the king and the kingdom were coming, there was no relief in sight.

The second lesson from the parable is that responsibility is still in force, Moore pointed out. We are to "occupy" until the Lord comes again. "Occupy" has to do with trade, Moore noted, and each is given equal blessing, and the responsibility is to see what one does with the blessing.

The third lesson is that the Lord expects results. "The results were not in question," Moore said, "they were going to come." The fourth lesson is that return and reward are still in the plan.

He closed by saying that we as Christians need to take a key from the secular corporate world and emphasize service. The McDonald's hamburger chain motto, "Press On" is one we need to incorporate, he stated. He concluded by telling the audience to remember that Jesus will return and will reward.

The benediction was given by his brother Truman Moore, pastor of East Side Church, Fort Smith.

Wednesday Morning

The morning session opened with David Oliver, minister of music from Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock, leading the congregation in singing "Glorious Is Thy Name."

Esther Burroughs led her final prayer emphasis, on praying for the family. She had mates bow together in prayer, and those without their mates to pray for their family.

William Tolar then led Bible study on "Building God's Family... by unprecedented consecration to holy living," with Galatians 5 for the text. He began by defining "holy" as being set apart and related to righteousness.

He also noted a danger: God's Word calls for his people to be set apart, but not to the point of being far removed. There is a chance of becoming a "better-than-you" Christian, like the Pharisees.

The election of officers began as Vice-President Dan Grant opened the floor to nominations for president. John Finn of Life Line Church, Little Rock, presented an eloquent nomination of Mike Huckabee. Don Hook moved that nominations cease and Huckabee be elected by acclamation. The full auditorium raised yellow ballot books in approval. Grant left the platform while Huckabee rose to sustained applause.

Johnny Biggs

then brought the annual report of Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries. He stated that God's blessings have been evident through providing when resources were needed in the agency's ministries. He cited the application of God's love through the last year's new ministry of the boys' ranch. The home for unwed mothers is still a matter of time and money, but groups of volunteers have been diligent in the physical preparation. Biggs stated that he hopes that the agency is leading young people to find direction for their lives.

With Huckabee presiding, the messengers adopted Biggs' report. Huckabee then opened the floor for nominations for first vice-president. Ronnie Mayes from First Church, Beebe, nominated Bill Lewis, director of missions from Harmony Association. Dillard Miller from First Church, Mena, nominated Daniel Grant. James Guthrie gave balloting instructions.

After the ballots had been collected by members of the Tellers Committee, Editor J. Everett Sneed came to the platform to deliver the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* report. He noted that the *Newsmagazine* is seeking to fulfill the Great Commission in three ways. First, by furnishing information. Second, by interpreting the events that are transpiring. Third, through inspiration. He pointed out that the *Newsmagazine's* ministry undergirds all that Baptists do. He named as the *Newsmagazine's* needs: prayer, infor-

ABN photo / Mike Gill



Jere Mitchell (left), pastor of First Church, Fayetteville, was elected vice-president and Delton Beall (right), pastor of First Church, Forrest City, was elected president for 1990-91 when the Arkansas Pastor's Conference convened Oct. 29 at Immanuel Church in Immanuel Robert Tucker of Wynne (not pictured) was elected to serve as secretary. Speakers were Curtis Coleman of Little Rock, Fred Wolfe of Mobile, Ala., Darrell Gilyard of Richardson, Texas, Paul Burleson of Broken Arrow, Okla., David Miller of Heber Springs, Sam Catbey of Oklahoma City, Okla., and Cliff Palmer of Rogers.

mation, and help in gaining subscribers.

President Huckabee came to the platform and messengers approved the report. Huckabee informed the messengers that election of officers could not continue as scheduled, due to lack of first vice-president election balloting results. He then moved the order of business to bring Jimmie Sheffield to the platform for the Witnessing-Giving Life presentation.

Sheffield explained that Witnessing-Giving Life is a cooperative effort between the Stewardship and Evangelism Departments. It is a call to commitment to witness and to give. The heart of the program is revivals scheduled for the fall of 1991. After a video presentation, ABCS Executive Director Don Moore, President Mike Huckabee, Stewardship Director James Walker, and Evangelism Director Clarence Shell signed the Witnessing-Giving Life Proclamation.

Huckabee then announced in a 549-196 vote, Daniel Grant had been elected first vice-president. David Oliver led the congregation in "Victory in Jesus." Mike Huckabee then opened the floor for nominations for second vice-president.

Ben Rowell nominated Earl Adams, from First Church, Lincoln, D.C. McAtee of Forrest City nominated Ray Branscum, and

Refus Caldwell of Perryville nominated H.E. Williams. Balloting instructions were again given by Guthrie.

The massive choir from Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock, brought a message through inspirational music.

Paul Sanders, pastor of Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock, delivered the convention sermon. Speaking from a text in Genesis 39, Sanders portrayed the session's theme, "Building God's Family... by unprecedented consecration to holy living," as he spoke about the temptation of Joseph.

He noted five things about temptation: first, temptation is always personal. Satan knows when we're discouraged. Second, temptation is always pleasant. "Satan knows what he is doing." Third, temptation is always powerful, and fourth, temptation is always persistent. Fifth, temptation produces pain.

He then noted that we need to recognize the selection of temptation, as stated in 1 John 2:15-17: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

He then suggested several guidelines for living a holy life: avoid wrong situations, do not be deceived by words or appearance, don't be gentle with your emotions and don't be confused by immediate



Paul Sanders

results.

He concluded with notes from Joseph's life. He said Joseph's attitude was a key to his success. It's also a key for Christians. "In the midst of all Joseph's trials, not once do we find him lashing out at others, resenting others, or being bitter of spirit... Sometimes we shoot ourselves in the foot by thinking too small and not leaving it up to the Lord."

David Oliver then led the congregation in singing "My Jesus I Love Thee."

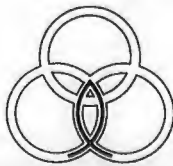
Huckabee came to the platform with two announcements, one being that the final messenger registration was 1,273. The second was that H.E. Williams had been elected second vice-president by a 53 per-

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STATE CONVENTION

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Arkansas Music Men Brass

cent majority. Williams received 312 votes, Branscum-120, and Adams-154.

Resolutions Committee Chairman Clyde Jones presented 13 resolutions which were then passed by messengers, a few with some debate.

The first resolution was in appreciation of the elected convention leadership, and the second was in appreciation for leadership against the lottery.

Resolution 3 admonished Southern Baptists to pray and give to relieve World Hunger, and Resolution 4 was on prayer for Spiritual Awakening.

Resolution 5 was in support of the Home for Unwed Mothers, and Resolution 6, in support of Amendment 3 on the Nov. 6 Arkansas ballot, denounced segregation and racism.

Resolution 7 affirmed support for the Cooperative Program.

Resolution 8, on Homosexuality and Civil Rights, opposed the growing cultural assimilation (of homosexuals) and opposed all efforts to provide any government endorsement, sanction, or recognition. Resolution 9, on Homosexuality and Public Education, condemned the June 15th seminar sponsored by the Arkansas Gay and Lesbian Task Force, which advocated a program called "One in Ten" designed to help homosexual students feel good about being gay, and to teach other students that gay is good. John Ashcraft from Remount Church, North Little Rock, came to a microphone to caution against total condemnation of homosexuals, stressing not to leave them out of the circle of

the ministry of God's family.

After more discussion concerning ministering to homosexuals and the dangers of the particular program being cited, the resolution passed.

Resolution 10, opposing legislation providing tax subsidies for child care, passed with a few dissenting votes.

Resolution 11 affirming the Sanctity of Human Life passed unanimously.

The most heated debate of the morning took place over Resolution 12, in opposition to school-based clinics. Messenger Jim Gattis of Pulaski Heights Church, Little Rock, proposed several wording changes. He wanted to omit three paragraphs which he felt were not "100 percent factual" and "politically worded." Marilyn Simmons, a member of the Resolutions Committee, spoke in defense of the paragraphs as fact, as did several others. The amendment to the resolution was defeated in mixed voting; the resolution was passed, also in mixed voting.

Resolution 13, in opposition to the policy of the National Endowment of the Arts in funding pornographic and anti-religious artistic presentations, passed unanimously.

In miscellaneous business, Jack Bledso of Fordyce extended a plea to Arkansas churches to reach or exceed Lottie Moon Foreign Mission Offering Goals. Another messenger requested that Resolution 11, on the Sanctity of Human Life, be sent to President George Bush. Both items were passed by messengers.

Mike Huckabee presented to messengers for a vote a change from *Kerfoots Parliamentary Law to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. The change passed, but will need to be approved next year in order to be used for the 1992 convention.

The completely re-elected slate of officers went to the platform and, with the messengers, formed a human hand chain for the benediction, given by Huckabee.

ACTS Recap

There will be a one hour recap of the ABSC on Nov. 11 on ACTS in Pine Bluff, Springdale, Fort Smith, Magnolia, Jonesboro, Little Rock, and Texarkana at 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. Simultaneously it will be a one time only presentation, but some affiliates may air it at their discretion.

Huckabee's Message

President's Mike Huckabee's message may be obtained by writing your associational director of missions or by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the ABN office.

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Arkansas Valley	Carroll Evans, Hughes
Ashley	Emil Turner, Crossett
Bartholomew	Greg Stanley, Warren
Calvary	Harrel E. Cato, Rosebud
Caroline	Jim Edwards, Cabot
Centennial	Scott Hinton, DeWitt
Clear Creek	Bob Floyd, Van Buren
Concord	Jim Files, Fort Smith
Concord	Ken Lilly, Fort Smith
Current-Gains	Clyde Spurgin, Piggott
Delta	Bruce Bond, Lake Village
Faulkner	Larry Pillow, Conway
Garland	Eugene Anderson, Jessieville
Garland	Lance Hudnell, Hot Springs
Greene	John Edwards, Paragould
Harmony	David Moore, Pine Bluff
Liberty	Travis Beeson, Camden
Liberty	Gerald Perry, Strong
Little River	Glen Power, Nashville
Mississippi	John Dresbach, Osceola
Mount Zion	Jerry Cooper, Jonesboro

Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries

Terms to expire in 1993

Craig Bradley, Monticello
Mrs. Carter Dryer, Manila
Jack Reeves, Mena
Jim L. Jenkins, Heber Springs
Tommy Jones, Fayetteville
Bob Shell, Little Rock

Terms to expire in 1992

Jeff Cheatham, Russellville
Joe Statton, Magnolia

Arkansas Baptist Foundation

Terms to expire in 1993

Bill Woods, Pine Bluff
Charles Fager, Hot Springs
James F. Sawyer, Little Rock
Tom Watts, Camden
David Ray, Little Rock

Arkansas Baptist

Historical Commission

Terms to expire in 1993

District 6—Sara Atkins, West Helena
District 1—Frank Coker, Fayetteville
District 4—Dillard Miller, Mena

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Terms to expire in 1993

District 4—Nelson Wilhelm, Waldron
District 6—Bert Thomas, Searcy
Member at Large—Lane Strothers, Mt. Home

Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc.

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Mike Gibson, Osceola
Dick Trout, Blytheville

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North Pulaski	Bratton Rhoades, Sherwood
North Pulaski	Otto J. Brown, North Little Rock
Pulaski	Tommy Cunningham, Little Rock
Pulaski	Billy White, Little Rock
Southwest	Rich Kincl, Magnolia
Southwest	Lynn Robertson, Stamps
Southwest	J. D. Webb, Texarkana
Tri-County	Larry Jones, Wynne
Tri-County	Don Settles, Earle
Trinity	Kyle Sumpter, Marked Tree
Washington-Madison	Harold Henson, Farmington
District 5	Shirley Fluharty, Little Rock
District 8	Katsy McAllister, El Dorado

Terms to expire in 1991

Red River	Tom Calhoon, Arkadelphia
North Pulaski	Stephen Hatfield, North Little Rock

Terms to expire in 1992

Caroline	Mitch Tapson, Cabot
Clear Creek	Nancy McClure, Van Buren

Baptist Student Union

Terms to expire in 1993

District 1—Max Harrall, Fayetteville
District 2—Randy Maxwell, Batesville
District 4—Neil Jackson, Russellville
District 7—Bob Webster, Arkadelphia
District 7—David Blase, Nashville
Member at Large—Vicky Lloyd, Fayetteville

Christian Civic Foundation

Terms to expire in 1993

Ledell Bailey, Augusta
James Box, Bald Knob
Norman Lewis, Alicia
Rusty Rowell, Warren
Anna Bearden, Mabelvale

Ministry of Crisis Support

Terms to expire in 1993

John Maddox, Little Rock
Larry Henderson, Little Rock

Terms to expire in 1992

Randy Walker, Sherwood

Ouachita Baptist University

Terms to expire in 1993

Jim Jones, Batesville
Mrs. Glenn Burton, Little Rock
Elizabeth Campbell, Little Rock
Clarence Anthony, Murfreesboro
Jim Gattis, Little Rock
Del Medlin, Cabot
David Uih, Camden
Rex Terry, Fort Smith

Williams Baptist College

Terms to expire in 1993

Bill Jessen, Hot Springs Village

E. R. Coleman, Cord
Steve Fowler, Brinkley
Jerry Frankum, Newport
Moscoe Cash, Harrison
Don Jones, Mount Ida
John E. Miller, Melbourne
Michael Todd, Paragould

Terms to expire in 1992

Charles Colquitt, Lewisville

Terms to expire in 1991

Donald Timms, Jonesboro
Donnie Holden, Springdale

Constitution and Bylaws Committee

Terms to expire in 1993

Betty Harp, North Little Rock
Jim Pate, Russellville

World Hunger Committee

Terms to expire in 1993

Betty Sue Wixson, Fisher
Bill Peel, Stephens
Rich Browning, Little Rock

1991 Convention Program Committee

Term to expire to 1993

Rich Browning, Little Rock

1995 Convention

Date: November 14-15, 1995
Place: Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock

1991 Convention Preacher

Preacher: Rex Holt, Central, Jonesboro
Alternate: Tommy Cunningham, Life Line, Little Rock

Convention Uniform

Another Way to Preach

by S. D. Hacker, Harrison

Basic passage: Jeremiah 36:4-8, 27-31

Focal passage: Jeremiah 36:5,30-31

Central truth: When traditional means are denied them, God's chosen servants must explore other avenues of reaching the people.

The messages from God through Jeremiah were messages of inspiration. Jeremiah's source was the same source as messages from God's chosen men today—God himself. The diction and delivery are much the same today as in Jeremiah's day.

Jeremiah had been banished from the house of the Lord. History has recorded many incidences such as this. When it occurs, God inspires the finding of other means to deliver his message. Consider the alternative you might choose should the doors of your church be forbidden you. Jeremiah entrusted the delivery of God's message to Judah to a loyal and faithful disciple. Jeremiah determined effort to inform all of Judah of God's warning was in spite of King Jehoiakim's attempt to silence him (vv. 5, 27). Do you see in certain corridors of our world today an attempt to hinder the work of the Lord's servants through the church?

A clear and well defined point in this text's message is: God is more interested in his people repenting than he is in coming down on them with wrath and destruction. The first messages were burned by the king, but Jeremiah had time to dictate again the Word of God, adding other messages God gave him. After the second delivery, God soon released his wrath (vv. 29-30).

Man can find himself outside God's promises by being indifferent to God and his Word, and by marching to the beat of a different drummer. Jehoiakim was indifferent to the convictions of his father, Josiah (v. 31). He chose to be entertained and to support the rebellious appetites of sin in his kingdom. If the king allowed it, the kingdom subjects wanted it. What a tragedy when leaders follow followers.

The end result: Jehoiakim had no successor to his throne; he would lose his reign and his children would have no positions of leadership—all because of their wickedness. The closing act shows that every evil they were warned of would be used on the leaders, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem, because they refused to listen to God's message.

Life and Work

Zeal for Worship

by Bobby Tucker, Maple Grove Church, Trumann

Basic passage: John 2:11, 15-25

Focal passage: John 2:13-22

Central truth: Believers must have prepared hearts for true worship.

I often ask myself after reading John 2:13-17 what Jesus would do if he were to physically appear in some of our worship services today? Would there be "zeal" in the life of the person who Sunday after Sunday nods off in the pew in front of you?

The Lord Jesus, in his earthly ministry, constantly confronted casual religious practices. This section of John 2 is a perfect example. The Jewish people were gathering for the God-decreed Feast of the Unleavened Bread. It was a special time of commemoration, yet was subject to much abuse by profiteers.

Perhaps there are a few lessons here for the 20th century church. Worship is rendering unto God praise and adoration because of who he is and what he has done. In order to worship properly, we must first have a desire for true worship. Our Lord cleansed the temple not because it was a feast day, but because a sacred celebration was being abused. True motive for worship had been replaced by greed and corruption. Do believers today sometimes worship with misplaced motives?

We tend to judge our services by whether we leave the sanctuary by noon. Some would be surprised to learn that true worship has no specific time frame. Our lives should be geared toward daily worship, not just for one hour on Sunday.

A second lesson gleaned from the passage is gleaned from the attitude of Jesus. John, in describing the activity of our Lord, quotes from Psalms 69:9, "Zeal for thy house will consume me." Jesus, in this interesting episode, manifests a part of his nature that is rarely seen in the gospels. He is angry. We call it "righteous indignation." John called it zeal. Jesus was concerned about the abuse he saw and the purity he didn't see. The challenge is all too clear. We must have focused zeal and the proper purity in order to effectively worship the living Lord.

Bible Book

Forgiveness

by Wayne B. Davis, North Park Church, Van Buren

Basic passage: Luke 7:1-50

Focal passage: Luke 7:36-50

Central truth: Jesus is God and he forgives sin. This forgiveness is "proven" by acts of love and worship.

A careful study of this Scripture should begin, focus and end with verse 49. The folks who were eating at the feast with Jesus began to think "within themselves." They wondered, "Who is this that even forgiveth sins?"

Luke's answer is clear: Jesus is God and he forgives sin. Christianity's answer must be clear. Baptists' answer must be equally clear: Jesus is God and he forgives sin. We must back up our clear statement with action. Acts like this sinful woman performed in public. Forgiveness in action expresses humility, boldness, generosity, and gratitude.

This sinful woman heard of Jesus' presence in a place near enough for her to go and worship him. She went and knelt behind him and wept as she kissed his feet repeatedly and devotedly. Her prior knowledge of him and his message of salvation and forgiveness had done its work in her dead, sinful heart. She was now repentant, full of faith in him and alive with the gratitude his forgiveness had produced in her heart.

But now, Jesus reassured her (v. 48) with a direct statement. He had just finished reassuring her with the parable of the two forgiven debtors. His statement of confirmation of Simon's judgment that "who is forgiven most will love most" was a further assurance. But most of all the reference to her act of worship assured her. Her worship was approved. Her gift of ointment was accepted. She knew Jesus was God and he had forgiven her. The humility she expressed at Jesus' feet is an act that expresses love and worship. Her generosity in giving the expensive, perfumed ointment expressed love and worship. Her gratitude overcame her fears and demanded an overt expression of love and worship.

All the explosion of love and worship from a sinful woman of poor, public reputation was a result of the implosion of forgiveness of a Savior who saw the intent of her heart. She loved Jesus as the God of forgiveness.

Convention Uniform

The Flock Is Scattered

by S. D. Hacker, Harrison

Basic passage: Ezekiel 34:1-12

Focal passage: Ezekiel 34:11

Central truth: Tyrannical rulers can plunder and destroy their kingdoms, instead of tending and providing for them.

No date in Ezekiel 34:1 is indicated, so we can surmise that this condition of misuse of the king's office has existed in most all cases. From this indictment comes a definite announcement that God was going to personally take control (vv. 11-12).

Because of the failure of the kings and other civil rulers to help keep Israel free of idolatry and trespasses of every kind, the prophet is telling of God's plan to take on the role of a shepherd (v. 12). This role is in line with the Old Testament thought found in 1 Kings 22:17, Psalm 77:20 and Jeremiah 23:1-6. No shepherd is worthy of the name if he neglects his duty to the sheep. Through neglect, he becomes nothing more than a hireling or a robber; such were the wicked kings of Israel (vv. 5-6).

The Lord loves his people and provides leaders to protect them. If this protection is traded off for over-taxation, denial of religious liberty, and mixing in man-made gods as a part of national culture, then God says: I will step in and search for my people (v. 11).

Oppression may cause the flock of God to wander. Mountains and high hills (v. 6) may represent hard circumstances that cause people to move to other areas to seek food, housing, happiness. Often they lose the way back home. The shepherd then must search and call for a return of the wandering pilgrims (v. 10).

Webster describes sheep as "bashful, silly, timid and defenseless creatures." Is it any wonder that Ezekiel expresses God's concern for his abused and neglected flock? Is it any wonder that Jesus has concern for his sheep when hirelings have robbed and scattered them (Jn. 10:1-5)?

Ezekiel points out the coming punishment of selfish leaders who have profited at the expense of other people; he reveals that God knows the weaknesses and diseases of his people and comes to heal and protect them (vv. 11-12). To his church and her leaders, Jesus gives the charge: feed my sheep that kings and civil leaders have scattered (Jn. 21:15-19).

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Life and Work

The Quest for Humility

by Bobby Tucker, Maple Grove Church, Trumann

Basic passage: John 3:25-36

Focal passage: John 3:27,30

Central truth: Biblical humility produces godliness.

This decade has seen its share of scandal in the Christian community. Many popular ministers and ministries have been either damaged or destroyed. And all too often the ministry that fell began to tread on shaky ground when it became man-centered rather than Christ centered. The source of the fall many times has been pride.

In John 3, there is a tremendous contrast between the man-centered ministries of today and the humility of John the Baptist. Two things are important in the quest for biblical humility.

First, John knew the source of all blessing—God. In John 3:27, he emphatically states, "a man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven." John's answer to his disciples' frantic inquiry must have been startling. His disciples must have noticed the impending threat caused by Jesus. John basically says, "Hey guys, it is not my ministry anyway. God allowed me to 'serve him.'" We should be careful about saying "my church;" or "my Sunday School class." The Lord is gracious to allow us to serve him in any capacity.

The second truth learned from the life of John hinges on the first. In verse 30 he says, "He (Jesus) must increase, I (John) must decrease." That is an incredible statement. What would our church be like if the motto of every true believer was the same as John's? What severed relationship could not be restored when Jesus is "increasing" in our lives? And what power would we have for service and ministry when we "decrease" and let the living Lord rule our lives?

All of these things relate to that simple, yet difficultly lived word: humility. John the Baptist was the epitome of humility in this passage. He could have claimed honor and praise for himself, but instead desired to cast it upon the Messiah. Why? Perhaps God saw in John that carefully crafted character trait that he had and that we so desperately need. You guessed it... humility.

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Bible Book

Jesus' Unlimited Power

by Wayne B. Davis, North Park Church, Van Buren

Basic passage: Luke 8:1-56

Focal passage: Luke 8:27-39

Central truth: Jesus' unlimited power covers the spiritual, physical, social, and mental areas of life.

Previously we have seen Jesus' power to call men and women into service. He expects them to be willing to forsake all to serve him. He has shown power over the problems and practices of their lives.

Now, we see Jesus with total power over the spiritual world of demons: the Gadarene man filled with the destructive personalities so numerous as to be called Legion (A Roman legion was 6,000 soldiers). This man had countless demons driving his daily actions. He was spiritually controlled by evil forces. Jesus sent them out of this tormented soul. He had power over demon spirits (28-33).

He was physically controlled in his daily activities. He went where he was driven: to the desert, to the tombs, away from home. Jesus has power over the physical.

He was socially out of control. He couldn't face people. He couldn't be trusted. He couldn't be tamed. Chains were not enough to restrain him. Jesus' power over social events and personalities is clear in this healing. This man was sent home healed and whole. He could meet people and be returned to social contact. Jesus' power made the Gadarene demonic acceptable to others.

He was mentally unfit. He was seen as crazy. He had an incurable mental illness. But Jesus' power cured his mind. At the demons' request, Jesus sent them into hogs. Jesus loves people. Jesus helps and heals people. Hogs are not the issue. Profit is not the issue. People are the issue. Hogs don't witness for Jesus. Healed people do. Jesus sent this once crazed man back to his home and friends with the message of salvation (vv. 38-39).

The Gadarene is sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. Jesus' power heals the spirit, the body, the social life, and the mind (v. 35). This healing reminds me of the wholeness of the nature of Jesus as seen in Luke 2:52. Jesus grew mentally (wisdom), physically (in stature), spiritually (in favor with God), and socially (in favor with man). He heals every area as he is whole in every area.

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WORLD

Arkansans Appointed

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board held a commissioning service Oct. 9 at Derbyshire Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., for 38 people, among them two missionary couples and one representative with Arkansas connections.

Dr. Cynthia K. Ashcraft was named a Baptist representative to Yemen, where she will work at the Baptist hospital in Jibla.

Recently she was a pediatrician in Fort Smith, and is a former member of First Church in Fort Smith. Born in Pine Bluff, she is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Ashcraft of White Hall.

She is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock. She was a resident physician in pediatrics at Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock.

Geoffrey and Deborah Hammond will live in north Brazil, where he will teach at the Baptist seminary in Recife.

Hammond is a British citizen and a permanent resident of the United States. His parents were Foreign Mission Board mission workers in Nigeria. He considers Dallas, Texas, his hometown.

He is a graduate of Spurgeon's College in London, England, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Mrs. Hammond, the former Deborah Atchison, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joe W. Atchison of Rogers. Her father is the director of missions for Benton County Baptist Association.

She is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas. She was an elementary teacher in Arkansas.

The Hammonds have two children: Timothy Lewis, born in 1985 and Nicholas Bailey, 1990.

Barry D. and Vicki Bates will live in Portugal, where he will promote church music.

Recently Bates was an associate pastor and minister of music and education at Hillside Church in Camden.

Born in Fayetteville, he is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John E. Bates of Conway. He also lived in Hope while growing up.

He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. He has been minister of music at Second Church in Arkadelphia and minister of music and college director at Richwoods Church, also in Arkadelphia.

Born and reared in Hot Springs, Mrs. Bates, the former Vicki Taylor, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Taylor of that city.

She is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. She has been a reporter for the news bureau at Ouachita Baptist University, a legal secretary in Gurdon, and a receptionist for BEI Defense Systems in Camden.

The Bateses have two children: Traci Leigh, born in 1987; and Kelsey Elizabeth, 1990.

Both families and Dr. Ashcraft will go to Rockville, Va., in January for a seven-week orientation before leaving for the field.



Ashcraft



The Hammonds



The Bates



Sent...to Serve All Nations

Fact: Estimates are that more than 579 million Chinese have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions
Dec. 2-9, 1990
Little Moon Christmas Offering
National Goal: \$86 million