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January 6, 1977

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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January 6, 1977

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE



I must say it

Charles H. Ashcraft / Executive Secretary

Tension/pressure/stress

"Never in my life have I sensed so much tension, stress and pressure." I hear this more and more with every passing day. Our up-tight generation is certainly set apart as the most pressure packed of them all and it is made even more confusing that its origin is within the very household of faith. It has come from within the kingdom with saint pitted against saint, believer against believer, and Christian brother against Christian brother and its solution must come from within.

It really seems there is a "baptism of fire" upon all leaders wherein unreasonable pressure is put and sustained until he either breaks or it becomes obvious he cannot be broken. Some have equated the effectiveness of any leader on the principle, "How much can he take?" and "How long can he take it?" Indeed much tension gravitates to those who serve in the context of the kingdom. No higher energy is ever exerted than preaching the word of God without fear or favor (II Tim. 4:2-3). Nothing takes more out of a person than "taking a stand for a principle and standing there" (Eph. 6:10-14). No less draining upon these prime energies is determining to live all out for Christ. Tensions and pressures surmount those whose ideals, goals and purposes approximate more nearly those of the Lord. This great drain of energy is compounded by those among us who have committed themselves to destroy any person who disagrees with them. To them the penalty for a new idea is the penalty of death. Add to this the great mass of uncomfortable people who enjoy their misery and you find the tension inside the household of faith exceeding the mundane surroundings about it. This is in sharp contrast to the Christian concepts of love, charity, compassion and understanding. Satan's crowd knows this.

Perhaps 1977 offers all of us a chance to improve the climate in which we are called to serve. If a person finds it impossible to serve in a given church with the established leadership, perhaps a change in church homes would lessen the stress on everyone. A genuine spiritual renewal will bring again the song of the Lord and the original joy of one's salvation will return (Psalms 51:12). If there is still no relief from the burdensome pressures, you can always write to the Executive Secretary a real mean letter bleeding away some of the pent-up anger and he will still be your friend. Try him. He understands; he really does.

I must say it!

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An article by Roy B. Hilton is the first in a series of 18 on the book of First John. Hilton's exposition of these passages will appear weekly.

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The activities of Arkansas Baptists are noted in brief form in the column "Arkansas all over ... people". These include the earning of seminary degrees by 13 persons and many church staff changes.

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Christians may have rung in the new year with a re-assessment of their own lives and a new look at the situation of a world in which God is still alive, as the words of a Christmas song suggest.

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Southern Baptists have come a ways in bringing Baptists of other races into the denomination and in working side by side with Black Baptists. A survey by "Home Missions" magazine assesses the progress.

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

VOLUME 76

NUMBER 1

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A successful new year

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



At the outset of each year predictions are made about coming events. Some are more accurate than others, but a measure of error is inevitable when one attempts to foretell the future. Only God knows with certainty what will transpire. The Bible, however, does provide principles for certain Christian success regardless of the future. Praise and joy for each person lies in "hearing" and "doing" the will of God.

Jesus, the master of illustration, told a story of two houses (Matt. 7:24-27). One had a rock foundation while the other was built on the sand. The house which was anchored on rock stood but the one on sand fell.

The illustration was drawn from life in Palestine. The successful builder must think ahead. In areas of Palestine during the summer there are many pleasant sand hollows, but if one builds in these areas, destruction is certain when the rushing and raging torrents of winter rain comes. Only the house with the sure foundation will withstand the storm.

This practical illustration stresses the fact that no building is more secure than its foundation. In like manner, no person can withstand the storms of life without a firm foundation. One who is firmly anchored will have a tendency to hear and obey the commands of God.

Guest editorial

Unworthy

To John the Baptist it was given to be the first and the last. The last he was of the old prophets, the mighty men who had filled the centuries with the largely ignored message of God. He was the first of the evangelists — the one to point to Christ and say, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

He was a man of austere greatness, pronouncing the prophetic call to repentance. He was, at the same time, a man sent from God to be great in a moment — a moment of attestation that Jesus is the Christ.

He had a single word for himself: "unworthy". He said: "... he it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes' latchet I am not worthy to unloose." Unworthy! A strange word it is for our day when we place such emphasis upon the significance of our self-concept. Somehow the Baptist's self-evaluation does not slide easily off the tongues of those of us who have been bathed in Transactional Analysis and urged again and again to be sure that our "O.K." is o.k. Some might even feel that it is high treason against our mental and spiritual well being to underline John's self concept. But I WAS unworthy and I AM unworthy.

Should one wish to know how deeply ingrained is our emphasis upon our own goodness and worthiness, he need only ask a group of five-year-olds, "Boys and girls, what kind of children does Jesus love?" The answer is theologically

Jesus said that the first step was to hear his sayings. One of the great difficulties of our age is that too few people listen to the teachings of Jesus. Many have formulated false teachings based on illogical concepts rather than the Word of God.

A recent philosophy recommends that a person: (1) Determine the logical thing to do; (2) Do the exact opposite because all of our thoughts are carnal; and (3) Hunt scripture to prove that our course of action is right. The worse thing about this teaching is that it encourages people to take scripture out of context. It is always a dangerous thing to twist or to distort God's perfect Word. Hearing means receiving the exact message God has given to us.

Finally, we are to do what Christ commanded. Knowledge only becomes relevant as we translate it into action. Jesus expects application of his teachings and obedience. Theory is of little value unless it results in practice. Theology must become life to be of proper value.

The new year promises much that is presently unknown. It may bring ease or it may bring disappointment. But regardless of events our Christian success is assured in hearing and doing the will of our Master.

devastating. Of course they answer, "good ones," because that is what has been ingrained into them. What a violation that concept is of the Biblical truth that "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

By implication we are saying over and over, "be good, be worthy and God will love you" as though God's love is limited to the discovery of lovable objects. Is it not far more true to say that grace so super-abounds sin that God loves unworthy children too?

How many Christians have failed to fulfill their purpose in life? Some have failed because they have so emphasized personal unworthiness that they have disclaimed any ability in God's service. More of us have failed because by refusing to discern our essential unworthiness we have pushed ahead in the human abilities we have to dismal failure.

When I step into the pulpit Sunday morning, I will say, "unworthy!" It will not be an act of spiritual masochism. It will rather be a statement of realization that in this body of mine there is no good thing that has not been placed there by the loving grace of Christ. The Lamb is worthy! And He, He alone, can take my unworthiness, accept me with my mixed motives, hear my confession of sin and forgive, and be pleased to use my empty life as His vessel of service. — **Jerry L. Breazeale in the "Baptist Message" of Louisiana**



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant / President, OBU

More light on so-called victimless crimes

One of the most dangerous trends in the language of television talk shows and the popular press is the glib use of the term "victimless crimes". Advocates of legalizing marijuana, gambling, prostitution, and the sale of alcoholic beverages in presently dry counties, are promoting the idea that all of these are "victimless crimes". The mass media seem to be cooperating with a rather uncritical acceptance of a fraudulent idea.

A much publicized recent murder on the campus of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock gives us a vivid picture of one of these "victimless crimes". As originally reported, a young woman student calmly shot and killed a male student in full view of many others outside the student union building. A great deal of mystery shrouded the murder, and the girl who fired the shot was quoted as saying, "It seemed to be the thing to do at the time." Perhaps I did not read the earlier stories carefully enough, but I did not discover until the time of the trial, several weeks later, that one of our innocent "victimless crimes" was involved. The girl who fired the fatal shot testified at the trial to the following events: The man she later shot had gotten her to smoke marijuana at a friend's

apartment and then had sexual relations with her; a few weeks later she discovered she was pregnant and confronted him with the fact on three occasions; he showed no concern and replied, "So?"; she went home at noon, got a pistol and drank some amphetamines mixed in a soft drink; and she returned to the student union and shot him. Three months later she was found guilty of second degree murder and sentenced to five years in prison.

A bizarre sidelight to the sordid story is the report that the student victim, a man who apparently practiced and promoted the smoking of marijuana, a married man who apparently believed in and practiced extra-marital sex, was "taking sociology and psychology and planned to be a case worker." The defense attorney called him a drug pusher with two previous arrests on his record. It would be interesting to speculate on what kind of "case worker" this man would have been.

How long will the uncritical talk about the sale of drugs as a "victimless crime" continue? Isn't it strange irony that both students became victims of their victimless crime?

History is for everyone

by Bernes K. Selph

History is for everyone; at least, it should be. Everyone assists in helping make it. Events and human interest stories today are history tomorrow. History recounts and reflects. Nature, itself, records it and man's study of such finds it a helpful guide. Human history provides the same help. This is spoken of in history in general but the principle holds true in religious history. I speak of Baptist history in particular.

At the recent annual Convention of Arkansas Baptists I was elected Director of the Arkansas Baptist Historical Commission, replacing George T. Blackman, former professor in Ouachita University, who resigned. This commission is made up of nine members from representative sections of the state who are elected by the Convention. Ouachita University serves as the repository for

our collection.

Since everyone helps make history everyone should help preserve it. And the first step in preservation is a consciousness of history and recognition of resources. Church, association, state and institutional records provide basic materials. But letters, diaries, interviews, newspaper articles, personalia, church bulletins, pictures, special occasion records, libraries, sermons and addresses give additional information. These afford intimate and personal glimpses that make history live.

Pastors, associational missionaries, denominational workers, and members of churches can help us preserve the account of our past which gives guide lines for the future. Will you join the Commission and me in doing this?

Letters to the editor Supports abortion

Editor's note: This is an answer to a letter carried in the Dec. 9 ABN. The letter has been edited to conform to our length requirements of approximately 300 words.

Consider the young people who, for the first time, experiment with sex — even though at least one of them has been told about mating, and babies, and warned not to until after marriage, they did anyway and the girl finds trouble. Her parents try to go along to make marriage plans for the baby's sake, but the boy's parents say no. Maybe children in trouble are too scared to tell, or maybe there is no one but the girl who has to bear all her sad plight — have you ever heard the term "man made"? I believe this with all my heart — some mating is man made. Maybe it's not God's will for some fetus to become life, for life is breath and only after a term is fulfilled and the fetus is delivered and starts breathing on its own is there truly life as we know it in human form.

Christ said, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy . . ." (Read Matthew 5:29-30 or all of chapters 5, 6, and 7.) I believe God forgives mistakes and gives people second chances — the woman at the well (John, Chapter 4). I believe from actual families I know who have had to deal with their own solution to this problem, that God works in mysterious ways. It is far better to have a girl be able to ask God to forgive her for not bringing a being into his world — if he is gracious enough to let her cast her mistake from her, if she can go to someone with her problem and receive Christian help — than to bear her problem all the way nine months, only to maybe wind up with problems that her answer to might not include Christian help, because then, she may have felt there was no one to turn to.

I believe the answer to this ageless problem should be left to the girl and God, if she has no one else. Sometimes a girl may tell her parents, or someone and sometimes they would guide her to a doctor.

What about the children all over the world who bring other beings onto the earth with no one to care for them?

It rained awhile, while I was writing this — I feel like this is Angels crying over the sins of mankind — may the Lord forgive us our trespasses. — Name withheld by request. (The author is the mother of three daughters and a son, and has been married 26 years.)



Woman's viewpoint

Iris O'Neal Bowen

The innocent shoplifter

When I was sewing for a house full of growing youngsters, one day I was down town shopping, and as I walked up to a counter of notions, I found a lady busily transferring lace, handful by handful, from the counter to her purse. When she saw she was being watched, she hastily put back the lace, and asked me, "Now what was I doing that for?"

I was so astonished, I didn't answer, but did stay there till she turned and left, and I had the feeling that, had I not been there, that lace would have gone home with her.

Shoplifting has become a major problem for merchants in the last few years. We often find in our business evidence that sticky fingers have been busy.

We expect the usual empty cup cake wrappers, and often have to remove a

candy bar from some little fellow's pocket. And when we do, we never fail to give our stern lecture about the evils of stealing.

Yes, we have even sent some of them home crying, and one horrible day we had a mother, with five of her family members, return to tell us that her children didn't have to steal, and the next time we accused one of them of taking candy, they would wipe us out!

But we have also had good customers to leave and return immediately, pulling an item from purse or pocket, which had not yet been paid for!

I guess it happens all the time:

A lady I knew once told how she had gone down town on her lunch hour from the telephone company, to shop for a gown. As she looked around, she draped a couple of gowns over her arm,

trying to make a selection. When she made her decision, she paid the clerk and started back to work, but about two blocks up the street, she saw, to her horror, that one of the gowns was still hanging over her arm.

She told us she couldn't make herself retrace her steps, but persuaded a friend to return the gown!

Which proves you don't have to be dishonest to get into trouble!

Mid-winter Bible conference set

Central Association will host its annual mid-winter Bible conference the week of Jan. 17-21 at Springlake Encampment, Lonsdale. The conference is open to all Arkansas pastors.

The program will include Bible study, missions study, and preaching. Time for rest and recreation will be included.

Pastors interested in attending should contact Oscar Golden, 1302 N. Olive, Benton, Ark. 72015, for further information.

An exposition of First John Introduction and background

by Roy B. Hilton
(First in a series of 18)

This epistle was written by the Apostle John about 95 A.D. The purpose of the epistle is stated in 5:13. In achieving his purpose it was necessary that he deal with the heresy of Gnosticism. In order to better understand the epistle it is necessary that we too know something about this heresy.

The word "gnostic" means knowledge or to know. To them salvation was attained by testing theories rather than by trusting a person. They claimed to have the true light while others dwelt in darkness. However, they were the ones who were ever learning but never coming to a knowledge of the truth.

Their basic philosophy was that all matter is evil while all spirit is good. These two, i.e. matter and spirit, were incompatible and could never be united. All human flesh was evil and the spirit was good.

This philosophy created two problems for the Gnostics. First, how could God who was essentially good create a physical universe that was essentially evil? They finally reached the conclusion that God didn't actually create the universe. He simply sent forth a series of emanations, or waves of energy, which traveled into space so far away from God that he was no longer related to them but yet they still had power enough to cause creation to occur. So, they argued that God really did not create matter.

Their second problem had to do with the person of Christ. They reasoned that if Christ was actually the very Son of God who was essentially good, how could he have a physical human body which was evil?

In dealing with this problem two schools of thought emerged. One group called themselves the Docetics. This word means "to seem". They argued that Christ did not actually have a physical body — it only "seemed" that he had

such a body. This would actually be a denial of the humanity and the incarnation of Christ which are two fundamental teachings concerning the person of Christ.

The second group were the Cerinthian Gnostics. Their name was derived from a man named Cerinthus. They argued that Christ did, in fact, have a physical human body. In fact, he was human but only human. They taught that the Divine favor anointed him at his baptism, which enabled him for his ministry; and then departed from him just before his death on the cross. Thus, according to their argument, you have only a human being named Jesus dying on the cross. This would be a denial of the Deity and Atonement of Christ, two more fundamental doctrines of the person of Christ.

Their philosophy of good and evil led to two extremes of conduct. One was extreme freedom. They reasoned that if the body was evil and the spirit was good, and the two were wholly separate, then why not let the body express itself in any kind of action for the spirit wouldn't be involved in any way. Give the body freedom to satisfy its every lust.

The other extreme was strict asceticism. They argued that if the body was evil and the spirit good then the body was to be kept in subjection. It must be denied every desire. It must be abused and constantly controlled.

John deals with these matters in his epistle. Look for them as you read and study this letter. This bit of background will help us understand the epistle as we attempt to give an exposition of John's First letter.

Next week: God in the flesh

About the author: Roy B. Hilton is retired from the pastorate of Immanuel Church, El Dorado. He plans to continue his ministry through writing and teaching.



Mrs. Warmack

Alvin 'Bo' Huffman Jr., executive vice president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission in Ft. Worth has been elected chairman of the 27-member Board of Trustees of Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis. Baptist Memorial Hospital, jointly owned by the state Baptist conventions of Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee, is the nation's largest private general hospital. Huffman was the longtime owner and president of Huffman Brothers, Inc., a building materials firm in Blytheville before joining the Radio and Television Commission staff in 1972. Dr. Huffman was first elected the Baptist Hospital Board of Trustees in 1948. Since that time he has served several terms as chairman of the hospital's Executive Committee. He is also a former member and past chairman of the board of directors of the Memphis Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. A member of Rotary, he has served as president of the Blytheville club and a past governor of district 615 of Rotary International. Dr. Huffman was associated with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention as Director of the Ouachita-Southern Advancement campaign before joining the staff in Ft. Worth. He and Mrs. Huffman live in Ft. Worth, but maintain a residence in Blytheville.

Mrs. Mildred Warmack was honored recently by Cullendale First Church, Camden. The church honored Mrs. Warmack for 31 years as teacher and director in the children's division.

Richard Stiltner of New Orleans will become pastor of Hope First Church on Jan. 10. He will succeed Gerald W. Trussell, who is retiring and moving to Shreveport, La. Stiltner was graduated with distinction from Louisiana College, Pineville, with a bachelor of arts degree in 1955. He received a bachelor of divinity degree from Southern Seminary and the doctor of theology degree in



Stiltner



Dr. Huffman

New Testament and Greek from New Orleans Seminary. Dr. Stiltner has pastored churches in Kentucky and Louisiana. He presently serves as chairman of the committee on nominations for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, and is on that convention's Executive Board. Dr. Stiltner is married to the former Joyce Clark and they are parents of three children, Susan Diane, Richard III and Joseph Michael.

John Eason, pastor of First Church, Black Rock, for the past three years, has resigned to accept the pastorate of Brookland Church. He and his wife moved to Brookland on Dec. 1 to begin their work.



Gallegly



Helm



Johnson



Overton

Robert Thomas, Earl Presley and Bobby Smith were ordained as deacons by Emmanuel Church of Batesville recently. O. I. Ford, pastor, led questioning with James Scott, Mountain View, preaching the ordination message.

Robert Bridge, **Russell Easley** and **Charles Davenport** were ordained as deacons by Mason Valley Church on Dec. 12. Bedford Jackson, Benton County Director of Missions, brought the charge and delivered the ordination sermon. J. M. Johns is pastor.

Malcom Sample is now pastoring Hebron Church in Little Rock. He came to this church from South Side Church in Cape Girardeau. In addition to

Arkansans earn seminary degrees

Twelve Arkansans received degrees from two Southern Baptist seminaries in commencement exercises Dec. 17. Both Southwestern Seminary and Southern Seminary awarded degrees on that day.

Eight Arkansas students got degrees from Southwestern Seminary. Receiving the master of divinity degree were John Martin Brown of Fayetteville, Andy Rudy Gallegly of Little Rock, Delbert Neil Helm of Lincoln, Kenneth Wayne Overton of Hot Springs, and Jerry Lynn Smith of Harrison.

Loyce Marie Johnson of Cash and Larry Vernon Williams of Hope were awarded the master of religious education degree by Southwestern. Ronald Dean Williamson of Ft. Smith received the diploma in theology from the school.

Receiving the master of religious education degree from Southern Seminary were Mary Massey Gates of Crossett and Cheryl Lynn Sorrels of Little Rock.

Peggy L. Pearson of North Little Rock was awarded the master of church music degree, and Emmett Eugene Powers of West Memphis received the master of divinity degree. (Photos of three Southern graduates were not available.)



Powers



Brown



Smith



Williams



Williamson

pastoring at South Side, he pastored the Temple Church in Caruthersville, Mo. Prior to pastoring these churches he served as minister of music and education in churches in Arkansas, Texas, Tennessee and Alabama. Sample and his wife, Stella, are natives of Arkansas and are parents of four daughters.

Bob Reeves was ordained to the ministry by the Hon Church on Dec. 19. Fritz Haga served as moderator. Bill Bailey led the questioning, and Elva Adams, Director of Missions for Buckner Association, delivered the sermon.

Harrison Johns, who recently came from Colorado to pastor Pleasant Grove Church in Conway, has been listed in the 1976 Centennial edition of Who's Who in Colorado, a biographical record of Colorado's outstanding civic, business, professional, religious, labor and government leaders. This 1976 edition, marking 100 years for Colorado as a state, is officially endorsed by the Colorado Centennial-Bicentennial Commission.

Mrs. Bess Compere White of Clearwater, Fla., died on Dec. 12 at the age of 72. Mrs. White, who was the daughter of the late Dr. and Mrs. J. S. Compere, was at one time office secretary of the Baptist Advance, official publication for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. She also served as private secretary to the administrator of the Baptist Hospital in Little Rock for several years. Mrs. White attended Little Rock schools and Ouachita University.

briefly

Sylvan Hills Church, North Little Rock, recently purchased 10.1 acres of land adjoining the church property for future expansion. The property was purchased at \$112,000. There are three houses on the land, one of which will be used for a youth house. The largest plot is 8.6 acres and will be used in a Day Camping program next summer, according to Don Moseley, pastor.

Dyess First Church held a revival recently with Jesse Reed, Director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Evangelism Department, as evangelist. David Finley, minister of music for Lepanto First Church, led singing. There were nine professions of faith. Charles Sandusky is pastor.



Piney Church's new building has a sanctuary which will seat 640 persons. (ABN photo)

Piney dedicates new building

Piney Church, Hot Springs, dedicated a new sanctuary and education building Nov. 21. The sanctuary portion of the new two-story structure has 5,151 sq. ft. and will seat 640 people. The 5,060 sq. foot-education building contains two assembly rooms, 25 classrooms, and three offices. The new structure was erected at a cost of \$165,000.

Those participating in the dedicatory service included Jesse Reed, secretary of Evangelism for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, who brought the dedicatory message; Clarence Shell, state evangelist, who brought the dedicatory prayer; and Jesus Christ Power and Light Company, a group of Ouachita students.

Piney Church was started from a Sunday School in 1938. The congregation was organized into a church in 1940. The first building was completed in April, 1941. A new education building, auditorium, and six-room parsonage was erected in the late 1940's.

The dedicatory message was brought by Jesse Reed who spoke from Isaiah 6:1-6, and Acts 26:18 on "The Power of Vision". At the beginning of his message, Reed described what happens when people have the wrong type of vision. Reed said, "Apart from God people have no spiritual power. We cannot get power from a building, but we can use a building for reaching and training people."

In the latter portion of his message

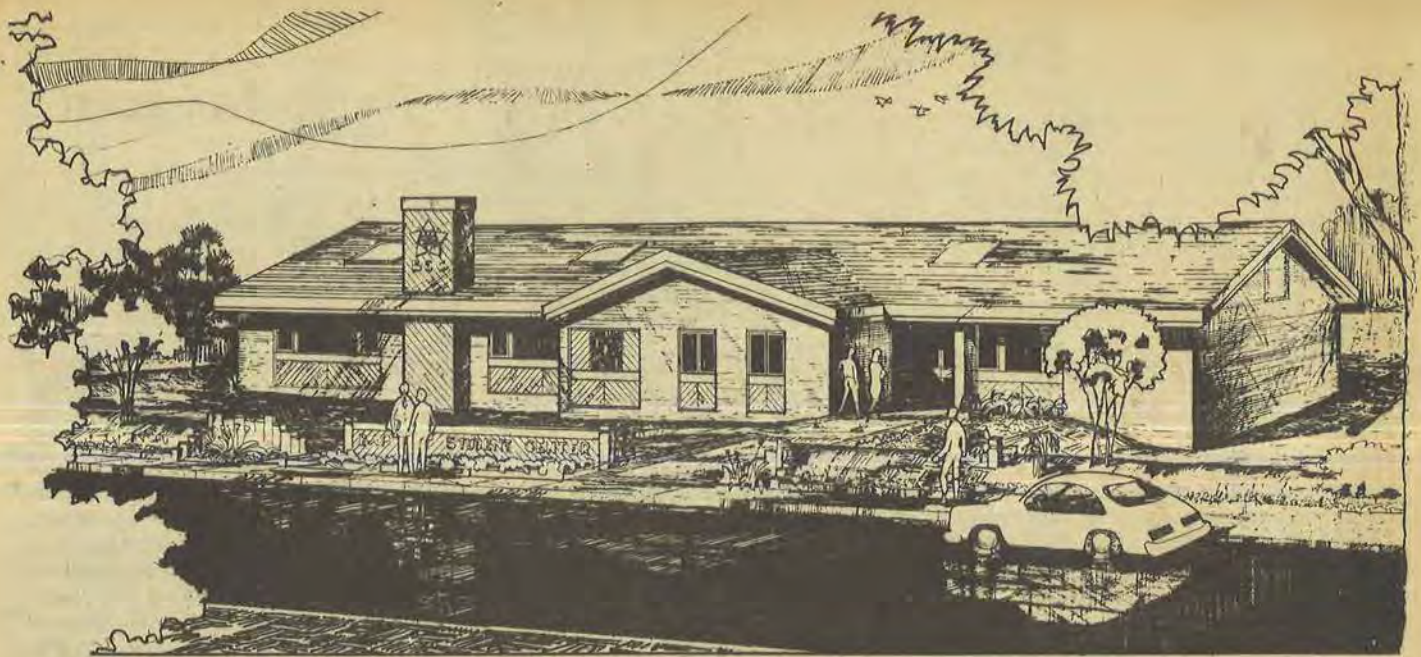
Reed discussed the right kind of vision. He emphasized that a right kind of vision will exalt life, direct an individual away from sin, bring eternal life, give the power of the Holy Spirit, and glorify every aspect of life.

In conclusion Reed challenged the people to support the work of the Lord. He said, "Our service must be sacrificial unto death if necessary."

Pastor David Weeks feels that the church has a bright future. He said, "We are the only Baptist church from the city limits of Hot Springs to Mt. Ida and the population of this area is growing tremendously. We have Mid-America Park and Mid-America Community College will be built just a quarter of a mile from where our church will be attracting much of its congregation. There are a large number of housing development projects in our area which will provide our church with even a larger number of prospects. There is a great lake ministry around the church because of the number of retired people who are moving into our area. Our church's future is very bright as we follow the leadership of our Master."

The Gospel God Promised
A study on Romans by Vester Wolber
Chairman of Department of Religion
Ouachita Baptist University
\$2.95 at your Baptist Book Store

Studies in Romans
By Earl R. Humble,
Professor of Religion
at Southern Baptist College
80-page book for \$1
available from Dr. Humble
at the school, Walnut Ridge, Ark. 72476



BSU center at Conway to be enlarged

John D. Jarrard, a Little Rock architect, has rendered the proposed enlargement and redecorating of the Baptist Student Center at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. Richard Boyles serves as Baptist student director at the University of Central Arkansas and Hendrix College. The building committee is composed of E. A. Pipkins of Clinton, Dana Whitfield of Heber Springs, W. T. Byrum of Lonoke, Richard Boyles of Conway, and Tom Logue and Charles H. Ashcraft of Little Rock.

Black churches

From page 16

imagine also confusing to our people. We are going to be Southern Baptists or we are going to be National Baptists."

Vernon Hickerson, black work and relationships consultant for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the only black employed in that capacity by an SBC state convention, believes his goal of 110 affiliations by 1981 is conservative. (The Home Mission Board also has a black in that capacity, Emanuel McCall, director of Cooperative Ministries with National (black) Baptists.)

Hickerson says some black churches do not seek affiliation because they fear absorption, rather than integration, and a dissolution of their own culture. They may also fear being identified as an "oreo" — like the cookie — black on the outside and white on the inside.

Hickerson has thoroughly studied dual alignment and recommends it. "You always benefit when you are exposed to someone other than yourself, especially those with whom you may not agree on everything."

Because of his sensitivity to the needs of the black community, Jack O'Neal of the California Southern Baptist General Convention agrees dual alignment is needed at this time, even though it calls for divided loyalties of a sort.

Thomas Kilgore, president of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, explains, "This is the ambiguity

black people have been forced into by this dual society. The alert black Baptist preacher is mindful he cannot walk out on the black experience; therefore, he has to keep his connection in these black Baptist conventions."

Kilgore has led his large, prestigious Second Baptist Church of Los Angeles, once singly aligned with American Baptists, to dually affiliate with the Progressive Convention.

On the other side, Kentucky Baptists report two of their white churches dually aligned with National conventions.

As the number of blacks within the SBC grows, both within once all-white congregations and through the new movement of the predominantly black churches, their contacts are attracting even greater numbers.

For example, Louisiana has been approached by three black churches for affiliation, two of these because the pastors were with churches in California and Texas that were affiliated with SBC groups.

All this means that other changes will be coming for the once predominantly white SBC, such as pressure for more and more representation on boards and agencies. Then it will follow that more qualified blacks will be available for staff positions, and Southern Baptists will be better informed concerning the needs and the culture of blacks.

Notice

Your local Baptist Book Store is still shipping to ALL customers in Arkansas and surrounding areas. Previous information may have led you to believe that your mail orders were to be sent to Arlington, Texas, Memphis or Nashville, Tenn.

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The Southern accent

The 1977 accent

by Jim E. Tillman

This column each week during 1977 will bring a different emphasis directly from the "Campus of Christian Purpose", Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge. The "accent" will be on the college program and activities to familiarize the readers of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* with the junior college which is owned and operated by the Arkansas State Baptist Convention.

Some of the events on campus that will be featured during the year will include homecoming, high school weekend, the completion of the new Student Center building, graduation 1977, events of the school in the fall, the description of the 1977 Church Efficiency Conference and other activities scheduled here at the college.

Testimonies of students' experiences with Christ while at SBC will be another feature. There will be seasonal inspirational articles by members of the Bible faculty.

One series of articles will accent the different programs of study here at Southern. Professors will give brief descriptions regarding their academic areas of work. The financial aids program for the college students will be clearly defined through the "accent". At the end of the summer a brief history of Southern Baptist College will be presented. Information regarding the admissions program as well as the "Developing Development Program" will also be among the headlines.

The Arkansas State Baptist Convention in November will read a report from the president while the messengers attend the 1977 Convention. The Vice President for Financial Affairs will publish in this article a resume of the financial status of the college as one of the articles.

Southern Baptist College family is grateful for the opportunity to give this kind of exposure to people who care about SBC. We invite you to watch each week in the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* for the "Accent" on Southern Baptist College.

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, With peace on Earth, good will to men." — Henry W. Longfellow

Central European Tour

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For information and brochure, write:

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announce Little Rock motorcoach tour departures as follows: Grand Ole Opry, July 8-10, \$125; Vicksburg-Natchez-New Orleans, March 4-9, \$270; Florida Funfest, Aug. 25 for 8 days \$365; Washington Cherry Blossom, April 7 for 8 days, \$365; New England Fall Follage, Late Sept. for 11 days, \$505; Central America (air), March 8 for 16 days, \$1169. Also wide variety of other tours departing Dallas. Write for itinerary on above or for full catalogue. "Coffee Dan" Dipert, Damascus, Ark. 72039, or call Mary Nixon, Little Rock, 947-7803 or 753-3090.

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*"How shall
they preach,
except they
be sent?"*

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

'A little of God's love'

The \$1200 check was accompanied by the descriptive statement, "A Little of God's Love". It was a gift from a young married couple who were active in the Baptist Student Union at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, during their student days.

Excerpts from the letter to BSU Director Jamie Jones, tells the reason for the gift.

"Several years ago you and I dreamed of an endowment fund for providing money on an annual basis ... for speakers to come to the University of Arkansas BSU ... This was primarily to further Christian growth of students by providing seminary teachers, counselors ... or good speakers from other sources ... Many of the quality speakers that came to BSU, with the Lord working through them, had a marked influence on my life. It is hoped that through this small effort, and the larger efforts of others and their contribution, that the work of the Lord may continue to prosper there in Fayetteville until He comes again ... Enclosed is the start of an endowment fund ..."

After consultations with Jamie Jones, who consulted with Harry Trulove,

President of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, the donors approved the following agreement:

1. The fund shall be administered by the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

2. The name of the fund shall be Christian Speakers' Endowment Fund, Baptist Student Union at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Campus.

3. The donors prefer to remain anonymous.

4. After the principal reaches \$2,000 the earnings from the investment will go to the Baptist Student Union, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Campus, to assist in bringing outstanding Christian leaders and speakers to the Baptist Student Union at the University of Arkansas.

5. Speakers shall be chosen by the University of Arkansas Baptist Student Union Executive Council (the elected officers of BSU) and the BSU Director and Associate Director(s). The BSU pastor and faculty advisors and the State BSU Director shall serve on the speaker selection committee as ex-officio members.

Another former student recently contributed \$500 to the fund, which now

totals \$1745.81, plus the additional accrued interest.

Jones says, "Our former students have provided outstanding support of our BSU Ministry through the years, including generous financial supplements for our programs, and for our facilities. God's use of BSU as a means of enriching their lives during their student days has prompted them to want to expand and improve BSU's ministry for today's students. We are deeply grateful for their interest and support."

Additional contributions can be made directly to the Arkansas Baptist Foundation designated for the BSU Christian Speaker's Endowment Fund — Fayetteville campus, Box 552, Little Rock, Ark. 72203, or to the Baptist Student Union, 944 West Maple, Fayetteville, Ark. 72701.

BOLD BELIEVERS IN GIVING

The pastor and stress continuing education workshops for 1977

First Church, Dumas	Jan. 17
Park Hill Church, Arkadelphia	Jan. 18
First Church, Trumann	Feb. 14
First Church, Clarksville	May 2
Calvary Church, Batesville	May 16



Jerre Hassell
Pastor
First Church, Stuttgart

Attitudes toward stress
Areas of stress
Arenas of help for coping
with stress

Discussant: Jerre Hassell
Moderator: R. H. Dorris



R. H. Dorris
Director of Missions

Sponsored by the Department of State Missions

Annuity All 33 conventions approve program

All 33 state Baptist conventions have approved the new retirement program proposed by the Southern Baptist Convention Annuity Board, according to a recent announcement by Darold H. Morgan, president.



Mrs. Bjorkman

Any person who receives a salary from a church is eligible for the retirement section. Participation is based on a minimum of 10 percent of total compensation with the church encouraged to provide the cost. The new program contains two sections, one providing benefits for retirement and the other for protection.

The protection section provides coverage for disability and a spouse benefit in the event of a member's death. The state convention assumes the cost for this coverage for all eligible career ministerial personnel, Dr. Morgan said.

If you are eligible for participation in one of the plans the Annuity Board offers, do not wait until the first of 1978 to enroll in the new plan.

Thank you for letting me serve as your Annuity Representative in Arkansas. Write or call me today about how to enroll or upgrade your present plan.

The Little Rock number is (501) 376-4791; the toll free number to the Annuity Board in Dallas is 1-800-527-4767.

— Nadine B. Bjorkman

National Baptist pastor to speak

J. G. Russ, pastor of the Mt. Hebron Baptist Church, Camden, for 25 years and moderator of the Ouachita District, Consolidated Missionary Baptist State Convention of Arkansas, will bring a message entitled "The Glories of The Ministry," Monday night, Jan. 24, during the Joint Evangelism Conference. The site is Little Rock's First Church, John Wright, pastor.



Russ

Russ has gained his expertise as a gospel preacher through years of experience that come with faithful service. He is known and respected by all

persons who reside in the southern part of our state and a familiar figure in his home town of Magnolia, Ark. When his predecessor in the Ouachita District Association, Samuel Morris, passed, and the association gathered to elect a new moderator, there was no question as to their decision requesting J. G. Russ to fill this important position of leadership and honor.

He believes in cooperation for the

cause of Christ and loyally supports his state convention and National Baptist Convention. Conference participants will be blessed through this man's message and the spirit with which he will deliver it. It is indeed fortunate that we can present him to the Baptists of Arkansas through the Joint Evangelism Conference. — Robert Ferguson, Director, Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists

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National Family Enrichment Conference Glorieta

July 29-August 5, 1977

Note: Because of limited space, attendance at this conference will be limited to the first 750 persons who specify National Family Enrichment Conference in reserving space.

Rates: Vary from \$11 to \$21.50 per day per person for room and meals, depending on type of accommodations desired. A few housekeeping apartments and trailer spaces are available.

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BSU Director to be honored

Friends of Juanita Straubie who have not received information about activities marking the 25th anniversary of her ministry as Baptist Student Director and Director of Student Activities at Baptist Medical Center are urged to call the Student Department at 376-4791.

Open house will be held at the Student Union Building at Central Baptist Hospital between 3 and 5 p.m. on Jan. 8. A testimonial supper will be held at 6 p.m. at First Church, Little Rock, on Rodney Parham Road.

Church Training

Youth/adult workshops

During the week of Jan. 31-Feb. 3 Youth and Adult Church Training leaders and members will have an excellent opportunity to strengthen their Church Training program. Fifteen Area Youth/Adult Workshops will be conducted during that week. In each of the 15 areas separate youth and adult workshops will be conducted simultaneously. Each workshop will be a two-hour training session for both members and leaders of Youth and Adult Church Training Groups. The sessions are scheduled for 7-9 p.m. in each location.

The locations of the workshops are as follows:

Monday, Jan. 31

First Church, Fayetteville
First Church, Mountain Home
Walnut Street Church, Jonesboro
First Church, Blytheville
Immanuel Church, El Dorado

Tuesday, Feb. 1

First Church, Van Buren
First Church, Harrison
First Church, Batesville
First Church, West Memphis
Beech Street, Texarkana

Thursday, Feb. 3

Second Church, Russellville

First Church, Pine Bluff
First Church, Monticello
First Church, Hot Springs
Immanuel Church, Little Rock

A youth and adult consultant will be assigned to each location to conduct the workshops. The consultants will be Sunday School Board or professional youth and adult leaders from other states. Plan now for your youth and adults to participate in the workshop in your area. — Robert Holley

Extreme mission needs

We are a mission of First Southern Baptist Church of Yuma, Ariz., and are in need of some good pews. We are using eight-foot plywood pews that are about 18 years old and they are in very rough condition. Maybe some church in Arkansas has some pews that they could give us as a mission project. We would be able to arrange for the transportation.

We are a mission of the Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention. — Homero Garza, pastor, Templo Bautista

**New England and Nova Scotia
Bus Tour Oct. 1-16, 1977**

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Contact Carl Gunter, 3217 Pine,
North Little Rock, Ark. 72116
Ph. 758-0897

Jesus faces his calling

Jan. 9, 1977

Mark 1:4-13

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus is portrayed as the "Son of God". From verse 1 to the cry of the centurion at the cross, from the voice coming down at his baptism to the voice at the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus is proclaimed the Son of God. The demons declared it and he himself declares to be the Son of God in the reference of the Master sending his son to the vineyard.

The Son of God must be prepared for the task that has been given him. That is what this lesson is about, Jesus Faces His Calling.

Christianity is centered in events. We must realize that our Christian heritage is based upon fact, not upon speculation or some ideal. We can be sure of the facts of our Bible. The events of John the Baptist are also recorded by early historians. All of the prophets of old, Moses, Elijah, etc. actually had part in history, for a particular reason, at a particular time and place.

John preaching repentance (1:4-11)

John was the last prophet before Jesus proclaimed his presence. John appeared for a particular reason at this particular time and place. He was to proclaim the coming of the long awaited Messiah. He was to prepare the way of the Lord.

Mark does not dwell upon the remarkable birth of John but picks him up in his later life around 27 or 28 A.D. John is mentioned as one baptizing in the wilderness. John cried out for repentance; he denounced sin; and he warned of judgment.

The repentance that John and Jesus preached is much more than remorse or feeling guilty for some act that we've committed. The English word "repent" means to be sorry again. It comes from a Latin derivative. The Greek language has a word for being sorry and it is not this word.

John preached demanding people to change their mental attitudes and conduct. He meant for those coming forth to turn from their sinful ways and to live a better moral life.

Mark was not trying to give us the teachings of John the Baptist but rather



Blackmon

he was introducing Jesus to his readers. To introduce Jesus, he introduced John.

Verse 5 tells us that many people came out into the wilderness to hear him preach. Those that were convicted of sin in their lives followed their repentance with baptism.

Baptism was not new to the Jews. All Jewish proselytes were baptized. These converts then could engage in the Jewish ceremonies. What was new to the Jews was the idea of a Jew being baptized because he was a sinner. People were leaving the formal ceremonial systems for a new religious experience dealing with them as an individual. John, the Elijah prototype, is preparing the way of the Lord.

John's attire consisted of a garment woven from camel hair. It was probably a mantle that he draped around him. He wore a leather girdle about his waist as Elijah did (2 Kings 1:8).

His diet consisted of locust and wild honey. Locust was clean according to Mosaic law (Lev. 11:22). They are still eaten today, boiled, parched, and salted. I would need lots of catsup. Wild honey has always been plentiful in that region. John lived the life of a hermit.

John declared that one was coming that was "mightier than I". Those that heard this declaration would not look for another itinerant preacher. They would probably be looking for some great kingly person such as David.

The Baptist humbles himself in saying that the one that is coming is so mighty that he is not worthy to loosen the latch on his sandals. This task was reserved for one of the servants. When a visitor came to your house, you would allow him to wash his feet. People normally walked and this was a nice gesture. John is saying that, compared to positions, he would not be worthy to be a servant as compared to Christ.

John was a great man in his own right. This humility was not some pretense. John realized that the Messiah was coming. God must have enlightened him as he did the prophets of old. John knew he was coming and was determined to do his part in preparing the way.

Through divine guidance John knew there would be more than just baptism

with water, but there would be a baptism with the Holy Spirit. John is saying as I immerse you with water, the one that is coming will immerse you with the Holy Spirit. To have the Spirit of God about us surely demands that we clean up our lives. It's time to repent! What a message!

The baptism of Jesus (1:9-11)

Mark gives a very brief account of the baptism of Jesus. Jesus came out of the city of Nazareth for the purpose of being baptized by John in the Jordan River. Mark does not tell us that John balked at the idea of baptizing Jesus. He simply states that Jesus came to be baptized and the next sentence has Jesus coming out of the water.

As Jesus came up out of the water the heavens were ripped apart and Jesus saw a vision. Jesus is the only one to see it so there is no need to speculate what he saw. This is not the only instance of the heavens opening. Stephen saw a vision prior to his stoning (Acts 7:6). He declared he saw Christ standing at the right hand of God.

Immediately as Jesus came up out of the water the Spirit like a dove descended upon him. Luke says that it had a bodily shape. John saw it for he says that it landed on Jesus (Matt. 3:16). The Spirit of God descended upon the Son of God. Jesus will need all that he can muster to defeat Satan.

The declaration of God about his only son must have pleased Jesus (v. 11). For 30 years Jesus lived a perfect life and now God commends him.

We must ask the question, "Why was Jesus baptized?" Being perfect he had no sins to repent of. Jesus came to identify himself with sinful men. Jesus told John to baptize him to fulfill all righteousness. Jesus was baptized to consecrate himself for the task that was ahead.

The temptation of Jesus (1:12-13)

Jesus was impelled by the Spirit to go into the wilderness immediately after the baptism. This impulsive urge that led Jesus would lead him for the next three years all the way to the cross.

For 40 days in the wilderness Satan tempted Jesus. Mark does not mention the three specific temptations but rather alludes to a continual period of tempta-

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(continued on page 14)

John: a believer who doubted

Jan. 9, 1977

Luke 3:16-17; 7:20-28

It is impossible to know the impact that John the Baptist had on his people. In the past, God had made known his will to Israel through the prophets. But there had been no prophecy for more than 400 years. It was believed that prophecy would reappear when the Messiah came (Joel 2:28). When the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness he was seen as the prophet who was to prepare the way for the New Age. The End Time had come!



Pipkins

Notice how John is introduced as a prophet. The "Word of God came to Him" (3:2). He is set in historical context as were the Old Testament prophets. All history was moving toward the coming of the kingdom of God (3:6), and John was the herald of the coming king. Prepare the way! The King is coming! The way would be prepared through repentance. A radical change in the hearts of the people, that would manifest itself in their works, was required to enter the kingdom.

John expressed the messianic hope of his people by announcing that one would come after him who would be mightier than he; so much so that John would not be worthy to perform even the services of a slave for him (v. 16). The whole idea of the coming of the Messiah is set in Jewish imagery.

A farmer uses a winnowing fork, throwing the grain against the wind to separate the wheat from the chaff. This is the way the Messiah would separate the evil from the good. The wheat would be stored in the farmer's granary, and the chaff would be burned. While the Baptist would only baptize with water, the Messiah would baptize with an unquenchable fire that would purge God's people. A passage in Malachi (3:1-3) seems to lie behind this description of the work of John.

Just as the Old Testament prophets had to suffer for their preaching, so this one, who has gathered up Old Testament prophecy and used it to point directly to Jesus, had to suffer. Because

of John's rebuke of Herod (3:19-20), he is imprisoned.

Jesus had begun his public ministry during the days of John's preaching, even to the point of submitting to his baptism (3:21). While John was in prison he was eager to get reports on what Jesus was doing and saying. In his own thinking he has prescribed ideas of what the Messiah would do, and if Jesus were the Messiah, John would recognize it.

In prison, with much time for reflection and no opportunity to validate ideas, John hears about Jesus and the impression he has made "throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about" (v. 17). However, what he hears does not seem to correspond to what he promised would accompany the coming of the Messiah. The people were saying that "a great prophet" had risen among them. John had promised more than a prophet (3:15-17). He was the forerunner of one who would purge Judaism of its unfruitful members by bringing a harvest that would fill God's granary and burn up the chaff. Now John is not so sure.

It should not be unreasonable that John doubted that Jesus was the Messiah. Other Old Testament leaders had their moments of weakness. (Num. 20:12; 1 K. 19:4). Jesus was not fulfilling the program that John had set up for him. He was doing only what other prophets had done. Likewise the people were seeing only a prophet in Jesus. The prison bars made John's questions more real: "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" (v. 19).

Jesus offered the things he was doing as evidence of who he was. He would stand on what John "had seen and heard" of him (v. 22). His description of his work was taken from the prophecy of Isaiah (29:18-19; 35:5-6), telling John that he was fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy of the Messianic Age. It would be John's task to examine the evidence and believe. Faith always rests on that final task to believe. Jesus adds an appeal for personal trust in himself (v. 23).

What Jesus said about John's ministry was intended to tie the people to the ministry of Jesus. With John's imprisonment and death, the contribution of his ministry was for people to believe in Jesus, whom John announced. An undeserving man would not have gained the peoples following (v. 24-25). John was a true prophet, and more than a prophet. It was given to him to be the last of the prophets before the Christian era. Because he announced the arrival of the Messianic Age, he held the most important position in God's plan up to that time. However, the Kingdom that Jesus came to establish was so much greater than all that had gone before, that even the least in it would be more privileged than John (v. 28).

Doubts in the Christian faith are best faced and taken to Jesus for understanding. Although He does not welcome them as He would strong confession, Jesus does not think less of one who doubts. Doubts can be replaced by strong faith, but only as one accepts the responsibility to believe.

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International lesson From page 13

tions. We know there is safety in numbers. Jesus was alone. His only companions were the wild beasts. When we are alone we seem to be more vulnerable to the wiles of Satan.

Angels ministered to the needs of Jesus. Angels are messengers of God. As the angels aided Elijah who was running away from temptation, surely they met Jesus' physical and spiritual needs, who was facing temptation.

Mark does not tell us the results of the temptations. He believed that we all knew who was victorious. It was Jesus. Jesus is now ready to face his calling as the Son of God.

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Attendance report

Dec. 19, 1976

Church	Sunday School	Church Training	Church addns.	Church	Sunday School	Church Training	Church addns.
Alexander, First	113			Jonesboro			
Alpena, First	67	14		Friendly Hope	134	95	
Batesville, First	214	73		Nettleton	291	122	
Berryville				Lavaca, First	410	134	
First	180	58		Little Rock			
Freeman Heights	193			Crystal Hill	146		2
Rock Springs	57			Life Line	542	123	
Biscoe, First	112	52		Martindale	113	64	
Booneville				Woodlawn	122	63	
First	295			Magnolia, Central	698	178	1
South Side	111	149		Monticello, Second	272	96	
Bryant, First Southern	232			Mulberry, First	233	109	5
Cabot, First	464	135		Murfreesboro, First	151		
Camden				North Little Rock			
Cullendale First	528	115		Calvary	432	112	
First	456	110		Levy	441	54	2
Cash, First	107	63		Park Hill	910		2
Cave Springs, Lakeview	109	61	3	Paragould			
Charleston, First	176	50		Calvary	257	259	2
Conway, Second	342	135	2	East Side	283		2
Crossett, Mt. Olive	367	154		First	432	92	1
El Dorado, West Side	423	415	3	Paris, First	392	89	
Elkins, First	98			Pine Bluff			
Forrest City, First	584	50		Centennial	171	56	
Ft. Smith				East Side	182		
Grand Avenue	1013	181	4	First	679	79	
Mission	15			Lee Memorial	238	130	
Haven Heights	243	126	1	South Side	591	66	
Trinity	180	67		Tucker	15		
Fouke, First	93	43		Sulphur Springs	189	121	
Gentry, First	161	68		Watson Chapel	400	125	5
Gillett, First	50	32		Rogers, Immanuel	515	78	5
Gillham	79	48	6	Russellville			
Green Forest, First	203	67		First	563	101	2
Hampton, First	170	125		Second	125	55	
Hardy, First	112	54		Sheridan, First	181		
Harrison				Springdale			
Eagle Heights	303	166	1	Berry Street	87		
Woodland Heights	151	74		Caudle Avenue	162	70	2
Hope				Elmdale	330	114	
Calvary	134	95	1	First	1500		8
First	389	89		Texarkana			
Hot Springs				Highland Hills	160	68	
Lakeside	190	76		Shiloh Memorial	172		
Memorial	111	74		Vandervoort	46	18	
Park Place	296	55		West Helena, Second	173	118	4
Hughes, First	174	50		Wooster, First	122	99	
Jacksonville				Wynne, Harris Chapel	93	75	2
First	437	66	1	Yellville, First	133	63	
Marshall Road	163	70					

Attendance report

Dec. 26, 1976

Church	Sunday School	Church Training	Church addns.
Alexander, First	89	48	
Alpena, First	53	16	
Berryville			
First	123	50	
Freeman Heights	149	46	
Biscoe, First	68	24	1
Booneville, South Side	68	76	1
Cabot, First	345	105	1
Cash, First	83	33	
Charleston, First	145	44	
Conway, Second	250	95	3
Crossett, Mt. Olive	209	93	
Forrest City, First	436	40	5
Ft. Smith			
Grand Avenue	710	167	5
Mission	19		
Haven Heights	175	126	1
Temple	118	54	
Trinity	132	42	
Fouke, First	94	49	1
Gentry, First	107	52	
Gillett, First	42	14	
Gillham	60	42	
Grandview	70	49	
Green Forest, First	132	45	
Greenwood, First	276	138	3
Hampton, First	91	45	
Hardy, First	71	50	
Harrison, Woodland Heights	69	44	
Hot Springs			
Lakeside	122	48	
Memorial	74	35	
Park Place	207	57	
Hughes, First	112	23	
Jacksonville, First	361	50	
Jonesboro, Nettleton	197	90	4
Kingston, First	58	26	
Lavaca, First	287	98	
Little Rock			
Crystal Hill	123	59	
Life Line	363	85	1
Martindale	103	53	1
Woodlawn	93	41	
Magnolia, Central	469		1
Monticello, Second	205	73	
Mulberry, First	203	70	
Murfreesboro, First	115	25	
North Little Rock, Levy	334	52	
Paragould			
Calvary	205	165	
East Side	250	129	
First	350	56	
Paris, First	304	58	
Pine Bluff			
East Side	108	42	
First	439	56	1
Lee Memorial	174	81	3
Rogers, Immanuel	360	71	
Russellville, First	379	53	3
Springdale			
Berry Street	66	20	
Caudle Avenue	122	55	
First	1063		10
Texarkana			
Highland Hills	118	53	1
Shiloh Memorial	153	49	
Vandervoort	58	15	
Wooster, First	90	49	

SINGLE YOUNG AND MEDIAN ADULT SKI CONFERENCE

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Black churches multiply in Southern Baptist Convention

by Walker L. Knight

ATLANTA (BP) — The number of predominantly black Baptist churches affiliated with Southern Baptists has jumped 76 percent in the past three years.

A recent survey conducted by *Home Missions* magazine, published by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, found 340 black churches affiliated with the once predominantly white Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) on associational, state and national levels.

In 1956, the year of the Supreme

black, and in Long Beach Harbor Association in California, more than 50 percent of the churches are predominantly black.

No reliable statistics are available on the number of black Southern Baptists. The last survey, taken in 1973 by the Home Mission Board, estimated 75,000 blacks were members of SBC churches. But board officials say the number of blacks has jumped significantly, along with the percentage of churches, and plan to do a new survey. Also, no figures are available on the number of predominantly white churches with black members.

Falling racial barriers have stimulated interesting events. Florida, which has seven black churches, reports, for example, the merger of white and black congregations in St. Petersburg. Southside Baptist Church — all white — and Tabernacle Baptist Church — all black — joined to form Southside Tabernacle Baptist Church with the black pastor, Lewis Langley, becoming pastor. State mission leader Murray McCullough says, "The church has done well and set a good pattern for other churches in changing neighborhoods."

States of the traditional Southern tier have fewer black congregations, and sometimes make the news with headline holdouts against blacks. Yet, even where change comes slowest, changes are coming. H. O. Hester, state director of special missions in Alabama, reports Trinity Church, a white church in Montgomery, has ordained a black minister who now serves as pastor of a mission of Trinity. It may become the first black church in that convention.

The strong interest comes despite passiveness of Southern Baptist leadership. Of course, racial prejudices — among both white and black Baptists — still handicap change in certain areas. But most SBC coolness today seems to result from the SBC's efforts to avoid charges of proselytizing from the three National (black) Baptist Conventions.

The initiative has had to come from the black churches themselves. Even in those states where most of the growth is taking place, the strongest activity from SBC leadership is cultivating relationships, building bridges and finding cooperative ways to tackle common problems.

Sid Smith, a black Christian social ministries director for Southern Baptists in the Los Angeles area, wants an end to the passiveness, even though he somehow wants to avoid proselytizing.

"In consideration of the background

of segregation and racism in our convention, we must come to the point that we realize that we need black Southern Baptists and other ethnic minority groups. We need their input, and it shouldn't be optional. We ought to work out some kind of an approach whereby we actively seek them. The passive approach has its limitations, and it does not recognize our need for the minority input."

Phil Rodgers, state missions director for Virginia Baptists, more aggressive than many, says: "We have let it be known in both public and private opportunities that the doors are open. Individual churches then request information, and we usually have a personal conference with church leadership."

More than a third of the state conventions report more black churches affiliating with them than in previous years. Nine still do not report any black churches. The others say the number of affiliations is about the same, but even that means an increase.

An important trend is developing especially with Southern Baptists in Illinois, Michigan, California and areas of the Northeast. These states are seeking to start churches in predominantly black communities.

As Illinois mission leader Charles Chaney says, "The black community of Illinois is the largest single pocket of people the Illinois Baptist State Association has tended to overlook in its 70-year history."

Chaney is seeking to change that, feeling Southern Baptists have the obligation to address the black community "in the same manner that we address the white community and the ethnic community."

A factor which gets a mixed reaction is dual alignment (the practice of having membership with more than one Baptist convention). In the past most black churches which affiliated with Southern Baptists kept their ties with one of the black conventions.

Most state conventions of the SBC, and the SBC itself, allow dual alignment. A few state conventions, such as Missouri, do not. While it is allowed in most places, not everyone favors dual alignment.

Joe Chaney, moderator of the Long Beach Harbor Baptist Association and himself pastor of a black church, says he has never aligned with another convention. "It would be confusing to me and I

See 'black churches'

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Court decision against racial inequality in education, there were few — perhaps five at most — predominantly black SBC churches. By 1973, a survey by the Home Mission Board found 191.

Most change is taking place in the border states and in states where Southern Baptists have started work since 1940. Twenty-nine black churches affiliated with associations in the past year, and one entire black association of 40 churches in the Los Angeles area has indicated an interest.

California, with 85, reports the most black churches. But Texas, with 81, is close. Illinois has 35. Michigan has 20. New York and Virginia each have 15.

Percentage-wise, New York leads with 20 percent of its churches black. Ten percent of the Michigan churches are