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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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**February 26, 1981**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Church youth:  
active part of the family of faith  
page 7.



February 26, 1981

Arkansas Baptist  
NEWSMAGAZINE

## Criticism: Destructive and constructive

by T. B. Maston

At the present time there is considerable criticism of the institutions, boards, and agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention. Also, recently there has been some criticism of the critics. While we should recognize the right of criticism we should also understand that criticism can be destructive as well as constructive.



Maston

### Right

The right to disagree or criticize is a basic human right. It is protected in a democracy, political or religious. There is no such protection in a totalitarian regime.

This right, as is true of other basic rights, is not unlimited. For example, a political democracy in a time of crisis may find it necessary to limit, at least to some degree, the right of dissent. It is also true that any right of the individual is limited by the rights of others.

All of us, and particularly Southern Baptists who strongly believe in the democratic form of church and denominational structure, should defend the right of any Southern Baptist to critically evaluate any aspect of our work. We should just as strongly insist that any criticism

should be constructive rather than destructive. Also, we should stress that the critic should be personally responsible for his or her criticism and the effect that it has on our work.

### Responsibility

There is no right without a corresponding responsibility. This is certainly true of the right to disagree or criticize. Ultimately, the responsibility of the critic is to God. However, he should have some sense of responsibility to his church and/or denomination. A constructive critic will weigh carefully the possible effects of his criticism. If he is persuaded that more harm than good will come from his criticism, he will not express it, or at least he will wait for a more favorable time.

A constructive critic will be motivated primarily by a deep desire to be helpful. He will also honestly believe that God approves what he is doing and that his criticism will do some good.

One test of whether or not the critic's criticism is constructive or destructive is the critic's commitment to the cause he criticizes. Closely akin to the preceding is the spirit revealed in the criticism. The constructive critic expresses his criticism cautiously and frequently regretfully. There will be a degree of humility not evident in the destructive critic. The constructive critic will even be careful about the use of pronouns. "We" will be evident to a degree that will not be true of

the destructive critic. In other words, the constructive critic tends to identify himself with the institution or the cause he criticizes.

### Results

The results of criticism are the supreme test of whether or not the criticism is constructive or destructive. Constructive criticism will build up and strengthen the work. Destructive criticism will tear down more than it builds up.

Another test of criticism is the effect it will have on others. Also, how will the criticism affect the critic's relation to them? My judgment is that if criticism is constructive and in the right spirit it will not adversely affect our relations with those involved in our criticism.

Furthermore, constructive and destructive criticism will differ in the effect on the critic himself. The destructive critic tends to develop a cynical, harping spirit, frequently accompanied by an air of superiority and a holier-than-thou attitude. He actually searches for things to criticize. It becomes a way of life for him. In contrast, the constructive critic looks for the good that he can approve. He seeks as best he can to be objective and fair. He is pleased with any degree of improvement and advancement.

Criticism from a loyal heart may open some wounds but there is healing for those wounds in the critic's spirit, understanding, and compassion.

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## In this issue

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## Letter to the editor

### True issue

I have read with interest all the articles printed in the ABN written by T. B. Maston. Generally, they have all been good with the exception of the last article entitled "Theologians: Conservative and Liberal." While some of the things said by the author were acceptable, his definitions distinguishing between conservatives and liberals is misleading. An elaboration of these definitions sheds light on the real issue facing Southern Baptists today.

The author defines a conservative as "one who seeks to conserve or hold on to the past or at least to the present way of life and thought." He defines a liberal as "one who approves or at least is willing to consider new or different ways." This line of thought makes the present problem with liberalism in our convention appear to be nothing more than a difference of opinion regarding approaches and procedures in dealing with life's problems. Nothing is said about the

real issue facing Southern Baptists, biblical inerrancy.

Could the motive behind this line of thinking be to lay a smoke screen before our "grass-roots" people so that the real issue, "The Battle for the Bible," appears to be the product of misguided ultra-conservatives? On the other hand, could it be possible the author is not informed? The "grass-roots" Baptist cannot be expected to be informed, but a theologian is a horse of another color.

The real issue is biblical inerrancy. Can we trust the God of truth to give us a book that is all true, not partly true? Can we believe that every word of the original manuscripts of the Bible was without error? The conservative says, YES! The liberal says, NO! Since the author did not make this clear it would be good if you passed this on to the "grass-roots" people. They'll appreciate knowing the whole truth — Bob Richardson, St. Charles



Much of the good or evil that occurs in the world starts with the spoken word. Often, a thoughtless word can damage the life of another immeasurably. Or, conversely, great good and happiness can be sparked in a few words. Hence, the writers of the Bible warned repeatedly that we should use great care in what we say. Every Christian has a stewardship of the proper use of his speech.

The damage resulting from improper use of the tongue is often compared with a raging fire in the Bible. James, the half-brother of our Lord, says the tongue is the instrument which ignites a raging fire (James 3:5-6). The picture was a scene which the residents of Palestine knew well. In the dry season dead grass, low thorn bushes and shrubs were easily ignited by a single spark. Once they were burning flames would spread like a wave which there was little chance of stopping.

Harmful words may be spoken unintentionally or they may be hurled out like a deadly dart with the intention of destroying another. The Jewish rabbis said that, "life and death were in the hand of the tongue."

Unintentional harm produced by something we say is the most difficult to avoid. Words spoken in jest may be taken seriously. Or, one person's experience or thoughts of the moment may be entirely different from those of the speaker. Christians should never use jokes or jest to convey a hurtful message to another. If a misunderstanding develops over an unintentional word, a Christian has the responsibility to correct it.

One of the most vicious things which one person can do to another is the use of malicious gossip. Such tactics can destroy the reputation and the good name of another when they are not present to defend themselves. It is deadly because there are few activities which the average person finds more delightful than engaging in spicy gossip. For many, involvement in gossip, particularly concerning some distinguished

person, is one of the most fascinating activities of life. Christians need to remember that gossip is condemned throughout the Bible as a vicious and heinous sin.

For most Christians our speech can be paradoxical. On one occasion we may praise God and say those things which will further the work of the kingdom. On another occasion we may say those things which are contrary to the furtherance of the kingdom and retard the spread of the gospel.

The speech of an individual is an excellent insight into his real nature. We say the things that we think and feel. While all of us must deal with our Adamic nature, there are a few steps which should prove helpful to each of us.

- We should ask God to assist us in controlling our speech. Only through God's help can our speech be what it should be.
- We should be certain when we speak that we won't hurt another person. It is essential that we treat others as we desire to be treated.
- We should always be certain we know all the facts when we speak. Someone has said, "The only mental exercise some people get is jumping to conclusions."
- We should never engage in vicious gossip. Communication of negative facts concerning another should be done only with the intention of helping that individual or to protect others. Sharing gossip simply for the fun of gossiping is sin.
- We should be quick to set the record straight if we have unintentionally brought harm or hurt to another by an unintentional word we have spoken.
- Above all, we should pray that God will assist us to speak words which will be a blessing to others. The words we speak will often help or harm others greatly. Only through God's help can we have a proper stewardship of our speech.

# Arkansas Baptist

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J. EVERETT SNEED, Ph.D. .... Editor  
BETTY KENNEDY ..... Managing Editor

ERWIN L. McDONALD, Litt. D. .... Editor Emeritus

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## One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

### The positive contributions of Jimmy Carter

During Jimmy Carter's four years in the White House, it was difficult to say nice things about him without being accused of promoting the Democratic Party. Some would say, "It was difficult to say nice things about Jimmy Carter, period." So much went wrong during his term of office — the strange crises of inflation and unemployment at the same time, the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and the American boycott of the Olympics, Iranian seizure of American hostages and the frustrating "yo-yo" pattern of efforts to free the hostages, and the bizarre "dumping" of more than 125,000 Cuban refugees, apparently including some criminals, drug addicts, and homosexuals that Castro was glad to send us.

Leave it to the historians to debate Carter's responsibility for causing, aggravating, and/or effectively handling these crises. I just want to say a few words on behalf of the positive contributions of President Jimmy Carter. I believe he was a good representative of the Christian

faith and life, and a good representative of the Southern Baptist interpretation of the Christian faith and life. He was the first President in my lifetime who spoke naturally, articulately, and without apology, of his experience as a born-again Christian. In doing it, he made "born-again" a part of the American vocabulary in a way that a century of preaching, Christian education, and home missions had been unable to accomplish. Mass media personnel apparently had not been listening to us prior to Jimmy Carter's presidency.

More than sensitizing the secular press to the evangelical Christian vocabulary, Jimmy Carter magnified the importance of the local church — the assembled church — by his personal example of attendance and participation. He resisted the temptation to bring the church to himself at the White House, and went regularly to Sunday School and the worship service at his own church in Washington. In a day when increasing millions seem to prefer the comfort of the

electronic church in their television den, it was an inspiration to see President Carter regularly take his family for Bible study and the preaching of the Word in his own local church. His own teaching of Sunday School from time to time further strengthened his example.

Finally, Jimmy Carter's unique two-fold commitment to missions and human rights was a refreshing change from the picture so often painted in the secular press — and even the religious press — that these two commitments are somehow incompatible. Historians may well remember Jimmy Carter more for challenging Southern Baptists to establish the Mission Service Corps while championing human rights, than for any other thing. Jesus taught us that the winning of souls and the meeting of human needs go hand in hand, and I for one appreciate a President who is unapologetic for both of these commitments.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University at Arkadelphia.



## Woman's viewpoint

Mary Maynard Sneed

### A mature commitment

For several months she wore the little gold ring that turned her finger green. Sometimes she pulled it back and scrubbed the stain vigorously with a toothbrush, but never could she be induced to take it off. It was a gift of love, symbolic of her engagement to the little boy across the street.

Generally, they played with his miniature racing cars or her "Barbie" dolls on our patio, but on that fateful afternoon they were playing touch football with several of the other neighbor children. It happened, unfortunately, that she outscored him at that game in the presence of all his peers. Humiliated beyond words, he walked home alone, choking back the tears.

A few decisive minutes later he greeted her at the corner of the block with the news that the engagement was off and he wanted his ring back. She obediently removed the precious symbol and laid it directly in his open palm, with a pop to

the nose that flattened him out on his back. He picked himself up, brushed himself off and ran, sobbing, to his mother.

That same afternoon she saw him present "her" ring to a girl who practiced sitting sidesaddle on a bicycle to avoid wrinkling her skirt. Our little girl rubbed her eyes on the sleeve of her shirt and came crying home to Mama.

Truly, small romances die hard, but lasting relationships require mature commitment. Marriage is not for children. The decision to marry must be made by adults who are committed to a lifetime relationship.

To a child, love is little more than sentiment. It is more self-serving than self-giving. The child's happiness is accomplished by the simple satisfaction of his own immediate needs and desires. The joy that comes from making others happy exists in a spiritual realm that he has

not yet explored.

Yet, all too often, such childish concepts of love and happiness do enter into the decision to marry. Since the marital relationship can be seriously complicated by the childish behavior of either partner, the adult-child marriage simply does not work very well. Leading authorities on marriage advise that, in the cultivating of healthy marriages, the most important single ingredient is maturity.

Mrs. Sneed of North Little Rock is the wife of the editor, a homemaker and the mother of two daughters. She is a teacher and choir member at Park Hill Church.

A special project to provide Bibles to Hungary has been launched by the American Bible Society. Nine tons of paper will be supplied to print 15,000 Karoli Bibles, the traditional version Hungarian Bible.

Mrs. Vertis Jefferies (right), in her office at Memorial Hospital, discusses volunteer activities with Levy Church member Mrs. Frances Pratt.



ADN photo/Maria Gill

## Levy's 'small' ministry big in results

by Robert Dilday

Southern Baptists often think mission projects require a great deal of money and enormous efforts. But a group of women at North Little Rock Levy Church have found a ministry that demands little more than a few hours of their time every week, and yet is as effective and fulfilling as any in a church's outreach program.

The women are ministering to out-of-town patients who, becoming ill or hurt while driving through Arkansas, are treated at Memorial Hospital in North Little Rock.

Memorial, a part of the Baptist Medical Center system, towers above the city on a hill not far from Interstates 30 and 40, the busy highways from Memphis, St. Louis and Dallas.

Mrs. Vertis Jefferies, director of volunteer services at Memorial and a member of North Little Rock Park Hill Church, said that the women's mission action group at Levy Church had been looking for a worthwhile project to take on.

"I asked them if they were interested in just being a friend to out-of-town patients while they were under the hospital's care," Mrs. Jefferies recalled; "they said this was just what they were looking for."

The first indication Mrs. Jefferies had of the potential success of the program occurred last November. A woman from Canada, on a tour passing through Arkansas, suffered a heart attack, and found herself in the coronary unit at Memorial. She was soon on her way to recovery, but alone in a strange city.

"I introduced myself and told her there was a church interested in being a friend to her," said Mrs. Jefferies. "Tears came to her eyes; she had a real emotional need for companionship. So I called Frances Pratt at Levy Baptist Church."

Mrs. Pratt, along with Levy members Mrs. Shirely Whittemore and Mrs. Ambra Johnson, visited the Canadian regularly, and when her family did arrive to be with her, took them to worship services at the church. The visitors were so impressed with Levy's outreach, that they said they were eager to start a similar ministry at their home church in Canada.

"We deal with financial needs so much," said Mrs. Pratt, "that we forget there is an emotional need as well. These people left with a good impression not only of Baptists, but also of North Little Rock and Arkansas."

Since the first experience with the Canadian woman, someone from the Levy Church mission action group has come by Memorial at most visiting hours. Mrs. Jefferies makes the contact with an out-of-town patient, and then introduces them to the church volunteers.

The volunteer services director is delighted with the results of this program and the possibilities of similar undertakings in other hospitals.

"I feel sure that anything I call on this group to do, they would do it," she beams. "Now our emphasis should be to appeal to groups across the state to develop comparable outreaches."

Robert Dilday is an intern with the Newsmagazine.



The Southern Accent

## This I believe: About Jesus Christ

by Earl R. Humble

Jesus was God. The New Testament presents Jesus as the one who was with the Father from eternity (John 17:5). Both Matthew and Luke give the story of the virgin birth: "Mary was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 1:18). The angels acknowledged him to be the Savior, Christ the Lord (Lk. 2:11). John recognized him as an eternal being, in fact, as the creator of the world (John 1:1-10). Paul says that Jesus was on an equality with God (Phil. 2:6).

Jesus was man. The fact that Jesus was God should not cause us to ignore his humanity. He had two natures — divine and human. He was as much God as if he had never been man and as much man as if he had never been God. If Jesus did not have a real body he did not bear our sins on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24). Because he was man as well as God, he could be tempted in all points as we are (Heb. 2:14-18; 4:15). Through the centuries some have denied either his divine nature or his human nature, but true believers take the Bible's word that he was both God and man.

Jesus was the God-man. In his human nature Jesus hungered, he thirsted, he became weary, and he needed rest and sleep. It was real blood that fell from his body on the cross. His divine nature was not reduced in its essence when he became man, and his true human nature was not lessened when he came forth from the grave. He is today our representative in heaven (Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1), and the Holy Spirit is God's representative on earth (Rom. 8:26). In our fully redeemed state we shall be like him (1 John 3:2).

Earl R. Humble is professor of religion at Southern Baptist College.

Fifty churches, 250 worship groups and 2,500 new Christians are the goals of Thailand missionaries for the next 20 years. Missionaries hope 10 percent of the eastern population will be Christians.



Humble



by Millie Gill/ABN staff writer

**Wade D. Tucker**

is serving as pastor of the Ft. Smith South Side Church, coming there from Charlotte, North Carolina, where he was minister with adults and for church growth with the Providence Church. A native of North Carolina, he is a graduate of Mars Hill College and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Elizabeth, have three children, Dennis, Rebecca and Emily.

**Arlen Waldrup**

died Feb. 13 at the age of 47. He was a member of the El Dorado Second Church, a member of the Board of Directors of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation and of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board. He was a graduate of Baylor University and Baylor Law School and was serving as vice president and trust officer of the National Bank of Commerce of El Dorado at the time of his death. Survivors are his wife, Mrs. Ann Pendleton Waldrup; two sons, Ken Waldrup of Stillwater, Okla., and David Waldrup of El Dorado; two daughters, Darcy Waldrup of Stillwater and Beth A. Waldrup of Houston; his father and stepmother, Mr. and Mrs. Hugh H. Waldrup of La Place, La.; three brothers and two sisters.

**Charles Collins**

recently celebrated his tenth year as minister of music with Ft. Smith First Church.

**Benny Grant**

is serving as pastor of Branch First Church. He is a 1980 graduate of Ouachita University where he was a religion major with a minor in sociology. He has been pastor of churches and served in associational leadership positions in Arkansas. Grant and his wife, Marcia, have two children, Jason and Alicia.

**Stephen P. Davis**

has resigned as pastor of the Fordyce First Church, effective Feb. 25. He has accepted the call to become pastor of the First Church of Guthrie, Okla., effective March 1.

**Bob Hall**

has resigned as minister of music/education of Little Rock Parkway Place Church to join the staff of the North Little Rock First Church.

**Tony Rose**

has joined the staff of West Memphis First Church as director of youth work. A native of Louisville, Ky., he is a graduate of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green and is now a student at Mid-America Seminary. He is married to the former Joie Lanham.

**Russell E. Branson**

has begun his pastorate with the Arkadelphia Unity Church, coming there from the Tichnor Church. He is a student at Ouachita University. Branson and his wife, Sandra, have one daughter, Ashley.

**Malvern Gilead Church**

held services Feb. 15 to ordain their pastor, Robin Rogers. Churches of Central Association participated.

**Blytheville First Church**

ordained Gary Hyde to the gospel ministry Feb. 15. Hyde is pastor of the Blytheville Bethany Church.

**Nodena Church**

ordained its pastor, Randy Johnson, to the gospel ministry Feb. 22.

**Gosnell Church**

has purchased a new parsonage in the Gosnell area. The former parsonage will provide additional educational and office space.

**Batesville First Church**

members are involved in a personal witnessing program that has resulted in 17 additions to the church in the last four Sundays. Pastor Don Nall reported that these additions included three adults coming for baptism.

**Little Rock Cross Road Church**

will hold an adult banquet Feb. 27. Jeffry and Barbara Schleiff, missionaries to Zimbabwe, will be speakers.

**Morrilton First Church**

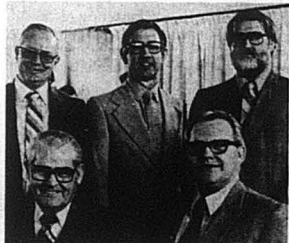
began a new ministry of Bible Study each Wednesday at noon. Pastor W. Coy Sample will lead the study on the Holy Spirit.

**Clinton dedicates new worship center**

Clinton First Church dedicated a new sanctuary and renovated educational facilities in a special service Feb. 15. Pastor Tom Harris and Homer Shirley, director of development for the Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services and former pastor, led the dedication services.

Shirley, who was pastor at Clinton in 1957 and 1958, compared the dedication of the 530-seat sanctuary with Solomon's dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem recorded in II Chronicles 6 and 7.

The total cost of the renovation and construction was \$235,000.



The Independence Baptist Association and the Arkansas Baptist Christian Life Council sponsored a moral issues seminar at Cave City Eastside Church Feb. 12. Conferences dealt with alcohol and drug abuse and family issues. Participating in the seminar were (first row, left to right) Hal Gallop, interim pastor at Eastside Church; S. D. Hacker, director of missions for Independence Association; (second row) Bob Parker, director of the Christian Life Council; Homer Shirley, director of development for the Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services; and Jim Pitman, pharmacist at the Goodwin Drug Store in Batesville.

Sheffield, Trulove, Fischer and Sawyers (from left) consider Fischer's close-up experience with a charging elephant, recorded in midstride. They met to critique the trip.



ABN photo/Betty J. Kennedy

## Arkansans' trips to Malawi signal new status for volunteers

by Betty J. Kennedy

Keith Parks of the SBC Foreign Mission Board thinks volunteerism may be the wave of the future.

Arkansans Dwayne Fischer, Jimmy Sheffield, and Conway Sawyers are equally as positive about volunteers for missions abroad, now that they have been to Malawi.

"What Parks was saying," Sawyers believes, "was that in the 1980's the Foreign Mission Board will push for more people to do this kind of missions."

"This kind of missions" is volunteers from the U.S. going to help establish churches and train laypeople who are nationals as leaders.

That's what four groups of Arkansans are trying to do through a four-phase evangelistic and church growth campaign that began last October with the trip by Fischer, Sheffield and Sawyers.

This trip and three more in 1981 will have ended the career missionaries in Malawi with Sunday School Growth, lay witnessing, youth training and enlistment. The campaign will climax in simultaneous crusades.

Not that Parks, Executive Director of the Foreign Mission Board, expects volunteers to replace career missionaries. He sees the volunteers as augmenting the work of those assigned permanently overseas.

"We can't send enough missionaries to win the world to Christ," Parks admits. So the FMB is looking to volunteers.

A seed was planted in Arkansas when Darrell Garner, agricultural missionary to Malawi, was on furlough here and shared the plan of a crusade with state staffers. The idea was cultivated by the Malawi Mission and resulted in an invitation to Arkansas Baptists by the Foreign Mission Board.

Recently retired Executive Secretary Charles Ashcraft delegated the enlistment of participants to Harry Trulove for two reasons: Ashcraft was nearing the end of his service, and the program would overlap in several areas of convention work.

Trulove, as President of the Arkansas

Baptist Foundation, already worked with all departments for financial undergirding and could coordinate work which involved several departments in an evenhanded way.

A six-person steering committee issued invitations to persons from across the state who were willing to secure the funds necessary to go.

Chosen to go for phase one were Fischer, associate pastor/minister of education and administration at Little Rock's Calvary Church; Sheffield, administrator at North Little Rock's Park Hill Church, and Sawyers, director of the State Missions Department for Arkansas Baptists.

They spent three weeks in Malawi (plus a week traveling to and from the field). Using materials coordinated by Arkansas Sunday School Director Lawson Hatfield, they led conferences in six locations to train leaders in methods and show them the importance of getting more people involved in Bible study.

Next month several couples will go to Malawi to help with training for personal evangelism. They will lead Malawi Baptists to one-to-one evangelism methods, using WIN materials.

Enlisting and training national youth and their adult leaders to use singing and drama teams for youth retreats and rallies will be phase three in June. Three young people and three adults will go from Arkansas.

Climaxing the projects will be three weeks of evangelistic crusades in 24 different locations, using a dozen evangelists and four musicians.

To help career missionaries in Malawi prepare for future teams of volunteer missionaries, Harry Trulove and the three phase one volunteers met to evaluate their first-hand look at foreign missions.

While the three suggest that more orientation is needed for future volunteers, they allow that any amount would be inadequate preparation for the reality of cultural differences.

One terms his experience "a different type of missionary education". "This is a

new approach to helping missions on location," Conway Sawyers says, "but it also should result in churches turning loose of more of their money for missions." "The educational process will filter back to the churches as experience translated through the minds and hearts of those who have been there," Sawyers predicts.

Next Week: Malawi missions close up.

Betty J. Kennedy is managing editor of the "Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine."

### On the cover



ABN photo/Millie Gill

Encouraging youth to see themselves as part of the family of faith of their church is one of the goals of their week, which will be observed in many Southern Baptist churches March 8-15. Young people at Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock annually honor the senior adults of their church with a tea, noting the older members' contributions to the church's well-being.



# Your state convention at work

Sunday School

8.5 by '85

Recently I had one of many visits with "Sunshine" Williamson and as always our conversation majored on Sunday School work. Sunshine is the widow of former Sunday School director for the state convention, Edgar Williamson. Their son, Stanley Williamson, also deceased,



Hatfield

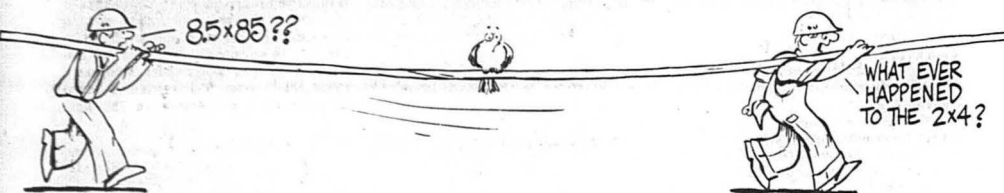
was a strong force in the implementing of Sunday School growth while an employee of the Baptist Sunday School Board at Nashville.

The Williamson father and son team developed and implemented what was commonly called "The Associational Pastor-led Sunday School Enlargement Campaign." Their strongest supporter was Sunshine. Mrs. Williamson recently expressed great pleasure to know the concepts of this emphasis are again coming to the front.

Like most movements or projects, names or titles may change, but the working concepts are the same. For example, the Flake Formula is again being

emphasized and more and more pastors, staff members, and church members are able to identify that Arthur Flake in the 1920's and 30's helped Southern Baptists to know and apply five basic growth principles. These are: know your possibilities, provide space, enlarge the organization, train workers, and visit prospects. Additional concepts include that leaders must be committed to growth, conduct weekly workers' meetings, and teach the scriptures to win persons to Christ.

Today the pastor-led enlargement campaign may be combined with "director-led" campaigns. They may also be identified as the small church growth



## Local church is focus of plans for aid to families

by Betty J. Kennedy

Gerald Jackson, who coordinates family ministries for Arkansas Baptists, thinks that Southern Baptist families will be strengthened by what Southern Baptist churches do for their members. "I have a conviction," he says, "that the way families are going to be helped is by the local church."

That's why the Church Training Department is sponsoring a state-wide conference about "The Church Strengthening Families" next month at North Little Rock's Park Hill Church. The conference, March 9 and 10, will be aimed at training local church staff to implement family ministries in their churches, though night sessions will offer help for family members themselves.

"It's one of the most extensive things we have done, on the state level, for families," Jackson says. And the conference comes a year ahead of the denomination-wide emphasis on strengthening families as one of three Bold Mission Thrust goals for 1982-85.

Workshops will alternate with general sessions featuring speakers on topics such as "Family Life Today, Strengths and Needs" and "The Home, Key to Christian Education." Also covered in general sessions will be the church's ministry to senior adults and Biblical perspective on the minister's family.

Speakers and workshop leaders will be members of the Family Ministries Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board and Arkansas Church Training Department staffers.

Workshops will offer help with the local church's ministry to single adults as well as to senior adults, and helps for using the Deacon Family Ministry Plan. Training for leading the church will be provided as pastors are shown how to use existing programs, such as the marriage enrichment system, and to establish new local programs of family enrichment.

Workshops of general interest will provide discussion of how to rear responsible children and how to use recreation to strengthen the family. Both topics are scheduled for night sessions.

Closing the conference on Tuesday evening will be an address on "The Church Strengthening Families, 1982-1985," one of three goals for Bold Mission Thrust during that time period.

To strengthen families, family ministries programs throughout the SBC will emphasize the following projects:

(1) "Opening the Word Together," a three-year program to enlist families in daily Bible study and family worship at home;

(2) "Marriage: Growing in Oneness," a

two-year project to strengthen husband/wife relationships and

(3) "Parents: Building a Christian Home," a one-year emphasis on helping parents develop Biblically-based attitudes toward child raising and developing parenting skills.

The three projects begin in different years but all continue to 1985 to reach the goals of having 500,000 family units committed to family worship and Bible study in the home, and having every church providing Christian family enrichment activities to strengthen family relationships and moral values.

Kickoff for each of the three projects will be Christian Home Week, observed by Southern Baptist churches in May each year.

Aids to the local church to carry out these projects will include special study materials and resource kits, plus existing periodicals which offer help in family relationships.

While Gerald Jackson hopes this conference will create awareness of the emphasis on helping families that is ahead at the denominational level, that's not the only goal for the meeting. He believes that addressing the current needs of families and enlisting the local church in long-range aid programs is the surest way of strengthening families.

project called "The People Reacher."

The current emphasis just starting this year is called 8.5 by '85. The goal is to enlarge the Sunday School enrollment in Arkansas to 271,000 by the end of 1985. This can best be accomplished through pastor-led enlargement efforts. Our aim is to conduct one such campaign in each association by 1985. It is a high aim, but worthy. Bold Mission Thrust will encourage all of us to participate.

Growth, led by pastors, dedicated Sunday School leaders, and members will be sunshine in the soul. "There Is Sunshine In My Soul Today." That would be a good theme song. — Lawson Hatfield, state Sunday School Director

#### Child Care

### Summer camp

Cold temperatures, dead grass, and leafless trees really don't sound like camp time. We usually associate camp with hot temperatures, outdoor sports, green grass and trees, ticks, chiggers, mosquitos and Siloam Springs.

Well, that time will soon be here and now is the time to prepare. A lot of love and a little money will send one of our children to Siloam Springs for an enjoyable and life-changing week.

Where can you better invest \$30? Just send us a check and say it is for "summer camp". We will see that a young person has the opportunity to participate in worship, Bible study, fellowship and recreation. Many will make commitments to Christ. What a dividend on a \$30 investment.

Last summer one of the young people expressed his appreciation for what he learned in a witnessing class at Siloam. What a thrill to know some of our young people have established such important priorities. After all, life is really made meaningful by relationships. Our relationship to God compels us to share him with others.

Many youth who come into our program do not know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Some of them come to know

him at Siloam. They also learn to share him with others. This is what life here is all about.

I repeat the question already asked, Where can you better invest \$30? — Homer W. Shirley Jr., Director of Development, Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services.

### Annuity Earnings increase

The Annuity Board retirement plans experienced an excellent year during 1980. The earnings credited in the various funds are as follows:

Pre '77 Fund B, 13.25 percent compounded monthly, 14.085 percent annual return

Fund E (Balanced), 20 percent compounded monthly, 21.94 percent annual return

Fund F (Fixed), 8.5 percent compounded monthly, 8.84 percent annual return  
Fund C (Variable Benefit), had a growth improvement per unit value of 25.8 percent

Unit value 12-31-79, \$2,2807

Unit value 12-31-80, \$2,8697

— Nadine B. Bjorkman, Arkansas Annuity Board Representative  
(See a Baptist Press article in this issue for additional facts.)

## MISSIONS means your neighbor, too!

Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, National Goal \$17,250,000  
Week of Prayer for Home Missions  
March 1-8, 1981

### CP Summary for January:

1980  
\$591,258.08  
580,185.70  
( 11,072.38)

Budget goal  
Budget receipts

1981  
\$669,511.50  
753,273.98  
83,762.48

Cooperative Program gifts registered a whopping 29.83 percent increase over one year ago. The \$83,762.48 advantage is 12.51 percent above budget requirements for the month. Mild weather and an inflated economy were factors in the increase. The major cause, however, is rooted in the faithfulness of God's people and churches that have increased their mission support. — James A. Walker

## BSU Third Century Campaign

### Tom made me do it by Mrs. S. A. Whitlow

After being an active, involved, busy pastor's wife for 25 years, suddenly I became the wife of the Executive Secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. When Jack was asked to serve in this position, he told me, "It will be much harder on you to make this change." Truer words were never spoken. But thanks to Dr. Tom Logue it was not long until I found my place of service.



Mrs. Whitlow  
Truer words were never spoken. But thanks to Dr. Tom Logue it was not long until I found my place of service.

Having always loved young people and working in various organizations with them, I was delighted to have the opportunity to be actively engaged in BSU work. I was invited to speak at Religious Emphasis Week on several college campuses, to attend retreats, and to work with International Students.

Tom had me doing things that I thought were impossible for me, and I would like to tell of one in particular. He asked me to speak at a State BSU Retreat. There were college students of many nationalities, all of our BSU Directors, foreign missionaries, southwide leaders, and my husband present. I think I was more aware of Jack's presence than any of the others. However, I did it, and shall forever be grateful to Tom for having confidence in me.

WHY AM I FOR THE BSU THIRD CENTURY ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN? Because I am for BSU and the tremendous work it is doing on our college campuses in influencing young people in all areas of life to give their best to the Master. I am thrilled to know many successful young people in the ministry, as doctors, nurses, missionaries and in the business world who were inspired and encouraged through BSU during their college years.

Please join Jack and me in supporting this Campaign that the BSU may continue to minister to the total needs of our college young people now and in the years to come.

Mrs. Lorene Whitlow is the widow of S. A. "Jack" Whitlow, Executive Secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention from 1959 to 1968.

# SBC datelines

## White House to end religious liaison post

WASHINGTON (BP) — Among the many changes being made at the White House by President Ronald Reagan is the elimination of a presidential assistant for religious liaison, Baptist Press has learned.

According to a spokeswoman for Elizabeth Dole, assistant to the president for public liaison, White House relations with the nation's religious communities will be reassigned to an office with a larger agenda. Dole's representative said the assignment has yet to be made to a specific member of the president's staff.

Speculation about the post had previously centered on likely candidates for the religious liaison position, a post held during the final 20 months of the Carter administration by Southern Baptist minister Bob Maddox.

Although numerous past presidents assigned staff to deal with the religious communities, Carter is believed to have been the only chief executive to elevate the task to the level enjoyed by Maddox.

An assistant in Dole's office emphasized, however, that the change does not signal a decision to neglect public relations with religious organizations.

One possible explanation for the decision to abolish the position may be Reagan's desire to avoid a direct confrontation with leaders of the religious right, the fundamentalist coalition which

claimed major credit for the new president's election.

Such a face-off would unquestionably result if the post of religious liaison were not offered to one of their own. By abolishing the position, the theory goes, the president will offend neither the religious right nor mainline denominations.

## SBC Annuity Board reports record growth

DALLAS (BP) — Trustees of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board learned of unprecedented financial growth and honored board president Darold Morgan on his 10th anniversary as chief executive officer during their 63rd annual meeting in Dallas.

Trustees also elected Charles Holland, pastor of First Baptist Church, Longview, Texas, as their chairman, succeeding D. William Dodson Jr., pastor from Martin, Tenn.

"Without a doubt, 1980 was a year of unprecedented growth in which we were able to credit record amounts to the accounts of our members," Morgan said.

He reported that funds held in trust for the more than 60,000 participants in the retirement programs of agencies and churches increased 17.4 percent to a

record total of \$806,518,757, or \$139 million more than last year.

Morgan said figures showing that 591 churches joined the retirement program for the first time and 2,362 new members enrolled were "encouraging" because "they reflect how retirement planning is becoming a priority item to the participant and the congregation."

Trustees commended Morgan and the board staff for their efforts in passage of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act which enables agency personnel to continue participation in the Annuity Board programs.

At the 10th anniversary banquet, trustees awarded Morgan a three-month sabbatical for professional enrichment in the areas of his choice, and gave him a personalized set of golf clubs.

The board last year paid benefits totaling \$37,015,444 to retired or disabled ministers, church and agency employees or their widows. The board also distributed \$333,798 in relief, the money received for that purpose through the SBC Cooperative Program.

Records were established in participation. Some 53,734 church and agency members now participate in the "B" plan; 3,376 in the "C" plan; and 20,527 in the "A" plan which is closed to new members. Premium income exceeded \$87.9 million.

The trustees also approved bylaw changes to conform with charter changes approved by the SBC last June.

## Indiana editor resigns after censure over letters

Gene Medaris, editor of the *Indiana Baptist* since June 1977, resigned Feb. 2 after he was censured by the state convention's executive committee.

Censure followed printing of two letters the committee deemed "controversial," but convention executive director R. V. Haygood and chairman of the executive committee, David Simpson, say the letters incident only illustrates long-term "poor judgment" on the editor's part.

"The issue is over the philosophy of what a state Baptist newspaper should be," said Medaris, 51, a former missionary, pioneer preacher and secular religion editor. "Is it to be a house organ or is it to be a newspaper? This is a problem all papers have when they are directly under the executive board."

An unsigned [the letter ended with the words "name on file"] letter in the Dec. 16 issue of the weekly newspaper questioned two actions of the executive board of the State convention of Baptists in Indiana. It questioned the reasoning behind a special interest account called

Fund 58, and the action of the executive board in creating the job of administrative assistant the week following the annual meeting of the state convention without mentioning it to the convention.

Medaris said the writer in an editor's note for more time to secure accurate answers to the questions.

"If he did not understand the question he should have given someone a chance to answer who did understand before he printed the letter," said Simpson, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in New Whiteland. The executive committee felt that Medaris' printing of the letter without answering the questions created controversy.

"Our view is that anonymous letters should not be printed," said Simpson. "If a man has the intelligence to write a letter, he should also have the courage to put his name on it. To withhold the name is poor judgment on the editor's part. There is an understanding between the executive board and the editor that this is not the way things are to be done."

The committee's censure reads in part: "One purpose of the *Indiana Baptist* is to create unity . . . and the unsigned letter of Dec. 16, 1980 was controversial, created disharmony." The censure instructed the editor "to share controversial letters or issues with the executive director before printing and have concurrence."

The problem was aggravated with the publication of a second letter from another source, asking for answers to the first and calling Fund 58 a "slush" fund. Haygood says he had asked Medaris not to publish the letter.

Fund 58 is a special account that collects the interest from the investment on non-Cooperative Program money. The executive board authorizes expenditures from the fund. Money from the fund bought an automobile and a television set as retirement gifts for former Indiana Executive Director E. Harmon Moore, an action the writer of the second letter disapproved. (BP)

## Blacks' past to be studied

NASHVILLE, TENN. — "Black Southern Baptist Heritage" will be the theme of the joint annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission and Historical Society here, April 21-22.

"With about 600 black Southern Baptist churches and possibly over 250,000 total black Southern Baptists in the United States today, the time is long overdue for a careful look at their heritage," said Lynn E. May Jr., executive director of the Historical Commission.

Leading off at 8:45 a.m., Tuesday, April 21, in the J.M. Crowe Room at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board; the first session will feature an "Overview of Black Southern Baptist Involvements," to be addressed by Edward L. Wheeler, associate director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Department of Black Church Relations.

The second address of the Tuesday morning session will be, "Implications of the Withdrawal of Blacks from Southern Baptist Churches Following Emancipation," with the speaker to be David O. Moore, chairman of the Department of

Religion, William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.

A noon luncheon at Nashville First Church, that same day, will feature a videotape presentation, "Black Southern Baptists at Worship."

The Tuesday evening session will feature Leon McBeth, professor of church history at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, addressing the issue, "Images of the Black Church in America."

In the same session, "Home Mission Board Ministry in the Black Community" will be discussed by Emmanuel L. McCall, director of that agency's Department of Black Church Relations.

The Wednesday session, to begin at 8:45 a.m., will feature an address, "Implications of Multiple Affiliation for Black Southern Baptists," to be delivered by pastor Harold T. Branch of St. John Baptist Church in Corpus Christi, Texas.

The final address of the meeting will deal with "Growth of Black Southern Baptist Churches in the Inner City," by an expert in that area, Sidney Smith, consultant with the Ethnic Liaison Unit of the Office of Church Programs and Services at the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Following each of the major addresses, a qualified person will respond, with dialogue to follow, said Lynn E. May Jr.

The Commission trustees will meet at 2:00 p.m., Monday, April 20, in the J.M. Crowe Room for their business session.

## Role shift spurs SBC growth

by Michael Tutterow

ATLANTA (BP) — Home missionaries have shifted roles during recent decades, to the benefit of Southern Baptist growth, says Loyd Corder, an observer and instigator of missions in the United States for 40 years.

"It's been slow and subtle, but the whole role (of missionaries) has changed," claims Corder, 64, who just retired from the staff of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"When first organized, the function of the board was to send and support missionaries and let them do the mission work," he explains. "But we've enlarged the definition of missionary from that of just a doer to that of an equipper, an enabler. There's been a steady progression from being a sending agency to one that provides leadership and acts as a catalyst, influencing the people in the pew to do mission work."

The role change evolved as missions responsibility shifted from the agency to state conventions and associations. Corder believes these cooperative efforts stimulated Southern Baptist work.

"Southern Baptists are like kudzu vines: the more you cut them, the more they grow," he says.

A structural reorganization of the board "divided up the work and made cooperative efforts more effective," Corder says. "We began doing all our work in cooperation with state conventions."

Under such a set-up, the board became an agency that "inspires and enables people to do mission," Corder says. He cautions it should never replace the individual's personal responsibility for mission.

"Mission is the purpose God has for each individual, each church," he emphasizes. "Everything we do is toward ac-

complishing mission. Christianity is not dogma or good works. It's relationships — to God, to others. It is the whole enterprise of evangelizing and discipling, centering in actions we perform where we are, and done in such a way that their effects carry into the future."

The key to educating people to do mission is in leading "state conventions to form missions committees that can train the churches to do it," he claims. "If the Home Mission Board doesn't relate to the state conventions and the associations, we won't have anyone to relate our concept to the local church."

Corder's long tenure and diversity of responsibility lend credibility to his words. Since 1940, he has been missionary pastor, superintendent of city missions for Houston, superintendent of Spanish missions in the Southwest, secretary of the board's language missions division, associate director of the missions division, director of the associational missions division and special assistant to the director of the missions section.

But he's not finished yet. He and his wife, Gertrude, plan to spend the next two years as Mission Service Corps volunteers in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

"I'll serve as consultant for the Foreign Mission Board, helping to develop cooperative relationships between churches, associations and national conventions," he explains.

Corder's emphasis, whether overseas or at home, is educating people about missions. As "Joe the Baptist," the other half of Corder's ventriloquism act, put it, "We shouldn't let people go around in their unawares."

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## Court rejects disputes

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Supreme Court reiterated the long-standing doctrine that hierarchical-type church bodies control the properties of local congregations, even when the latter secede from their denominations.

In a pair of cases involving Episcopal churches in New Jersey, the high court unanimously declined requests from local parishes to review lower court decisions holding that their properties belong to the mother denomination, the Protestant Episcopal Church. Both congregations had objected to changes in the denomination and withdrew from membership.

By rejecting the appeals, the high court reasserted the principle, first enunciated in 1872, that church bodies controlled by a hierarchy have property rights over local congregations. On several occasions, the court has decided other church property disputes, but in each case the contending parties were Presbyterian.

Although no church property dispute involving congregational-type churches or denominations had ever been argued or decided by the court, virtually all church-state experts agree that in such bodies local congregations control their own property.

In a separate church-state action, the Supreme Court also refused to hear a challenge by a Lutheran parochial school student to the Louisiana high school athletic association policy barring athletes from participating in interscholastic competition for one year if they are recruited by high schools outside their primary school districts.

The complaint was lodged by a student at a Lutheran high school who was declared ineligible for a year because he transferred from one school district to another between his elementary and high school years in Lutheran schools.

Attorneys for the student-athlete

argued that the transfer rule placed an undue burden on his free exercise of religion as guaranteed by the First Amendment.

They argued further that the student's constitutional rights to due process and equal protection of the law were violated.

## Publishing VP, music head named

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Jimmy D. Edwards was elected vice president for publishing and distribution and Wesley L. Forbis was named secretary of the church music department by trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board at their semi-annual meeting.

Edwards, an 11-year employee of the board, moves to the newly created position from the board's book store division, where he has been manager of the Broadman trade sales department at the board.

Forbis, 49, chairman of the music department at William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., for 18 years, also has served the Missouri Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention as a frequent music worship leader and seminar resource person. He has been part-time minister of music for a number of congregations.

As vice president for publishing and distribution, Edwards, 42, will be responsible for supervision of the Broadman, Holman and book store divisions and in charge of general publishing and retail distribution through book stores.

Edwards, a native of Virginia, is a graduate of the University of Richmond and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Before moving to the Sunday School Board, he was pastor of churches in Virginia and an employee of the Humble Oil Company.

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Feb. 15, 1981

Church	Sunday School	Church Trng.	Church addns.
Alexander	133	70	
First	83	35	
Vimy Ridge Immanuel	77	28	
Alpena, First	115	42	
Batesville	200	116	3
First West	190	56	1
Nursing Home	36		
Bentonville, First	529		1
Berryville, Freeman Heights	213	88	
Blue Eye, Mo., First	165	75	
Booneville	267		1
First Blue Mountain Mission	18		
South Side	105	88	1
Bryan	338	232	5
First Southern	122	68	1
Indian Springs	330	232	5
Claborn	409	124	1
First Mt. Carmel	471	198	1
Candler, Cullendale First	423	116	1
Caraway	148	124	5
Conway	106	56	
Harlam Park	183	88	2
Pickles Gap	490	206	2
Crossett	497	105	5
First Temple	189	117	1
Daniels, First	127	19	
Nursing Home	24		
El Dorado Parkview	139	77	1
Nursing Home	26		
West Side	599	336	3
Eureka Springs, First	66		
Beaver Lake Mission	16	4	
Forrest City, First	554	119	4
St. Smith	1,149	327	5
Grand Avenue	36	47	
Mission	130	35	
Westside	157	44	
Cawville	135	70	
Genry, First	114	96	
Hampson, First	238	123	3
Hardy, First	151	80	
Harrison	119	54	
Eagle Heights	300	71	1
Northside	150	101	
Woodland Heights	75	52	2
Hot Springs	293	92	
Grand Avenue	160	66	
Harvey's Chapel	346	27	1
Memorial	151	96	
Park Place	139	85	
Hughes, First	429	111	4
Jacksonville, First	95	70	
Jonesboro	423	143	12
Friendly Hope	462	202	3
Philadelphia	190	90	2
Netleton	129	27	
Kingston, First Southern	153	56	
Levaca, First	65	26	
Magnolia, Central	216	152	1
Mountain Home, East Side	104	60	
Mountain Pine, First	101	212	
Murfreesboro, First	431	138	2
Nashville, Ridgeway	220	73	
North Little Rock, Stanfill	130	69	
Paragould	592	112	7
Calvary	150	59	
Center Hill	221	42	2
East Side	363	127	3
First	196	78	1
Pea Ridge, First	492	137	9
Pine Bluff	249	73	2
Central	623	138	5
First	509	235	4
Second	211	66	6
Sandusky, Okla., Faith	37	26	
Springdale	66	47	
Berry Street	110	46	1
Cascade Avenue	304	122	2
Elmdale	1,792		2
First			
Tearkanna	116	78	
Highland Hills	124	76	
Shiloh Memorial	272	179	11
Trinity	80	55	1
Valley Springs	472	84	1
Van Buren, First	129	77	2
Ward, First	234	90	
West Memphis	125	58	
Ingram Boulevard			
Wootter, First			







Stege

**International**  
Mar. 1, 1981  
Matthew 19:1-15  
by Stephen Stege  
Beech Street First Church  
Texarkana, Ark.

## Dignity of persons

The divorce rate continues on an upward spiral, the median age for people to marry climbs each year, and we find the "traditional family" in the midst of change. As a denomination, we must identify and develop strategies to help meet the needs of people in the 1980's.

### What God hath joined together . . .

It has been said, "Marriages are made in heaven . . . are lived out on earth." Both spiritual and physical aspects of marriage are important. Marriage is of divine origin. Jesus' response to the pharisees in Matthew 19:4-6 was clarifying that men do not have a right to separate what God has joined.

### A question of tradition

Why then did Moses, the lawgiver, allow the children of Israel to divorce? We must take note that we are marked as people of choice. Jesus has provided us an example — a way — yet we choose every day whether we will follow the teachings of "the way". The Bible tells us to obey God, yet we often choose to lie instead of tell the truth, to cheat instead of being honest. The Bible teaches us not to divorce yet God's people often choose to do so. Just as we fall short of God's intention by lying, cheating and other sins, so do we also fall short when divorce becomes a part of our experience.

### An alternate lifestyle

Verses 10-12 provide an alternative: the gift of being single. Jesus states that, for some, being single is the best lifestyle one can live as a Christian. However, not everyone has the ability to remain single and live an exemplary Christian life. Those who do can come to a true and right understanding of verse 11.

### Train up a child

It is interesting to note that there were children also in the crowd listening to Jesus teach. What effect Jesus must have had upon these children as he taught with such authority. It behooves parents to realize that it is never too early to begin to teach our children by word and example the principles of life and relationships found in God's word. We are persons of worth and dignity because of our relationship to Christ.

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## Heeding God's Word now

Jesus did not tell this story to give us a lesson on the geography of hell. Nor did he tell the parable, if it is in fact a parable, to teach us how to solve the very ancient and very real problems associated with the coexistence of extreme wealth and poverty. The story might well contain truths that are applicable to these interests. But the real point of the story is to be found elsewhere.



Lisk

### A picture of contrasts

The story is one of simple but stark contrasts. There was a certain rich man. Traditionally he has been named "Dives" which means "rich." He is pictured as living in great luxury. Blindly he apparently took this for granted as only his just due. He is not pictured as a vile sinner, rather he is pictured as a man deaf and blind to reality. Apparently he accepted the still commonly held view that the possessions of good things in life is an indication of the favor of God.

Dives apparently had everything. Lazarus, whose name means "God helps," apparently had nothing. His only com-

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## Life and Work

Mar. 1, 1981

Luke 16:19-31

by Richard Lisk  
England First Church

pany was that of the scavenger dogs, his only food was scraps from Dives' table, and his only hope was God.

Both men die and positions change. Now Lazarus is pictured as being in the bosom of Abraham. This was a common picture of eternal bliss. Dives is pictured as being in torment so severe that he could only beg for a mere drop of water.

### The need for care

It is here that the story can speak to us, but we must be careful. Neither man's destiny was determined by what he did or did not possess. It was determined by what he did with the Word that God had spoken to each of them. We dare not presume that our possessions indicate our standing with God.

We are taught that God has spoken to us already in many ways. It is how we respond to the revelation that we have that determines our standing before God. We cannot expect some other revelation.

### The final message

According to our lesson, there will come a time when we will have made all our decisions and we will be bound by them. God has spoken to us in many ways. We have the Bible, churches, and Christ as the supreme revelation. If we have not heeded the revelations we have, it is doubtful we would heed any others.

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## Bible Book

Mar. 1, 1981

I Corinthians 11:17-34

by Tommy Robertson  
Liberty Baptist Association

## Worship and the Lord's Supper

Another of the disturbing practices of the church at Corinth was their wrong observance of the Lord's Supper. Their behavior was so bad it was abhorrent to Paul, and rather than commend them he proceeded to straighten their thinking and lead them toward proper observance of the supper.

### The tragic abuse of the Supper (I Cor. 11:17-22)

The first century church had a wonderful practice known as the love feast. In this they met together in loving fellowship where every social barrier was broken down. Following this feast they observed the Lord's Supper in a most meaningful way.

The Corinthian Church, however, had sadly abused both of these. Evidently, the more affluent ones were meeting early, enjoying their feast, and ignoring the needs of the poor who had little to eat. To compound their sin they became intoxicated and then proceeded to observe the Lord's Supper. No wonder Paul abhors their sacrilege and endeavors to straighten their thinking in regard to their brothers and in regard to the memorial meal.

### The proper observance of the Supper (I Cor. 11:23-34)

Paul's knowledge of the Lord's Supper came by revelation from the Lord himself. This may be the first recorded account of this ordinance. The elements of this meal represent the body and blood of our Lord given at Calvary to cleanse us from sin and proclaim a new relationship with God for the believer.

The warning about reverent, thoughtful, careful observance is to be applied to every person who partakes of these significant elements. To be involved in the Supper without remembering the loving sacrifice of Christ is to invite God's judgement upon one's life. Each of us should examine himself thoroughly, ask forgiveness of any sin that clings to our lives, and only then should we involve ourselves in the Supper, gratefully remembering Christ's sacrifice for us.

### Conclusion

Gluttony and drunkenness do not characterize our observance today, but we should learn to go to the Lord's table with deep commitment to God's purpose for our lives.

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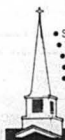
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## Witness planned for 1982

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — If a determined group has its way, messengers to the 1982 Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans will be able to do something more than talk about Bold Mission Thrust.

Plans are underway for a massive witnessing effort to the city of New Orleans on Wednesday afternoon of the convention.

Ron Herrod, chairman of evangelism for the Baptist Association of New Orleans, said that a committee has already been formed to spearhead the effort, and that some Southern Baptist Convention leadership had already given

## Smith would consult Pressler, Sherman

DALLAS (BP) — SBC President Bailey Smith would be willing to discuss his committee appointments with antagonists Paul Pressler and Cecil Sherman if it might help spare the convention any more bickering.

Smith told the *Texas Baptist Standard* he plans to represent the total denomination when he appoints the 1981 committee on committees and committee on resolutions.

Pressler, appeals court judge from Houston, and Sherman, pastor of First Church in Asheville, N.C., lead groups with separate interests in the makeup of convention committees and boards.

Pressler and Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, have led efforts to elect convention presidents committed to biblical inerrancy. Pressler has expressed an intention to gain control of convention agencies through the election of trustees.

Sherman has led in several meetings of pastors in the Southeast to organize to send messengers to the 1981 convention in Los Angeles.

"I really would" be willing to sit down with Pressler and Sherman, Smith told Toby Druin of the *Standard*. "I said from the beginning and still say my desire is to try to be a person to bring us together . . . My whole desire is that the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole love one another and continue to be about winning this world to Christ."

*Baptist Standard* Editor Pressnal Wood in an editorial Feb. 4 called for a "spiritual summit meeting" between Smith, Sherman, Pressler, the SBC vice presidents and Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee.

Wood said no such meeting should be a media event, neither should it be a binding practice for succeeding presidents prior to committee appointments. But he said such a meeting could be helpful, and "thousands would be in prayer."

Smith said he didn't know if any good could come from a meeting with Pressler and Sherman, but that he "certainly wouldn't be opposed to it."

"The Southern Baptist Convention has elected me, and I am going to try to appoint people to the committees just like Jimmy Allen, James Sullivan, Jaroy Weber (all former presidents) or any of those did in consultation with the vice presidents, talking to executive secretaries where I don't know people.

"I am going to be as fair and honest as I know how. I was elected by a cross section of Southern Baptists and plan to appoint a cross section of Southern Baptists."

Smith appoints the committee on resolutions which will handle such mat-

ters that come before the annual meeting in Los Angeles. The committee can have great influence through its handling of the resolutions on the stance of the convention in session on various issues.

He also appoints the committee on committees which nominates persons for the committee on boards, the panel which makes recommendations to the convention for boards of trustees of convention agencies.

Smith said committee appointments are due in April and he would meet with vice president Jack Taylor and C. Wade Freeman in Nashville, during the meeting of the SBC Executive Committee, Feb. 16-18, to discuss them.

Pressler and Sherman are not strangers. They attended Princeton University — Pressler the university and Sherman the seminary — at the same time in the 1950s and have exchanged Christmas cards ever since, Pressler said.

Both Pressler and Sherman said they would be willing to sit down with Smith and discuss the issue but neither would speculate on anything being achieved by it.

Pressler, who emphasized he would initiate no such meeting with Smith because any attempt by him to contact the SBC president "would be distorted out of all reason, distorted extremely in the Baptist press," nevertheless, said he would be "glad to meet with anybody that asked me to meet with them."

Sherman said he would go, sit through and leave any meeting with Smith and Pressler "in good humor." "I am not enthusiastic because I have not said anything about them that requires I retract anything," he said. "The only way the meeting could be attractive to me would be for them (Pressler and Patterson) to withdraw their agenda they stated in Lynchburg."

## Schools post decalogue

MADISONVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Copies of the Ten Commandments are being posted in public school classrooms in Hopkins County despite a ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court and an opinion from the Kentucky attorney general.

Last fall, the high court struck down a Kentucky law that required the decalogue to be posted in all classrooms in the state if private money was given for that purpose. Kentucky Attorney General Steve Beshear later said that meant the Ten Commandments already posted should be removed from public school classrooms.

But Patrick O'Neil, superintendent of the Hopkins County school district, has now ordered that the commandments be posted. He acted in response to a vote by the county school board.

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their support.

During the recent state evangelism conference in Alexandria, Herrod, who is also pastor of Kenner First Baptist Church, met with state and national evangelism leaders.

Herrod said that he hoped to "saturate the city of New Orleans in a single afternoon with the gospel materials to help people understand Baptists and take something of a mini-survey.

"We want to go to every home primarily in the inner city and give a verbal witness or leave a written witness — plus tell the story of Baptist work in New Orleans," he said.

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