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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Arkansas Baptist

newsmagazine

NOVEMBER 27, 1969

Personally speaking



Clemency for all

Some of us antediluvians who were in Ft. Smith last week for the 116th annual meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention were on hand 32 years ago for the last time the convention had met in that city. I refer to characters such as Don Hook, pastor of Little Rock's Baptist Tabernacle, and myself.

At 30 years of age and with a wife and six-year-old daughter, I had just "surrendered to the ministry." The 1937 convention, the 84th annual meeting, was the first I ever attended.

One of the speakers that year was a man named L. R. Scarbrough. They said he was president of Southwestern Seminary at Ft. Worth. He was a clean-cut, grey-headed, soft-spoken fellow who turned out to be fervently eloquent when he stood to preach.

Dr. Scarbrough had just come back from a preaching trip to South America, and he told us some of his experiences. I still remember what he told us about a certain outlaw who came to one of his South American preaching services.

"It was time for the service to begin and the house was packed," said Dr. Scarbrough. "Suddenly, the door opened and a huge, rough-visaged man in his forties came in. He walked all the way to the front of the building. Finding no place to sit, he picked up a child on the front row and took its seat, holding the child on his knee.

"The pastor whispered to me: 'Preach as you have never preached before in all of your life. The man who has just come in is one of our most notorious outlaws. He is known to have killed four men.'"

Dr. Scarbrough told of how he poured out his soul in his sermon that night, and how intensely the big outlaw seemed to drink in every word.

When the invitation was given, and before the invitational hymn could be started, the big man set aside the child from his lap and went running to Dr. Scarbrough.

"He put his big arms around me," said Dr. Scarbrough, "and rested his big head on my shoulder as he sobbed out his repentance and his new faith in Christ.

"I was wearing this very suit," continued Dr.

Scarbrough, "and the man's tears flowed so profusely that they soaked through my coat and wet my shoulder."

To this day I cannot recall this report without shedding my own tears. For it reminds me of what the Lord has done for me and for so many of my relatives and friends. You see, we, too, were outlaws till we came to Christ.

Erwin L. McDonald

IN THIS ISSUE

A FULL REPORT on the Arkansas Baptist State convention, held last week in Ft. Smith, begins on page 6. Photos show the activities and personalities of the meeting.

NEW CONVENTION PRESIDENT Bonham, featured on this week's cover, is introduced on page 9.

MORE CONVENTION business, the election of boards, is reported on page 12.

THE ANNUAL SERMON, by outgoing president Thomas Hinson, begins on page 14.

PICTURES on page 24 tell more about the convention activities.

THERE WAS a great spirit of revival at the Ft. Smith meeting. So says this week's editorial, found on page 3.

Arkansas Baptist

newsmagazine

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November 27, 1969

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Opinions expressed in editorials and signed articles are those of the writer. Member of Southern Baptist Press Association, Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association.

Abbreviations used in crediting news items: BP Baptist Press; CB Church Bulletin; DP Daily Press; EP Evangelical Press; LC Local Correspondent; AB Associational Bulletin; EBPS European Baptist Press Service.

Spirit of revival at Ft. Smith

"Sweet reasonableness" is a wonderful frame of mind for free-wheeling, autonomous, cooperating Southern Baptists. And this seemed to be the general mood at Ft. Smith last week as more than 900 messengers from churches affiliated with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention met in the 116th annual session of the body.

It was not the kind of convention that we had several years ago, at which time we went through every business session without anyone asking a question, debating a proposal, or casting a negative vote. This year's situation was a more healthful situation, really, with the messengers listening to and expressing some differing views and then leaving the decision to majority vote.

A proposal that the local associations be permitted to elect their own representatives to membership on the Executive Board of the Convention flew in the face of our Baptist polity, in which each Baptist body, whether a church, an association, or a convention, is completely self-governing. Some thought that this proposal could have been ruled out of order. President Hinson obviously felt that, given the facts and angles of the situation, the convention would dispose of the matter wisely. At any rate, that is how it worked out, with the messengers voting by sizeable majority not to amend the convention constitution to permit election of board members outside the convention itself.

A nomination from the floor, in which the name of a former board member was proposed for reelection instead of one nominated by the convention's Nominating committee, lost and the convention elected the total slate proposed by the committee. One observer suggested that this indicated the convention felt it should show loyalty and support for the judgment of its own committee.

The only sad angle of an otherwise perfect fellowship came from the fact that the four churches dropped from the convention last year still remained on the outside. But the course charted by the credentials and reconciliatory committees, as brought to the convention by Chairman Dillard Miller and accepted unanimously by the convention, seemed to be most reasonable and compassionate.

The fact that there is now to be a special committee making a careful study of the situation, hearing any and all viewpoints, and arriving at suggestions to be presented to the convention next year, is cause itself for great hope that a solution can be found. Perhaps this would be a good time

for all of us not only to continue to pray for the four churches directly involved, and for the new committee to be appointed by President Bonham, but also for ourselves. Would it help the situation, do you suppose, for each one of us to pray that the Lord lead us to find and accept the right solution for our fellowship problem, quite aside, if needby, from our individual ideas as to what is right? Can we earnestly and sincerely join in this prayer?

There seemed to be a general feeling among those who attended the Ft. Smith convention that the convention took the form of a great revival. Some who had been attending the annual sessions for decades did not hesitate to say that this one was the best of all they ever attended. There was every evidence that Concord Association, through the leadership of its superintendent of missions, James Griffin, and with the cooperation of churches and pastors, had done a good job of "make ready."

Nowhere have we ever seen a host church outdo what the great First Church of Ft. Smith did, through the leadership of Pastor William Bennett and his staff, to provide Baptist and Christian hospitality at its very best. Certainly all of this, with the prayer support of so many in Ft. Smith and across the state, set the climate for a harmonious and purposeful convention.

The fact that two stellar new leaders were program personalities and a part of the convention fellowship, as was a great leader now in retirement, former Executive Secretary S. A. Whitlow, contributed to the happy Christian optimism of the occasion.

President Hinson and the program committee are due a big bouquet for the masterful job they did in securing some of Southern Baptists' great personalities as speakers and teachers. The teaching of the Book of James, by Professor J. W. MacGorman, of the faculty of Southwestern Seminary, and the preaching of Gordon Clinard of Texas, and Pastor Stephen Olford of Calvary Church, New York City, were especially noteworthy.

The pastor's conference, held on Monday night and Tuesday morning, was another highlight of the week. And the preaching, soul-searching, and prayers in these sessions made their own tremendous impact.

In their last official meeting of the 1960's, Baptists of Arkansas have made a great and confident stride toward facing the challenges of the 1970's.

Arkansas all over

El Dorado pastor has book released

NASHVILLE—"The Dynamics of Belief," by Don B. Harbuck, a discussion of the meaning of Christian faith, has been released recently by Broadman Press. Harbuck is pastor of First Church, El Dorado.

The book, slanted to college-age youth, is designed to show how religious experience is involved in everyday life. The seven chapters of the book endeavor to trace the processes of man's belief.

Questions designed to provoke further study are included at the end of each chapter.

Broadman Press is the general books publishing arm of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"The Dynamics of Belief" is available in Baptist and general book stores across the nation.

OU Tigerettes to play Mexicans

The national Mexican women's basketball team will play the Ouachita Tigerettes in two exhibition games here Dec. 9 and 10, according to Tigerette Coach Carolyn Moffatt.

The Mexican team, on a tour of the United States, is an all-star squad composed of the best girls' basketball players in Mexico. The Tigerettes are the sixth-ranked team in United States girls' basketball.

Several members of the Tigerette squad, including Coach Moffatt, toured South America this summer with the National AAU girls' basketball team.

Ticket information for the two games at Arkadelphia will be announced later.

New dean of students

Lendol Jackson was recently appointed dean of students of Southern Baptist College. In addition, he will retain his position as assistant to the president for promotion.

Mr. Jackson also handles student financial aids and admissions.

A full-time student solicitor will be appointed in the future, a position which Mr. Jackson previously held. President H. E. Williams has announced.

"Baptists Who Know, Care"

Church members will support Baptist work in Arkansas and around the world if they are informed of the needs by reading the ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWS-MAGAZINE.



MISSISSIPPI COUNTY Association Officers: Martin Sifford, pastor of Trinity Church, Blytheville, moderator; Dennis Dodson, pastor of First Church, Leachville, vice moderator; John D. Gearing, superintendent of missions; Russell Bragg, pastor of Joiner Church clerk; and Wayne E. Maness, pastor of First Church, Dell, assistant clerk. Next annual meeting: Oct. 19-20, Clear Lake Church, Blytheville.

Baptist beliefs

Faithful children

BY HERSCHEL H. HOBBS

Pastor, First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, past president, Southern Baptist Convention

"I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth."—II John 4

Certainly, "children" may refer to the members of a church or to actual children of a mother. It depends upon how one interprets "elect lady" in verse 1. The fact that John used teknon, children, a tenderer word than huion, sons, suggests the latter. They were members of her own family.

If this be the accepted meaning then it is most beautiful. This woman's adult children had been in Ephesus. They came from a smaller to a greater city, one filled with temptations. Yet John had "found" them to be ordering their lives according to the truth of the Christian gospel and teachings. The word "found" is a perfect tense. John had completely found them to be true. And he was so overjoyed by it that he wrote their mother to commend them. Perhaps he had seen other children who had come to Ephesus and been swallowed up in its evil. Surely such a message gladdened the heart of this mother.

Which suggests a lesson for all parents. They have their children for such a short time. During that time they should so ground them in Christian moral conduct and truth that when they are plunged into life they will be able to make the proper decisions as to how they shall live. When parents are no longer at hand to say, "Do this" or "Do not do that," they will have moral and spiritual fortitude and judgment to enable them to choose the right paths.

What a joy John's letter must have been to this mother! Or to any parent to receive a letter from a pastor in a distant city telling him or her that the careful teaching of the formative years is being followed by sons and daughters. No parental sacrifice is too great to produce so fine a result.

From the churches

The youth council of the First Church, Russellville, has elected officers for the 1969-70 year. They are president, John Palmer; and vice-presi-

dent Karen Jacobs. Representatives for each class were also elected. They are Gary Jackson, Dennis Lord, Tressa Henderson, Larry Dover, Carol Carpenter, Fredia Jackson, and Joe Bradley.

Frank's Chapel*

BY BERNES K. SELPH, TH.D
PASTOR, FIRST CHURCH, BENTON

Allen E. Simmons has been called as minister of music and youth at First Church, Brinkley. He also has been employed as band director for Des Arc school. Mr. Simmons come to the post from Central Church, Jonesboro.

Dr. Charles Ashcraft, executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be the speaker at White River Association "M" night, to be held Dec. 1 at First Church, Mountain Home.

Fred Helms has resigned as minister of music and youth at First Church, McGehee, to accept a similar position at Cullendale First, Camden.

First Church, Hughes, has called Dick Hill, minister of music and youth. Mr. Hill comes from Forrest Hill Church, Memphis.

John Gardner, minister of music at First Church, Siloam Springs, has accepted a position at Olivet Church, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Charles Hughes has resigned as minister of music at First Church, Searcy, to go to Memorial Church, Tulsa, Okla.

Ben Prince, formerly minister of music and education at Gaines St. Church, Little Rock, has been called to the position of church administrator at Second Church, Hot Springs.

When Mary Ann Bester concealed the five-franc piece in the toe of a stocking and sent it to Mrs. Justus H. Vinton in Burma more than a century ago she little realized what a movement she had set in motion.

This poor woman had been given this small amount to buy a warm dress for winter. Desiring to contribute to missions, but fearing she would be blamed for doing so under the circumstances, she hid it in a stocking she was knitting. She scribbled this message to Mrs. Vinton, "The contents of the toe are for the heathen."

In her travels throughout the United States, when she visited her homeland, Mrs. Vinton told the incident of the stocking and what she found in its toe. Many gifts, large and small, were designated for Frank's Chapel, which was named in honor of the five-franc gift. Upon returning to Burma, the Vinton's were called to Rangoon where Frank's Chapel was built. As long as they lived, it went by this name, but after their death was changed to "Vinton Memorial."

The Vintons landed in Maulmain in December, 1834, anxious to be on their field. They had been studying the Karen language for a year in Hamilton Institute and were able to begin their work within a week after arrival. They travelled together, at first, but receiving so many requests from distant villages they found they could not accept them all unless they separated. Each took a band of native Christians and went from village to village preaching. This proved so successful that they adopted the plan and followed it for nearly a quarter of a century in their journeys among the Karens.

*G. Winifred Hervey, *The Story of Baptist Missions in Foreign Lands* (St. Louis, Chauncy R. Barns, 1886) pp. 340-45

Revivals

Monroe Church, Dec. 2-7; John Bliss will be evangelist, Chick Williams will lead the music. Norman Wright is the pastor.

South Side Church, Pine Bluff, Nov. 30-Dec. 7; Eddie Martin will be the evangelist.

Methodists to help blacks

BOSTON—\$1.3 million will be spent by members of the United Methodist Church for several black causes over the years ahead, according to a report here by the Board of Missions of the church.

A 145-member board approved the plan recommended by a study group.

The major provisions: \$550,000 for five black Methodist colleges, \$300,000 for an interreligious foundation for community organization, \$200,000 to fund a new African affairs office within the Board of Missions and \$100,000 for the World Council of Churches to begin a program to combat racism. (EP)



New Mt. Zion headquarters

Mt. Zion Association builds new offices

Mt. Zion Association recently dedicated a new office building. The building is located at 2100 Young Street, Jonesboro, and is designed for use as an associational center.

In addition to offices for the superintendent of missions and the director of family child care center there is a reception room, a secretary's room, two conference rooms which serve as a li-

brary, a kitchenette, a work room, a storage room and three rest rooms.

The building is of brick veneer construction and has approximately 1,700 square feet of floor space. It has central heat and air. Total cost of the building and lots is approximately \$28,000.

Carl Bunch is superintendent of missions for the association.

Al Presley is director of family and child care center for the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children.

Convention names committee on membership, approves \$2,737,000 budget, at Ft. Smith

Messengers to the 116th annual meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, in Ft. Smith, sidestepped a thorny fellowship problem in the opening session here Tuesday night of last week naming a study committee to make a study during the coming year and bring recommendations to the convention at its next annual meeting.

On the motion of Dillard Miller, pastor of First Church, Mena, who is chairman of two committees which have been grappling with the fellowship problem precipitated by the vote of the convention last year to "withdraw fellowship" from four churches, the convention voted to seat all messengers except any from the four churches previously excluded.

Speaking for the committees on credentials and on reconciliation, which he heads, Mr. Miller moved that the new president of the convention name a representative committee of 25 from the eight districts of the state to make a study and report back a year from now.

Purpose of the study would be "to clarify, specify, and recommend policies regarding membership to this convention." It was suggested that the committee be divided into three sub-committees: historical, doctrinal, and constitutional, and that it "receive questions from all who care to be heard on these matters" and give consideration "to all views expressed."

Miller reported that only one of the four churches whose messengers were not seated last year had conferred with the convention's reconciliatory committee and that this church had indicated it would not ask that its messengers be seated at the meeting this year. In

the light of this, Mr. Miller moved that "the matter of recognizing messengers' credentials in this convention be arrested at its present stage of development to allow a broad study committee at least one year's work and that all questions relating to this issue be referred to said committee which will report to this convention in the 1970 session."

The four churches in question, which were denied seats at the 1968 session of the convention because of their stated policies of permitting Christians of other faiths than Baptists to participate with them in observance of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, were: First Baptist Church, Russellville; First Baptist Church, Malvern; University Baptist Church, Little Rock; and Lake Village Baptist Church, Lake Village.

Fred D. Hubbs, executive secretary of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan, read a resolution of appreciation from the Michigan convention expressing appreciation for the assistance the Arkansas convention has given in establishing Southern Baptist work in Michigan.

President Hinson read telegrams of greetings from Utah-Idaho convention, from the Foreign Mission Board, and from the Ohio and Hawaii conventions. A lei sent from Hawaii was placed on Mrs. Henson by Mrs. Bernie Bjorkman, secretary to Charles Ashcraft, executive secretary of the Arkansas convention.

At the suggestion of President Hinson the convention sent telegrams of greetings to sister conventions currently in session in Alabama, District of

Columbia, New Mexico, and South Carolina.

On a motion by L. H. Coleman, pastor of Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff, the convention approved the appointment of a committee to study the advisability of reapportioning the eight districts into which the state is divided for promotion of the convention's work. Dr. Coleman said that the number of Baptists varies greatly from district to district. As an illustration of the situation, he said that there are 24,000 Baptists in District 1; 16,000 in District 2; and 73,000 in District 5.

The inauguration of Dr. Ashcraft was in the form of a television newscast directed by W. O. Vaught, pastor of Immanuel Church, Little Rock. Dr. Vaught called on fellow "news commentators" Tal Bonham, Pine Bluff, who has served during the past year as president of the Executive Board; and Wilson Deese, West Helena, chairman of the Operating committee, all of whom had key leadership roles in the calling of the executive secretary.

Mr. Hinson presented Dr. Ashcraft a plaque at the close of the ceremony.

Elected officers of the convention, at Wednesday sessions, were: Tal Bonham president; Lehman Webb, pastor of First Church, Hot Springs, first vice president; and Kenneth Threat, pastor of First Church, Piggott, re-elected second vice president.

Speaking to the convention Wednesday afternoon in his first official appearance after his inauguration, Executive Secretary Ashcraft said that God is matching Southern Baptists with their greatest opportunity.



NEW CONVENTION OFFICERS: Posed, left First Vice President Lehman Webb; and Second and unposed. Left to right: President Tal Bonham, Vice President Kenneth Threat.

Cataloging many of the concerns of the day, including race relations, existence of caste systems, threat of communism, poverty, increase of crime, etc., Dr. Ashcraft said that none of these is the main issue for Baptists. The main issue, he said, is the need for the world to be redeemed through Jesus Christ as Lord.

He concluded by stating briefly "where I stand" on many of the issues of today.

On the problem of race, he said:

"Southern Baptists have been right on too many things to be wrong here. I believe Negroes desire jobs, education, earning power, and status more than integration into our churches, and we can help in this area."

He said that the only solution to poverty is "to educate and train our people to earn a good living."

On evangelism and social ministries: "It is no longer 'either or' but 'both and,' with evangelism listed first."

On Federal aid: "Baptists do not need nor do they deserve to have anything they cannot or will not pay for."

On Christian education: "There has never been a time in the course of human history when we needed more our Christian educational institutions. I believe in academic excellence, the highest accreditation, Baptist ownership and control of these institutions, and that we should provide the funds for their operation."

On the issue of ecumenism, his only comment was: "You cannot upbraid a herd on the principle of minimums."

On the second coming of Christ: "We should be ready for the Lord's return."

On ladies' apparel: "As the warmth, charm, and loveliness of a woman increases, the need for high hem lines decreases progressively."

At the Wednesday night session, the convention voted to dedicate its 1969 annual to three Baptist leaders who died during the past year: Charles F. Wilkins, a Bible professor at Mountain Home College and pastor of Dardanelle and Newport First Churches; Jay W. C. Moore, a former superintendent of missions for the Conway and the Concord Associations; and S. A. Wiles, Malvern, whose lifelong ministry was in Arkansas as pastor and associational missionary.

Pastor Stephen Olford of Calvary Church, New York City, gave the first of two sermons to the convention on Wednesday night.

Speaking on James 5:15, Dr. Olford said that the greatest need of the church today is for a heaven-sent re-

(Continued on page 8)



INSTALLATION: Top, Executive Secretary Charles H. Ashcraft (at pulpit) as he and Mrs. Ashcraft were presented by Wilson Deese, chairman of Operating Committee.

Middle: "Meistro" W. O. Vaught gives all the latest news, including Agnews.

Bottom: Convention President Thomas A. Hinson presents Dr. Ashcraft a plaque.

State convention

(Continued from page 7)

vival that can come only through prayer.

Pointing to the promise of God that the prayer of faith shall save the sick, Dr. Olford said there is a sickness in the church today that needs to be healed and which can be healed only through intercessory prayer.

Christians must have their eyes open to what is going on in the world, for only then can they pray intercessory prayers, he said. Referring to the great wave of infidelity sweeping the country; to the "emptiness that is being filled by paganism"; to "a new kind of materialism" and to anti-Godism; to delinquency; to dehumanization; to dishonesty that results in a loss of millions of dollars in the schools alone each year, Dr. Olford said that it is estimated that crime now costs the taxpayers of this country \$28,500 per minute.

But the answer is not flesh and blood conflict, but a turning to God in prayer for the solutions, he emphasized.

At the close of the service people stood all across the auditorium indicating their resolve to be more diligent in taking the spiritual approach of prayer as they seek solutions to problems in their lives.

The convention adopted a proposed budget of \$2,737,229 for the coming year. Of this, \$906,642 would go to the Southern Baptist Convention for world missions. Of the portion remaining for work of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, \$335,529 would be for capital needs, including: Ouachita University, \$144,330; Southern Baptist College, \$42,690; \$20,600 for ministerial scholarships; \$27,552 for the Baptist Student Union; \$22,042 for new mission sites; \$33,211 for the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children; \$37,552 for camp and assembly improvement; and \$7,552 for maintenance of the Baptist Building.

State causes will receive, as operating budget:

Administration, \$46,850; Baptist Student Union, \$127,000; Brotherhood, \$16,700; Evangelism, \$21,630; Missions, \$132,384; Church Music, \$24,350; Church Training, \$38,600; Sunday School, \$39,000; General Services, \$47,000; Camps and Assemblies, operating, \$23,000 and capital improvements, \$15,000.

The Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, weekly newspaper of the convention, will receive a budget supplement of \$18,100.

The Woman's Missionary Union will receive \$56,000.

Under Special Services, Annuity/Stewardship will receive \$27,000; Convention, \$17,000; Foundation, \$19,000; Retirement Dues, \$110,000; Baptist Building debt, \$95,000; BSU Buildings, \$12,000; Miscellaneous, \$8,800; and Reserve, \$14,000.

In the Christian Education division of the budget, Ouachita College will receive \$393,288; Southern Baptist College, \$55,645; Ministerial Education, \$41,984.

The Arkansas Baptist Home for Children will receive \$95,727.

A proposed amendment to the convention constitution to permit associations to elect "their own board member or members" to serve on the Executive Board of the convention was voted down. The proposer was Calvin Easley, pastor of Second Church, Russellville. The Committee on the Constitution, headed by Don Hook, pastor of Baptist Tabernacle, Little Rock, spoke against the proposed amendment.

It was the view of the committee that the proposed amendment conflicted with the sovereignty of the convention as an autonomous body.

Committees named for convention

Committees named by Arkansas Baptist State Convention President Thomas A. Hinson to serve during the convention sessions in Ft. Smith last week were:

Order of Business: W. V. Philiber, Little Rock, chairman; Jerry Don Abernathy, Crossett; Don Moore, Jonesboro; Clifford Palmer, Ft. Smith; Harold Elmore, Mountain Home; Jack Clack, Brinkley; and Homer Shirley, Malvern.

Credentials: Dillard Miller, Mena, chairman; Russell Duffer, Corning; Johnny Jackson, Little Rock; Amos Greer, Mountain View; Hugh Owen, Malvern; and Russell Hunt, Batesville.

Resolutions: Bernes Selph, Benton, chairman; Wilson Deese, West Helena; Ray McClung, Little Rock; Alexander Best, Fayetteville; Lehman Webb, Hot Springs; Loyd L. Hunnicutt, Magnolia; and Mason Craig, McGehee.

Tellers: C. D. Peoples, Ft. Smith, chairman; Ben Rowell, Hughes; S. D. Hacker, Flippin; James Hickman, Huntsville; Richard Johnson, El Dorado; Gerald Jackson, Conway; and David Stephens, Fayetteville.



HONOLULU LEI: Mrs. Bernie Bjorkman "installs" Mrs. Hinson, wife of Convention President Thomas A. Hinson, in lei sent with the greetings and compliments of the Hawaii Baptist Convention, Arkansas Edmond Walker, executive secretary.

Chaplains Named for new posts

In a business session of the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist Convention, held at First Church, Ft. Smith, Tuesday of last week just ahead of the annual sessions of the convention, two chaplains were employed.

Marion O. Reneau, currently on the staff of the Christian Fellowship Center of the Home Mission Board in San Antonio, Tex., was named chaplain at the Arkansas Girls Training School, and Dewie E. Williams, pastor of Fowlkes Church, Fowlkes, Tenn., was named chaplain at Cummins Prison.

Chaplain Reneau is a native of Norman, Okla., a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, and has the B.D. degree from Golden Gate Seminary, Mills Valley, Calif. He received clinical training at Baptist Memorial Hospital, San Antonio, and is accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education. He and Mrs. Reneau have two teen-age sons.

A native of Rochelle, La., Chaplain Williams has the B.A. degree from Mississippi College and the B.D. degree from New Orleans Seminary. He had clinical pastoral training at Southern Baptist Hospital, New Orleans, and is accredited by the American Protestant Hospital Association.

The chaplains will work under the direction of the Arkansas Baptist State Missions department, of which R. H. Dorris is director of chaplaincy ministries.



New president of Arkansas Convention

Ft. Smith.—The young man who has just been elected president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention is himself a miracle of God's grace.

Left without parents at an early age, when his father and mother were divorced, Tal Bonham and a brother three years his senior were left for a grandmother to support and rear at Cordell, Okla.

It was not until he was eight years old that Tal went to church for the first time. His grandmother took in sewing for a living and thus came in contact with women of the First Baptist Church of Cordell. Through the friendliness of the church women the grandmother and little grandsons were soon regular church attenders.

At the age of 12, Tal made his public profession of faith in Christ and at age 17 he felt called to preach. His mother had remarried and he had the privilege of winning her and his stepfather to the Lord. His grandmother and brother had accepted Christ, as he had, in Cordell First Church.

One of the sad things for him is that his father, after being remarried several times, died at the age of 37 without ever accepting Christ.

From the human standpoint, the future prospects for Tal Bonham would have been anything but bright in his early years and against the background of his broken home. But he is a walking example of what can happen in one's life when Christ comes in.

He received the B.A. degree from Oklahoma Baptist University and the B.D. and Th.D. degrees from Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Smith, with a major in Christian ethics.

South Side Church, Pine Bluff, which he has served as pastor nearly six years, is his first full-time pastorate since completing his formal education.

Says Ashcraft

Music, education have vital roles in church of future

Ft. Smith—The ministries of church music and religious education are destined for vital roles in the future of the church, Dr. Charles H. Ashcraft, executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, said here in an address to the Arkansas Baptist Religious Education-Music Association.

Dr. Ashcraft spoke at the first of three sessions of the association, Monday afternoon of last week, at the Grand Avenue Church, ahead of the Tuesday night convening of the 116th annual session of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

There he has led in a strong emphasis of evangelism and missions, seeing two missions established, one of which has become East Side Church with a membership of more than 200 and with 250 enrolled in Sunday School.

The South Side Church has consistently stood among the 25 top churches of the state in the number of baptisms from year to year and in the amounts given to missions. Each Monday morning the church writes out a check for 16 percent of the offerings of the previous day and this goes to missions. Dr. Bonham calls this "Missions on Monday."

Currently the church has a budget of \$4,000 a week, or \$208,000 per year, exclusive of special offerings.

He has indicated that as convention president he will encourage churches to give to missions on a percentage basis, endeavoring to increase the percentage given from year to year.

Mrs. Bonham is the former Faye Wright of Selma, Ala., a graduate of Judson College. They have three children; Marilyn, 8; Randy, 7; and Daniel, 1.

Dr. Bonham, who at 35 may be the youngest man ever elected to the presidency of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, is already a veteran in denominational affairs. In addition to heading the Executive Board of the convention last year, he is a former moderator of the Harmony Baptist Association and has served on numerous committees.

One of his hobbies is writing. He is author of a book on the Sermon on the Mount, and of numerous articles for various publications.

Those who know Dr. Bonham best have high regard for his depth of spirituality, his Christian optimism and enthusiasm, his great dedication to the Lord and the Lord's work, and his great natural endowment and excellent educational background.—ELM

Pointing to forecasts of statisticians that 93 percent of the people of America will be city dwellers by the year 2000, Dr. Ashcraft said that Baptists, who traditionally have been rural, are having to make some changes in order to continue to reach people.

The gospel of Christ, which Baptists preach, is unchanging, but new ways must be found to present the gospel, Dr. Ashcraft said. The fact that church music admits to much adornment and great variety assures it of a vital place in the future life of the church, he said. He emphasized that music is at the heart of the worship services.

Turning to the place of the minister of education, Dr. Ashcraft said that no one is "closer to the cutting edge of the church in this new day that is upon us than the minister of education."

Through his leadership in the teaching of the Bible, the minister of education adds stability to the lives of Christians and contributes greatly to the ministry of the pastor, Dr. Ashcraft said.

Whatever the special ministry to which one is called in the church, the most essential personal endowment is that of spiritual depth, Dr. Ashcraft said. And this is a matter largely left to the individual to secure.

"We must be professional without becoming the victims of professionalism," Dr. Ashcraft admonished. "We must always maintain a common touch with the people so that they will love us and desire our commodity."

Church ministers of music and education are drawn to God by the very nature of their positions, said Dr. Ashcraft. But he cautioned that this does not assure calm, trouble-free careers. On the contrary, he said, "the men who have come closest to God have been those who lived disturbed lives." He cited as examples Isaiah, Elijah, Moses, David, Paul, Jonah.

"We must have a spirit of resoluteness that comes from knowing where we are going and why we are doing what we are doing," Dr. Ashcraft counseled. "And happiness for ourselves comes from helping others to be happy."

Amon Baker of Pine Bluff was elected president of the group Tuesday. Also elected were Joe Santo, El Dorado, first vice president; David Tate, Camden, second vice president; and Ray McClung, Little Rock, secretary-treasurer.

Neglect of the Gospel seen as greatest danger in our day

In the keynote address of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at the opening session on Tuesday night of last week, Gordon Clinard, pastor of First Church, San Angelo, Tex., warned that "the most serious reaction to the Gospel and its on-moving purpose in our time is not rejection but neglect."

Taking as a text, Heb. 2:1-4, Dr. Clinard said:

"We can drift from the Gospel, be carried downstream quietly and unnoticeably, with all the silence of a ring slipping off a finger."

Declaring that there are treasured principles which must be "most surely believed," Dr. Clinard continued:

"Perhaps the twin axioms which Baptists have held most dearly, the Lordship of Christ and the autonomy of every believer and of every church, need reaffirmation especially. But the treasured affirmations of the people must be made against the backdrop of the bold and thrilling challenge of the decade before us.

"God is moving today. His redemptive purpose will be asserted in our world. We must dare to follow him in our time, with the maturity to distinguish between the changeable and the unchangeable."

Expressing concern over "the subtle powers that cause us to drift away from our best treasures," Dr. Clinard warned of the possibility that we may by-pass the opportunity of our day.

"I am concerned about our drifting from the church," he said. "It has happened in the 60's to many of our peo-

ple. Fewer men in our seminaries feel that the pastoral ministry is where they can best spend their lives. Church members have changed dramatically in their sense of loyalty to the institutional church. It is one of the great dangers of our time."

Factors contributing to our tendency to drift were cited as our affluence, our leisure culture, the failure of the church to be the church, and our pessimism.

"It is time for us to renew our faith in the church," he said. "Christianity will never exist without the church. It is true of the church spiritual. And the church is primarily and first spiritual."

We come to Christ alone, but it is impossible for one to be a Christian alone, Dr. Clinard said. "For when one becomes a Christian, he is immediately a part of those people whom God is in the process of creating."

Our churches must be "communities of forgiveness where men know the acceptance of God because they feel the acceptance of other forgiven men," Dr. Clinard said. "Persons must be loved in an age of computers, rapid and mass transportation, scientism and desired anonymity. And we Baptists must maintain our concern for one another, renewing our fellowship."

In conclusion, Dr. Clinard said:

"We must never forget the person of the Gospel. It is he who is 'the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person.' . . . We must not forget the price of our Gospel. . . The price of the Gospel makes our salvation precious."

Pine Bluff to host 1970 convention

The 1970 meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention will be held at Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff, Nov. 17-19, with William Bennett, pastor of First Church, Ft. Smith, as preacher of the annual sermon and with Damon Shook, pastor of Park Place Church, Hot Springs, as alternate preacher.

Change voted on Baptist scholarships

Effective September 1970, scholarships provided through the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for ministerial students and wives of ministerial students will be available only for those attending the two convention colleges of the state—Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, and Ouachita University, Arkadelphia.

This change in the present policy, which includes scholarships to ministerial students and wives of ministerial students studying at any of the Arkansas colleges and universities, was voted at a meeting of the Executive Board of the Arkansas State Convention, in a meeting last week at Ft. Smith.

To qualify for the scholarships, which cover half of tuition, ministerial students must be licensed or ordained, must be recommended by their local churches, and must agree to be active members of the student ministerial associations on their respective campuses. Certain courses are also required of the ministerial students.

In other action, the Executive Board gave final approval to plans to erect a new concrete-block dormitory at Siloam Springs Baptist Assembly at an estimated cost of \$10,000. The building will have four compartments, each with accommodations for 25 people.



KEYNOTER: Gordon Clinard gives keynote address at opening session of Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



WELCOME: Host Pastor William Bennett, First Church, Ft. Smith, welcomes 116th Annual Session of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Sunday School Board lauded in resolution of convention

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention last week adopted unanimously resolutions expressing appreciation to the Southern Baptist Convention's Sunday School Board; calling on Baptists across the state to "be alerted to the

possibilities of a new day of forward progress"; and urging Baptists to "put forth efforts to reclaim the Lord's Day from the commercial clutches of our materialistic society."

In expressing "deep appreciation" to

the Baptist Sunday School Board for "producing, editing, and distributing the finest religious literature to be found in all the world," the convention commended the use of Sunday School Board materials and the services of the Sunday School Board to its churches "in their efforts to establish the Biblical revelation in the hearts and minds of our people."

In addition to an appeal for Baptists to reclaim Sunday as the Lord's Day and "restore it to its Biblical place as a day of rest and worship," the convention, through a resolution, urged "all responsible Christian citizens to appeal to newsstands and proprietors and sellers of all publications to refuse to handle literature of a lewd nature."

Individuals were further urged to use their influence on the motion picture and television industry in the interest of rejecting "the current programming of violence, immorality, and illicit sex" and in the interest of having films and programs of basic moral value.

Other resolutions expressed appreciation to First Church, its pastor, and churches of the Concord Association and Ft. Smith citizens "who have hosted our convention in so hospitable and gracious manner."

Dealing with the "new day for Arkansas Baptists," the resolution alerting Baptists of the state to the coming of two new leaders—Charles Ashcraft, as state executive secretary, and Daniel Grant, as president of Ouachita University—continued:

"We believe that it is ours to join hands under the direction of their consecrated leadership and move in unison toward a fuller realization of the Kingdom of God as a personal attainment and denominational entity.

"Be it further resolved that the means toward these ends, namely, making our faith live, be the steady application of education, Bible study, prayer, leadership of the Holy Spirit, evangelism, fellowship of brotherly love, and extensive extension of God's will into every segment of religious and social life."

Still another resolution commended President Thomas A. Hinson, other officers of the convention, and the program committee for "providing for us a most meaningful and spiritual program." Application was also expressed for the news media "which have sought to convey the spirit and actions of this convention to the public."

Home for Baptist aged

A home for Baptist aged is being established in Newcastle Emlyn in western Wales, Great Britain. A house, purchased for \$24,000, will be converted for this use.



APPRECIATION: Chairman of the Executive Board Tal Bonham presents Dr. and Mrs. S. A. Whitlow a plaque of appreciation at a session of convention, in First Church, Ft. Smith.



MISSIONARIES choose as officers of the Association Missionaries' Fellowship: S. D. Hacker, White River Association; Harold White, Harmony Association; and Don Williams, Bartholomew.

New members of boards named at Ft. Smith meeting

New board members for Arkansas Baptist State Convention agencies and institutions, elected at the Ft. Smith meeting of the convention last week, include:

Executive Board:

Terms to expire in 1972:

Mrs. Joseph Hogan, Sweet Home, District 5

Mrs. Roy Hilton, El Dorado, District 8

*Don Fuller, Brinkley, Arkansas Valley Association

Klois Hargis, Hamburg, Ashley County Association

Jack Bledsoe, Monticello, Bartholomew Association

A. C. Uth, Searcy, Calvary Association

Delton Cooper, Almyra, Centennial Association

*Dr. James Sawyer, Benton, Central Association

*Ellis Yoes, Ft. Smith, Concord Association

D. Hoyle Haire, Booneville, Concord Association

Curtis Smithson, Pocahontas, Current River Association

Harold Sadler, Dardanelle, Dardanelle-Russellville Association

Mason Craig, McGehee, Delta Association

John McClanahan, Pine Bluff, Harmony Association

Leo Hughes, Texarkana, Hope Association

Loyd Hunnicutt, Magnolia, Hope Association

D. C. McAtee, Smackover, Liberty Association

Tom Bray, El Dorado, Liberty Association

Harold Brewer, Ashdown, Little River Association

Paul Stockemer, Wilson, Mississippi County Association

Harold Ray, Jonesboro, Mt. Zion Association

Al Sprankman, North Little Rock, North Pulaski Association

Zane L. Chesser, North Little Rock, North Pulaski Association

Herbert Hodges, Little Rock, Pulaski Association

P. V. Philliber, Little Rock, Pulaski Association

E. A. Pipkins, Clinton, Stone-Van Buren-Searcy Association

James Tallent, Wynne, Tri-County Association

John H. Colbert Jr., Lepanto, Trinity Association

Terms to expire in 1971:

Mrs. Andrew Hall, Fayetteville, District 1;

Mrs. John Copeland, West Memphis, District 6;

Mrs. Raymond Coppenger, Arkadelphia, District 7.

Ollie Noles, Rock Springs, Buckville Association

Bruce Cushman, Van Buren, Clear Creek Association

*Bob Lyon, North Little Rock, North Pulaski Association

Thomas Simmons, Clinton, Van Buren County Association

Terms to expire in 1970:

Mrs. Roy Law, Ft. Smith, District 4

Mrs. Barren Tine, Heber Springs, District 2

Mrs. Wayne Friday, Blytheville, District 3

C. E. Moses, Viola, Big Creek Association

John Graves, Plumerville, Conway-Perry Association

L. B. Jordan, Heber Springs, Little Red River Association

Carl Kluck, Arkadelphia, Red River Association

Noble Wiles, Evening Shade, Rocky Bayou Association

Arkansas Baptist Foundation

Terms to expire in 1972:

*Jesse Porter, West Helena; *Van Pennington, Paris; *Willford Pruett, Benton.

Arkansas Baptist History Commission

Terms to expire in 1972:

Lonnie Lasater, Greenwood, District 4; Gene Box, Gravette, District 1; Harold Taylor, Marvell, District 6.

Terms to expire in 1970:

Harold Elmore, Mountain Home, District 2

Arkansas Baptist Home for Children

Terms to expire in 1972:

*Robert L. Bostian, Monticello; *Paul Owen, Lake City; *Ardell Martin, Mansfield; *Charles Ainley, M. D., Paragould; *Arthur Melson, Siloam Springs; Jerry Don Abernathy, Crossett.

Terms to expire in 1970:

Russell K. Hunt, Batesville; *Cletis Overton, Little Rock.

Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis

Terms to expire in 1972:

*Neil Puryear, Jonesboro; *J. H. Spears, West Memphis; Thomas A. Hinson, West Memphis.

Baptist Student Union Advisory Board

Terms to expire in 1972:

*George Tharel, Fayetteville, District 1; *Frank Huckaba, Mountain Home, District 2; Norman Sutton, Lewisville, District 7; Bruce Cushman, Van

Buren, District 4; Loyd Hunnicutt, Magnolia, District 7; *Dr. Calvin Bradford, member at large, Ft. Smith.

Terms to expire in 1971: D. B. Bledsoe, Pine Bluff, District 8.

Ouachita Baptist University

Terms to expire in 1972:

*Harold Echols, Arkadelphia; *George DeLaughter, Sparkman;

*Carl Smith, Rogers; *Alvin Huffman Jr., Blytheville; L. H. Coleman, Pine Bluff; *Richard Petty, M. D., Star City; *Mrs. R. H. Gladden, Little Rock; George T. Blackmon, Arkadelphia.

Terms to expire in 1971:

*John B. May, Little Rock; Clyde Hankins, Forrest City.

Southern Baptist College

Terms to expire in 1972: Edward Maddox, Harrisburg; C. D. Peoples, Ft. Smith; Phelan Boone, Texarkana; *Norman Kelly, Paragould; *Charles R. Newcomb, Blytheville; *Billy Rogers, Earle; J. K. Southerland, Batesville; *Harold Stocks, Little Rock.

Terms to expire in 1971:

*Ivy Scallion, Pine Bluff; Gerald Taylor, Stamps; Bill Stancel, Ft. Smith

Terms to expire in 1970:

Elmer E. Greiver, Berryville.

Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas, Inc.

Terms to expire in 1972: Padgett Cope, Little Rock; Alvin Pitt, North Little Rock; *Harold Burns, Ft. Smith; Oscar Golden, Benton; Erwin L. McDonald, Little Rock.

Constitution and By-Laws Committee

Terms to expire in 1972:

Gerald Trussell, Hope; James Zeltner, Ft. Smith.

Convention Program Committee

Term to expire in 1972:

Bill Kennedy, Star City. *Layman

Preschool directors attend workshop

NASHVILLE—Four directors of preschool education from Arkansas attended the Kindergarten Workshop Nov. 3-7 at the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention here.

Miss Joyce Rogers, South Side Baptist Church, Pine Bluff; Miss Janet Ham, First Baptist Church, Batesville; Miss Nancy Norman, Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock; and Mrs. Carol Henson, First Baptist Church, Blytheville attended the week-long conference. Day care center work, characteristics of preschool children, and how to set up a kindergarten program in a Southern Baptist church were featured at the seminar.

Sessions were held in the board's Church Program Training Center.



HEAD PASTORS: *The Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference named as new officers: Clifford Palmer, pastor of Grand Avenue, Ft. Smith, president; Ross Williams, missionary of Caddo River Association, secretary; and Ben J. Rowell, pastor of First Church, Hughes, vice president.*

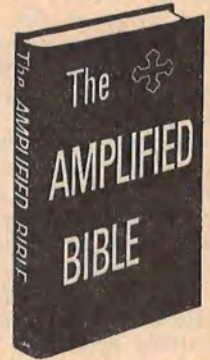


WIVES OFFICERS: *New officers of the Arkansas Baptist Ministers Wives organization are, left to right: Mrs. Lehman Webb, Hot Springs, president; Mrs. James Zeltner, Ft. Smith, program vice president; Mrs. Jerry Don Abernathy, Crosssett, devotional chairman; Mrs. Thomas A. Hinson, West Memphis, secretary-treasurer; and Mrs. Gean Roy Law, Ft. Smith, social chairman.*

NOVEMBER 27, 1969

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Living the spirit of Christ

(1969 Arkansas Baptist State Convention President's address, by Thomas A. Hinson)

We stand today on the eve of a new decade—the 70's. Ten short years ago, some of us were calling the 60's, "The Decade to Do or Die." History may yet prove that we were more correct than even present indications seem. What shall we call the 70's?

Our denominational leaders are asking us to lead our people in "Living the Spirit of Christ" in the 70's. How could we fashion a more fitting challenge, or one more needful? The pessimist says, "What's the use—the heavens are about to fall in anyway!" The Christian optimist says, "The future is as bright as the promises of God for any people who will meet the conditions of God." I want to make certain that I am a Christian optimist and that I lead my people to meet God's inexorable conditions by which he can bless them.

There are many essentials to "Living the Spirit of Christ" in a day like this one in which we live. I want to discuss with you here today three of those essentials which I believe to be both timely and vital to our particular situation.

First, "Living the Spirit of Christ" involves:

I. MANAGEMENT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Apostle Paul was the "convention president" of his day. The small, incipient church was involved in a great, sprawling missionary movement which was sweeping across the earth. I want us to observe some things the apostle had to say in his "State of the Union Address" as he wrote to seven major churches in his epistles.

1. To the Romans, the apostle taught that the Holy Spirit is the "Spirit of Life" to overcome the self-life. There are 41 personal pronouns in Romans, chapter 7. It is full of I's, me's, and my's. What is God's solution to this kind of problem? It is given in 8:2, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Just as the natural law of gravitation causes a small piece of metal to fall to the ground when it is released from the hand of him who held it, so the tendency of man is naturally to earthly things.

Man's sinful gravitation is always downward. But when a piece of metal is attached to a balloon, then it rises with the object to which it is united. A man who is saved and is in vital union with Christ through the Holy Spirit is energized by the Spirit's uplifting presence. Then, and only then can he get victory over the downward tendency of earthly things.

2. To the Corinthians, the apostle taught that the Holy Spirit is "The Spirit of God" in contrast to the impotence and incompetence of man. In the Corinthian epistles, the problem of a man-centered and carnal congregation is dealt with. The apostle reminds them that they cannot understand the Word of God, nor fathom the deep things of God, nor apply the truths of God alone. The Spirit is the Unfolder of the Word, the Enlightener of the mind, and the Communicator of the Gospel. In order for any Christian, or group of Christians, to have his competency, they must be under his control.

3. To the Galatians, the apostle made a contrast between "the Spirit" and "the flesh." The grievous error into which the Galatians had fallen was the substitution of fleshly energy for the Holy Spirit's working. No one, nor anything, must ever be substituted for the Holy Spirit. This grand truth would lead the apostle, near the end of the Galatian letter, to say, "Keep on walking in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh," 5:16. Man alone can never climb to the heights of God's holiness nor comprehend the riches of God's grace; but the Holy Spirit is ready and available to lift us into both and make us cease from the strug-

glings of fleshly frustrations.

4. To the Ephesians, the apostle taught that the Holy Spirit is the only One who can transform Christian doctrine into practical discipline. There are 12 references to the Holy Spirit in the six brief chapters of Ephesians. The first six of these references tell us what he does in his ministry to the Christian. The second and final six of these references to the Holy Spirit in Ephesians tell us what we do when he is in us. This is why scholarly students of the Ephesian epistle point out that the first half of the book is doctrinal (or truth-stated), and the last half of the book is practical (or truth-related).

My brethren, there is no other way to make doctrine live than through the power and ministry of God's Holy Spirit. In Chapter 4 of Ephesians we are told seven things we are not to do: not to lie; to be angry and sin not; not to give place to the devil; not to steal; not to allow our tongue to be a medium of corrupt communications; not to grieve the Holy Spirit; and not to allow bitterness and its attendant evils to be associated with us. Then chapter 5 contains that great Christian imperative, "Be filled with the Spirit." The natural result of the Spirit's indwelling is also sevenfold. This time it is not negative, rather it is positive: Spirit-filled believers submit themselves to each other; Spirit-filled wives are subject to their husbands; Spirit-filled husbands love their wives; Spirit-filled children obey their parents in the Lord; Spirit-filled parents are considerate of their children; Spirit-filled servants serve the Lord in their earthly service; and, Spirit-filled masters regard their servants with kindly interests.

5. To the Philippians, the apostle taught that the Holy Spirit is the medium through whom we have fellowship with the Lord and each other. It is here that we read of the "fellowship of the Spirit" and are told "to be of the same mind," and are exhorted to be "of one accord" and to have "one spirit." Just as the sap is the unifying power holding every part of the tree together, so the Holy Spirit is the unifying power enabling believers to be of one accord with each other. The concord of mutual interest can only be attained by being in one accord through the Holy Spirit.

6. To the Colossians, the apostle taught that the Holy Spirit is the one who imparts the fulness of the glorified Christ. Here we are brought face to face with the fulness of Christ as the head of all creation, and as the head of the church to whom believers are united, and in whom they are made complete. The Holy Spirit is mentioned by name only one time in the Book of Colossians, but his ministry runs throughout the letter. Chapter 1 is an excellent example. Verse 10 speaks of spiritual understanding, and of spiritual walk and spiritual fruit. Verse 11 points to spiritual power and spiritual endurance. Verse 24 explains spiritual affinity, and verse 25 mentions spiritual ministry. The Holy Spirit is the Secret Worker who leads us into the fulness of the living Christ.

7. To the Thessalonians, the apostle taught that the Holy Spirit is the Safe-Guarder of the Christian worker's life and labour. He is the One who makes the message of the Gospel effective through the believer's life and lips. He is the One who gives joy amid suffering, and transforms affliction into a means of gladness. He is the One who guards us by his presence, lest we should presume upon God's love, and the One who reminds us not to quench any flame which he has kindled in another. He frequently admonishes us, lest we forget the purpose of the Lord in saving us; namely, in setting

us apart for his hallowed occupation.

My Baptist brethren, if there is any hope of our "Living the Spirit of Christ" in the '70's, it will come on this basic, biblical formula of the apostle: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). This kind of submission to his sovereignty will bring victory and glory to the noble causes of Baptists in our beloved Wonder State.

Second, "Living the Spirit of Christ" means:

II. MAKING FAITH LIVE

To say that we believe a truth is fine. The only thing is, the world's not listening! And it won't listen! The day may have gone forever in America when we secure the attention of the masses on the basis of what we say we believe! Present circumstances demand a living faith, not merely a dogma or doctrine that can be beautifully housed in a theological library. Tennyson's words, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day. I'd rather men would walk with me than merely point the way. . ." were never more appropriate than now!

May I borrow your trustful imagination and memory just now, and take you with me through that marvelous "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews, Chapter 11.

1. Here is Abel, making faith live through an acceptable sacrifice. Cain was rejected for bringing an offering unacceptable to God. Abel was accepted for the very opposite reason—he brought an offering which was acceptable to God. We are all like Cain and Abel: saved or lost, believers or unbelievers, accepted or rejected, in or out, Christians or not Christians. Abel exercised faith by discounting human schemes, methods, and reasonings, and by obeying God. He exercised faith by acknowledging his sin and his need of God's forgiveness, by recognizing that no work or effort of his own could gain him acceptance before God, and by providing an offering that foreshadowed the great offering for sin by the Lord Jesus.

2. Here is Enoch, making faith live through fellowship. The fifth chapter of Genesis makes for doleful reading until we come to verse 21 where we are introduced to this man Enoch. "The seventh from Adam," who walked with God and lived day by day in holy and happy fellowship with him. Adam and Eve, who started the human race, had also walked with God in that beautiful, pristine paradise called Eden. Then sin came in and broke that wonderful fellowship between God and man. Once unbelief had robbed man of his fellowship with God, faith became the only link by which man could be restored into fellowship with the Father again.

Enoch's walk was with the Lord God, himself. The word to emphasize is the word "with" for it denotes fellowship. Enoch did not walk independent, but in dependence upon God. He walked with God, which implies that they went in the same direction and at the same speed, and that this life was lived in harmony with the Lord and in step with him. Amos said, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (33) The answer is obvious!

Enoch also walked in a way pleasing to God. We can please him in two ways; first, by being born again, and, second, by acting like it! Perhaps there were skeptics in Enoch's day who said, "It won't last; he's just another nine-day wonder." But Enoch's walk with God did last. He walked with God for over 300 years, or 109,500 days, or 2,628,000 hours. This he did not in a monastery, but in a home with a wife and family; in a business world, amid pleasures, joys, and sorrows much like our own. John H. Sammis' hymn is correct: "When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word, what a glory he sheds on our way; while we do his good will, he abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey."

3. Here is Noah, making faith live through his works. Whenever there is true faith in God, there is always definite outward evidence of that faith. Belief always affects behaviour. Faith shows itself in works. It is vain to say that we have faith in God if there are no works in our lives resulting from and giving evidence of such faith.

The work of faith is to do the will of God, even though you appear to be the only one doing it. It is to go on in God's work in the face of every opposition and discouragement.

It means to accept his judgment without questioning his justice. It demands the proclamation of the message of God, however solemn and unacceptable it may be to your hearers. But the work of faith also promises the reward of faith. Another hymn writer said, "I will not work my soul to save, that work my Lord has done. But I will work like any slave, for love of God's dear Son."

Noah lived and worked in a day of grace, and so do we. He lived and worked in a day of terrible apostasy, and so do we. He lived and worked at the end of an age, and so do we. Noah felt a compulsion to be faithful in service, and so must we!

4. Here is Abraham, making faith live in obedience. One of the towering peaks of living faith in the Old Testament is Abraham. God called him, "The father of all them that believe." In this great "Hall of Faith," Hebrews 11, only one verse is given to each of the biographies of Abel, Enoch, and Noah; but to Abraham, 12 verses are given. These 12 verses summarize some 14 chapters from the Book of Genesis. The Bible is literally full of references to this great man and servant of God. To dispell any doubt about his genuine historicity, simply read what Jesus said as recorded in John 8.

Abraham's living faith demonstrates how one is to launch out upon God's promises and do his work without question. Abraham's faith did work. It brought an upheaval in his life. He packed his things, said goodbye to his friends and family, and went off to obey God. How we thank God for multitudes who since then have done substantially the same thing. Nothing is foolish when it results from God's command and faith's obedience. What is peculiar in the eyes of the world is often precious in the eyes of the Lord.

To me, Abraham demonstrates our need for obedience to the Great Commission and to all that Jesus gave the New Testament church to do. Abraham's obedience was prompt, practical, progressive, peculiar, and, thank God, it was productive.

5. Here is Isaac, making faith live through visions of the future. The writer of Hebrews states that "by faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, concerning things to come." This means that Isaac pronounced a blessing upon his sons in respect to their future condition and this he did by faith in God with complete confidence that God would accomplish all that he had promised. Isaac was about to die, but he believed that God would do all that he predicted he would do. This was the "vision of faith"; and in order that we may see "the vision of faith" operative in a life, we observe several lessons in the life of Isaac. True faith must always have to do with "things to come," with things not yet revealed by sight. Weymouth translates Hebrews 11:1 this way, "Faith is confident assurance of that for which we hope, a conviction of the reality of things we do not see." Faith operates in the realm of the unseen. This means that a man of faith is of necessity a man of vision! The world says, "Seeing is believing." The Christian says, "Believing is seeing!" It is the presence and operation of faith in a life that makes that life pleasing to the Lord. Isaac, whose life was full of tragic failures, carved a line in this section of Holy Writ because of his vision. The perfect work of faith is to surmount failures and replace them with victories.

Faith may at times be more submissive than creative. Isaac's faith took on the character of submission, whereas Abraham's faith was more creative and took on more initiative. Faith, when it is real, will be tested at every turn of life's journey. Faith sometimes shines out more clearly in time of defeat than in time of victory. Faith accepts every situation permitted by God as his way of accomplishing divine purposes. Faith is beautiful when its vision is keen all the way to the end of life, as in the case of Isaac.

6. Here is Jacob, making faith live through worship. When the Holy Spirit chose from the rich and illustrious life of Jacob a special fragment of his life which best demonstrated his faith in God, what would it be? The one point

(Continued on page 16)

President's address

upon which our attention is focused is Jacob dying, blessing, worshipping; and what a picture it is!

Observe some things about a faith that worships. Worship is the highest function of the human soul. Redeemed sinners who do not thrill at this privilege are anemic saints, to say the least. We Baptists are great activists, our service is known wherever our name has gone. But of how many of our average members can we honestly say will go to church next Sunday supremely and primarily to worship God?

Those who practice making faith live through worship in this limited world will appreciate even more the fast approaching day when worship will be by sight!

7. Here is Joseph, making faith live through persistence. In a long life of adversity, temptations, sorrows, disappointments, successes and prosperity, Joseph's faith persisted. To have a faith at all is great indeed, but the greatest need today is for men and women who have a faith that will not be defeated, either in triumph or in frustration.

What can we say about this persistent faith which Joseph had? It was not shaken by fierce adversity. Brothers might hate him, family and national injustice might befall him, and subtle temptation might come upon him. His only hope of overcoming was his faith. It was not disturbed by false and unjust accusation. Be certain of this, all who honor God will be honored by him. Persistent faith is not perturbed by broken pledges. It was not influenced by human reasonings, nor confined to time's horizons.

8. Here is Moses, making faith live through right decisions. What can be more important than the decision of faith? First, there was a great refusal in Moses' life. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter and to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Whatever he might deny himself in time, God would fully compensate, he genuinely believed in all of eternity. Then there was a great acceptance in his life. At the burning bush, he must have reasoned, "That thing looks as if it could burn forever. I burned out in 24 hours in Egypt years ago. I need what that bush has." His decision was reasonable. It is reasonable to trust God, because it is always right to refuse to do wrong, and always right to do what is right. It is reasonable to trust in God because there is always profit in suffering, if that suffering is born for the sake of what is right. It is reasonable to trust God because any pleasure enjoyed in wrong paths is for all-too-brief a season. It is reasonable to trust God because no temporal gain is worth anything if it leads to eternal loss. The poet said, "Thou hast made thyself to me a living, bright reality, more present to faith's vision keen, than to any earthly object seen; more dear, more infinitely nigh than even the closest earthly tie."

Third, "Living the Spirit of Christ" requires:

III. MINISTRY THROUGH A VITAL CHURCH

On every hand today, the church as an institution, and the very term "church" is misunderstood. It is a part of the "establishment" that falls in a great, comprehensive category of the "old-fashioned, out-moded, and useless institutions," which a group of young men and women with long hair and growing beards seem dead bent on destroying! They have not told us yet what they have better than "the establishment." They propose to clean up the country, when they have not yet even learned the basic rules of personal cleanliness! How tragic!

What is the church? How many churches are there? I believe that God has chosen to bless the people called Baptists because they have embraced a doctrine of the church very close to that one set forth in the New Testament.

The only church I know anything about in the New Testament is local. One needs to lay no claim to scholarship in order to identify more than 90 of the less than 120 uses of the Greek word, "ecclesia," as definite, named, local assemblies. After careful study of the other small minority of the uses of the word, "ecclesia," in the New Testament (which

some have used to defend the universal church theory) I am personally satisfied and convinced that they are institutional or generic uses of the word. I do not believe the New Testament teaches a universal church. Rather, I think this is a confusion of the term "church" and some attempt to make it synonymous with "the kingdom of God."

And there is little doubt in my mind that this concept of the universal church has contributed significantly to current controversies over church union and proper place and observance of church ordinances. Our real problem is at the point of ecclesiology.

Some months ago I was in Nashville attending a denominational meeting. While at lunch with several distinguished Baptist leaders from wide-spread areas of our Convention, the subject of ecumenicity and its related theories were discussed. Soon the concept of "the universal church" was before us. I was pleased to hear one of our finest seminary professors say, "I don't know for sure that they mean by 'universal church,' but I am relatively sure of this, they are not depending on getting their salary from it."

Even if we solved all these theological differences in this Convention, I am convinced there are other mountains for the church to climb. Our greatest problem is in leading our members to love the church like the Lord Jesus loved it, and to be loyal to the church as Jesus was, and to labour compassionately and consistently in the church and through it as Jesus did. This is what plagues my church most. The tragedy of this tendency is that if you cannot get people excited about practical loyalties based upon a personal love for the Lord and his church, how will we ever get them to embrace the great New Testament doctrinal distinctives on which Baptists have thrived in this country for almost 200 years.

Four key words are used by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament to describe the church. He tells us that the church is a brotherhood, the church is a body, the church is a bride, and the church is a building.

As a brotherhood, the church is made up of regenerate members, born-again believers only. How can we be brothers in a church family before we are born into God's family? Not only does the brotherhood concept propagate the family idea, but, perhaps even more, the fellowship idea.

As a body, the church gives expression to the spirit of Christ from our community out to the very ends of the earth. In I Corinthians, chapter 12, the term "body" is used 16 times in verses 12-27 and as such, Christ is the head and we are the functioning members of His body.

As a bride, the church expresses love for the Heavenly Bridegroom. Proper emphasis is also given here to fidelity. I wonder how long your homes would last if the bride were no more loyal and her fidelity were no deeper than the loyalty and fidelity of many who claim to be members of the Lord's church.

As a building, the church is founded upon the Lord Jesus. In I Peter, chapter 2, the Holy Spirit, through Simon Peter, gave us a word picture of that church. He described Jesus, the foundation, as "a living stone disallowed, indeed, of men, but chosen of God." The members of the church are described as "living stones," and are built up into "a spiritual house." Jesus said, when speaking of himself, "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And in the I Corinthian letter, we are reminded that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (3:11).

The point I want to nail down just here is this: that if we wish to "Live the Spirit of Christ" it will be through ministry in this vital New Testament church. Of this I am sure! Jesus, who established the church, gave himself as its Chief Corner Stone, and purchased it with his own blood, is not going to bless the man who minimizes or mutilates his best and only divinely ordained instrument and institution for doing his work in the world.

What shall I say in conclusion?

First, we are helpless failures in all areas of Christian service until we are filled and controlled by God's Holy Spirit.

President's address

He can solve our problems, and he wants to do so. However, he can only do this as a result of our invitation and personal surrender to him.

Second, we must ever look for and readily use any better methods of teaching and preaching. However, our greatest deficiency is not in the area of communicating the spoken words, it is in the area of acting out the living Word. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without

works is dead also" (James 2:26).

Third, we must stay with the church and be certain that it is fashioned after the New Testament pattern. We must ever remember that God will honor him who honors his church. Our needy world awaits the church's ministry with all of its vast potential, to help heal the hurt of the world; but above all, to point out for men the way to heaven.

Fourth, I appeal to all Arkansas Baptists, and all of our pastors, and all of our churches, and all of our institutions: in the name above every name, "Live the Spirit of Christ" during this upcoming, desperate decade!

Maryland Baptists emphasize N. Y. Convention formation

ANNAPOLIS, Md.—The end of an era—the end of the 1960s and the leaving of Baptist churches in New York to form a convention of their own this year—was emphasized during the meeting of the Baptist Convention of Maryland.

Hosted by College Avenue Church here, some 700 messengers heard Paul S. James, executive secretary of the Baptist Convention of New York, discuss the history, development, and prime ministry of the convention.

Beginning work in metropolitan New York was in 1958, with the establishment of the Manhattan Baptist Chapel under the sponsorship of the College Avenue Church.

Today, more than 7,000 Baptist live in the greater New York area.

A budget decrease of \$27,000 in Co-operative Program receipts from local churches in Maryland is anticipated due to the departure of the New York churches.

Both the amendment and the entire report carried with little expressed opposition.

The report recommended specific action by the state executive board in three areas, calling on the board to provide loans or grants for vocational training for the needy; provide monies for scholarships for Negro ministerial students; and provide information about ministries to handicapped persons.

The committee called on churches and interested individuals to undertake programs to improve housing for low-income groups, citing as examples the work of Owensboro Churches for Better Homes, and the Church Housing Association of Prestonsburg. Both are non-profit corporations working for better housing, involving Baptists.

In other major actions, the convention ventured into the never-never land of sex education, approved statements concerning taxation of church property and tax aid to parochial schools, and supported President Richard Nixon's Vietnam policy.

The convention requested its Christian Life committee and state paper, the *Western Recorder*, to develop and disseminate to churches information about "a healthy approach to sex education" and also to help make churches aware of the dangers of pornography in Kentucky.

A report from the convention's public affairs committee expressed strong opposition to tax support for parochial schools "... through direct action or any subterfuge, because we believe that the funds of all the people should be used to provide the best public school system possible for all the children of Kentucky."

In the area of taxation, the committee supported taxation of non church-related business activity for profit, regardless of the use of the funds by churches. Strong opposition, however, was voiced to taxation of properties used for religious purposes.

Earlier, the convention's executive board had agreed to pay property taxes on the state headquarters building in Middletown, Ky.

The convention adopted a resolution supporting President Nixon's Vietnam policy, and asked the convention's executive secretary to notify the president of the action.

An emergency recommendation brought by the Executive Board asked the convention to "reaffirm and reiterate the action taken... that any and all allocations heretofore made to Kentucky Southern College be terminated." The motion was adopted.

The action was taken in light of a hearing scheduled about a week following the convention on a law suit against the convention and Kentucky Southern College involving about \$288,000 in funds promised to the former Baptist school by the convention but terminated when Kentucky Southern merged with the University of Louisville recently.

At the recommendation of the Executive Board, the convention voted to revise downward the Cooperative Pro-

General officers retreat set for December

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Apples and roasted peanuts. . .
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Inspiration and fellowship. . .

How does that sound for a weekend in December? This is exactly what is planned for the annual General Officers' Retreat at Camp Paron, Dec. 5-6.

Dr. Stuart Arnold, Baptist Sunday School Board, will be our special guest. Dr. Arnold is a consultant in the general administration section, with specific assignment in helping the "small" churches.

The program is designed for pastors, other staff members, and general Sunday School officers. Outreach, curriculum, achievement guide, the 70's, and Bible study will be the program areas.

Cost is nominal—\$4.65 for three meals and a good bed, Friday night (supper) through noon Saturday. Bring linens and "goodies". Write us of your plans to attend.—C. Don Cooper, Sunday School Department

gram budget goals for the next two years, because contributions had fallen short of the goals for the past two years.

The current fiscal year goal of \$4,150,000 was reduced by \$150,000 and the 1970-71 goal of \$4.3 million was revised to \$4.1 million.

Elected president for the convention was Sidney Maddox, pastor of First Church, Hopkinsville. Next year the convention meets at Walnut Street Church, Louisville, Nov. 10-12. (BP)

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L. R., Immanuel	Pulaski	\$45,379.57	L.R., Pulaski Hgts.	1564	\$39,005.58	\$24.94	Pulaski
L.R., Pulaski Hgts.	Pulaski	39,005.58	N.L.R., Indian Hills	179	3,942.98	22.03	N. Pulaski
Fort Smith, First	Concord	29,639.59	Camden, Faith	24	479.00	19.96	Carey
N.L.R., Park Hill	N. Pulaski	28,918.51	Springdale, First	1016	20,051.53	19.74	Wash.-Mad.
Ft. Smith, Grand Ave.	Concord	27,332.43	N.L.R., Park Hill	1687	28,918.51	17.14	N. Pulaski
El Dorado, First	Liberty	27,151.90	Ft. Smith, Grand Ave.	1692	27,332.43	16.15	Concord
Crossett, First	Ashley	25,080.84	Ft. Smith, Immanuel	549	8,798.84	16.03	Concord
Pine Bluff, First	Harmony	25,028.73	Crossett, First	1568	25,080.84	16.00	Ashley
W. Memphis, First	Tri. Co.	23,715.28	Malvern, Trinity	78	1,168.59	14.98	Central
P.B., South Side	Harmony	23,271.36	Camden, First	1315	19,688.57	14.97	Liberty
Springdale, First	Wash.-Mad.	20,051.53	Harrison, First	979	14,346.51	14.65	Boon.-New.
Camden, First	Liberty	19,688.57	Jonesboro, Walnut Street	1009	14,766.19	14.63	Mt. Zion
Magnolia, Central	Hope	19,379.62	Almyra, First	396	5,718.12	14.44	Centennial
NLR., Baring Cross	N. Pulaski	19,230.62	Stephens, First	432	6,227.23	14.41	Liberty
Benton, First	Central	18,904.47	N.L.R., Amboy	667	9,580.19	14.36	N. Pulaski
Jonesboro, First	Mt. Zion	18,742.71	Fordyce, First	895	12,600.00	14.08	Carey
Forrest City, First	Tri. Co.	17,241.22	Paragould, First	1174	16,429.06	13.99	Greene Co.
Blytheville, First	Miss.	17,189.02	P.B., Watson Chapel	341	4,589.11	13.46	Harmony
Paragould, First	Greene Co.	16,429.06	Star City, First	701	9,255.52	13.20	Harmony
N.L.R., Levy	N. Pulaski	15,684.61	Ft. Smith, South Side	797	10,437.43	13.10	Concord
Hope, First	Hope	15,670.00	Smackover, First	665	8,522.03	12.82	Liberty
Jonesboro, Walnut Street	Mt. Zion	14,766.19	Blytheville, First	1349	17,189.02	12.74	Miss.
Little Rock, Second	Pulaski	14,515.16	El Dorado, First	2146	27,151.90	12.65	Liberty
Harrison, First	Boon.-New.	14,346.51	L.R., Immanuel	3589	45,379.57	12.64	Pulaski
Warren, First	Barth.	13,686.15	N.L.R., Levy	1251	15,684.61	12.54	N. Pulaski

Contributions listed are only through The Cooperative Program. Other mission giving is not listed. Contributions postmarked after the 5th of the month are not listed.

(Compiled by T. K. Rucker, Secretary Annuity - Stewardship Department)



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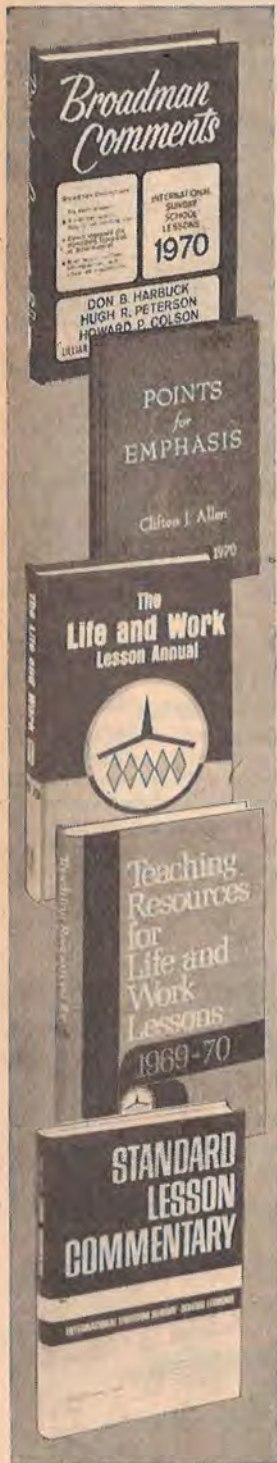
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Man in a moral universe

By L. H. COLEMAN
Pastor, Immanuel Church
Pine Bluff

Life and Work

Nov. 30, 1969

Habakkuk

Having completed a study of the sovereignty and laws of God the past two weeks, we approach a very stimulating study today concerning God's justice.

Habakkuk was a unique prophet. Although we know nothing of his personal life, his book could be called a footnote to the book of Job. They are companion volumes and address themselves to similar themes.

The former prophets addressed Israel on the part of God but Habakkuk addressed God on the part of Israel. His probing question was, "My God, Why?" His cry was to God not a complaint against God. His problem was not so much the sin of the people as it was the inaction of God.

Please read a standard commentary for the historical background. Note the discussion in your study material.

The problem stated Hab. 1:1-4

Habakkuk's problem, aside from feeling that God had not answered his prayer was why does God allow the wicked men of Judah to go unpunished? How long will God allow the injustice and evil to continue in Jerusalem? Why do the wicked prosper? Why do the righteous suffer? Is all suffering a result of sin and all prosperity a result of righteousness?

These four verses state the passionate outcry of the prophet. How wise it is to state our sincere feelings unto God! Habakkuk is not to be criticized for raising these questions; after all, he he stayed around to hear some of the answers.

God's Answer (Hab. 1:5-6)

God was and is not inattentive nor unconcerned about any of the problems of any of his children. In fact, the Lord had already enlisted the Chaldeans in the work of humbling and chastising the people of Jerusalem. Judgment would come upon Judah. Although evil seems to prosper for a while, the righteous alone have abiding, permanent life.

Note the expressions, "I will work a work" and "I raise up." This denotes a God of action and concern. He is not

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dead nor disinterested. He is at work. He is at work today as well.

The prophet's predicament (Hab. 1:12-13)

No longer could the prophet feel that God was indifferent. He furthermore stated another problem: How can a righteous God use such a cruel instrument as the Chaldeans to scourge Judah and punish his friends? How can the cruelty of the Chaldeans be reconciled with the holiness of God?

Even so, the prophet expressed confidence in God. He stated, "We shall not die." In every crisis, God can be trusted. Evil has within itself the ingredients of death. In times of deepest doubt our best course is to turn to God and wait for his answer.

The high place of faith (Hab. 3:17-18)

Although we must trudge through the valley of doubt, despondency and fear, we belong on the high place of faith. (Habakkuk 2:4 became the battle-cry of the Reformation.) Faith is the victory for the child of God. Habakkuk went through the fog of complaint only to arrive in the glorious sunlight of faith. Chapter 3 is a psalm of victory. The note of joy is sounded (see v. 18). Habakkuk puts his trust implicitly in the Lord.

Conclusion

Please consider the following truths which can be deduced from principles found within this book:

1. The Christian must look beyond the temporal interest (financial success, etc.) of this life to the glories of the life beyond.
2. If someone prospers in this life, so what? "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."
3. This book refutes a prevalent viewpoint: (Man is rewarded in this world because of his deeds; if he serves God he will prosper financially and otherwise.) There are two fallacies in this line of thought:

(1) Virtue would be practiced for earthly results;

(2) Religion would belong to the rich, the free, the healthy, and the happy and would have no advantage for those who need God the most—the poor, the broken, the defeated, the "second class" citizen, and the wretched.

4. Not all suffering is result of sin.

5. Faith is required that one day God will even the score. This life does have its injustices and inequities, but the wicked will "give account unto God" ultimately.

Next week we shall begin Unit III of our quarter's study. We look forward to dealing with "Truths about Forgiveness and Salvation."

Be with us next week.

WHAT THINK YOU

of your state Baptist paper?

Here is what Herschel H. Hobbs, pastor of First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, and a past president of the Southern Baptist Convention says: "In the promotion of our work, the presentation of our beliefs, the preservation of our fellowship, and the prophetic call to enlarged spiritual endeavors, the state Baptist papers occupy a place second to none in the far-reaching service of our denomination." If your church is one of the few in Arkansas trying to struggle along without sending the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine to its members, let us tell you how you can have the vital ministry of your state paper. Write or call: ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWSMAGAZINE, 525 West Capitol Avenue, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201, Telephone: 376-4791, Ext. 63



DR. HOBBS

God's law reaffirmed

By VESTER E. WOLBER
Religion Department
Ouachita University

International
Nov. 30, 1969
Nehemiah 8:1-12

One of the primary benefits to be gained from a study of this lesson is a recognition of the wholesale transformation of religion in Israel, brought about by the captivity and restoration. During the exile the people of God collected and began to use Hebrew scriptures; developed synagogues, institutions in which the people gathered in local assemblies to study the law and worship God; parted finally with idolatry; and developed a sense of their own unique relationship with God and with other peoples of the earth.

Thus, when Ezra returned from exile he had some scriptures in hand—the law of Moses; had a new religious institution which he could use for instruction and worship—the synagogue; was free from the old thorny problem of idolatry; and found in Jerusalem a colony of Jews characterized by religious zeal.

But in cataloging the major factors which brought about the religious transformation in Judea, one could hardly stress too much the extreme religious zeal and arduous labors of Ezra. He placed the stamp of his own convictions on the religion of Israel, and his influence continued in force for five centuries. The religion of Judaism which Jesus encountered and set aside got its final thrust from Ezra.

Expository preaching (8:1-8)

1. Ezra assembled his people—men, women, and older children—"all who could hear with understanding." They all "gathered as one man" in the square before the water gate. They must have broken attendance records, and the fact that they all came with ready will to listen and learn tells much about the people and about their leader.

They were ardently religious, excited about learning. Their ears were attentive to the words spoken from the book. There was in them a positive readiness to receive, believe, and obey the law of God.

One has to be impressed by the common sense of Ezra. He assembled all who were capable of receiving religious instruction but made other arrangements for infants and small children who were unable to comprehend and whose presence would have distracted the attention of their parents and misused their energies. We are not told who operated the nursery that day.

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2. Ezra mounted a raised platform so as to be seen and heard by the people. Some churches have elevated their ministers high above the floor-level and far away from the congregation—perhaps to suggest that their messages come down from heaven with a minimum of human influence. The Gospel is more effective, however, when it comes to men from another weak and sinful man who has received and interpreted the message in the light of his own experience. Therefore, the pulpit should be elevated only that the speaker may be seen and heard.

3. He read aloud from the law. Since the law was written in Hebrew, it is likely that he read in Hebrew, without translation, a custom which carried down to the New Testament era, even though the people spoke Aramaic, a Semitic language which they brought back from Persia, quite similar to Hebrew.

When Ezra opened the book (probably a scroll), the people stood, a custom which came to be quite common. Just as a soldier stands to receive orders from a superior officer, so the people of God stood to hear God's law.

4. The Levites helped Ezra explain the law. Thirteen Levites stood beside him and helped him; "they read from the book . . . clearly; and they gave the sense so that the people understood."

(1) They read distinctly, enunciating

Historical Faith

The world is progressing
when a prudent man is not
content with his meager life-
span
but delves inquisitively into
the past questing for founda-
tions, sure to last
then launches beyond space's
offering of Mars, with faith
in God's heart-world that is
tuned to his stars.

—Maggie Smith

their words so as to be heard clearly. The spokesman for God in any generation should have something to say, something worthwhile, and should speak out clearly. He does not have to yell in volumes of sound and fury, but he does need to speak so as to be heard and understood.

(2) They translated the scripture into the language of the people, in this case Aramaic. The work of translation is not complete when scholars have given us the Bible in modern English. The minister must explain the message of the Bible in the week-day language of the street and lanes of his own community.

(3) They carefully dealt with those who had problems in grasping the meaning of the written word. The Levites moved among the people to hear and answer their questions and "helped the people to understand the law, while the people remained in their places."

A day of rejoicing (8:9-12)

1. The people wept in grief and sorrow when they heard the words of the law. Their grief and mourning may have expressed deep national regret for having neglected and thus broken covenant law; but it seems more likely that they grieved because they failed to understand the deep significance and true value of the law. When they came to understand the treasure of the law, it became a source of rejoicing.

2. Nehemiah, the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people issued a resolution: "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep." Instead, they were instructed to feast and rejoice.

The Levites went among the people and said, "Be quiet. . . do not be grieved." Evidently ancient Jews, like a lot of modern gentiles, made more noise when they were mourning than they did when they were rejoicing. Most of us seem to have more talent for mumbling and complaining than we do for thanksgiving and rejoicing.

3. The people did feast and rejoice because they understood the scriptures which had been read and explained to them. The word of God when received into the heart puts a smile on the face and a smile in the voice.

B—Bonham, Tal, new president of state convention (cover story) p9; board members elected p12.
 C—"Clemency for all" (PS) p2; Convention officers (photo) p6; convention committees p8.
 F—"Frank's Chapel" (BL) p5; "Faithful children" (BB) p4.
 H—Harbuck, Don B., has book released p4.
 I—Installation of Dr. Ashcraft (photos) p7.
 J—Jackson, Lendol, named dean of students at Southern College p4.
 L—"Living the spirit of Christ" (President's address) p14.
 M—Mt. Zion Ass'n new offices (photo) p5.
 P—Pastors conference officers (photo) p13; Pastors wives officers (photo) p13.
 S—"Spirit of revival at Ft. Smith (E) p8.
 T—Tigerettes to play Mexican women's team p4.



"When I ask a simple question, I want a simple answer!"

South African Union withdraws from council

The Baptist Union of South Africa, meeting in Durban, decided to withdraw from the South African Council of Churches.

"Over the past decade, differences with the Council's liberal stance have increased to the point of incompatibility," the union's press representative said in releases circulated after the annual assembly.

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Lesser disaster

There was an earthquake once which frightened the inhabitants of a certain town. One couple sent their little boy to stay with an uncle in another part of the town, explaining the reason for the lad's unexpected visit. A day or two later the parents received this telegram: "Am returning your boy; send the earthquake."

Top level matter

A well-dressed lady stepped on an elevator in an office building and told the operator she wished to be taken to the ninth floor. "Whom did you wish to see on that floor?" asked the operator courteously. Drawing herself up, the woman stared at him and asked, "What business is that of yours?" "None, madam," he replied, "but there are only eight floors in this building."

* * *

In the old days a man worked on and on. He had tired blood, but he didn't know it.

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Church	Sunday School	Training Union	Ch. Adns.
Alicia	59	63	
Arkadelphia Shiloh	16		
Banner Mt. Zion	47		
Berryville			
First	141	80	
Rock Springs	78	54	
Freeman Heights	188	85	2
Booneville First	258	220	
Camden			
Cullendale First	396	96	
First	487	126	5
Cherokee Village	60	81	3
Crosssett			
First	535	126	
Mt. Olive	277	181	1
Dumas First	280	51	
El Dorado			
Caledonia	32	18	
Ebenezer	160	69	
Fayetteville First	575	143	3
Forrest City First	588	162	2
Ft. Smith First	1,130	373	2
Gentry First	150	59	
Green Forest First	200	92	27
Greenwood First	281	111	
Hampton First	157	39	
Harrison Eagle Heights	244	85	1
Hope First	462	163	
Hot Springs			
Emmanuel	57	31	
Grand Avenue	187		
Lakeside	171	83	
Helena First	255	111	5
Jacksonville			
Bayou Meto	128	84	2
First	543	115	1
Marshall Road	305	188	2
Jonesboro			
Central	498	147	10
Nettleton	303	122	
Lake Hamilton	125	41	
Little Rock			
Archview	147	51	
Geyer Springs	617	253	6
Highway	156	66	2
Life Line	592	225	5
Marked Tree			
Neiswander	96	63	
First	139	52	
Monroe			
Monticello	75	27	
Northside	109	71	1
Second	264	117	
Nashville Ridgeway	97	47	
Norfolk	71	44	2
North Little Rock			
Baring Cross	589	209	
Southside Chapel	45	32	
Calvary	480	180	4
Central	245	90	
Forty-Seventh St.	185	73	
Levy	453	143	3
Park Hill	817	191	
Sixteenth St.	51	36	
Sylvan Hills	260	124	
Ozark First	248	72	1
Paragould East Side	240	138	
Paris First	341	112	1
Payneway Corners Chapel	102	87	
Pine Bluff			
Centennial	224	110	
East Side	165	107	2
First	770	176	5
Green Meadows	67	24	1
Second	204	81	
Watson Chapel	212	92	
Springdale			
Berry Street	114	35	
Caudel Avenue	105	30	
Elmdale	414	132	6
First	470	147	
Oak Grove	68	38	
Van Buren			
First	407	165	1
Jesse Turner Mission	16		
Chapel	35		
Vandervoort First	53	17	
Walnut Ridge First	314	124	
Warren			
First	417	125	
Southside Mission	85	70	
Westside	85	51	
Williford Springlake	75	48	

REPARATIONS SOUGHT

The Black United Front, a militant group in Washington, D. C., USA, seeking reparations for Negroes, has asked Washington's National Baptist Memorial Church for \$250,000 to help rebuild riot-scarred areas of the city.

The convention in pictures

CONCORD CENTENNIAL: Commemorating the 100th anniversary for Concord Association, these Concord pastors' wives dressed in 1870-style frocks for a tea last week for pastors' wives attending the Arkansas Baptist State Convention annual sessions in Ft. Smith.

Top: Mrs. James Zeltner plays a number on an old organ for, left to right: Mrs. R. E. Stair; Mrs. Charles Skutt, Mrs. Roy Gean Law, and Mrs. James Griffin.

Bottom: Mrs. William Bennett (second from right) presides over the punch bowl, with, left to right, Mrs. Gene Palmer, Mrs. Vic Neve, Mrs. Jesse Beaver, Mrs. Elton Pennington, and Mrs. C. D. Peoples.



BREAKFAST: Two of Arkansas Baptists' new leaders, Ouachita President Grant, left, and Executive Secretary Ashcraft of the convention, far right, enjoy donuts with Southern Baptist College President H. E. Williams, second from left, and Convention President-elect Bonham, at a joint meeting of boards of trustees of Ouachita and Southern.



CONGREGATIONAL SINGING: LeRoy McClard, Nashville, leads congregational singing at opening session of convention in Ft. Smith Municipal Auditorium.

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