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### April 23, 1992

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# Arkansas Baptist



Arkansas Fellowship meets  
Page 10

Vol. 91, No. 9

April 23, 1992



COVER

## Senior Adult Day May 3

**Divorce:  
Hoping and  
coping**

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**'I read,  
studied,  
and prayed'**

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**Committee  
named to  
replace Parks**

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# Arkansas Baptist

## At a glance

### 6 Divorce: hoping and coping

"Jesus came 'to seek and to save.' He loves us and desires to redeem his loved ones. Even those who are suffering because of divorce. He has left his church in this world as his redemptive agent, his body, through which he continues to offer salvation, cleansing, forgiveness, strength to cope, and the vision of hope for the future. How is the church to respond when divorce comes to church?" asks Billy White, pastor of Little Rock Second Church, in the last of a two-part series on divorce.

### 10 Arkansas Fellowship meets

More than 250 participants attended the meeting of the Arkansas Fellowship of Concerned Baptists on April 10 in Little Rock. Grady Cothe, president emeritus of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, former executive director of the SBC Woman's Missionary Union, were the featured speakers.

### 18 'I read, studied, and prayed'

Daniel Bramlett believes in putting his faith into action. Confronted with the pressures faced by his peers, the fifth grader at Beryl Henry Elementary School in Hope, Ark., made a presentation to the Hope School Board to form a Bible study club at his school. To prepare for his meeting with the board, Daniel said, "I read, studied and prayed."

### 23 Committee named to replace Parks

Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees elected John Jackson, a California pastor, as trustee chairman and Joel Gregory, pastor of Dallas First Church, as chairman of a 15-member committee to find a successor for retiring President R. Keith Parks.

**1992 BSU Summer Missionaries**

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## Cover story

BSU photo / Jim Vermeer



### Senior Adult Day May 3

Viola Smith, a member of First Baptist Church of Tolland Conn., makes daily phone calls to members of her congregation who are having birthdays. She prays for them, reads them Scripture and sings a song. "Heritage, Happiness and Hope in the Senior Years" is the 1992 theme for Senior Adult Day, which will be observed May 3 in many churches. Senior Adult Day is sponsored by the Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

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# Salvation's service

J. EVERETT SNEED

Salvation, to many, seems to mean little more than escaping from eternal punishment and a life with Christ throughout eternity. While salvation provides a life with our Lord, the New Testament teaches that those whom God has redeemed experience an immediate, radical change in their lives. The individual liberated by God's saving grace has not only been released from the slavery of sin, but demonstrates a new love for others and a desire to serve the Master.

Jesus' redeeming work starts with the forgiveness of sin, but goes on to change our entire attitude toward life and our relationship with others. Jesus offered both physical and spiritual nourishment. He never compartmentalized into the sacred and the secular. Jesus' clear priority, however, was to bring individuals to a life changing experience through his atoning death. The salvation offered by Christ provides the abundant life here and now and continues this new life after physical death. Any less would come close to the Gnostic concept which promises joy and liberation only after death.

Gnosticism emphasized a distinction between the spiritual and the physical. They maintained a dualism which taught that the soul and the body were composed of radically different kinds of substance. The spiritual part of man was inherently good, while the physical was made of evil matter. They maintained they had a secret knowledge of some liberation in this life, but ultimate freedom could only be reached when an individual was released from this world.

Since the Gnostics maintained matter was evil, they denied Jesus had a physical body. If Christ had no physical body, it precluded his resurrection from the dead. The Gnostics, however, clearly denied that Jesus was really human, that he was incarnate in the flesh, and that he was bodily resurrected from the dead.

Although, there are probably no modern Christians who would espouse Gnosticism, we do have a kind of dualism which separates the secular from the sacred. This disharmony emphasizes the necessity of salvation to secure one's place in eternity, but denies the responsibility to love others and to serve God here and now.

The word "love" is used in so many different ways in English, that often we fail to understand its meaning in the New Testa-



ment. We speak of loving our spouse, our children, our church, our country, and our favorite food. The meaning of the word "love" is different in each case.

Perhaps the best way to understand the concept of love, as set forth by Christ, is to consider how he portrayed love. As we examine these examples, we should note the command Jesus gave to his followers. Jesus told his disciples on the night of the Last Supper, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you . . ." (Jn. 13:34).

One vivid portrayal of Jesus' love is found in his dealing with Simon Peter after the resurrection. Peter had denied his Master three times prior to the crucifixion. When Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved him, he began by using the Greek word for self-giving love (*agape*). Peter could respond only by using the word for love in the sense of friendship (*philia*), a lesser love. Our Lord was helping Peter to see that true Christian love is often a slow, painful process.

The greatest example of love is the sacrificial, atoning death of Christ. At Calvary, we see our Master voluntarily taking the sins of every individual in the world upon himself. He, who knew no sin, voluntarily became sin so that all who would accept his saving grace might have life

eternal.

Jesus redeemed his disciples for service. John said that true love puts action into the words he speaks (see Jn. 3:18). We are to serve by ministering both to the physical and spiritual needs of those with whom we have contact.

Christ spelled out for his followers how they were to serve him in reaching the world as he said, "While you are going, therefore, disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you . . ." (Mt. 20:19-20, author's translation).

This passage states the task of service for every Christian. The priority to "disciple all nations" (make Christians) is shown by the use of an imperative verb. We can make disciples only as we go and tell others about Christ. Once we have made disciples, we are to baptize and teach them.

The infinitive "to observe" is most significant. Basically, it means to "watch over," or "to guard." We are to keep in the sense of preserving or protecting so that new Christians will not be harmed. Those who are won to Christ are to serve by doing the things he has commanded and, in so doing, we are to pass on his commandments to those who follow after us.

So the living, reigning King sent his servants out into a hostile, wicked world with the task of carrying his message to the ends of the earth. Our task is not to be safe, but to serve. Our King has not told us to be successful, but to be faithful. We are to leave the results in his hands. So long as we are in service and in love, we can know that our Master will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

## Arkansas Baptist

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## Letters to the Editor

DON MOORE

## You'll Be Glad To Know



You do not get tired of good news, do you? I hope not. Some people may not want to believe good news! It is still true. God is at work. He says, "It is a good thing to give thanks." Join in praising him!

We reached our goal of \$350,000 which we had to reach in order to receive the challenge grant money from the Mabee Foundation for the Siloam Springs Assembly. The Mabee Foundation gift will be \$295,000. We have had 129 people and/or churches give \$500 or more toward the campaign. There were 453 people and/or churches that gave less than \$500. How grateful we are for those who have given. The goal reached secured the matching funds, but it will not be enough to renovate all of the buildings. Yes, additional monies will be needed. Renovation will begin at the close of camps this summer.

Guatemala Baptist work will never be the same, nor will Arkansas Baptists. Though our partnership will not conclude until November of this year, we have already had 1,193 volunteers from 386 churches participate in the projects there. Of our 41 associations, 38 have had some of their people working in Guatemala. Praise God!

We recently held our Golden Age Evangelism Conference in Eureka Springs. Last year some 340 were registered. This year over 1,000 were registered. We are looking for larger quarters for next year.

Our annual Asteens event which usually has 300 to 350 registered had over 800 registered this year. God blessed with great inspiration and some teenagers being saved.

God is at work! Your convention people are at work! Their vision, planning and your enthusiastic cooperation make great things happen! We praise God for his direction and blessing. We thank you for taking advantage of the many rich opportunities we are able to provide for you. It makes for a happy, productive relationship.

**Don Moore** is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

## Let's tell the Lord

A poorly dressed man walked up to the gate of the palace of a king. Upon seeing this needy individual the guard asked, "What may I do for you sir?" "I want to ask the king some favors." "And what favors might you ask the king?" the guard replied. "All that I want is some food, clothing, and a place to call home." "Enter in," the guard replied. Immediately the needy man was ushered into the presence of the king.

Upon seeing the poorly dressed individual, the king asked, "And what may I do for you sir? Just ask and it's yours." "Oh," the man replied, "I have already told the palace guard all that I want. . . so, just go ahead and give me what I have already told him about." Now, perhaps someone may be saying, no one in their right mind would ever say a thing like that. . . but beloved, that's just what happens in the spiritual realm every Wednesday evening across our land. It's prayer meeting time. . . numerous requests are given. . . great detail is gone into. . . leaving nothing out. . . and now, it's time for actual prayer. . . and in all too many cases one lone individual gets up, and in effect says, "Lord, you have already heard our requests. . . so just go ahead and grant what we have already mentioned. . . for we know that you already know about it all anyway." Yes, God does know all about it anyway, but beloved, let's not be guilty of failing to tell God. . . What we told the prayer group about. . . Let's bring our prayer requests before God.

It's sort of like this worn out, meaningless prayer, "Lord, bless all these for whom it's our duty to pray." Beloved, if it's our duty to pray for them. . . let's actually pray for them. . . by name. Let's not stop at just telling the prayer meeting group. . . let's go one step further. . . let's tell the Lord.—Ned York, Blytheville

## Clear up rumors

In order to clear up some decidedly inaccurate rumors, I want my fellow Arkansas Baptists to know that reports that I have "left the ministry" are absolutely erroneous! One story circulating is that some fellow minister alleges that I stated publicly that my call to ministry was "just a job." Take it from the "horse's mouth:" God's call on my life is not something I have or would ever take lightly. Neither do I take it lightly when others would speak for me

without speaking with me about such matters.

It's true that I resigned from the pastorate of Beech Street First Baptist Church effective February 2 of this year, but not in order to "quit God." If ever in my life I have been confident of the veracity of God's Word and the power of prayer, it's now.

On February 6th, I formally announced candidacy for the United States Senate. In order to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest, to prevent our church from unnecessary dissension, and to insure that I wasn't receiving a paycheck from the church while spending most of my time away from the church field, it was necessary to resign the full-time pastorate. While I am not pastoring, I am quite active preaching—filling the pulpit virtually every Sunday and many Wednesdays.

Within the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, we've put much emphasis in recent years toward the validity and significance of bi-vocational ministry. Many of our college professors and administrators continue their preaching ministries, even though their livelihood is not derived directly from the full-time pastorate. Even our Foreign Mission Board has increased its attention to the concept of "tent-maker" missionaries who "work" at a non-church related vocation in order to "serve" the cause of Christ as volunteers.

God's people have been overwhelmingly supportive and all but a few realize that my proclamation of the gospel continues, as does my service on the board of my alma mater, Ouachita Baptist University. For those who have been led to think otherwise, I hope this letter will set the record straight.—Mike Huckabee, Texarkana

## Against Freemasonry

Although I am glad that the SBC leadership is finally looking into Freemasonry, it saddens me to read that "most Southern Baptists do not care about" the existence of this philosophy within the denomination.

It is obvious that most Southern Baptists are majoring on minors. Conservatives have spent most of their time defending biblical authority, but in their zeal to protect the Book they have neglected the one to whom the Book points. Moderates are now so enamored with "Baptist principles" that they have allowed these to take precedence over loyalty to Christ and concern for his honor and glory.

If we are to confess Christ as Lord, it

behooves us to exalt and glorify him and the gospel, to the exclusion of all that is opposed to him. I am convinced that one reason why Southern Baptists make so little impact on American society is that they allow followers of polytheistic pagan worldviews (such as Freemasonry) to join, and oftentimes even lead, their congregations.

Christ gave us no such options; either we follow him or we follow Satan. If we are then accused of being narrow, intolerant or hostile to "Baptist principles," then so be it! How any saved person can read passages such as 1 Corinthians 10:14-21, Colossians 2:8, 18, 19 or Revelation 2:24 and still favor letting Masons become members of his congregation is utterly incomprehensible.

The Home Mission Board worries that getting into a controversy over Freemasonry would be divisive. But, Christ came to bring a sword, not "peace!" Between Christ and Belial there can be no true peace anyway—the two are diametrical opposites.

A parting of the ways between Christians and Masons is long overdue; a purified church, though smaller in numbers, will be greater in power. May Southern Baptist believers have the strength to make the break.—John Windsor, Little Rock

*[Editor's note: This letter is representative of several letters the ABN received on the subject of opposing Freemasonry, some of which contained erroneous information.]*

## Sick society

We Christians pray for God to heal our sick society, yet we continue to keep in power those same representatives who have caused our problems.

We prayed when an atheist had God removed from our public schools. We prayed when drugs and violence made the scene. We looked the other way when por-

nography was legalized. We agonized over the sexual revolution, and as the heathen installed its system of slaughter houses to exterminate all resulting, unwanted babies, we prayed that our families might escape such atrocities.

We were bewildered over the homosexual revolution, appalled at the AIDS epidemic, and while God's helpless children were crying out to him, Satan was having a heyday.

Don Wildemon, a man devoted to the task of fighting pornography, made it simple for Christians across America to give our signatures in protest of the blasphemous movie, "The Last Temptation of Christ." Now, surely God would bless us for such an act of courage.

When vote hungry legislators conjured up their tax-funded snake pit labeled, "National Endowment for the Arts," we prayed God would zap that unholy thing, yet after repeated attacks on our Lord Jesus by the NEA, our legislators voted to continue pouring our tax dollars into it, but most astounding is the act that we continue to reflect those responsible.

To what extent does God hear the prayers of his children who will not get involved when corruption is eating away at our beloved country and destroying our precious children?

If Christians can't discern the difference between right and wrong, can we expect unbelievers to know that if God isn't involved in our children's activities they cannot win?

We've yielded our children over to Satan. America has corrupted herself, and is wallowing in the mire of her holocaust of 27,000,000 unborn infants. Yet from atop our lofty pedestal, we Americans have the audacity to meddle in the affairs of other nations, threatening to ban them from our "holy alliance" unless they purge themselves and follow our example.

Oh, that the children of God were as committed as the heathen.—Laura Puryear, Bryant



## S.B.C. INDIANAPOLIS TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Group transportation for messengers and visitors to the 1992 Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis is being arranged by CHRISTIAN TRAVELERS of Des Plaines, Illinois. A daily SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE will be available from most of the outlying hotels to and from the Hoosier Dome. Six bus routes will provide hourly service to 90% of the convention hotels. The shuttle bus service will begin on Sunday afternoon and will end after the final session on Thursday. A discount is offered to those who order their transportation arrangements in advance.

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# Hoping and coping

*What the church has to offer those suffering because of divorce*

by Billy White

Special to the Arkansas Baptist

Jesus came "to seek and to save." He loves us and desires to redeem his loved ones. Even those who are suffering because of divorce. He has left his church in this world as his redemptive agent, his body, through which he continues to offer salvation, cleansing, forgiveness, strength to cope, and the vision of hope for the future.

How is the church to respond when divorce comes to church? What can persons experiencing divorce expect when they come? These are timely questions which beg to be addressed as the Christian community prepares to face the challenge of the twenty-first century.

Three "givens" form the context for specific practical responses. First, it is assumed Holy Scripture speaks with God's authority to our lives and will direct our thinking here. Second, the freedom and character of each local church is to be honored. Churches have different cultural contexts and personalities that affect the way they relate God's timeless truth in timely application to their respective situations. Finally, all decisions are to reflect the redemptive ethic of Jesus and not the judgmental self-righteousness of the Pharisees.

What then can the divorced expect when they come to church? Perhaps the best way to respond would be by sharing what they can expect when coming to Second Baptist in Little Rock since that is where this writer has firsthand experience in seeking to apply the principles discussed in a previous article.

First, at Second, the divorced person can expect to be valued as a human being, respected as a person, and welcomed as one loved by God. Jesus said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (Jn. 6:37). As his body we seek to act in this world as we believe he would were he here in the flesh (1 P. 2:21). When people come to church anguishing from the trauma of divorce, reeling with bewilderment and uncertainty, we

seek to be the kind of place where "the heavy laden" can come and "find rest for their souls" (Mt. 11:28-9).

Churches can make divorcees feel welcome by inviting and welcoming them to worship, by involving them in appropriate church events. In addition, Sunday School classes can be offered which specifically target the needs of the divorced. Second Baptist offers at different times a "Beginning Again" class for this purpose. Additionally, other seminars or retreats can be made available to the community. Our singles ministry has done this in the past with great degrees of success. Topics have included titles like "Intimacy" and "Healing for the Heart."

The second thing the divorcee can expect is to be treated with sensitivity to the hurts and needs of life. This is not to naively assume that every need will somehow be met, every problem resolved, or every emotional pain felt with depth by the church. But rather, it means that we seek to be sensitive people, not calloused or condemning. To this end, small groups can provide nurture and support for those whose wounds are fresh. We have TLC groups within our church that could respond to this need. These groups supply Tender Loving Care in some cases and Tough Love and Commitment for others. The divorced are encouraged to participate in such support groups.

Third, at our church, the divorced individual can expect to be confronted by the proclamation and public teaching of God's Word just as any other sinner whom God loves. We still preach and practice God's ideal for Christian marriage. One man and one woman committed to one another in love for life is the divine plan. Simply because some of us miss the bull's eye in this area of life is no reason to move the target. The divorcee will be challenged to affirm God's ideal for Christian marriage. Additionally we acknowledge that divorce, falling short of this ideal, is sin. It has earlier been established that divorce is not the unpardonable sin, nor is it in itself grounds for one to be cut off from the

fellowship of the body. Nevertheless, this does not mean that divorce is any less severe than any other sin. According to Scripture, all sin is committed against a holy and infinite God, and consequently, each sin is of infinite proportions. Sin is always serious, and no less so when it concerns holy matrimony. Those who experience this sin of divorce will be challenged to come to terms with their own accountability in the matter.

## What can the divorced expect when they come to church?

1. To be valued as a human being, welcomed as one loved by God.

2. To be treated with sensitivity to the hurts and needs of life.

3. To be confronted by the proclamation of God's Word.

Fourth, they will be offered the "amazing grace" of Jesus Christ as fully and freely as any other sinner in our membership. This means that God's forgiveness will be extended as a free gift, totally independent of any connection to their deeds or misdeeds. It also means that there is a personal choice for them to make in receiving the forgiveness God freely offers in Christ. No one else can make that decision for another. We must each individually and personally "approach

the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace in time of need" (He. 4:16). As we do, we also have confidence that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn. 1:9). Finally, the opportunity for forgiveness becomes for each one of us a growing process. Jesus taught that forgiveness obliges the recipient to also offer it to any who have offended them as Jesus taught (Matthew 18:21-35). This involves a tremendous process of growth in grace since very few of us sinners forgive instantaneously. When one has been hurt deeply and the pain is fresh, real and personal, forgiveness can be a colossal challenge of faith and true discipleship. However, it can also be a gigantic step forward and away from the self-pity that plagues so many.

Fifth, the divorced person can expect to be challenged, as are all other followers of Jesus in our church, to be adjusting his or her behavior according to the enlightenment and empowering grace of the Holy Spirit. In word and deed, each believer is to seek to follow Jesus' example of obedience to the Father. To those previously married, this means seeking to remain spiritually committed and sexually pure.

Sixth, when the time seems right, healing is progressing and one's life is growing in Christ, our church involves those previously married in leadership opportunities at church. In some churches there may be those who argue that "the divorced" would not make a good role model for others. And in certain cases this may be true. In our church, where we minister to so many single parent homes, we need good solid role models of Christian single parenthood who by their lives and from their struggles can show that Christians can deal with and live through divorce! (We also need continuing role models of married men and women who are managing, by the grace of God, to keep their marriage alive and growing!) For this reason and because we believe that "forgiveness by God" means forgiven by God, we encourage forgiven sinners to serve the Lord as they feel led and as their church has need.

Finally, what of the issue of remarriage? This has proven to be a difficult area for many pastors as they are approached by couples who desire to be wed but have a prior experience of divorce. It may be of some comfort to realize that we are not the first to have to wrestle with this issue. The New Testament speaks of another church that struggled with this matter 20 centuries ago in Corinth (1 Corinthians 7). Though individual interpretations differ concerning this passage, all seem to agree it does offer us a model of Christian leadership unafraid to deal with the difficult domestic issues of the day and of church members' personal struggles. It also provides us an example of how the apostle sought to apply the ethic of Jesus to the matter of divorce and remarriage as it affected the lives of the people of the church at Corinth. If Paul had viewed Jesus' teaching on divorce as law, surely he could have and would have reminded the believers as he wrote to them. He easily could have told them, "No divorce ever." And, "No remarriage ever." Instead, he encouraged them, in a variety of circumstances, to try to stay together if at all possible. Then, noting that there are some cases where God's people will have to accept less than God's ideal, he states a general

principal (v. 15), "God has called us to live in peace."

Based on the redemptive ethic of Jesus, the fact that forgiven means forgiven, and that God has called us to live in peace, not turmoil, abuse, loneliness, or misery, we remarry previously divorced persons in our fellowship. As any other prospective bride and groom they are required to counsel with the pastor before the service is set and during this time all pertinent matters are discussed as the couple prepare to commit themselves to each other in bonds of matrimony. Marriage is no less serious the second time around. To the contrary, for the Christian, it becomes all the more important to do one's best by God's grace to fulfill the vows of commitment.

In our ministry, we seek to provide the opportunity for new beginnings, for the power and healing of the gospel to cleanse and renew. Remarriage offers that opportunity to those prepared before God to begin again and make the type of commitment required to honor him and bless another. "Amazing Grace" is still the theme song of the Baptists at Second, Little Rock.

Billy White is pastor of Second Church, Little Rock.

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## 1992 BSU Summer Missionaries

---

*'... I have set before thee an open door, and no man can sbut it...'*

*Revelation 3:7*

---

**Home Mission Board— (not pictured)** Emily Hopkins, Kara Dickenson, Julie Lawrence, Lesley Poteet, Kim Williams, Angle Goacher, Missy Duncan, Shannon Pinkston, Christeen Melnts, J. Renae Butler, Scott Link, Brian Kirby, Wesley Johnson, Terrell Baker, Dean Mattix, Jason Buscbien

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**New Orleans, La.—(front row)** Terry Leach, Amber Vaden, Richard May, Partick Block, Jamie Harmon; **(second row)** Steve Nail, Sara Ramsey, Charlene Keck, Trevia Mansell, Nikki McIntosh; **(third row)** Wendy Moore, Kelley Ross, Amy Moore; **(fourth row)** James Skinner, Derek Inmon, Brandon Dillingham



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**Resort Ministries, Arkansas**—(front row) Kelley Risler, Paul Murby, Caroly Topping; (second row) Julie Snider, Sheila Glover, Heath Clower



**Children's Homes and Family Ministries**—(front row, left to right) Kent McCormick, Susan Hobby, Tara Smith, Loxi Jones, Kenny Sandefur; (second row) Charlee Grabam, Nathan McLean, Angel Turner, Dana Lovett, Donna Lillard



**Special projects**—(left to right) Jo Ann Goley, Mary Chadick, Stacy Standridge, Sarah Heard



**International**—Kim Chababtab (back); Leigh Anne Woodford, Darren Kilbury, Vladtmir Martinez



**Eureka Springs**—(left to right) Melissa Allen, Alyssa Cupp, Bill Gifford



**Sbare Team**—Shannon Sansing, Kristi Baber, Gillian Pate, Mait McClellan, Scott Martin, Brent Sorrels

## Arkansas Fellowship meets

by J. Everett Sneed  
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"It is probable that the best option for Southern Baptist churches is to do careful analysis of what has occurred in the Southern Baptist Convention," declared Grady Cothen, president emeritus of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board to the 279 individuals who attended the meeting of the Arkansas Fellowship of Concerned Baptists. "Pastors should

do this very carefully. We are not all beginning at the same place and we have different backgrounds, emotions, and opinions.

"Some are searching for ways to be Baptists without destroying all the things that Southern Baptists have done across the years," Dr. Cothen continued. These remarks were made at Second Church, Little Rock, on Friday evening, April 10.

Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, former executive director and treasurer of the SBC Woman's Missionary Union, was the second speaker to the fellowship.

Cothen began by saying that his father was a Baptist preacher and that he also had two brothers who were Baptist preachers. He said that his father believed that the Bible is completely the Word of God. But his father didn't know how the Bible was inspired. He said, "Neither do I after studying the subject with some of the leading scholars of the world."

Cothen asked the question, "What is a Southern Baptist?" The traditional answer has been that it is a member of a Southern Baptist church. He observed that Southern Baptists believe in a central group of theological truths, but so do many others.

Cothen observed that there is a wide variety of types of Southern Baptist churches. Among the types he listed were: authoritarian churches, formal churches, and spontaneous churches. This is an outgrowth of the various roots that formed Southern Baptists. He said, "Sometimes we have trouble discovering if we are Calvinistic or Armenian. Someday we are more of one and other days we are more of the other."

A second question asked by Cothen was, "When did the controversy begin?" He believes that it had its inception about the



Grady Cothen and Carolyn Crumpler

time of the convention at Houston in 1979. It was during this convention that the Bold Mission Thrust, an effort to preach the gospel in every country, had its inception. He said, "I began to hear, 'We must save the Southern Baptists from the liberals!'"

A year or two later Cothen recalls that he learned that the method to rid the convention of the liberals was to elect a president, who in turn would appoint a nominating committee who would place only "conservatives" on the Committee on Committees.

Cothen raised the question, "Who are these people?" He indicated that these people do not like to be called "fundamentalists." Many of them are not. Cothen said, "A true fundamentalist is filled with negativism, is legalistic, authoritarian, and overtly political."

A fourth question asked by Cothen was, "How did the controversy get started?" In response he said, "The Judge" issued a 50 page paper filled with quotations. In the paper a liberal was equated with one who didn't believe that Moses wrote about his own death.

A second portion of the paper dealt with 15 problems within the Sunday School Board. "Fourteen of these," Cothen said, "had been dealt with or were being dealt with. This left only one of the supposed problems that had not been dealt with."

Cothen indicated that adherence to the "movement" maintained that everyone must believe that the Bible is "inerrant," "inerrancy," Cothen said, "is the belief that the biblical autographs are without error. But, we do not have any of these basic documents. We are talking about a question that we cannot settle."

Cothen believes that the attack has been made on our basic Baptist distinctives.

Among these he listed: freedom of expression (the priesthood of the believer), the nature of the church (the equality of all believers) and denominational policy (the SBC has no authority over any church or any person).

Cothen also stated there had been an attack on many of the denominational leaders. Several of these have been forced from office because of the work of this organization. He said, "The latest casualty is my dear friend Keith Parks."

Cothen believes that creedalism is now becoming the order of the day. He said, "We, as Southern Baptists, have always said that we had no creed other than the Bible. The four statements made by the Peace Committee must now be accepted by all employees or they are in danger of being terminated."

Cothen mentioned several other problems he believes are developing. Among these is a Puritan approach to religious liberty. The Puritans believed in religious toleration, not religious freedom. Other problems include: fragmentation on missions, the development of new seminaries, the closing of theological schools around the world, and the persecution and angering of people who are forming new groups.

In conclusion Cothen asked the question, "What are our options?" The first option is to allow things to continue with the status quo. Second, churches can enter into careful critical analysis of the current situation. He cautioned that this should be done "very carefully."

Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler talked about the developmental steps in Southern Baptist life that led to our present missionary structure. She also talked about the elements in her own life that caused her to become committed to missions at home and abroad. She said, "I made my full commitment to enter into full-time Christian service of missionary work when I was 16 and heard Dr. M. Theron Rankin speak."

Crumpler said she became involved in state level WMU work immediately after her seminary graduation. Later, she became the executive director-treasurer of the SBC WMU.

She reported that today we have foreign missionaries in 121 countries and in all of our 50 states. In total, we have more than 8,000 missionaries. She said, "I am excited about the things that are happening in missions. I was excited in 1979 in Houston when the Bold Mission Thrust effort was begun."

Crumpler asked, "What would you do if you had been the Devil?" In response she said, "I would have started the controversy exactly as it has unfolded in Southern Baptist life in the last few years."

The tragedy of the controversy is the

lost opportunities we have today. The doors are opening in Europe and Russia. In China the doors are not really open, but Christian lay people can go there today to carry the message. The cities of the world are now open to the gospel.

"Due to the controversy," Crumpler said, "we are closing doors." She listed a number of ways in which doors are being closed: The forced retirement of Keith Parks, the new philosophy of the Foreign Mission Board that has developed, which is producing controversy on every hand.

Crumpler said that recently while in Russia the people were saying to her, "Will you send us some real Southern Baptists? We are not going to let anyone, including the Foreign Mission Board, tell us what to do."

Crumpler said problems are developing all over the world and in numerous countries, problems are emerging with the new philosophy of the Foreign Mission Board. In our own country the strategy of the Home Mission Board also is changing. In some instances this is causing some of the best missionaries to have difficulties.

Crumpler said that some were now trying to make the WMU an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention. She said, "This cannot happen because we have our own charter and our own structure. But, we can give ourselves away if this is what is necessary."

Crumpler ended her address by referring to a children's story in which the roots of a tree were removed from the soil and the limbs were stuck in the hole. Crumpler asked the question, "Can we continue our work when the roots are not in the proper place?" She said, "Dr. Frank Staggs was one of my mentors. He said, 'the Lord got along without Southern Baptists for 1800 years,' but many of us want to be a part of God's world mission program."

The moderator for the meeting was Emil Williams, pastor of First Church of Jonesboro, who commented, "There is no intention on the part of any Arkansas Baptist pastor or church to divert funds from the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, as far as I know." This statement was greeted with applause.

The meeting was concluded with a question and answer period with both Cothen and Crumpler responding.

## Correction

The April 9, 1992, edition of the *Arkansas Baptist* should have reported that Don Travis, who retired in 1991 as pastor of Lawson Church, is now serving as pastor of Ebenezer Church in El Dorado.



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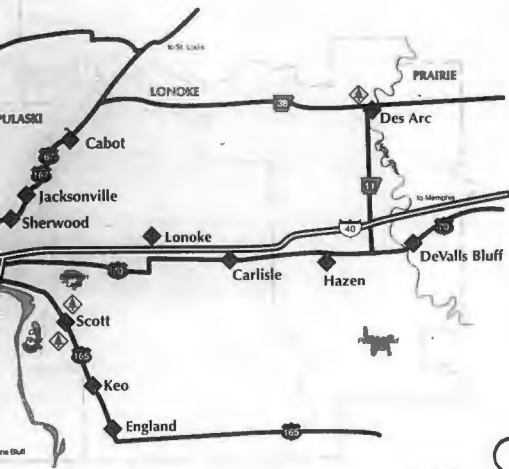
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## Arkansas All Over

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## People

**James B. Busby** of Forrest City, who had pastored Colt Church from 1975-83 and has pastored Michigan churches, died March 26 at age 76. Survivors include his wife, Oleta Brown Busby; two sons, James David Busby of Alma, and William Mark Busby of Memphis, Tenn.; two daughters, Janie Rebecca Weatherwax of Grenada, Miss., and Deborah Oleta Busby of Forrest City; two brothers; three sisters; and 10 grandchildren.

**James Rogers**, a chaplain at the University of Arkansas Medical Center in Little Rock, has been called as pastor of Bradley Church.

**Lynn Worthen** resigned April 12 as pastor of First Church in Arkadelphia to serve as pastor of First Church in Springfield, Mo.

**Freddie Jolley**, assistant professor of office administration at Ouachita Baptist University, has been elected to serve a two-year term as vice president of the Arkansas Business Education Association.

**Larry Brewer** is serving as pastor of Perry Church.

**Fred Oakes** is serving as pastor of Harmony Church, Perryville.

**Pete Cragar** is serving as interim pastor of First Church, Casa.

**Bob Stagg**, the J.C. and Mae F. Fuller professor of Bible at Ouachita Baptist University, has been elected vice president of the National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, Southwestern Region for the 1992-93 academic year. He will become president of the organization the following year.

**Doug Noland** has joined the staff of First Church of Crossett as minister of education and outreach. He is formerly of Atmore, Ala. Noland his wife, Penny, have a daughter, Janice.

**Sharon Kachelhofer** resigned April 12 as minister of education and youth at Lake Village Church.

**Huck VanSoyce** has joined the staff of First Church in Mena as interim youth director.

**Pete Ramsey** will join the staff of East Side Church in Fort Smith May 3 as minister of

administration and education, coming there from seven years of service at First Church in Kay, Texas. He and his wife, Ann, have three children, Rodney Ramsey of Fayetteville, Melissa Ramsey, a student at the University of Texas in Austin, and Penny Ramsey of Fayetteville.

**Dorothy Bicknell Lipford** of Little Rock died April 5 at age 89. She was the widow of Herman L. Lipford, a Southern Baptist minister. Survivors are a daughter, Mina Lynn Lipford Apple of Bryant; two grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

**Roy Buckelew**, a professor at Ouachita Baptist University, is serving as interim pastor of Beech Street First Church of Texarkana.

**Mike Marshall** and **April Shields** will serve as summer youth interns at First Church of El Dorado. Marshall is a sophomore at Ouachita Baptist University and Shields is an OBU freshman.

**Bob Richardson** is serving as pastor of Midway Church, White River Association.

**Michael Sby** is serving as pastor of East Side Church of Mountain Home.

**Jim Murray** has joined the staff of Woodlawn Church in Little Rock as music director, coming from Geyer Springs First Church of Little Rock.

**Steve Dooly**, a student at Ouachita Baptist University, is serving as youth director for Woodlawn Church in Little Rock.

**Hunter Douglas** has joined the staff of Woodlawn Church in Little Rock as director of religious education. Douglas is a local businessman and a former member of Immanuel Church of Little Rock.

**James W. Bryant**, who served as pastor of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith from 1983-1989 and as a first vice president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be inaugurated as the third president of Luther Rice Seminary May 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary of the Rehoboth Church of Atlanta, Ga.

**Ida Killion Duffin** of Little Rock died April 4 at age 86. Her funeral services were held April 6 in Immanuel Church of Little Rock where she was a member. She also was a member of the Baptist Hospital Auxiliary and was a hospital volunteer. Survivors are two daughters, Mrs. John F. Danner Jr. of Searcy, and Mrs. Leslie Wilfong of Little Rock; four grandchildren, John Mearl Danner of Dallas, Texas, James Paul

Danner of Fort Worth, Texas, Mark Richard Danner of Cleburne, Texas, and Rebecca Danner Remley of Birmingham, Ala.; and two great-grandchildren.

**Angus L. Emerson III** was granted the status of Certified Chaplain and Fellow of the College of Chaplains in March at their annual convention held in Indianapolis, Ind. The College of Chaplains is an almost 50 year old international, interfaith, certifying society of chaplains. Emerson, also endorsed by the SBC Home Mission Board, is a staff chaplain at the Arkansas Children's Hospital.

## Briefly

**Filipin First Church** was in revival March 22-25, experiencing the greatest revival in the history of the church with 95 professions of faith, 25 re-dedications and 53 baptisms. A March 29 service, in which there was a standing room only crowd, saw 42 people baptized. William Blackburn of Fort Smith was evangelist. Steve Martin is pastor.

**Calvary Mission**, sponsored by First Church of Rogers, will be constituted as a church, debt free, April 26 at 2 p.m.

**Russellville Second Church** will hold a Family Festival May 1-3 that will feature as speakers Gary Hawk from the BSSB Family Ministry Department and Lisa White of Second Church in Little Rock.

**Hermitage Church** recently licensed Jerry Hines to the gospel ministry.

**Monticello First Church** held a "Wonder-Full Week-End" April 3-5 led by Felix Snipes, magician evangelist from Atlanta, Ga. The event resulted in 45 professions of faith, 15 for counseling regarding assurance of their salvation, 70 for spiritual counseling, and 85 for commitment to personal witnessing.

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*Martindale Church, Little Rock, held a dedication for their new educational facility April 12. The old building burned in July of 1989 and the insurance paid for the new building that was erected at a cost of \$120,000. The building houses the pre-school and children's departments and contains 6,000 square feet. It has 10 Sunday School rooms, a choir room, four restrooms, a pastor's office, and a secretary's office. The two-story facility is carpeted throughout and has central heat and air conditioning. In addition to the new construction, a 20-car paved parking lot was dedicated. Siding also was placed on the fellowship hall and additional drains were installed. Pulaski Association Director of Missions Glenn Hickey was the dedicatory speaker. Scott Johnson is pastor. The dedicatory was followed by an open-house.*



*South Main Church in Crossett recently dedicated an all purpose building which houses a combination fellowship hall and worship center with Sunday school classrooms. Nailbenders for Jesus and others provided volunteer labor for the project; total building value is \$150,000. Jimmie Lewis is pastor. Ashley Country Association Director of Missions Billy O. Kite was dedicatory speaker.*

## Looking Ahead April

- 24-25 RA Congress, Ouachita Baptist University (Bbd)
- 25 Hispanic Evangelism Conference, (Mn)
- 26 Life Commitment Sunday (SBC)
- 26 National and SBC Fellowship, Cullendale First Church (NB)
- 27-28 Key Leader Meeting, North Little Rock Park Hill Church (Ad)

## May

- 1-2 Pastor/Deacon State Conference, Camp Paron (CLS)
- 2 Youth Music Festival, Benton First Church (M)
- 3 Associational Hymn Sings (M)
- 3 Senior Adult Day (SBC)
- 3-10 Christian Home Week (SBC)
- 3-17 Hope for the Home Emphasis (DT)
- 4-5 Chaplaincy Awareness Conference, Subiaco Retreat House (Mn)
- 5 State New Work Task Force Meeting, Baptist Building, Little Rock (Ad)
- 7 Master Singers/Singing Women Concert, Jonesboro Central Church
- 7 National Day of Prayer (SBC)
- 8-9 Resort Workers Workshop, Camp Paron (Mn)
- 8-9 Pastor and Wife Prayer Retreat, Baptist Medical Center, Little Rock (Bbd)
- 9 Ouachita Baptist University Commencement, Arkadelphia (OBU)
- 10 Children's Home Offering (CHFM)
- 10 Give and Grow Sunday (SA)
- 14-17 Campers on Mission Rally (Mn)
- 15-17 Arkansas Baptist Conference for the Deaf (Mn)
- 18-19 Church Planting Conference, Camp Paron (Mn)
- 18-20 State Senior Adult Convention, Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock (DT)

*Abbreviations: Ad - Administration; Bbd - Brotherhood; CL - Church Leadership; CHFM - Children's Homes and Family Ministries; DT - Discipleship Training; Ev - Evangelism; M - Music; Mn - Missions; NB - National Baptists; SS - Sunday School; SA - Stewardship/Annuity; Stu - Student; WMU - Woman's Missionary Union*



## April proclaimed Arkansas Alcohol Awareness Month

State Drug Director Robert Shepherd and Joe Hill, director, Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, on March 31 joined a national effort chaired by Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service, Antonia C. Novello, M.D. to draw attention to alcohol, the greatest threat to the nation's youth. Shepherd and Hill proclaimed that April is Alcohol Awareness Month in Arkansas and inaugurated the "Let's Draw The Line" campaign, which is being led by the Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention.

Larry Page, executive director of the Arkansas Christian Civic Foundation, called the national alcohol and drug prevention effort to the attention of Lt. Governor Jim Guy Tucker. Page said, "I am exceedingly pleased that Arkansas is joining this effort. We need to do everything possible to stop the destructive forces produced by alcohol and other drugs."

Alcohol continues to be a serious problem in Arkansas. A recent survey of

some 79 schools, covering 4,097 students indicates that 2,737 had had at least one drink of alcohol in their lives. The survey indicates that during the immediate 30 day period, 53 students had five or more drinks in a couple of hours on 20 or more days.

The Arkansas Association of Substance Abuse Treatment Programs, the Arkansas Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors, the Arkansas Substance Abuse Certification Board, the local Alcoholics Anonymous community, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Arkansans for Drug Free Youth, and many other grassroots organizations are joining together to ensure that the public is aware of the dangers of alcohol.

Antonia C. Novello, M. D., Surgeon General, U. S. Public Health Service, serves as honorary chairperson for Alcohol Awareness Month, which is being observed in April by communities throughout the United States. A grassroots event with national leadership, it offers organizations with different missions an opportunity to work together to raise awareness about underage drinking, alcohol-related injury and many other issues associated with the country's number-one drug problem.

## OBU takes over Ozark Institute

Ben M. Elrod, president of Ouachita Baptist University, announced recently that the university has taken over management and

operation of the Arkansas Institute of Technology in Fayetteville. The branch is called Ouachita Baptist University Ozark Institute, and is directed by William H. Cook, vice president of Ouachita.

Cook, who has served as vice president for development at OBU since 1989, will move to Fayetteville to oversee daily operation of the institute. Founded by University Baptist Church, the institute includes the 12,000-volume J. Sidlow Baxter Library.

For further information, contact William H. Cook, OBU Ozark Institute, 505 West Maple, Fayetteville, AR 72701; telephone 582-2301.



Cook

## Geyer Springs' second location

The Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock, dedicated a second location for its congregation March 1. The two locations are referred to as the Main Location at 57th Street and Geyer Springs Road and the New Location at I-30. As far as is known this is the only Arkansas church that has one church with two locations.

The new facility was erected at a cost of \$2 million and has 42,000 square feet. It is a two-story building that has a worship area designed to seat a maximum of 800 people. The multi-purpose worship facility can be broken down into eight large rooms and is designed for fellowship, as well as worship. The educational space contains 27 large Sunday School rooms that also can be broken into numerous smaller rooms. The first floor not only houses the worship area, but also has the senior adult department and pre-school area. The pre-school area is state of the art with a security entrance where children are dropped off. The building has central heat and air throughout.

The church staff serves both locations. The schedule is as follows: 8:15 a.m.



Present for the dedication were: (left to right) ABSC Executive Director Don Moore, Pastor Paul Sanders, and ABSC President William "Buddy" Sutton.

Worship at Main Location; 9:30 a.m. Worship at the I-30 Location; and 11 a.m. worship at the Main Location. The Sunday evening and Wednesday evening services are all held at the Main Location. Additional services will be conducted in the future at the I-30 location.

The leadership for the I-30 location was selected from the Main location with

160 volunteers serving as Sunday School leaders.

The congregation has enrolled 211 new Sunday School members at the I-30 location. The majority of the people which are attending at the I-30 location are visitors and unchurched people.

Paul Sanders is pastor of Geyer Springs First Church.

## Judsonia wins HSBYM tournament

High School Baptist Young Men from 21 churches participated in the State High School Baptist Young Men's Basketball Tournament/Congress in the gyms of North Little Rock Park Hill Church and Calvary and Immanuel churches in Little Rock.

More than 150 participated in the breakfast where UALR Coach Jim Platt was the featured speaker. The tournament was won by Judsonia First Church with Danny Wood as coach.

An all-star team was chosen that will be led by Bobby Shows to do sports evangelism with missionary Bill Cashion in Venezuela. They will function as preparation teams for church planting efforts. Team members are: Neely Robertson, North Little Rock Park Hill Church; Justin Denton and Jason Brown, Russellville First Church; Damon McKenzie, North Little Rock Central Church; Jason Hunter, Pincy Church; Jeremy Couch, Lepanto First Church; Bryan Smith and Nathan Adams, West Memphis



ABSC Brotherhood Director Glendon Groder and the winning team from Judsonia First Church.

First Church; Michael McClanahan, Little Rock Immanuel Church; and Casey Jones, Judsonia First Church.

Interestingly, Casey became a Christian

after participating in the High School Baptist Young Men tournament two years ago and will now go to share his testimony with the other boys overseas.

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## 'I read, studied, and prayed'

### 11-year-old RA begins Bible study club in school

by Julie Wilkerson  
SBC Brotherhood Commission

HOPE, Ark. (BP)—Daniel Bramlett believes in putting his faith into action. Concerned with the pressures faced by his peers, the fifth grader at Beryl Henry Elementary School in Hope, Ark., made a presentation to the Hope School Board to form a Bible study club at his school.

Under federal equal access provisions, students are allowed to form groups before and after school on school property but they must go before the school board for approval. Daniel met with the Hope School Board March 16 to present a proposal and constitution for the club. The board voted unanimously to approve it.

Inspired by the "Meet Me at the Flagpole" concept used by the local high school, Daniel hopes the club will "minister to kids. . . . Some of them have problems at home," he said.

It's no surprise Daniel is concerned about others. His family has been active in Christian service for generations. His aunt, Debbie Moore, is a missionary in Liberia, and his great-grandfather, S.A. Whitlow, was a pastor and Baptist associational leader. Daniel, a member of the First Baptist Church and a Royal Ambassador for four years, has had firsthand experience in missions. Last summer, he worked at the migrant mission center his church sponsors.

"Daniel has already devoted his life to full-time Christian service — he knows the Lord has his hand on him and he (Daniel) allows God to use him," said Betty Moore, Daniel's grandmother. "He was so shy in kindergarten, there's no other way to explain it." She credits his mother, Beckie (Mrs. Carl) Bramlett, for having a positive Christian influence on him. "She works with Daniel on his devotionals at night," Moore said.

Club members will study the Bible under the direction of the club president who, along with the vice president and secretary, will be elected later this school year. Daniel will serve as interim president until the election.

Besides Bible study, the club also will sponsor school service projects such as picking up litter and organizing parties to celebrate teachers' birthdays.

Billy Capps, an area dentist, will help club members who need to talk about their concerns. And, as with all school functions, a faculty member must attend although, according to Daniel, this staff person will not be a club participant.

The club has not met yet but Daniel has gotten the word out by telling kids face-to-face. "I have about 20-25 prospects who have been contacted by word of mouth," he said.

There will be no dues for membership. The group, which is non-denominational,

is open to anyone. Meetings will be twice a month at a time determined by group members.

Daniel offered advice to anyone who wants to start a similar group. Be prepared, he said, to prepare thoroughly and follow all requirements when dealing with a school board. Daniel also was ready with a proposal and constitution from a sample he found in a book. To further prepare for his encounter with the board, Daniel said, "I read, studied and prayed."

## Anita Bryant will be at the Baptist Book Store on Thursday, April 30

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- For seven years she was spokeswoman for Coca-Cola.
- For 11 years she was co-host for the Orange Bowl Parade.
- For seven years she appeared with Bob Hope's overseas Christmas shows for the U.S. military.

Then her world caved in. As a mother concerned about the education of her four children in Dade County, Florida, she led a referendum opposing legislation which would have required that homosexuals be hired as teachers in private religious schools. Anita's stand quickly became national news. She lost contracts, bookings, and finally her marriage of 20 years. She was caught between those who opposed her stand and those who condemned her for divorce.

*A New Day* is her painful, yet victorious, account of picking up the pieces and putting her life back together. It is a loving, straightforward story but more—a rich spiritual sourcebook for all who suffer alienation and misunderstanding.



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## 1,400 teens trained to share Christ

More than 1,400 Arkansas Baptist junior and senior high school students and youth leaders are better equipped to share their faith in Jesus Christ after attending one of five regional Youth Evangelism Training Days. One hundred seventy-five churches from 40 associations have participated in this training. The theme for this year's training was "One Heart At A Time."

The Youth Evangelism Training Rallies were coordinated by Randy Brantley, youth associate in the Evangelism Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, in cooperation with youth ministers in five regions of our state. The hosts for this year's training included Ronnie Brock, First Church, Greenwood; Tracy Watson, Immanuel Church, El Dorado; Dave Hughey, Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff; Johnny Burnett, First Church, Russellville; and Jim Wiseman, Central Church, Jonesboro. The training days began and ended with a high energy rally led by Mark Evans, Neal McClendon, Jim Agee, Brian Ford, and Eddie Walker. Sing alongs, multi-media presentations, and a Christian concert were followed by a challenging message to reach out to students "One Heart At A Time."

After the morning youth rally, students chose either a basic, advanced, or radical level seminar where they received practical training in personal evangelism. These seminars were taught by pastors and youth ministers from the region of each rally loca-

tion. Each church that brought students to the rallies received training in how to use a four-week follow-up strategy to expand on the training offered at the regional rally.

The One Heart At A Time Rallies have registered 20 professions of faith and more than 600 renewed commitments to become a personal witness. Students making a commitment to personal evangelism were given a powerband witnessing bracelet. The powerband is to serve as a daily reminder to share Christ.

The training has mobilized Arkansas Baptist teens to become more aggressive witnesses. One student from Green Forest Church in Berryville, went home from the training and lead a friend to the Lord and that friend joined the church and was baptized the next Sunday.

Plans are being made for a statewide "pizza party" evangelistic event for 1993. The idea of the "pizza party" will be for each local church to sponsor a pizza party at someone's house for the purpose of viewing an evangelistic TV special on the ACTS Network featuring Josh McDowell on March 6, 1993. Churches will be trained in how to equip their students to invite lost friends to a "pizza party," then view the special and afterwards share with lost friends one-on-one about how to invite Christ into their heart.—Randy Brantley, associate, ABSC Evangelism Department



**Builders erect center**—The Church in a Day builders helped erect the Crisis Pregnancy Center in Hot Springs on Feb. 29. More than 60 men participated in the project to build a new home for the center, which counsels women with unplanned pregnancies. The Church in a Day builders also erected a building for Greater Grace Baptist Church in Little Rock on April 18.

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## At odds over homosexual issue

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (BP)—Members of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's executive committee voted 9-8 against joining six officers of the convention and its general board in recommending the rejection of funds "from any church which knowingly takes, or has taken, any official action which manifests public approval, promotion or blessing of homosexuality."

The April 7 vote followed nearly two hours of discussion by the committee in a regular meeting at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem.

The discussion and the recommendation drafted by convention officers came in the wake of decisions by Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh and Binkley Memorial Baptist Church in Chapel Hill regarding homosexuals in their congregations. Pullen voted March 1 to bless the

"union" of two male homosexuals and Binkley voted April 5 to license a student at Duke Divinity School to the ministry. The marriage-like union service for two homosexual men was held March 15 at Pullen.

Six convention officers drafted a resolution in late March to be presented to the state convention's general board May 19 to

reject funds from churches taking actions such as Pullen's and Binkley's. The officers also recommended, "Any such church shall not therefore qualify as a 'cooperating church' as defined in Article IV, A, 3 of the Constitution of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina."

Five of the eight votes cast during the executive committee meeting in favor of the motion were by the officers who drafted the recommendation.

## More agencies drop exhibit plans

NASHVILLE (BP)—A total of seven out of eight Southern Baptist Convention agencies have changed their minds about sponsoring exhibits at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship annual meeting in Fort Worth, Texas, April 30-May 2.

Baptist Press learned the Radio and TV Commission, as of late April 1, decided to opt out of an exhibit at the Fellowship's Resource Fair at Fort Worth's Tarrant County Convention Center. However, the Annuity Board told Baptist Press late April 2 it has not changed its plans to have an exhibit and earlier Woman's Missionary Union, an auxiliary to the SBC, indicated it also would sponsor an exhibit.

In addition, a Southern Baptist Theological Seminary spokesman told Baptist Press late April 1 the seminary would not have a formal exhibit. Originally, four of the six SBC seminaries — Midwestern, New Orleans, Southern and Southwestern — had planned to use a joint display at the Fellowship meeting.

However, all have since decided against the exhibit but some will sponsor alumni meetings.

In addition to the seminaries, other SBC agencies deciding this week not to exhibit include: Sunday School Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and TV Commission.

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## Convention Uniform

*The cornerstone*

by Jim McDaniel, First Church, Brinkley

Basic passage: 1 Peter 2:1-10

Focal passage: 1 Peter 2:6

Central truth: We gain our identity from Jesus Christ.

In most buildings today, cornerstones are largely decorative. At one time they were carefully chosen and put into a building at great cost and great care. They were fundamental to the structure of a building. Once they were in place the rest of the building was determined.

Before calling us to Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone, Peter refers to him as a living stone. Stones are not featured as living. This metaphor indicating life and strength, i.e. immovable and unchangeable.

Most men reject Jesus. Their rejection extends from lightly esteeming him to hating him. To God he is chosen and precious.

Those who come to Christ become living stones themselves. We are to be fitly framed with other believers in a spiritual house. There isn't any freeloading for Christians. We find our place and purpose in the context of fellowship with other believers in God's church.

We become a holy priesthood. It is the privilege of the priesthood to enter the holy of holies. That is an awesome responsibility as well as privilege. The priest would be assigned a special time of entrance and would wear clothing dedicated to this one event. There he represented the people before God in prayer and service. In the same fashion, we as priests of God are to offer spiritual sacrifices, well pleasing to God, through Christ. Romans 12:1 says that our bodies are to be offered as living sacrifices of praise to God. Revelation 8:3 indicates we are to offer sacrifices of prayer to God. Romans 15:16 says we should minister the gospel for the conversion of the lost as a sacrifice unto God.

As we read further in Peter we learn in verse 6 that Christ is not only a living stone, he is the chief cornerstone. That is the stone that gives identity and meaning to the rest of the building.

"Where also it is contained in the scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded" (1 Peter 2:6).

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## Life and Work

*For the bad times*

by David Blase, First Church, Nashville

Basic passage: Revelation 1:9-10, 12-19

Focal passage: Revelation 1:9, 17-18

Central truth: We need to look to Jesus when times are bad.

Christians often have bad times. Jesus promised his followers that they would have tribulation (Jn. 16:33). The Apostle Paul said that all who live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution (2 Ti. 3:12).

The Apostle John had some bad times. He was faithful to the Lord and was arrested, convicted and exiled to Patmos. He was cut off from everyone and everything he held dear.

The bad times did not drive John away from Jesus. On the Lord's Day he was in the Spirit (v. 10) and worshipping Jesus.

Jesus came to John in the bad times. Revelation 1:12-16 is a glorious picture of Christ. He is seen as pure, powerful, all-knowing, compassionate, and in touch with all his churches. Jesus could take "time out" to come to the aid of one lone man out on a lonely island.

In bad times, Jesus always says, "Fear not!" He does not want us to be afraid. Paul said that fear was not of God (2 Ti. 1:7). The child of God must always look to Jesus and let the vision of Christ dispel every fear. Psalm 23:4 says, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." A little girl said, "Daddy, I am not afraid of the dark when you are here with me."

Many Christians are having bad times. Churches are having some bad times. Like John, multitudes are worried about tomorrow. Some believers are wringing their hands and are losing their witness to unbelievers (Ph. 1:28,29). Even though they know that worry is a sin, many seem powerless to do anything about it.

The Word of Jesus to his churches and to each individual is the simple command, "Fear not." He speaks through the Scripture and says, "You are my child, I know where you are and am there with you. I am strong and can take care of any problem you have."

The word that spells relief is Jesus. He takes care of us in life and in death (v. 18). Christians must stop looking to the world of drugs and vain philosophies and look to Christ (Hc. 12-2). When we have our risen Savior even the bad times are good.

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## Bible Book

*Building confidence*

by Dennis M. Dodson, First Church, Monticello

Basic passage: 2 Corinthians 4:1-2, 6-14; 5:6-10

Focal passage: 2 Corinthians 4:1-2, 6-14; 5:6-10

Central truth: Christians can have confidence in adversity.

Paul's critics and the many crises he experienced in his ministry gave him reason to lose heart and to give up. Yet he didn't! His confidence to continue on encourages and challenges every believer.

Paul gave his ministry, which was based on the mercy and the might of God, as reason for his confidence (1 Ti. 1:12-26). The demands of Paul's ministry in Asia were beyond his own strength and caused him to depend solely upon God (2 Co. 1:10-10). He learned that with God's call comes the power to do it.

As a messenger of the Word of God, which inherently has the power of God, Paul did not need to resort to deceit and distortion as his critics had charged. All he had to do was to deliver accurately the truth of the Word (2 Ti. 2:15). The success of his ministry was not dependent upon the adequacy of the messenger, but on the adequacy of the message.

Paul saw himself as an earthen vessel holding the treasure of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in Jesus Christ. The contents of the vessel, rather than the vessel itself, determine the consequences of its service (1 Co. 1:26-27).

Paul's deliverance through suffering, as well as the deliverance of the Corinthians from the bondage of sin, which gave witness to the power of God, gave Paul confidence. The frailties of the flesh can be assets and avenues to advance the cause of Christ. Suffering can be a matter of exaltation rather than endurance.

Because of the resurrection, the rigors of service are temporary while the rewards are permanent. The earthly life will be followed by a better life in the presence of the Lord. These certainties gave Paul confidence to endure the trials of life on earth. He walked by faith rather than sight. He lived according to the revelation, responsibilities, and rewards of the unseen realities which are in Jesus Christ. Heaven is not just a place of go. Like the heroes of the faith in Hebrews 11, it is a purpose for which to live.

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Lesson  
Date:  
May 10

# LESSONS FOR LIVING

## Convention Uniform

### Love covers

by Jim McDaniel, First Church, Brinkley

Basic passage: 1 Peter 3:13-18; 4:1-2,7-11

Focal passage: 1 Peter 4:7-8

Central truth: The ultimate aim of Christianity is to produce genuine love for God and man.

Peter writes in anticipation of the second coming of Jesus. There is an end! This world is not all there is. Heaven and earth shall pass away but his Word shall endure.

Towards that time Peter exhorts his readers to be of a sound mind, knowing what's going on. In 1 Thessalonians we are to study to be quiet and sober. Be watching. Peter learned this truth through bitter experience. He had been told to be watching in the Garden of Gethsemane the night of Jesus' arrest.

Then above all things, Peter exhorts them to have fervent love for one another. This love originates with and flows from God. The great business of life is to learn *agape* love. This is the ultimate goal of the universe and the sole reason for creation.

This love is especially to be expressed among Christians. Jesus said this is the way people will know that we are Christians. We can't love a lost world to Christ if we don't love our brothers in the Lord.

This love covers a multitude of sin. Hatred stirs up strife and enmity. In 1 Timothy 1:5, Paul indicates the ultimate aim of Christian ministry is to produce genuine love from a pure heart, a clear conscience and genuine faith.

Among the greatest sins in the body of Christ is dishonesty. It is more prevalent than lying, stealing, and drunkenness. It causes more people to be without the gospel. Jesus' prayer for his followers in John 17:11 was for unity.

The eyes of the universe are on the church. It is the goal of all creation. The church will not be free from tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword; but these do not separate us from the love of Christ. In the midst of them we are to be united in our love for Christ and his love for us.

Our ultimate weapon is the love of Christ. 1 Corinthians 8:1 declares that knowledge puffs up while love builds up. The primary issue is who is sharing the love of Christ with family, Christian brothers, and a lost world.

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## Life and Work

### When love is lost

by David Blase, First Church, Nashville

Basic passage: Revelation 2:1-7

Focal passage: Revelation 2:4-5,7

Central truth: Christians who fall out of love with Jesus are on dangerous ground.

The church at Ephesus was an active church. Jesus commended their work, their labor, their patience, and their concern for correct doctrine (v. 2,6). Like a good counselor, he praised them before he criticized them. We should learn from his example.

The glaring fault in the church was that they had left their first love (v. 4). Jesus remembered when they had a passionate love for him. Now, however, the flame was only a flicker.

Lovers can relate to this word of Christ. One preacher looked at this passage and exclaimed, "The honeymoon is over!" When married couples let the loving feeling die in their relationship, the nights get very long and very cold.

The Lord wants us to love him with "all our heart, soul, mind, and strength" (Mk. 12:30). He is a jealous God and wants our complete love and devotion (Ex. 20:3).

If we really love Jesus, we will obey him (Jn. 14:21). The last great commission he gave to his church is found in Matthew 28:19 and 20. It was to "Go, make disciples, baptize and teach." Had the Ephesians gotten so busy (v. 2,3) and so concerned about heretics (v. 2,6) that they had stopped witnessing? The first love of Jesus was to save the lost (Mt. 20:28). The first love of a disciple of Jesus should be the same. The first love of the Holy Spirit is to witness (Jn. 15:26) and when the Spirit comes into a person, they become witnesses (Ac. 1:8).

Many lovers have tried themselves to sleep wishing that the loving feeling would return in their partner's heart. Jesus longs for that same thing. He calls upon the church to remember, repent, and do the first works (v. 5). If they fail, he will take the candlestick away from them.

Many a marriage has continued long after that loving feeling has disappeared, but it's hard on everyone concerned. A church can continue long after the candlestick has been removed, but it will be a reproach to the Lord Jesus. Churches need to repent and do all they can to rekindle that wonderful first love.

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## Bible Book

### What makes me minister?

by Dennis M. Dodson, First Church, Monticello

Basic passage: 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2

Focal passage: 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2

Central truth: Comprehending the reasons for one's ministry is essential to its acceptance and one's dedication to it.

The motives for his ministry were a primary concern of Paul. Critics at Corinth had questioned his ministry and his motives for it. In our study passage, Paul directly addresses this issue and gives four motivations for his ministry.

(1) The comprehension of the fear of Christ (v. 11). A Christian's accountability at the judgment seat of Christ should cause him to have not only a reverence for God and a regard for his behavior, but also, a reason to "persuade men."

Paul wanted to persuade the Corinthians that his ministry was genuinely motivated to gain their acceptance of it, which was vital to the acceptance of his message, which was necessary for the salvation of sinners, which was Paul's mission for Christ.

(2) The companions of concern (v. 13). The twofold concern of Paul for the glory of God and the good of men underlie all of his conduct.

(3) The compassion of Christ (v. 14). Because of his conclusion about the extent and effect of Christ's death, the love of Christ controlled Paul and compelled him to serve others. Because Christ died for all to provide life under his lordship, Paul lived a life of submission to him and service to others.

(4) The commission of Christ (5:16-6:2). By his relationship to Christ one becomes a new person with a new perspective and a new purpose. All of this newness is due to the reconciliation which God brought about through Christ. Those who are reconciled to God have a different regard for Christ and those for whom he died. To, they receive from Christ the ministry and message of reconciliation (Jn. 20:21; Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16).

As Christians we work together with Christ to ensure that the grace of God will not be in vain (of no effect). If the ministers of reconciliation don't deliver the message of reconciliation to those who are estranged from God, the grace of God will not be effective (Ro. 10:13-15).

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## Committee named to replace Parks

### Californian Jackson elected trustee chairman

by Robert O'Brien & Donald D. Martin  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

CLEMSON, S.C. (BP)—Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees elected John Jackson trustee chairman and Joel Gregory chairman of a 15-member committee to find a successor for retiring President R. Keith Parks.

Parks, who said in March he would retire, made it official in an April 8 letter, setting Oct. 30 as his departure date and noting one of the reasons for retiring is his leadership has continued to cause division among trustees.

The previous evening Parks drew a standing ovation from about 11,000 people gathered at Littlejohn Coliseum at Clemson University April 7 for the appointment of 38 new foreign missionaries. After Parks gave a challenge to the missionaries and issued an invitation to the audience, 199 people made spiritual decisions, including 77 who committed to various types of foreign mission service.

The appointments bring the total foreign mission force to 3,955 missionaries assigned to 125 countries. Outgoing trustee chairman Bill Hancock told the crowd the board had achieved the 125-country figure eight years ahead of the 2000 A.D. target date in the Southern Baptist Convention's Bold Mission Thrust effort to proclaim the gospel to the whole world.

Jackson, a pastor from Fairfield, Calif., won the trustee chairmanship by a vote of 48-35 over John P. Greene, a business corporation president from West Palm Beach, Fla. Jackson was nominated by trustee Paige Patterson of Dallas and Greene by trustee Hoyt Savage of Las Vegas, Nev. Jackson previously was first vice chairman and is former state president of California Southern Baptists.

Other officers elected for one-year terms by similar vote margins were Bonnie Westbrook, physician from Beaumont, Texas, first vice chairman, and Mike Goodwin, pastor from Festus, Mo., second vice chairman. Karen Gilbert, a pastor's wife from Hampton, Va., was reelected without opposition as recording secretary.

Jackson, who will preside over his first trustee meeting in June, said he will be an ex-officio member of the search committee, appointed by Hancock and chaired by Gregory, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas.

Besides Gregory, other members are Leon Hyatt, vice chairman, from Pineville, La.; Bob Oxford of Lakewood, Colo.; Phyllis Randall of Blacksburg, Va.; Karol

Wise of Hartsburg, Pa.; John Simms of Salem, Va.; Bruce Romero of Ellicott, Md.; Terry Williams of Batesville, Miss.; Ted Moody of Warner Robins, Ga.; Reed Lynn of Shawnee, Okla.; Carol Gilbreath of Florence, Ala.; Terry Horton of Colleyville, Texas; Mike Goodwin; Hoyt Savage; and John Greene.

Jackson said he would encourage the committee to seek input from missionaries and Southern Baptists in general as they develop a profile and seek a candidate for a successor to Parks, a 38-year veteran of foreign missions who has been president since 1980.

Asked if it is essential to follow the past pattern of naming a person with missionary experience as president, Jackson said the trustees' opinion is divided. "About half the board feels it's mandatory to have missionary experience," he said. "Another large bloc is looking for the man and his ability to lead and his missions heart."

Asked if the committee would have a candidate by Oct. 30, Jackson said the search could take a year if the committee "does its work right." He said he feels trustees would be willing for Parks to serve until a successor is found but Parks said in an interview later he would stay no longer than Oct. 30.

Jackson also said Parks, who has expressed strong philosophical differences with trustees, will retain full authority until Oct. 30 "as far as I'm concerned."

The question of Parks' disagreements with trustees resurfaced both in his official letter of retirement and as a result of a motion from the floor which would have asked him to remain in his position until 1995. Last August Parks asked to remain until that date but changed his mind in a spiritual retreat March 19-20 with trustees to resolve the issue of his tenure.

Commenting on philosophical differences with trustees Parks has expressed, Jackson said: "We will never find anyone who is in full philosophical agreement with all trustees. You've got 88 different opinions. That will depend on the leader and how he can serve. I hope his resignation is not because of philosophical differences. He said it was because God had led him to do so."

In a matter related to the board's news policy, Greene, chairman of the communications committee, announced a seven-member subcommittee of trustees and staff to develop guidelines for handling press conferences and sensitive news

releases. The action stemmed from trustee criticism of news coverage.

The subcommittee, which will meet May 4-5 in Richmond, includes four trustees: Terry Williams of Mississippi as chairman, Bill Pace of Florida, Mike Smith of North Carolina and Greene. It also includes three FMB staff members: Alan Compton, vice president for communications; Irma Duke, associate vice president for communications support; and Bob Stanley, director of news and information and chief of the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.

## Classifieds

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**Now open**—Lake Nixon Lodge, located in Little Rock, is now open during summer months for weekday or weekend retreats/conferences. Call 225-6525. 5/21

**Needed**—Music and Youth Director. If interested send resume to Personnel Committee, Pickles Gap Baptist Church, #2 Pickles Gap Road, Conway, AR 72032. 4/23

**Let's Go!**—"To Russia with God's Love." Evangelist Charles Chatman is forming a crusade team of pastors and laypersons going to Moscow, St. Petersburg, and L'vov, June 15-26, 1992. The door is open, we must walk through it! Receive full detailed brochure. Charles Chatman Evangelistic Association, 5169 Longhorn Trail, St. Louis, MO 63033. 314-355-5444. 4/23

**Needed**—Regular part-time minister director. Send resume to Riverview Baptist Church, 10900 Crystal Hill Rd., Maumelle 72113. 4/23

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## WORLD

### ROMANIA

## Inerrancy requirement proposed

by Mike Creswell & Stanely Crabb  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

**BUCHAREST, Romania (BP)**—A proposal to require teachers to accept the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy or be fired has been rejected by the president and a majority of the faculty of the Baptist Theological Institute in Bucharest, Romania.

The proposal, presented by Romanian pastor Josef Ton, asks the Romanian Baptist Union's general council to require professors teaching at both the Bucharest institute and the Baptist Bible Institute in Oradea to agree with the inerrancy statement or be fired.

Ton heads the Oradea school, which is owned and operated by Second Baptist Church in Oradea, where he is pastor. He teaches at both schools and is chairman of the union's committee on education. The Bucharest school is operated by the Romanian Baptist Union, but the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board owns the property.

Ton asked Vasile Taipos, president of the Baptist Theological Institute in Bucharest, to join him in signing the proposal. It is now circulating among Romanian Baptists bearing the typed names of both men.

But Taipos has refused to sign it. He and most of the seven faculty members at the Bucharest school have rejected Ton's proposal in principle although it has not been presented officially to the faculties of the two schools. At least one of seven teachers at the Oradea school — Otniel Bunaci — also has refused to sign.

The three Southern Baptist missionary teachers at the Bucharest school are Charles "T" Thomas, Bill Richardson and Gerald Milligan.

Thomas, who has resigned effective May 1 and will leave Romania in late April, said he would refuse to sign the statement. Instead, he signed the Romanian Baptist confession of faith and called it to his classroom door.

Richardson told Baptist Press the matter should be worked out among Romanians. "If it should be presented officially, I'll consider it at that time," he said.

Milligan told European Baptist Press Service, "I would really have to look at (it) and pray a long time before I would sign any creedal statement, especially the Chicago statement, which I haven't seen as yet."

In recent months Ton has criticized European Baptists and moderate Southern Baptists as liberals. He sent a letter to Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees congratulating them for defunding the Baptist

Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon, Switzerland, last fall. Thomas resigned in protest of the defunding.

Taipos told European Baptist Press Service he does not intend to back Ton's proposal because he and others who teach at the school believe the present Romanian Baptist confession of faith is adequate. He said any changes in that should be made only by Romanian Baptists in their next general congress in 1995.

But one Romanian Baptist leader familiar with the situation predicted Ton will persist in seeking approval for his proposal with the union's general council, which has some 50 members.

## Innoculations for 50,000

**CENTRAL ASIA, Commonwealth of Independent States (BP)**—After five days of delay in Moscow, innoculations for 50,000 children arrived in two Central Asian capitals.

A volunteer medical team led by John Anderson, a physician from Dallas, carried the innoculations into the former Soviet Union. Purchased by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, the Foreign Mission Board and Texas Baptist Men, the DPT, tuberculosis, oral polio and measles innoculations cost an estimated \$36,000.

The innoculations were part of the first phase of Project Brotherhood, a North American Baptist response to food and medical needs in the CIS. Initiated by the Baptist World Alliance, the Brotherhood Commission is coordinating the cooperative response.

The Moscow delays and domestic airline complications caused the team to split, with Anderson going to one city and the others to another. In each city, health officials took possession of the innoculations.

"Our plan was for the medical volunteers to do mass innoculations," said Jim Furgerson, Brotherhood Commission adult division director. "We communicated this to health officials along with information about how the shots would be administered."

"All correspondence with Central Asian health officials indicated their agreement with our goals," he added.

Instead of allowing volunteers to perform the innoculations, health officials distributed the innoculations to neighborhood clinics where staff nurses gave the innoculations.