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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 92, Number 5

March 11, 1993

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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The almost

**14-year controversy
(in the SBC) could be
solved overnight....
We have in place the
solution to the problem.
But it waits upon the
human element."**

— Herschel Hobbs

THE BAPTIST
FAITH &
MESSAGE

Revisited

1963

1993



Projects round Arkansasans worldwide mission options

When Glendon Grober talks about going to the ends of the earth, he speaks from personal experience.

In addition to coordinating the Guatemala/Arkansas Partnership which concludes this summer, Grober supervises the state convention's TTEOTE (To The Ends Of The Earth) emphasis which will take Arkansas Baptists into five other countries this year. He also recently returned from an 18-day, four-nation trip to Europe in preparation for a proposed 1994-96 partnership with the European Baptist Convention.

Mission opportunities

He said TTEOTE projects for 1993 include involvement in a trans-Latvia crusade in late June and early July; trips to Mexico in April and July to do street witnessing, church planting and related projects; a High School Baptist Young Men's mission trip to Venezuela in July; a trip to Australia in late July and early August to do relational evangelism; and a November trip to India to lead local church revivals.

Following recent partnership efforts in Guatemala and Brazil, Grober said the diversity of the TTEOTE projects will allow participants to gain an ever broader perspective of Southern Baptist foreign mission efforts.

Individuals interested in participating in one of this year's TTEOTE projects may contact Grober for additional information at the ABSC Brotherhood department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791, ext. 5158.

Grober said the proposed partnership with European Baptists currently calls for

Arkansas Baptists to be involved in helping start new churches, evangelism projects, providing leadership training and helping strengthen the ministry of existing churches. He said the partnership may involve as many as 400 to 500 Arkansas Baptist volunteers per year during the three-year effort.

Although much work remains to be done before the partnership is "formalized and finalized" by the ABSC Executive Board and state convention messengers, executive director Don Moore affirmed that "the exciting thing about this is we will have an opportunity to go in at a time when Europe is more open to the gospel than any time in more than 100 years." He said another plus for volunteers is that most of the churches in the European Baptist Convention are English-speaking congregations.

The convention, which was established in 1957, includes approximately 60 churches and missions in 15 European countries. Convention goals include proclaiming the gospel of Christ, planting English-language Baptist churches, strengthening European Baptist congregations and promoting Christian missions throughout the world.

"I was pleasantly surprised by the European Baptists' warmth for evangelism," Grober pointed out. "They have a real heart for wanting to reach people.

"My hope," he added, "is that being involved in the European context will broaden the vision of those who go, those who send them and those who pray for them—to help them gain a vision of what's involved in being Great Commission Christians."

Cover Story



Faith and Message 9

"The Baptist Faith and Message Revisited," a 10-part series by Herschel Hobbs, begins this week on page 9. The series explores the historical significance of the document and its application for Southern Baptists today.

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



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Baptisms in Arkansas increase 5 percent

An increase in the number of baptisms and a decrease in the number of churches which recorded no baptisms are significant statistics, according to Clarence Shell, director of evangelism for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

According to statistics compiled by the Baptist Sunday School Board from churches' 1992 Uniform Church Letter reports, baptisms in the state totaled 13,009 last year, an increase of 5.1 percent over the previous year. Arkansas Baptist churches which reported no baptisms for the year decreased by 4.6 percent to 230.

Shell said one key to the positive statistics is that "we are seeing the greatest interest in personal evangelism we have known," adding that several churches "are training their laity to become involved in sharing Christ."

Noting that many churches continue to reach people through mass evangelism events, Shell said, "Revivals and crusades are still very effective in spite of what people may believe." He added, however, that "the best mass evangelism is always done when we do good personal evangelism and our laypeople get involved."

During the recent Arkansas Baptist Evangelism Conference, Shell recognized the state's leading churches in the categories of total baptisms and ratio of members per baptism. First Church, Springdale, led the convention with 456 baptisms last year and Amazing Grace Church, Bentonville, led in baptismal ratio with one baptism per every 2.07 members.

According to Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, the key to the church's baptisms is an ongoing prayer ministry. "We have over 700 prayer warriors who pray an hour a week specifically for the ministries of our church," he explained. "There's no way in the world we're going to significantly impact our region until God steps in."

SBC president requests nominations

HOUSTON (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention president Edwin H. Young has asked Southern Baptists to suggest names for the four committees he will appoint.

The SBC bylaws direct the president to appoint the committee on committees, resolutions committee, tellers committee and credentials committee. Each of these committees involves both laypersons and people in church-related positions.

TOP 10 CHURCHES IN BAPTISMS

Number of Baptisms / Church

456 Springdale First

189 Immanuel, Rogers

135 Mulberry First

115 Geyer Springs First

102 Central, Jonesboro

100 University, Fayetteville

94 Trinity, Texarkana

90 Rogers First

88 Lowell

86 West Memphis First

TOP 10 CHURCHES IN BAPTISM RATIO

Ratio / Church

2.07 Amazing Grace, Bentonville

2.41 Hickory Creek, Springdale

2.92 Union Hill, Hermitage

3.00 Whispering Hills, Little Rock

3.33 Crestview, New Blaine

3.62 Shady Grove, Gurdon

3.66 Royal

3.70 Joiner

3.91 Tomahawk, Saint Joe

4.28 Mulberry First

*Ratio = Number of members per baptism.

Emphasizing the importance of focus, Floyd added, "You can't be everything to everyone. Our mission statement is to glorify God through people sharing Jesus with other people."

Jerry Holcomb, pastor of Amazing Grace Church, said his congregation has approximately 175 members and baptized more than 80 people last year.

"Our people have a real, real desire to get out and witness," Holcomb affirmed. "They have an evangelistic heart. They just want to see people saved."

Declaring that "we preach and teach the Word," Holcomb noted, "We find the lost people and get them under the preaching of the gospel and plant the seed and let the Lord do the rest."

Immanuel Church in Rogers was second in the state with 189 baptisms, despite

spending much of 1992 without a full-time pastor. "The real credit goes to the laypeople and the staff," said pastor Tom Hatley, who has been serving there approximately six months.

While last year's baptism record "was an all-time high for our church," Hatley said, "We're not preoccupied with the numbers. We feel it's important to keep reaching people."

Hickory Creek Mission near Springdale was second in the state in baptism ratio, with approximately 30 baptisms. Tommy Poplin is pastor of the mission which organized last fall.

"It's only through the Lord. I can't take any credit," Poplin remarked. "The only thing we have to offer is the Lord. We just love them to the Lord."

"We've got some dedicated, God-loving people and that's what it takes," Poplin continued. "It takes a lot of prayer."

Jim Box is pastor of First Church, Mulberry, which was third in the state in total baptisms with 135.

"We've got a good soul-winning, evangelistic-minded church," Box said. "Basically, the deacons all are soul-winners and our folks are real concerned about reaching people."

Affirming Arkansas Baptists' efforts in reaching people for Christ, Shell concluded, "Churches need to remember that the priority of our Lord was to seek and to save the lost. He calls us to be the seekers and He will still do the saving."

YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE
ABSC Executive Director

What we "must do," we can do! Because we can, it does not automatically follow that we will. Many factors affect how we approach what must be done. Do we have to do it now? What will happen if we do not do it? Are others doing what they "must"?

If we are talking about civil law, we know that we "must" or be prepared to pay the price of non-compliance. If we are talking about military duty, we "must" or be prepared to be penalized by demotion or confinement. If we are talking about sports, we "must" or lose our place on the team.

What about God's "musts"? Can anyone doubt that the chief "must" of the people of God is to be "fishers of men"? Christ's earliest order held until His last day on earth in the flesh, when He restated it and reinforced it by saying that the Holy Spirit would make it possible for us to be effective witnesses. It still stands. It will not be altered or annulled. At the judgment seat of Christ it will be the key issue, not for condemnation, but for reward.

It appears that we have altered this truth in our own minds. Witnessing and soul winning appear to no longer be a "must" in most churches and in most Christians' lives. We apparently believe that God is less demanding on His people than the government, the military or the coach. If God is going to lay down the life of His Son for sinful men and then invest His Spirit in the life of redeemed men, He has every right to expect and demand that we follow His instructions. These are "musts."

As we approach the spring revivals, I want to urge that every one of us take a fresh look at where we are in relationship to Christ's intention to make us fishers of men. There is a lot of evidence that winning the lost is not being given the priority in the churches that God gives it in His Word. While we rejoice in a 5 percent increase in baptisms in our Arkansas churches, we have not come close to winning the people that we should to Christ.

BOBBI DeBUSK

Woman's Viewpoint

Hope



Children are very adept at expressing their hopes. Our children are frequently heard hoping for new clothes, good grades, phone calls from friends, or the chance to go anywhere. Even adults use the word to show a desire for everything from good weather to good health. As a matter of fact, Webster's dictionary defines hope as "yearning with expectation or anticipation; that which is desired and expected."

Mr. Webster's definition goes on to describe hope as "one in whom confidence or trust is placed." During our last presidential election, Mr. Clinton was pegged "the man from Hope," and is being looked to offer new leadership and direction for our nation. Our nation is in need of hope. But we must be careful to place our hope not in the man from Hope or any place else, but in the Man of Hope, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In his gospel, Matthew reminds us that the prophet Isaiah declared "in His (Jesus) name would the Gentiles hope."

In Christ our hope is not just for this world. As His followers and believers, we know that our hope reaches into eternity. In his first letter to the

Corinthians, Paul wrote, "If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.... For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."

The hymn writer, Edward Mote, said it beautifully:

"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly learn on Jesus' name. On that the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is sinking sand."

Let's covenant together to pray that our government leaders, our church leaders, and we ourselves will bring hope to our world by bringing our world to hope: Jesus.

Bobbi Medford DeBusk, the wife of J.R. DeBusk, pastor of South Side Church in Pine Bluff, is immediate past-president of Arkansas Baptist Ministers' Wives. She teaches fourth, fifth and sixth grade music at Coleman Elementary School in the Watson Chapel School District. DeBusk is the mother of Rachel, Matt and Holly.

Personal perspectives

"The priority of our Lord was to seek and to save the lost. He calls us to be the seekers and He will still do the saving."

—Clarence Shell, director of evangelism, Arkansas Baptist State Convention

"Everybody is terminally ill from a spiritual disease called sin. We do pretty good about telling people about Jesus, but we need to show people who Jesus is."

—Fred Loper, medical missionary, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board

"Sometimes you want to cry and break down, but you learn to deal with it then and break down afterward. I think God is the one who keeps me together."

—Benita Jennings, emergency room nurse who aided victims of shootout in Waco, Texas

Trust is the bottom line

Much has been written and said in recent weeks about the relationship between Woman's Missionary Union and the Southern Baptist Convention. Much more will be written and said in the weeks and months ahead. Among the key questions being posed are: What does the future hold? What is the bottom line?

What the future holds is anyone's guess. The WMU issued a vision statement in January and the SBC Executive Committee asked for clarification. The Executive Committee adopted a resolution two weeks ago and WMU leaders have requested clarification. All indications are that the ball is once again in WMU's court, but it remains a lively ball with lots of bounce left.

Many people believe they know what the bottom line is. The problem is that the bottom line is different things to different people.

For many Executive Committee members, the bottom line is ensuring that WMU provides no direct support to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship through offering promotion or related activities. "If the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship wasn't in this, there wouldn't be any eyebrows raised at all," acknowledged Arkansas Executive Committee member Ronnie Floyd. "That's the major issue."

National WMU leaders insist the bottom line is positioning their organization for ministry into the 21st century. "Our decisions first and foremost have been for the sake of lost souls around the world," explained national WMU executive director Dellanna O'Brien, adding that WMU has "taken a stance—not sides."

With diverse opinions continuing to circulate, one bottom line factor that is urgently needed is trust. It is beyond time for Southern Baptist individuals and groups to stop assigning motives to one another. Christian brothers and sisters should be able to trust one another's words—and to be trustworthy in presenting their own words and motives.

The SBC Executive Committee needs to trust WMU leaders' words that they will continue to support "Southern Baptist global missions through prayer, the Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions." As O'Brien told Foreign Mission Board trustees, "We're committed to do what we've done in the past." WMU's 105-year track record indicates they are trustworthy.

WMU leaders need to trust the Executive Committee's commitment to

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON



"pledge our eager and glad-hearted intention to work with the Woman's Missionary Union, to respect and honor its effective and praiseworthy work, and to affirm its status as auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, so long as the Woman's Missionary Union pledges its faithful and solitary support of the mission offerings and mission programs of the Southern Baptist Convention and its mission boards." While there remains room for interpretation on what would violate "faithful and solitary support," the Executive Committee should be trusted in its commitment to help make the relationship work.

What about the people in the pew? If trust is the bottom line, what trustworthy words can typical Southern Baptist church members expect from convention leaders? Several Baptist leaders have offered food for thought:

■ Jimmy Draper, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, noted: "I believe we have to take everything in context at this

time and be very careful how we react....I hope that none of our agencies or institutions will have a knee-jerk reaction to this situation." Southern Baptists have the right to expect that future decisions will be made in the best interest of all Southern Baptists.

■ Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board, while opposing any support of the Fellowship, added, "I am not opposed to any agency, including the WMU, serving every church which is in friendly cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention. If messengers from a church are seated at the Southern Baptist Convention, we are obligated to assist and serve that church and its people." Southern Baptists have the right to expect that all SBC entities will effectively serve their local congregations.

■ Alma Hunt, retired WMU executive director, remarked, "I pray the day will never come that we as Southern Baptists will say we cannot walk with another Baptist or another person who believes in Jesus Christ." Southern Baptists have the right to expect that all SBC and WMU leaders will place the work of Christ above any other priority or personal concern.

Southern Baptists have the choice of majoring on the things which divide us or on the things which unite us. The latter remains a much broader category. A recent sermon truth I heard warns: "A divided family is not very effective in ministering to a divided world."

What does the future hold? It remains our choice. What is the bottom line? Trust—and trustworthiness.

The Baptist Faith and Message Revisited

The 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement is among the most significant documents ever adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention. While carefully avoiding creedalism, it masterfully sets forth key beliefs held by Southern Baptists.

The name most closely associated with the Baptist Faith and Message is Herschel H. Hobbs, chairman of the committee which drafted the 1963 statement. Dr. Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City, is a Southern Baptist statesman who has earned the trust and respect of leaders across the Southern Baptist spectrum.

Dr. Hobbs, 85, is the oldest living former SBC president. He preached 18 years on the SBC's "Baptist Hour" radio program, served on the SBC Peace Committee and currently is a member of the theology

study group named by SBC president Ed Young. Dr. Hobbs, who has written more than 140 books, is perhaps best known for his quarterly "Life and Work" Sunday School lesson commentaries.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the current Baptist Faith and Message statement. In honor of that milestone, the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* has commissioned Dr. Hobbs to write a series of articles examining the historical significance of the document and its application for Southern Baptists today. The series begins this week on page 9.

Dr. Hobbs is known for his wisdom and his candor. His reflections on "The Baptist Faith and Message Revisited" will hopefully provide our readers fresh, practical insights into Southern Baptists' historic beliefs and practices.

WMU urged to protect 'exclusive relationship'

NASHVILLE, TN (ABP/BP) — Woman's Missionary Union needs to affirm its "singular cooperation," "undivided commitment" and "exclusive relationship" with the Southern Baptist Convention and its mission boards, according to a resolution passed by the SBC Executive Committee Feb. 23.

The resolution was adopted in response to changes approved by WMU's executive board Jan. 10 that would allow WMU to provide non-financial support to missionary-sending groups other than the SBC's Foreign and Home Mission boards.

Executive Committee officers met privately with WMU leaders Sunday night, Feb. 21, before the start of the Executive Committee meeting Feb. 22. That session was closed to the press, but participants later said concern about a WMU tie to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was the chief concern of the officers.

The resolution begins with seven paragraphs of affirmation for WMU's historic role in supporting SBC missions. It praises WMU for leading Southern Baptists to pray for, financially support and send out home and foreign missionaries.

It also notes that WMU "was established originally for the express purpose of supporting the two mission boards of the Southern Baptist Convention, 'disclaiming

all intention of independent action."

However, that disclaimer, an Executive Committee leader explained in a subcommittee meeting, was taken from the original version of the preamble to WMU's constitution. That line was removed from the document in 1890, two years after WMU was formed.

The second half of the resolution notes "deep concern" for WMU and its future relationship with the SBC.

"We call upon the executive board of the Woman's Missionary Union to make clear its singular cooperation with the convention and its mission boards and its undivided commitment to the Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions," it states.

The resolution also says the Executive Committee pledges to continue supporting the WMU's relationship to the SBC as an auxiliary "so long as the Woman's Missionary Union pledges its faithful and solitary support of the mission offerings and mission programs of the Southern Baptist Convention and its mission boards."

"We appreciate the affirmation expressed by the SBC Executive Committee," WMU executive director Dellanna O'Brien said in a written statement after

the Executive Committee meeting. "There are several areas of the resolution which are ambiguous and we will seek further clarification," she added.

"The WMU executive board next meets in June in conjunction with the WMU annual meeting and the Southern Baptist Convention," O'Brien continued. "This would be the earliest time this resolution could be considered by our board."

If WMU does not answer concerns voiced in the resolution, James Morton, a pastor from Grass Valley, Calif., asked fellow Executive Committee members, "Where does that leave us?"

Guy Sanders, chairman of the Executive Committee's program and budget subcommittee, said the resolution is like any other resolution: "We're expressing ourselves on an issue. We're not codifying anything here." Sanders, a Lake Wales, Fla., pastor, added the resolution simply states "where we are in the present and where we would like to be in the future" in the SBC's relationship with WMU.

Morton then commented the resolution contains "very direct" words, such as its call for "singular" cooperation by WMU with the SBC and its Foreign and Home Mission boards.

Morton asked whether WMU, in voting to offer its missions education materials in non-SBC markets as part of its new initiatives, is doing anything different than the Baptist Sunday School Board does with many of its products.

"Are we overreacting to something?" Morton asked. He said he did not feel WMU is making any "earth-shaking changes," though he acknowledged others would disagree.

"It appears to me it would be wise not to do this," Morton said. "It is drawing the line too tight and unnecessarily so."

Earlier in the brief discussion, another Executive Committee member, Ronald Huffman, a pastor from Middletown, R.I., recounted O'Brien's responses to questions during the program and budget subcommittee's meeting that day, that WMU will not be promoting the missions offering of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and that WMU will not become a missionary-sending organization.

To him, Huffman said, O'Brien's responses "made the resolution...not needed," adding that he found her explanations "consistent with our goals as a convention."

No other Executive Committee members voiced caution over the resolution and the proposal was adopted with only a few dissenting votes.

Rogers: WMU should submit to SBC control

MEMPHIS, TN (ABP) — Woman's Missionary Union may lose its role in decision-making in the Southern Baptist Convention unless it submits to control by the SBC, Adrian Rogers warned Feb. 18.

Rogers, three-time SBC president and pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church near Memphis, Tenn., told visiting staff and missionaries of the SBC Foreign Mission Board that WMU must be "hard-wired" into the convention structure or lose key positions on SBC policy-making bodies.

"Hard wiring," Rogers said, would mean permitting the SBC to elect WMU's governing board, which since 1888 has consisted of representatives who are chosen by state WMU organizations.

Rogers also said he regrets the "feminization" of missions, insisting that missions promotion should be led not by WMU but by pastors and by leaders of Brotherhood.

Rogers discussed his concerns during a two-hour meeting in his church

office with FMB personnel, who were leading a world missions conference at nearby Mid-America Seminary.

FMB participants described their meeting with Rogers as non-confrontational, but several said they left saddened that Rogers and other key conservative leaders now regard WMU with new suspicion.

Among those attending the session were three FMB vice presidents — Sam James, Harlan Spurgeon and Bill Wakefield — and staff members David Cornelius, Irma Duke, Don Reavis, Herman Russell and Kenn Shirley.

Also present was John Floyd, a Mid-America vice president recently elected to administer the FMB's work in Europe. Several furloughing missionaries assisting in the missions conference also attended.

Both Reavis and Duke said that Rogers focused on WMU's role as an auxiliary, comparing it to an auxiliary engine on a train which has no power of its own but only assists the main engine.

'A resolution of concern and commitment on WMU and SBC'

WHEREAS, the Woman's Missionary Union has served loyally and effectively as an auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention; and

WHEREAS, the Woman's Missionary Union was established originally for the express purpose of supporting the two mission boards of the Southern Baptist Convention, "disclaiming all intention of independent action;" and

WHEREAS, the Southern Baptist Convention and the Woman's Missionary Union have worked hand-in-hand for the cause of missions at home and abroad for 105 years; and

WHEREAS, the Woman's Missionary Union has led by precept and example in sacrificial support of the missionary cause, promoting and supporting the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, in continual prayer support of Southern Baptist missionaries, and in the effective teaching and training of women and children for the cause of missions; and

WHEREAS, those offerings have produced millions of dollars in vital support for Southern Baptist missions and those prayers have sustained dedicated missionaries throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Baptist Convention has respected and honored the contributions of the Woman's Missionary Union and seeks to work in close coordination and mutual trust with its auxiliary;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that we, the members of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, hereby register our deep concern for the Woman's Missionary Union and its future relationship with the Southern Baptist

Convention even as we affirm the long-established role of the Woman's Missionary Union and honor its unique and abiding contributions to this denomination and its missionary cause; and

Be it further RESOLVED, that in light of the historically significant changes announced by the Woman's Missionary Union Executive Board on January 10, 1993, we call upon the Executive Board of the Woman's Missionary Union to make clear its singular cooperation with the Convention and its mission boards and its undivided commitment to the Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions; and

Be if further RESOLVED, that we express to the Woman's Missionary Union our urgent concern that the exclusive relationship of 105 years which has been so wondrously blessed by God be protected by mutual trust and loyalty; and

Be it further RESOLVED, that we pledge our eager and glad-hearted intention to work with the Woman's Missionary Union, to respect and honor its effective and praiseworthy work, and to affirm its status as auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, so long as the Woman's Missionary Union pledges its faithful and solitary support of the mission offerings and mission programs of the Southern Baptist Convention and its mission boards.

Be it finally RESOLVED, that this Executive Committee prayerfully support each agency of the Southern Baptist Convention, each state convention, each state fellowship, and each local church as they decide their response to the changes announced by Woman's Missionary Union.

Arkansas Baptists evaluate Executive Committee resolution

As dialogue continues between leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention and Woman's Missionary Union, what impact will the SBC Executive Committee's recent resolution have among Arkansas Baptists?

According to Marjorie Grober, president of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, "We appreciate the Executive Committee's desire to work together, which we also desire."

Concerning the Executive Committee's call for the WMU to demonstrate "singular cooperation," "undivided commitment" and "solitary support," Grober said WMU leaders will be meeting with Executive Committee representatives "to see exactly what the Executive Committee is meaning."

Grober said she also will visit with WMU representatives from across the state to seek grassroots response.

Executive Committee member Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, said the resolution's "major issue is the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and WMU's relationship to it. That is the issue; nothing else."

WMU recommendations adopted in January include plans to "produce resources for Southern Baptist groups

involved in missions, at their request," including the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship which is at odds with conservative leadership in the SBC.

Affirming WMU's decision not to support the Fellowship's mission offering, Floyd said WMU's current actions "are going to be livable with the Executive Committee, according to our resolution."

Noting that the resolution provides WMU leaders "a chance to show what their commitment is going to be," Floyd added, "The Executive Committee wants to do everything they can to help everyone work together for the cause of Christ.... If the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship wasn't in this, there wouldn't be any eyebrows raised at all."

Executive Committee member Rex Terry, an attorney from Fort Smith, described the resolution as "a conciliatory gesture on the part of the Executive Committee."

The action "places the Executive Committee on record—and I think this is the way the convention feels—that we're grieved over any possibility the WMU would divide its efforts. It plainly shows we want the historic relationship to continue."

Agreeing that WMU's relationship to the Fellowship "is the most significant thing," Terry added, "It's not the only thing." He said he has other "deep-seated concerns" about the language used in WMU's recent action. "I hope the WMU will take a more conservative approach from the top down," he added.

Billy White, newly elected moderator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Arkansas, said he "appreciates that the SBC Executive Committee held themselves to a statement of concern rather than taking any exclusionary action."

White, pastor of Second Church, Little Rock, said he believes "WMU is recognizing the kind of world in which we live...and is being more responsive to the need for an inclusive approach to world missions."

Responding to concerns about CBF, he added, "The fact is the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is Southern Baptist; it is comprised totally of Southern Baptists.... The choice is not either/or, it is both/and."

"Our desire is for a family large enough for all the family," White noted. "The sister is trying to keep the brothers together and say we're all family. Why must we insist that the sister pick one brother as her favorite?"

Executive Committee proposes \$138 million budget for SBC

By Art Toalston
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee has adopted a proposed 1993-94 SBC Program Allocation Budget of \$138,234,735 for recommendation to the SBC annual meeting June 15-17 in Houston. The Executive Committee's recommendation follows its 1989 decision to recommend a basic budget no larger than receipts of the last fiscal year of record, which in this case was 1991-92.

The recommendation is \$1,965,660 less than this year's budget, or a 1.4 percent decrease.

Meeting Feb. 22-24 in Nashville, Executive Committee members also voted to request the Annuity Board to divest itself of stock of corporate contributors to Planned Parenthood; called for a study of "the future of theological education in Southern Baptist life"; and approved a resolution calling for the United States to break diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

Portfolio study requested

The Executive Committee voted to request the Annuity Board to "identify any company in its portfolio that is contributing to Planned Parenthood or any other provider or advocate of legal abortion" and "begin a process of divesting itself" of those stocks.

J.C. Mitchell, a Winter Park, Fla., pastor and an advocate of the divesting, said in an interview that information available from pro-life research arms indicates the Annuity Board may have investments in various companies that contribute to Planned Parenthood.

Mitchell cited news accounts that Planned Parenthood receives \$7 million annually from corporate contributors.

In brief debate of the proposal, Executive Committee member William Hall of San Clemente, Calif., advocated stockholder actions as more effective in spurring companies to discontinue Planned Parenthood contributions. Selling such stocks, he said, "seems like a bite without any teeth."

The divesting request to the Annuity Board, however, passed with only minimal opposition.

Joining efforts to urge President Bill Clinton to end U.S. diplomatic relations with the Vatican, the Executive Committee passed a resolution stating such ties are "clearly a violation" of the U.S.

Constitution's First Amendment prohibition against laws favoring one religion over another.

On Feb. 15, the SBC Christian Life Commission, the National Association of Evangelicals and three other groups sent a formal letter to Clinton urging him to rescind diplomatic relations and exchange of ambassadors that President Reagan established with the Vatican in 1984.

In approving an in-depth study of the future of theological education in the SBC, the Executive Committee authorized chairman David Hankins, a Lake Charles, La., pastor, to appoint a study committee in consultation with the SBC's Education Commission and six seminaries.

Such a study is needed, said Guy Sanders, program and budget subcommittee chairman and a Lake Wales, Fla., pastor, because questions abound which no other SBC entity is assigned to address. Matters needing attention, he said, include the relationship between the SBC's six seminaries and state Baptist colleges; whether and where new SBC seminaries might be needed; the range of degree programs offered; and various funding questions.

In other business, the Executive Committee:

- Voted to start *SBC Life*, a full-color, tabloid publication, and to phase out *The Baptist Program* published by the Executive Committee since 1925. *SBC Life* will be launched with a special edition for the SBC annual meeting in Houston, then begin regular publication in October. *SBC Life's* editor will be Mark Coppenger, Executive Committee vice president for convention relations.

- Approved a change in the way gifts are recorded at the SBC level, with the Executive Committee to accept funds and designate them as "Cooperative Program" gifts if designated as such from state conventions. Gifts received directly from churches or individuals for distribution only to SBC entities will be reported as "Cooperative - SBC Causes." The latter category will be added to reports presented by the Executive Committee, and the SBC basic budget title will be changed from "SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget" to "SBC Program Allocation Budget."

- Set a \$38,000 fee to the Pastors' Conference for costs related to the yearly pre-SBC meeting. The fee, based on an analysis of costs the past five years, will be charged through 1995 and reviewed by the Executive Committee in 1995.

SBC and BJCPA settle dispute over funds

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—At least one element in more than a decade of strife between the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and the Southern Baptist Convention apparently will end with the SBC Executive Committee's approval of a settlement for a \$300,000 fund claimed by both.

The Executive Committee, following a lengthy debate Feb. 23, voted to approve the settlement and give the BJCPA \$25,000 a year for four years.

Also, both sides are to make "good faith" efforts to refrain from "impugning the motives and integrity of the other party ... over the facts and circumstances surrounding this controversy ... (and) to see that the dispute is put to rest."

At the core of the dispute is a \$300,000 allocation, established by the SBC in 1964 and funded in 1966, which has been on deposit with the Southern Baptist Foundation. Documentation about the original ownership of the fund is somewhat murky but apparently it was set up to purchase a building in the nation's capital to be used by a Baptist public affairs committee.

Interest on the fund was sent to the BJCPA on a regular basis until a dispute between BJCPA leadership and SBC leadership erupted in the 1980s. Last year at the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis, messengers approved a motion severing all ties with the BJCPA, ending a 50-year relationship with the Washington-based religious liberty organization of 10 Baptist bodies.

In 1991, the SBC stopped all contributions to the BJCPA. In 1992 messengers turned down a proposal for binding arbitration in the \$300,000 dispute and gave the Executive Committee authorization to allocate the money for SBC causes.

The agreement says both parties agree the settlement does not represent a division of the fund in dispute but rather acknowledges the fund is the "sole property of the SBC." In the agreement's six sections, it bars the BJCPA from any further claim to the funds as well as any future litigation in the matter.

Preamble helps guard against creedalism

By Herschel H. Hobbs

Special to Arkansas Baptist



In reading any book it is well to begin with the introduction. Thus you will know the author's purpose in writing the book and will understand better the contents of it.

This is especially true of the preamble of The Baptist Faith and Message. It is in light of the preamble that the 17 articles are to be interpreted and applied. Southern Baptists have always been a non-creedal people. The committee which presented this statement spent more time on the preamble than on any one of the 17 articles. Its purpose was to protect the individual conscience and to guard against a creedal faith. From the day of the adoption of this statement, May 9, 1963, I have repeatedly reminded Southern Baptists, both from the convention platform and in writing, that if we ignore the preamble we do not need to get a creed. We will already have one.

Preamble protections

Without the preamble I am certain that the convention would not have adopted this statement. And no individual or group of individuals has the right to regard any one of the 17 articles while ignoring the Preamble. To do so is not to use it but to abuse it.

When the convention appointed the committee in 1962 it was charged with the responsibility of presenting to the convention in 1963 "some similar statement (to the 1925 statement) which shall serve as information to the churches and which may serve as guidelines to the various agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Note the words *shall* and *may*. It *shall* serve as information to the churches, and *may* serve as guidelines to the various agencies of the convention. Here is protection number one for the individual conscience.

In its first meeting our committee agreed that we had three options: (1) write a new statement of faith; (2) recommend a reaffirmation of the 1925 statement; (3) present a revision of the 1925 statement. We chose the third. Therefore, we quoted with approval from the preamble of the 1925 statement. It notes the historic Baptist

practice of bodies from local churches to conventions to draw up statements of faith as a consensus of its constituents for general instruction and guidance of its people. But it states "that we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility." This is the second protection for the individual conscience.

Furthermore, "the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience." This is the third protection for the individual conscience.

Again, confessions "are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are not to be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in other realms of life." (Of course, conclusions in matters of religion must be in agreement of the Scriptures.) This is the fourth protection for the individual conscience.

Furthermore, "Such statements have never been regarded as complete, infallible statements of faith, nor as official creeds carrying mandatory authority." Here is the fifth protection for the individual conscience.

Constantly our committee was aware of the diversity in our unity as Southern Baptists. One incident illustrates this. At 11 o'clock one night we finished the article on baptism. I said, "Brethren, we are physically and mentally exhausted. Let's get a night's rest and take up the Lord's Supper in the morning."

The next morning a member of the committee read a proposed statement on the Lord's Supper. It was closed communion of the tightest sort. In response a strong conservative from a western state said, "I like that statement very much. That is what we practice in my state. But we must remember that we are drawing up a statement for all Southern Baptists. We must make it broad enough that all Southern Baptists will be comfortable with it." We followed that wise counsel.

A word of caution. Reading the "protections," some might take them to mean that a person can believe anything and still be a Baptist. Not so! The two closing paragraphs of the preamble read:

"Baptists emphasize the soul's competency before God, freedom in religion, and the priesthood of the believer. However, this emphasis should not be interpreted to mean that there is an absence of certain doctrines that Baptists believe, cherish, and with which they have been

and are now closely identified.

"It is the purpose of this statement of faith and message to set forth certain teachings which we believe." Then follow the 17 articles of faith.

The preamble suggests that the time may come when Southern Baptists may wish to revise this statement or write a new one. If that time does come, in my judgment no change should be made simply through a motion from the floor. It should be done through a representative committee following a long, careful study.

Preamble principles

In closing this article two things call for attention. They are not specifically spelled out, but are involved in the principles set forth in the preamble.

The annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention is composed not of delegates, but of messengers. A *delegate* is one to whom the church delegates its authority and instructs him or her to vote a certain way on issues brought to the convention. In turn the local churches would be bound by the actions of the convention. A *messenger* is someone appointed by a local church but with no delegated authority or instructions as to how to vote.

If one goes instructed as to how to vote, he or she is a *delegate* and is not eligible to be seated. I realize that this would be difficult to administer. I mention it as something which should weigh heavily upon the conscience of each appointee.

The other matter is the appointment of the Committee on Committees and the one on boards and the resultant members of the various boards of convention agencies. This is not only inherent in our church polity but also to direct action of the convention in adopting the Peace Committee report with an estimated margin of 97 to 3. One of the recommendations of this report calls for balanced appointment of committees and board members.

This is not intended as criticism of anyone. But it does point out something we all have overlooked. The elected officers of the convention are not its bosses but its servants. If this one recommendation in the Peace Committee report were followed, the almost 14-year controversy could be solved overnight. At least the stated reasons for the present division would be removed. This same report called for an end to politics and for a balance in seminary faculties. We have in place the solution to the problem. But it waits upon the human element.

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Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

Staff changes

David R. Ard began serving March 7 as pastor of Olivet Church in Little Rock, coming there from Oxford, Miss., where he had served 13 years as pastor of Shirley Church. A native of Mississippi, he currently is completing his doctoral degree at Mid America Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served on the executive board of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, as well as holding numerous associational leadership positions. Prior to entering the ministry, Ard was project administrator in continuing education at the University of Mississippi. He and his wife, Richie, are parents of two daughters.



Mike McDaniel began serving Feb. 28 as pastor of Lake City Church. He moved there from Memphis where he had been on the staff of Bellevue Church.

R.L. Williams is serving as director of evangelism for North Main Church in Jonesboro. He is a former pastor of the church, having served there in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Joe Craft is serving as pastor of Second Church in Clarksville. He moved there from Gould where he had been pastor of First Church since 1988. Craft is a graduate of Bethany Bible College in Santa Cruz, Calif., and is working on an advanced Bible studies diploma through the Southern Baptist Seminary Extension program.

Jeff Erwin is serving as youth intern at Second Church in Arkadelphia. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

Terry Owens has resigned as pastor of Memorial Church in Blytheville.

Bill Ault resigned Feb. 28 as pastor of Shady Grove Church of Sparkman to recover from open heart surgery.

Troy Harris is serving as pastor of Harmony Church of Thornton. He had been a member of First Church of Hampton since his 1992 retirement as pastor of a church in California.

John Mark Wheeler is serving as pastor of First Church of Kingsland. He has served

as pastor of other churches in Carey Association and is a former member of Prosperity Church of Bearden.

Vivian Ferguson has retired as head librarian at Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock. Her years of service in the library spanned three separate terms, for a total of 18 years.

Dwayne Chappel has joined the staff of First Church of Greenwood as minister of music. He came there from Arlington, Texas, and previously has served on the staff of First Church in Lavaca.

Keith Clutts has joined the staff of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith as minister of music. He and his wife, Gayle, and their children, Sarah and Rachel, moved to Fort Smith from Hot Springs where he served on the staff of Second Church.

Thomas Haynes has joined the staff of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith as minister of single adults. He was a member of the church and previously has served on the staff of churches in Arkansas and Oklahoma.

Ray Edmondson began serving March 7 as pastor of First Church of Altheimer. He and his wife, Brenda, moved there from Paragould where he served for four years as pastor of Immanuel Church.

Skip Wofford recently resigned as minister of music and youth at First Church of Booneville, following more than 19 years of service. He and his wife, Nancy, have organized a ministry in which they will assist Arkansas churches in establishing travel ministries. Wofford, who has served for 36 years in the music and youth ministry, also is available to serve as either a supply music director or interim pastor or to lead workshops with adult or youth choirs.

Mike Whiteley has resigned as pastor of Faith Church, Colcord. He currently is a member of the church.

Larry Chapman has resigned as pastor of Gum Springs Church, Siloam Springs.

Larry Rogers has resigned as pastor of Oak Grove Church, Pochontas. He is residing in Biggers.

Bill Scaggs has resigned as pastor of Harmony Church, Rector. He is residing near Pochontas.

James Nowell is serving as pastor of First Church of Turrell. He and his wife,

Charlene, moved there from Pennsylvania where he was serving as a church planter.

Sonny Williams is serving as pastor of Shell Lake Church. A native of Manila, he returned to Arkansas from serving as pastor of an Iowa church.

Milton Andrews is serving as pastor of Gilmore Church. He moved there from Blytheville.

Dennis Coop will join the staff of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock March 15 as minister of education and outreach. He and his wife, Martha, will move to North Little Rock from Jonesboro where he has been serving as minister of education and administration at First Church.

Clark Lasse is serving as pastor of a new mission organized by First Church of Farmington. He resigned as pastor of First Church of Winslow to begin this new work.

James Gatchel is serving as pastor of Wedington Woods Church. He was a member of Brush Creek Church, Springdale.

Dianne Swaim, a member of Second Church in Little Rock, is assisting Central Church in North Little Rock for six months as a single adult consultant. She will be working with single adults to establish a ministry to meet church and community needs. Swaim is a single adult consultant for the family ministry department of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Correction: A reporting error concerning the new field of service for Russell Draper was published in the Feb. 11 issue of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*. He has joined the staff of Immanuel Church in Paragould as minister of youth.

Church news

Highland Hills Church of Texarkana was in a revival Feb. 7-10 that resulted in 112 decisions, including 54 professions of faith. William Blackburn of Fort Smith was the evangelist and Orvis McRae was the music director. James Lindsey is pastor.

Rogers First Church music ministry recently recognized Lea Long as choir member of the year. Amy Fike received the director's award and John Fike, Pat Smith and Beverly Keenen tied for the best attendance award. The church also

recently recognized Benny and Tomilee Lundy for 20 years of service in the bus ministry.

Eden Church near Hamburg held a revival Feb. 21-24 with William Blackburn of Fort Smith as evangelist. Wayne Grothman from First Church of Crossett directed music. Pastor Steve Dumas reported 53 professions of faith and 25 other decisions.

West Memphis Second Church truckstop ministry records indicate that in the past year 525 visitors, representing 38 states and Canada have been ministered to through the ministry. Witnessing efforts have resulted in 40 professions of faith.

Liberty Association will hold an evangelism conference April 1 at El Dorado Municipal Auditorium. Conference speakers will include Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Church in Del City, Okla.; Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention; Fred Lowery, pastor of First Church in Bossier City, La.; and Ron Barker, associate director of the evangelism department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Sessions will begin at 1:30 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. with a supper break at 5 p.m. Music will be provided by area churches. Tommy Robertson is director of missions.

Obituaries

Doyle W. Alderson of Knoxville died Feb. 10 at age 94. A retired Southern Baptist minister, he had served as pastor of churches in Arkansas River Valley Association from 1973-1980. Survivors are a daughter, Dorothy Mae Burton of Knoxville; two grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Oleiva Hoyle of Bentonville died Feb. 9 at age 61. She was a member of Pleasant Hill Church of Rogers where her husband, Vessar Hoyle, Jr., is serving as interim pastor. Other survivors are a daughter, Beverly Hoyle of Bentonville; three brothers; and two sisters. Memorials may be made to the Radio Bible Hour, c/o Clark Funeral Home, Newport, Tenn.

Vada L. Cullum died Feb. 25 in Wichita Falls, Texas, at age 59. A retired licensed vocational nurse, she was the wife of Alfred R. Cullum who had served as a pastor and staff member of Arkansas churches. Other survivors include two sons, Tim Cullum of Marion and Reid Cullum of Memphis, Tenn.; two daughters, Cynthia London of North Little Rock and Opal Rountree of Forrest City; a brother; and three grandchildren. Memorials may be made to Wichita Falls Hospice or the Cancer Fund of America in care of West Side Church, Little Rock.

Ministry workshop offers ways to 'have a heart like Jesus'

By Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist

It is seldom lack of willingness, opportunity or interest that prevents a church group from participating in mission action projects; it is often the "nuts and bolts" of the work that becomes a stumbling block. The "nuts and bolts" were explained to Arkansas Baptists in a recent church and community ministries workshop, entitled "Have a Heart Like Jesus." The workshop, which drew more than 100 participants from across the state, covered topics as far-ranging as literacy, multihousing ministries and health care missions in Arkansas.

One essential area, discovering ministry needs and opportunities, was addressed by Diana Lewis, who works part-time in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department, and also participates in hands-on missions through Central Association. "We need to develop more of a heart like Jesus," Lewis emphasized. "In our state, churches need to find out about their community."

Lewis said the starting point is a community assessment. This can be done through a "windshield survey" — a drive-through of the community. "Look at your neighborhood with new eyes; look for things that indicate the presence of children, see how many mobile home parks and apartments there are," Lewis explained.

After the initial survey, volunteers can organize their church for a one- or two-day community needs assessment. Make appointments with government agencies and schools that directly come into contact with those in need.

After assessing community needs, Lewis explained, assess the resources of the local church and association. Money and manpower are not the only resources to consider, Lewis added.

"Think of your facility as a base of operation" she said. Child-care for needy mothers, a soup kitchen or a clothing closet could be housed in a church, and a church van could be used to transport senior citizens to doctors' appointments and shopping. After the assessment, Lewis cautioned against trying to do too much. Try one thing and make it work first, she encouraged.

Fred Loper, a physician and Home

Mission Board medical missionary, talked about health care needs in the '90s and how to start medical and dental missions.

"Everybody is terminally ill from a spiritual disease called sin," Loper said. "We do pretty good about telling people about Jesus, but we need to show people who Jesus is."

Christians

need to set good examples by their lifestyle, Loper explained. "We live in a world dominated by diseased people because of the way we live," he emphasized. Smoking, high blood pressure, drug abuse and sexually transmitted diseases can all be attributed to lifestyle, Loper contended.

There are many places where Christians can be involved as the heart, eyes, hands and feet of Jesus, Loper noted. "Ministry like health care leads to meaningful relationships which validate our talk about the good news of Jesus," he declared.

Tommy Goode, an associate in the ABCS missions department, shared another major missions opportunity begun in 1989—the Mississippi River Ministry. "This project will give all of us an opportunity to do volunteer missions," he said, adding that this is missions "right where we live."

During the workshop, a posthumous award was given to Bernard Beasley in honor of outstanding volunteer service. His widow, Lou, received the award from former ABCS missions department director Conway Sawyers.



Medical missionary Fred Loper

Get to know students, Robinson urges

GATLINBURG, TN (BP)—How can Southern Baptist student ministers reach fraternity and sorority members, commuter students or particular racial and cultural groups on their campuses?

The key is meeting students "where they are," according to Mark Robinson, director of student ministry at Henderson State University in Arkadelphia. Robinson was a seminar leader at the recent Conference on Student Evangelism in Gatlinburg, Tenn.

"We've got to learn to love students for who they are and minister to them in their context," Robinson said in a seminar on reaching commuters with the gospel. "You've also got to be where your market is."

Addressing misconceptions

Robinson said one of the biggest misconceptions about commuters is that they go home immediately after class.

"How many students do you know that can get all of their classes one after another? There is always a lag time, and they have to go somewhere," he said, adding likely destinations are the library, student center/cafeteria, gymnasium, bookstore or parking lots.

"You need to spend large blocks of time on your campus to find out the traffic patterns — where the students hang out and spend their time talking. Then you've got to get out there and get to know them."

Robinson also encouraged student ministers to learn the general profile of the "baby buster" generation. Most current students belong to this group of people born between 1965-1985.

Referring to the book, *The Invisible Generation*, by research expert George Barna, Robinson said "busters" see themselves as hard workers, curious, easy to please, pragmatic and skeptical. Fifty-two percent claim to be religious and 25 percent claim to be born again. They are more oriented toward relationships than financial success and view "baby boomers" (people born between 1946-64) as selfish.

"This is an angry generation," Robinson said. "But if they feel the complete acceptance and love of Christ, it will bring them out of that. If you can provide something of quality as far as relationships go, you've got them."

Robinson discussed several evangelistic strategies for reaching commuters and other students, including the use of contemporary Christian music in presenting the gospel; mass Bible distributions; the formation of campus-wide discussion groups on topics like AIDS, safe sex and the environment; and using quality advertising and communication pieces to promote the Baptist Student Union.

Other ideas on how to attract students to the program included offering aerobic, English as a Second Language and CPR classes.

CONFERENCE MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE CHURCH



Jim Ryan will be leading the conference. He is a growth leadership consultant in the pastor-administration section of the church growth-Sunday school division at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

TIME/DATE: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. • May 18

PLACE: Markham Street Baptist Church
9701 West Markham, Little Rock

TARGET AUDIENCE: Pastors/staff members who supervise other persons on the church staff or support staff.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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or phone 376-4791, ext. 5148

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Seminar calls for mutual respect, appreciation

ABN photo / Millie Gill

By Millie Gill
Arkansas Baptist

The religious, business, academic and legal "Perspectives on the African-American in a Predominately White Organization" was the focus of a statewide race relations conference held Feb. 11.

Cooperative Ministries with National and Southern Baptists sponsored the conference which was held in the Baptist Building chapel in Little Rock. Sponsoring organizations included the Consolidated Missionary Baptist State Convention, the Regular Arkansas Missionary Baptist State Convention, the General Missionary Baptist State Convention and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Dawson Williams, Baptist Student Union director at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and regional associate in Cooperative Ministries, discussed four different perspectives in the religious world of the African-American.

He described the culturally immersed as the African-American who is so immersed in his own cultural that he does not desire involvement in a white society and the Afrocentric as one who works in the white setting but lives and socializes in the black community.

"The Black Cultural who lives and works in a white setting, but is the elite of the black organization is the one who can be accepted by both groups," Williams said. "The one who will not be accepted by the black community is the fully acculturated African-American who lives and socializes in the white community, goes to a white church and is a member of white organizations

"To change the African-American perspectives in a predominately white organization," Williams declared, "we must start dealing with it at the seminary, convention and conference levels as well as placing more African-Americans in our work forces rather than the token one we now have there.

'An attitude of servanthood'

"However, the most important thing we can do for this religious perspective," Williams concluded, "is to have an attitude of servanthood so that the Lord's Kingdom can be built up."

"Most African-Americans feel that they must take a 'stab in the back' to get ahead," noted James Haymon who presented the business perspective. Haymon attributed this attitude to the history of the African-American in the business world, pointing out that the majority of African-Americans



Jack Kwok, director of Arkansas Baptist Cooperative Ministries, moderated a dialogue session at the conclusion of a recent race relations conference in Little Rock.

had no parental or mentor/sponsor to give them an initial entry into the marketplace.

Haymon, a telecommunications programmer manager in Little Rock, said marketplace changes would occur for African-Americans who rely on skills, recognize that all are created by God, go beyond expectations, are God appointed, are faithful, show respect and patience and who give it their best.

"I am truly an African-American in a predominately white organization" declared Doris Lajune Nash, "and have been in this position for the past 25 years." Reflecting on her past, Nash recalled being the only black female student to graduate from Dollarway High School in Pine Bluff, the only black major in drama in her undergraduate class at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, the only black major female graduate in her class at Auburn, Ala., and the only black graduate of theater in her class at Fayetteville and now the only active black high school teacher of drama in the Arkansas State Communication Association.

"As I reflect upon my experiences as a student and a teacher in a predominately white organization, one fact has been painfully revealed," said Nash. "According to the 1990 survey of the University of Chicago National Opinion Research Center, 53 percent of nonblacks actually believe that African-Americans are less intelligent than whites. Yet, the education system which includes more than 50 percent of minority students is not conducive nor beneficial for most of our black students."

Nash emphasized that excessive concern with color "is a clever trick of the devil, thus rejecting God's perception for God has no respect of persons. Since racism is detrimental to both white and African-

Americans, let's pray that elementary school, high school and universities will stop being playgrounds in which the devil uses racism for a tool."

Little Rock attorney Wendell Griffen, pastor of Emmanuel Mission Church in Little Rock, recalled the removal of the African-American barrier in the legal profession began in 1948 when Silas Hunt was the first African-American to enroll in the University of Arkansas Law School. "When I entered law school in 1976," Griffen said, "there were no lawyers of color practicing in any of the major law firms in any community in Arkansas, despite the fact that black and white law students had been learning law together at the U of A and other institutions around the country for 30 years.

"I became the first lawyer of color to practice with a major white firm in 1979. This was 31 years after Silas Hunt broke the color barrier for legal education."

The need for white leaders to develop the will to produce an integrated professional society, the need to stop spouting rhetoric and start producing results, the need to take responsibility for the problem and the need to be led by racial victims instead of blaming them were listed as suggestions by Griffen for changing the African-American predicament.

Conference moderator Jack Kwok, director of ABCS Cooperative Ministries, said the meeting was designed "to help white people and black people relate to one another with respect and appreciation."

Although "National and Southern Baptists have not arrived at where they want to be in race relations," he added, "they are pressing toward the mark of racial righteousness."

Leazer removed from further work on Mason study group

NASHVILLE, TN (BP/ABP)—The Home Mission Board has removed the director of its interfaith witness department from an ad hoc committee preparing a "report and recommendation" on Freemasonry for the Southern Baptist Convention.

HMB president Larry Lewis removed the department's director, Gary Leazer, from the committee Feb. 22 for what Lewis termed "inappropriate" comments Leazer made about the Freemasonry issue in a letter.

Leazer's letter to a Chattanooga, Tenn., man was circulated to Home Mission Board officials, Baptist Press and other news media Feb. 22 by James "Larry" Holly, a Texas physician intent on the SBC declaring that Freemasonry is incompatible with Christianity.

Holly—who blames Masons for the fact his father, a Mason, rejects Christianity—contends Leazer's letter shows the HMB employee to be favorable toward Masons.

During last year's SBC meeting in Indianapolis, Holly made a motion for the creation of a special ad hoc committee to study Freemasonry. But messengers voted to amend the motion, instructing the HMB interfaith witness department to do the study and the HMB to bring "a report with recommendation" to this year's annual meeting, June 15-17 in Houston.

Holly, in an interview with Baptist Press, said he obtained a copy of Leazer's letter about the HMB Freemasonry study after it

was "circulated indiscriminately" in Chattanooga.

Leazer, in the letter, voiced appreciation to two Masons, including Abner McCall, former president of Baylor University, for reviewing the report he was preparing to submit to Lewis Jan. 22. Leazer wrote he had incorporated suggestions made by McCall and the other Mason.

Recommendation outlined

Leazer wrote of Holly: "He, of course, will explode when he sees it. I am reaffirming our department's 1986 position that Freemasonry is NOT a religion and recommending that the SBC take a stand neither for nor against Freemasonry."

Leazer additionally noted: "Of course, anything can happen between now and the SBC in June. Holly is already marshalling his forces to counter-attack. It is essential that as many Southern Baptist Masons get to the SBC as possible."

Lewis, in a written statement Feb. 22, said an ad hoc board committee is handling the "second portion" of the SBC motion passed last year, preparing a report and recommendation to be submitted to the full board of directors for approval during their March 17 meeting.

Lewis also noted the interfaith witness department had completed the "study" portion of the two-part SBC motion. "The study has been reviewed by a number of

directors of the Home Mission Board and will be sent as information to the full board prior to the March meeting."

Lewis noted the study underwent some "radical revisions" after Leazer completed his work. "We are all satisfied this is a thorough, accurate and fair study," he said.

Beyond Leazer's removal from the HMB's handling of the Freemasonry issue, Holly said HMB directors should determine whether to ask for Leazer's resignation from the agency's staff. He also called for the rejection of the study prepared by Leazer.

Lewis acknowledged Leazer "sent an early draft of the study to two Masons asking them to review his facts and understanding of Freemasonry due to the very complex nature of the subject."

"Personal observations and projections by Dr. Leazer about Dr. Holly were inappropriate and unfortunate as was inclusion in the letter of Dr. Leazer's own conclusions and recommendations," Lewis added.

"Dr. Leazer's statement regarding Masons attending the study was also inappropriate," Lewis wrote, "even though he says he was attempting to respond to numerous requests from Masons about what avenues of response were open to them."

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Mohler nominated as president of Southern

NASHVILLE, TN (ABP/BP) — Al Mohler, a 33-year-old Baptist newspaper editor from Atlanta, will be recommended as president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, according to the seminary's search committee.

If elected, Mohler will succeed retiring president Roy Honeycutt. Mohler formerly served as special assistant to Honeycutt and director of capital funding for Southern. He left that position in 1989 to become editor of the *Christian Index*, weekly newjournal of Georgia Baptists.

Wayne Allen, chairman of Southern's trustees and the search committee, made the announcement of Mohler's unanimous selection in a Feb. 21 news conference in Nashville, Tenn., where Southern Baptist Convention leaders were gathered for an SBC Executive Committee meeting.

Although trustees planned to announce their selection in April, Allen said the search committee reached a "first-vote unanimous decision" after interviewing Mohler and two other finalists during the week of Feb. 15 and decided to release the name.

"We had not planned to reach a decision until early March," Allen said, "but we had such a sense of God's leadership and peace concerning God's will that we reached a unanimous decision" Feb. 19.

Mohler will be recommended to Southern's trustees when they meet April 19, or sooner if trustees decide to call a special meeting, Allen said.

A native of Lakeland, Fla., Mohler is the only one of four finalists for the post who is both a graduate and one-time employee of Southern. He holds the doctor of philosophy and master of divinity degrees from Southern, in addition to a bachelor of arts degree in religion from Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. He was pastor of Union Grove Baptist Church in Bedford, Ky., while a seminary student.

If elected, Mohler would be considerably younger than most of the faculty members he would supervise. He also would be the youngest president in the seminary's history, except for the school's founder, James P. Boyce, who at 32 became chairman of the faculty at the seminary's founding in 1859.

Allen said Mohler's age "could be seen as a liability, but it could be seen as a strength." He noted that four of Southern's eight previous presidents were in their 30s when elected.

Strong 'personal vision'

In the committee's interviews, Allen said Mohler "clearly articulated his personal vision for the Institution. His statements reflected a complete knowledge of the history of the school, a thorough understanding of the present climate of anxiety and a conceptual course for a positive future direction."

In a written interpretation Mohler provided of the seminary's traditional

Abstract of Principles, Allen said, the committee was "impressed with Dr. Mohler's biblical, conservative, Baptist, evangelical theological positions."

Arkansas trustee David Miller, director of missions for Little Red River Association, told the *Arkansas Baptist News Magazine* that he expects Mohler to be elected unanimously. Allen agreed that he anticipates "a very strong vote" for the nominee.

Miller added that he is "personally thrilled" by Mohler's nomination because he believes Mohler "represents the historic faith of the seminary."

Mohler said he intends "to be very open and clear and candid, sensitive... a listening ear" and a president who will provide "a firm sense of direction."

"Personally, I have great confidence in him," retiring president Honeycutt said. "I predict for him an outstanding career as president."

Others interviewed for the post were Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, and Timothy George, dean of Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala. A fourth candidate, Bob R. Agee, president of Oklahoma Baptist University, withdrew from consideration after the four candidates' names were revealed in news media reports.

If elected, Mohler likely will assume the role of president-elect sometime this summer. Honeycutt is expected to remain at the seminary until Dec. 31, his announced retirement date.

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Baptists minister to victims of shootout

By Toby Druin and Ken Camp

Texas Baptist Standard

WACO, TX (ABP) — Federal agents received a hail of gunfire when they knocked at the door of a man who claims to be Jesus Christ. Later they were given a healing hand and comfort from a Texas Baptist hospital that ministers in Jesus' name.

Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center in Waco received 16 of the casualties of the Feb. 28 raid by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms on a religious cult housed in a 77-acre compound near Waco.

Two of the ATF agents were dead on arrival and a third died at the hospital. One other ATF officer and two cult members also were killed but were not brought to Hillcrest.

Seven of the injured were hospitalized with a variety of gunshot wounds, although all were listed in stable condition two days following the incident.

They were wounded when a firefright erupted as ATF agents served an arrest warrant on David Koresh, also known as Vernon Howell, leader of the Branch Davidians, which split off from the Seventh-day Adventist Church almost 60 years ago.

Koresh, 33, claims to be Jesus Christ and to hold the keys to the "seven seals" described in Revelation. But he also has been accused of many crimes, including child molestation, and reportedly has 15 wives. The ATF raid Feb. 28, however,

was staged to arrest him on federal weapons charges and to search the compound for automatic weapons and homemade bombs.

The shooting began shortly after 9 a.m. Sunday morning. A force of several dozen ATF officers moved on the rambling compound. But when the arrest warrant was served at the door they were met with a hail of gunfire. Shots were exchanged for more than a half hour. A cease fire was arranged so both groups could remove their dead and wounded.

The Hillcrest Medical Center staff had no advance warning that such an event was in the works, but it didn't take long for them to respond.

Benita Jennings, an emergency-room nurse and member of First Baptist Church of Hubbard, near Waco, said she arrived at the hospital at 11:30, and the first of three ambulances, each with several ATF wounded, arrived within an hour.

Spirit of camaraderie

She worked triage, directing patients to various levels of care. She said she was immediately struck by the spirit of camaraderie among the ATF officers. The first ambulance had an ATF agent in the front seat and two in the back of the ambulance, one already dead. The man in the front seat had lost a thumb to a bullet, she said, but he refused to get out of the ambulance until the others were cared for.

Another ATF agent in a later ambulance "kept asking about the others," she said. "He had heard one had been killed, and when I told him it was true he cried. He cried again when he found another agent from his squad had died."

Jennings works as an emergency medical technician and is accustomed to seeing blood and gunshot wounds, but she said she had never seen so much blood or such bad wounds.

"I haven't had time to think how this is going to affect me," she said. "You can't let it get to you at the time. Sometimes you want to cry and break down, but you learn to deal with it then and break down afterward. I think God is the one who keeps me together."

George Humbert, director of Hillcrest's emergency-room services, said he found ATF officers in full battle gear when he got to the emergency room. There were rumors that the Davidian cult would seek reprisals. The ATF agents "immediately secured the area and began to ask for phones."

Hillcrest's chaplaincy corps — director Curtis Holland, Hazel Thompson and Jake Remenschneider — bore the brunt of the counseling load.

Holland, a member of Western Heights Baptist Church in Waco, said much of his work involves comforting family members and easing them into their first meeting with their injured loved one.

A veteran of 20 years at Hillcrest, Holland said he was impressed with how the whole "team" at the hospital was drawn together, working to get the job done.

"It becomes a reminder of what a wonderful experience it is to be in a Christian environment and see the arm of the church reach out in a different way than hearing it in a sermon," he said.



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RTVC restructures, reduces staff

FORT WORTH, TX (BP)—The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission outlined the restructuring of its staff in a recent meeting with Baptist editors.

RTVC president Jack Johnson said the move would result in elimination of several positions and reassignment of others. Johnson said the moves came as a result of the changes made in transmission of ACTS programming in October.

A total of eight job assignments were eliminated in the restructuring, according to Richard T. McCartney, RTVC executive vice president. A deferred compensation plan based on length of service enabled long-term employees in the eliminated positions to continue to receive their base salaries from three to 12 months after separation. "The result will be a small reduction in personnel costs in the current budget and an approximate \$250,000 savings in 1993-94," McCartney said.

Johnson said the restructuring will change the nature of the network operations division, with it focusing on programming and developing ACTS, the commission's cable network, and FamilyNet, a program service aimed at

broadcast television stations. Administration, programming and traffic will be directed by vice president Michael Wright.

The support services function is being assigned to the business services division headed by Jerry Stamps, vice president for business services. The division will include accounting, information services, computer network, insurance, mail service and the physical plant. Charles Roden, former director of support services, has taken early retirement.

The external relations division under vice president Doug Dillard will be expanded to include marketing, consulting services, institutional advancement and the TimeRite advertising agency in addition to public relations, counseling services, direct mail, graphics and printing. The former development department was closed.

ACTS' move to the Faith and Values Channel and this leaner, more efficient organization, Johnson said, "should enable us to make missions and evangelism the high priority we know Southern Baptists want them to be."

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Judge in India dismisses charges against Rebekah Naylor

BANGALORE, INDIA (BP)—A judge in the southern Indian state of Karnataka has cleared a Southern Baptist medical missionary at Bangalore Baptist Hospital of criminal charges alleging she violated the state's factory labor laws.

In 1988, union workers, angered over personnel cuts at the hospital, filed a criminal complaint against missionary Rebekah Naylor, who was the hospital's medical director at that time.

The complaint said Naylor broke a law that protects factory workers when she laid off 39 hospital employees in 1988. The prosecuting attorney claimed the hospital was subject to the same laws which govern India's factories and the handling of their labor forces.

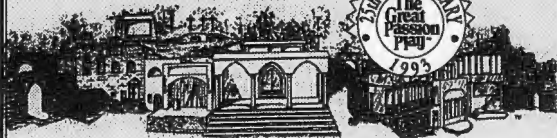
For the past four years, as the case moved through India's court system, Naylor faced the possibility of a prison sentence.

But when the case reached Karnataka's high court, a judge ruled the prosecution had no basis for its complaint. He said it was "ridiculous for anyone to ever think that a hospital was a factory," reported missionary Clyde Meador, associate to the area director for southern Asia.

The judge strongly disagreed with "the idea that such a prosecution should ever have been pursued, and he categorically declared Dr. Naylor innocent," Meador said. "We're thankful that she and the hospital have been vindicated."

Naylor, who has worked at the hospital more than 19 years, is the only remaining missionary working at the hospital, which opened in 1973. She is now a senior surgeon at the 123-bed facility.

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English comes in handy on African borders

TUNDUMA, TANZANIA (BP)—In a border town, sometimes you have to change things besides countries — like languages.

Southern Baptist missionary Jon Lord recently arrived at Tunduma Baptist Church on the Tanzania-Zambia border to preach and show the popular "Jesus" film outdoors. Following an afternoon church service, he visited door to door with the local pastor until 4 p.m., then preached to 300 students at the primary school.

By the time dusk approached, the tired missionary was ready to show the film and go home.

A young man approached as Lord leaned wearily against the car and asked in English, "What is the cinema?" Lord answered in Swahili, "Maisha ya Yesu" (the life of Jesus). The young man's eyes lit up as he exclaimed, "Oh, Michael Jackson!"

"I was too tired at the time to think that was funny," Lord said later. "But I began a polite explanation about the film," based on the Gospel of Luke. The young man quickly stopped the missionary and explained, "I am a Zambian and do not hear (understand) Swahili. Could you tell me about Jesus in English?"

"After preaching and witnessing all day in Swahili it was actually a little hard to shift back to the ol' mother tongue," Lord admitted. "But without even warning him about my Louisiana accent I began to share Jesus."

It was almost time to start the movie so Lord, fearful the Zambian would melt into the crowd, asked, "Is there any reason why you cannot accept Christ right now?" The reply: "Today, I have become a Christian."

Not long afterward Lord got a letter. It said: "Thank you for the Bible which you gave me. Please Jon, keep on living for God and teaching the Good News of Jesus. I will not stop following Jesus. I was a sinner, but now have asked Jesus to come into my heart. You are the one who let me know about Jesus Christ." It was signed by the young Zambian, Boniface Mwakalosi.

"That letter," Lord said, "reminded me of the thousands of Southern Baptists who give and pray so I could be in that border town full of police and thieves, customs officials and smugglers, truck drivers and money changers — and a Zambian who thought he was going to watch Michael Jackson and instead met Jesus Christ."

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Missionary Notes

Donald and Elise Brown, Baptist representatives to Israel, are on the field (address: P.O. Box 0372, Hertzlia Bet, 46103 Israel). He was born in El Dorado. The former Elise Word, she is a native of Mississippi. They were employed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1987.

John and Claudia Brown, missionaries to Malawi, are on the field (address: P.O. Box 1408, Blantyre, Malawi). A native of Arkansas, he was born in Pine Bluff and considers Star City his hometown. The former Claudia Tenney, she considers Jackson, Miss., her hometown. They were appointed in 1987.

Russell and Vicky Fox, Baptist representatives to Israel, are on the field (address: Baptist Village, Mobile Post, Central Sharon 45875, Israel). He considers Little Rock his hometown. She is the former Victoria Hagan of Stuttgart. They were employed in 1982.

David and Martha Miller, missionaries to Chile, are on the field (address: Casilla 266-20, Santiago, Chile). They are natives of Arkansas. He is from Little Rock. The

former Martha Savage, she was born in DeQueen and considers Walnut Ridge her hometown. They were appointed in 1986.

Charles and Audrey Morris, missionaries to Kenya, are on the field (address: P.O. Box 32, Limuru, Kenya). They are natives of Arkansas. He is from Parkin. The former Audrey Dulin, she was born in Earle. They began serving with the Foreign Mission Board in 1986.

Rebekah Naylor, missionary to India, is on the field (address: Bangalore Baptist Hospital, Bellary Rd., Hebbal, Bangalore 560024, India). She was born in Arkadelphia. She was appointed in 1973.

MK Prayer Calendar

Missionary kids attending college in Arkansas with birthdays in March:

■ March 18, Andrea Leagans, OBU Box 4215, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001. Freshman from Colombia.

■ March 25, Pam Dial, WBC Box 3663, College City, AR 72476. Senior from Uruguay.

Prayer Thrust

Bold Mission Prayer Thrust prayer requests for March:

■ Missionaries Bill and Lajoye Martin will leave for Mongolia on March 25. They will live in Ulan Bator. Pray for them as they work to strengthen works already started and to establish new works.

■ The National Prayer Conference on April 19-22 at Gloriaia.

■ Bartholomew Migrant Mission Center at Hermitage. Pray for volunteers as summer activities are coming. Ariel Hernandez is the director.

■ Dixonville Baptist Center. Pray for the Wednesday ladies groups and for the volunteers who minister to the women and children in Dixonville. Diana Lewis is coordinator.

■ Migrant Mission in Magnolia. Pray for the tree planters to whom Central Church is ministering. Paul Roaten is the migrant mission center director.

■ Mississippi River Ministry. Pray for additional full-time Mission Service Corps volunteers to help coordinate MRM. Tommy Goode is state MRM coordinator.

■ Eudora Church. Pray for the community food ministry which the ministerial alliance has begun. Pray for harmony and cooperation in the community. Francis LaRocque is pastor.

■ Pines Apartments, Little Rock. Pray that troubled young men here will listen and learn God's will. Pray that they let God guide and direct them as they struggle to change. Doris Nash is coordinator.

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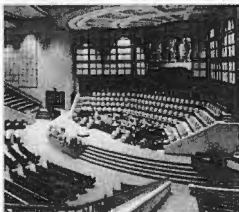
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PEOPLE TO DEPEND ON

Convention Uniform

Seeing the truth

By David Laird, pastor, Trinity Church, Malvern

Basic passage: John 9

Focal passage: John 9:1-5

Central truth: Lessons can be learned from the painful and sometimes unexplainable illnesses in life.

After His encounter with the Pharisees in chapter eight Jesus continues to mingle with the people in the Temple complex. While passing through the multitude of people, His disciples called attention to one man in the crowd. Apparently some or all of the disciples knew him or knew of him. This we learn by the way the disciples talked about his blindness, "he was born blind." Since they knew that he had been blind since birth, we can be sure they knew more than John told.

The question the disciples asked, though a very simple question, in v. 2, "Who did sin?", is another way of attempting to deal with the universal question concerning illness in the world. The Jews of antiquity answered the question by attributing all sickness and suffering to some sin in the sick person's life or to a sin in the lives of the parents of the person who was sick. This was a simplistic approach to a complex question.

Jesus did not share their simplistic view of cause and effect of sin and sickness. This is all the more reason that we should not settle for a simple answer to a question that affects lives.

The response of Jesus in v. 3, "that the works of God should be made manifest in him" should not be taken as a blanket answer to the universal question but as a principle to be used in helping God's people live through very painful, difficult and even terminal illnesses. The principle that He sets forth to the disciples is this: Illness has a purpose in life. In this case the purpose was to show that God's work of healing could be performed in a man's life. The purpose of God will vary for each individual because we are all unique.

This principle should lead us to ask not, "Why am I sick, or dying, or suffering?" but rather "What can I learn from my illness?" The principle set forth by Christ in this miracle should set us free from the erroneous teaching so prevalent today which teaches that it is not God's will for us to suffer illness. Let us remember that in every situation God has a lesson for us to learn. The question for us is, "Am I willing to learn His lessons?"

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Life and Work

Rewards of faithfulness

By Bruce Tippitt, pastor, Fianna Hills Church, Fort Smith

Basic passage: Genesis 40-41

Focal passage: Genesis 41:28-40

Central truth: Faithfulness in testing is rewarded by God's best in God's perfect time.

When bad things happen to good people and good things always seem to happen to bad people, undeserving people, do you ever wonder if faithfulness is really worth it? Do you really believe that a life of faithful obedience to God is rewarded? If you only knew half of the story of Joseph, you would think not! Yet this portion of our story teaches us one brilliant truth: Faithfulness in testing is rewarded by God's best in God's perfect time.

Think back on all the tests that Joseph faced: hated by his brothers, sold into slavery, accused by Potiphar's wife and forgotten in the dungeon. Now he would face the test of whether or not he would let the knowledge that he had been obedient be the sole reward for his faithfulness. Joseph did not fail! Hallowed God to accomplish His purpose first and his dream would be second.

The turning point for Joseph came in Genesis 41:1-2. Pharaoh had a dream but someone must interpret it. Joseph was remembered (Gen. 41:9-13) and called out of the dungeon. In his moment he did not fail to acknowledge the Lord (Gen. 41:16). Joseph skillfully interpreted the unique dreams of Pharaoh (Gen. 41:25-36). For his faithfulness to God, the Lord used Pharaoh to reward Joseph (Gen. 41:38-40). Here is a flesh and blood example that faithfulness under testing is rewarded in God's perfect time.

What can we learn from this story? First, we can discover that long tests don't have to discourage us. Joseph endured 13 years of trial and yet came out without bitterness or discouragement. Another lesson is that bad memories need not defeat us. Joseph was able to set aside the sting of his experience in order to make room for the work of God in his life. There's one final truth here, it's that great blessings don't have to disqualify us. Joseph was not changed in his character one bit. His generosity did not diminish nor did his ear become deaf to those in need and suffering around him. He was the same on the throne of Egypt as in the dungeon of Potiphar.

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Bible Book

Heathen, God and you

By Bill H. Lewis, DOM, Harmony Association

Basic passage: Psalms 2, 20, 110

Focal passage: Psalms 2:1

Central truth: Loud raging and boisterous actions do not denote power and victory in life.

It is said that we are living in a day in which Americans feel that everything can be fixed in Washington. But one preacher was accurate at our last Southern Baptist Convention when he said, "God does not ride the backs of elephants or donkeys." In Psalms 2 we see the intentions of the heathen. In verses 2 and 3 we see the plotting of wicked leaders as they declare their intention of "taking council against the Lord and his anointed, breaking their bands and casting away their cords." We see that their intentions are subtle. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? Imagination is an illustration of a possibility. The devil-inspired heathen are always plotting the destruction of the anointed.

Now, what is God's response to the threat of the heathen? Verses 4, 5 and 9 reveal that God will laugh (v. 4); He will have them in derision (also see Ps. 33:1 and 59:8); He will trouble them (v. 5) (also see Ps. 21:8-9); He shall break and dash them in views (v. 9) (see Ps. 110:5-6 and Re. 2:27). The heathen trying to overpower God and His anointed is like a feist dog barking at the moon in an attempt to make it fall.

In verses 11-12, and throughout Psalms 30, we see the constant admonition that the Christian should just completely trust in and serve the Lord. All Christians, and especially those who are preachers of the gospel, can rest with assurance that in Psalms 20:6 the Lord "saveth (protects, preserves, sustains, strengthens) his anointed."

Finally, in Psalms 110:5-6 we have the following assurance, "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike (destroy) kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen..."

Therefore, when we see the heathen rage, we can rest with the assurance that such is about all he can do. Our key word is "faithfulness." Our responsibility is to remain in the will of God. Our business is not to defeat the heathen, but to do the work and will of God. Victory is assured, but it is God's victory.

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Convention Uniform

Waiting on God

By David Laird, pastor, Trinity Church, Malvern

Basic passage: John 11:1-44

Focal passage: John 11:1-44

Central truth: God's glory shines brightest for those who patiently wait for God to act in their lives.

This one of the better known stories in the New Testament. Its significance is to show the Lordship of Jesus over the most dreaded enemy of man, death. There are other lessons to be gleaned from here and one such lesson has to do with people waiting on and trusting in God to accomplish His will. Notice the parallels in the actions of Jesus in dealing with the situation involving Lazarus and our own situation.

1. A request is made. In v. 3 a need is revealed. Lazarus, a dear friend of Jesus, is critically ill and He has been asked to come to the aid of Lazarus by healing him. This should sound familiar because we do the same. We have a need and we go to the Lord in prayer and request that God will take care of the need we have.

2. There is a delay in answering. Jesus heard the request for v. 4 states, "When Jesus heard that." Humanly speaking He knew how critical time was, yet in v. 6 John tells us that Jesus deliberately stayed two more days. This certainly added to the anxiety of those waiting on Jesus. The same is true in our lives. When we ask God to meet a need in our life the anxiety level rises when God delays meeting the request. Sometimes people wonder if God really does hear and care. We must remember that God handles things on His agenda in His time frame, not ours.

3. The decision to act. In v. 7 Jesus says, "Let us go into Judea again." He knows the time is right. The time to significantly impact the people has arrived. Thus, He goes to Bethany. Jesus knew when to act and would not act before. We must allow God to act and give Him credit for knowing when to act.

4. The glory of God revealed. (v. 44) When Lazarus had been in the grave four days and any doubt about his condition was removed, Jesus called him from the dead. Any sooner and the people would have had suspicions and doubted. If God were to act sooner upon our request there may be room for some to suspect human intervention but God always acts in a time when His glory will be seen by those who were to see it as that moment.

Life and Work

Time doesn't change all

By Bruce Tippit, pastor, Flanna Hills Church, Fort Smith

Basic passage: Genesis 44:1-45:15

Focal passage: Genesis 45:4-15

Central truth: Time will not change what only reconciliation can.

We are often told that time changes everything. Yet the story of Joseph convinces us that this is not always true. Joseph had been in Egypt over 20 years. However, the issue of his brothers' treatment of Joseph was not resolved. The whole circumstance with the brothers meeting Joseph (Gen. 42-44) is proof of this. It is interesting that the sin against their brother and God's dealing with them is fresh on their mind in this whole event (see Gen. 42:21-22, 28). The guilt they had lived with for so long could only be removed by reconciliation. Time will not change what only reconciliation can.

Joseph tests his brothers by placing his silver cup in Benjamin's grain sack (Gen. 44:1-17). He continues the test by bargaining for their brother (Gen. 44:18-33). When he could stand it no more, he discloses to them his true identity (Gen. 45:1-4). What a shock it must have been for his brothers to come face to face with the object of their guilt!

The response of Joseph is an example of grace to a guilty person. Instead of anger, he was comforting (Gen. 45:5). When others might have been resentful, he saw the purpose God had for all of this (Gen. 45:5-7). Then rather than bearing a grudge, he was generous and unselfish (Gen. 45:9-13). Finally he denied the temptation to hate and forgave them completely (Gen. 50:20).

Twenty years of a broken relationship is at last reconciled. In one of the most lovely biblical accounts, we see the need of human relationships that are destroyed to be reconciled. Yet even more important than that, we can see the one supreme reconciliation exemplified here—our being reconciled to God through Jesus Christ!

What does this story tell us about reconciling relationships? It shows that they are very real. They may be the result of many different circumstances but they are real! This also points us to the need to reconcile our relationships. Regardless of the present kindness or the time elapsed between the two, the separation is still a problem. Another area of concern is that we will never know peace within until there is peace outwardly.

Bible Book

Fairweather Christians

By Bill H. Lewis, DOM, Harmony Association

Basic passage: Psalms 81, 95, 150

Focal passage: Psalms 81:7-16

Central truth: Valleys demand trust; mountains demand praise.

Psalms 81 depicts a contrast between those who trust in the Lord and those who do not. However, their trust was a temporary exercise. In verse 7, when people were in trouble they called on God. They are like the captain of a sinking ship who prayed, "Lord, I ain't bothered you in a long time. I promise if you will just save this ship, I won't bother you no more."

The thrust of verses 1-7 is the admonition to the people to praise the Lord for all He has brought them through. He goes on to tell them in verse 10 that He will still bless them if they will trust, "open thy mouth wide and I will fill it."

We are reminded once again in Psalms 95:8-11 of the consequences of getting away from and falling to trust in God. This comes on the heels of the urging of the people to "sing and praise and give thanks to God" (verses 1-2). The reasons stated are: 1. He is our rock, our stability (v. 1). 2. He is a great God and king (v. 3). 3. He is our strength (v. 4). 4. He is our God and we are His people (v. 7).

All the Psalms are sandwiched between the "blessings of the righteous man," (Ps. 1), and the urging of, "let everything that hath breath praise the Lord" in Psalms 150.

In this final Psalms the people are singing about every type of experience. Even if it was a bad experience, the conclusion was always one of victory. We would feel no praise for God if all our experiences were in the valley and we were left there. Some people cannot enjoy the good times for fear of the bad times. Often we have heard someone say, "I feel so good and everything is going so great, something bad is bound to happen." One person was asked, "How do you feel today?" To which she replied, "Well, I'm feeling good today, but I'm scared I won't feel good tomorrow." Too many of us are like that.

God does all things well. He knows what He is doing all the time, while man does not really know what He is doing half the time. Because God does all things well, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord."

The *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* offers subscription plans at three rates:

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RTVC announces launch of two new TV programs

FORT WORTH, TX (BP)—The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission has announced the launch of two new television programs. "Capital News," a half-hour daily news show began on FamilyNet Feb. 22 at 6:30 p.m. Central Standard Time. "Talk to Me," a live talk show begun Feb. 23, will air on both ACTS and FamilyNet Tuesday through Saturday mornings; 3-4 a.m. CST on ACTS and 2-4 a.m. CST on FamilyNet.

Capital News, which features national and international news events from a conservative Christian perspective, is produced by a Washington FamilyNet affiliate, WTKK-TV. Lisa Digiavani is news anchor and Cal Thomas, noted syndicated columnist, will give a commentary twice each week.

Talk to Me, hosted by Jim Canteloni from the studios of WCFC-TV, Channel 38 in Chicago, provides a coast-to-coast "meeting place" for callers to talk to Canteloni and each other about a wide range of issues, opinions, fears and concerns.

1992 VBS record enrollment surpasses 3.7 million

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Enrollment in Vacation Bible Schools and backyard Bible clubs reached a record high in 1992, surpassing the 3.7 million mark.

According to statistics compiled by the Baptist Sunday School Board, 3,709,174 children, youth and adults were enrolled last year, surpassing the previous year's total by almost 90,000.

Almost 76 percent of Southern Baptist churches (29,482) reported having VBS in 1992. In addition, 1,712 mission Vacation Bible Schools and 3,508 backyard Bible clubs were reported.

All HMB missionaries to receive witness training

ATLANTA (BP)—All Southern Baptist home missionaries will receive more comprehensive soul-winning training under a new guideline reviewed and supported by the Home Mission Board's missionary personnel committee.

HMB president Larry Lewis explained that all approved missionaries are required to take a one-day soul-winning course, but under the new requirements appointed and approved missionaries will need to take a more intensive seminar within two years of appointment.

He said those missionaries already in service will have two years to obtain the necessary training. Newly appointed missionaries will need to complete a Continuing Witness Training seminar. Approved category missionaries, which primarily are mission pastors, may take either CWT or WIN (Witness Involvement Now).

Fellowship hires Betty Law, nominates Crumpler

IRVING, TX (ABF) — Leaders of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship hired one employee, authorized a committee to hire another, and nominated retired Woman's Missionary Union executive Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler as the organization's next moderator-elect.

The Fellowship's Coordinating Council hired longtime Southern Baptist missions administrator Betty Law as associate global missions coordinator. Law, 64, is the Fellowship's second stateside missions staffer. She will assist Keith Parks, who recently was hired as global missions coordinator.

The Coordinating Council also authorized the hiring of a director of communications. The communications work group was empowered to employ the person from a list of four finalists. The finalists were not named.

Crumpler was nominated by the council to become Fellowship moderator-elect. Crumpler's nomination must be approved by the Fellowship's general assembly in May.

Colson 'humbled, grateful' as Templeton Prize recipient

WASHINGTON (BP)—Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship and former self-described "hatchet man" for Richard Nixon, has been awarded the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion.

Colson is a member of Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, Va. The \$1 million-plus prize previously has been awarded to Billy Graham, Mother Teresa and Alexander Solzhenitsyn. It is named for financier John Marks Templeton and is seen to be a Nobel Prize-like award in the field of religion and spirituality.

"When I first learned of this award, I did not feel a sense of exultation," Colson said. "I was instead driven to my knees, humbled and grateful to the Lord Jesus Christ whom I serve." Prison Fellowship now encompasses a 280-member staff, some 50,000 volunteers in the United States and similar outreach in 54 countries.

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