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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

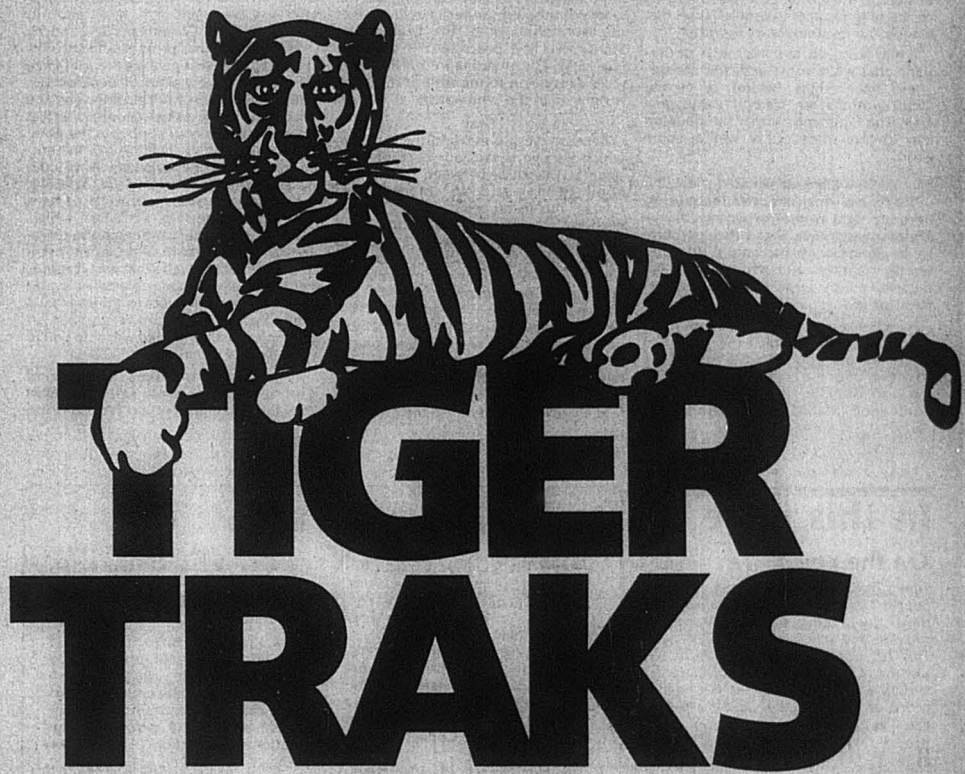
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March 26, 1981
Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE



Ouachita Baptist University, April 9-11

Decisions: black, white, and gray

by T. B. Maston

Have you recently faced or are you now facing a difficult decision whether or not something is right or wrong for you to do? Does it seem at times that whatever decision you make it will involve some evil as well as some good? Or, are you seeking to decide what your position should be concerning some of the social issues that plague our contemporary world?



Maston

It may help you, as it has me, to understand that while some activities are unquestionably right (white) or wrong (black), others are clearly in the gray area. The latter means that the decision may involve some evil as well as some good.

Black or white

There are some activities that are inherently right (white) or wrong (black). These are activities that either conform to or violate our basic nature. In other words, rightness and wrongness is not determined by some arbitrary requirement or law.

Another way of saying the same thing is to suggest that God's expectations of us are for our good. That is true of his provision of one day in seven as a day of rest and worship; it was provided for man's good (Mark 2:27). It is also true of

every other basic requirement of his.

For example, can you think of a single one of the Ten Commandments, which summarize the basic moral law, that is not for our good and the good of society? This clearly implies that anything that violates or is contrary to our basic nature and is not best for the world in which we live is wrong and belongs in the black area.

It is easier to determine what is black than what is white. One reason for this is the fact that rightness involves primarily inner motives. Paul, for example, lists the works of the flesh (outer). He then gives the wonderful list of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, etc. — all inner (Gal. 5:19-23). Anything in our lives that gives expression to the fruit of the Spirit is right or in the white area.

Gray

Because we are evil and the world in which we live is evil, our decisions frequently will not be between an unmixed good (white) and an unmixed evil (black), but in the gray area. Whatever we decide to do may result in some good and some evil. The best we can do, at such a time, is to make the decision that we believe will result in the maximum of good and the minimum of evil. The choice is between what is termed the lesser-of-two-evils. Such a decision will not do a great deal of damage as long as it is recognized that the activity is not inherently good but that it involves some evil.

Some activities may be in the gray area

because of the attitude of others toward our participation in them. We may consider such activities in the white area, while others consider them wrong. This puts them in the gray area for us. It should be remembered that this is never true of something that is inherently wrong. Wrong can never become right but the right can become wrong.

Paul sets forth some principles in connection with his discussion of the eating of meat offered to idols that can help us. Space will not permit me to suggest all of them. Check for yourself Roman 14:7 and 1 Corinthians 8:1, 4, 9 and his conclusions in 1 Corinthians 8:12 and 13.

He sets forth two principles in 1 Corinthians 10 that will give us the guidance we need in every time of decision but particularly when the decision is in the gray area. These principles are: (1) "Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor" (v. 24, RSV). (2) "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (v. 31, RSV).

You have possibly noticed that I have not labeled certain activities white, black, or gray. This has been done deliberately. It is far more important for you to decide for yourself what you consider right (white) or wrong (black) or in the gray area than for you to know what I think. Rather, the emphasis has been on principles that it is hoped will help you in your time of decision.

T. B. Maston is retired professor of Christian ethics, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

In this issue

On the cover

Tiger Traks weekend means Ouachita Baptist University students helping students by aiming to raise money to provide 100 scholarships of \$500 each. This 7th annual event will be April 9-11 on the OBU campus. Information is available from the Student Foundation office at Ouachita by calling 246-4531, ext. 176.

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A first-of-its-kind state conference offered some helps for churches in helping families and encouraged the local congregation to face up to the needs of families.

Arkansas programs grow in 1980

Arkansas ranked high among states in the Southern Baptist Convention in the increase of baptisms, Sunday school enrollment and participation in other church programs in 1980.

According to figures just released by the Baptist Sunday School Board, the state reported 15,507 baptisms. That represented a rise of 22 percent, compared to 16.5 percent in the Convention as a whole.

In Sunday school enrollment, Arkansas was also above the Convention average, with 9,000 additions, the fourth largest numerical increase among states. Total Sunday school enrollment was 242,792.

Church training in Arkansas grew by 3,437, to a total of 80,654, an increase of 4.49 percent. The convention-wide increase was 2.3 percent.

A 12 percent rise in Brotherhood growth during the past year, to 10,225, placed Arkansas ninth among Baptist state conventions in that category. Brotherhood enrollment was up 5.6 percent in the national convention.

Both Church music and the Woman's Missionary Union reported a .05 percent increase. Total enrollment for music programs was 46,916 and the WMU listed 26,505 for 1980.



Are you prejudiced? If we are honest, most of us would have to admit that we are. Prejudice may invade almost any area of life. We may express it in our attitude toward persons of other religions, races, political views, or economic or social levels. Even the particular physical appearance or accent of a stranger may arouse our inner hostilities. Such attitudes are not in keeping with the teaching of God's Word. But to overcome them requires conscious effort and the help of the Holy Spirit.

The dictionary defines prejudice as, "injury due to some judgment or action of another, as in disregard of a person's rights . . . an opinion or leaning adverse to anything without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge." Someone has said, "Prejudice is being down on what we are not up on."

For Christians, we might consider prejudice as decisions which are made outside of God's will, or not reflecting Christian love. Those of us who are a part of the kingdom are by no means immune from this cancer.

The Jews, in the time of Christ, experienced the awesome tragedy of prejudice. So hostile were they toward the Samaritans that they refused to even go through the country. These people were related to the Jews, being a mixture of Hebrew and Assyrian. Often, we are most resentful of, and feel most threatened by, those to whom we are most closely related.

Remember how startled the Samaritans were when Jesus approached the woman at the well? In requesting water he had violated several deep seated prejudices. Besides being a Samaritan, the fact that she was a woman was one strike against her. Furthermore, rabbis were held above common people and this woman was, obviously, of low character, one with whom "the better

folks" would not want to be seen (John 14:6ff).

The tragedy of prejudice is that, often, it prevents an individual receiving just treatment. This, at times, has been true as well for the protection of the collective rights of a group of people. We, as Christians, are not just to do what is required by the law but we are to go the second mile (Matt. 5:41).

The important thing for each of us is to successfully cope with our pre-judgment. Admittedly, this is far easier said than done. Some of the following suggestions could prove helpful:

1. We should strive, under God, to recognize the areas of our own prejudice, remembering that this is a part of our unconscious behavior. It is difficult to cope with this problem until we have identified it. Someone has said, "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

2. We must ask God to help us to overcome this sin in our lives. Prejudice must be recognized as sin and it can only be eliminated by God's help.

3. We might share this problem with some trusted friend. It sometimes is good to verbalize our animosities. Often, when we listen to our prejudices we can see how ridiculous they really are.

4. Once we have brought the problem out into the light, we should forgive ourselves for having yielded to these emotions so long.

5. Finally, we should all work to be more Christian in our attitudes. When we replace our prejudices with positive attitudes, the victory will be won.

In order for us to have the kind of Christian witness that we should have, it is essential for us to eliminate our prejudices. When we are victorious in these efforts, we will become more the kind of person that God would desire us to be.

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

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

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Member of Southern Baptist Press Association.



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

The victims of 'victimless crimes'

One of the current fads among many well-meaning persons in the field of law enforcement is the idea of "victimless crimes." This is a term being used increasingly in the press, magazines, and on television, by persons advocating the legalization of gambling, prostitution, public drunkenness, marijuana, and homosexual activities.

Their argument appears to be very persuasive on the surface, and goes something like this: One of the reasons police are having such a hard time controlling "serious crimes" where there are obvious victims (like murder, rape, robbery, etc.) is that it takes too much time

and money trying to enforce laws against "victimless crimes" where immediately recognizable victims are said to be hard to find.

The director of the Center for Studies in Criminal Justice at the University of Chicago Law School, argues that we are wasting time and money trying to prohibit gambling, public drunkenness, narcotics use, and sexual immorality between consenting adults.

The only thing wrong with this argument is that the reasoning is deceptively skin-deep or, to change the word picture, it is an iceberg with four fifths of its menacing mass invisible below the

water's surface. What are loosely called victimless crimes are actually crimes capable of destroying the fabric of society as a whole, if allowed to grow as cancerous sores uninhibited by society's laws.

To legalize such crimes as "victimless" is, in effect, to say that we are not concerned when the ocean liner strikes the visible mass of an iceberg and plunges all passengers into a watery grave, and that we are only concerned when one person is seen throwing another person overboard. Personally, I am thankful that we don't wait until bad tendencies become totally destructive before we outlaw them.

Isn't it strangely ironic that the real victims of permissive legislation on gambling, drinking, narcotics, and sexual immorality, are the weak people in society whose addiction to any one of these sick practices destroys innocent children, wives, husbands, and loved ones? Many of those who advocate legalizing "victimless crimes" profess to be supporters of legislation on behalf of the weak and helpless in our society.

Beware of the term "victimless crimes." It is a vicious wolf in sheep's clothing.

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



Woman's viewpoint

Polly Reynolds

Do you think of yourself as a rose?

In a get acquainted time, recently, we were asked if we thought of ourselves as a rose or a sunflower and to explain to the group why. Many things came to my mind about a rose: the beauty, the sweet fragrance, the thorns. I thought, so many churches are like a rose bush. They are made up of beautiful blossoms but so many thorns.

I am sure God intends all his children to be flowers in the garden of life, but what happens to cause some to be thorns? Could it be they have failed to grow as Christians? Someone has coined the phrase soap opera Christians. Tune in five or 10 years later and it's still the same old story. This should not be true. We are to grow as Christians and the growth is up to us. I am responsible to God. I cannot wait and be dependent on others or the church program. I must reach out to God through prayer, Bible study, fellowship and sharing my faith.

One of the common complaints is not enough time. We each have 24 hours and it is up to us to determine how we will spend it. How foolish we would be to fail to spend time in prayer and Bible study because we do not have hours to spend. Start with minutes. Make time to read and study because we need to hear from

God. The apostle Paul had as his life's goal to know him. Our life's goal as Christians should be no less.

In 1 John 1:7 we find these words, "If you walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another." It breaks my heart to hear people talking about disagreements and turmoil in their churches. Lack of fellowship in the local church is not a new problem. Paul addressed it often in his writings. But, in spite of it being an old problem, we still are being thorns, keeping the church from being the example it should be.

Another way we grow is through sharing our faith. God expects us to be available to him. We are to share with others what he is doing in our lives.

Are you a rose or a thorn? Do you, as God's child, shed beauty and a lovely perfume wherever you go? Or are you a thorn, intent on having your own way, regardless of who gets hurt or how much blood is drawn?

Polly (Mrs. Gene) Reynolds is a homemaker, volunteer, and a member of Douglas Church. She is active in teaching the Bible, missions work and civic organizations, and she leads lifestyle evangelism workshops.

Watch that address

New postal regulations require that addresses for publication mailings include a box number, street number or route and box number. Person and town (plus zip code) is not enough. Magazines lacking a complete address will be returned to the "Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine" at a substantial charge per piece.

Subscribers, whether by church or individual, will not be added to the mailing list without complete address. Church lists of ABN subscribers must be brought into line with this regulation immediately.

Letters to the editor

Judging orthodoxy

I am writing at this time to express my appreciation for the series of articles by Dr. Maston. I especially appreciate article number 10 on "Orthodox and heretic" which appeared in the Feb. 19 issue.

In my opinion, this article and others in this series, express the message which Arkansas Baptists most need to take to heart. I do not speak as an outsider, since I was born in Hardy and two of my five pastorates have been in Arkansas. Nor am I speaking out of any sense of "sour grapes" because I have never been challenged on a doctrinal matter or has any church which I have served.

The only time I have been embarrassed by our state convention or my fellow pastors was when they did give in to the temptation of a "holier than thou witch hunt". I do not know what else to call it for it always meant that someone had decided that they had a holier Lord's Supper, baptism or Bible than someone else had. I felt then and still feel that this does a disservice to the cause of Christ and is very harmful to the image of all Southern Baptists.

For any person or group of persons to

become a judge of doctrinal matters they must stop being a disciple, for a judge must assume that he knows the truth in order to decide whether or not others do. A disciple is a life-long learner or student who is always open to new ways of understanding and expressing the ageless truths of our God.

I hope and pray that my fellow Arkansas Baptists will not only read over Dr. Maston's series of articles, but also pray over them. This spirit of judgmentalism, which is a hold over from the "Campbellite controversy", needs to be removed from all areas of Southern Baptist life.

As a great Arkansas Baptist used to write, even when talking to fellow Arkansas Baptists, "I must say it". — Dennis J. Davis, Olathe, Kan.

CP wrong basis

The recommendation of the Executive Committee requiring gifts through the Cooperative Program as the basis for representation at the Southern Baptist Convention has to be the worst recommendation ever brought to the convention by the Executive Committee.

Certainly the convention has a right to insist that our member churches be "in friendly cooperation with the convention and sympathetic with its purpose and work", just as we say now in our present constitution. We also have every right to expect that they be a "bona fide contributor to the Convention's work". However, it is not the prerogative of the Convention to tell our churches how they must give their funds. It is the right of every congregation to determine how they give. They may elect to give through the Cooperative Program or they may choose to give directly, as they feel led of God. The convention should only insist they support the work in whatever way they choose.

If passed, I feel this recommendation will do our convention irreparable harm. Hundreds of churches may be lost to our denomination and it could lead to a split in our fellowship. Many churches simply will not tolerate the obvious violation of their local autonomy by a denominational hierarchy telling them how and how much they must give.

I am a friend of the Cooperative Program. The church I pastor has sought to increase its gifts through the Cooperative Program, both percentage and total amount, each year. I have sought to lead the churches I pastor to give at least 10 percent and one church gave 25 percent through the Cooperative Program. Nevertheless, I vehemently protest any effort on the part of the Executive Committee or our denomination to usurp the authority of my church and dictate what and how we must give. — Larry L. Lewis, St. Louis, Mo.



The Southern accent

This I believe: About the Scriptures

by Earl R. Humble

The Bible is a divine book, yet human. It is the inspired record of God's revelation, or self-disclosure to the human race. It is called the "record" of revelation because God revealed himself not only in words to the prophets and apostles, but also through mighty acts, as creation (Gen. 1-2; Ps. 19); deliverance (Ex. 7), and the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ.

The Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21; John 16:13-15; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). It is human only in a secondary sense. (1) God used about 40 men to write the Bible over a period of some 1400 years. (2) Many of the books of the Bible were written in answer to questions or problems arising in the churches. Not only was the writer, under God, human,



Humble

but the human situation was obvious.

There are many theories about how the human writers came to write the Bible. (1) Some say they were inspired like great writers of classical literature. This is not acceptable. (2) Others say that God manipulated the writer's mind in a mechanical way and that the man wrote not knowing what he wrote. This view makes robots out of the writers. (3) The third theory says that the Holy Spirit illumined the mind of the writers, inspired them, and led them to write what God wanted them to write. The writers' thought processes were used, yet illumined and guided. Luke acknowledged using sources (Lk. 1:2).

We do not have the original manuscripts but copies of them. Its inspiration is proved by the fact that God honors it, saves souls when it is preached, and keeps all of his promises found therein.

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

SBC president leads Waldo revival

The president of the Southern Baptist Convention returned to a former Arkansas pastorate March 23 for a three-day revival.

Bailey E. Smith, who served Waldo Memorial Church 1962 to 1965, led in the services which were scheduled for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

Paul Heisner, music and education director of El Dorado West Side Church, led the music.

Smith, who is pastor of First Southern Church in Del City, Okla., is nearing the end of his first term as convention president and recently announced his decision to run for a traditional second term. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Ron Kimbell is pastor of Memorial Church.

by Millie Gill/ABN staff writer

Ron Graham

began serving Hughes First Church as minister of music and youth March 4. Licensed to the gospel ministry by Pine Bluff East Side Church, he attended Arkansas Tech University and is now a first year student at Mid-America Seminary. Graham has also served churches at Plainview and Ola, as well as working on a youth ranch. He and his wife, the former Joy Wisner of Pine Bluff, have two sons, William and Jimmy.



Deahl



Graham

Eddie Smith

has accepted the call of Ft. Smith Bluff Avenue Church to serve as music director. A native of Rogers, he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. He has also served on the staff of the Bearden First Church and Dierks First Church. Smith and his wife, Carol, are residing in Ft. Smith.

Rudy Gallegly

has resigned as pastor of Eureka Springs First Church because of illness. He and his family are now residing at 6707 Fairfield Drive in Little Rock 72209.

Willis Sawyer

is serving the Eureka Springs First Church as interim pastor.

Rick Morrison

has resigned as pastor of the Grubb Springs Church to move to California.

Noel Barlow

died March 4 at age 71 in Baptist Memorial Medical Center in Jackson, Miss. A native of Simpson County, Miss., he pastored the Montrose Church in Arkansas, and served as Director of Missions for Delta Association. He was a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Survivors are his wife, Mrs. Daisy Brassell Barlow of Simpson County, Miss; three daughters, Mrs. Ruth McCully of Ames, Iowa; Mrs. Joyce Coleman of Houston, Texas; and Mrs. Jackie Edmonson of Simpson County, Miss; one brother; and seven grand-

children.

Barry Hughes

has resigned as music/youth director at Little Rock Barnett Memorial Church to accept a similar position with the Beebe First Church.

Joe Atchison

began his eighth year of service March 1 as pastor of Pine Bluff South Side Church.

Chuck Henderson

has resigned as youth director at the Smackover First Church.

Ernest Brooks

began serving the Magnet Cove Mission as pastor March 29, coming there from the Gainsville Church, Gainsville, Mo.

Tim Deahl

has been called as pastor of Texarkana Calvary Church, effective March 29. He will come there from the Brinkley Broadmoor Church where he has served since 1977. He is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and received his doctorate from Mid-America Seminary. He and his wife, Carolyn, have two children, David and Sherri.

Boyce Bible School schedules seven courses for third term

Boyce Bible School will offer seven courses during its third term April 17 through June 6. Each of the courses, which meet at Central Baptist Hospital, will consist of eight sessions of two hours per session.

Courses include:

| | | | |
|----------|------------------|------|---|
| Friday | 6:00- 7:55 p.m. | 0514 | Geography and historical background of N.T. |
| | 8:20-10:15 p.m. | 0642 | Planning Your Preaching |
| | 8:20-10:15 p.m. | 0880 | Music in Worship |
| Saturday | 7:45- 9:40 a.m. | 0505 | Field Education |
| | 7:45- 9:40 a.m. | 0820 | Youth Education |
| | 10:15-12:10 noon | 0587 | Interpreting Hebrews |
| | 12:50- 2:45 p.m. | 0720 | How Southern Baptists Work Together |

Everett Sneed
W. T. Holland
Peggy Pearson
T. K. Rucker
Bill Falkner
Huber Drumwright
Ralph W. Davis

Registration will be conducted on the beginning day, Friday, April 17, from 4 to 6 p.m. The Baptist Book Store representative will be present that afternoon from 5:30 to 7 to sell the books.

New students or students who have not attended for

the last two regular sessions should contact the director, Ralph W. Davis, 2121 North Van Buren Street, Little Rock, 72207, phone 663-4098, for application forms which must be filled out before the term begins.



Sneed



Holland



Rucker



Falkner



Drumwright



Davis

Sparkman New Hope Church has completed an improvement program that included erecting of a steeple and purchasing a public address system. Pastor Rick Hyde reports that plans are now being made to add a fellowship hall and install central heating and air conditioning in the auditorium.

Brinkley Broadmoor Church ordained Jim Hayes as a deacon March 22. Pastor Tim Deahl led the service.

Salado Church held deacon ordination services Jan. 31 for Norris Guynes, Avner McBride, Roy Young and Arnold Martin. Participating in the service were Charles Crowson, Lonnie Busby and George Roberts.

Oark Mission celebrated its first anniversary Feb. 15 with a potluck dinner and an afternoon of gospel singing. Pastor L. W. Massengill, in this first year, has led in a membership growth from two to 24 members. Clarksville Second Church, where Ed Ramsey is pastor, is the sponsoring church.

Springdale First Church has launched a new ministry for Senior Adults. Debbie Thompson will direct the homebound work.

Des Arc First Church is launching, under the leadership of Bob Childers, a dual purpose meeting that will precede regular Wednesday evening activities. Childers, Sunday School director, has planned a Bible teaching pro-

gram and a program of enlistment and soul winning visitation.

Malvern Gilead Church ordained Wendell Davis as a deacon March 22.

Blevins Marlbrook Church is using "Church Mice" cartoons created by Roy Bannister, a member, in its bulletins as outreach and soul-winning epiphanies.

Black Oak Church held a service March 8 to ordain Donald Rogers, James Brewer and Noble Dunkerson as deacons. Larry Sanders of Milligan Ridge was moderator. Opie Chambers served as clerk, and L. E. Sanders presented the candidates. Pastor J. W. Gibbs preached the ordination message.

North Little Rock Sylvan Hills First Church honored J. C. Paney March 15, recognizing his 20 years of service as church treasurer.

Dardanelle-Russellville Association is sponsoring a World Missions Conference March 29-April 5 that will feature foreign, home and state missionaries. Director of Missions Tom Lindley reports that churches participating in the conference include Danville First, Delaware, Centerville, Dardanelle First, Ola, Gravelly, Fair Park, Pottsville, Plainview, New Hope, Atkins, Bakers Creek, Dover, Rus-

sellville Second, East Point, Hopewell, Hector, Moreland, Knoxville and London.



Garland Baptist Association officers are (left to right) Clytee Harness, moderator; Mrs. Marvin James, clerk and acting treasurer; and Joe Stevenson, vice moderator.

Churches form new association

Arkansas' 42 Baptist associations include a new one consisting of churches in Garland County.

The Garland County Baptist Association, which was formed on Oct. 28, 1980, at Hot Springs Park Place Church, now lists 10 churches in their fellowship, according to moderator Clytee Harness. Harness is pastor of Hot Springs Grand Avenue Church.

Joe Stevenson, pastor at Hot Springs Rector Heights Church, is vice moderator.

"The association we were in (Central) covered four counties," Harness points out. "We had a real problem being able to promote the program and getting the attendance and fellowship we needed. So we felt that in an association of Garland County churches, we would be able to work on a more local level."

Harness said that other reasons for the new association were the decreased amount of travel time between churches; the fact that all phone calls to churches except one would be local; and the possibility of more pastors and lay people attending associational meetings.

"Our goals for the association," he noted, "are strong fellowship among the Garland County churches; to promote mission work; and to strengthen our churches through a good training program and mission activity."

1981 annual meeting committees named

Committees to serve for the annual meeting of the Arkansas State Baptist Convention for 1981 have been appointed by John Finn, president of the Convention.

Appointees are the following:

Constitution/By-Laws

Carl Overton, Hot Springs, chairman
Carel Norman, North Little Rock
Lance Hanshaw, Cabot
Dillard Miller, Mena
Johnny Jackson, Little Rock
John Holston, Nashville

Credentials

Paul Sanders, Little Rock, chairman
Frank Shell, Walnut Ridge
John Maddox, Wynne
Delton Cooper, Almyra
Bill Lewis, Bryant

Nominating

Jack Bledsoe, Des Arc, chairman
Russell Miller, Mountain Home
R. Wendell Ross, Ft. Smith
Dennis Dodson, Monticello
Joe Hogan, Harrison
Dillard Miller, Mena

Merle Milligan, Harrison
Milton Wilson, Pine Bluff
James Evans, Clinton

Order of Business

Jack Bledsoe, Des Arc, chairman
Gene Petty, Arkadelphia
Richard Lisk, England

Resolutions

Carroll Caldwell, Harrison, chairman
Richard Stiltner, Hope
Ray Crews, Heber Springs
Cary Heard, North Little Rock
Bert Thomas, Scott

Tellers

Robert McDaniel, North Little Rock, chairman
Jamie Jones, Fayetteville
Edward Powers, Mountain View
Harold Stephens, Benton
Rich Kincl, Berryville
William Piercy, Manila
Ledell Bailey, Paragould

Other personnel

Dr. Ken Lilly, Ft. Smith, parliamentarian
Miss Lucretia Gill, Little Rock, page

Awareness of family needs, help from

In the midst of growing awareness, but few pat answers about the plight of the family in America, some leaders in "family ministries" recently sought to "sow some seeds" for helping families through Arkansas churches.

The Family Enrichment Conference, held at North Little Rock's Park Hill Church, was a first for the state. Arkansas Baptists' Church Training Department had sponsored regional conferences around the state before, but never had offered a state-wide program.

An added motivation for focusing on family ministry this year is that strengthening families is one of three goals of a Southern Baptist Convention focus for 1982-85. The objectives are enlisting families in daily Bible study and family worship at home; strengthening husband/wife relationships; and helping parents develop Biblically-based attitudes toward child raising and developing parenting skills.

To head off the drift toward a predicted 10 million divorces by 1990 and other types of breakups and breakdowns of the family, Southern Baptists hope to make the 1980s the "decade of the family."

Arkansas coordinator of ministries to families, Gerald Jackson, sees ministries through the local church as the best route for helping families. He planned the conference March 9-10 around training church staff members, those who "minister" full-time, to help the churches help families on the local level.

The four family ministry specialists with the Baptist Sunday School Board presented ideas for local churches to

adapt in their own ministries, but also challenged participants to do their own thinking about the needs of families and realistic responses of churches to these needs.

While Harold Bergen emphasized that Christian families have sources of strength that others do not have, he challenged church leaders to recognize that Christian families still have problems. "We want more out of life than we have experienced," he submitted, "because we know of the abundant life and we want it in family relationships, too."

"Up to this point, a lot of people in the church have not listened to families in trouble," he said, "and some have lamented the state of the family but have thrown up their hands and done nothing."

What Bergen and his colleagues in the SBC Family Ministry Department have been trying to do is to help church members become aware of the needs that exist in families.

One of the needs of families, addressed by Family Ministry Department head Joe Hinkle, is parenting modeled after the example of God as loving father, rather than wrathful avenger, and redemptive, rather than punitive, parent.

"Parenthood originates with God," Hinkle said, "and children are God's gifts to parents and vice versa." He listed the tasks of parents as making the child feel loved and wanted; raising the child to his or her full potential; leading him to faith in Christ; and, finally, helping him move on toward becoming his own whole person and letting go.

by Betty J. Kennedy

Hinkle suggested parents take the responsibility of talking with their child about becoming a Christian — rather than place the task on their pastors — because of the spiritual bond that would be created.

Because the families of pastors and church staff members often are expected to be models for other families, Richard Waggener offered a Biblical perspective on the minister's family.

Waggener acknowledged that ministers are cast in the role of self-giving helpers who meet the needs of vast numbers of persons in their churches. He also admitted that he grew up with a belief that it is okay for the minister to be needed but not to need.

He acknowledged that while he was a pastor he sometimes used Paul as an example, reading into Philippians 4:11-14 that the one who ministers needs no one but the Lord to inspire him when he's down. "Some ministers seem to be saying, 'In Christ, I am self-sufficient,'" Waggener pointed out. "Then they will buckup and charge back into the fray."

"The scripture shows that Paul believes God mediates his love toward us through other people as instruments," Waggener explained. Church members know when the minister needs others to meet his needs and may ask when he's going to take some vacation or rest, Waggener attested from experience.

He expressed concern that because



APIN photo/Betty J. Kennedy

Staff members of the Family Ministry Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board also led small group conferences for the meeting. Focusing of topics such as rearing responsible children, enriching marriages, the pastor leading in strengthening families, ministering to singles, and ministering to senior adults. Gary Hauk (right) also spoke on ministering to senior adults at one of the general sessions. Other leaders from Nashville were (from left) Richard Waggener, Harold Bergen, and Joseph Hinkle. Arkansans Robert Holley, Gerald Jackson and Bobby Shows were leaders for other conferences, such as those on planning for Christian Home Week, strengthening the family through recreation, and using the Deacon Family Ministry plan.

churches sought

ministers do not reach out to family to meet needs that they operate sometimes out of an empty bucket, when they have dished out all the water but gotten none in return, and have no more to give the people, much less their family.

"It's great to be so needed by the church (and that's one way for the minister to meet his need to be needed)," Waggener said, "but what about the family needing him?"

He spelled out the priorities of needs-meeting relationships, putting the minister's relationship to God as the "primary" relationship. "But," he maintained, the relationship to the mate is "primal" and is the first human relationship, recorded back in Genesis.

Next after the relationship to his mate, the minister should place his "prime" relationship to his children, Waggener explained. The people the minister serves come next, he said.

"The place to get that bucket filled is from the mate, as God mandated when he directed that men and women leave home and parents and become as one person," Waggener said. "Then the minister is able to meet the needs of the people he serves."

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Arkansans indebted to J. I. Cossey: he saved their state paper

Southern Baptists, like the rest of the world, were scarred by the severe financial disorders of the 1930s. Pastors and churches, Baptist colleges and seminaries, all felt the strain of little money and fewer jobs. Budgets were curtailed until nothing was left; and then still more cuts were demanded as dreams disappeared into the depression gloom.

The Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine shared in that general suffering. This official organ of the state convention could have ended in financial tragedy; instead, it was saved almost singlehandedly by a man who died Feb. 28 at the age of 92.

James Irvin Cossey, editor of the ABN from 1933 to 1939, is known by Arkansas Baptists as pastor, evangelist and educator, as well as journalist.

Born in Damascus in 1888, Cossey graduated from Ouachita Baptist College and Southwestern Baptist Seminary. Except for a few years during and after seminary, his ministry was spent in Arkansas.

This former leader may be best known for his ingenuity in church stewardship promotion. Building on an idea he discovered at Broadway Church in Fort Worth during his seminary days, Cossey developed the "Six-point record system" in the late 1920s, to keep track of a member's Bible study, attendance and giving. The familiar offering envelope was soon widely used in Arkansas churches and has since spread throughout the Southern Baptist Convention; the "Eight-point

system" is its most recent descendant.

But for Arkansans, Cossey's greatest contribution remains his stint as editor in the 1930s.

"Arkansas Baptists owe a tremendous debt because of Cossey's selfless service in keeping the Newsmagazine going during the depression days," says present Editor J. Everett Sneed.

By 1932, the Executive Board of the Arkansas State Baptist Convention had decided funds were no longer available to publish their news journal. Cossey, however, who was both state missions director and pastor of Searcy First Church, pleaded so persuasively to retain the paper, that the board agreed — if he would edit it himself. For seven years, Cossey wrote, printed and published the newspaper, paying for much of it out of his pocket, and claiming as salary only what was left after expenses.

Editor Sneed, credits the Newsmagazine's uninterrupted existence today to those efforts.

In addition to Searcy, Cossey served 16 other churches in Arkansas; held a number of positions in the State Convention; and taught at Southern Baptist College.

For Arkansas Baptists, J. I. Cossey will be remembered as a trailblazer in Baptist work. — Robert H. Dilday

Editor's Note: Much of the material for this article came from an article by Erwin L. McDonald, Editor Emeritus of the ABN, and long-time friend of J. I. Cossey.

News about missionaries

Mr. and Mrs. Van Gladen, Baptist representatives to Mexico, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: Cisne 160, Colonia Contry, Monterrey, N.L., Mexico). He is a native of Jack County, Texas. The former Alma

Ruth Franks, she was born in Lepanto, Ark., and also lived in Rector and Helena, Ark., and Hayti and Springfield, Mo. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1956.



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Sunday School

Children's curriculum now offers a choice

A recent newsletter *Update* from the Nashville Sunday School Board informs the churches of a choice in children's curriculum. A new lesson series will be available October 1981. The new line is based on the Convention Uniform lesson outlines used also by youth and adults. The Foundation series will continue in its present



Hatfield

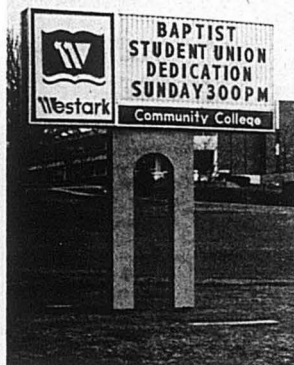
form. Churches now have a choice of Southern Baptist Convention literature to use with this age group. Both lines are high quality products.

The new lessons are designed for one teacher classes with eight or fewer children of a wide age span. In other words, these lessons are primarily designed for the smaller church. Obviously if a small church elected to choose to use the Convention Uniform lessons in adults, youth and children's age division, all members would have the same scripture lesson each Sunday. This means that even the small church can have a unified weekly or monthly workers' meeting. Another advantage is that all readers in a family can discuss the same lesson at home weekly.

The *Update* further describes the new lessons. The new *Children's Bible Study* will consist of an 80 page teacher's quarterly, leaflets for younger children, and leaflets for older children. Each one will contain activities, a Bible story, a memory verse, and help in preparing for the next Sunday. The leaflet will be used during the Sunday School session and may be taken home by the child.

The teacher's quarterly will provide teaching suggestions for thirteen Sunday sessions.

These new materials will appear first on the October-December 1981 Church Literature Dated Form of the Materials Services Department, Sunday School Board; then each quarter thereafter. — Lawson Hatfield



Recent dedication service for the enlarged and renovated Baptist Student Center at Westark Community College in Fort Smith was led by Don Moore, chairman of the Westark BSU Committee.

Rosie Simpkins, BSU Director at Westark, welcomed guests and recognized those who had helped in the building effort. Huber Drumwright (inset) brought the dedicatory message.



Your state convention at work

Church Administration Minister of education seminar planned

A retreat and seminar for ministers of education will be held at De-Gray State Park Lodge on Thursday and Friday, May 7-8. The title of the seminar will be "The Minister of Education as Educator." The sessions will begin at 10 a.m. on Thursday morning and will adjourn at 2 on Friday afternoon.

Will Beal, consultant in the Church Administration Department, Baptist Sunday School Board, will direct the seminar. According to Beal, "Of the four functional areas of the minister of education — (1) minister, (2) administrator, (3) growth agent and (4) educator — the most neglected is the function as educator." The minister of education's role as educator will be the focus of this seminar and retreat.

Topics on the agenda will include: (1) What should a religious educator be, (2) The minister of education as a teacher, (3) Looking at the pupil, (4) Teaching for results and (5) The future and the religious educator.

Any staff member with responsibilities for any aspect of the church's educational program are invited to participate. To register or to secure additional information, write Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, Ark. 72203. — Robert Holley

Family and Child Care Pennies provide thousands for children

Have you had a birthday this year? If not, and if the Lord permits you to live, you will have one. How do you thank God for his goodness and blessings?

One very excellent way of saying thanks to God is through the Birthday Offering for our child care ministry. The tradition has been to give a penny for each year of age. I remember the slogan some churches used in years past, "Give a penny for each year, each a gift to Jesus dear."

Several churches promote and receive a Birthday Offering to help provide for our ministry to children. Some receive it prior to the morning worship service, others do it through the Sunday school. Some mail out envelopes to their people

on their birthday and encourage them to respond. If you wish to use special envelopes for this purpose we will send them to you upon request.

Look what could happen. There are almost 300,000 resident church members in our churches. If the median age is 25 years that would be 25 cents per member per year. The total amount would be \$75,000. In other words if every resident church member would give a birthday offering on his or her birthday we would receive \$75,000 more money to provide needy services to children and their families.

I know I talk about money a lot. That is my job, but there is no magic formula to provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education and parents for the children in need. All of these cost money and Arkansas Baptists, as always, will provide for the need.

If your church is not now receiving a Birthday Offering I encourage you to begin doing so. Give your people the privilege of a blessing by sharing with children. — Homer W. Shirley, Jr., Director of Development, Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services.



Beal



Outgoing chairman of the State BSU Advisory Committee, Roy Jolly (left), was honored at the winter meeting of the committee. The Jonesboro layman also serves on the ASU Area Committee.

Don Nall (right), pastor of Batesville First Church is the newly-elected chairman of the committee. Pat Baugh of Dermott was elected vice chairman and Rosie Dunham of Little Rock, secretary.

Christian Life Council Sadism — yesterday and today

Someone has called the Marquis de Sade, the most modern of men. Many years ago he openly advocated all types of offences, including murder. As one who did not believe in God, de Sade held that any action in the realm of creation is normal. Nothing can be sinful or criminal. He said that all things should be permitted, except Christianity.

An example in contemporary life which shows a trend toward sadism is noted in comparing a 1973 Gallop poll with a more recent poll. Regarding pre-marital sex, two out of every three Americans held that pre-marital sexual relations were wrong in 1973. Today, the public is more evenly divided with 48 percent believing sex before marriage is wrong and 43 percent holding that it is not.

The same type trend is seen regarding the percentage of Americans who do not drink alcoholic beverages. The percentage of total abstainers gets smaller almost every year. (The proportionate number of problems related to alcohol consumption grows also.)

Except for being in hell, having rejected Jesus Christ, the Marquis would be extremely proud of the influence his devilish philosophy continues to exert in our day. In all probability, some who live permissively would not like the "sadism" label, but the truth is, a life not lived under the Judeo-Christian ethic would be pleasing to the Marquis de Sade.

As humanistic philosophies are being espoused more than the Judeo-Christian ethic, Christians today must redouble efforts to be the salt, light and leaven of God's influence in every area of life.

There's strong evidence that Paul found the forces of Satan operating basically the same way as in de Sade's and our day. The whole armor of God must be put on now as then (Ephesians 6:11f).

We are already in combat and must be constantly prepared to endure hardness, offensively and defensively, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:3). — Bob Parker

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Attendance report

| Mar. 15, 1981 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------|-------|-----|---------------------------|-----------|-----|-----|---|
| Church | Sunday School | Church Trng. | Church addns. | | | | | | | | |
| Alexander | | | | 485 | 111 | 2 | | Nashville | 254 | 103 | 2 |
| First | 125 | 62 | 2 | 384 | 118 | 2 | Philadelphia | 134 | 77 | 1 | |
| Vine Ridge Immanuel | 75 | 32 | | 247 | 136 | 3 | Kingston, First Southern | 93 | 75 | | |
| Alma, Clear Creek Southern | 209 | 75 | | 162 | 23 | | Little Rock, Central Hill | 156 | 104 | | |
| Alpena, First | 173 | 24 | | Nursing Home | | | Magnolia, Central | 707 | 146 | | |
| Alma, First | 123 | 34 | 1 | El Dorado, Parkview | 29 | 44 | Manfield, First | 166 | 67 | | |
| Berleville | | | | Nursing Home | 27 | | Mountain Home, East Side | 221 | 100 | 1 | |
| West | 300 | 123 | 2 | Eureka Springs, First | 55 | | Mountain Pine, First | 86 | 73 | | |
| Nursing Home | 35 | 53 | 2 | Bever Lake Mission | 14 | 13 | Mulberry, First | 153 | 96 | | |
| Benoniville, First | 445 | | 1 | Forest City, First | 630 | 141 | Murfreesboro, First | 129 | 26 | | |
| Berryville | | | | St. Smith | | | Nashville, Ridgeway | 165 | 63 | 6 | |
| Freeman Heights | 232 | 114 | 5 | First | 1,904 | 11 | North Rock, Stanhill | 91 | 47 | | |
| Blue Eye, Mo., First | 244 | 71 | | Grand Avenue | 1,137 | 463 | Paragould | | | | |
| Booneville | 150 | 60 | | Wagon | 28 | 44 | Center Hill | 91 | 59 | | |
| First | 299 | | 2 | Wesley | 138 | 40 | First | 431 | 102 | 1 | |
| Blue Mountain Mission | 20 | | | Wesley | 128 | 56 | Pea Ridge, First | 239 | 80 | 2 | |
| South Side | 147 | 115 | | Grandview | 101 | 50 | Pine Bluff | | | | |
| Bryant | 325 | 200 | 4 | Hampton, First | 164 | 90 | Centennial | 142 | 67 | | |
| First Southern | 118 | 84 | | Hardy, First | 520 | 60 | Central | 114 | 48 | 2 | |
| Indian Springs | | | | Harrison | | | First | 568 | 77 | 1 | |
| Cabot | | | | Eagle Heights | 265 | 113 | Hardin | 159 | 56 | | |
| First | 353 | 134 | 1 | Northside | 167 | 81 | Lee Memorial | 367 | 137 | 1 | |
| Mt. Carmel | 388 | 195 | 4 | Woodland Heights | 119 | 52 | Sulphur Springs | 210 | 71 | | |
| Camden, Cullendale First | 113 | 100 | 168 | Hot Springs | | | Watson Chapel | 481 | 148 | 3 | |
| Caraway, First | 111 | 31 | | Fairdale | 80 | 36 | Rogers | 525 | 135 | 2 | |
| Cherokee Village, First | 96 | 46 | | Grand Avenue | 274 | 83 | First | 771 | 211 | | |
| Conway | 122 | 76 | 3 | Hanna's Chapel | 138 | 90 | Immanuel | | | | |
| Harlan Park | 487 | 199 | | Memorial | 89 | 73 | Russellville | 490 | 284 | 1 | |
| Oak Bowery | | | | Park Place | 274 | 95 | First | 173 | 75 | 3 | |
| Second | | | | Hughes, First | 191 | 92 | Second | 34 | 23 | | |
| Crossit | | | | Jacksonville, First | 382 | 40 | Sandusky, Okla., Faith | | | | |
| | | | | Jessieville | 75 | 40 | Springdale | | | | |
| | | | | Jonesboro | | | Berry Street | 72 | 48 | 2 | |
| | | | | Friendly Hope | 150 | 113 | Claude Avenue | 88 | 43 | | |
| | | | | | | | Emdale | 326 | 128 | 8 | |
| | | | | | | | First | 1,901 | | | |
| | | | | | | | Treaslane | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Highland Hills | 101 | 76 | | |
| | | | | | | | Shiloh Memorial | 150 | 74 | | |
| | | | | | | | Trinity | 150 | 150 | 1 | |
| | | | | | | | Valley Springs | 93 | 29 | 2 | |
| | | | | | | | Van Buren, First | 409 | 79 | 2 | |
| | | | | | | | Vandover, First | 61 | 35 | 1 | |
| | | | | | | | Walnut Ridge, First | 224 | 79 | | |
| | | | | | | | West, First | 120 | 68 | | |
| | | | | | | | Woolter | 114 | 69 | 21 | |

Cooperative Program report: February

| 1980 | February budget | 1981 |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| \$ 591,258.08 | February receipts | \$ 669,511.50 |
| <u>582,987.39</u> | February budget | <u>610,590.19</u> |
| (8,270.69) | Over (Under) | (58,921.31) |
| \$1,182,516.16 | Budget year-to-date | \$1,339,023.00 |
| <u>1,163,173.09</u> | Gifts year-to-date | <u>1,363,864.17</u> |
| (19,343.07) | Over (Under) | (24,841.17) |

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and

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May 16, 1981

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Band/orchestra instrumental ensemble

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Contact your associational office or the associational music director for information concerning a tournament in your area.

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For those who qualify for the state tournament and ensemble jubilee the entry deadline is May 6, 1981.

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March 29, 1981

Matthew 25:1-13

by Stephen Stege
Beech Street First Church
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Be ready, be faithful

The Jewish wedding custom was designed so that the bridegroom accompanied by his friends came to the home of the bride's father to claim his bride and take her to his home, where she would be welcomed with a marriage feast. The virgins were friends of the bride who awaited the bridegroom's coming and joined the procession as it approached the house. Jesus Christ draws an analogy of his coming — he being the bridegroom; the bride, his church.

Awaiting the bridegroom's arrival (v. 5-9)

The bridegroom was coming — the 10 virgins were awaiting his arrival. The bridegroom was not late, yet was delaying his arrival to be sure all preparations had been made ready. We find five prudent virgins who made the necessary preparations and five foolish virgins who were also waiting in attendance, yet had not made the necessary preparations. Suddenly the bridegroom appears and is announced. The prudent virgins stood ready and the foolish virgins found that they had not made adequate preparations. Please note here that the prudent virgins in the parable were not being rude, but perhaps were to signify that each of us must individually prepare for the bridegroom's coming.

The arrival of the bridegroom (v. 10-13)

In these verses we note a word of joy for the prepared, a word of doom for the unprepared.

For those who are ready when Christ comes there is a feast of joy, happiness, gladness and reunion such as one would see in a wedding feast. But for those who are not ready there is a word of doom as we note that the "door was shut" and the words from our Lord "... I do not know you."

Conclusion

The wise who are prepared for Christ's return will enjoy all that he has for his children. The foolish who stand unprepared will not be able to participate in this great event. Perhaps our Lord's delay can be viewed as an act of grace to provide the additional time to make ready. "Be prepared, be faithful", for we do not know the day or the hour.

The Outlines of the International Bible Lesson for Christian Teaching, Uniform Series, are copyrighted by the International Council of Religious Education. Used by permission.

Not my will, but thine be done

From last week's lesson one could conclude that the death of Jesus was the result of the hatred of the Jewish religious leaders. It is true that they demanded and secured his death. However, they could never have touched him if it had not been the will of God. This lesson begins with a plot against Jesus. Both the chief priests and the teachers of the Law sought a way to put him to death secretly because they feared the people. Satan entered Judas and he provided the means.



McMenis

Meanwhile, Jesus gave instructions as to how and where to prepare the Passover meal. Jesus and his apostles observed it in the prescribed manner. Then Jesus used two of the elements to institute the Lord's Supper. They all drank from one cup and Jesus broke from one loaf. Paul in I Corinthians 10:16-17 uses this to teach the fact that the church is one body. Jesus said, in reference to the bread, "This is my body", and that the cup is Christ's blood shed in sealing the new covenant. Thus the cup and the bread represent the body and blood of Christ. Jesus revealed to Judas his knowledge that Judas would betray him. Judas left and went to the high priest to complete his already arranged betrayal.

Jesus' heart was heavy. It was made heavier by the disciples' arguing as to who would be accounted the greatest. Jesus said the greatest servant is the greatest before God. Jesus also revealed to Peter that he would deny Christ and said he had prayed for him. Peter protested, but time proved Jesus' words.

One of our focal passages tells of Jesus' agony in the garden of Gethsemane. He asked his disciples to watch and pray that they enter not into temptation. Further in the garden he prayed that if it were possible, the cup of suffering be removed from him, but that the Father's will be done. Jesus agonized so that his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. Why did Jesus agonize so? Did he fear death? Surely so in a natural

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Life and Work

March 29, 1981

Luke 22:1-46

by Freeman McMenis
Eudora Northside Church

human way, but this was not the main reason. His death was to be a sacrificial one. He was to become the sin-bearer for all mankind. His pure soul revolted against having to bear this tremendous load of sin. Yet if there was no other way for man to be saved, he was willing to die this atoning death. He won the victory within himself by submitting himself to the Father's will. In God's will he faced Judas and the arresting officers.

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Bible Book

March 29, 1981

I Corinthians 15:35-16:24

by Bedford Jackson
Benton County Association

The Resurrection of Christians

The Bible answers all questions about life and life beyond the grave. Soon, all mysteries regarding the resurrection will be made known.

A new body (v. 35-49)

God keeps up with the human race, one by one. He knows who is born and who dies. He knows it is natural for us to want to live as long as we can with a normal, healthy, prosperous life. We are here today and gone tomorrow. The things that really count in this life and the life to come are spiritual and related to Jesus Christ.

When Christ returns, the dead in Christ and the living in Christ will receive brand-new eternal bodies. God is going to make more out of us than we are now. Because we have trusted Christ as our Saviour, we will have more in the resurrection than in the present world. Paul taught:

1. Man is greater than all of God's creation.
2. Spectacular sights have no comparison as great as "the first man" who is accountable to "the second man . . . the Lord from heaven."

Victory over sin (v. 50-58)

"Flesh and blood" fail, but the Scriptures never fail to convict, inspire and comfort. They speak with power, and give us confidence in the Christ of the Kingdom of God. Victory is ahead over Satan, sin, suffering, and death. Every service performed now will be rewarded. Souls saved, songs sung, prayers prayed, offerings given, services rendered, and worship experienced are expressions of "thanks be to God." Commitment and involvement in "the work of the Lord" are "not in vain in the Lord."

Gratitude for giving (16:1-24)

After all of what Jesus Christ has done for us there should be no question raised about supporting the church with tithes and offerings. Giving money is an act of worship. Giving shows that we serve a crucified-risen Saviour. The Bible teaches:

1. Where to give — a church like the Corinthian church.
2. When to give — "first day of the week."
3. Who is to give — "every one."
4. How much to give — "as God hath prospered him."
5. Why give — because we appreciate the blessings of salvation.

We should want the whole world to know Jesus and give increased percentage gifts through the Cooperative Program and associational missions for this purpose. "A great door and effectual is opened" to the church that is evangelistic and mission-minded. "Adversaries . . . and fear" cannot stop "the work of the Lord." The church that never dies is the one that is known in the community as "the church that is in their house" or home.

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Backyard Bible clubs: how to build a successful summer

by Marvin Fitts

Backyard Bible Clubs can dramatically change the spiritual atmosphere at your church this summer. Things are different now at First Church of West Memphis after two years of reaching out to the children and their families through this ministry. Following are some suggestions that can help you be a blessing to many in



Fitts

signs for the yards of church members and others proclaiming "We support backyard Bible clubs", and large signs for the yards where the clubs would meet.

7. During the morning worship service three weeks before the clubs met, members of the church were asked to pledge to work in a club.

8. Staff members took these pledges and divided them into seven member teams for each club.

9. Strategically located back yards were chosen and the owners asked to cooperate by loaning us their yard (the children never enter the house).

10. Club team members were trained by staff and others as to their responsibilities and how to fulfill them.

11. House-to-house survey visitation was held by club workers and others dur-

ing the week prior to the meetings. Limited information was requested at each house and a flier was left announcing the clubs.

12. Church members were asked to donate cookies and soft drink mix for the refreshments.

13. A children's rally, with an outstanding Christian guest speaker/entertainer, was held for everyone at the church on Friday night.

14. Follow-up visitation and ministry culminated and high-lighted the club activities.

May you be blessed, as we have been, through this missionary outreach ministry to your community.

Marvin Fitts is minister of education at West Memphis First Church.

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Church helps feed elderly

by Robert Dilday

Arkadelphia First Church is shouldering a burden that many churches in the near future may also find an opportunity to take on — helping to maintain food programs for the poor and elderly that are being dismantled as a result of Washington's current wave of budget-cutting.

A \$5,000 grant from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board was channeled through First Church to assist the Elderly Nutrition Program, a service of the Senior Adult Center in Arkadelphia, which is in turn an agency of the Central Arkansas Development Council.

The \$5,000 check, which will go directly to the preparation and serving of food, was presented at a ceremony March 11, which was attended by W. Maurice Hurley, interim Pastor at First Church; Mrs. Hurley; Nathan Porter, recently-named domestic hunger consultant for the Home Mission Board; Julia Russell,

nutrition director of the Central Arkansas Development Council; and Carolyn Alexander, site director of the Arkadelphia Senior Center.

An average of 130 senior adults participate in the Elderly Nutrition Program, and an additional 40 elderly people receive hot meals from the program delivered to their homes by volunteers from First Church's Women's Missionary Union.

Mrs. Russell, a member of Gurdon Beech Street Church, estimates that the \$5,000 gift will provide 3,125 additional meals to the elderly needy.

"This service gets down to the nitty-gritty of life and death," says Mrs. Russell, whose experience in a WMU mission action group sparked the motivation for the work she is engaged in. "There are agencies like ours all over Arkansas; any church can be involved in this type of ministry."

your church field as well. Here is how we held 33 clubs in 1979 with 1302 enrolled and 38 clubs in 1980 with 1499 enrolled.

1. We invited a staff member from the First Church of Springdale, (Ark.) which had had successful clubs, to present the total program to us.

2. Our staff unanimously recommended to the church that we conduct the clubs. It was approved without opposition.

3. We cleared our calendar of major activities for four weeks prior to the week of the club meetings.

4. Funds were designated for materials and promotion from the operating budget.

5. BBC manuals were purchased from the Baptist Book Store.

6. Yard publicity was ordered: Small

Discussing Arkadelphia First's and the Home Mission Board's gift of \$5,000 are (left to right) Nathan Porter; W. Maurice Hurley; and Julian Russell.

