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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

12-4-1975

December 4, 1975

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Arkansas Baptist State Convention, "December 4, 1975" (1975). *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1975-1979*. 48.

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December 4, 1975
Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE

Observe Student Day
at Christmas





I must say it

Charles H. Ashcraft Executive Secretary

Ordaining women

The market for ignorance is somewhat diminished on these inflated times. There is no indication that any change will occur in this direction.

Ignorance deserves no recognition, encouragement, reward or solace. As long as everyone in charge of educational facilities is making every conceivable effort to share the learning experiences, there is less than little excuse for the degree of ignorance which persists.

There are colleges, universities, seminaries, chairs of religion, seminary extension courses, and Bible School Centers, all of which are committed to the education of our constituency. In more cases than is known financial help is available to assist those of lesser advantages to improve their educational status.

Most any person in Arkansas is near to some educational facility. Many special arrangements have been made to accommodate students in courses on an off-campus basis. Night classes are offered by our biggest universities to those who will avail themselves of the opportunities. In the case of our preachers we do quite well in substantive support. The Boyce Bible School Center at Little Rock is only one such project to afford the opportunity for educational advancement.

The churches of our Lord deserve good sermons, able administration and the active projection of worthy goals. They will not forever listen to poor sermons, excuses for lack of excellence or mediocrity of leadership. Our age and our churches demand more preparation on the part of the clergy. This preparation can be secured in our day. Any person who feels he has been left out or denied educational advantages should contact us and we will look into it.

What has this to do with ordaining women? There are many dedicated young women in all our seminaries who are preparing themselves to serve their Lord either in or outside of our churches. They have endured all the disciplines, walked through all the roads and are ready.

Any lack of serious assessment of these delightful handmaidens of Almighty God will not meet the smile of God. This will constitute the strongest argument for the ordination of women - (Acts 21:9, I Cor. 11:5, Gal. 3:28.)

While ordination for women may not be acceptable to many, they must be allowed and encouraged to give full expression of their devotion to their Lord. It would hardly be appropriate for one who doesn't care enough about his calling to prepare for it to register negatively against those who have struggled so long to be ready should God call them.

The Holy Spirit reserves the right to determine the qualification for ordination but the people are required to pay the freight and listen to what comes out.

I must say it!

In this issue

On the cover:

Churches over Arkansas will spotlight members who are college students as they observe a Sunday in December as "Student Day at Christmas" using the theme, "Declaring Christ's Liberating Presence."

Staff changes 5

Associations meet 6

Arkansas associations have held their annual meetings and some have reported on their business.

Board members 7

Arkansas Baptist boards and committees have some new members, which were named at the state convention meeting.

Wilbur Herring's story 8

New state convention president, Wilbur Herring, got a good ways down life's road before he changed directions and entered the ministry. An article traces Dr. Herring's journey from lawyer and businessman to president of the convention.

News briefs 10

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

VOLUME 74

NUMBER 48

J. EVERETT SNEED, Ph.D. Editor
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MARY GIBERSON Secretary to Editor
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Post office box 552, 525 West Capitol Avenue, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72203. Published weekly except at July 4 and December 25. Second Class postage paid at Little Rock, Arkansas.

Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double space and must be signed.

Photos submitted for publication will be returned only when accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Only black and white photos can be used.

Deaths of members of Arkansas churches will be reported in brief form when information is received not later than 14 days after the date of death.

Original poetry cannot be considered for publication.

Individual subscriptions \$3 per year. Every Resident Family plan 18 cents per month or \$2.16 per year per church family. Club plan (10 or more paid annually in advance) \$2.52 per year. Subscriptions to foreign address \$5 per year. Extra copies 10 cents each.

Advertising rates on request

Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer. Member of Southern Baptist Press Association.



J. Everett Sneed

The anti-Zionism resolution

The recent condemnation of the Zionist movement by the United Nations was a tragic mistake. The proponents of the anti-Zionist statement has suggested that the movement is racist. In reality those who oppose Zionism are racist by their own accusations.

The Zionist movement dates back into antiquity. At the end of the Middle Ages David Reubeni promoted the return of the Jews to Palestine. His statements were generally received with great enthusiasm by the Jews.

The desire of Jews to return to Palestine has ebbed and flowed, but has always been present, at least in a dormant state. A German socialist, Moses Hess (1812-75), gave expression to Zionism among Jews.

The holocaust of Hitler during World War II produced the incentive for Zionism which ultimately produced the State of Israel on May 14, 1948. During this period boundaries were negotiated under U.N. auspices. It is, indeed, ironic that the U.N., the force which assisted in the development of Israel, has now condemned the movement which produced the country. The action by the U.N. was for many anti-Semitic while for others it was an action of expediency. Obviously, many nations were merely responding to the economic pressure of the oil cartel. The countries controlling oil and the money which it brings, today are able to exert more pressure than ever before.

The major proponents of anti-Zionism, an anti-Semitic movement, argue that Zionism is totally racist. Opponents to the State of Israel, however, are those nations or individuals who either desire the land of Israel, or those with strong feelings of anti-Semitism.

The Zionist movement claims Israel as the homeland of the Jews. Other nations, too, are composed of basically one race of people. Everyone recognizes the right of the residents of a nation to have a spirit of nationalism.

There are many reasons why the Jews believe that Israel belongs to them. First, they believe that God gave them the land. They recall God's promise to Abraham "...a father of many nations have I made

thee...and I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, a land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession and I will be their God." (Gen. 17:6-8)

Historically, the Jewish people have felt that they could not have a proper existence without the land of Israel. This feeling has been transmitted from generation to generation.

Finally, the Jewish people feel that they must have a land to which they can flee if persecution becomes unbearable in other countries. Hence, the Zionist movement has great meaning for Jews of all other countries as well as those who are citizens of the State of Israel.

The most important question for us is "How should we react to the anti-Zionist movement?" First, and most important, we should recognize the right of every person to maintain his religion, customs, and heritage, as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others. Since Judaism does not violate the rights of others, we should seek the same freedom for them which we desire for ourselves.

Secondly, we should recognize the historic right of the Jews to possess Israel. Recently, the land has been granted to them. They have earned it with blood, sweat, and tears.

Perhaps, the dilemma is best understood when these contemporary events become personal. We were touring Israel when the anti-Zionist resolution was passed. So we pose the question "How would we feel if a large portion of the world hated us?"

The depths of this hatred is seen in the senseless action of the Palestine Liberation Army. Only a few hours after we had left Old Jerusalem a group of teenagers were killed by a bomb. These were not soldiers, but unarmed young people.

Racism should be removed as far as the east is from the west. Peace can only prevail when the rights of all people - Jew and Gentile, learned and unlearned, rich and poor - are accepted and protected. Let us work and pray for this day!

Guest editorial

What's right with America!

United States citizens have enjoyed 200 years of freedom of speech. We speak our minds with no fear of recrimination from any authority. This is a relatively new thing in the history of man. It is so new that even after two centuries we continue to over-emphasize our freedom. It becomes for many of us a right to criticize. We point out what is wrong with each other, with government, public services, church...everything that affects our lives.

Agreed, many things are wrong in America. But many things are right as well. We need a new awareness of these blessings. Some of these good things are found only in America. Many are more abundant here than in most countries.

Religious freedom is uniquely American. Many countries have religious tolerance, a state church maintained by tax funds but with "free" churches tolerated. Some countries claim to have religious freedom when in reality those of certain persuasions suffer discrimination. No country surpasses our religious freedom.

Equal rights for all citizens are given more emphasis here than in most countries. We criticize ourselves for discriminatory practices, and rightly so. Still few countries can equal our fair treatment for people regardless of race, color creed.

America leads the world in scientific achievement,

(Continued on page 4)



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant / President, OBU

Is the world's largest man-made project a mistake?

It is a humbling experience to learn that the handiwork we may be most proud of just might turn out to be a monumental snafu. In a day when we seem increasingly to be looking to the "works of man" to solve all of the world's problems it might be well to reflect on the continuing fallibility of man (and woman).

A recent issue of the University of Iowa Spectator reported on a speech by Richard Underwood who served as chief of photography for manned spacecraft at the Johnson Space Center. Much earlier he served as an engineer on the Aswan Dam project on the Nile River in Egypt. He called Lake Nasser, stretching 400 miles behind the Aswan Dam, the world's largest man-made project. According to Underwood it was the only man-made

object visible to astronauts en route to the moon. American engineers warned the Egyptians to reconsider the massive size of the reservoir, but Russian engineers who helped build the dam didn't follow the American advice.

Underwood believes the many problems caused by the Aswan Dam outweigh any advantages it has. Before construction of the dam the annual September floods of the Nile irrigated, fertilized, and cleaned all at one time and the Egyptians had a food surplus. After the dam was built, salts in the soil began to leach up and change the productivity of the land. Fertilizer is now required; silt no longer comes down the river so they have no bricks to build houses; at the mouth of the river land sinks beneath the sea, so they have less

land; the sardine industry has been wiped out because the food supply that came down the Nile for thousands of years was cut off when the dam was built; and the change in evaporation of salts coming down the river has caused changes in salinity of the Mediterranean Sea with resulting problems for Spain and Morocco 3,000 miles from the dam. As a final reminder of the fallibility of man, the speaker added that when an astronaut looks back from the moon, the only man-made thing he sees is air pollution drifting from one continent to another.

Not being an authority on the ecology of dams, reservoirs, and hydroelectric poser, I cannot say for sure whether the Aswan Dam was a big mistake. However, lest we take too much pride in human inventions and accomplishments, it might be well occasionally to modify the historic first statement sent by telegram and ask, "What hath man wrought?"



Woman's viewpoint

Iris O'Neal Bowen

The Oscar Meyer happening

At a recent meeting, someone intimated that little people in little jobs are merely existing, and life is nothing but misery. I held up my hand and told them:

"I work in a grocery store, and I never get bored. I like it! I am happy! And it's true. Something new is always happening, and sometimes things even get nearly out of hand.

Take the Oscar Meyer Happening, for example:

Late one day, a wobbly stranger wobbled in and asked where we kept the franks. He found the meat box, alright, but he couldn't seem to find what he was looking for. He fumbled around for a while, finally asking the butcher where the Oscar Meyer wieners were. When told we didn't happen to carry that

brand, he became very angry. The clerk tried not to argue with him, but he got louder and louder, finally demanding that the butcher come out from behind the meat box and fight him like a man!

About that time a regular customer of ours, we shall call him Herbert, came in and joined the crowd that had accumulated around the unusual drama being unfolded.

"What's the matter, here?" he asked.

At that, the Oscar Meyer man turned on him and told him loudly what the matter was. His language was not beautiful, nor was the fist he put in Herbert's eye.

Well, Herbert, well-known for his muscles and courage in the face of peril, pulled back his own fist and neatly and completely knocked that fellow to the floor, where he lay motionless!

Our Oscar Meyer customer lay so still, everyone thought he was dead. Herbert got down on his knees and slapped around on his face, while a clerk poured water on his face.

Finally the man moaned and opened his eyes, Herbert helped him to his feet and led him gently out the front door and into his car, and pointed the way to town.

My only regret was that I was not there to see that one, but there's always another time in a grocery store!

What's right with America!

(From page 3)

education, development of natural resources, standard of living. These are not to be taken lightly. Of greater importance are our equal rights, freedom of speech, and freedom of worship. These things make America a great nation. -Editor John Roberts in the 'Baptist Courier' of South Carolina

Staff changes

Tommy Higle has been called as the new pastor of Ridgeway Church, Nashville.

Higle, a native of Concordia, Kan. grew up in Caddo, Okla. After graduation from high school in Caddo, he attended Southeastern State University, Durant, Okla. Higle received a B.S. degree in Education from Southeastern in 1972, and then attended Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Worth, Tex.

Coming to Ridgeway from Farris Church, Farris, Okla., Higle has pastored four churches in Oklahoma.

Higle is married to the former Virginia Boydston, also from Caddo. She is a graduate of SSU, with a B.A. in education. The Higles have two children.



Higle

Poe

Jesse Poe, who served as pastor of Oaklawn Baptist Church, Texarkana, Tex. for 13 years has accepted the call of Shiloh Memorial Church, Texarkana, Ark. to serve as interim pastor.

Poe graduated from Wayland Baptist College, Plainview, Tex., and Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Worth, Tex. He pastored four churches in Texas and one in Kansas prior to serving in the Oaklawn Church. He and Mrs. Poe are

parents of three children.



Pilgreen

Ben G. Pilgreen has joined the staff of First Church, Fordyce, as music-youth director. He came to Fordyce from Rehoboth church in Tucker, Ga., where he served as interim organist. For the year prior to this he served as Minister of Music at Central Baptist Church in Itasca, Texas. He graduated from Southwestern Seminary with a master of church music degree in July of this year. He is 24 years old and single.

Lakeshore Drive Church, Little Rock has added three staff members. Directing music for the church are **John and Margie Halbert**. Halbert is a graduate of Ouachita University and Southern Seminary, and has taught sociology at Ouachita. For the past two years he was Director of Religious Activities and BSU Director at OBU. He now works with the Area Agency for the Aged in Little Rock. Mrs. Halbert, the former Margie Stobaugh, is a Ouachita graduate and has taught vocal music at OBU. They are the parents of two daughters.

Sharon Wegman has joined the Lakeshore Drive staff as director of education and youth. She worked for more than two years in the Student Department of the state convention. Miss Wegman holds the B.A. degree from Arkansas State University, and has been associate BSU director at ASU. She had been youth director for the church since January.

Baptist Heritage

by Bernes K. Selph

The week of Nov.30-Dec.7, was set aside as victory week in 1919, climaxing the 75 million dollars campaign for cash and pledges during the following five years. This set the stage for introducing the Cooperative Program of Southern Baptists which has strengthened every phase of their denominational life.

The time was ripe for such an effort. Prosperity of the people, experience of soliciting and giving war funds, Y. M. C. A., and Salvation Army during World War I, and contact of Baptist men in the armed forces with citizens of foreign countries showed the need and possibility of a more aggressive program for the churches.

More than \$90 million was pledged. Though the total was not raised, forces were set in motion through cooperation which revolutionized Baptist work, and its beneficent results are still felt. With the Baptist emphasis upon the autonomy of the local church, it was healthy to find a plan by which they could work together.

.....and that was an important move in Baptist life 50 years ago.

□ *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, Broadman Press, 1958, Vo. 11 pp 1196-98

Arkansan takes post with Michigan Baptists

Roy G. Adams, an Arkansas native, has resigned his pastorate in Flint, Mich., to serve as secretary of stewardship, director of the Baptist Foundation, and director of communications for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. He has been pastor of Eastgate Church in Flint for the past eight years.

Adams was born in Arkadelphia. He graduated from Ouachita University and Southwestern Seminary, and held pastorates at Lonoke, Biscoe, and Mineral Springs in Arkansas.

Adams was president of the Michigan convention 1972-73 and was vice president before that. He has been a member of the Baptist Sunday School Board since 1968. Adams has held other positions on the associational and state levels in Michigan and has served on the state executive board from 1966-69 and from 1971-75.

He is married to the former Alline Smith. They are the parents of a son and two daughters.



Elected officers by the Directors of Missions of Arkansas at the annual meeting of the state convention were Paul Wilhelm, Clear Creek Association, president; Peter Petty, Washington-Madison, vice president; and John Finn, North Arkansas, secretary.

Churches earn library recognition

NASHVILLE—Five churches in Arkansas have been cited by the church library department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board for their work during the past year using the Church Library Achievement Guide.

The three levels of recognition include Merit, Advanced and Distinguished. During 1974-75, the department has granted 109 Merit recognitions, 237 Advanced recognitions, and 131 Distinguished recognitions.

The Church Library Achievement Guide is a tool for church library staffs, designed to assist in evaluating work and setting goals.

Arkansas Baptist churches receiving Merit recognition are First, Jacksonville; and First, Stuttgart. Churches earning Advanced recognition include Park Place, Hot Springs; West Side, Little Rock; and Harden, Pine Bluff.

OBU students to study Congress first hand

A group of Ouachita University students will be in Washington, D.C. Jan. 2-11, 1976, to study the operation of the United States Congress as part of OBU's Maddox Washington Seminar, according to political science instructor Jim McDougal.

"We plan to study Congress, meeting with its leaders and studying the staff system in Washington. I want the students to get a complete look at the congressional aspect of government," McDougal said.

Students will probably have a chance to meet with their United States representative and Senators Dale Bumpers and John L. McClellan. They will also talk with committee staff members on the operations of congressional committees.

McDougal plans to have lobbyists from both special interest groups and consumer groups meet with the students and explain the operations of lobbies.

Ouachita will subsidize part of the expenses of the trip through its Maddox Public Affairs Center, and students will be responsible for food and lodging costs. Expenses of the trip probably will be \$150-200, McDougal said. In addition, students will have to pay school tuition for the seminar, which will count as a three-hour class.

A maximum of 15 students may take part in the seminar, which will count as a three-hour class.

A maximum of 15 students may take part in the seminar, with preference being given to political science majors and seniors.

"I think this will be an outgoing project with us possibly having trips abroad in the future," McDougal said.

Associations hold annual sessions

Baptist Associations over Arkansas held their annual meetings in October and reports received by the Newsmagazine indicated it was mostly business as usual.

• Bartholomew Association reported that attendance was better than in recent years. Their sessions met with Enon Church, Monticello, and Immanuel Church, Warren. Messengers accepted a recommendation that they doin with Delta Association in the operation of Wolf Creek Camp. The operation of the camp will be under the direction of a board of control, with members from Ashley, Delta, and Bartholomew Associations.

Also approved were plans to begin seminary extension programs in January, 1976, with Hermitage Pastor Jimmy Anderson as director.

Messengers heard reports that baptisms in the association were up from 209 to 300 the past year, which is the highest in more than 15 years. They also were told that giving to associational missions and through the Cooperative Program was up 11 percent.

The closing session focused on the '76 Life and Liberty Campaign, with Warren pastor James Walker explaining the campaign and its history. Ft. Smith pastor Don Moore brought the closing message.

Officers elected were moderator, John C. Robbins, pastor at Second, Monticello; associatie moderator, Forrest

Bynum, pastor at Immanuel, Warren; clerk, Don Covington, pastor of Ebenezer Church; and treasurer, Raymond H. Reed, director of missions.

• Clear Creek Association met with First Church, Ozark, Oct. 14. Julian Rowton, pastor at East Mt. Zion Church, brought the annual sermon, and Larry P. Fears, pastor at Cedarville Church, brought the doctrinal sermon.

Elected officers of the association were Wayne B. Davis, pastor of Oak Grove, Van Buren, moderator; Larry P. Fears, vice moderator; Mrs. Faber L. Tyler of Ozark was re-elected treasurer, and Paul E. Wilhelm, associational director of missions, was re-elected clerk.

It was announced that the 1976 session will be held Oct. 12 at the Oak Grove Church.

• Mt. Zion Association met in its 123rd annual session Oct. 20 the Philadelphia Church, Jonesboro. Host pastor R.D. Harrington preached the annual message.

The second meeting was with First Church, Caraway, the next night. J.W. Gibbs, pastor at First Church, Black Oak, preached the message.

Elected to associational office were Jimmy Davis, pastor at First, Lake City, moderator; Jerry Tracy, pastor at First, Monette, vice moderator; Herbert Waddell of Jonesboro, clerk; and L.D. Walker of Jonesboro, treasurer.



Officers of Mt. Zion Baptist Association (left to right) Jerry Tracy, Pastor, First Church, Monette, vice moderator; Herbert Waddell, Jonesboro, clerk; Carl Bunch, Jonesboro, Director of Missions; and Jimmy Davis, Pastor, First Church, Lake City, moderator.

Board and committee members elected

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention in annual session elected the following persons to serve on boards and committees: (* indicates laymen)

EXECUTIVE BOARD, Terms to expire 1978:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Arkansas Valley | Jim Davis, Clarendon |
| Ashley County | * C.J. Holiman Jr., Crossett |
| Bartholomew | James Hickman, Monticello |
| Calvary | J.E. Clark, Bald Knob |
| Caroline (new term) | Keith Loyd, Cabot |
| Centennial | Eddie McCord, DeWitt |
| Central | Oscar Golden, Benton |
| Clear Creek | Billy R. Usery, Clarksville |
| Concord | * Henry Oliver, Ft. Smith |
| Concord | Ernie Perkins, Ft. Smith |
| Current River | Curtis Smith, Pocahontas |
| Dardanelle-Russellville | W.H. Jenkins, Atkins |
| Delta | Thomas Welch, Wilmot |
| Greene County (new term) | Oatis Vester Jr., Paragould |
| Harmony | Joe W. Atchison, Pine Bluff |
| Hope | James Lindsey, Texarkana |
| Hope | * Auby Rowe, Magnolia |
| Liberty | Conway Sawyers, El Dorado |
| Liberty | Sardis Bever, Strong |
| Little River | Frank Carroll, Foreman |
| Mississippi County | William Piercy, Manila |
| Mount Zion | * Paul Owens, Lake City |
| North Pulaski | William R. Brown, Jacksonville |
| North Pulaski | J.C. Myers, North Little Rock |
| Pulaski County | Paul Sanders, Little Rock |
| Pulaski County | * Andy Setliffe, Little Rock |
| Tri-County | Thomas A. Hinson, West Memphis |
| Trinity | Nodell Dennis, Trumann |
| DISTRICT 5 | Mrs. Bob Wright, Little Rock |
| DISTRICT 8 | Mrs. R.E. Hagood, Dumas |

EXECUTIVE BOARD, Unexpired term, to expire 1977:

North Arkansas John Finn, Harrison

EXECUTIVE BOARD, Unexpired terms, to expire 1976:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Concord | Daniel E. Threet, Booneville |
| Searcy County | C.W. Russell Jr., Marshall |
| Washington-Madison | James A. Criswell, West Fork |
| DISTRICT 2 | Mrs. Paul Henry, Batesville |
| DISTRICT 4 | Mrs. C.S. Williams, Mena |

ARKANSAS BAPTIST FAMILY AND CHILD CARE SERVICES

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>Terms to Expire 1978:</u> | Mrs. George Snarr, Monticello |
| | Emil Williams, Jonesboro |
| | * Dr. Otho Hesterly, Little Rock |
| | Mrs. James F. Sawyer, Benton |
| | * Frank Huffman, Blytheville |
| | Mrs. Lloyd Sims Jr., Pine Bluff |

Term to Expire 1976: * Ed Thrash, Hope (for unexpired term)

ARKANSAS BAPTIST FOUNDATION

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>Terms to Expire 1978:</u> | * Carbon Sims, Monticello |
| | * Ronald Cox, Wynne |
| | Jack Clack, Russellville |
| | * Joe Sullivan, Little Rock |
| | * Bruce McNeill, Ft. Smith |

ARKANSAS BAPTIST HISTORY COMMISSION

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <u>Terms to Expire 1978:</u> | District 1 - Burton Miley, Springdale |
| | District 6 - Robert Tucker, Wynne |
| | District 4 - C. Wendell Henderson, Waldron |

BAPTIST MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, MEMPHIS

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| <u>Terms to Expire 1978:</u> | Leslie Riherd, Newport |
| | J.W. Royal, Benton |
| | * C.E. Bell, Parkin |

BAPTIST STUDENT UNION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <u>Terms to Expire 1978:</u> | District 1 - * Bob Lewis, Fayetteville |
| | District 2 - Kenneth Threet, Mountain Home |
| | District 7 - * Norman Canterbury, Magnolia |
| | District 4 - Neil Jackson, Russellville |
| | District 7 - Jim Adams, Texarkana |
| | Member at Large - * William Echols, Beebe |

CHRISTIAN CIVIC FOUNDATION OF ARKANSAS

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Terms to expire 1978:</u> | Kendell Black, Conway |
| | * David Murdock, Atkins |
| | J. Everett Sneed, Little Rock |
| | * Sam Pintado, Glenwood |
| | Leroy French, Barling |

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Terms to Expire 1978:</u> | Carel Norman, Glenwood |
| | Ed F. McDonald Jr., Texarkana |

OUACHITA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <u>Terms to Expire 1978:</u> | * H.E. (Pete) Raines, Stuttgart |
| | Mrs. Clarence Anthony, Murfreesboro |
| | * Edward Maddox, Harrisburg |
| | * Jess Odom, Little Rock |
| | Lloyd Cloud, Hot Springs |
| | Don Moore, Fort Smith |
| | John McClanahan, Pine Bluff |
| | * Bill Hargis, Warren |

Terms to Expire 1976:
(for unexpired terms)

* Jim Greene, North Little Rock
Jim Thrash, El Dorado

SOUTHERN BAPTIST COLLEGE

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Terms to Expire 1978:</u> | Kenneth Threet, Mountain Home |
| | * Dale Ward, Little Rock |
| | Mason Craig |
| | * J.H. Spears, West Memphis |
| | Gerald Knighton, Earle |
| | * Andrew Wright, Fair Oaks |
| | Carroll Gibson, Paragould |
| | * G.E. (Eddie) Davis, Lepanto |

Term to Expire 1977:
(for unexpired term)

Kerry Powell, Forrest City

Terms to Expire 1976:
(for unexpired term)

Eugene Ray, Augusta
* G.B. Hambric, Pocahontas

CONVENTION PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Term to Expire 1978: Cliff Palmer, Springdale

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Kreis, Chairman
Johnny Jackson
Cline Ellis
Bob Wright
Wayne Davis
Eugene Johnson
Earl M. Jones Jr.
Mason Craig
Douglas Bradley

by Erwin L. McDonald
Editor Emeritus, ABN

The new president of Southern Baptists in Arkansas, R. Wilbur Herring of Jonesboro, says God was calling him to preach many years before he gave up his law practice and business careers to enter the ministry.

"I first heard the call one day in 1936 at the corner of 4th and Louisiana Streets in downtown Little Rock, as I was walking to my law office," he said in an interview at Ft. Smith shortly after his election as president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

"It was as plain as if God had said in an audible voice: 'Work for me.'"

When he told close friends about his experience, one encouraged him too much and another, not enough.

His pastor at the time, Dr. L.M. Sipes of Pulaski Heights Church, wanted him to give up his law practice immediately and enroll in a seminary for his theological training.

"But I was not ready for so drastic a change," he recalled.

Attorney Brooks Hays reminded him facetiously that "somebody's got to pay the preacher" and suggested that he might be already in his proper place of service.

Something young Herring found in the *Baptist Advance* (now *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*), official organ of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, did not turn out to be much help.

The way to test whether or not God is really calling you to preach, said a formula in the paper, was "Don't preach if you can do anything else."

"With my specialization in corporate law and finance, backed by a law degree, I decided I'd take this advice," Herring said.

So, for 10 years, Herring "did something else."

Most of this time he was with the U.S. Government as a consultant in law and finance in the Federal Works Agency and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

During World War II he served in the Navy. For a year his assignment included studying at the University of Virginia, where he took military government and civic affairs, and at Stanford University, where he studied the Japanese language, anthropology and Eastern religions.

"They were getting us ready to go as a part of the anticipated military government in the occupation of Japan. But Gen. Douglas McArthur never called for us, and we never left the states."

During his military experience, Herring

again felt deeply impressed that God was calling him to become a minister.

"Then the ministry was not a popular calling," he said. "And I suppose the fact that I was the first of my family to feel called to preach served as a sort of deterrent."

This time, however, Herring felt it was necessary to make personal commitment.

"I promised the Lord I would preach Christ, come hell or high water, and felt that both might come before I could ever get out," he recalled.

Once out of the Navy, he still delayed for a time, going back to Dallas to take up his work with the RFC for a few months. "I didn't know exactly where the Lord wanted me," he said.

One of the greatest obstacles across his path at this time was the offer of a \$30,000 job that opened for him in the business world.

"That was back when \$30,000 was a big salary," he said, "and I had a hard time not insisting that the Lord let me work there for at least a year or two."

"It's hard for others to understand," he said, "but I am convinced it took the chastening hand of God upon me to bring me into his will for my life."

Quoting the scripture that says "Whom the Lord loves he chasteneth," he recalled several adversities that came to him in quick order.

A baby son died and Mrs. Herring narrowly escaped with her life.

A son became critically ill and nearly died.

His father suffered major business reverses.

All of this came ahead of his call to military service and tended to make him more receptive to the ministerial call, he said.

One thing he had to give up to preach was an ambition he had had since high school days to be governor of Arkansas.

Interestingly enough, one of his fellow law students at the University of Arkansas was a young fellow by the name of Sid McMath, a Methodist who at the time was considering abandoning his law career to enter the ministry.

Another law school classmate, as McMath, went on to be Arkansas' chief executive—Francis Cherry.

A vote-getter from his early days, Herring was president of his high school home room in Little Rock High School (now Central High School), president of

the Student Council and active in student government.

His 10-year stay of executing his call to preach was quite successful, "except a great emptiness in my heart. I felt I was not doing what God wanted me to do."

Herring graduated from Little Rock Junior College, forerunner of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and completed his law degree in three years at UA. His bachelor-of-law degree has since been changed to the juris doctor degree.

While he no longer practices law, at the insistence of an attorney friend he keeps his dues paid in the Arkansas Bar Association.

Mrs. Herring is the former Mary Elizabeth Taul of Little Rock. They met while Herring was a law student and she was in high school.

The Herrings have two children—a son, Dr. William T. Herring of Memphis, a specialist in internal medicine and a deacon in the Germantown (Tenn.) Baptist Church; and a daughter, Elizabeth, whose husband, Bob W. Harrison, is a general contractor in Jonesboro and an active deacon in Herring's church.

Herring's first church position was that of assistant pastor of the St. Charles Baptist Church in New Orleans, where he had been mustered out of the Navy.

"When my wife and I left New Orleans after my honorable discharge, I told her I'd never go back. But that was where the Lord sent me on my first assignment for him."

His second assignment in the ministry was to serve as president of the San Marcos (Tex.) Baptist Academy, the oldest and largest Baptist academy in the world, for two years.

He has had pastorates in four churches—Calvary in Little Rock; North Jacksonville in Jacksonville, Fla.; First in Chamblee, Ga.; and Central at Jonesboro. His present pastorate is his second at the Jonesboro church.

All of the churches have grown under his leadership. The Jacksonville church, largest of the group, went from a membership of 1,345 to 2,900 in the 10 years he was there.

Second only to his grandchildren—two granddaughters and a grandson—he ranks walking as a hobby.

He keeps fit, if not trim, by walking three miles a day around the outer edges of his back yard at the Central Church parsonage.

Herring is convention president

"I've discovered that one time around the yard is the equivalent of a city block and that 15 times around is a mile," he said. "So I do 45 laps a day, in the setting of trees and birds, where no one is around but my wife."

His walking in solitude is not a reflection of something anti social in his nature. He just likes to walk without being interrupted, as he used to be on the streets by well-wishers offering him rides or stopping to visit.

"I use my 45 minutes of walking to do intercessory praying for members of the church and other friends," he said.

He walks at a cadence of 120, which is a way of saying he takes 120 steps a minute and moves at a rate of four miles an hour.

His walking comes at the close of the morning, just after he has completed studying for the day—usually from 11:15 to 12 noon.

One day a week he tries to get away long enough to play a round of golf, but he readily admits he is no "pro."

Many honors and positions of service have come to him in personal and denominational affairs.

In 1963 he received the honorary doctor of divinity degree from John Brown University at Siloam Springs.

This year he received the Southern Baptist College Distinguished Baptist Minister Award and Arkansas State University conferred on him its Distinguished Service Award for civic leadership and outstanding service to the university.

He has preached the annual convention sermons of Baptist conventions in Florida and in Arkansas.

In Florida he was a member of the Baptist Foundation Board for six years.

Also in Florida he was a member of a 15-man committee to lead in reorganization of the work of the Baptist State Convention.

He has been moderator of the Pulaski County Baptist Association and the Mt. Zion Baptist Association.

He has just completed two one-year terms as president of the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and for the past year has served, and will continue to serve, as director of the 1976 Life and Liberty evangelistic campaign for the Arkansas convention.



Andrew Setliffe

Setliffe heads Executive Board

Andrew B. Setliffe Jr., minister of education at Pulaski Heights Church, Little Rock, was elected to a one-year term as president of the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at the annual meeting, held this year in Ft. Smith.

Dr. Setliffe, a native of North Carolina, has served the Pulaski Heights Church since 1970. He came to the Little Rock post from Grand Avenue Church, Ft. Smith, and also has served churches in Georgia and Texas.

He has served four terms on the Executive Board, being a member of the program, assemblies, and nominating committees, and serving as chairman of the finance committee. Setliffe has been chairman of the convention nominating committee, and has been president of the Arkansas Religious Education Association.

Dr. Setliffe has served on the faculty of Ridgecrest and Glorieta Baptist Assemblies, and has written for *The Sunday School Builder*, *Church Administration*, *Church Training Magazine*, *Outreach*, and the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*. He also has led Sunday School and Church Training campaigns in several states.

Setliffe holds the B.A. degree from Baylor University, and the M.R.E. and D.R.E. degrees from Southwestern Seminary.

He is married to the former Dorothy Cardwell of North Carolina. They are the parents of three daughters.



Dr. Herring (left) is congratulated on his election by John Wright, pastor of First Church, Little Rock.



Cupples: Discussed methods

"It is easy for an overseas missionary to support the Cooperative Program," Dr. John Wikman told those attending the Cooperative Program Fellowship Breakfast at First Church, Ft. Smith, last month. The speakers addressed the second annual Cooperative Program Fellowship meeting held in Arkansas. The annual Cooperative Program Fellowship Breakfasts are fast becoming a tradition in Arkansas.

Dr. Wibman, a medical missionary to India, said "Our foreign missionaries are totally dependent upon the Cooperative Program and we can see just how important it is as we observe those who do not have it.

"We now have a hospital in India," Wikman continued, "in which we are able to witness to more than 300 families through our ministry daily. Because of the love which is shared there people for miles around know of the work of our hospital. The first patient we operated on in India was blind from birth. Through our ministry he received both Christ and his sight.

"Our Baptist correspondence program is one of the largest on any Southern Baptist foreign mission field. We have seen eight Baptist churches developed from the ground up. All of these programs are made possible because of the Cooperative Program. You do have a channel through the Cooperative Program to proclaim Christ around the world. We can't begin to do the things we need to do but because of the Cooperative Program. You do have a channel through the Cooperative Program to proclaim Christ around the

world. We can't begin to do the things we need to do but because of the Cooperative Program we are able to touch the lives of many people for Christ."

Tommy Cupples, pastor, First Church, Mount Ida, discussed some of the methods he had used in increasing Cooperative Program gifts in his church. He said "Previous pastors have laid a good foundation by encouraging our people to support the Cooperative Program. We let our people know that such things as Sunday School and Church Training Leadership Conferences, the work of the BSU and the state assemblies are all made possible through the Cooperative Program."

Cupples discussed some of the methods that he used in keeping the Cooperative Program before his church. Among these were films, film strips, tracts placed in the bulletin, mission speakers, and placing the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* in the budget so that each family would receive it.

Roy Lewis, secretary of Stewardship-Cooperative Program said "We are very pleased with the support that our churches have provided through the Cooperative Program. The inflation rate has been eight or nine per cent and currently we are running 12.91 percent ahead of last year. The increase in the Cooperative Program has enabled Arkansas to increase its gifts to the SBC Cooperative Program for the fifth consecutive year. Arkansas is only the second state in the Southern Baptist Convention to be able to achieve this."



Dr. Wikman: Mutual support

□ First Church, Sulphur Springs, broke ground recently for an addition to their education building, which will include six classrooms. They also will remodel the present sanctuary. Melvin Coffelt is pastor.

□ Lakeshore Drive Church, Little Rock, has begun a Sunday School Class designed for single adults, both never married and previously married. Bible study will be held in a discussion setting for persons 21-30. Jerry Wilcox is pastor of the church.

□ Parks church has dedicated some additional education space which includes three classrooms and a nursery. The church also installed central heat and air conditioning and a public address system. Roy McLeod is pastor.

□ Rye Hill Church, near Ft. Smith, observed their pastor's first anniversary with the church on Oct. 26. Church attendance has doubled and there have been 78 additions during the year that Charles N. Van Pelt has served there.

Southern College names vice presidents

The Board of Trustees for Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, has announced the establishment of three vice president positions for the administration of the College. The Board named Jerol B. Swaim as Vice President for Academic Affairs; James Strait as Vice President for Business Affairs; and Jim E. Tillman as Vice President for Development.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Swaim began his work at Southern Baptist College in 1964. Dr. Swaim holds the B.A. degree from Union University, the M.A. degree from George Peabody College for teachers, and the Ed.D. degree from Memphis State University.

The Vice President for Business Affairs, James Strait came to SBC in 1974. Strait holds the B.S. degree from Arkansas State University and is currently enrolled in the MBA program at A.S.U.

The Vice President for Development, Jim E. Tillman began his work at the College in 1974. Tillman holds the B.A. degree from Ouachita University and the B.D. degree from Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, Tex.

D. Jack Nicholas, president of the college, and J.K. Southerland of Batesville, is president of the board of trustees, made this announcement this past week-end.

Your state convention at work

Child Care

Thanks for 'giving children a chance'

"Arkansas Baptists...Giving Children A Chance" — this theme has been before all the Baptist churches in Arkansas who participate in the annual Thanksgiving love offering for our child care ministry. We have deep feelings of appreciation and gratitude for your interest and your sharing that makes possible our ministry to hundreds of children and their families. To those churches and individuals who make monthly contributions or take their offering at another time, we also want to say "thank you."

We depend on these offerings for approximately 1-3 of our budget needs to provide food, clothing, housing, education, medical needs, and other ministries to our children.

Arkansas Baptists have demonstrated

their concern and compassion for "their children" down through the years. Because of this intense interest, the Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services has grown in its ministry to boys and girls and is recognized for its multiple services.

It will be helpful if we can receive these offerings from the churches by Dec. 31, 1975. A list of these contributions by churches will be published in the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*.

We are grateful that Arkansas Baptists have always been concerned about the hurts of children and support a child care ministry to meet these needs. —Johnny G. Biggs, Executive Director, Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Service.

Stewardship

Providing for the pastor

(5th in a series of 15)

The average pastor spends a considerable amount of time in his car on visitation or calling on members in the hospital. In many cases, the pastor who ministers in a small community must drive many miles to the city where the hospital is located and oftentimes has members in several hospitals located in opposite directions.

The cost of operating his car is, therefore, of major concern to the pastor and should be also to his church. Most pastors receive from their churches some reimbursement for car expense, but only in very rare cases is the amount adequate.

There is no easy way to figure an equitable expense reimbursement. Many denominational employees are reimbursed at the rate of 15 cents per mile. Recent figures from the U. S. Department of Commerce indicate that a full size car cannot be operated for less than 16 cents per mile. Even this figure may soon be obsolete if the cost of gasoline and the price of cars continues to escalate. Several commercial authorities already claim that the actual cost is nearer 25 cents per mile.

Whatever method of reimbursement is used should include not only the cost of

gas and oil and tires, but also the cost of maintenance, insurance, and depreciation.

It might be argued that the pastor uses his car also for personal and family use and that therefore the church should not bear the full expense of it. However, many pastors have found it necessary to provide a second car for their wife or family because of the continued demands on their time and the use of their car on church business.

Most tax authorities state that the average pastor uses his car at least 75 percent of the time (and mileage) for church business, but many pastors would exceed that figure.

Perhaps the time will come when most churches will provide a car and expense for their pastors, as many secular firms now do. This writer strongly feels that such would be more fair and equitable than most of the financial arrangements now in effect. However, until that time comes, churches should at least try to reimburse their pastor for money he has spent or is spending directly on church business. —Roy F. Lewis, Secretary, Stewardship-Cooperative Program

Show is planned for senior citizens

A special bicentennial show by the cast of "Up with People" is being given Monday, Dec. 15, at Second Church, Little Rock, for senior citizens. A church spokesman suggested that churches bring their senior citizen groups and provide shopping trips before the free show, scheduled for 3:30 p.m. Afterwards, the groups could purchase a meal at the cafe in the Albert Pike Hotel and meet the cast. Reservations are needed only for the meal.

Death

Robert F. Courtney Jr., 41, pastor of First Church, Dumas, for the past five years, died Nov. 25. He was a native of Monroe, La. Dr. Courtney had been pastor of churches in Mississippi and Louisiana before coming to Arkansas. He was a graduate of Louisiana State University and of New Orleans Seminary.

He is survived by his wife, Sarah Crawford Courtney; a son, Robert Franklin Courtney III; two daughters, Rebekah and Rachel Courtney; his mother Mrs. Shirley Courtney; and two sisters.

Tapes of convention messages available

Cassette tapes of all messages from the state convention annual meeting and the pastors' conference meeting are available from First Church, Ft. Smith for \$2.50 each. Specify speaker and send amount to First Baptist Church, 1400 North E. Street, Ft. Smith 72901

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Elected officers of the Arkansas pastors' conference at the annual meeting held prior to the state convention meeting were John Finn, director of missions for North Arkansas Association, president; Harry Wigger, pastor at Bella Vista, first vice president; and Jimmy Taylor, pastor at First Hardy, second vice president.

Outdated literature can be very timely

NASHVILLE--Outdated and discarded Southern Baptist Sunday School literature often may be beneficial to lives far outside the walls of a church or Sunday School class.

Last spring a family consisting of the father, mother and seven children moved in with their maternal grandmother in a house directly behind Clay Baptist Church in Clay, Ala., near Birmingham. All were Jehovah's Witnesses.

While playing near the church, the children found some discarded Sunday School Board literature, which they took home to read. Even though they were punished for bringing the literature home, the children's interest heightened and they gathered more literature. Soon the mother and grandmother also were reading the quarterlies.

T.R. Sams, pastor of Clay Church, reported that the children were very eager to attend church, but had no appropriate clothes. Members of the church quickly gathered clothes for the children who soon were participating in church activities.

First they attended a Backyard Bible Club sponsored by the church. When they joined Vacation Bible School, their mother and grandmother attended the Adult Vacation Bible School study.

In a recent revival at Clay Church, the three older children, the mother, father and grandmother were converted and baptized into the membership of the church.

According to Sams, "changes in the lives of the new Christians were evident to everyone around them."

Recently the mother, father and children moved to Georgia, where they have already joined a Baptist church. The grandmother still lives behind Clay Church and is enrolled now in a new member training class.

"It often takes many things to win people to Christ," Sams said, "especially when they are of another religious background. In this case, the discarded literature cracked the door, and ministering to their physical needs opened the door to winning them to Christ."

"I have always known Southern Baptists have the best literature," Sams said, "but this experience confirms my belief."

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Matthew's unique gospel

Dec. 7, 1975

Matthew 9:9-13; 1:1,17; 4:23-25

In this unit of study we have 20 lessons in Matthew's gospel. Matthew's gospel is unexcelled on the subject of Jesus, the King of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is truly the gospel of the kingdom. We are impressed with evidence that the writer was excited about the royal beginnings of Jesus and his message. This theme of royal beginnings will permeate the first four lessons.

Unique Authorship (Matt. 9:9-13)

The word "unique" is defined as "being without like or equal; single in kind or excellence."

There are several ways in which Matthew's gospel is different from the other three gospels. Primarily it is different in content and purpose. It contains at least six great discourses and a number of parables not found in Mark's gospel. Although it was written after Mark's gospel, Matthew's account took first place in all groupings of the four gospels, and was fixed there in the cannon of the New Testament.

Matthew's call to be a follower of Jesus is unique. Matthew, sometimes called Levi, the son of Alphaesus, was a custom-house official. He collected the duty on imports, exports, toll on roads, bridges, the harbour, the town tax, and a great many other taxes on various items. This gave opportunity for much abuse and graft.

The taxes in Judea were levied by publicans, who were Jews. They were hated by the Jews because of the frequent abuses in the tax system. Then they were hated because the taxes they collected were for the Roman government, a foreign power. In the eyes of the Jews the tax collector was a symbol of servitude. He was a constant reminder to them that God had forsaken his people and land. Many had lost sight of the Messianic hope, founded on the promises of ancient prophets.

One day Jesus, coming up from the lake side, passed nearby where Levi was sitting at the receipt of custom. "And saith unto him, Follow me, and he arose and followed him." (v. 9)

Try to put yourself in Matthew's place as you read his gospel. If you can imagine yourself as one who had been classed by the people with harlots, usurers, thieves, gamblers, and dishonest herdsmen, who lived hard lawless lives, then you will be able to appreciate his position.

According to traditions of the Rabbis there was no hope for a man like Levi. He was excluded from religious fellowship. His money was considered defiled and

tainted anyone who accepted it. He could not serve as a witness. The religious leaders had no word of help for him because they expected him to stand justified before God by external conformity to the law.

The attitude of Jesus toward the publican was in complete contrast to that of the Rabbis. He had come to seek and to save the lost.

Whether Jesus had ever spoken to Matthew before we do not know. There is reason to believe he was expecting Jesus to call him, and had resolved in his heart to leave everything to follow Jesus. Without doubt he had heard of the great teacher and of his preaching. He was ready to adopt the view of the kingdom of God which Jesus taught.

Matthew lost no time acting upon his decision. The same day he made a great feast, perhaps a farewell feast to his old associates. He invited Jesus and his disciples. That must have been a joyous occasion for Matthew. For the first time as an eye-witness he marked the words and acts of Jesus, and stored within his memory this event which he was inspired to write for the instruction of God's people in ages to come.

It seems that Matthew's decision to follow Christ was the time his name was changed from "Levi" to "Matthew" Levi would signify "servant of the Lord"; Matthew would signify "the Lord's free man." The Lord's free man could understand Christ's action as he defied the social traditions of the Pharisees and sat down to eat with publicans and sinners. There was a conflict with the Pharisees. They wanted to know why Jesus did this. The answer they got was unanswerable. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Jesus had come, the Great Physician, to heal the sin-sick, not the righteous.

Unique message (Matt. 1:1,17)

There was need for a message to strengthen the believers hearts. The historical facts about Jesus, his genealogy, was given before anything else was said about him. The people needed to know this Savior in whom they had believed, was an Almighty Savior. He was the king of Israel. He was the promised Messiah.

During the entire history of the human race God was preparing providentially for the coming of the divine son and Messiah into the world. Matthew gives us historical proof that Jesus of Nazareth is the King of Israel. He traces the family down through David to Joseph from Abraham the father of the Hebrew race.

He traced it through Joseph because the regal descent was through the father's side always.

This royal genealogy proves from public records that Jesus is the lineal descendant of David and Abraham. He is the son of David and the son of Abraham. This made him heir to all the promises that were made to the fathers. He is of the line of kings. This makes him heir to the throne of David and to the hereditary blessing of Abraham.

This message that Jesus, the carpenter, was the appointed and foretold King of Israel, would tend to strengthen the heart of every Jewish Christian, and make him stand by Jesus, no matter what trial and trouble might come.

Unique purpose (Matt. 4:23-25)

Make no mistake about it. Jesus put the teaching of the good tidings of the Kingdom of God in first place. He refused to be enthroned as a king who had come to establish a political Kingdom and throw off the yoke of Rome from Israel. He came to establish a spiritual kingdom, universal in its sweep, founded on life, which would be motivated by the rule of heaven in the hearts of men.

The three aspects of Christ's ministry in Galilee; teaching, preaching and healing are in that order. Teaching and preaching are inseparable. There may be teaching without preaching, but no true preaching without teaching. The theme of Jesus' preaching was the Kingdom of God. He had a clear understanding of the nature of the Kingdom of God. His teaching, preaching and miracles of healing were means to the end of bringing men into the Kingdom.

His teaching ministry took Jesus into their synagogues. This is important for two reasons. First: It identified him with the Jewish people. Second: He wanted to make it clear that Christianity is not a new religion, but a faith that has its roots in the Old Testament revelation.

Jesus made it clear that his was a divine mission. He was conscious of a great purpose in his life and ministry; that he came forth from God for world evangelization. He "was sent forth," the apostle of men. And his mission was an impartial one. The people thronged him from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem and from beyond Jordan.

Rejection or trust?

Dec. 7, 1975

Matthew 11:16-20, 23-30



Cupples

This unit entitled "What Will You Do With Jesus?" will continue the study of the Gospel of Matthew. This week's lesson poses the question of decision. Will there be rejection or trust of Jesus? We need to consider our own response to this

question.

No greater compliment could have been passed on a man than the one Jesus passed on John the Baptist. Jesus said of John the Baptist that no one born of woman was greater than John. (v. 11) yet, John was now in prison because of his preaching the truth. The people had rejected John the Baptist. It was now evident that the people were rejecting Jesus as well. The people had made their decision and that decision was to reject Jesus.

Life is full of decisions. From the day of our birth 'till after our death when our families must make decision about our physical remains, we face the dilemma of decision. Whether it be the choice of education, vocation or marriage, none can surpass the importance of the spiritual decision each of us must make. The choice is ours — reject or trust Jesus. Which will it be?

There is the choice of rejection

(Matt. 11:16-20, 23-24)

Jesus drew an illustration from children to drive home his point about the choice of rejection. Children, in Jesus's day, often played in the marketplace. One group of children were trying to entice another group to enter into play. They first suggested to dance, but the other children would not dance. Next, there was suggested a funeral game but again the other children would not play. Jesus was making the application to the approaches by John the Baptist and himself. Though both men were proclaimers of the truth, their personalities and approaches were quite different. John the Baptist came as a hermit. He wore a garment made of camel's hair and a leather belt about his waist. His food was only locusts and wild honey. When Jesus came he was the opposite. He ate and drank even in the homes of the sinners. His clothes probably were no different than those of any other carpenter of the day. The tragedy was that the people rejected the

message of both John the Baptist Jesus.

There will be judgment upon these who reject Jesus. In verse 20 Jesus begins to reproach the cities where previously he had done many miracles. The purpose of the miracles performed by Jesus was to show by signs that Jesus is the Son of God. The multitudes had flocked to Jesus in order to see and receive his miracles but they had not repented. Nothing could have had more of a shock effect on the people than for Jesus to indicate the sinfulness of the cities to be greater than the cities of Sodom. Sodom had become a synonym of sin referring back to the days of Lot's miraculous escape from that sinful city. The severity of judgment depends upon the opportunities of repentance. (Luke 12:48)

Today there is a wide spectrum of approaches of the gospel. Every preacher has his own style and approach to preaching and soulwinning. We have become quite innovative in our methods of evangelism. The bus ministry and the enrollment-attendance project of the Sunday School are but two of the most recent innovative methods for reaching people for Jesus Christ. Our approaches and methods may be different but the message is the same. Our purpose is to bring men and women, boys and girls to the point of decision about Jesus.

Our nation has been given a great opportunity of decision. How much more America will be held accountable in this atmosphere of religious freedom. We are unhindered in our attempts to evangelize our nation. We have been given 200 years. How much longer will God permit us to abuse our freedom before he calls our nation to judgment? For tragic would it be to hear the words, "It shall be more tolerable for the nations of Red China and Russia in the day of judgment than for America?"

The choice of trust

(Matt. 11:25-30)

The choice of trust is one that is so simple that even a child can understand. The wise and intelligent have difficulty accepting salvation because of the requirement of faith. This is not to say that wisdom and intelligence are hindrances to salvation but rather that salvation comes only by childlike faith. Jesus spoke out of experience. The intellectuals — Scribes, Pharisees, Priests and others — had rejected him, while common folk like farmers and fishermen had accepted him. The only way to God, salvation and eternal life is through the Son, Jesus Christ. To be made rich with

God, one must have that simple trust in Jesus.

Nicodemus tried intellect as a way to salvation but failed, the Rich Young Ruler tried keeping the commandments, and the Rich Fool tried his money, but all failed. We are prone to depend upon our strength as a nation, our prosperity as a person and religiosity as a people; but only by simple faith in Jesus will salvation come to our house. I shall never forget when several years ago I knelt as a child in the living room of the home of my father and mother. With my mother on one side and my father on the other and in childlike faith, I prayed and received Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. I thank God that his plan of salvation is so simple that even a child can understand.

Our passage concludes with one of the greatest invitations to salvation contained anywhere in the scriptures. You can identify with the idea that the life of sin is a life of loneliness, weariness and heaviness. To carry the burden of sin upon one's shoulders is a burden too great to bear. Take heed, all is not lost. There is a way by which the burden can be lifted. Jesus Christ has the answer. He can fit each of us with a yoke that makes pulling the load of life's problems bearable. Not only does he make the yoke for us, but we are also yoked with him. Jesus Christ plus you or I can do anything. The yoke of Jesus is both easy and light. One of the most precious promises in the scriptures is the promise of rest. The basketball players look forward to the few moments of rest during the brief times-out in a fast moving game. The game of life does not have times-out but rather Satan buffets us continuously. Yet even in the midst of the action of the game, we are constantly receiving the necessary rest to run the course and finish the race.

Down through the ages since Adam and Eve, each person has faced the eternal decision of life. Clear is the choice that each person faces today. What will you do with Jesus? You have the choice of rejecting him and enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season or of trusting in Jesus Christ and find that perfect rest that is sufficient for all seasons.

The choice is yours!

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Attendance report

Nov. 23, 1975

| Church | Sunday School | Church Training | Church addns. |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Alexander, First | 98 | 41 | |
| Albena, First | 65 | 31 | |
| Bentonville | | | |
| Central | 89 | 39 | |
| First | 272 | 43 | |
| Mason Valley | 73 | 39 | |
| Berryville | | | |
| First | 172 | 86 | |
| Freeman Heights | 203 | 55 | 1 |
| Rock Springs | 75 | 49 | |
| Biscoe | 74 | 31 | |
| Booneville | | | |
| First | 233 | 182 | 4 |
| South Side | 88 | 70 | 1 |
| Bryant, First Southern | 120 | 58 | 1 |
| Cabot, Mt. Carmel | 298 | | 6 |
| Camden, Cullendale | 521 | 131 | 3 |
| Cash, First | 117 | 68 | |
| Concord, First | 96 | 35 | |
| Conway, Second | 298 | 112 | 6 |
| Crossett, Mt. Olive | 366 | 149 | |
| Dalark | 30 | 23 | |
| Damascus, South Side | 137 | 71 | |
| El Dorado | | | |
| Caledonia | 35 | 22 | |
| West Side | 400 | 391 | 1 |
| Elkins, First | 88 | 9 | 3 |
| Forrest City, First | 701 | 89 | |
| Ft. Smith | | | |
| First | 1218 | 138 | |
| Grand Avenue | 861 | 255 | 5 |
| Mission | 15 | | 1 |
| Haven Heights | 235 | 144 | |
| Temple | 152 | 53 | 3 |
| Trinity | 170 | 79 | |
| Fouke, First | 104 | 69 | 1 |
| Garfield, First | 88 | 54 | |
| Gentry, First | 176 | 70 | |
| Grandview | 62 | 40 | |
| Greenwood, First | 341 | 137 | |
| Hampton, First | 130 | 70 | 2 |
| Harrison | | | |
| Eagle Heights | 278 | 110 | |
| Woodland Heights | 100 | 50 | |
| Hatfield, First | 93 | | |
| Helena, First | 293 | 86 | |
| Hope | | | |
| Calvary | 170 | 88 | 1 |
| First | 402 | 17 | |
| Hot Springs | | | |
| Grand Avenue | 458 | 211 | 7 |
| Leonard Street | 119 | 55 | 3 |
| Memorial | 79 | 30 | |
| Park Place | 333 | 91 | 1 |
| Hughes, First | 165 | 72 | |
| Jacksonville | | | |
| First | 455 | 100 | 7 |
| Marshall Road | 185 | 72 | |
| Jonesboro, Friendly Hope | 135 | 88 | |
| Kingston, First | 62 | 39 | |
| Lavaca, First | 290 | 97 | |
| Little Rock | | | |
| Geyer Springs | 687 | 151 | 2 |
| Life Line | 522 | 134 | 1 |
| Woodlawn | 116 | 48 | |
| Magnolia, Central | 615 | 277 | |
| Monticello, Second | 281 | 84 | |
| Mt. Ida, First | 147 | 34 | 2 |
| Mulberry, First | 141 | 85 | 2 |
| Murfreesboro, First | 141 | 48 | |
| North Little Rock | | | |
| Calvary | 202 | 117 | |
| Gravel Ridge | 462 | 79 | 2 |
| Levy | | 100 | 2 |
| Paragould | | | |
| Calvary | 240 | | |
| East Side | 245 | 186 | 5 |
| First | 470 | 108 | |
| West View | 186 | 91 | 6 |
| Paris, First | | 110 | |
| Pine Bluff | | 135 | |
| Centennial | 148 | 82 | |
| Lee Memorial | 202 | 121 | 1 |
| Second | 101 | 46 | 6 |
| South Side | 691 | 130 | 1 |
| Tucker | 12 | | |
| Oppelo | 25 | 11 | |
| Sulphur Springs | 229 | 94 | 5 |
| Watson Chapel | 362 | 95 | 5 |
| Pollard, New Hope | 90 | | |
| Prairie Grove | 160 | | |
| Rogers, Immanuel | 530 | 45 | |
| Russellville | | 110 | 2 |
| First | | 104 | 4 |
| Kelley Heights | 488 | 19 | |
| Second | 48 | 74 | |
| Sheridan, First | 129 | | |
| Springdale | 223 | | |
| Berry Street | | 38 | |
| Caudle Avenue | 94 | 75 | 2 |
| Elmdale | 148 | 77 | |
| First | 332 | | 5 |
| Oak Grove | 1555 | | 2 |
| 97 | | | |

Foreign Mission Board REPORTS

FOREIGN MISSIONS INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW

ALMOST A MILLION DOLLARS A WEEK

--FOR WHAT?

The 1976 Foreign Mission Board budget will be almost \$1 million a week (\$51,036,000). Southern Baptists need to know how this large amount is spent since they are the ones who give this money primarily through Cooperative Program gifts and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

More than half the budget goes for the support of missionaries overseas. This includes salaries, housing, medical expenses, education of children, insurance and taxes.

The second largest expenditure is for evangelism and church development overseas. These priority items in foreign missions require more than 11 percent of the total budget.

Three other items requiring more than a million dollars are schools (\$3.3 million), publication work (\$1.1 million) and medical work (\$1.5 million).

The 1976 budget shows an increase of about 12 percent over 1975, an increase which barely keeps up with worldwide inflation.

Almost ninety percent of the foreign missions dollar is still used for overseas expenses, leaving about ten percent for stateside promotion and administrative costs.

If you would like more information about Foreign Mission Board finances write to us.



Foreign Mission Board, SBC
P.O. Box 6597
Richmond, Virginia 23230

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|---|-----|--|--|--|--|---|
| Texarkana | | | | | | | | | |
| Shiloh | 127 | 57 | 2 | | | | | | |
| Trinity | 340 | 117 | 2 | | | | | | |
| Van Buren, First | 546 | 195 | 4 | | | | | | |
| Mission | 28 | | | | | | | | |
| Vandervoort, First | | 75 | | 45 | | | | | 3 |
| Walnut Ridge, White Oak | | 86 | | 61 | | | | | |
| West Helena | | | | | | | | | |
| Second | | 218 | | 101 | | | | | |
| West Helena Church | | 303 | | 75 | | | | | 2 |

Nearly 30 million Baptists

WASHINGTON (BP)—Baptists in North America now number 29,681,927—up 82,884 over the previous year—according to 1974 statistics released here by the Baptist World Alliance (BWA).

The statistics, covering both BWA affiliates and non-BWA bodies, represent only baptized believers. Baptists do not practice infant baptism and the data is not comparable to statistics for denominational groups which do.

If the Baptist data embraced all members of Baptist families and unaffiliated Baptist-preference church goers, the total Baptist community would number about 80 million in North America, according to Carl Tiller of the BWA staff.

Baptist churches in North America number 101,088, according to the BWA.

"Most of the growth is accounted for by the Southern Baptist Convention, which is the largest Baptist body in the world," the BWA said. The SBC, the USA's largest Protestant-evangelical denomination, numbers 12,515,842, according to 1974 statistics, up 218,496 over the previous year.

New youth consultant

NASHVILLE—Keith Wilkinson is a new consultant in youth work in the Sunday School department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Wilkinson, a native Oklahoman, was the director of youth work for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma for three years prior to coming to the Sunday School Board. Also, he served as director of associational missions in the Chickasaw Baptist Association, Chickasaw, Okla. and pastor of Crown

Heights Baptist Church, Woodward, Okla.

He holds the B.A. degree from Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and the B.D. degree from Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Worth.

New day for Training

NASHVILLE—An average of one new church training program for each of the 1,196 Southern Baptist associations is the goal of church training leaders sponsoring "New Day for Training" on April 4, 1976.

Associations, state Baptist conventions and the church training department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board are working in a joint effort to start the new church training units on or before April 4, 1976, which has been designated as a "New Day for Training."

Philip B. Harris, secretary of the church training department at the Sunday School Board, said the "New Day for Training" emphasis could provide "the greatest forward thrust for church training in recent history."

If attendance in new church training units averages 30 persons, it would mean a total of 35,880 more people engaged in Christian training.

Harris said he expected many church training programs to start before the official beginning date, because interest generated earlier would make it beneficial to start the programs immediately.

Two packets and a brochure are available from state church training offices at no cost for churches starting a new church training program.

Extension sets records

NASHVILLE (BP)—During its 25th anniversary year, the Southern Baptist Convention's Seminary Extension Department here has reported establishment of all-time records in student enrollment, course enrollment and establishment of extension centers.

Student enrollments in 1975, says the department's director, Raymond M. Rigdon, has reached 6,702 students taking 8,983 courses. Both figures top the previous record, set last year, of 5,163 students in 7,814 courses.

Rigdon said 230 extension centers are operating in 1975, compared to the previous all-time high of 220 last year. Seminary Extension provides courses through both centers and home study. Most students earn Seminary Extension credit through centers. This year, 5,209 enrolled in centers and 1,495 in home study.

Five year growth percentages for the department of the SBC's six theological seminaries show a 42.4 percent increase in course enrollments between 1970 and

1975 and about a 50 percent increase in students. Establishment of extension centers has shown a 23 percent increase.

Texas assistant to chief

DALLAS (BP)—Lloyd Elder, pastor of Gambrell Street Baptist Church, Ft. Worth, has been elected assistant to James H. Landes, executive secretary of the two-million-member Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Elder, who is completing his second term as chairman of the Texas Baptist Executive Board, will assist Landes as a resource person and liaison officer.

Pastor of Gambrell Street Church for nearly eight years, Elder is former pastor of three Texas Baptist churches—the First Baptist Churches of College Station, Holland and Princeton.

Elder has served on a number of civic and denominational boards. He is a member of the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board and president of the Texas Alumni Association of Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Worth.

A native of Dallas, Elder is a graduate of Howard Payne College, Brownwood, Tex., and earned bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southwestern Seminary.

Consultant named

NASHVILLE—R. Clyde Hall Jr., has been named general administration consultant in the church training department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board to work with ministers of education in developing comprehensive church training programs.

Initially, much of his time will be spent listening to ministers of education to discover which areas of church training work need the most immediate attention. He will lead seminars, workshops and clinics for ministers of education, as well as conferences at the annual church training weeks at Ridgecrest and Glorieta Baptist Conference Centers.

Additionally, his services will be offered to religious education faculties at Baptist seminaries to assist in training students in the work of the church training program.

Hall holds the bachelor of arts degree from the University of Florida, Gainesville, and the master of religious education and doctor of education degrees from Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Worth.

He has served as minister of education in churches in Texas and Tennessee, and as a secretary of the church training department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Before assuming his present duties, Hall was a consultant in associational work in the church training department at the Sunday School Board.

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