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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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From the Mountaintop

Arkansas Baptist

August 24, 1989

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**Two Kinds
Of Freedom**



Cover Story



(BP) photo / Warren Johnson

Two Kinds Of Freedom 23

As Namibia moves toward political freedom from South Africa, eight missionaries are hard at work—fighting for freedom of another kind.

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Skip Notice

The *Arkansas Baptist* will not publish an Aug. 31 edition. Sunday School lesson commentaries for Aug. 26 and Sept 3 are included in this issue.

IT'S UPLIFTING

Two Million Pounds of Food

The Arkansas Rice Depot gave away its 2 millionth pound of food in a ceremony at the depot headquarters in Little Rock Friday, July 18. Jerry Bedford, the founder of the Rice Depot, was on hand to present the bag of rice to a Little Rock mother and her three children.

"To get an idea of how much food has been given away, picture 50 tractor-trailer trucks lined up in a row," remarked Laura Rhea, executive director of Arkansas Rice Depot. "That's the amount of food Rice Depot has given away in the past seven years."

The Arkansas Rice Depot was formed in response to growing federal cutbacks in human service programs, and to assist local churches with an ever-increasing number of families asking them for food assistance.

"We didn't want to set up just another bureaucracy with expensive buildings and lots of high-paid staff," said Rhea. "Rather,

we chose to assist those churches and groups in Arkansas already in a position to help the hungry. We felt if every church, health clinic, and human service agency in the state knew they could come to us and get all the free rice they could give away, there wouldn't be any reason for Arkansas families not to have at least some food throughout the month."

The Rice Depot buys only Arkansas grown rice, thus supporting Arkansas farmers, and supporting the state's economy. In addition, rice growers donate rice through Riceland Foods and Producers Rice Mills. Last year, growers donated one-third of the total rice given away.

In 1988, the Depot began to give away dried beans as funds were available. When served together, beans and rice form a complete protein. Last year, the Home Mission Board provided a grant to Arkansas Rice Depot that purchased 55,540 pounds of black-eyed peas. These peas were given away in 92 cities in the state, through 204 churches and hunger agencies.

GOOD NEWS!

Coping with a World System

1 Peter 1:1-2

The young man asked a difficult question. After telling of his recent conversion, he asked, "How can I cope with the world in which I live?" He added: "I did not come from a Christian family. My friends in my fraternity are not believers. I am having a hard time being a Christian in the world."

Christians in Asia Minor had a hard time coping with the world about them. Living the Christian life is hard in any culture. Believers can cope through with the pressures of a secular society. Let us examine the resources for coping.

The Christian has Jesus Christ—Peter addressed Christians—"exiles of the dispersion." He described the believer's intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. To be a Christian is to have a vital union with Christ.

A union with Christ leads to a new allegiance. Believers become "exiles," meaning those who live in a strange place. Christians live in the world, but their ultimate allegiance is to Jesus Christ.

Since Christ lives within the believers, a unique strength emerges. There is a resource from within to cope.

The Christian has a support—Peter us-

ed the term "exiles" in the plural. Christians do not exist in isolation. They exist in a group relationship known as the church.

Believers belong to one another by a common faith in Christ. Believers struggle together with life's inevitable problems. They also fight together against the world's pressures. When one looks at the true church, he can see "tracks of fellow strugglers."

The Christian has a superior kingdom—The Roman government and the secular society appeared superior to God's kingdom. Many times secular security seems to have superiority.

Believers can live victoriously over the world system Jesus defeated every enemy during his life and ministry. When Christians open their lives to Christ, they can have victory over the world.

God's kingdom will reign ultimately. Earthly kingdoms rise and fall. The Roman Empire has fallen. God is alive, and his people reign with him.

Learning to cope with a world system is obvious from 1 Peter. Open your life to Christ. He will live within you, give you people around you, and show you a kingdom beyond you.

Adapted from "Proclaim," April/June 1981. Copyright 1981 The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. All rights reserved. Used by permission. For subscription information, write to Material Services Dept., 127 Ninth Ave. North, Nashville, TN 37234.

Bi-Vocational Pastors

J. EVERETT SNEED

Baptists owe a great debt of gratitude to pastors who must work at a second job in order to support their families. Too often the contributions of these men are not properly recognized. It is evident that Southern Baptists could not have progressed as we have without the work and dedication of these noble servants of God.

In the past, many bi-vocational pastors served churches which were able to have services only one or two Sundays a month. These pioneer preachers did a remarkable job in spreading the gospel and training leadership despite the limited time they had with any given congregation.

Today most of our Southern Baptist churches have full-time preaching services. Yet, we still have more than 800 churches in Arkansas averaging less than 100 in Sunday School. Many of these churches do not have enough financial resources to provide full support for a pastor and his family. Therefore, the bi-vocational pastor still plays a vital role in our work.

The contribution of the bi-vocational pastor is evident across the Southern Baptist Convention, since we have, currently, more than 10,000 serving our churches. This is approximately one-third of all our Southern Baptist pastors. Although we do not have exact statistics for Arkansas, it is evident that our state is well above the national average.

Bi-vocational pastors will be essential to the future of Southern Baptists. There are currently approximately 500 counties in the United States which do not have Southern Baptist congregations. Our seminaries are overflowing with young people whom God has called to the ministry. Some of these will need to serve in pioneer areas as bi-vocational pastors.

Bi-vocational pastors have a noble heritage. The apostle Paul, for example, was skilled in a second occupation—tent making. He was pleased to have never been a burden to anyone. He said, "Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught, but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you" (1 Th. 3:8, 2:9; 2 Co. 11:9).

Paul, through his tent making, located some excellent helpers in carrying the gospel. It appears that the husband and wife team, Aquilla and Priscilla (Ac. 18:1-4), were already committed Christians. But their mutual occupation, as well as their



commitment to the gospel, drew them together at a time when Paul needed help.

Another benefit derived from a preacher's working at a secular vocation is the fact that he always knows what the life of the "working man" is like. This was one of the reasons the Jewish rabbis were required to be bi-vocational. Rabbi Gamaiel III said, "All study of the Torah (law) which is not combined with work will ultimately be futile and lead to sin" (Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, p. 367).

Obviously there are many drawbacks to the pastor's being bi-vocational. There is the constant drain on his time and his energy. He cannot devote his full time and thought to the spread of the gospel and the developing of his church members. Sometimes his secular work may make it impossible for him to minister to people

in times of illness or grief.

Every church should provide full support for its pastor as soon as it has adequate resources to do so. Church members need to realize the most important person in guiding the congregation is the pastor. Paul emphasized the obligation of a church to its pastor as he said, "Even so the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live by the gospel" (1 Co. 9:14).

Contrary to what many people think, bi-vocational pastors are often well trained. Many are college graduates and hold seminary degrees. Many ordained ministers, like this editor's own father, who held both the bachelor's and master's degrees, have chosen to serve as bi-vocational pastors. If needs are to be met in our pioneer areas, others must serve in this manner.

There are several positive steps which must be taken toward recognizing the importance of the bi-vocational pastor. First, let us re-emphasize the fact that there are no big and little churches. Any New Testament congregation which is in God's will is big, regardless of its attendance. Every pastor is important and valuable to God, if he is serving where God wants him to serve.

More bi-vocational pastors should be included on boards and committees. This is often a problem because of the difficulty of being away from a secular job. But these men have a great deal to contribute and they should be included.

Finally, we should thank God for these dedicated men. They are a mighty force in spreading the gospel throughout our land. If this country is to be confronted with the gospel, every God-called person must be employed to this end.

Arkansas Baptist

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know

It was my high privilege and joy to bring the commencement address for the summer graduation of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in July. While blessed to have that opportunity, the thing I am most thrilled for you to know is the very special place Arkansas has in the life of that great institution. In reading the list of faculty members, I noted 13 of them were Arkansans. There were possibly others I did not know. A number of Arkansans are on staff in other than teaching relationships.

Arkansas is the smallest of the old-line Southern Baptist Convention states. We have fewer churches, members and resources. Yet, we continue to make large contributions to the kingdom of God throughout the world. This is borne out by our large foreign mission force from Arkansas, as well as in college and seminary contributions.

Three things are usually true when such things happen. First, some adults in local churches began helping their young people to think in larger terms than the narrow bounds of a community or state. Second, these young people were made sensitive to the movings of God in their lives and had the courage to obey. Third, they paid an enormous price to prepare themselves educationally and professionally so that they would not be hindered if called by God to any assignment anywhere in the world.

So many aspects of church and denominational life figure into this large picture. No church, denominational program, agency or institution should minimize its part in preparing young lives for global service. We need to pray, think, plan and work with the whole earth in mind. A single child today may as an adult touch an entire continent tomorrow. Because of this potential, every aspect of our work should be filled with awe, excitement and excellence.

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



'Spiritual Heart' of Siloam

The Arkansas Baptist Assembly at Siloam Springs has been an integral part of the Arkansas Baptist family for over 70 years. Generations of Baptist youth have been trained and developed into leaders for local congregations of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and other denominational endeavors. The Arkansas Baptist Assembly has been a training ground and a turning point for both the campers and the staff. Many individuals have made significant life decisions as a result of their experience at Siloam Springs.

After 70 years of service, the dormitories and the cabins are in desperate need of repair and improvements. These are necessary to bring them to a condition in which they can continue to provide service to today's youth so that they may continue the heritage of the Siloam experience. At the same time, the venerable tabernacle is showing its age. The building needs to be replaced so that it can continue to serve as the "spiritual heart" of the Siloam experience.

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention has just completed a Feasibility Study to determine the potential of a capital campaign to underwrite the repairs and

reconstruction at Siloam Springs. The Feasibility Study was conducted by Larry Bone & Associates, Inc., a Little Rock consulting firm. The Feasibility Study showed that there is strong support among those Arkansas Baptists who participated in the "Siloam experience." The data shows that there is adequate support for a campaign, particularly among those individuals between the ages of 28 and 54 who have been to Siloam Springs.

If the Executive Board approved the capital campaign, which will be directed to individuals rather than the churches, the names and addresses for former campers, teacher, and staffers will be needed. Since registration cards were only used for insurance and medical purposes, these have not been kept throughout the years. We encourage you to complete the identification card at the end of this article and send it to Larry Bone & Associates, Inc. Our goal is to touch as many Siloam Springs participants as possible. Your immediate response to this appeal will help the Arkansas Baptist State Convention to prepare for the capital campaign if it is approved.—Jimmie Sheffield, ABSC associate executive director

Siloam Springs Assembly Alumni, Teacher/Staff and Friend Identification

Please help the Arkansas Baptist State Convention identify the name and address of people who have attended the camp. We need their present name, address, zip code and phone number. Please send to Larry Bone & Associates, P.O. Box 22604, Little Rock, AR 72221.

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GAP

Letters to the Editor

Sending Messengers

I am very concerned and disturbed with the leadership in our Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). As a layman I have realized in the past year the kind of negative effect this leadership is having on spreading the word of Jesus Christ in the world and the losses of freedom to people in all areas of our convention. It is time that lay people get involved in what is happening in the convention, make decisions on what should be done and provide direction for the future in this great Baptist denomination we have.

One thing is certain. Any change in the convention will take place at SBC annual meetings each year. Therefore, it is im-

perative that each church in our convention send its 10 messengers to vote as Christ would lead them. Many potential messengers in our convention do not have the funds to go to the SBC annual meetings, therefore, limiting their ability to effect change. I am asking you as a fellow Southern Baptist to put funds into your annual budget to help messengers go to the SBC annual meetings. If you would put only \$50 or \$100 per messenger, it would do much to encourage members of your church to attend. My own church, First Church, Wilmington, N.C., made a commitment two years ago to have 10 messengers at the annual meetings each year and appropriated \$300 per messenger out of our budget to send 10 messengers.

JOHN FINN

On the Moral Scene

A Moral Issue?

Is a state-owned lottery (gambling operation) a moral issue? Proponents of state legalized gambling never tire in accusing opponents of arguing about morality. An opposing opinion is usually dismissed with the statement, "You are making it a moral issue, and morals cannot be legislated." This statement is supposed to settle lottery gambling. We reply to this statement by quoting a former Arkansas governor, "Just because I said it doesn't mean it is so."

What is wrong with moral convictions? In my opinion, our nation is drifting through dangerous and troubled waters because we have drifted from our moral moorings. The book of Judges sets forth a vicious cycle: "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Jg. 21:25). As God's people, we are to do that which is right in his eyes. We gladly concede that a decision to legalize state lottery gambling is a moral issue.

Is it right in God's eyes when the state decides to derive income from an activity which is a highly regressive form of taxation that affects poor people more extensively than affluent people?

A state senator, in reply to a letter stating our opposition to state lottery gambling, wrote, "Instead of opposing a lottery, why aren't you involved in

helping the poor?" Our opposition is based upon our compassion and concern for the poor.

As Christians, we strive to live in accordance with God's Word and this gives the assurance we are doing right in God's eyes. God's concern and compassion for the poor are revealed in his Word. "You shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother" (Dt. 15:7). We are forbidden to harden our hearts against the poor. In my opinion, only a hard-hearted person or a state that has lost its heart will take from the poor to fill the pockets of a few or the state's coffers.

The prophet, Amos, brought the following indictment against his nation. "I will not revoke its punishment, because they sell the righteous for money and the needy for a pair of sandals. These who pant after the very dust of the earth on the head of the helpless..." (Amos 2:6-7). Surely we believe the prophets. God takes a dim view of a government that fleeces the poor to pay for education or a bureaucracy.

State lottery gambling a moral issue? You can bet on it.

John Finn is director of the Christian Civic Foundation.



It is my firm belief that until we see leadership which will include all Southern Baptists, the Cooperative Program will suffer financially. Such leadership will bring unity back into the convention and the funds going into the Cooperative Program, home missions and foreign missions will increase substantially which they are not doing now. Therefore, your assistance in providing financial help to messengers will directly and positively affect missions work in this world. I believe this with all my heart and I beg you to include financial assistance in your budget to send messengers to SBC annual meetings beginning next year by sending 10 of your church members to New Orleans.—**Robert S. Parker, Wilmington, N.C.**

Classifieds

For Sale—Retired missionary's mobile home and lot. Joining OBU. For sale, rental potential. Call Coldwell Banker Tatman, Realtors, 246-4575.

B/24

Billy Graham Crusade Countdown

August

- 26 Leadership Breakfast with Dr. Emmanuel Scott
- 27 Support Sunday
- 28-9/22 Prayertime Broadcasts

September

- * High School Assemblies
- 5-9 Roots—One-on-One Discipleship Training
- 9 Christian Life & Witness Make-Up Class
- 9-10 Visitation
- 11-16 Rehearsals
- 17-24 CRUSADE
- 18-21 Regional Satellite Crusades
- 18-22 School of Evangelism
- 25-10/27 Follow-up Broadcasts

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

From the Mountaintop

[Editor's Note: W.O. Vaught, pastor emeritus of the Immanuel Church, Little Rock, and approximately 20 others from the Little Rock area, climbed to the top of Mount Sinai on January 3, 1988. The following message is taken from a tape recorded on April 6, 1988, the day before Dr. Vaught's first surgery. It is Dr. Vaught's desire to share this notable experience with the readers of the *Arkansas Baptist*.]

Ever since the time I was a tiny lad I had great reverence for the Ten Commandments. I remember when I learned the Ten Commandments the first time, and Mount Sinai was, in my boyish mind, almost the vestibule of heaven.

Never did I dream in those youthful days that one day I would climb to the summit of Mount Sinai, where the commandments were given to Moses. Though I had been to Israel more than 20 times, I never had been as far south as Horeb or Mount Sinai. So when we had the opportunity to stay in the new motel at the foot of Mt. Sinai and, then, the next day climb to the summit, I realized it was going to be a great spiritual experience. However, I was not prepared for the spiritual impact that the experience would bring to me.

Of course, as you know, it is a very trying physical experience. We began climbing at Saint Kathryn's Monastery at the foot of the mountain and climbed from 2:30 a.m. until 6:30 a.m. and, finally, reached the summit just in time to see the sunrise. The last quarter of a mile was covered with ice and snow and very cold. Yet, the thrill of knowing that we were in the very mountains where God had dealt with Moses took all of the hurt away, and we kept pressing forward, until we finally reached the summit. I'll have to say this is the hardest physical exertion of my life. There were many times when I thought I would never make it to the top. There were times when I would say, "I cannot take another step." Yet, we kept going and, finally, broke out on the top of the mountain.

I thought about Elijah when he came to Horeb. I also thought about Paul when he



W.O. Vaught atop Mount Sinai

came there, with his stubbornness and self-righteousness, and allowed the Lord to straighten out his theology.

The roots of the book of Romans and Ephesians, the two greatest doctrinal books in the Bible, came from Paul's experience there in those mountains.

So being on Mount Sinai gave me an opportunity to relive the meaning of the Ten Commandments and the true meaning of the burning bush.

Our Arab guide, even though he didn't speak a word of English, realized the spiritual significance of this trip to us. About two-thirds of the way up the mountain, when we were all exhausted and were resting to make the last final climb, the guide went out and lighted a bush. There in the midnight darkness we saw the burning bush. It really brought the experience of Moses very close to us.

The burning bush to Moses meant two things. One, God was saying, "Moses, just like that bush is burning, I want you to know that my people are burning in slavery down in Egypt. Though the bush is not burned up, it is burning, and my people have not been burned up, but they are burning. I want you to go down there and bring them out."

The second thing the burning bush meant was, "Moses, I keep my word. I told Abraham 500 years ago that his family would go down at Egypt and stay 400 years. Then, I would bring them out. I'm about to do that Moses. I just want you to know that this burning bush is my signature, declaring that I keep my word."

Well, I thought of those things when I saw the burning bush. Then of course, when I got to the top and saw the sunrise, it was a great experience to realize that I was in the very mountain where God gave Moses the highest moral code the world has ever received. If the world should last a million years, there will never be a moral code that will surpass the one that God gave to Moses there.—W.O. Vaught

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BENTONVILLE

Church In A Day

Sixty men, all Arkansas Baptists, participated in the "Church In A Day" building project in Bentonville in July.

Under the direction of Glendon Grober, Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood director, the team erected a building "in the dry" at Calvary Mission in Bentonville. Construction began at 6 a.m. and by dark the team had erected a 4,500 square foot church measuring 54 feet wide by 100 feet long, with seating for 135.

The mission is the team's fourth project.

OBU Selected for Sears Program

ARKADELPHIA—Ouachita Baptist University has been selected to participate in the Sears-Roebuck Foundation's 1989-90 "Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Program."

The awards, made to more than 700 of the nation's leading private liberal arts colleges and universities, will recognize top educators on each campus for their resourcefulness and leadership. Each winning faculty member will receive \$1,000 and the institution will receive a grant ranging from \$500 to \$1,500 based on student enrollment.

Youth Tournament Winner Speaks

RIDGECREST, N.C.—"Each of us has a decision about our future. We all have a choice to either take that decision into our own hands or give it to God," the winner of the youth speakers tournament from Arkansas said.

"When I was saved, I not only received eternal life, but I also received the Holy Spirit to be in complete control of my life," said Charlotte Stone, a member of First Baptist Church of Hope.



Charlotte Stone

Stone told the group attending Church Training Leadership Conference worship services at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center that when she was first trying to determine her future, she asked advice from adults and peers, both of whom steered her wrong.

"So far in trying to decide my own future, I had pushed the guidance of the Lord away," Stone said. "Then, I realized if I would just turn my future over to God, he would take care of it.

"The only way I was able to do that was through faith. Faith gives us the courage to face the present with confidence and the future with expectancy.

"I don't know the answers to all the questions," Stone said, "but I do know that my future belongs to God, and in his time, he will reveal his plans for my life."

The young speakers tournament is sponsored by Baptist state conventions and the youth section of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training (name changing to discipleship training Oct. 1) department.

Five Graduate Southwestern

FORT WORTH, Texas—Southern Baptist leader Don Moore told graduates of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary they must take care of themselves, their churches and their leadership skills as they prepare to enter the ministry.

"The graces of God that are supposed to flow from God to you to others will never take place unless you take care of you," Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist Convention, told graduates during Southwestern's summer commencement July 14. The ceremony was held at Travis Avenue Church in Fort Worth.

Five Arkansans were among the 175 graduates. Receiving the master of divinity degree were:

—Jim Perry Fowler, son of Jim and Brenda Fowler of Paragould; and son-in-law of Roy Allen and Patricia Fowler of Mountain Home. His home church is Eastside Church of Paragould.

—Teresa Nadine Stephens, daughter of James C. and Sue Stephens of Dierks. Her home church is First Church, Dierks.

Receiving the master of arts in religious education was Michael Dean Sypult, son of Robert Sypult of Rogers and Melba Turner of Springdale; and son-in-law of Charles and Edith Dufford of Stuttgart. He is minister of music and youth at Trinity Church in Blytheville.

Receiving the associate of divinity degree were:

—James Ronald Blagrave, son of James Blagrave of Camden.

—H. Ray Burns, son of Harry R. Burns of Springdale, and Shirley Burns of Arlington, Texas. His home church is First Church, Springdale.



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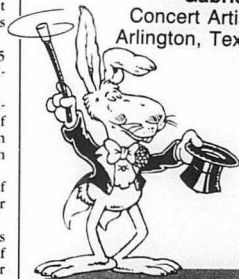
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YOUTH IN CRISIS: *Fifth of a Six-Part Series*

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by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Pornography.

For many, the word conjures up images of airbrushed centerfolds and sniggering adolescent boys, of racy magazines in Daddy's dresser drawer.

"Harmless enough," some say. "And certainly none of my business. After all, this is a free country."

But few Americans have seen the depravity of hard-core pornography or recognize its tentacles in mainstream American society, say some observers. And few parents understand the powerful influence pornography can have on an adolescent's developing attitudes toward human sexuality.

The problem with pornography is not just its visual images, but the ideas they represent and the impact those ideas have on American society, says David Steele, author of Arkansas' Youth Issues Institute material on pornography.

"The pornography crisis is a battle between competing philosophies," says Steele. "The basic issue in pornography is not pictures in a magazine or a movie, but what those pictures and movies teach about human sexuality and relationships between men and women."

What those images teach is that self-gratification is the purpose of sexual relationships and that other persons are objects used to obtain gratification, says Steele. Trust and respect between partners is replaced with exploitation, which further erodes the already-endangered family structure in American society.

Pornography poses a particular threat to teenagers precisely because young people are forming crucial attitudes in those areas, says Glen McGriff, director of the Arkansas Baptist Ministry of Crisis Support.

As a child passes through puberty and into adolescence, he is developing a set of values about the opposite sex and sexual relationships, McGriff says. If a young man chooses values which say that a woman is an object for his sexual gratification, rather than a partner in celebration of a God-given capacity, the stage is set for trauma of untold proportions.

Although researchers admit it is practically impossible to scientifically document the precise impact pornography has on individuals, there is a body of research which describes the impact of pornography when it is combined with violence.

In *Pornography: A Human Tragedy* (Tyndale House, 1986), Canadian

psychotherapist David A. Scott reports on research conducted at six U.S. and Canadian universities. Among other things, those studies indicated that:

— Exposure to milder forms of pornography leads people to tolerate it and desire more bizarre kinds.

— Persons exposed to massive doses of violent pornography, typified by R-rated "slasher" movies, develop a "resistance" to such movies and require increasingly greater doses of violence to experience the same stimulation.

— Persons who view large amounts of violent pornography are less sensitive to violence against women in general and tend to trivialize the crime of rape in particular.

— A minority of individuals are incited by pornography to reenact what they have seen depicted.

The fact that individuals can become obsessed with the sexual stimulation of pornography and can develop a resistance which drives them on to "harder" forms has led many mental health professionals to begin treating pornography problems like an addiction, says "Rev" Winans, clinical director for New Hope Institute, a psychiatric facility at Little Rock's Doctors Hospital. New Hope Institute employs Christian principles in the treatment of mental health problems.

"We are seeing sexual addiction programs being developed by national treatment centers all over the country," says Winans. "They treat obsession with pornography like any other addiction. Many of them have even adapted the 'Twelve Steps' of Alcoholics Anonymous as their model."

What these new clinical programs are addressing is not a problem that has only recently developed, Winans adds.

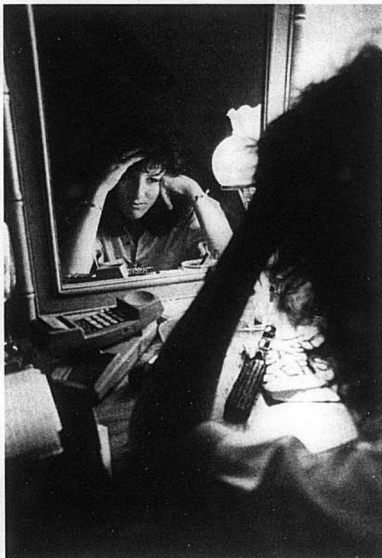
"Pornography addictions did not start just last year, when these programs began to open," he says. "Rather, they began 20 years ago when these adults were first exposed to pornography as teenagers. Somehow they came to equate sex with the distorted pornographic images and the pro-

blems gradually developed into serious psychiatric and inter-personal problems."

Winans points out that, while many teenagers who are exposed to pornography manage to adjust and go on to lead normal lives, others become obsessed with the material and develop an addiction. As the pornography addict is forced to seek more bizarre forms to maintain the level of stimulation, many begin to ask themselves whether acting out their fantasies might give them the thrill they seek.

That was the testimony of Ted Bundy, the infamous serial killer who was executed in January by officials at the Florida State Prison. He had confessed to raping and dismembering 28 women and was

Photo Illustration / Jim Veneman



suspected of other brutal murders.

On the day before his electrocution, Bundy was interviewed at length by psychologist James Dobson, president of the Christian ministry organization, "Focus on the Family."

Bundy's life story, recounted in a Dobson video, "Fatal Addiction," could be that of any Southern Baptist teenager. Raised by strict, churchgoing parents, his upbringing included all the traditional "don'ts" of Baptist life: smoking, drinking, dancing, etc.

Yet the convicted mass murderer told Dobson that his use of soft-core pornography and violent pornography during his early teens exposed a weakness in his personality. Despite the fact that, in all other respects, he grew up as the typical "boy next door," a secret obsession had taken root in his life, and it grew until it completely controlled a part of his personality.

Although Bundy did not blame his crimes completely on pornography, he did tell Dobson that pornography fueled a fantasy life that was constantly testing the barriers of restraint his parents had instilled in him. He said that violent pornography was the "indispensable link in the chain" which finally brought him to the point of acting out the hideous crimes he saw depicted in the material.

"Once a person becomes addicted to soft-core pornography, he keeps looking for more potent material," Bundy said. "But even hard-core pornography only goes so far, and eventually you reach a jumping off point where you begin to wonder if maybe actually doing what you have seen depicted will give you what is beyond just reading about it or looking at it."

Discussion of the pornography issue is hampered on many fronts in American society. To begin with, there are philosophical differences between those who espouse a traditional view of human relationships and morality and libertarians who talk about "sexual preferences" and "private acts between consenting adults." A society which cannot convince many of its members that homosexuality is not an acceptable, normal "lifestyle" should not expect any consensus that the pornographic view of human sexuality is unacceptable.

The problem is further compounded by a blurring of issues and confusion of terms. Apologists for pornography cry "censorship" when anti-porn activists picket an adult bookstore, even though censorship actually refers to preventing the publication, not the sale, of such material. And anti-porn activists confuse matters by referring to legal "soft-core" pornography as "obscenity," when that term actually applies only to the class of pornography which is illegal according to criteria set forth by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Perhaps the biggest hindrance to intelligent social discussion about pornography is the sheer ignorance of most people about the depravity of hard-core pornography.

"The average American has no idea what hard-core pornography is," says James Dobson in another video, "A Winnable War." "When you ask them to describe it, they will describe soft-core pornography, magazines like *Playboy* or *Penthouse*.

"But while those materials are pornographic, they are not illegal. Hard-core pornography is infinitely worse than the airbrushed nudity of soft-core pornography."

After apologizing for the bluntness of his description, Dobson recites a litany of perverse or criminal acts which are the staples of hard-core pornographic literature, among them homosexual violence; fetishes involving urination, defecation, and vomiting; and bestiality — humans engaged in sex acts with animals. He describes one series of photos which actually recorded the murder of a nine-year-old boy.

While Dobson labels such material "unbelievably gross," he nevertheless points out that it constitutes an \$8 billion a year industry in the U.S., one which feeds on the compulsions of helpless addicts.

The pornography crisis is a battle between competing philosophies. The basic issue in pornography is not pictures in a magazine or a movie, but what those pictures and movies teach about human sexuality and relationships between men and women.

But pornography is not limited to the deep depravities of hard-core material, says David Steele. In fact, if one understands pornography as any sexually explicit material which is intended to sexually arouse its audience, one can see pornographic influences in the mainstream of American society.

"The pornographic philosophy is all around us," explains Steele. "You can see it in movies and videos that are designed to stimulate the sexual interests of the viewers. You can see it in advertisements in newspapers and magazines and on billboards. And even though television shows may not be sexually explicit, there's no question that many of them purposely seek to arouse the viewer sexually. Even the new 'tabloid' TV shows exploit sexual themes under the guise of reporting about them."

The impact of these influences in society at large is to desensitize people to violence and exploitation, says Steele. "The longer the American public views these images, the more accepting they are of foul language and violence and explicit sex.

Their standards are lowered."

And lower standards lead to more explicit images, which in turn create a hunger for even more images built around sex and violence. And continued exposure to those images further desensitizes the viewer, who begins to look for more stimulating subject matter. Eventually an addict-in-the-making turns to hard-core material to satisfy his cravings.

It is a pattern that is repeated in one life after another, say counselors such as Glen McGriff. And it is a problem from which Christians, even the clergy, have not been exempted.

McGriff, whose clientele consists largely of Southern Baptist church staff members, says he encounters pornography obsessions in his counseling. Although only a small percentage of his clients have such problems, he says pornography addictions are "far more prevalent than many would think. I have known for a long time that pornography has greater influence in Christian lives than many are willing to admit."

Pornography finds its way into Christian lives in many ways, McGriff explains, but he says most often the addicted adult was first exposed to pornography during early adolescence. He says others deliberately introduced pornography into their marriage relationships in an effort to "spice up" a sexual relationship which had become routine.

"Without exception, pornography has a negative influence on an individual or a relationship," McGriff says. "It substitutes a picture of a woman for a real person, with the result that the person becomes even less attractive than before. It erodes the dignity and value of a woman when her mate turns to a picture for stimulation. It takes control of a person's life and destroys his personhood and freedom. It is always harmful."

And there is no easy solution once pornography has taken control of a life, McGriff observes.

"It's like other types of addictions or obsessive patterns," he says. "The pornography addict must withdraw. It involves pain and persistence. He has to recognize he has a problem, and he has to deliberately choose to be rid of it." Unfortunately, he adds, many are unwilling to give up their habit, in spite of the destruction it causes.

Therein lies the danger for teens, says David Steele. Given their heightened susceptibility to pornography, the easy availability of material, the long-term consequences of addiction, and the negative role models or indifference of parents, teenagers today are easily entrapped by pornography.

(continued on next page)

For most of them, the cost of their obsession will be high: a loss of personal dignity and control over their own lives, a distorted view of sex and relationships between men and women, and physical and emotional problems in relating to a marriage partner.

But for a handful of otherwise perfectly normal youngsters, a small number who are unusually vulnerable to pornography, the price will be even higher. Listen once again to the voice of Ted Bundy:

"I can only hope that (people) will believe what I am saying now: that there are loose in their towns today. . . people like me whose dangerous impulses are being fueled day in and day out by violence in the media, particularly sexual violence."

"They need to recognize that those of us who have been so much influenced by pornographic violence in the media are not some kind of inherent monsters. We are your sons and we are your husbands. We grew up in regular families, and por-

nography can reach out and snatch a kid out of any house today. It snatched me out of my home 30 years ago, as diligent as my parents were. . . . There is no protection against the kinds of influences that are rampant in our society."

Next Week: Sexual Choices

Teenage Pornography Abuse Resources

The following is a partial list of materials and organizations addressing the teenage pornography abuse issue. The list is not intended to be comprehensive, nor does it constitute an endorsement by the *Arkansas Baptist*.

"A Winnable War"
Focus on the Family, 1987

"Fatal Addiction"
Focus on the Family, 1989

Ministry with Youth in Crisis
Richard Ross and Judi Hayes, compilers
Convention Press, Nashville, 1988

Pornography: A Human Tragedy
Tom Minnery, editor
Tyndale House, Wheaton, Ill., 1986

"24-Hour Counselor"
Baptist Sunday School Board
Nashville, Tenn.

American Family Association
P.O. Drawer 2440
Tupelo, MS 38803
601-844-5036

The Bridgeway
501-771-1500
A 70-bed acute-care psychiatric hospital. Free evaluation and recommendations for four programs directed toward children, youth, and adults. Offers chemical dependency/dual diagnosis treatment.

Charter Vista Hospital
501-521-5731; 1-800-545-HOPE
A 65-bed private hospital located in Fayetteville. Provides detoxification and psychiatric services to adults and adolescents. New children's emotional and

behavioral program. Follow-up "After-Care" provides group and family counseling. Outpatient services provided through Charter Counseling Centers in Fayetteville (521-1616) and Rogers (631-6907).

Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas
501-568-0448

Private, non-profit educational organization which addresses problems of drug and alcohol abuse and pornography. Monitors related legislation in General Assembly. Provides resources for community groups interested in local action.

Citizens for Decency through Law
11000 Scottsdale Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85254
602-381-1322

Focus on the Family
Pomona, CA 91799
714-620-8500

GAIN Early Intervention Program
Family Service Agency
501-758-1516

Private, non-profit organization offering counseling and educational services to strengthen and enrich family life in Pulaski, Prairie, Lonoke, and Saline counties. GAIN is a family educational series providing drug and alcohol information to lower the risk of abuse. Will lead workshop locally or train instructors at no charge. Available in other counties; call 501-682-6660 for information.

Minirth-Meier-Rice Clinic
501-225-0576

An outpatient clinic providing Christian medical and psychiatric counseling and therapy. Programs for individual and family counseling, group therapy, as well as educational programs and resources.

Morality in Media
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115
212-870-3222

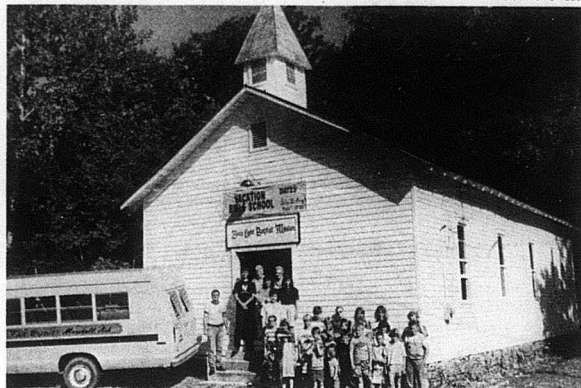
National Coalition Against Pornography
800 Compton Road, Suite 9224
Cincinnati, OH 45231
513-521-6227

New Hope Institute
501-663-4673; 1-800-343-6571
A 28-bed inpatient Christian psychiatric program located at Doctor's Hospital in Little Rock. Adolescents treated on an outpatient basis or through other facilities. Evaluation and referral for hospital care and outpatient services.

New Life Counseling Service
501-664-3010
A private mental health group providing outpatient counseling and crisis intervention. Christian program for individual and family counseling and group therapy.

Teen Challenge
501-624-2446
A private, non-profit program for persons with "life-controlling problems." Fourteen-month intensive discipleship process directed toward applying biblical principles to problem areas. "Turning Point" program trains leaders to use principles in congregation.

Turning Point
501-370-1360
A behavioral unit located at Children's Hospital in Little Rock. Providing short-term inpatient care, followed by continuing outpatient care. Free assessment and recommendation offered 24 hours a day.



Zion Light Mission hopes its VBS will extend enthusiasm.

Sunday School Mission

by J. Everett Sneed

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

First Church, Marshall, is sponsoring a mission Sunday School at Duff, which is near Marshall off Highway 65. Members of the Marshall Church are teaching a mission Sunday School class each Sunday morning and recently conducted a Bible School in a church building which has been in the community for many years.

Several years ago, the Duff Baptist Church was disbanded and gave the property to the North Arkansas Association. Members of First Church, Marshall, recently have repainted the building and reinstalled electricity.

First Church, Marshall, began discussing the possibility of having a mission at Duff in February of this year. Royce Christmas, then pastor of First Church, Marshall, encouraged the congregation to conduct a survey to determine the interest at Duff. The religious census was taken in February and Buck Mays III, director of the Duff Mission, said, "There was a good response and it appeared that there was sufficient interest for the mission in the community."

The first service of Zion Light Baptist Mission was held on Mother's Day, May 14. The attendance for the mission Sunday School has run from seven to 20. Currently the workers are conducting the Sunday School classes from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. each Sunday. This allows the workers to return for the morning worship at Marshall.

A Vacation Bible School was held July 31-Aug. 4. First Church, Marshall, provid-

ed a bus to pick up children from the Gilbert and St. Joe communities. Mrs. Buck (Vicky) Mays served as the principal of the Bible School. On Monday, 22 children were in attendance. By the end of the week 31 children had enrolled in the school. Buck Mays observed, "The children enjoyed the Vacation Bible School greatly. It is our hope that the VBS will help develop attendance and enthusiasm in the mission."

Immediate plans include obtaining of bus so children can be picked up for the mission Sunday School each Sunday. Mays said, "This work may never hold the potential of becoming a church. But individuals who will not come to our church or any other church will be brought under the teaching of God's word."

Dickson Rial

former pastor in DeWitt, McGehee, and Benton, celebrates his 10th anniversary at Hillcrest Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, on September 3, 1989.

All former members and staff invited. Call church office for more information:
214-330-0323.

50-Year Celebration

L.C. Hoff, retired pastor of Bayou Mason Baptist Church in Lake Village, will celebrate 50 years of gospel ministry in September.

A native of Mississippi, Hoff pastored the Bayou Mason Church from 1970 to 1983. Prior to that tenure, he served seven years as pastor of the Eudora Church. His previous experience also included seven congregations and a part-time chaplaincy in Mississippi.



Hoff

Hoff was ordained by the Pearlhaven (Miss.) Baptist Church in September 1939. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

His denominational experience includes a variety of associational and state convention positions in both Mississippi and Arkansas. He has been moderator of the the Delta Association and presently chairs that association's stewardship committee. He has directed the Wolfe Creek children's camp for the past six years.

He is married to the former Jewel Pierce; they have two sons and five grandchildren.

A reception will be held in honor of Hoff at 2 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 3, at the Bayou Mason Church.

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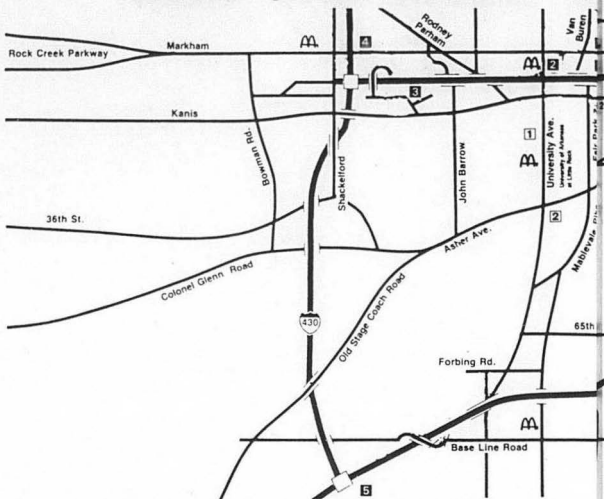
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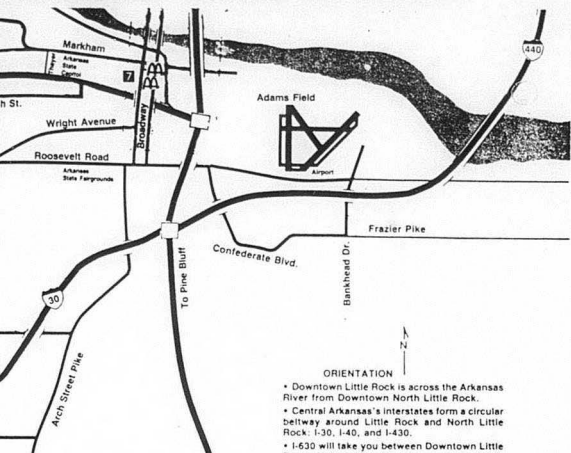
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- 2 - Guesthouse Inn
- 3 - Plaza Hotel
- 4 - Days Inn, West
- 5 - Holiday Inn, Otter Creek
- 6 - Red Roof Inn
- 7 - Radisson Legacy Hotel
- 8 - Markham Inn
- 9 - Colaianni Piano & Organ
- 10 - Casa Bonita
- 11 - McDonald's

ORIENTATION

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- Central Arkansas's interstates form a circular beltway around Little Rock and North Little Rock: I-30, I-40, and I-430.
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September Events

by Don Moore
 ABCS Executive Director

Proud of September opportunities!

Glancing over the materials related to what our Executive Board leadership will be offering our churches in September makes me very proud. The Bylaws of the Executive Board has a purpose statement that leaves little doubt about what our assignment is. We are "to assist the churches. . . ." This is our singular purpose. This is our commitment. We thank God for the churches who do let us help. We wish more pastors and churches would take advantage of the increasingly effective activities our people are providing. My difficulty is in selecting what will be highlighted here. I do it basically by the number of people the event may apply to and also by whether it is a priority emphasis.



Take a look at these—You and your church can increase your effectiveness and expand your vision through the enlightenment and excitement these events offer.

Bivocational and Small Church Evangelism Conferences—Many of these cannot attend our annual Evangelism Conference. So, we are taking the conference to them. Everything will be designed to inspire and equip this large group of churches and church leaders. Half of our churches have 53 or less in attendance each Sunday in Sunday School.

First Church, Murphreesboro; Second Church, Monticello; and Pine Tree Church, Colt, will be the locations. Sept. 11, 12 and 14 are the dates. An unusually effective speaker has been secured for you.

State Sunday School Conference (Convention)—This has come to be our largest state meeting. Record breaking crowds and limited seating, even in our largest church in Central Arkansas, has caused us to have to make some changes. Yet, the finest help available will be brought to our Sunday School leadership in the 40 conferences being offered. These are offered variously; some by age group, some by literature used, some on the basis of size of church, some on the basis of experience. Everything you could hope to find in an exciting Sunday School growth experience will be here for you.

Make your way to Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock, Sept. 29-30. It

begins at 6:50 p.m. on Friday and concludes at noon on Saturday. This schedule is followed so that more employed people can participate. Pastors, this is a must for you!

Arkansas—A Mission Field! Yes it is! We all know it. But, we do not all know what Arkansas Baptists through the Missions Department and mission organizations are doing to try to reach our state. Baptists will not pray for nor support the unknown. Who should help them know? I believe the pastor should enlist the help of the WMU, if he has one, in leading the church to have an emphasis on state missions for the entire church. If he does not have a WMU, he could get the materials and do it himself. Even one service with the right information and prayer could result in strengthening the support of state missions. The Dixie Jackson Mission Offering should follow. This offering is the primary source of funds for helping churches and associations start new missions. "Church Arkansas" will forge ahead or substantially stop on the basis of the Dixie Jackson Offering. A record number of churches took the offering last year. Perhaps every church will this year. The goal is \$550,000. Contact our Missions Dept. or WMU office if you need materials.

Church Arkansas Rallies—We believe in evangelism that results in churches, and churches that believe in evangelism. It is happening in Church Arkansas! Churches are unselfishly reaching out to pockets of people they can't reach and establishing mission points through which they can be reached. "Church Arkansas" may be the most New Testament activity going on in Arkansas. The book of Acts is filled with the record of churches sending our people who started churches everywhere they went.

Two rallies are scheduled to bring these happy groups together—the sponsors, the missions people, and the new converts. Those churches considering sponsoring or co-sponsoring missions should also attend.

The rallies are at Elmdale Church, Springdale, on Sept. 5, and First Church, Jonesboro, on Sept. 7. The Springdale rally begins at 7 p.m. with Harvey Kneisel, Houston, Texas, as speaker. The Jonesboro rally begins at 7:30 p.m. with Jack Redford, Cisco, Texas, as speaker.

Baptist Youth Day—This annual event has come to be one of the great events of the year for thousands of our youth. It's our way of helping churches provide a special time of fun, fellowship and inspiration for youth from over the state.

Special speakers and outstanding musicians are enlisted who can communicate with youth. They will be challenged. Many will be saved. It all happens at Magic Springs! It happens on Sept. 9, between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. The August *Vision* has a pull-out poster with all of the information.

WMU IMPACT Meetings have been scheduled in eight areas of the state in September. The idea is to get the best training possible as close as possible to all of our local church WMU leaders. The September training will prepare leadership and start off the new year in October with great enthusiasm and new excitement. The times and locations have been published in the last issue of *Vision*. Call 376-4791 for more information is needed. Do your best to get your leadership out for this. Our state leaders will be giving you their very best.

Pastoral Aid pastors and wives will enjoy a time of study and fellowship Sept. 15-16 at the Mather Lodge, Petit Jean State Park. These who work faithfully in small, struggling situations will be renewed in spirit from the time spent together. Call Jack Ramsey, if you have not already let him know of your intentions to be in attendance.

Fall Campers on Mission will rally Sept. 7-10 at Petit Jean State Park. The meeting begins with the evening meal on Sept. 7. A good spirit of fellowship and ministry is developing with our people who are Campers on Mission.

October Alert—Hold Oct. 27 for the Guatemala/Arkansas Partnership Rally. Dr. Keith Parks from our Foreign Mission Board, and Dr. Joe Bruce, area director for Middle America, will speak. The meeting will be at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Oct. 27, at Immanuel Church, Little Rock.

Church Music Youth Choir Workshop

Music ministers indicate that the youth choir ministry is one of the greatest challenges facing their ministry today.

The day when you announced you were going to do a musical and the youth came running is past in most cases. The challenge to entice youth into the music program is more complex than ever before due to the demands placed upon their time.



Ennes

This challenge requires the music minister to be more creative and innovative, perhaps even to be more concerned about the vocal development of that young person who may even stop singing as he or she approaches the adolescent years and there is no one to help guide them through the physical changes that they are not capable of understanding on their own. This becomes the true fulfillment of ministry.

The Church Music Departments of OBU and ABCS are uniting to provide a Youth Choir Workshop, Sept. 25-26 at OBU, to help meet the ministry needs of youth.

Program personalities are: Dr. Wesley Coffman, Hardin-Simons University, authority on the adolescent voice; Jim Hawkins, Youth/Adult Division, BSSB; Lynn Madden, minister of music, Immanuel Church, Little Rock; and Charles Vance, minister of music, Beech Street Church, Texarkana. Host Coordinator is Dr. Craig Hodges, school of church music, OBU.

The workshop will include: reading sessions of youth music, understanding the adolescent voice, planning and preparation for the youth choir, individual and group demonstration lab, promotion and publicity, the youth ensemble, and successful music selections.

Registration and fee information is available through OBU or the ABCS Church Music Department.—**Glen E. Ennes, associate**

Brotherhood

Needs In Michigan

Immanuel Church of Forrest City sent a work team to Michigan. They were surprised to find that American Baptists had their last revival in that city with Billy Sunday. One of the men testified that being there on mission was just a little touch of heaven. He said "I work out in the public and hear cursing all of the time. A wonderful sweet spirit replaced it among the 10 men that went." Another said "If you have a coldness in your church, try doing missions." The total impact of these men was that there is nothing quite like going out, being involved and doing mission work somewhere.

Michigan continues to be a challenge to local church teams or for associational construction teams. Recently Carol Fowler, an Arkansan who is church extension director for Michigan Baptists, shared these needs for 1989-90.

(1) Houghton Lake Southern Baptist Church will be adding to their existing building with an auditorium, 42 by 54 feet. Houghton Lake is located in northern Michigan.

(2) Community Baptist Church is located at Hillman, Mich., also in northern lower Michigan. They have outgrown their building. They have the opportunity to build a new parsonage and church building. They need block layers, as well as carpenters.

(3) Shilo Baptist Church is a black

Southern Baptist Church in Pontiac. We need at least three groups to help with this project.

(4) Raisinville Baptist Church in southern Michigan will be building. They need a finishing crew.

(5) Temple of Faith needs one group to prepare an existing building for trusses and to put the trusses in place. Temple of Faith is a black congregation and is located in the greater Detroit area.

(6) We have a small church in southern Michigan in need of a group to roof a building.

(7) Trinity Baptist Church in Adrian, Michigan, needs two groups to complete their building. Adrian is in southeast Michigan.

If your church can help you can get more information from Ed Greathouse through the state Brotherhood office.—**Glen Grober, director**

Stewardship/Annuity Annuity Board Offers Plans

Effective Sept. 1, 1989, the Annuity Board will offer four new insurance products for churches to protect church employees.

ChurchLife Premium Plus Plan provides up to \$100,000 of term insurance with up to \$200,000 in case of accidental death. The plan also includes \$5,000 for a spouse and each dependent child. Up to \$20,000 of post-retirement coverage is a part of ChurchLife Premium Plus.

The ChurchLife Pure Term Plan offers up to \$100,000 in term life insurance.

ChurchLife Economy Plan provides up to \$50,000 in term life insurance and up to \$100,000 in the event of a fatal accident. The Economy Plan includes \$5,000 for a spouse and each dependent child. Up to \$10,000 can be built-up for post-retirement coverage.

ChurchLife Budget Plan is the minimum plan offered by the Annuity Board and is required for medical and disability coverage in the Church Insurance Program. The Budget Plan offers \$10,000 of term life coverage.

All plans provide for waiver of premium if the insured becomes totally disabled and unable to work before age 60.

The rates are competitive on all ChurchLife Plans. Contact your state representative or 1-800-262-0511 for more information.—**James A. Walker, annuity representative**

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Two area Saturday workshops are planned this fall, besides the retreat at Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, for your convenience. In the south is the workshop at First Church, Smackover, on Oct. 7 and in the northwest the workshop is at Lakeview Church, Cave Springs, on Oct. 28. The workshops will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 3:30 p.m.

We'll do our very best to provide assistance in worship planning, selecting new music for your choir, sharing creative ideas for congregational singing, helping the accompanist to develop their hymn playing, selecting offertory music, accompany the choir, and we'll even talk about the combined children's choir.

There is no registration fee but we need to know in who you will attend for we want you to be our guest for lunch. Join us at the one closest to you.

Contact the Church Music Department to register and for more information at 376-4791.—Glen E. Ennes, associate

Church Media Library Church Library and a New Law

A new Arkansas law that is designed to provide confidentiality for patrons of libraries has raised some questions for church media library workers. A public library cannot, by law, disclose information about resources a library patron uses.

Recent news reports describing the new law's effect on library staffs have caught the attention of many church media library staff workers. "Does the law apply to church media libraries and what changes do we have to make in our check-out system?" is the question library workers are trying to answer.



Jackson

As a general rule, the law does not affect the church media library. The law does require libraries funded wholly or in part by public funds to provide confidentiality for persons borrowing library resources. An employee of the Arkansas Attorney General's Office told this writer the key is "funded by public funds" and that church media libraries funded by church contributions are not affected by the law.

Direct any question about your media library and the new law to the Arkansas Attorney General's office at 682-2007.—Gerald Jackson, associate

Evangelism Why Conduct Here's Hope?

Dr. C. E. Matthews was the human instrument that God used to institute simultaneous revivals in Southern Baptist churches. Dr. Matthews, who served as director of evangelism for the Home Mission Board, had a deep concern for lost souls and a burning conviction that we must reach them for salvation in Christ. He stated, "The only method in evangelism we believe is absolutely adequate for this hour is the simultaneous method. This is a reference to both the mass and personal approaches to evangelism."

A simultaneous revival is one in which all the churches of like faith and conviction



Shell

in a given association, city, or state enter into a revival beginning on the same day and closing together.

History records that the greatest year of blessings in baptisms that Arkansas Baptists have experienced was in 1950. There were 16,337 baptized and it still stands as a record. It is more amazing when you recall that the 1949 total membership of Arkansas Baptists was 218,514. This was a ratio of 13-1 in baptisms. This record is stated because 1950 was the first statewide simultaneous revival in Arkansas.

Dr. C. E. Matthews stated then, and it's still accepted now, the following reasons for a simultaneous effort:

(1) It is a concerted effort, all the churches in a given territory doing the same thing at the same time.

(2) It is church centered. The revival is conducted in the local church and employs all the church's agencies. It strengthens every phase of local church work and makes possible conservation of resources.

(3) If properly directed, it will command the attention of saint and sinner.

(4) It fixes responsibility with individuals and churches.

(5) The simultaneous method leaves the prospect without excuse.

(6) It gives every church, large or small, the same assistance and direction in leadership.

(7) It enables any church, regardless of size, to have at least one revival during the year of emphasis.

(8) The revival crusade, properly conducted, is the answer to the problems of churches making an annual report of no baptisms.

The Arkansas date for Here's Hope is March 18-April 8, 1990. Has your church voted to participate?—Clarence Shell, director

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Looking Ahead

September

- 5 Church Arkansas Rally, *Springdale Elmdale Church (Mn)*
- 7 Church Arkansas Rally, *Jonesboro First Church (Mn)*
- 7 IMPACT '89, *North Little Rock Central Church (WMU)*
- 7-10 Fall Campers on Missions Rally, *Petit Jean State Park (Mn)*
- 8 Furloughing Missionaries Orientation, *Baptist Building (SA)*
- 9 Baptist Youth Day, *Magic Springs, Hot Springs (CT)*
- 11 IMPACT '89, *Texarkana Trinity Church (WMU)*
- 11 Bi-Vocational and Small Church Evangelism Conference, *Murfreesboro First Church (Ev)*
- 12 IMPACT '89, *El Dorado First Church (WMU)*
- 12 Bi-Vocational and Small Church Evangelism Conference, *Monticello Second Church (Ev)*
- 13 IMPACT '89, *El Dorado First Church (WMU)*
- 14 IMPACT '89, *Pine Bluff Immanuel Church (WMU)*
- 14 Bi-vocational and Small Church Evangelism Conference, *Colt Pine Tree Church (Ev)*
- 15-16 Adult Campercraft and HSBYM Certification, *Spring Lake, Benton (Bbd)*
- 15-16 CPA Pastors and Wives Retreat, *Mather Lodge, Petit Jean State Park (Mn)*
- 17-24 Season of Prayer for State Missions (*WMU/Mn*)
- 25 IMPACT '89, *West Memphis First Church (WMU)*
- 25-26 Church Music Conference—Youth Emphasis, *Ouachita Baptist University (M)*
- 26-27 IMPACT '89, *Jonesboro First Church (WMU)*
- 29-30 State Sunday School Conference, *Little Rock Geyer Springs First Church (SS)*

October

- 2-5 National CWT Seminar, *Little Rock South Highland Church (Ev)*
- 6-7 Church Recreator's Retreat, (*CT*)
- 6-8 Baptist Student Convention, *Hot Springs First Church (BSU)*
- 7 Volunteer/Part Time Music Leader Workshop, *Smackover First Church (Mu)*
- 7 Northeast Arkansas Small Sunday School Workshop, *Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge (SS)*
- 7-14 Arkansas Senior Adult Chautauqua *Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center (CT)*
- 9-13 Associational Meetings (Assns.)
- 13-14 Tri-State Camp-o-ree, *Memphis (Bbd)*
- 16-20 Associational Meetings, (Assns)
- 19-20 Music Men/Singing Women Retreat, *Ouachita Baptist University (Mu)*
- 19-20 Baptist Women Retreat, *Camp Paron (WMU)*
- 20-21 Baptist Women Retreat, *Camp Paron (WMU)*
- 23-24 State Conference on Discipleship, *North Little Rock Park Hill Church (CT)*
- 27 World Mission Rally, *Little Rock Immanuel Church (Bbd)*
- 28 Volunteer/Part-Time Music Leader Workshop, *Cave Springs Lakeview Church (Mu)*

November

- 2-3 Baptist Men's Prayer Retreat, *Camp Paron (Bbd)*
- 4 State Keyboard Clinic, *Little Rock Calvary Church (Mu)*
- 13 Pastors' Conference, *Little Rock First Church*
- 13 Ministers' Wives Conference, *Little Rock First Church*

- 13 ABREA Meeting, *Little Rock First Church*
- 14-15 Arkansas Baptist State Convention, *Little Rock First Church*
- 17-19 International Student Conference, *Camp Paron (BSU)*
- 19-22 Foreign Mission Study (*WMU*)
- 27 "M" Night (*CT*)
- 27-Dec. 1 Church Building Tour (*SS*)
- 30 State January Bible Study Clinic, *Baptist Building (SS)*

December

- 3-10 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, *Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (WMU/FMB)*
- 4-5 Career Assessment, *Baptist Building (CT)*
- 4 Tax Seminar, *Little Rock Baptist Medical Center (SA)*
- 5 Tax Seminar, *Fort Smith Grand Avenue Church (SA)*
- 6 Tax Seminar, *Jonesboro First Church (SA)*
- 7-8 Evangelism Workshop, *Camp Paron (Ev)*
- 28-29 Joy Explo '89, *Hot Springs Convention Center (Ev)*
- 28-29 All-State Youth Band and Choir, *Hot Springs Convention Center (Mu)*

Abbreviations:

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

A SMILE OR TWO

The scientific theory I like best is that the rings of Saturn are composed entirely of lost airline luggage. —Mark Russell

When any calamity has been suffered, the first thing to be remembered is how much has been escaped.

—Samuel Johnson

Closer Scrutiny

FMB Trustees Reopen Pennington Discussion

by Marty Coll

SBC Foreign Mission Board

ROCKVILLE, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees in their August meeting cleared the way for requiring the agency's staff to scrutinize prospective missionaries' beliefs more closely.

Also during their three-day meeting near Richmond, Va., trustees revived the possibility Greg and Katrina Pennington eventually could be appointed as foreign missionaries; divided \$2.4 million of the 1988 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering funds among four regions of the world and allocated \$3.8 million to be used strategically as global priorities dictate; and appointed 24 new missionaries.

After consideration, trustees voted to accept a joint trustee-staff study committee's proposal, which emphasizes more trustee control over the staff-implemented process of missionary selection. But they stopped short of deciding to have trustees routinely interview missionary candidates about their theological beliefs.

At present, board employees known as candidate consultants interview missionary candidates and lead them through the appointment process. Other staff members review candidates' files, both independently and with trustee subcommittees. Not until the week of their appointment do candidates routinely meet trustees, however, although trustees are encouraged to make contact with candidates in their states.

Trustees considered suggestions that they

personally interview candidates proposing to teach theology overseas as one way to ensure appointees believe the Bible and are able to communicate their belief. But they instead adopted language encouraging trustees to trust the staff to identify specific, predetermined parameters of belief among candidates.

The Penningtons, rejected for missionary appointment by a trustee subcommittee June 27, said in a prepared statement from their home in Ardmore, Okla., "We are delighted the door is still open for us to serve as missionaries."

The same subcommittee, after closed sessions, issued a statement Aug. 8 intended to dispel what trustee spokesmen called "inaccurate information" surrounding the rejection of the two ordained staff members of Northwest Church in Ardmore.

The statement, affirmed unanimously in a board action the next day, "keeps the door open" for what might lead to eventual reconsideration by the subcommittee

of the Penningtons' application for missionary service, according to trustee Chairman C. Mark Cortis of Winston-Salem, N.C., and subcommittee Chairman Paul Sanders of Little Rock, Ark.

The trustees' rejection of the Penningtons led to at least four resignations from the board's development council, which helps raise funds for the agency. It also resulted in more than 300 letters mailed to board leaders. Virtually all the letters protested the subcommittee action.

The same subcommittee has approved two other ordained women during the past two years and actually based its decision about the Penningtons on the view that the couple had not handled her ordination in the most redemptive way, Cortis said.

Trustee action on the Lottie Moon funds was required because Southern Baptists gave 12.5 percent more in 1988 than in 1987. After budgeting for receipts of \$72.5 million, the board received nearly \$78.8 million. The board also allocated the final \$755,000 of the Lottie Moon funds that had been built into its 1989 budget.

Trustees approved 24 missionary appointees to work in 10 countries on five continents.

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Dr. Bill Bennet, Pastor
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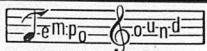
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Staff Positions Cut

by Mark Wingfield
SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—Faced with an \$8.2 million cut in 1989 expenditures, trustees of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board have voted to eliminate 28 positions from its national staff.

While 15 of the positions are vacant, 13 employees will be affected directly by the reduction. Of those 13, eight will be transferred to other board positions and five have no other assignments.

The 28 positions were deleted from about 380 positions for staff, national missionaries and national consultants. No field missionaries cooperatively funded with Baptist state conventions are affected, said board President Larry Lewis.

At the March 1989 board meeting, Lewis announced plans to trim the agency's 1989 budget by 9.69 percent or \$8.2 million, to bring expenditures in line with projected income for 1989 and 1990.

Since that meeting, the Atlanta staff's operating budget has been cut \$5.8 million, and cooperative agreements with state conventions have been trimmed about \$700,000. At the August meeting, Lewis said proposing the staff reduction was a last step in the budget cutting process and "the most painful of all."

Lewis said he felt it was "miraculous" that 28 positions had been cut and only five

people did not have a place to go.

The board is deeply concerned about those five and will try to help them find a place of employment, he added. The board's human resources division has been assigned to assist employees who are leaving the board.

Among employees affected by the staff reduction is Floyd Tidsworth, associate vice president of the extension section and former director of church extension for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Tidsworth's position was suspended and he has been transferred to the new church

extension division as director.

Trustees also voted to become more personally involved in recommending future personnel. The adoption of a recommendation that board members be sent "reference forms" on individuals from their states being considered as missionaries, board staff and chaplains moved the trustees a step closer in the hiring process.

As of Aug. 4, gifts through the Annie Armstrong Offering had reached \$30.5 million, an increase of \$2.2 million, or 8 percent, over the amount received by the same date in 1988. Board Executive Vice President Bob Banks said that historically, the board receives 92 percent of the offering by August.

Two Couples Appointed

ATLANTA—Two couples with Arkansas ties were among 69 people recently appointed to mission service by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Mountain Home natives Perry and Janice Fowler will live in Charlevoix, Mich., where he will serve as church planter, and she will be a family and church worker.

The son of Jim and Brenda Fowler of Paragould, Fowler is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is currently minister of youth and music at First Church,

Throckmorton, Texas.

The daughter of Roy and Patricia Fowler of Mountain Home, Mrs. Fowler is a graduate of the University of Texas in Arlington.

Howard and Marge Murray will live in Rockford, Ill., where he will serve as director of missions for the Blackhawk Association, and she will be a family and church worker. She is a Bowman native.

The daughter of Willie and Thelma Seay of Batesville, Mrs. Murray is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Seminary. The Murrays have two children.

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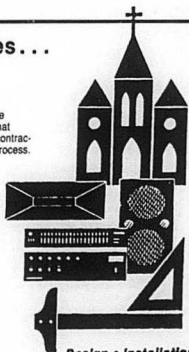
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'Unprecedented'

Trustees Also Approve Reorganization, Adopt Budget

by Al Shackelford
Baptist Press

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—In an unprecedented action, trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board have given administrative control of one of its publications to a non-employee.

During their August board meeting at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center, trustees directed the student ministry department to publish an addition to the "Baptist Student Ministry Guidebook" and named Max Barnett of Norman, Okla., as managing editor.

Barnett, director of the Baptist Student Union at the University of Oklahoma, will approve any writers and a field consultant to implement an evangelistic and discipleship approach to student ministry.

The action marks the first time a non-employee has been given authority to exercise total editorial control over a publication. Barnett is an employee of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

In the February 1989 meeting of the board's church program and services committee, trustee Floyd E. Hughes of Caledonia, Mich., distributed "A List of Concerns" about Baptist Student Union he said had been prepared by six fulltime BSU directors. Some of the 10 concerns related to claims evangelism and discipleship need a higher priority in student work.

The SSB administration was asked to respond to the concerns. Their response, presented during the board meeting, made no recommendations.

After hearing the staff response, Hughes made a motion to name Barnett as the managing editor of the book, with authority to approve writers and name a field consultant to implement the new approach. The motion also directed that the consultant be paid by the Sunday School Board's student ministry department.

Biographical information on Barnett was not presented to trustees. Barnett, a native of Texas, has been BSU director at the University of Oklahoma since 1967.

During board discussion, Don Dilday, director of missions in Conroe, Texas, moved to postpone a vote until the board's February meeting. "I do not want us to set a precedent. We need to involve our administration in employment," he said.

The motion to postpone was opposed by Larry Holly, a physician from Beaumont, Tex., and by Dan Collins, an attorney from Taylors, S.C. The motion was defeated and the committee's recommendation passed on a voice vote with some opposition.

During the meeting, trustees also created a new office of marketing and distribution and elected as vice-president Jimmy D. Edwards, formerly vice-president for church programs and services. The new office will

include the present book store division, a new marketing division, and a distribution services division.

A 1989-90 budget of \$183,694,000 also was approved, representing an increase of 6.9 percent over projected income for 1988-89.

An 18.7 percent increase in income over the previous year was reported for the Baptist Telecommunication Network. The number of new subscribers totaled 250.

Trustees also voted to discontinue *The Quarterly Review* magazine. The annual handbook issue which contains historical and demographic information about the convention, will continue.

CLC Hires D.C. Staffer

NASHVILLE (BP)—James A. Smith, an employee of the U.S. House of Representatives Republican Study Committee, has been hired as the first full-time staff member of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's Washington office.

Smith, 24, will work with members of Congress and other government leaders on legislation and other matters relating to the program assignment of the Christian Life Commission, said Richard D. Land, CLC executive director.

Smith will be assistant director of the Washington office. "As funds are available, we plan to expand our staff by adding a person with doctoral-level credentials as associate director in charge of the Washington office," Land said.

"In the interim," Land said, "Larry Braidfoot, the CLC's general counsel and the staff person who has most often represented the CLC in Washington in past months, will continue to work closely with the Washington office, as will other Nashville-based staff."

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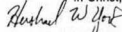
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Convention Uniform

Hope for the Home

by Dennis W. Swanberg, Second Church, Hot Springs

Basic passage: Ruth 4:1-22

Focal passage: Ruth 4:9-17

Central truth: Hope is found in a daily walk of faith that strives to fulfill God's eternal plan.

Ruth's life was filled with despair and detours—nevertheless, she saw hope fulfilled in her life. Even when she turned away from Moab, without a husband or family, she saw the grace of God in her relationship with her mother-in-law. God revealed to her that her love and service would be with her existing family. Therefore, she committed her life to Naomi. But out of commitment comes the reality for hope—and we see here in this text, the hope of a home. We see clearly that the hope for Ruth and Naomi would come from a person—the person of Boaz. Such is the case with our loving Lord, for we see our ultimate hope in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God, in his gracious activity, provided Naomi and Ruth with a personal redeemer. Boaz would be the solution to Naomi and Ruth's financial and emotional struggles. God has a way of arranging circumstances to bring about his perfect plan; he is in control.

Ruth and Boaz were married, and through their marriage came a blessing of God, Obed (which means "servant"), their precious son. He would be a servant to Naomi as she grew older, and in time, the lineage of Obed would include King David and ultimately the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ.

Ruth and Boaz demonstrate a love story that is commensurate to the love and commitment of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our hope for the family and family of faith. God is in control, therefore, we need to yield to him so that his hope will be our hope. He offers hope to a lost world. He alone has the ability to restore a sinner to himself. He alone cares for the hurting people of this world. He loves each one of us with an everlasting love. He loves us individually and collectively. Just as he loved Naomi, Ruth and Boaz and brought blessing and joy to their lives, such is his desire for you and me. His love was clearly demonstrated at the cross where he gave his own Son so that we might be one with him.

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Life and Work

The Pursuit of Wisdom

by David Moore, Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Proverbs 2:6,9-12; 3:13-18; 9:10-12

Focal passage: Proverbs 2:6,9-12; 3:13-15; 9:10-11

Central truth: God gives wisdom for our earthly lives.

The writer of Proverbs seeks to address the training of a son. The book is a collection of moral and spiritual truths in the form of sayings and statements of probability. In the early chapters, Solomon glorifies and personifies wisdom as a chief end of life for his son.

Wisdom is learned. The son is wise if he will listen and learn from his father. Wisdom brings pleasure. Life will go much smoother and easier for one who acts according to wisdom. Pleasure can be the result of gained good or the result of prevented bad.

Yet it is clear in the mind of this wise man that God is the true source of wisdom. God ultimately gives insight and understanding. God may choose to use human instrumentality, e.g. parents, to convey his will. God deserves all the credit, however.

When contrasted with worldly things (Pr. 3:14-15), wisdom is again exalted. If you were given a choice of riches or wisdom, which would you prefer? Our newspapers remind us often of the deceit of riches. Would you rather have a great portfolio or a good name?

Sadly, it seems today that most prefer the riches. We have been trapped into thinking that the world offers us wisdom in the form of an "almighty" dollar bill. Yet the wise man tells us clearly that wisdom is far greater than silver, gold, or jewels.

We are told in Scripture that if we lack wisdom, we should ask God for it (Ja. 1:5). After all, God is the source of wisdom; and the reverence of God is required of one who desires to be wise (Pr. 9:10).

The writer is so convinced as to the importance of wisdom that he tells us that wisdom will add years to our lives. If then wisdom adds pleasure, understanding, and years to our lives, each of us should make it a lifelong pursuit to seek wisdom in our daily lives.

As a father longs to teach his son the great lessons of life, so God longs to give to us, his children, the wisdom we need for our daily lives.

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Bible Book

God's Called Leaders

by Robert O. Pruett, University Church, Fayetteville

Basic passage: Numbers 1:1 to 21:35

Focal passage: Numbers 16:1-3,28-32; 18:19,26

Central truth: God's called leaders are called by God, sustained by God, and upheld by God.

This lesson gives us a more in-depth look than last week's lesson on how God directs his leaders. In this instance there were those who were attempting to overthrow God's leadership completely.

Perhaps you have asked: "Why should I follow a man who has set himself up as a pastor or staff member? We believe in the 'priesthood of the believer,' which declares the equality of all people. What does my pastor have to say that is more important than what I have to say?" This was the concept of the camp of Korah.

Korah along with Dathan and Abiram tried to overthrow Moses. They maintained that they had as much right to be a leader as did Moses.

No one has the right to appoint themselves as a "called man of God." Moses resisted God's call. When God calls, an individual must respond or be miserable. Jonah attempted to run from God's call, but found himself unable to do anything but respond to God. Some of the most miserable people on earth are those who have resisted God's call.

God is the one who extends the call and sustains those whom he has called. People should refrain from passing judgment on those whom God has called. Sometimes individuals resistance to the leadership of God's call is based on jealousy.

Sometimes it is difficult for people to distinguish between God-called leaders and those who are self-appointed. The Sunday School lesson illustrates for us that self-appointed leaders do things which are not in keeping with God's will. God-called leaders, such as Moses, strive to follow the leadership of God.

The lesson concludes by emphasizing the sustaining grace of God for those whom he has called. God provides for all those who serve in his tabernacle. God emphasized the permanence of this promise as he said, "It is a covenant of Saul forever before the Lord" (Nu. 18:19). Our prayer is that we will follow and support those whom God has called to lead us.

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Convention Uniform

God Is Always There

by D.C. McAtee, First Church,
Forrest City

Basic passage: Ezekiel 1:4-6,
15-20,26-28b

Focal passage: Ezekiel 1:28

Central truth: God is with each of us wherever we are.

Ezekiel was of a priestly family. His name means "God strengthens." His early years were spent in Jerusalem until he was taken captive with 10,000 Jews to Babylon in 597 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar. When things get dark, timid believers may believe that God has forsaken them. But voices of faith, like that of Ezekiel, make the glory of God known even then. He settled in his own house in a village near Nippur, along the river Chebar, where perhaps the exiles may have met for prayer. Psalm 137 reflects the depressed mood of the people to whom Ezekiel was to prophesy for at least 22 years.

Ezekiel was a contemporary of Daniel and Jeremiah. All three were prophets called of God, a job probably none of them really wanted. Their prophecies were usually very unpopular with the ruling element.

In our Scripture today we are to learn many things. One is that God is with his people wherever they are. He had been with the Israelites in the temple in Jerusalem, but now they were forbidden to go to the temple, and God revealed himself to them even in captivity.

In Ezekiel's vision of God, "four," which often stands for completeness in the Bible, is often mentioned. The four living creatures (v. 5) were cherubim or throne attendants. Some think the four faces (v. 10) were symbolic: the human face of man made "after the image of God," the lion of sovereignty, the ox of strength made subservient to human uses, and the eagle of kingly power. The four wheels, one beside each creature, were sparkling (v. 16), moving (v. 17), awesome (v. 18), and functioning (vv. 19-20). As the wheels signify the mobility of God to go wherever needed, so the eyes symbolize his all-seeing nature. The climax of the vision (vv. 26-28) is where God revealed his glory to Ezekiel, who fell on his face before the Lord. He saw little hope for his nation, but a rainbow appeared. Hope was still ahead! God is with us no matter where we are geographically or circumstantially.

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Life and Work

The Wise Use of Money

by David Moore, Immanuel Church,
Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Proverbs 6:6-11;
11:1-4,24-28; 15:16-17

Focal passage: Proverbs 6:6-11;
11:1-4,24-26; 15:17

Central truth: Honesty, generosity, and love should govern our use of money.

There is nothing inherently wrong with money. On the contrary, we all need money. Strangely, however, many fall in love with money, and therein lies our problem.

Wisdom involves a correct use of money. We must earn our money honestly. If you tip the scales in your favor when you are weighing your product for sale (Pr. 11:1), then your actions are hated by God. And by the way, your dishonest wages will do you no good when you face God in death.

Christians must not steal from their employers! Taking parts, pencils, or pads should be avoided. Yet many steal from their employers in other ways. Laziness is just another method of theft. To accept a day's wage without an honest day's work is stealing in the sight of God. Learn the lesson of the ants (Pr. 6:6-8).

Another characteristic of God's people is generosity in using money. The wise man uses his money and is blessed with more money. The poor man is stingy and cautious. Listen to those tithing testimonies with an open mind. Could it be true that folks have a better life on 90 percent (or less) of their income than on 100 percent?

The truth is that God is looking for those whom he can trust with material resources. Are you trustworthy? The wise man admonishes us to be generous, so that we will be prosperous (Pr.11:25a). If you can be trusted with the little that you have now, then God will trust you with more.

The final characteristic in this lesson is love. We are reminded that you can have all this world's goods; but if you do not have love, you have nothing. It is better for you to eat soup and crackers with a family filled with love than to eat steak each meal with those you hate.

Let honesty, generosity, and love guide your use of material resources. This is the only way you will overcome the disease of materialism that has crippled so many. Greed can easily overtake you. The writer reminds us, "It is wiser to be modest" (Pr.11:2 TEV).

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Bible Book

Ungrateful Complainers

by Robert O. Pruett, University
Church, Fayetteville

Basic passage: Numbers 1:1 to 21:35

Focal passage: Numbers 20:3-4,11-12;
21:5-8,21-24

Central truth: Those followers of God who are ungrateful to God and complain to and about his leaders are sinning, causing their lives to not be fruitful and possibly affecting the ministry of God's leaders.

The people of Israel were not happy campers in any way! Even though they were in the desert they had not come to adapt to the desert lifestyle. God had provided for them, but they were not satisfied. They wanted to live as they felt they should and have God bless in exactly the manner they wished. Much like people making plans today and then remembering to ask God to bless their plans as a last thought.

Remember, the reason they were still in the wilderness was their own fault. God had shown them the promised land and they were so afraid, and displayed so little faith in God that they decided to fall back. Needless to say, Moses and Aaron were getting a little angry trying to keep people happy. Moses let his disappointment of the people and their complaining rob him of the joy of leading the people of Israel into the promised land. Moses did pray for the people to receive water from God, but in the process his anger surfaced and instead of giving God the glory for providing the water by merely speaking to the rock, Moses struck the rock twice. God still provided, but one of God's greatest leaders was punished for not following God's leadership.

In the final verses of this lesson we find one of the greatest pictures of the cross found in the Old Testament. Once again the people were complaining about God having provided manna. God showed his wrath by sending snakes whose bites brought fiery, painful death. Moses again prayed for his flock and God instructed the people to look in faith to a serpent made by Moses and placed on a pole in the midst of them.

Only by looking in faith and depending on God to heal and provide would the people of Israel be saved.

May we this day look in faith to God to provide all our needs, and accept his provisions without complaint.

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Two Kinds of Freedom

by Craig Bird
SBC Foreign Mission Board

WINDHOEK, Namibia (BP)—"Namibia should be free."

That sentiment has fueled an armed revolution against South Africa's control of the southwest African country for more than two decades. Now, if the diplomatic balancing act stays on course, elections in November might produce political freedom for "Africa's last colony."

Among people celebrating the milestone will be eight Southern Baptist missionaries who are in the country as "freedom fighters"—in a spiritual sense.

Missionaries Charles and Betty Whitson and John and Sara Martz work in Windhoek; Carlos and Myrtice Owens are in Tsumeb; Adney and Vel Cross are in Oshakati—spreading the gospel, starting churches and training leaders.

They live in towns very much in the news in recent months—and in towns with thriving evangelical Baptist churches.

Windhoek, the capital, is headquarters for the United Nations peace-keeping forces that are to ensure fair elections in November. In recent history, it has been the scene of bombings of cars and banks. On the outskirts of Windhoek in the black township of Katutura, SWAPO—the Southwest Africa People's Organization—organized massive public rallies under the guns of South African soldiers.

Tsumeb sits atop diamond mines where part of the country's wealth is pulled from the earth. It was close enough to the Angolan border for SWAPO troops to launch raids in the years before the ceasefire. Strikes by unions against the mining companies have produced violence.

Oshakati was home to one of South Africa's largest military bases. Now it is home to one of the largest resettlement centers as refugees, mostly SWAPO fighters and their families, return from bases in Angola to resume their lives in Namibia. Among the war's victims were two American diplomats killed by a car bomb in 1984, children who stepped on land mines while playing and hundreds of SWAPO and South African soldiers who died in battles in the area.

(BP) photo / Warren Johnson



Young Namibian girls listen to the gospel.

But in the cities and in scores of other towns and villages, new Christians are forming Baptist churches and reaching out to people around them.

The Baptist part in the fight for spiritual freedom was unfocused for decades, as English Baptists moved into and out of the country but never coalesced.

But in 1959, a South African Baptist woman started a Sunday school for neighborhood children in her garage in the port city of Walvis Bay. In 1961, three couples, all Baptists, met in Windhoek, formed a Bible study class and began looking for a pastor.

From that double beginning, Baptist work took root in the arid, sparsely settled country. The Whitsons arrived in 1968 to work in Windhoek and Walvis Bay. For many years they were the only Southern Baptist missionaries in the country.

They launched Bible Way correspondence courses, a media ministry and

organized two congregations in Windhoek and others in Walvis Bay, Swakopmund, Khomasdal and Rehoboth—commuting thousands of miles in the central region.

But the bulk of the population is in the northern third of Namibia. After years of praying for co-workers, they were joined by missionaries Carlos and Myrtice Owens, who transferred to Tsumeb from Tanzania. They started work as church developers in early 1983. By the summer of 1988, 28 new Baptist churches had been organized.

The churches are scattered along the border 1,000 miles east to west—and worship in four African ethnic languages in addition to English and Afrikaans. The responsiveness is so great that the only apparent limit to growth is the hours and miles the Owens are capable of working and traveling.

Independence brings uncertainty along with jubilation, missionaries have reported. No one knows what the stance of any new government will be toward mission work. Several African countries have ordered all or many missionaries to leave after changes in government. Others have invited them to stay and help build the country; still others have allowed mission groups already in place to remain but restricted access to others.

Whatever happens, the years of work have gained Baptists in Namibia a strong position from which to preach the gospel. Thousands of people—black, mixed-race and white, African and European—have accepted the freedom of Jesus Christ.

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WORLD

Meeting the Needs

by Maxine Stewart
SEC Foreign Missionary to Thailand

Brad Fields, M.D., will soon be completing a year of volunteer medical ministry at the Bangkla Baptist Hospital in Thailand, meeting a personnel need while missionary physician Orby Burcher was on furlough. He grew up attending Second Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn., a church where foreign missions is strongly emphasized.

Not yet feeling God's call to career foreign mission, though open to God's leading, Brad longed to acquaint himself with foreign mission work. After college, before he entered medical school, he lived in Brazil for a year, working with a national Baptist pastor. During medical school he was able to spend two weeks with a medical missionary in Mexico and two months in the Bangalore Baptist Hospital in India.

On his year's assignment to Thailand, Brad took with him his wife, Karen, and their four-month-old son, Daniel, a very friendly little boy who has become the delight of Bangkla. Daniel has opened doors of friendship not only with the hospital personnel, but with many townspeople. Their coming to Thailand as a family has given them a look at foreign missions together.

The Fields, of course, have been limited in speaking the Thai language. This limitation has shown them the necessity of missionaries knowing the language of the people with whom they work. Brad uses a translator at the hospital, but out among the townspeople they feel their inadequacy to communicate.

Although Brad specialized in obstetrics/gynecology, being on the foreign mission field has given him another opportunity to participate in a family practice type ministry. Even though he has found this to be a satisfying medical ministry this year, it has affirmed his chosen field of

obstetrics/gynecology.

Brad is very impressed with the Baptist mission hospital's facilities and personnel, finding them very adequate for a rural hospital which gives good patient care.

Brad had seen patients with tuberculosis, but nothing like the number of T.B. patients he has seen in Thailand. He has seen (for the first time) patients with malaria, leprosy, dengue fever, hemorrhagic fever, snakebite (including spitting cobra venom in the eye), tetanus, and giving inoculations for rabies to people who have been

bitten by rabid animals. He cannot believe the number of gunshot wounds, stabbings and drunken drivers of motorcycles (no helmets!) who come in during the night.

One of the most delightful things that has happened to the Fields family while in Thailand is the adoption of a Thai baby, Andrew, seven months younger than Daniel. The family adores him. The first night they took him to their Bangkla home was the first night Daniel slept through the night in Thailand.

Although Brad grew up in Memphis, he went to undergraduate school at the University of Arkansas. He attended medical school at the University of Tennessee. He took his residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Little Rock. He met Karen in the singles Sunday School class in Second Baptist Church in Little Rock. They were later married and returned to the singles class as workers. Since coming to Thailand he received an invitation to go into a group practice with five other obstetricians and gynecologists in Jonesboro, Karen's home area. This does not mean the door to missions is closed.

Thailand Baptist missionaries and Thai hospital personnel are grateful for the good Christian witness of both Karen and Brad and his tremendous contribution to the medical ministry while they are in Thailand.

Photo / Maxine Stewart



Dr. Fields at work in Thailand