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June 22, 1989

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Report from Las Vegas

Arkansas Baptist

June 22, 1989

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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In This Issue

Cover Story



(BP) photo

'55/45' 4-13

Two key votes at Southern Baptists' 132nd annual meeting in Las Vegas, Nev., demonstrated there still is a division in the rank and file.

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Skip Notice

The *Arkansas Baptist* will not publish an issue of June 29. The Sunday School lesson commentaries for June 24 and July 1 are contained in this issue.

IT'S UPLIFTING

On and Off The Field

PITTSBURGH (BP)—Larry Doughty serves God at his church and on the baseball field.

As general manager and senior vice president of the Pittsburgh Pirates, Doughty comes into contact with many players and has opportunities to tell about his faith in Christ.

He often is on the road 200 days a year and usually works 16-hour days during the baseball season. But he is active at Pittsburgh Baptist Church, where he is a substitute Sunday school teacher.

"There's an opportunity during practice sessions to visit and talk to players on the ballfield and in the clubhouse," Doughty said. "On several occasions, players have questioned me philosophically and so forth regarding a religion or a right-standing with the Lord.

"I really think that in some cases, I've seen careers saved for players" because they became Christians.

As general manager, a position he has held since November 1988, Doughty manages the major league team, works with the club's seven minor league teams and scouts for new recruits.

He has been involved with professional baseball since 1972, when he started as a scouting supervisor with the Cincinnati Reds. He first joined the Pirates in October 1987 as assistant to the general manager.

While Doughty shares Christ with others on the job, he said his greatest opportunity for witnessing is teaching Sunday school and serving as a deacon.

Although being active in his church is important to Doughty, many times during the season he is on the road. Then he goes to church in the city closest to the game or attends baseball chapel.

"Baseball chapel takes place every Sunday in virtually every professional baseball park," he said. "The local area brings in people to perform chapel. The players usually are in uniform and have begun preparing for the game." About 40 percent of the major league players take part in the chapels, he said.

Doughty is down to earth about his position and major league title, even though he is one of major league's 26 general managers.

Doughty's pastor at Pittsburgh Baptist Church, Danny Crow, said Doughty proves that in a very select field "people can be people. . . . If they win the World Series this year, he'd still be Larry Doughty."

GOOD NEWS!

Wise in Your Own Eyes

Judges 20-21

The last verse in Judges ends on a pessimistic note. The people were again without a leader, and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Jg. 21:25). Persons left to their own ways are self-defeating. The warning is left indelibly in the reader's heart in this final statement from a book filled with so much sorrow. This is always the sad and tragic result when people turn away from God. Seven times in Judges the statement is made that Israel did evil in the sight of God.

The contrast is obvious. The people did what was right in their own eyes, but in God's sight their deeds were evil. Our ways are not his ways.

How can we know and follow God's ways? A few clues are given in the final two chapters of Judges.

They asked counsel of God (Jg. 20:18)—The first step to true wisdom is the recognition of need. Remember the words of Ecclesiastes: "For God giveth to a man that

is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail" (Ec. 2:26). God is our source of truth.

They worshipped before God (Jg. 20:26)—They came to the house of God, the place of worship. They wept before God, the right approach to worship. They fasted and offered burnt offerings, the proper forms of worship.

Worship is an important and needful experience in the life of a believer. Both private and group worship serve a vital need in the Christian's life.

They sought the presence of God (Jg. 20:27)—The reference to the Ark of the Covenant of God clearly indicates the desire of the people to seek God's presence. The Ark of the Covenant signified the Lord's protective presence. It contained the tables of the Law and filled a significant place in the history of God's people. In every age God's people need to seek God's presence and search for his will.

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'If My People...'

J. EVERETT SNEED



There were many positive events which transpired during the 1989 Southern Baptist Convention. Among these were the extremely successful evangelistic efforts, the excellent presiding of President Jerry Vines and the continuation of funding of the Baptist Joint Committee. But there were also negative actions which were a part of the convention. Among these was the obvious continuation of the division and mistrust within the convention and the adoption of an Executive Board recommendation which requires only the reporting of fund raising efforts by SBC agencies rather than approval for this activity.

The most positive event which transpired at this year's convention was the excellent soul winning activity developed by the Home Mission Board and the Nevada State Convention. On Saturday prior to the convention, there were more than 360 individuals who made professions of faith. During the weeks immediately preceding the convention there were 15 new Baptist churches or church type missions started. These events clearly endorsed our going to Las Vegas to hold this year's convention. Nevada's executive director, Ernest Myers, observed that Nevada's Southern Baptists would never be the same because of this year's efforts.

President Vines is to be commended for his even temper and fair dealing with the messengers. Dr. Vines made every effort to be kind, fair, and accurate in his decisions. Most of the messengers wished to maintain restraint, for the well being of the cause of Christ and our convention. The overall spirit of the messengers seemed to be better in this year's convention than in any recent convention. President Vines and most of the messengers deserve our applause for their good demeanor.

Good preaching was also a highlight of this year's convention. We particularly want to commend Dr. Vines on his excellent presidential address. We believe this to be one of the better presidential addresses delivered in the history of the SBC. The sermon delivered by Charles Stanley also is worthy of commendation. His emphasis on helping people to rid themselves of guilt is of significant importance.

Among the negative events which took place this year was a change in the policies of the Executive Committee. In the past, any agency, commission or institution

which wished to engage in fund raising activities had to receive the approval of the Executive Committee. The new policy simply requires any SBC entity to report to the Executive Committee concerning the "type of fund raising activity conducted by the entity." Obviously, this will ensure additional fund raising activities by the various agencies, commissions and institutions of the SBC. Additional fund raising activities, coupled with the increase in special offerings, is likely to further damage the Cooperative Program. In recent years, the Cooperative Program has not kept up with the annual inflation rate.

Obviously, the most negative thing connected with this year's convention was the continuation of deep-seated division among the messengers. This division was evident in the vote on the president and on

the effort to defund the Baptist Joint Committee. The most important question is how we can eliminate our division and distrust of each other. First, it is essential that a wider spectrum of Southern Baptists be involved as trustees of the agencies, commissions and institutions. As long as a major segment of Southern Baptists feel that they have been disenfranchised, the conflict will not end.

Second, political organizations must be dismantled if the conflict is to end. Individuals who do not normally come to a convention must be incited to the point of anger in order to encourage their attendance. When one political group forms a grass roots political structure, it is inevitable that those on the other side will form a counter group. Both political groups are now firmly in place. All such groups must be dissolved if we are to have harmony within the convention.

Finally, leaders must place the well being of the Lord's work and Southern Baptists above personal interest. When individual leaders, on both sides, become totally convinced that the well being of the convention and our world wide mission effort is more important than personal gain, the conflict will end.

The people called Southern Baptists have been used of God and will continue to be used of God as each Southern Baptist places priority on missions and evangelism. Such priority must supersede any personal interest. God declared this truth to Solomon as he said, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and heal their land" (2 Ch. 7:14).

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1989 SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

'55/45'

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

LAS VEGAS, Nev.—Although much of the rancor has subsided, Southern Baptists still are divided.

While the 132nd annual meeting June 13-15 in Las Vegas, Nev., was not marred by the bitter wrangling that has characterized recent conventions, it nevertheless produced the same "55/45" kind of votes that demonstrate Southern Baptists are not yet ready to move ahead in unity with their work.

On two key votes — the election of a president and the funding of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs — messengers split by the same margin, but in different directions, just as in each of the last four or five conventions.

Messengers re-elected SBC President Jerry Vines, the "conservative" candidate, by a 12 percent margin over "centrist" candidate Daniel Vestal. And a motion by "conservatives" to radically reduce the funding of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs failed by a margin of 8 percent.

But if Southern Baptists are still divided, it is yet not agreed what the issue is that divides them. "Centrist" Daniel Vestal claims the issue is "freedom" versus "forced conformity," and he has called for "broader inclusion" as the solution to the division.

"Conservative" President Jerry Vines, on the other hand, says the issue was the inerrancy of the Scripture but adds that he believes the question is settled and that, in time, a process of theological renewal will, "in a loving and Christlike manner," resolve the convention's "theological problems."

Whatever the explanation, deep differences exist. And it remains to be seen whether Southern Baptists can — or will — resolve them in time to keep their birthright as a powerful redemptive tool in the hand of God.

Tuesday morning

It was quite a contrast.

In recent years, record attendances at the annual meeting had pushed convention centers to capacity, forcing organizers to limit access to the main floor and set up

electronic communications with remote overflow sites. Because of the seating problems, messengers had thronged at convention center doors, waiting for opening time and the ensuing mad dash for the main floor.

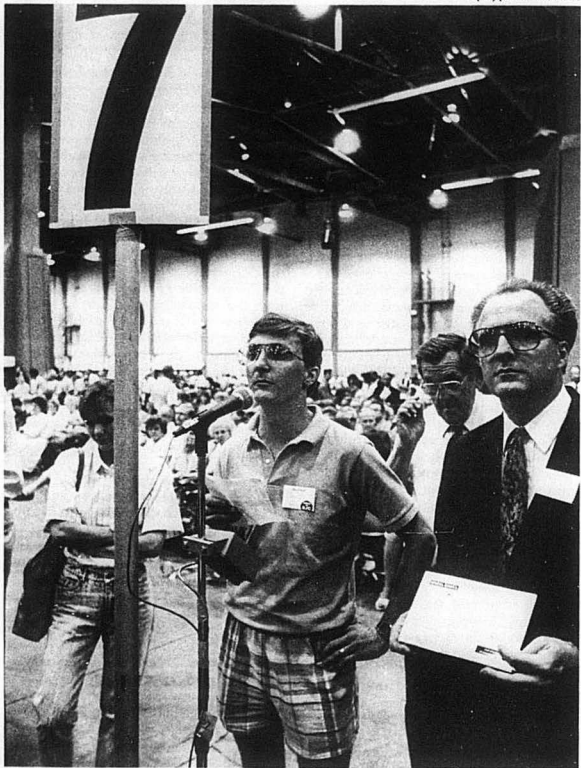
But at 8:15 a.m. Tuesday morning, less

than 15 minutes before the opening activities, messengers were casually strolling into the hall, which was still barely two-thirds full.

Several experienced convention observers had predicted a dramatically lower registration for the Las Vegas meeting, and that no doubt relieved many concerns about the availability of seating. But even though the opening registration of 16,586 was less than two-thirds of last year's meeting in San Antonio, it was still well above the 12,000 some had mentioned as a possibility.

The 8:30 a.m. prelude to the first session featured Greg Buchanan, a harpist from

(BP) photo / Tim Fields



Southern Baptists are yet divided.

Overland Park, Kan. After Buchanan's 20-minute performance, Convention President Jerry Vines of Jacksonville, Fla., gavelled the 132nd annual meeting to order. Rex Holt, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro, voiced the invocation.

After Holt's prayer, another Arkansan came to the podium, John Wright, pastor of First Baptist Church in Little Rock and chairman of the SBC Committee on Order of Business. Wright reminded messengers that a prayer room had been established in the convention center, and he urged them to take advantage of it, saying, "The most important business of the convention will be conducted there."

Convention President Vines then introduced Gray Allison, president of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn., who delivered an interpretation of the annual meeting's theme: "Going, Weeping, Sowing, Reaping."

Executive Committee Report

Following Allison's presentation, Harold Bennett, president of the SBC Executive Committee, brought the first part of that body's report to the messengers. The assembly moved quickly through 12 recommendations.

Messengers approved a recommendation that the \$2.5 million debt on the new SBC Building in Nashville, Tenn., be designated as a priority item in the 1989-90 budget. That line item, along with another \$22.9 million in other capital needs projects, had been unmet because Cooperative Program gifts had been lower than expected during the past five years. The action will eliminate the building debt and reschedule the other capital expenditures over the next 10 years.

Also approved was a \$134.8 million basic Cooperative Program budget, which represents a decrease of 2.1 percent from 1988-89.

As expected, messengers also postponed until next year a proposal to establish a new commission to address religious liberty concerns. That recommendation, approved by the SBC Executive Committee in February 1989, became the focus of some controversy because it would draw Cooperative Program dollars away from already-reduced mission budgets. The delay was accepted by proponents of the new entity only with the understanding that it would be considered at next year's annual meeting.

Without discussion, messengers adopted a "restated and amended" Article VI for the convention's Business and Financial Plan. That article previously required that special fundraising activities conducted by SBC agencies first had to be approved by the convention or its Executive Commit-

tee. Under the new provision, agencies must merely make an annual report of outside fundraising activities conducted during the previous year.

Messengers also adopted a new purpose statement for the Home Mission Board and agreed to rename the Sunday School Board's "Church Training" program, which will now be called "Discipleship Training."

Motions and Resolutions

At 10:47 a.m., messengers completed the first part of the Executive Committee report and were ready to turn their attention to the introduction of business and resolutions. Among the nearly two dozen items presented were several matters of continuing concern for Southern Baptists.

One messenger moved that a committee of state convention presidents be formed to consider how the annual meetings could involve a broader range of churches, especially those which cannot easily afford to send messengers. In recent years, regional meetings linked by satellite have been suggested as one way of dealing with oversize conventions and allowing more small churches to be represented.

Another messenger offered a motion to subtract \$350,000 from the budget of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and redirect those funds to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. In recent years, the Baptist Joint Committee has been the subject of several such efforts by SBC "conservatives" who have

taken exception with the outspokenness of BJC Executive Director James Dunn and have objected to a position on school prayer taken by the BJC in the early 1980s. The Baptist Joint Committee is a cooperative group of nine Baptist bodies which represents Baptist concerns on church/state and religious liberty issues. Although the percentage of the BJC budget provided by Southern Baptists has been declining, the majority of the agency's budget comes from the Cooperative Program. The proposal to organize a Southern Baptist Religious Liberty Commission is a "conservative" effort to establish a strictly Southern Baptist voice on church/state issues in Washington, D.C. Although repeated efforts have been made to defund the BJC, messengers have voted down such

proposals.

One motion proposed to limit educational institution exhibits at SBC annual meetings to schools "properly accredited" and funded by SBC Cooperative Program funds. This year's annual meeting was the first under a new policy which allowed exhibit space for non-SBC schools. Three institutions not supported by Southern Baptist missions offerings had booths in the Las Vegas convention center: Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn.; Criswell College in Dallas, Texas; and Luther Rice Seminary in Jacksonville, Fla.

Another messenger presented a motion asking messengers to remove Curtis W. Caine of Mississippi from the SBC Christian Life Commission. Caine stirred a furor during the CLC's annual meeting last September when he reportedly called Martin Luther King Jr. a "fraud" and said "apartheid in South Africa... doesn't exist anymore and was beneficial when it did."

One motion during the first session was brought by an Arkansan. Eddie Harrison Jr.,

(BP) photo / Stanley Leary



Witnessing in Las Vegas

pastor of Dollarway Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, suggested that messengers consider no resolutions during the Las Vegas meeting, in the hopes of promoting unity. Resolutions have been the focus of considerable controversy during recent annual meetings, and immediately prior to the convention the SBC Credentials Committee had entertained the possibility of placing a moratorium on resolutions.

A final motion dealt with the practice of referring some motions to the SBC Executive Committee for further study. Often the Executive Committee declines to take further action and reports that decision back to messengers the next year. The messenger contended that the custom violates SBC Bylaw 15, which provides for the referral of motions affecting SBC agen-

cies. The Executive Committee is not listed as an agency in that bylaw.

Executive Committee President Harold Bennett responded to the motion by referring to Bylaw 20, which refers to the body as an "agency" of the convention. Although President Jerry Vines ruled the motion out of order, the challenge resulted in the Committee on Order of Business taking the added precaution of asking messengers to approve its disposition of the motions presented to it.

President's Address

At 11:33 a.m., Jerry Vines delivered his first President's Address, an interpretation of Psalm 126, the scriptural basis for the convention theme, "Going, Weeping, Sowing, Reaping." Vines made an impassioned plea for commitment to personal soulwinning.

It is in the "warp and woof" of Scripture that those with gospel seed have an assignment to sow it, explained Vines. He said that, if there is anything Southern Baptists agree on, it is their responsibility to give every person an opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Yet Vines voiced a concern that Southern Baptists seem to have lost their capacity to express genuine concern for the unsaved. He asked, "Are we so businesslike and professional that we are unable to weep anymore over lost people who need Jesus as Savior?" And he added a warning: "Revival will not come among Southern Baptists until our hearts are broken over the lost."

Vines identified the "seed" the Christian must sow as the "incorruptible" Word of God. "While some may doubt or dissect" God's Word, Southern Baptists "will sow the seed," Vines declared. And as that seed is sown, its "infinite possibilities" will be released and lives will be changed.

While the Scripture never promises that every person witnessed to will be won, it does promise that those who are faithful to sow will return rejoicing, Vines concluded. He said that leading people to salvation will "put the joy back" in the Southern Baptist Convention.

He then asked music director John McKay to lead the assembly in a refrain of "Bringing in the Sheaves," and Spencer Rogers of Willingboro, N.J., voiced a benediction.

Tuesday afternoon

A group of evangelistic singers and a vocal ensemble from Southern Seminary provided music for those who chose to eat their lunches in their seats rather than brave the crowds at local restaurants. By

2:00 p.m., when the afternoon session got underway, registration had pushed its way to 20,040.

Motions and Resolutions

The afternoon began with another period for the introduction of motions and resolutions. Committee on Order of Business Chairman John Wright read into the record the titles of several resolutions presented directly to the committee, and the floor was opened for additional motions and resolutions.

Among the items brought by messengers was a motion directed toward the Home Mission Board, which asked that evangelistic activities similar to those which preceded the Las Vegas meeting be planned for annual meetings in coming years.

More than 360 professions of faith had been registered during a "saturation visitation" project in Las Vegas residential areas on Saturday prior to the convention. About 1,800 individuals participated in the door-to-door witnessing effort, which followed close on the heels of simultaneous revivals in 90 of the state's 120 Southern Baptist churches.

Presidential Elections

At 2:30 p.m., the assembly turned its attention to the election of officers. First Vice-President Darrell Robinson took the podium and opened the floor for nominations.

Again, as in previous years, two men who had announced their candidacy prior to the convention were nominated. President Vines was renominated for a second term, and Daniel Vestal of Dunwoody, Ga., also was nominated. Vines represented the "conservative" organization, and Vestal was supported by "moderates" and "centrists."

Registration Secretary Lee Porter instructed messengers in the balloting, and the order of business turned to the report of the convention's Committee on Nominations.

In a departure from recent annual meetings, no effort was made to amend the report from the floor. The nominations report has been a matter of controversy in recent years because it is the vehicle by which "conservatives" have placed persons committed to their agenda on the boards and commissions of the SBC. "Moderate" attempts to alter that report



Missions Directors—The Southern Baptist Directors of Missions Conference elected officers during its annual meeting June 11-12 in Las Vegas, Nev. They are (from left) F. Russell Bennett, Long Run Association, Louisville, Ky., president; Glenn Hickey, Pulaski Association, Little Rock, Ark., first vice president; Ken Chadwick, Salt Lake and Rainbow Canyon associations, Salt Lake City, Utah, second vice president; A. Lawrence Clegg, Chappapeela Association, Ponchatoula, La., secretary; Grayson Glass, Galveston Association, LaMarque, Texas, newsletter editor; (not pictured) Phil G. Hall, Southeast Iowa Association, Albia, treasurer; and J.R. Blakeney, associate director of the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans, host for the 1990 meeting.

had created a great deal of controversy and generated a ruling that amendments to the report had to be made one position at a time. That ruling made such amendments virtually impossible because of limited time and messenger impatience. A lawsuit over that ruling, filed by Bob and Julia Crowder of Birmingham, Ala., was resolved in favor of the convention.

Prior to the adoption of that report, only one question was raised from the floor. A messenger suggested that too few women were being nominated to positions of responsibility and asked if the convention's bylaws contained any rules limiting the number of positions which may be held by women. Messengers endorsed the question with substantial applause.

Committee Chairman Joe H. Reynolds of Houston, Texas, replied that the committee had done "the best we could," given the complicated formula used to allocate board positions.

Executive Committee Report

After a break for congregational singing led by Bill Crawford of Oak Ridge, Tenn., Executive Committee Chairman Charles Sullivan came to the platform to introduce the final item in the committee's 13-part report, a resolution of appreciation for Carolyn Weatherford on her retirement after 15 years as executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC.

The resolution noted the growth in the mission offerings and in the number of WMU organizations that had occurred under Weatherford's leadership and ex-

pressed "gratitude to God for (her) life and ministry" and "deep appreciation for her long and faithful service to Southern Baptists."

Motions and Resolutions

John Wright, chairman of the Committee on Order of Business, returned to the platform to announce the recommended disposition of more motions and resolutions. His proposal to refer additional motions to the Executive Committee was adopted by the messengers. They also approved Wright's suggestion to postpone until 1990, because of legal concerns, discussion of a motion to remove Curtis Caine from the Christian Life Commission.

Registration Secretary Lee Porter briefly took the microphone to report on the presidential balloting.

He told messengers that, of 19,007 ballots cast, SBC President Jerry Vines had received 10,574 for 55.6 percent of the total. The challenger, Daniel Vestal, received 8,248 votes (43.4 percent).

Having learned the results of the presidential election, messengers returned to business matters. They adopted the report of the Committee on Committees and heard other resolutions and motions introduced. When one messenger expressed a concern for Chinese Christians involved in that country's democracy movement, President Vines asked messengers to join hands across the aisles and he voiced a brief prayer, asking God to protect Christians and others working to bring greater freedom to the People's Republic of China.

Among other motions introduced were proposals to:

— amend the bylaws to provide for election of SBC officers to two-year terms, without possibility of re-election;

— require that individuals elected as trustees of Southern Baptist seminaries be graduates of Southern Baptist seminaries;

— amend the bylaws to render ineligible nominees for trustee positions if their election would give their home congregation more than one member serving as a trustee for Southern Baptist entities;

— amend the bylaws so that neither the President's Address nor the Convention Sermon could immediately precede the election of the president;

— set a date in July 1989 as a day of prayer for reversal of the Supreme Court's controversial 1973 Roe v. Wade decision regulating abortion.

Also during the business session, President Vines ruled out of order an earlier motion to rescind the resolution on the priesthood of the believer passed at the 1988 SBC annual meeting. The motion was improper, Vines declared, since resolutions simply express the opinion of messengers present and voting at a given annual meeting and are not binding on any individual, church, or agency. Messengers cannot rescind the opinions of those at a previous meeting.

When the time for the introduction of business had expired, Vines opened the floor for vice-presidential nominations. Four names were brought: evangelist Junior Hill of Alabama, Bill Poe of North Carolina, Carolyn Weatherford of Alabama, and Brian Harbour, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock.

At 4:25 p.m., Registration Secretary Lee Porter instructed the messengers, who cast their ballots for first vice-president.

Larry Wynn of Dacula, Ga., pronounced the benediction which closed the Tuesday afternoon session. He prayed for Millie Lovegren, who was missing from a Southern Baptist tour group visiting in China.

Tuesday evening

After his election to a second one-year term, SBC President Jerry Vines told reporters that personal evangelism and "building great soul-winning churches" will be the twin themes of his second year in office.

In a report published by Baptist Press, the convention's news service, Vines was quoted as pledging to "restore the joy" to the Southern Baptist Convention by encouraging greater involvement in personal evangelism.

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Jerry Vines

During his President's Message Tuesday morning, Vines had preached about a biblical promise that "those who are faithful to sow (the seed of the gospel) will return rejoicing." He said, "Leading people to salvation will put the joy back in the Southern Baptist Convention," and he read the names of several individuals he had personally led to faith in Christ during the past year. He told messengers that his commitment to personal soulwinning, made last year after his election in San Antonio, had made the intervening months "the sweetest, most joy-filled" of his life.

Although Vines admitted the controversy within the SBC is not yet over, he did say he believes the "issue of the Bible" is settled among Southern Baptists, meaning that the trustees and administrators of SBC institutions "clearly understand the direction Southern Baptists want to go." He added: "I believe the process of theological renewal is under way. I am confident that, in a loving and Christlike manner, theological problems in God's good time will be resolved."

In a separate news conference, challenger Daniel Vestal said the issue among Southern Baptists is not the nature of Scripture, but freedom.

According to a Baptist Press report, Vestal said "forced conformity" in the SBC has polarized and divided the convention. Although he reaffirmed his congregation's commitment to continuing to give 12 percent of its receipts to the SBC Cooperative Program, Vestal said he does not believe the convention can continue "disfranchising

people year after year... and expect them to continue giving."

The report said Vestal appealed to Southern Baptists to reject "militant partisanship" and work instead toward a "legitimate unity" by including people from various perspectives within the convention.

Elections of Officers

After getting off early from the afternoon session, messengers reconvened at 7:00 p.m. John Yarbrough, pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Cartersville, Ga., brought an invocation.

Registration Secretary Lee Porter announced the results of balloting for first vice-president. Alabama evangelist Junior Hill polled 6,989 votes, for 54.2 percent of the 12,884 ballots cast. His closest challenger was retiring WMU Executive Director Carolyn Weatherford, who drew 4,207 (32.7 percent) of the votes.

Three nominations were entered for second vice-president: Lewis Adkison of Colorado, G.T. Bowman of Georgia, and Ernest B. Myers, executive director of the Nevada Baptist Convention. On Porter's instructions, messengers cast their ballots and then turned their attention to Bobby Boyles, pastor of First Church, Moore, Okla., who brought the evening's theme interpretation.

Immediately after Boyles's message, Lee Porter returned to the platform to announce a runoff between Lewis Adkison and Ernest Myers would be necessary. Myers had drawn 3,199 of the 6,910 ballots

cast, for 46.3 percent of the vote. Adkison had polled 3,173 (45.9 percent). The total balloting for second vice-president was barely one-third of that for president. Messengers voted again.

Board Reports

When the time arrived for a report from the Baptist Sunday School Board, BSSB President Lloyd Elder assured messengers that the board's commitment to the integrity of God's Word "would not falter or fail." Elder explained that commitment was not only personal but also included a commitment to the "Baptist Faith and Message" as the doctrinal guideline for the board's work. He told messengers that more than 10 million New Testaments, including 250,000 in languages other than English, will be published for the 1990 "Here's Hope" simultaneous revivals. The plan of salvation is being prominently displayed in more than 5 million pieces of literature sent out each quarter, Elder added.

At the end of his report, Elder was asked by a messenger if the board would not include the plan of salvation in preschool materials, as well as curricula for older age groups. To indicate the need for such a step, the messenger said his son had been saved at three years of age.

At the conclusion of the Sunday School Board report, Lee Porter announced that Ernest Myers of Nevada had been elected second vice-president with 3,540 votes, 56.3 percent of the 6,289 ballots cast.

Although attendance was minimal when the evening session opened, the



July 24-28, 1989
Ouachita Baptist University



Pastor
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auditorium had gradually filled during the course of the evening. Many of Las Vegas' 13,000 local Baptists swelled the ranks of the congregation as they came to hear the report of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, always an inspirational highlight of the annual meeting. An estimated 15,000 persons were in attendance for the report.

Appreciative messengers gave a sustained standing ovation for FMB President R. Keith Parks, who acknowledged the recognition by quipping, "We are glad to have our report in a part of the program where you are so tired of sitting that you'll stand up for anything."

The FMB report consisted of video presentations intertwined with missionary testimonies, including one from John and Connie Anthony, Arkansas natives who are serving as Baptist representatives in Israel.

Parks told the assembly that, despite financial cutbacks, Southern Baptist missionaries are still making progress in baptizing new converts each year. But because of new restrictions being placed on traditional missionary work, Southern Baptists must look for new, creative approaches to missions, such as non-residential missionaries, "tent-makers," and itinerant missionaries.

"Is it really possible to share the gospel with everyone in the world before the year 2000?" Parks asked. He pointed out that in 1950 there were 21 lost people for each "Great Commission Christian" in the world, but by 1989 that ratio had been reduced to only seven per Christian.

"If people and churches committed themselves to reach the unreached, we

could do it for the first time in human history," Parks declared, "but it will require every genuine born-again Christian throughout the world and it will require of us more than we have ever done before."

Apparently Southern Baptists have not yet decided that it is worth the effort necessary to reach the world for Christ, Parks said. He told messengers that, if Southern Baptists decided to contribute their proper share to the task, it would require increasing the foreign mission budget 112 percent to \$360 million by A.D. 2000.

"I don't have time to be delicate and diplomatic," Parks said bluntly. "We have plenty of money to underwrite everything needed to reach the world for Christ, but we have not decided we are ready to pay the price."

Rather than make the sacrifices and pray and give and go to meet the need, Southern Baptists have chosen instead to "desecrate the offerings placed before God by spending the money on ourselves," Parks said.

"We who claim to live by the book have taken out of that book sacrifice and suffering and self-denial," Parks declared. Shouts of "Amen!" echoed across the hall when he added: "God will judge us when he writes 'Ichabod' across our epitaph."

"Unless we are willing to deny ourselves, unless we discover a new passion for the world, we will arrive at 2000 and be marked as the generation that had everything it needed to reach the world except one thing, a broken heart, a concern for a lost world that would cause us to leave home and family and country and comfort, to reject our own desires, to take up our own

(BP) photo / Tim Fields



Casting ballots

desires and follow Jesus Christ," Parks prophesied.

The benediction was pronounced by Barry Barron of Gainesville, Ga., and the third session of the annual meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Wednesday Morning

The second day of the convention opened at 8:30 a.m. with 20 minutes of inspirational music provided by the Old Time Gospel Hour Trio of Lynchburg, Va.

The first order of business was the election of the recording and registration secretaries. Martin Bradley and Lee Porter were re-elected without opposition.

Board Reports

The bulk of the morning's schedule was devoted to receiving reports from 10 agencies and committees of the convention. Complying with a request from SBC President Vines, each agency head shared a recent witnessing experience as he brought his report.

Messengers received reports from Richard T. McCartney of the Radio and Television Commission, Milton Ferguson of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lewis A. Drummond of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, A.R. Fagan of the Stewardship Commission, and Hollis E. Johnson III of the Southern Baptist Foundation.

Christian Life Commission Chairman Joe Atchison of Rogers presented the printed CLC report and introduced CLC Executive

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Director Richard Land. Land informed messengers that the commission's staff, through the auspices of a new Washington office, had given testimony on child pornography, enforcement of obscenity laws, alcoholic beverage labeling, and child care. The CLC also had joined in friend of the court briefs opposing abortion on demand and in support of federal ban on dial-porn, Land said.

Brotherhood Commission Chairman Billy Summerlin introduced that agency's report. Summerlin said the commission had assisted Baptist Men's groups which had distributed 95,000 meals and rebuilt dozens of churches in the wake of two hurricanes this past year. In addition, 200 church buildings had been put up in the United States by Baptist Men groups, Summerlin said.

The Baptist World Alliance report was delivered by BWA General Secretary Denton Lotz. Lotz recounted an international delegation's visit to Cuba for first time since that country's communist revolution. He said the group found churches in Cuba thriving after 30 years of repression.

Public Affairs Committee

When the time arrived for the report of the Southern Baptist Public Affairs Committee, the simmering Baptist Joint Committee controversy boiled over again.

Public Affairs Committee Chairman Sam Currin gave messengers an overview of his committee's activities during the year just past. He commented on the PAC's involvement in legislative issues such as opposing national child care legislation and expressing concerns about the Civil Rights Restoration Act. He also pointed out to the assembly that the Public Affairs Committee had begun publishing its own newsletter.

After his presentation, Currin was closely questioned by three messengers. He was asked about the PAC's continued criticism of the Baptist Joint Committee's position on the Voluntary School Prayer Amendment, about the PAC's continued insistence on a greater Southern Baptist voice in BJC governance, and about a motion presented on Tuesday to decrease BJC funding and distribute the monies among other SBC entities, including the PAC.

Currin told messengers that Southern Baptists provide 90 percent of the BJC's funding, yet have only one-third of the voting membership of its board of directors. He also said the BJC is "circumventing the Cooperative Program" by independently raising as much as \$200,000 from Southern Baptist churches. "We can't get an accounting from the staff on where their money is coming from or how it is being spent," he said.

Later in the session, BJC Executive Director James Dunn was given three minutes to respond to Currin's charges.

Dunn denied what he called "gross distortions and misrepresentations" concerning the Baptist Joint Committee. He said Southern Baptists provide 53 percent of the BJC budget, not 90 percent, as Currin had claimed, and that SBC support has dropped from 70 percent of the budget just two years ago. Dunn told messengers that the Joint Committee is being careful to operate by the "letter of the law" regarding fundraising in SBC churches, although Currin had implied the BJC was illicitly raising thousands of dollars from Southern Baptist congregations.

When Committee on Order of Business Chairman John Wright brought another motion to refer items to the Executive

Committee for consideration, he was challenged again on the authority for such a referral. A motion was made to prevent the referral of a motion which would have prohibited the President's Address or the Convention Sermon from being scheduled immediately prior to the presidential election. When the vote on that motion was undecided on a show of hands, President Vines ordered ballots to be cast.

Budget Reconsideration

That brought the messengers to the point where discussion was scheduled on the motion to divert to Southeastern Seminary \$350,000 of Baptist Joint Committee funds approved when the budget was adopted on Tuesday.

Former SBC President Adrian Rogers spoke in favor of the idea, saying "we have marched around this mountain so many times that this body needs to speak its mind... and go ahead and make this decision." Nashville attorney Frank Ingraham differed with Rogers, contending that the budget process is "intricate" and involves both agency trustees and members of the SBC Executive Committee. That process, not discussion on the convention floor, best represents the needs of the agencies, as well as the wishes of the previous convention which set the process in motion. Floor politics tends to reflect the desires of "the one who is most winsome at the moment," Ingraham said, and he pled with messengers not to submit to "individual pressures of the moment."

Once again, President Vines found himself unable to judge the vote on a show of hands, and he ordered ballots to be cast.

Convention Sermon

The 1989 Convention Sermon was delivered by Morris Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas. Chapman spoke on the "permanence" of the Word of God, expanding on the "issue of the Bible" which Vines said has been settled among Southern Baptists.

Chapman declared that the controversy among Southern Baptists is "not a matter of a left or a right turn, but a matter of a right or a wrong turn in the history of Southern Baptists."

He criticized as "a figment of someone's imagination" the phrase "functional inerrancy," which some "moderates" have coined to describe their confidence in the reliability and authority of the Scriptures without committing themselves to the doctrine of inerrancy as it is commonly held. "God breathed out the substance of Scripture" and "whether we allow it to function in our hearts or not," Scripture is inerrant nonetheless, Chapman asserted.

Chapman said Southern Baptists "must stay the course which was blazed by our



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(Left to right) Second Vice-President Ernest Meyers, President Jerry Vines, and First Vice-President Junior Hill.

fathers in the faith" and pass along as a heritage to the next generation belief in the historical accuracy of Genesis chapters 1-11 and the New Testament miracles, as well as the traditional "five fundamentals": Jesus' virgin birth, sinless life, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, and literal return.

If Southern Baptists will "stand before the Jericho walls of doubt and disbelief and let the people shout out the shout of salvation," then those walls will fall down, Chapman insisted.

When Chapman had completed his address, Lee Porter announced that the motion to not refer the item concerning the ordering of speeches and elections had failed by a narrow vote of 5,247 to 5,206. The motion to reconsider the budget and divert \$350,000 from the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs to Southeastern Seminary had failed dramatically, though. Of 11,232 ballots cast, 6,034 (53.7 percent) had favored the BJC.

Phil Box of Tulsa, Okla., pronounced the benediction.

Wednesday evening

Bill Merrell of Midwest City, Okla., opened the Wednesday evening session with prayer. Then Bo Whitten, a homemaker from Marietta, Ga., brought an interpretation of the convention's theme.

After her testimony, Public Affairs Committee Chairman Sam Currin took the stage to contradict what Baptist Joint Committee Executive Director James Dunn had said in reply to Currin's charges earlier in the day.

The record "needs to be set clear," Currin said, and he reiterated his contention that Southern Baptists contribute 90 percent of the BJC's support. He held aloft an

SBC Annual which he said showed the BJC received in 1988 a total of \$476,000 from all nine member bodies, \$435,000 of which he said came from Southern Baptists, an amount "in excess of 90 percent."

However, if one took into account funds flowing into the BJC from outside denominational contributions, then the percentage of Southern Baptist support indeed becomes 53 percent, Currin said.

Such "outside" funds "distort the budget process and the view of the budget from within the SBC," he added.

Board Report

The Wednesday evening session concluded with the report of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Richard Harris, HMB mass evangelism director, told messengers that soulwinning efforts connected with the SBC annual meeting had included prayer for every person in the Las Vegas phone book, 90 revival meetings the previous week, and distribution of 26,000 marked New Testaments, with a result of 15 new churches started and the prospect of more than 450 total professions of faith. During the week, 2,025 volunteers called on at least 120,000 homes and discovered at least 5,000 prospects.

HMB President Larry L. Lewis said 1988 had been a "banner, signal, record year in nearly every way" for Southern Baptist home missions. He noted an increase of 2.3 percent in SBC baptisms, the organization of 1,248 new congregations, an increase of 8.3 percent in the number of new missionaries appointed, and a record \$30.9 million for the home missions offering.

Darrell Robinson, HMB vice-president for evangelism, brought a message to conclude the board's report.

He said Southern Baptists have been "quarreling too much about the methodology" of winning souls when they really needed to "just go to it." He said there is "no bad way to win people to Jesus."

"Too many churches are "fenced in by attitudes of defeat" regarding soulwinning, Robinson said. But every church has adequate personnel for the job, "an army for God seated in the pews of the church," and pastors must equip that army because "the

generals will never do it from the pulpit."

Robinson asked messengers to fill out cards which reflected a personal commitment to prayer for spiritual awakening and involvement in personal soulwinning.

James Jones, director of evangelism for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan, dismissed the evening session with prayer at 9:28 p.m.

Thursday morning

The convention's final day began with 20 minutes of inspirational music presented by the choir of Del Cerro Baptist Church in LaMesa, Calif. At 8:50, John McKay led the congregation in a series of praise and worship choruses, and Steve Taylor, pastor of Sandia Baptist Church in Albuquerque, N.M., brought the



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invocation.

Apparently tired from two days of nonstop conventioning, messengers were straggling into the meeting. Only a handful were present when time for the 9:00 a.m. business session arrived. President Vines ruled that, in the absence of the 5,106 messengers necessary to establish a quorum, those present would take reports and forego business until a quorum was established.

Thursday's reports continued the motif of agency heads sharing personal witnessing experiences. Messengers received reports from Arthur Walker of the SBC Education Commission, William O. Crews of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynn E. May Jr. of the SBC Historical Commission, and Landrum P. Leavell of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Leavell joked with messengers as he complimented his faculty. He told messengers every member of the New Orleans faculty is "a storehouse tither and a teetotaler; try that on your deacons and then come criticize my faculty!"

Carolyn Weatherford presented her final report as executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC. She reviewed several of the many accomplishments

WMU has achieved during her tenure: relocation and construction of a debt-free headquarters building, an enlarged staff, increased and improved services, video and satellite communications technology added to printed media, the launch of New Hope (a publishing venture targeting the general Christian marketplace), establishment of the Second Century endowment fund, and a new emphasis on tours to help bring missions to life.

Weatherford recognized WMU President Marjorie McCullough, who assured messengers that missions would remain WMU's top priority. McCullough also said a search committee is hard at work, seeking God's leadership in the selection of a successor for Weatherford.

At 9:40 a.m., the chair ruled that a quorum finally was present, and messengers returned to their business agenda.

Resolutions

The major item on that order was consideration of 10 resolutions reported out by the convention's Resolutions Committee.

Resolutions Committee Chairman Mark Coppenger led the way in the adoption of

the report with practically no changes. Resolutions adopted without discussion encouraged laypeople to exercise their gifts in personal ministry, called upon Christians to commit themselves to "absolute personal integrity," and designated 1990 as the International Year of Bible Reading. Other resolutions called upon congregations to participate fully in the 1990 Here's Hope simultaneous revivals, urged individuals to ask their congressmen to support recommendations on drunk driving recently received by the U.S. Congress, besought Christians to pray for peace, reform, and the spread of the gospel in the People's Republic of China, and expressed alarm about illegal drug traffic and the violence it causes.

Two resolutions were challenged before being adopted as printed.

A resolution on racism took a stand for racial justice and equality and repented for past bigotry. It challenged Southern Baptists to establish brotherly relationships across racial lines. A substitute motion which would have added a condemnation of the "heresy of apartheid in South Africa" was defeated.

The second resolution to engender debate dealt with the delicate subject of

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abortion. It affirmed opposition to legal abortion "except to prevent the imminent death of the mother;" endorsed a constitutional amendment banning abortion, and urged state legislatures and the Congress to pass laws restricting induced abortion. Two messengers objected to limiting exceptions merely to the life of the mother, but the resolution was adopted by a three-fourths majority.

As with motions referred by the Committee on Order of Business, the Resolutions Committee asked messengers to approve its disposition of items not reported out to the floor. The messengers gave that approval.

Board Reports

The resolutions report complete, Darold H. Morgan, president of the SBC Annuity Board, brought his last report before retirement in March 1990. Messengers also heard reports from Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Roy Honeycutt, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Honeycutt presented the seminary's E.Y. Mullins Award to Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks in recognition of his "unwavering commitment to Jesus Christ and the cause of global missions."

Messengers also received reports from the Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary and the Canada Planning Group before President Vines announced that the session would go straight through the lunch break in an effort to complete business by 1:00 p.m.

After congregational singing led by John McKay and a prayer by Mark Brooks, pastor of Eldmade Baptist Church in Springdale, former SBC President Charles Stanley rose to preach.

Focusing on John 8:31-32, Stanley preached on being set free from the emotional and spiritual bondage which results from theological error and unresolved guilt.

He said Baptists are strong on the doctrine of eternal security, which gives persons hope for the future, but argued that people also need strength to live daily life with all of its troubles. He said that strength comes from the simple, but profound truth: Jesus Christ is my life. When a person begins to recognize the resources of Christ within and begins to respond to his circumstances based on those resources, God sets him free, Stanley asserted.

"We are preaching to people who are desperate, and I want to ask you, do you as a pastor know how to set them free?" Stanley queried. "Telling them how to be saved every week is not going to do it," he added. "You have the message of freedom for hurting folks. Tell it with all your heart."

Following Stanley's sermon, which would have closed the morning session had messengers not agreed to work through the lunch hour, the time arrived for the scheduled report of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

BJC Executive Director James Dunn thanked messengers for the affirmation they had given earlier by defeating the effort to reduce the BJC's funding. He noted that five of the last six conventions have reaffirmed the BJC and said he was confident messengers will do so again in New Orleans, where the issue of the proposed new Religious Liberty Commission is to be debated.

Dunn reviewed the BJC's role in achieving greater religious freedom than the Soviet Union, in shaping a new context for religious expression in public schools, and in gaining a new level of access with the Internal Revenue Service regarding the concerns of Southern Baptist laypeople and clergy.

"Some ridiculous distortions continue to be printed," Dunn said. "And that is not good, but the distortions make many more people eager to learn for themselves what is really going on, and that is good." He encouraged people to subscribe to the BJC's *Report from the Capitol* to "learn the truth and come to appreciate the important role of the BJC in regard to religious liberty and separation of church and state."

Responding to a messenger's question about the discrepancies between Dunn's and Currin's reports on the BJC's budget and fund raising, Dunn said that the full BJC budget includes categories of income other than contributions from member denominations. He said the budget approved by messengers on Tuesday provided \$391,796 for the BJC, which amounts to 53.7 percent of the agency's total 1989-90 budget of \$729,772.

The two final reports of the convention came from Alvin C. Shackleford, representing the denominational press and John D. Erickson, on behalf of the American Bible Society.

At the close of Erickson's report, Committee on Order of Business Chairman John Wright moved the adjournment of the 132nd annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. A benediction by Joe Finckoff, pastor of First Baptist Church in Gentry, voiced a desire for God to move in revival among Southern Baptists during the coming year. President Vines gavelled the meeting to a close at 1:04 p.m.

The registration at noon Thursday stood at 20,423, making the Las Vegas meeting the sixth largest Southern Baptist Convention ever held and the largest annual meeting ever held west of San Antonio, Texas.

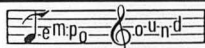
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Drummond to Address Breakfast

Dr. Lewis Drummond, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., will be the next featured speaker in the continuing series of events leading up to the Arkansas Billy Graham Crusade.

Drummond will speak at a leadership breakfast at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 24 at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock. His topic will be "The Role of Prayer in Spiritual Awakening."

Reservations can be made by calling the crusade office at 375-1989. The meeting is open to the public, but is especially intended for church leadership.

Billy Graham

Crusade Countdown

June

- 24 Leadership Breakfast with Dr. Lewis Drummond

July

- 4 Singles Rally
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- 23 Operation Andrew Sunday

August

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- 14-25 Nurture Group Training
- 21-27 Prayer Hosts Extend Invitations
- 26 Leadership Breakfast with Dr. Emmanuel Scott
- 27 Support Sunday
- 28-9/22 Prayertime Broadcasts

September

- * High School Assemblies
- 11-16 Rehearsals
- 17-24 CRUSADE
- 18-22 School of Evangelism
- 25-10/27 Follow-up Broadcasts

For more information on any of these events, contact your church's crusade coordinator or call the Crusade Office at 375-1989.

Baptist Men Honored

Arkansas Baptist Men recently received honorary membership to the National Disaster Medical System for participation in the spring earthquake exercise. Certificates were also given to the following churches for their participation: Calvary Church, Little Rock; Immanuel Church, Little Rock; First Church, Little Rock; Second Church, Little Rock; South Highland Church, Little Rock; and Woodlawn Church, Little Rock.

Baptists For Life

The third meeting of the recently formed Baptists for Life will be held on Thursday, June 29, at 7 p.m. at South Highland Church, Little Rock. Any pro-life Southern Baptist is welcome. This group,

although composed exclusively of Southern Baptists, is not part of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention or sponsored by the convention.

If interested, contact Lisa Clay at 224-6218.

Centennial History

First Baptist Church of Walnut Ridge is celebrating its 100th anniversary during 1989. Among the special activities planned by the church's centennial committee is the publication of a centennial history.

Entitled "March We Onward," the book follows the growth and development of the congregation from its inception in 1889.

The history, written by Dr. Kenneth Startup of Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, is available at a pre-publication price of \$6 postpaid and can be ordered through Aug. 1 from

"March We Onward," P.O. Box 547, Walnut Ridge, AR 72476.

OBU Receives Four Gifts

ARKADELPHIA—Four benefactors have established scholarship funds and endowments totaling \$389,000 at Ouachita Baptist University.

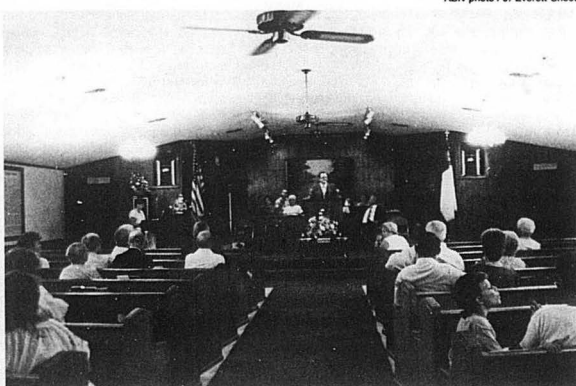
A gift of \$340,000 was presented to Ouachita from the estate of J.C. Fuller of Little Rock to endow a chair in the religion department.

Arkansas' poet laureate, Miss Lily Peter of Marvell, has established a scholarship fund at Ouachita with a gift of \$25,000.

Christina Hunter of Henryetta, Okla., has given OBU \$15,000 to establish a scholarship fund.

Valree Bates of Hope has also established a scholarship fund with an initial gift of \$9,000, to be supplemented with the proceeds from a gift annuity.

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



Dedication—First Church of Eagle Mills, near Camden, dedicated its new facilities June 4. The 3,200 square foot construction project was erected at a cost of \$120,000, and is valued at \$180,000. It houses a 250-seat auditorium, baptistry, two classrooms, nursery, and church office. The morning message was delivered by ABN Editor J. Everett Sneed and the dedicatory response was led by Pastor James C. Morgan.

Bookshelf

Christian Doctrine for Everyman: An Introduction to Baptist Beliefs by Jimmy A. Millikin

The book *Christian Doctrine for Everyman: An Introduction to Baptist Beliefs* provides a clear yet comprehensive overview of most of the Bible doctrines. It is written for lay people, yet contains a depth which will be helpful to preachers and experienced Bible teachers. The work contains a simplicity of style but provides insight into some of the most profound teachings of the Bible.

The author's deep love for the Bible is evident. Though one may occasionally differ with Dr. Millikin's interpretation of a particular doctrine, all will agree that he has made every effort to exalt the Word of God.

Virtually every important doctrine of the Bible has been dealt with. The doctrines included range from the doctrine of revelation to an examination of the teachings of last things. In dealing with each doctrine Dr. Millikin places Christ preeminent. His deep and abiding conviction should help combat many of the erroneous teachings of our time.

Dr. Millikin is uniquely qualified both

educationally and practically to produce this type of book. He holds the Th.D. degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, with a major in New Testament. He has served churches in both rural and urban settings and his teaching experience has brought him in contact with a wide variety of people.

This book will be exceedingly helpful to all who are committed to a better understanding of God's truths. The book is available at the Baptist Book Store.

Crosspoint Camps Begin July 12

Crosspoint recreation camps for students who have completed grades four through eight are being offered across the county July 12-Aug. 12.

Crosspoint offers recreational activities such as baseball, basketball, cheerleading, gymnastics, football, tennis, softball, soccer, swimming, and volleyball. Non-sport activities are also offered. Students study the Bible daily during the week-long camps.

Arkansas Crosspoint will be offered July 3-8 at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia. For information, contact the Baptist Sunday School Board, Church Recreation Department, 127 Ninth Ave. North, Nashville, TN 37234.

Photo / Jackie Scott



Boys Ranch Dedicated—Just one of the many helping hands that enabled the Arkansas Baptist Boys' Ranch in Harrison to become a reality belongs to Pansy Arnold, 89, of Woodland Heights Church. She is pictured with Resident Manager Richard Brown and one of the nine quilts she made for the home. An open house was held June 5 for the facility which was made possible by North Arkansas Association.

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July: Test or Treat?

by Don Moore
 ABCS Executive Director

There are so many ways in which July can be a test to us. The heat is usually bad. Attendance tends to suffer. You are worn out from trying to get the kids to all of the ball games, camps, cheer-leading and music activities. Bible school, backyard Bible clubs and day camps have taken some of your time. You could add several more. It isn't easy to be a parent during the summer, or any other time so far as that is concerned. By the middle of July you are not sure you are going to pass the test! Right?



Well, this is June. Now is the time to do something about July. Some practical suggestions at this point might help you make July a treat instead of a test.

First, plan it all out well. Get a calendar, or two if necessary, and map out who, what, when, where and how it is all supposed to happen.

Second, use some good sound judgment about what is reasonable to try to do. With a view to priority matters, determine what you can and should do. That needs to be done independent of the expectations of those who do not have responsibility for the welfare of your family and their relationships.

Third, you should schedule adequate time for travel, preparation, and free time. These have to be done as much as anything else has to be done. If you do not commit to do it, someone else will be in control of your schedule, and you will be pressured and victimized by your failure to take control of your schedule.

Fourth, make sure you and your family give priority to the things of God. The only place God will take is "First Place." To relegate him to a lesser role in your life opens the door for Satan to move in. Once he gets a foot in the door he will move on in his strategies to "steal, kill and destroy" (Jn. 10:10). The following activities can be just the thing you or someone in your family may need for a terrific spiritual boost this summer. These can be the treat in July.

Siloam Springs Assembly—The first two camps in July are full. We still have room in the July 17-21 and July 24-28 weeks. Two separate assemblies are operated at the same time. Children and youth services are conducted separately.

Every Baptist child in Arkansas ought to have a week at our Siloam Assembly.

Family Enrichment—How we hunger for more meaningful homes! The failure of so many marriages of children who have been raised in fine Christian homes is alarming. "Parenting By Grace," "Covenant Marriage," and "Family Enrichment Leadership" are the sessions that will be conducted July 10-11, at the Parkway Place Church, Little Rock. If you have an interest and want to help your family or be in a position to help others, you ought to explore the resources. Contact Church Training at 376-4791.

Senior Adults SummerSing—While the current generation is very music oriented, most of it is music performed by others. People who are 55 years of age and up have an orientation to music in which they were the performers. No, it isn't because they were so good. It was because there were few radios and no television when they grew up. In the home, school or church no one else provided your music. You provided your own. That is why SummerSing has such an appeal. Senior adults are doers, not just hearers. I'm so excited over the special week at Ouachita for senior adults. The dates are July 24-28. The Church Music Department should be called if you need more information (376-4791).

Youth Music Camp—July 24-28, Ouachita Baptist University is the traditional site of Music Arkansas for Youth. Band and honors choir auditions will be held. A musical will be learned. Everyone can sing in a mass choir. Creative worship and theory learning experiences will be shared. Stephen Hatfield and Gregg Greenway will be the worship leaders.

Revival—Our hearts cry out for it, even though we may not know what we are asking. To most people, revival is a group of services conducted over a three day to two week period. An effort is made to get the church to set aside other matters so they can devote their time to the services. The usual goal is to get as many lost people as possible in the services so that the Lord can convict them and bring them to salvation.

Honestly, most everyone wants more than meetings. But even the meetings could mean so much more if there was adequate preparation.

The Here's Hope Simultaneous Revivals provide us one of our best opportunities for real revival. God needs to find us faithfully preparing. July 13-14 is the date when one person from each association will be trained in Here's Hope Revival

preparation. They will then be prepared to train other pastors in the association to do a good job of preparation in each of their churches. Dear people, the cry for revival needs to be matched with the thorough preparation for revival.

A Primitive Camp? Trust me! That's what it will be. High School Baptist Young Men (grades 10-12) only may participate. The challenge of wilderness existence is the attraction. The dates are July 20-22. The place will be somewhere in the mountain wilderness adjoining the White River. An experienced leader, Jim Sullivan, will be in charge. Can you think of a more daring way for a senior high boy to spend some of his summer? Call the Brotherhood Office (376-4791) for more information.

Building Consultation—July 10-14; Ed Hinkson and a church building consultant will be traveling to churches needing counsel on possible building or renovation projects. The demand is great. Appointments should be made by June 30 for a time in their schedule. Call Ed Hinkson at 376-4791.

Church Music Music Study Course Offered

Volunteer/part-time song leaders, choir directors, pianists, and organists will have another great time together in northeast Arkansas, Aug. 18-19, at Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge.

There'll be new music to read through, and James Allcock, First Church, Hope, will teach the book *Music in the Worship Experience*. Study course credit will be given. Peggy Pearson and Sue Crosby will lead the sessions for pianists and organists. Lester McCullough and Glen Ennes will lead sessions in music fundamentals, directing, and new music.

We'll start the first session at 4 p.m., Friday. You can register any time after 2 p.m. If you just can't be there by 4 p.m. then plan to come in time for the second session at 6:30 p.m. We'll eat supper about 5:30 p.m. The last session will finish at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday. One of the Saturday afternoon topics will be especially for combined children's choir leaders. Encourage these leaders to attend. Registration is required. For more information, contact the Church Music Department at 376-4791.—Glen Ennes, associate

Evangelism

Here's Hope 1990

Every person in Arkansas is linked together by a need. This need is as pervasive as the dream of freedom and as pressing as the hunger for love. This need is shared by the poor person as well as the wealthy. This need is known to the young and is reached for by the old. This need is sought in the rural areas and reaches to the largest city. This need surges through the heart of every individual. It is hope. This is why 1990 can be a year of victory for Southern Baptists as we share the message that Christ is the only hope. With one vision and one voice, every Christian in Arkansas will be called upon to share the message of hope.



Shell

The national goals for Here's Hope are:

- (1) To mobilize Southern Baptists in a unified prayer effort using Daniel Prayer Teams and Prayer for Spiritual Awakening emphasis.

- (2) To have 100 percent of state conventions participating.

- (3) To have 1,000 new church starts in 250 targeted areas.

- (4) To distribute 12-15 million scripture pieces.

- (5) To have 400,000 Southern Baptists trained to use marked New Testaments in soul winning.

- (6) To have 500,000 baptisms in 1990, 175,000 which results from Here's Hope.

- (7) To have full Southern Baptist Convention cooperation; Home Mission Board, Sunday School Board, Woman's Missionary Union, and Brotherhood Commission.

The Arkansas Here's Hope goals are:

- (1) 42 associations in the state involved.

- (2) 1,000 local churches participating in Here's Hope Revivals.

- (3) 10,000 Arkansas Baptists praying for revival.

- (4) 5 percent increase in baptisms

- (5) To blanket the state with the message of Here's Hope through television, billboards, radio, and newspapers. Note: the state convention effort will be basically television and billboards. The associations are asked to publicize this effort through newspapers and radio.

- (6) Total cooperation and support of all Executive Board programs saying to the people of Arkansas, "Here's Hope, Jesus Cares for You."

Has your local church voted to participate in Here's Hope? If the answer is "No," please do this immediately. Select your evangelist and begin to pray as the Psalmist, "Oh, God, wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee."—Clarence Shell, director

ABSC photo / Glen Ennes



Festival—Twenty-three adult choirs, representing 627 participants from across Arkansas gathered together at four locations for the semi-annual Adult Choir Festivals. The choirs sang for each other and joined their voices together in a large mass choir, singing two selections all choirs had previously prepared. Pictured is the Fort Smith's East Side Church choir, directed by Ken Stogsdill at Fort Smith's South Side Church.

Sunday School Building Tour

Does your church need help with a building program or with a first unit building? Does it need help with long range planning or with a plot plan? If so, help is on the way!

The Church Building Tour is scheduled for the week of July 10-14. John Hack from the Church Architecture Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board will be available for on-site visits to churches.

On-site visits should be scheduled with the Sunday School Department by June 30. The tour schedule will be set up and mailed out the week of July 3.

If you have questions about the tour, or if your church needs help with a building program, please call Ed Hinkson, 376-4791.—Ed Hinkson, associate

Annuity/Stewardship The Pastor And Stewardship

Lyle E. Schaller has an established reputation as a church growth consultant. He is not a novice in other areas of church life. In a recent book he had two noteworthy suggestions on a pastor's relationship to stewardship promotion.

The pastor is the most influential teacher of stewardship in the congregation. He models stewardship for all members. Schaller claims the minister is committed to tithing and should urge members to tithe as a part of their Christian stewardship.

Preaching is probably the most widely used approach to stewardship according to Schaller. He encourages ministers to make their preaching a source of stewardship education. Effective preaching can change both beliefs and behavior in stewardship matters.

With summer comes the annual plea for "faithfulness in your tithes and offerings." A good biblical sermon on stewardship can encourage members in the grace of giving.

A free book, *Preaching Helps on Stewardship*, is available from your Stewardship/Annuity Department.—James A. Walker, director

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Family Ministry

Family Enrichment Conference

Ray Wells will lead the state Family Enrichment Conference July 10-12, 1989, at the Parkway Place Church in Little Rock. The conference will include three workshops to be conducted consecutively beginning Monday afternoon, July 10, and adjourning at noon on Wednesday, July 12. Participants may choose to attend one, two, or three of the workshops.



Wells

The Family Enrichment Conference will feature three workshops designed to enable churches to minister effectively to couples and parents. The workshop titles are "Family Enrichment in Your Church," "Parenting by Grace Leadership Conference," and "Covenant Marriage Leadership Conference."

The "Family Enrichment in Your Church" workshop will provide practical suggestions to help the churches organize and plan effectively to enhance marriage and parent relationships of families in the church and community. This workshop is scheduled for Monday afternoon and evening.

The "Parenting by Grace Leadership" workshop will interpret the Parenting by

Grace materials and process. Participants will also receive specialized training in how to lead Parenting by Grace groups. This workshop is scheduled for Tuesday morning and afternoon.

The "Covenant Marriage Leadership" workshop will interpret the Covenant Marriage materials and process. Participants in this workshop will also receive specialized training in how to lead Covenant Marriage groups. The workshop is scheduled for Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning.

Ray Wells is a former Arkansas pastor, serving for several years as pastor of the First Church in Smackover. He and his wife, Carolyn, were the first couple in the Southern Baptist Convention to be certified as marriage enrichment retreat leaders by the Sunday School Board. Ray was Family Ministry Director for the Louisiana Convention since 1981, where he provides leadership for family enrichment, single and senior adult ministry.

Rick Smith and Gerald Jackson will assist Mr. Wells. Smith is minister of education and music for the Sylvan Hills Church in North Little Rock. Jackson is an associate in the Arkansas Church Training Department.

The three workshops will be about five hours in length. A participant may attend one or more of the three workshops. Each participant will need a personal copy of the basic resource for each workshop he attends. Resources will be available for purchase at the conference site.

Participants should pre-register for the

Family Enrichment Conference and indicate which workshop(s) they plan to attend. A small registration fee will be charged. Contact the Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 376-4791 for additional information.—Gerald Jackson, associate

Brotherhood

Where Are We?

Where are we in the Guatemala Arkansas Partnership Mission?

What is happening in 1989?

During 1989 the Guatemala Baptist Mission is projecting the work that they want Arkansas Baptists to do during 1990-1992. The meeting of the mission in July of this year will be extremely important in the planning process. Some very definite requests for partnership mission work should be available by mid- or late August 1989.

During 1989, a few partnership mission activities have and will be happening.

(1) A group of 11 went to Guatemala in January to initiate planning and establish the base for our cooperative effort through the Foreign Mission Board.

(2) A promotion group went in March to prepare television tapes for information and orientation. Pastor Mike Huckabee and Gary Underwood filmed and are producing, with the help of ACTS, this material for any and all churches in Arkansas.

(3) BSU has already become involved

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July 20-22

For more information, contact your RA leader or write: Brotherhood,
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through a summer teaching project in Quetzaltenango.

(4) The High School Baptist Young Men's all star team under the leadership of Bobby Shows will play basketball and witness during the end of June. Ten fine young men were chosen from the teams in the state tournament. They have all prepared their personal testimonies in Spanish and will share at half time and on other occasions.

(5) A dental team led by Dr. Rudy Jolly from Calvary Church in Little Rock will work for about a week in the Atitlan lake region in August.

(6) The executive secretary of the Guatemala Baptist Convention, Dr. Rosalio Ramirez, will attend and speak to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at the Little Rock meeting.

You can do one very important thing now. You can pray for the partnership. Specific suggestions are now available to guide in praying. These can be requested from you state Brotherhood office.—**Glendon Grober, director**

Church Music

For Children's Choir Leaders...

...Area Workshops! We're bringing the annual state workshop to you this year. On Monday, Aug. 21, our team of state approved workers will lead

a workshop at First Church, Arkadelphia; then the same team will move on to First Church, Monticello, for a workshop on Tuesday, Aug. 22. Our team for these two locations consists of Phil Hardin, older children; Judy Rogers, younger children; Mary Delaine Allcock, combined choirs; and Marsue Keathley, preschool.

The next week Elaine Barteel will lead the older children's workshop at Wynne Church on Monday, Aug. 28. On Tuesday, Aug. 29, Charlie Pierson will lead the workshop for older children's leaders at First Church, Springdale. All the other workshop leaders will remain the same.

The workshop schedule will be the same in each location: 2 p.m.—Registration; 2:30-4:30 p.m.—Conference; 4:30-6 p.m.—Supper on your own; 6-9 p.m.—Conference. This will allow maximum workshop benefits for the time you



Pearson

may need to travel. If you can't make the afternoon session, come on to the night session, 6-9 p.m..

The cost will be \$6.50 per choir leader and a registration form will be in the next issue of the *Preschool/Children's Choir News*. If you have a question, contact the Church Music Department at 376-4791.—**Peggy Pearson, associate/office manager**

Church Training MasterLife Workshop

Twenty-six participants completed a MasterLife Workshop conducted the week of May 15 on the Ouachita Campus. A second MasterLife Workshop will be conducted Aug. 7-11 on the campus of Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge. This will be our first MasterLife Workshop to be conducted in northeast Arkansas. Participants are expected from throughout north and east



Holley

Arkansas and southeast Missouri. The workshop leaders will be Val Prince of Fresno, Calif., and Charles Sharpe from Denver, Colo. Val Prince is a retired director of California's Church Training department. Dr. Charles Sharpe is executive director of the Colorado Baptist Convention. They are two of the most experienced MasterLife co-leaders in the convention.

Lodging will be available on the Southern campus. The cost will be \$3.50 per night for a private room. Participants must provide linens, towels, etc.

A meal ticket is available for \$20 that includes breakfast Tuesday-Friday and lunch Tuesday-Thursday.

To request reservations or additional information, contact Robert Holley, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 376-4791.—**Robert Holley, director**



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Pastor-Director Conference

Friday-Saturday, Aug. 4-5

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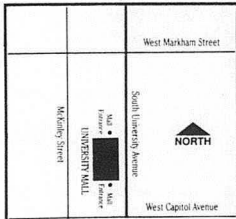
Conference Leader



Wes Campbell, Consultant Church Training Dept. Nashville, Tenn.

7 p.m. Friday-Noon Saturday

Location: University Mall Conference Room



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- * Planning a total Discipleship Program
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- * Selecting curriculum materials
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Looking Ahead

July

- 3-6 Arkansas Baptist Assemblies, *Siloam Springs (SS)*
- 10-11 Enrichment Leadership Conference, *Little Rock Parkway Place Church (CT)*
- 10-14 Arkansas Baptist Assemblies, *Siloam Springs (SS)*
- 10-14 Church Building Tour (CT)
- 13-14 Revival Preparation Seminar, *Camp Paron (Ev)*
- 20-22 High School Baptist Young Men's Primitive Camp, *Cotter (Bbd)*
- 21-22 State BSU Advisory Committee meeting/BSU directors' conference, *Days Inn, Little Rock (Stu)*
- 24-28 Music Arkansas for Youth, *Ouachita Baptist University (M)*
- 24-28 SummerSing, *Ouachita Baptist University (M)*
- 29 Associational Brotherhood directors meeting, *Hot Springs Piney Church (Bbd)*

August

- 1 Director of Missions Meeting, *Baptist Building (Ad)*
- 3-4 Weekday Early Education Workshop, *Little Rock Geyer Springs First Church (SS, M)*
- 4-5 Pastor-Director Retreat, *University Mall Community Room, Little Rock (CT)*
- 7-11 MasterLife Workshop, *Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge (CT)*
- 17 Associational Clerks Workshop, *Baptist Building (Ad)*
- 18-19 Associational Leadership Training Conference, *North Little Rock Park Hill Church (CT)*
- 18-19 Associational WMU Officers' Retreat, *Camp Paron (WMU)*
- 18-19 Volunteer/Part-Time Music Leader Retreat, *Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge (M)*

- 21 Children's Choir Leader Workshops, *Arkadelphia First Church (M)*
- 22 Children's Choir Leader Workshops, *Monticello First Church (M)*
- 22 State Growth Spiral Workshop, *Little Rock Markham Street Church (SS)*
- 28 Children's Choir Leader Workshops, *Wynne Church (M)*
- 28 IMPACT '89 Meeting, *Fort Smith Grand Avenue Church (WMU)*
- 29 Children's Choir Leader Workshops, *Springdale First Church (M)*
- 29 IMPACT '89 Meeting, *Fayetteville Immanuel Church (WMU)*
- 31 IMPACT '89 Meeting, *Harrison First Church (WMU)*

September

- 5 Church Arkansas Rally, *Springdale Elmdale Church (Mn)*
- 7 Church Arkansas Rally, *Jonesboro First Church (Mn)*
- 7 IMPACT '89, *North Little Rock Central Church (WMU)*
- 7-10 Fall Campers on Missions Rally, *Petit Jean State Park (Mn)*
- 8 Furloughing Missionaries Orientation, *Baptist Building (S/A)*
- 9 Baptist Youth Day, *Magic Springs, Hot Springs (CT)*
- 11 IMPACT '89, *Texarkana Trinity Church (WMU)*
- 11 Bi-Vocational and Small Church Evangelism Conference, *Murfreesboro First Church (Ev)*
- 12 IMPACT '89, *El Dorado First Church (WMU)*
- 12 Bi-vocational and Small Church Evangelism Conference, *Monticello Second Church (Ev)*
- 13 IMPACT '89, *El Dorado First Church (WMU)*
- 14 IMPACT '89, *Pine Bluff Immanuel Church (WMU)*

14 Bi-vocational and Small Church Evangelism Conference, *Colt Pine Tree Church (Ev)*

17-24 Season of Prayer for State Missions (WMU/Mn)

25 IMPACT '89, *West Memphis First Church (WMU)*

25-26 Church Music Conference—Youth Emphasis, *Ouachita Baptist University (M)*

26-27 IMPACT '89, *Jonesboro First Church (WMU)*

29-30 State Sunday School Conference, *Little Rock Geyer Springs First Church (SS)*

Abbreviations:

Ad - Administration; Bbd - Brotherhood; CLC - Christian Life Council; CT - Church Training; Ev - Evangelism; M - Music; Mn - Missions; SS - Sunday School; S/A - Stewardship/Annuity; Stu - Student; WMU - Woman's Missionary Union

Brotherhood Commission photo



RA University—Approximately 292 persons attended the Royal Ambassador University, the four-day national training meeting for RA leadership held in Memphis, Tenn., May 25-28. Arkansas participants were: (left to right, back row) James Beavers, Augusta; Rick Kelley, Jacksonville; Ken Bouillon, Jacksonville; (front row) Jim Sullivan, Benton; Diana Sullivan, Benton; and Ozzie Berrybill, North Little Rock.

Convention Uniform

The Choice of A Lifetime

by Dennis W. Swanberg, Second Church, Hot Springs

Basic passage: Joshua 24

Focal passage: Joshua 24:14-22,26,27

Central truth: Life is full of choices. However, the greatest choice that one can make is to surrender to God and then serve him faithfully.

Choices in life should never be made lightly! Rather, we should make vital daily decisions that require understanding, responsibility, and commitment. Like Joshua, our decisions will genuinely affect others as they choose to or choose not to serve the Lord. Let's realize that our response should be commensurate to his gracious invitation to salvation, service, and love.

Choices involve total commitment (24:14-15). God has no grandchildren—he just has children. And each individual on the face of this earth must choose whether or not they choose God through Christ as their Lord and Savior, and that choice involves commitment. Joshua knew that God's covenant was not something to be taken for granted. Joshua brought his people to the place where they could exercise total commitment to the Lord.

Choices involve open communication (24:16-18). The Israelites openly communicated their knowledge of the Lord and their understanding that he had been the one to bring them out of the bondage of Egypt. They appreciated his protection in the presence of their enemies; and they responded favorably (v. 18).

Choices involve lasting consequences (24:19-20). Choices that involve the Lord should not be entered into lightly.

Choices involve real rededications (24:21-22). There are times in our lives when we soberly and deliberately reaffirm our commitment unto the Lord. He, therefore, reminded them of the importance of a rededication, and he called them witnesses against themselves if they chose not to serve the Lord.

Remember, choices that are eternal are the choices of a lifetime; therefore, choose today to serve God! Serve him with a lifestyle of communication. Serve him with your talents that will last a lifetime, and rededicate yourself to him demand for servanthood. Their result will be that our Lord will be glorified and his people will be blessed.

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Life and Work

Tragic Ending

by L.B. Jordan, DOM, Red River, Association, Arkadelphia

Basic passage: Judges 16:19-22,28-30

Focal passage: Judges 16:19-21,30

Central truth: A person may have a good, advantageous beginning, but because of sin come to an untimely, tragic end.

Samson's conception and birth were attended with the remarkable, the supernatural. There was the appearance of the angel of the Lord with the announcement that a barren woman would conceive and bear a son. The angel appeared again and informed Manoah as to how the child was to be reared and then the angel ascended in the flame of the altar.

Also, both Manoah and his wife concerned themselves greatly with how the Lord wanted them to raise the child, Samson. They were good and godly parents. Samson had an auspicious beginning.

The story of Samson reveals serious flaws in his character. (1) He turned away from his own people and married a Philistine girl whose god was Dagon (Jg. 14). (2) He repeatedly lied as to the source of his strength (Jg. 14 and 15). (3) He involved himself with a prostitute (16:1-3). The whole story of Samson is replete with weakness of character and sin against God. Admittedly God used Samson to judge or punish the Philistines, but judgment also fell on Samson.

Too often we see examples that remind us of Samson. We see children of godly parents break the hearts of family and friends. We see youth with great physical strength and beauty, captivated by sensuousness and pride, turn from God and their parents' training. We see people with great spiritual gifts or unusual talents miss the mark in terms of how they utilize what God has given them. Sometimes through alcoholism, sexually transmitted diseases, drug overdose, etc., these people come to untimely deaths.

On the other hand, how beautiful it is to watch youth who blossom and grow into adulthood and live in obedience to the Lord. We are wonderfully blessed by so many who use their spiritual gifts to edify (build up) the church. We are enriched by those who learn from the mistakes of Samson and control their desires and utilize their physical energies for God. May their tribe increase!

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Bible Book

Never Cease Witnessing

by Dianne Swaim, Immanuel Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Acts 28:16-24,30-31

Focal passage: Acts 28:17-24,31

Central truth: Neither our opportunity nor our responsibility to witness ever runs out.

Paul has had a "long row to hoe" as the old adage would put it. His life has certainly been a traumatic one, moving from crisis to crisis. And his handling of each crisis has been a lesson for those of us who have followed his ministry. Acts 28 brings us to Paul's first Roman visit.

Paul had only been in Rome for three days when he called the chiefs of the Jews together. We have seen how time after time the troublesome Jews from past cities followed and harassed him. This time Paul seemed ready to get the jump on them. He gave them a short history of how he came to be there as a prisoner and offered his defense. His defense led to his opportunity to once again share the gospel with Jews.

On the appointed day, the Jews came to Paul's prison lodging, a hired house with a guard. Verse 23 tells us that he "expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus... from morning 'til evening."

We should note that when Paul had the invitation to teach, he began at the point where the people were. He taught them from the law of Moses and also from the prophets (v. 23). Paul's own Jewish background made him well-versed in the Old Testament scripture when he used as a point of reference. Probably one of the saddest shortcomings of today's witnesses is that we don't really know the Scripture well enough to use it in witnessing. Maybe the only thing sadder than not knowing it is using that ignorance as an excuse, rather than making an effort to learn the Scripture.

Verse 24 could almost be the theme verse of the book of Acts. "And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." The same is true today. Let us not be so discouraged by those who do not that we fail to speak of the Word.

The last two verses of Acts almost make me breathe a sigh of relief. Following Paul in his journeys has been tiring as we have watched him go from one major crisis to another. How blessed to read that he spent the next two years preaching and teaching, "no man forbidding him."

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Convention Uniform

God's People Defect

by Dennis W. Swanberg, Second Church, Hot Springs

Basic passage: Judges 2:11-19

Focal passage: Judges 2:11-12, 18

Central truth: Defection from the Lord brings about God's righteous response to sin and spiritual adultery.

The sin of the Israelites (2:11-13). Israel's sin is highlighted in term of her forsaking the Lord . . . who had brought them out of Egypt and serving or worshipping the various gods of the peoples around them (v. 12), identified as the Baals (v. 11) or Baal and the Ashoreths (v. 13).

The word "baal" which can mean "lord" or "husband" corresponds with the analogy of idolatry as spiritual adultery (cf. v. 17). "Baal" was the Canaanite name for the Syrian god Hadad, god of storms and wars. The plural "baals" suggests the many local varieties of the worship of Baal. In Canaan the goddess Ashoreth was the consort of Baal, known in Syria as Athtart and in Babylon as Ishtar. Ashoreth was the goddess of fertility. Baal worship involved the most debasing immorality imaginable. And, so it is today, as many, so-called believers, combine other gods with the one and only true God that we know and love through Jesus Christ. God plus anything or anyone is tantamount to defection. We serve one God and one God alone.

The defeat of the Israelites (2:14-15). The Lord's anger was his righteous response to Israel's sin and spiritual adultery. Here we have the vivid imagery of a slave dealer (he sold them to their enemies). This vivid picture indicates the severity of the divine displeasure the Lord manifests in disciplining his people. Listen, your sins will find you out. Sinful defection will end in defeat and distress.

The deliverance of the Judges (2:16-19). Israel's defection led to a downward spiral under the judges. The progression was as follows: sin, servitude, supplication, salvation, silence, and then the process would repeat itself again and again. God is faithful to his people and wishes that none should perish. Israel again and again tasted the discipline and pain of the Lord. But she also knew of the saving power of God. May we know his saving power and may we always live in it. May we never defect, but rather, prove to be faithful so that we might enjoy the blessings and promises of a holy God.

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Life and Work

True Praise

by David Moore, Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Psalms 33:6-9; 104:24, 27-34

Focal passage: Psalms 33:6-9; 104:24, 27-33

Central truth: God's people need to praise God.

We begin a unit in Psalms and Proverbs which concerns our relationship to God and others. We rightly start with an understanding of God. Only as we recognize the nature and attributes of God do we begin to see the joy in praising his wonderful goodness.

God's people need to praise God. For many today there is a noticeable lack of praise. The concerns of many are self-centered and man-centered, rather than God-centered. Yet David the psalmist calls us to praise—we should shout for joy in light of what the Lord has done. Using harps and stringed instruments, we are to give thanks as we sing a new song to God (33:1-3).

On what basis do we praise God? A good place to begin is with creation. David reminds us that God created the heavens; the sun, moon, and stars; the seas and oceans; and all there is.

David is not ecstatic simply about nature itself. He is overcome with praise as he remembers that it was with God's power that the world was created. It was "by his command" (33:9) that creation is accomplished!

We should honor and praise God, first of all because "when he spoke, the world was created." God's people should praise his greatness and his power.

The psalmist goes on to describe how God made the world with wisdom (104:24). He carefully and wonderfully filled the world with his creation. In fact, all creation depends solely on God (104:27-28).

Thus, when God turns away, they are afraid. When the Lord, upon whom we all totally depend, takes away our breath, life is over. God gives us breath and God takes it away. (104:29-30). Every moment of every day we are dependent on the Lord. Praise him for every breath you take!

God's people should see the glory of God in his world. We should sing praises to him. We should praise him as long as we live (104:33).

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Bible Book

An Expression of Joy

by Robert O. Pruett, University Church, Fayetteville

Basic passage: Leviticus 1:1 to 16:34

Focal passage: Leviticus 1:3-4; 5:5-6, 17-18; 6:2-5

Central truth: Offerings are to be a praise and worship experience for those who have made restitution to man and God for their sins.

Have you ever been so consumed with God's grace and forgiveness in your life that you felt like doing something totally out of that love for God? Perhaps giving above your tithe and offering at a time when you didn't have any extra funds.

As I read the directions concerning the burnt offering in Leviticus 1:1-17, a person who had sinned against God was to seek to be in a right relationship with God once again. Sin separates us from God and only through a contrite heart, grateful worship, and adoration to the God who forgives can we renew that relationship. This offering is different to others in that what is given is totally consumed and none is used by the one making the offering. The sacrifice was to be offered as an expression of the joy and gratitude of the worshipper, rather than as a means of coercing the deity to provide blessing.

Leviticus 5:5-6 reminds us once again that confession is to be made and then the offering is to be given as a way of being of one accord with God once more. Atonement actually can be remembered as at-one-ment with God. The specific sins mentioned in this passage are as relevant as the local newspaper. If you are a part of that which is not suitable for Christians, if you fail to keep your word, or commit to be a part of something not on the up-and-up, you should seek to right the wrong and once again be right with God and man. Even if you were innocent in your motives or understanding of what you were doing you are to seek forgiveness when you become aware of your sin.

The last portion of the focal passage Leviticus 6:2-5 states we are to make even more that restitution if we have taken from or caused someone to lose money or possession. The standard presented is that we give back what was taken or lost plus 20 percent. The bottom line . . . our offerings become not a way to pay out of sin, but a way to say thank you to a loving and forgiving God for already forgiving us.

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ROMANIA

Accounts Differ

by Art Toalston
SBC Foreign Mission Board

BUCHAREST, Romania (BP)—Romanian authorities arrested five members of a Baptist congregation and destroyed a church building May 31, according to a report by Keston College, an English research institute monitoring religious affairs in communist countries.

The church members, including the pastor, Ioan Chivoiu, were released after several days. "All were reportedly beaten during their detention," Keston College reported. A spokesman for the institute in Kent, England, did not know exactly how long the group was jailed.

The church is located in the town of

Comanesti, about 250 miles northeast of Bucharest.

Whether the congregation had proper government approval to turn a house into a church remains at issue. According to Keston College, the congregation obtained "verbal consent of the local authorities" two years ago to convert one of the members' houses into a church.

But Vasile Talpos, former general secretary of the Baptist Union of Romania and current president of the European Baptist Federation, claimed the church never sought a building permit.

"There is a law here that you cannot build anything without having permission," Talpos said in a telephone interview,

adding that buildings erected without construction permits are subject to demolition.

Keston College and Talpos also disagreed on another matter. According to the research institute, "The government's Department of Cults is reported to have asked the Baptist Union to take away Chivoiu's license as a pastor and revoke registration of the congregation but—in an unusual move for Romania—the Baptist Union is reported to have supported (the pastor and church)."

Talpos, who also is president of the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest, said he had not heard of any Baptist Union stance on the matter. "The Baptist Union always supports the congregations here," he said. "But when things are illegal, nothing can be done."

According to Keston College, the congregation fashioned the house into a 200-seat church that was "slightly bigger than had initially been agreed," but it "paid fines for this and believed the question was settled."

However, new leaders who took office in Comanesti declared in March that the church had been built without proper authorization and ordered it demolished, the college reported.

"The church was sealed by the authorities on several occasions to prevent the congregation (from) meeting inside, and police tried to break up gatherings outside," a news release from the college said. "The pastor was put under surveillance by the secret police, the Securitate."

Keston said authorities blocked off surrounding streets May 31 and used heavy machinery to demolish the church. "Even trees were uprooted and the ground was plowed up. Flowers were reportedly planted, so that there was no sign that the church had ever stood on the site."

Talpos said such church demolitions do not occur often; usually building loss is due to permit restrictions.

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WORLD

New Look at China Work

by **Michael Chute**
Baptist Press

HONG KONG (BP)—More than half of the 35 Southern Baptist teachers and students sponsored by Cooperative Services International have left China to regroup in Hong Kong and discuss future efforts in the Asian giant.

"It's time for re-evaluation," said Britt Towery of CSI's Hong Kong office. "We can't take a traumatic time like this and move on as usual. We have to determine how we can best be effective in China. We need some time to look at what we do best and how to go about it."

CSI, a Southern Baptist organization, provides personnel and assistance to nations where missionaries do not work. Its efforts in China have focused on education, particularly the teaching of English.

Twelve more Southern Baptist teachers and one student were scheduled to leave China by June 23. The organization still had not learned the status of Stan Huesing, a teacher in nearby Guangzhou (Canton). Although efforts to contact him had failed, CSI officials believed he was safe in Guangdong province's capital city.

"Communication is difficult in China," Towery explained. "It's not easy to get a telephone call through in normal times, much less times like this."

Two of the teachers—John Hippe of Pleasant Valley, Calif., and Joy Hilbun of Baton Rouge, La.—obtained re-entry visas for China and hoped to return there by June 16. They planned to finish the school term at Jia Ying University in Meixian, Guangdong province, before leaving again in early July.

CSI canceled the summer language institutes scheduled in various universities throughout China but will go ahead with plans for the fall. The organization still plans to place teachers in China as they are invited by various schools.

Even as China's unstable political situation caused CSI personnel to leave, the Hong Kong CSI office received an invitation from Shanghai Institute of Mechanical Engineering to place a teacher there this fall. Another invitation came from Dali Medical College in Yunnan province.

In addition to Hilbun, CSI personnel who plan to return to their teaching assignments include: Ronnie and Ina Winstead of St. Peters, Mo., at Shanghai Institute of Mechanical Engineering; Ken and Lou Ann Locke of Arkadelphia, Ark., at Guangxi University in Nanning; Charles and Thannis Phillips of Arkadelphia, transferring from Zhengzhou to the Coal and Mine Management College in Beijing; Sue Todd of Windsor, N.C., at Nanjing

University; and Glen and Rose Davis of Frankfort, Ky., at Nanjing Pharmaceutical College.

The teachers had different reactions to leaving China. Some did not want to leave, saying the U.S. State Department failed to pass along enough detailed information to allow them to make an accurate appraisal of their situation.

Students Leave, Hope to Return

HONG KONG (BP)—Not wanting to leave Beijing but not wanting to be stranded either, two Southern Baptist students boarded a plane at the crowded Beijing International Airport June 8 and arrived safely in Hong Kong.

Frustration and grief over events inside China lined the faces of the two students—Jay Templeton and Jana Clayton—as they met family and friends in Hong Kong.

Both expressed mixed emotions about leaving Beijing and said they want to return to China as soon as the situation there stabilizes.

"I never felt like we should leave in the first place," said Templeton, of Kingsland, Texas, who hopes to return to China this fall. Clayton added that the decision to evacuate all Americans from China was "bizarre" and called reports of danger to foreigners "a little exaggerated."

But both admitted mainland news reports of the violence were understated by the Chinese media.

"Inside China we didn't get all the facts. We only got Chinese news," said Clayton, who is from Longmont, Colo. "China needs to know the truth. The world knows but the Chinese people themselves don't."

Templeton has another year on his two-year contract to study Chinese at the Second Foreign Language Institute in Beijing under sponsorship of Cooperative Services International, a Southern Baptist organization. Clayton, also sponsored by CSI, had almost finished her two-year stint at the institute.

The decision to leave Beijing was "painful but we felt that most of those were a help to" had already left the language institute, said Clayton. The two Americans also worried that they "might be in the way" of their Chinese friends and acquaintances. "By protecting us they might be endangering their own lives," Clayton explained.

"Staying there to help the people would be useless," concluded Templeton.

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