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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Siloam Springs: almost ready for summer campers
see page 11



May 21, 1981
Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE

House committee to consider nonprofit postal subsidy

WASHINGTON (BP) — As the U.S. House of Representatives passed President Reagan's budget proposal requiring sharp spending cuts, the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee announced it will hold hearings to consider how it will make the cuts the budget requires.

One consideration is the administration proposal to eliminate a postal subsidy which allows nonprofit mailers such as Baptist state newspapers to move to full postage rates on a graduated basis.

A 16-year phasing process for these and other nonprofit publications was set up by Congress to soften the blow of its 1970 decision to require each class and subclass of mailer to pay its full cost.

The administration's recommendation to eliminate funding for the phasing would require nonprofit mailers to begin paying full rates this October instead of 1987.

The impact of the Reagan proposal, according to an April survey of Baptist editors, would be to double the postage bills of these papers, forcing them to produce extra income from their supporting conventions or agencies or through higher subscription rates or to reduce the number of issues they publish.

In the case of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, the current cost of second class mailing is more than \$105,000 annually and this would double to \$210,000.

ABN Editor J. Everett Sneed explained that, "If this plan is adopted, it will mean subscribers will have to pay higher rates, and most likely we will have to reduce the number of issues published each year."

A representative of religious nonprofit publication mailers was scheduled to

testify at the committee's first hearing, May 13. By June 15, the committee will be required to report its recommended cuts to the House Budget Committee.

Asked whether the phasing process might yet be saved, a committee aide replied, "The question is, how do you do it? What pocket do you take it out of?"

Though the budget passed by the House required the committee to slash \$5.5 billion from its programs, and the administration recommends that the phasing subsidy be part of that cut, the committee has the option of leaving the subsidy in place.

But even if the House committee were to decide to leave the so-called "revenue foregone" subsidy at the current funding level, it is likely that some cuts would result since the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee has already reported its recommendation that the phasing process be eliminated.

Letters to the editor

Messenger issue has 'other side'

In response to Dr. Sneed's editorial in the March 19 issue of the ABN, I would offer this comment on "the other side" relative to the change being proposed by the SBC Executive Committee concern-

ing messenger representation at the annual convention. Let me say that I appreciate Dr. Sneed's work as editor, and consider him a friend in the ministry. As one of the two current Arkansas representatives on the SBC Executive Committee, however, I believe there is another side on the matter of messenger representation which should be heard.

As Editor Sneed notes, the present plan of representation has been in effect since 1948 — for the past 33 years. Since the SBC was organized in 1845, these guidelines have obviously been reviewed and altered at other times in our history.

The present plan grants additional messengers (above the basic 1) for each 250 members, or for each \$250 paid to the work of the Convention during the previous year, up to a maximum of 10 messengers. Among the 37 churches of Harmony Association where I serve, this plan works out like this: Membership representation, 91 Messengers (only 1 church with 10); dollars representation, 286 Messengers (24 churches with 10).

The present membership plan obviously favors larger churches. The present dollars plan favors smaller churches. The SBC Executive Committee recommendation is an honest attempt to bring greater equity between the two options which we are now using.

Any dollar figure which was set 33 years ago obviously needs some review

because of run-away inflation, in order to mean the same thing in 1981 that it did in 1948. Furthermore, the dollar figure, as it now reads, is vulnerable to exploitation by any group which wants to grasp voting power. As it now stands, a messenger vote at the SBC can be "bought" for \$250.

The SBC Executive Committee brings its recommendation to the Convention in Los Angeles with a responsible sense of duty and conscience. Let the consideration of this recommendation be open and clear, and then in good Baptist fashion, let the messengers vote their decision. — John H. McClanahan, Pine Bluff

In this issue

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Little Rock Immanuel Church Pastor W. O. Vaught returned in March from a visit to China. He shares his impressions of that nation this week.

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The 1981 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, expected by some to be pivotal, is analyzed by Dan Martin, Baptist Press news editor.

Challenge to giving

In interest of missions, I have always wondered why all of the churches don't give at least 10 percent of their income to missions. Also, I challenge all church members who use tobacco in any form to give as much as their tobacco, cigars or cigarettes would cost weekly to the Annie Armstrong mission offering. — Darlene Brownell, Lead Hill

Korean college students traveled seven hours on a partially heated train, waited two hours in an unheated bus station and hiked 20 minutes up a snow covered mountain path for a three day retreat of prayer, worship and evangelistic training.

Southern Baptist missions in Middle America

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



Recently, I was privileged to join a tour in Middle America under the sponsorship of the Foreign Mission Board. The 10-day trip covered four countries and provided opportunity to observe a variety of mission work. Overall, our work is doing exceedingly well, in spite of the difficulties. We can be grateful for the excellent work that is being done by our missionaries.

We visited Panama, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico. Although there are many similarities in the four countries, we were impressed by the most striking differences. Each country, also, has a variety of different mission endeavors.

There are several problems that are common to each of our mission efforts. The greatest need in every country is for more people to effectively proclaim the Good News of God's redeeming grace. The need for evangelistic preachers includes both missionaries and nationals. The number one request of most missions is for more missionary preachers who will be involved in evangelism.

A second major need is for operating budgets (money for travel, equipment, supplies, etc.). In most, if not all, instances, adequate provisions has been made for the missionary's personal comfort. But in most of the missions we observed, the operating budgets are totally inadequate. The primary reason is inflation and, in some instances, the devaluation of the dollar.

Though inflation has taken its toll on most families here at home, it has cut much more deeply into the purchasing power of families in Middle America. In Mexico, for example, the inflation rate last year was more than 35 percent. In order to make it possible for our missionaries to live with reasonable comfort, the operating budgets have been diverted to missionary support. As the number of missionaries increase, more strain is placed on the operating budget of a given mission, unless operating funds are increased. The solution is for more families to follow God's plan of supporting his work through tithes and offerings.

In several countries around the world, our missionaries are in physical danger. The missionary's purpose is to con-

front people with the gospel while remaining completely clear of all political involvement.

The missionaries desire three kinds of prayer from Christians back home: First, they would like for us to pray for their physical safety. There are instances in which missionaries can not publicly comment on local current events, since this could be interpreted as political activity. The best way to know whether our missionaries are in physical danger is to keep up with the daily news. Any severe turbulence in a country could affect the well-being of our missionaries.

Second, pray for the work that our missionaries are performing. There are several sources of information concerning missionary activity. Among the best and most acceptable are *The Commission*, in Arkansas, the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, and reports given by our missionaries while on furlough.

Finally, pray that God will provide wisdom for developing the work in the countries where the missionaries are serving. And that they will be able to conduct themselves properly in turbulent times. Often, it is difficult to determine the greatest priority on the mission field. When there are so many needs, the question arises, "Which is the greatest?" It also may be difficult for our missionaries to know what to do in times of political unrest.

Middle America is an exciting area. The doors are wide open to the gospel. The kinds of work which are underway include both traditional and non-traditional approaches. There is great diversity in the living conditions of people — some are rich, but many are poor. By necessity, we have churches with dirt floors, or where people worship by Coleman lantern. There are large cities where radio and television are used to disseminate the gospel.

It is exciting, indeed, to see what God is doing through our missionaries and the national pastors and lay people. We should pray for our work around the world and rejoice because the Great Commission is being carried out.

Editor's note: In the next four issues of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* there will be stories on missionary work in Panama, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico.

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NUMBER 20

J. EVERETT SNEED, Ph.D. Editor

BETTY KENNEDY Managing Editor

ERWIN L. McDONALD, Litt. D. Editor Emeritus

Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double-space and must be signed. Letters must not contain more than 350 words and must not defame the character of persons.

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

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One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Glendon Grober and a modern tale of a whale

When Missionary Glendon Grober recently returned to his Alma Mater Ouachita to be honored with the doctor of divinity degree, it reminded me of a whale of a tale he once told. I heard it from Nilson Fanini, distinguished Brazilian pastor from Rio, at a national conference to discuss world mission strategy for Southern Baptists. Fanini used the story to illustrate the great diversity of problems faced in sharing the Christian Gospel.

It seems that Glendon Grober and a group of Brazilian Baptists were approaching a village on the Amazon River for the purpose of conducting a baptismal service. They discovered the can-

didates for baptism refused to be baptized in the river because there was some giant monster, such as a snake or dragon out in the river nearby. Grober jokingly said he would take a group of men in a boat and go slay the beast. As it turned out, there was a real live whale out in the river, that had wandered into the wide mouth of the Amazon River from the ocean. They proceeded to kill the whale and then tried to resume the baptismal service. By this time the river was discolored with blood from the whale and the baptismal candidates again refused to be baptized.

Pastor Fanini said he was asked by Missionary Grober to bring to the missions

conference the question, "What do you do when you have a whale in your baptism?"

Actually the story had a happy ending. Brother Fanini reported that the villagers were extremely happy about the conquest of the whale, because it is very valuable for meat and oil. This incident is hardly universal enough to provide the base for a new world mission strategy, but it is comforting to know that good can come out of adversity. The walk of faith continues to be an exciting one for new persons in Christ.

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



Woman's viewpoint

Minette Drumwright

Gifts-of-the-heart

Many years ago I was browsing in our church library when I found myself turning through the pages of a worn little book entitled, *Try Giving Yourself Away*. The impact of its simple contents has lingered with me all these years.

The author begins by describing the experience through which he accidentally discovered that there is great pleasure in giving oneself away — when it is done with no strings attached. Basking in the glow of that discovery, he decided to see how many different ways he could find to give himself away to the people who crossed his path. As a result, his days came alive with adventure and warmth. At first he considered the plan his, "hobby," but he received so much joy that it soon became a way of life.

The author's story brought to mind the familiar words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Rings and jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only gift is a portion of myself." A beautiful thought — but now I was being challenged to take that truth into the fabric of my being and live it out in practical everyday forms.

So I experimented. Sure enough, I did not even have to go out of my way. Opportunities for giving-away were all around me. I realized that almost any-

thing can be bought for money, except the warm impulses of the heart. They have to be given. And when they are given, they bring that inward glow to both the giver and the recipient.

The little book was right on target. We all have different things to give, and giving-away must be done in our own unique ways. Some of us have extra time; some have physical energy to give; some have a talent, or skill, or ideas, or imagination, or the ability to make others laugh, or the gift of organizing.

All of us can give appreciation, interest, loyalty, understanding, encouragement, kindness. A sincere compliment, credit for a job well done, a note, a telephone call — often giving-away can be done quickly and in the simplest of forms — just so that it comes from the heart and expects nothing in return.

Jesus taught and lived this truth in the most profound kind of way. He is the greatest Giver of all time — not only gifts-of-the-heart, but life itself. And his spirit is the source of those warm impulses that come to our minds and hearts. In these days of hurry and hassle and "Looking out for Number 1," how many opportunities we have to release Christ's spirit in the world by obeying

those impulses and giving daily gifts-of-the-heart to those around us: family, neighbors, friends, fellow workers and strangers.

It "makes my day" to receive a gift-of-the-heart. I want to be more alert to opportunities to "make your day" by giving you a portion of myself.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is most blessed to do both.

Minette Drumwright of Little Rock is a homemaker and author. She is the wife of Arkansas Baptists' Executive Secretary, Huber L. Drumwright, and is the mother of two daughters. She is a member of Immanuel Church in Little Rock.

Preacher answers Macedonian call

MONROVIA, Liberia — Walker Dennis, a young Liberian Baptist preacher, has answered a Macedonian call. As the first missionary of the Macedonia Baptist Association in Liberia, he will try to bring a church which has been closed for the last year back to life and will work with other churches in the area. The association and other supporters hope to buy him a motorcycle for traveling to the nine churches and preaching stations in the area.



Food and fellowship

Virginia Kirk and Jane Purtle



The Southern Accent

Old fashioned ice cream parlor

Youth money raising projects should produce three things: fun for the youth who participate, fellowship between youth and the church family, and money. Though the latter is important, the other elements should be considered when projects are being planned. A project that meets all these criteria is an old fashioned ice cream parlor.

Fellowship Hall can be made festive with card tables covered with checked tablecloths, posters, a counter with high stools, decorative menus and waiters and waitresses with colorful uniforms. A Saturday evening from 7 to 10 is a good choice of time. Most people will stay an hour or less, so there should be space and time to serve a hundred people or so.

Youth can plan entertainment such as group singing and variety acts (vocals, instrumentals, comedy acts, skits, mystery personalities). They will come up with many ideas when they brainstorm. They should be in charge of decorating, securing ice cream and toppings, serving, entertaining and clean up.

What should the menu include? We recommend homemade ice cream. Several families in the church will be willing to prepare a freezer at home and bring it, or the youth can borrow freezers and prepare it at the church. The first plan is best, especially if the group is small. Dishes of plain ice cream will be popular, as will ice cream cones. Sundaes and banana splits are old standbys. The youth may design more exotic treats for daring souls. It will be a fun evening for all.

This chocolate recipe appeared in an earlier column, but we are including it again because it's a universal favorite. The other is unusual and delicious.

Chocolate ice cream

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 6 rennet tablets | 1 1/2 quarts homogenized milk |
| 1/4 cup cold water | 3 cups heavy cream |
| 2 2/3 cups sugar | 1 tablespoon vanilla |
| 2/3 cup cocoa | |

Blend sugar and cocoa. Add liquid slowly, making a smooth paste. Dissolve rennet tablets in cold water. Heat other ingredients until lukewarm. Stir in rennet tablets and quickly pour into a gallon freezer. Let set for 10 minutes. Cool mixture by putting in refrigerator or pack freezer can in ice and allow to set about 30 minutes. This step assures smooth ice cream. Freeze.

Tropical ice cream

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Juice of 3 lemons | 3 cups sugar |
| Juice of 3 oranges | 3 cups whipping cream |
| 3 bananas, mashed | 3 cups milk |

Mix all ingredients. Pour into gallon freezer and freeze.

Virginia Kirk, professor emeritus at Arkansas College, is a member of Batesville First Church. Jane Purtle is on the staff of Christian Counseling and Teaching Center in Syria, Va. They have enjoyed cooking together for several years.

This I believe: about salvation by grace

by Earl R. Humble

Salvation is brought about in the believer's life by the working of divine grace. Grace is the unmerited favor of God, bestowed upon repentant and believing sinners. With this experience sinners become saints.



Salvation is from Humble
sin — The act of repudiating sin in one's life is called in the Bible repentance. Two ideas are seen in the word: a change of mind and a change of direction of the life. For those who refuse or neglect to repent, there is no salvation (Luke 13:3). Jesus said the people of Nineveh repented (Matt. 12:41), and Jonah 3:10 says they turned from sin. Repentance is toward God (Acts 20:21). As one turns from sin he is turning toward God.

Salvation is by and in Christ — Faith in Christ means accepting his finished work for our sins and trusting our souls into his hands. Both repentance and faith are continuous actions rather than one-time, point action events. Salvation is a past event in that we have been delivered from sin's penalty. It is a present process in that we are being continuously delivered from sin's power. It is a future event in that we will be finally delivered from the very presence of sin (Phil. 3:21).

Salvation is for service — We are saved to serve, but service must never be understood as in any sense paying for our salvation. The ultimate purpose in salvation is that we be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29). Since God does not take us to heaven at once when we are saved, we believe we are left here to grow and to serve (Eph. 2:10). "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

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

Mission Service Corps is cooperating with summer missions. A volunteer precedes the summer missionary to the mission field. After the summer, the volunteer remains to do follow-up work.

News about missionaries

Mr. and Mrs. H. Doyme Robertson, missionaries to Peru, have completed language study and arrived on the field to begin their first term of service (address: Apartado 810, Trujillo, Peru). Born in Manila, Ark., he also lived in Melbourne, Harrison and Jonesboro, Ark., and Hickman, Ky., while growing up. The former Martha Mathis of Mississippi, she was born in Hattiesburg and grew up in Boaz. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1979.

Mr. and Mrs. Dennis G. Folds, missionaries to Japan, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service (address: Uehara Plaza 3C, 2-19-18 Uehara, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151, Japan). A native of Louisiana, he was born in Winnsboro and grew up in Lawtell. The former Judith Synco, she was born in Crossett, Ark., but also lived in Hot Springs, Ark., and Minden, La., while growing up. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1980.

by Millie Gill/ABN staff writer

Ben A. Nettles

has accepted the call to serve as pastor of the Swifton First Church. He has served churches in the Jonesboro and Beebe areas. Nettles is married to the former Teresa Belew. They have one son, Jonathan.

Steve Hoffman

is now pastor of the Ft. Smith Spradling Church, coming



Nettles

there from Memphis, Tenn. He and his wife, Sheila, have two daughters, Kristen and Keli.

Les Aldridge

has resigned as pastor of the Little Rock Cross Road Church.

Elvis Smith

is now pastor of the New Haven Church in Pulaski County Association.

Bob Williamson

has resigned as minister of music at Pine Bluff South Side Church to join the staff of First Church of Galveston, Texas.

Tommy Hagle

begin May 17 his seventh year as pastor

of Nashville Ridgeway Church when the church presented him with monetary gifts and letters of appreciation.

Pete Ramsey

began his fourth year May 1 as minister of education to the Fayetteville First Church.

Robert T. Marsden

died in Little Rock May 2 at age 77. A member of Little Rock First Church since 1929, he was a leader in that church and throughout Arkansas in work with the deaf. Survivors include his wife, Betty Marsden.

briefly

Blevins Marlbrook Church

ordained Norris Bristow as a deacon April 26.

Batesville Calvary Church

celebrated Victory Sunday May 3, receiving gifts of \$8,000. These gifts were added to the \$97,000 bringing the total goal to \$107,790 to be used in financing the construction of a fellowship hall. Pastor Glen Hickey reported that the principal on the building loan is paid and all that remains to be paid is the accrued interest.

Springdale Emdale Church

celebrated its 20th anniversary with a series of services April 1-5. Speakers included Pastor Larry R. Lashley, and Weldon I. Barnett, Paul M. Wheelus, W. R. (Bud) Edwards, and Burton A. Miley, all former pastors. The church, first organized as a mission of Springdale First Church in the autumn of 1958, is now finalizing plans toward the construction of a multi-purpose educational-fellowship-recreation building. This will be the fourth building program undertaken by the church in its 20-year history.

Crossett First Church

was in revival April 26-30 with Lloyd Bardowell as evangelist and Dick Day, music director. There were 15 professions of faith with 12 baptisms and seven additions by transfer of letter.

Mountain Pine First Church

was in revival April 26-May 3 with Aubrey Halseil as evangelist and Herbert "Red" Johnson as music director. Phillip Graves is pastor.

North Little Rock Amboy Church

celebrated its 30th anniversary May 10. Current Pastor Garland Brackett and Arnold Teel, pastor of the church for 28 years, were speakers. Charter members Robert Hall and Lanelle Hall Pack di-

rected music. The church was organized on Mother's Day of 1951, with 104 charter members. It had been sponsored as a mission church by North Little Rock Baring Cross Church. The church, now with an enrollment of 645 members, lists among its accomplishments the sponsoring of two churches, North Little Rock Indianhead Lakes Church and Daisy Lakeside Church.

Bryant Indian Springs Church

is in revival May 20-24 with Rick Caldwell of Glenview Church in Ft. Worth, Texas, as evangelist. Bud Fleming, church music

director, is leading music. Ray Branscum is pastor.

Caroline Association

Woman's Missionary Union met April 21 at Carlisle Immanuel Church with Lehman Fowler as guest speaker. Fowler, a member of Brinkley First Church, serves as a volunteer in agricultural mission efforts. Carolyn Smith, a member of Ward First Church, was elected to serve as association WMU director. Others on the program were Carol and Cheryl Mobbs, Carolyn Byrum, and W. T. Byrum, director of missions.

See all youth
June 19-20
at
Camp Paron

Campfire
Recreation
Missionaries
Swimming & Music



YOUTH MISSIONS RETREAT

Sponsored by Brotherhood and WMU

El Dorado First Church broke ground May 3 for a \$1.55 million Christian Life center which is scheduled for completion in May of 1982. The complex will be located on 2.19 acres of land and will contain a gym, game rooms, craft room, exercise room, and physical

fitness room, as well as fellowship hall, kitchen and stage area, located on several levels. Areas for preschool education for the church program and daycare also will be part of the building which connects to the present education building. Using the "Together We Grow"

campaign, the church, led by Pastor Don Harbuck, already has pledged the \$1.55 million dollar cost of the 31,000 square foot building. Thirteen contractors will be needed for the construction. John Williamson serves as chairman of the building committee.

Arkansas and Indiana leadership work on plans for a link-up of Arkansas churches and associations with Indiana churches and associations. Left to right: C. E. Wiley, director of missions for Indiana; Conway Sawyers, director of missions for Arkansas; Pete Petty, director of special ministries for Arkansas.



Arkansans begin link-up with Indiana churches

C. E. Wiley, director of missions for Indiana, came to Little Rock on May 4, to meet with Conway Sawyers and the Arkansas Missions Department staff to further develop plans for the Arkansas-Indiana link-up.

The plan is simple. Arkansas churches and associations will link up with churches and associations in Indiana to provide sponsorship and assistance. Churches within Arkansas associations will assist in developing new congregations in Indiana.

It was observed that some link-ups are already underway. Some associations and churches have already voted to par-

ticipate in the endeavor. At least one church is already actively sponsoring a work in Indiana.

In order to speed up the linkage process, the Arkansas State Missions Department has suggested assignments to certain Indiana associations. Wiley and Sawyers said, "Associations can accept or reject our suggestions without offending us." It is the desire of the Arkansas-Indiana leadership that the link-up will be established as soon as possible.

In order for Arkansas associational directors of missions and pastors to see the opportunities of developing new

work in Indiana, a trip will be provided July 6-10, for Arkansas pastors and associational missionaries to see the work first-hand in Indiana.

In some instances, one Arkansas church will sponsor new work in Indiana. In other instances, it will require several Arkansas churches to sponsor one new work in Indiana. The primary factor in determining the number of churches required to assist in starting a new work is the financial ability of Arkansas churches. The strength of the plan is that it makes it possible for Arkansas churches of all sizes to be involved in this exciting mission project. — J. Everett Sneed

Immediate needs in Indiana

These are the proposed sites in Indiana of missions that Arkansas churches or associations could assist as part of the two-state link-up. The asterisk indicates that work has already begun at that location.

Central Association: *Bargersville; *Pittsboro; Westside, Indianapolis; Irvington; Sunbest-Fishers; Camby; Sheridan; *Crickett Hill, Indianapolis; Cumberland; Pike Township, Indianapolis; *Central Avenue, Central City.

Southwestern Association: Dale; Northwest, Evansville; Newburg; Fox Road, Evansville; Korean Language Mission.

Wabash Valley, Miami and Iroquois Associations: Morocco; Boswell; Swayzee; Spanish Language Mission.

West Central and White River Associations: *Bick-

nell; *West Baden; *Mitchell; Terre Haute; Linton; Bloomfield; Bedford; Spencer; Vincennes; Cayuga.

East Central Association: North Anderson; Elwood; Dunkirk; *Modoc; Farmer City; Mt. Summit, Sulphur Springs; College Corners.

Northwest Association: St. John; First Southern (Spanish); Lowell; Gary Baptist Center Mission; Vietnamese Language Mission; Wheeler.

Northeastern Association: *Decatur; Columbia City; Butler; Auburn.

North Central Association: *Goshen; Rochester; Warsaw; E. Elkhart.

White Water Association: Clarksburg; Milroy.

Churches or associations interested in link-ups with these missions should contact the state missions department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, Ark. 72203, (501) 376-4791, ext. 147.

Five vivid impressions of China

by W. O. Vaught

The multitudes
China is the third largest nation on earth. Russia is the largest, Canada is second and China is third. However, China has more than one billion people and one out of every four people alive in the earth is a Chinese. Many years ago, in my student days, George W. Truett and Charles E. Maddry visited China and they returned to Ridgecrest, North Carolina, to speak to us at the BSU summer conference. I recall their vivid impression of the throngs and limitless multitudes they saw in China.

This is my most vivid memory of our visit to that amazing land. In many of the streets in Peking and Shanghai, we saw thousands on bicycles. It looked like a football stadium crowd had just been emptied into the street. We went through one village where market day was in progress and there must have been 15,000 people on that main street. The bus had to inch through the crowd and the faces of those Chinese will haunt my memory until the end of my life.

Most of these billion Chinese live in the eastern one-third of China, for much of the interior is desert and mountainous country. Since the fall of the Mao regime, uncoupled thousands are crowding back into the cities, and housing is probably the number one problem of millions of Chinese today.

Primitive agriculture

To our great amazement, we saw no mechanized farm equipment in all of China. We rode through the countryside by bus and train in South, Central and Northern China and we didn't see one piece of power equipment being used in the fields.

The Chinese do everything by hand just as they have done for thousands of years. We learned that it takes five men to care for one acre of rice. Here in Arkansas one man, with about a dozen helpers, can care for more than 10,000 acres of rice. They gather every bit of human refuse and pig manure available and put it back on the land. This is absolutely vital for life, because that same land has been used every year for several thousand years.

About 80 percent of the billion people in China work on the soil and they labor from morning until night trying to make enough to keep a crust of bread in their mouths. As I rode through the countryside of China and saw their back breaking labor and realized how their entire life was spent in keeping bread in their mouths, I could see the words of Jesus superimposed across the fields, "Man shall not live by bread alone."

I do not know when mechanized farm equipment will come to China. If it were to come now, it would put millions out of work. But if the culture of China changes and men can devote their skills

to other things than agriculture, I believe the right kind of farm equipment could transform that land into the greatest breadbasket in the world.

The communes

The Chinese are separated into more than 50,000 communes. We visited one commune which had a 77,000 population. They have a school, a hospital (if you could call it a hospital with what they call barefoot doctors), and they have a communist form of government. We ate lunch with the chairman of this commune and he told us of their agricultural goals and the plans they had for the future. When you realize that less than 15 percent of the land in China is tillable, it is a miracle that they are able to raise enough food to feed a billion mouths.

A political and social revolution unequalled in all world history

I do not believe the communist revolution in the Soviet Union changed the way of life in Russia as much as it did in China. For well over 2,000 years, China had been ruled by a Chinese dynasty and had been ruled by an emperor or empress. The Yuan Dynasty ran from 1280 to 1368 A.D., then came the Ming Dynasty, probably the most famous one, from 1368 to 1644 A.D. The last dynasty was the Ching Dynasty from 1644 to 1911 A.D. These rulers lived in Peking in what is called "The Forbidden City." This 275-

acre city was closed to the Chinese and only the Emperor and his family and servants lived there. From that city would go the decrees of the emperor and all of China obeyed without question.

When the last empress was driven from the throne in 1911, Sun Yat Sen became the president and he attempted to set up a democratic form of government. He was a Christian and he married Chingling Soong, one of the famous children born to Charles Jones Soong and his Christian wife. This Christian family was to have great influence for more than a half century as China struggled to rid herself of the curse of emperor rule. The younger daughter, Mayling Soong, married Chiang Kai Shek. After the death of Sun Yat Sen, Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek took over the country, and in time, became a Christian. He was baptized into the Moore Memorial Church in Shanghai and read the Bible every day for more than 30 years.

The great red tide from the north was pressing down on China, and in 1949 Chiang Kai Shek was driven from the mainland of China to the island of Formosa, which we now call Taiwan. Mao Zedong was the leader of the Communist Party and was successful in spreading communism throughout the whole of China. Every Christian missionary was driven from the mainland and China suffered a blood bath unequalled in all of



W. O. Vaught (left) meets with the pastor of the Community Church in Shanghai, where more than 1,000 Chinese Christians gather for worship each Sunday. The Communist government in China is allowing some Christian churches to reopen for the first time since its surge to power in 1949.

Editor's note: W. O. Vaught, pastor of Little Rock Immanuel Church, visited the People's Republic of China March 12-29. Here he relates some of his impressions of "that amazing land."

history. The *Guinness Book of World Records*, on page 394 says, "The greatest massacre in human history ever attributed to any nation is that 26,300,000 died under the Mao Zedong era of 1949 to 1965."

All private property was confiscated, the landowners were killed and no privately owned property remained. Teachers were killed, all the wealthy were eliminated. Since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and the liquidation of the "gang of four," restrictions have been eased and life is beginning to return to normal. Travel restrictions were relaxed in 1977, and since that time, travel parties have been touring China under the direction of communist guides.

Population explosion is being slowed

With a total of over one billion mouths to feed, it became quite evident in recent years that China must adopt some program of birth control. When you realize that in the year 1900, China had a population of 500 million and now 80 years later, she has one billion people, you can see that something had to be done about the population explosion. The Communist government has set a limit of one child per family, and if this limit is surpassed, the government steps in and begins to discipline the family. Salaries are cut, health benefits are removed and the right to go to school is taken away from the second child. Millions of communist families in China are abiding by these government restrictions and the Chinese believe they have found a way to stop this population spiral.

The status of Christianity in China

For more than 150 years, prior to 1949, China had been the major mission field for the Christians of all the world. In 1949 all missionaries were driven out, all churches were closed, mission school and hospitals were taken by the Chinese government. No missionaries are allowed in China today and Christians in China are under close surveillance.

We attended a Sunday morning worship service in a community church in Shanghai. The church had been opened for just a little more than a year, and at both the 8:30 and 11:00 services every Sunday, the church is crowded. Seating about 700, the church had more than 1,000 in it when we worshipped there. The singing was enthusiastic and moving, and the minister preached on "The Love of God." A young Chinese minister interpreted the sermon for me and helped me turn from scripture to scripture as the

minister admonished the audience to live like Christ. When the service was done, they engulfed us with love and an emotional affection we have rarely experienced anywhere else in the world.

Future for Christianity is bright

I believe the future is bright for Christianity in this next decade. Missionaries from the outside world have been granted visas to have short visits back in China and they report that they believe there are more Christians now in China than when the missionaries were driven out in 1949. J. R. LeMaster, professor from

Baylor, who has been teaching for a year at Peking University, said to me, "They are begging for Bibles and they are eager to know about Christ." Missionary James D. Hollis from Alabama, stationed in Hong Kong, has been invited to teach English for the summer in Shanghai and he is eagerly anticipating the opportunity to be in China and get a first hand impression of the status of the church and the Christian community. It is my conviction that before the end of this century, missionaries will probably be going again to this amazing land. Let us pray toward that end.

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Your state convention at work

Speakers, sports attract 850 RAs

More than 850 Royal Ambassadors from 57 churches converged on Little Rock Geyer Springs First Church and Northeast High School in North Little Rock May 1-2 for two days of missions inspiration and sports competition.

This year's RA Congress, an event sponsored annually by the Brotherhood Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, recorded the largest number ever to attend. Luke Flesher, minister of youth at Park Hill, served as chairman for the annual event.

The boys, ranging in age from first to twelfth graders, filled the sanctuary of Geyer Springs First on Friday night to hear Missionary to Kenya Carl Hall describe life in that African country. They also saw a demonstration by Bunny Martin, the "Yo-Yo Champion of the World," and heard John Hicks, a layman at North Little Rock Park Hill Church, sing.

Saturday morning the stadium at Northeast High School was the site of a variety of sports competitions, including 50, 100, 220 and 440 yard races; a mile relay; stock car races; BB gun competition; and a speaker's contest.

Mike Young, a guard on the University of Arkansas basketball team, gave a basketball skills exhibition in the gym during the day and signed pictures for the RAs.

Eight churches who took prizes in sports events were West Memphis First Church, Prairie Grove Church, Walnut Ridge First Church (two), Heber Springs First Church, Glenwood First Church, El Dorado Westside, North Little Rock Highway Church and Jonesboro Walnut Street Church.

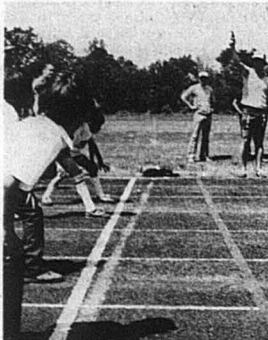
Music

Keyboard workshop held

Twenty-eight were in attendance for the State Keyboard Workshop held at Pine Bluff First Church. The leaders for the event were Polly Riddle, William Jewell College (organ), and David Danner, Church Music Department, BSSB (piano).

Methods and materials were presented to the accompanist as well as the development of a philosophy for the keyboard player.

One particular thought presented was the fact that the offertory is the time when the instrumentalist make their offering also, and should not be taken lightly, but adequate preparation should be made, for it is "their offering to the Lord". — Glen E. Ennes



Bottom: Among the more than 850 boys who participated in sports events at Northeast High School Stadium were (left to right) Michael Atkins, Sheridan First Church; Adam Lynch, Harmony Church in Faulkner County; and Shane Lamb, Perryville First Church. Top left: The 100 yard dash was one of many sports events sponsored by the Congress at Northeast High School. Top right: University of Arkansas basketball player Mike Young talked with RAs from across the state at the Congress and gave a basketball skills exhibition in the Northeast High School gymnasium.

ABN photos/Robert Dickey

Cooperative program report: April

| |
|---------------------|
| 1980 |
| \$ 591,258.08 |
| <u>592,379.07</u> |
| 1,120.99 |
| \$2,365,032.32 |
| <u>2,370,834.64</u> |
| 5,802.32 |

| |
|---------------------|
| April budget |
| April gifts |
| Over (under) |
| Budget year-to-date |
| Gifts year-to-date |

| |
|---------------------|
| 1981 |
| \$ 669,511.50 |
| <u>670,874.69</u> |
| 1,363.19 |
| \$2,678,046.00 |
| <u>2,695,092.19</u> |
| 17,046.19 |

January gifts exceeded the budget by \$83,762.48. February and March gifts were below budget requirements. April 1980 and April 1981 are similar with both months in the one thousand dollar plus bracket. April gifts this year exceeded the budget by .0020 percent and 1981 gifts are 13.68 percent over 1980 gifts. That's bold giving. — James A. Walker

Siloam Springs Assembly ready, almost



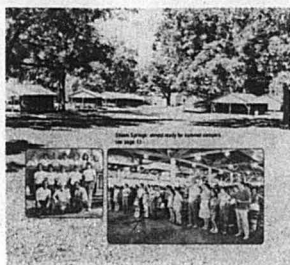
Hatfield

The assembly program awaits thousands of summer campers. Readiness is the word.

To help in the service and upkeep of the grounds a new truck, a new tractor and other implements have been purchased. The grounds are just beautiful.

Some improvements for this year include the installation of evaporative coolers in each of the 54 dormitory rooms. New electrical wiring systems have been installed in both the tabernacle and dining hall. Water fountains have been provided at the children's building, the children's park, and the new ball field. A new piano will be delivered for use in the choir room.

The same good food services will be



On the cover

The state assembly grounds at Siloam Springs (background) will soon be ready, with the help of staff (left) to provide camping experiences such as worship in the tabernacle.

provided with two breakfast choices, and three choices for noon and evening meals. And, hey, we made an early purchase of peanut butter. How about that!

A wonderful tabernacle band will function each week. Adults and youth bring instruments and participate. The

program is ready. Plans for recreation await ball players, crawfishers and hand-crafters.

Are you ready? For reservations write Don Cooper, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, or phone 376-4791. The second and fifth weeks are full. All other weeks have space.

We do have a few needs before we are completely ready. We need medical helpers. Are you a doctor, nurse or technician, and would you be willing to serve? Write or call me today. — Lawson Hatfield, assembly director

April CP receipts 14.5 percent ahead

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — April receipts to the national Southern Baptist Cooperative Program increased 14.5 percent over April 1980.

The undesignated receipts, the primary means of support for SBC mission and education programs, totaled \$6,374,821, an increase of \$807,232. For the year, they are up 13.8 percent to \$47,364,696.

Designated receipts for April increased 21 percent to \$5,523,668.



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'Circus' points to missions for state Acteens

Attendance report



by Millie Gill
ABN staff writer

Acteens gathered under the "big top" (top photo) at North Little Rock Baring Cross Church for activities such as a puppet skit about the Cooperative Program. Part of the atmosphere (right photo) were clowns Pete and Harley, who gets a last minute costume adjustment from Mom, Mrs. Pete Petty. Acteens from all over the state registered for the annual event (photo above).

A circus can be different, Acteens soon discovered when attending a statewide Encounter May 3-4 at North Little Rock. Instead of tight wires, ropes, poles, animals and acrobats under the 'Big Top,' they found bright-colored streamers creating a tent effect and booths displaying missions materials.

State, home and foreign missionaries, dressed in native costumes, manned display booths sharing information, artifacts, brochures and pictures of their work.

A puppet skit on the Cooperative Program by Acteens of Little Rock's Geyer Springs First Church was a part of the 'Big Top' show as were clowns, popcorn and cold drinks.

A Saturday noon fashion show, presented by Stuttgart First Church Acteens, had been used by Janice Reed, director, and her Acteens to enlist new members.

Several of the models shared how their involvement in Acteens had led them to their conversion experience.

Other program features were missionary-led conferences, a worship service and the commissioning of five Acteens Activators. Activators is a program for groups of Acteens and leaders to serve, at their own expense, in mission tours in the United States, and is sponsored through the state convention and Southern Baptist Convention.

Graydon Hardister, missionary to Jordan, was the featured speaker. Guest musicians were Ted Stanton, missionary to Argentina, and Mrs. Norman Coad, missionary to Upper Volta.

Betty Jo Lacy, Acteens director of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, assisted by Louis Criswell and Roy Cook, staff members of the host church, coordinated the program and activities.

| May 18, 1981 | | Church | Church |
|--------------|-------|--------|--------|
| Sunday | Trng. | addn. | |
| 139 | 46 | | |
| 200 | 69 | | |
| 193 | 26 | | |
| 121 | | | |
| 289 | 106 | 5 | |
| 210 | 71 | 5 | |
| 68 | | | |
| 404 | | 2 | |
| 220 | | | |
| 291 | | | |
| 159 | 110 | | |
| 295 | 63 | | |
| 126 | 63 | 2 | |
| 345 | 100 | 1 | |
| 362 | 113 | 2 | |
| 115 | 82 | | |
| 107 | 38 | | |
| 96 | 30 | 1 | |
| 114 | 62 | | |
| 798 | 88 | | |
| 441 | 180 | | |
| 454 | 96 | | |
| 282 | 105 | 3 | |
| 179 | 72 | | |
| 144 | 18 | | |
| 20 | | | |
| 20 | 63 | | |
| 140 | 51 | | |
| 32 | | | |
| 430 | 415 | 6 | |
| 557 | 112 | 3 | |
| 1,977 | | 7 | |
| 1,172 | 264 | 2 | |
| 75 | | | |
| 65 | 28 | 4 | |
| 96 | 32 | | |
| 134 | 58 | | |
| 76 | | | |
| 181 | 41 | | |
| 148 | 60 | 1 | |
| 120 | 60 | | |
| 253 | 98 | | |
| 170 | 92 | | |
| 30 | 37 | | |
| 75 | 42 | 1 | |
| 390 | 90 | | |
| 138 | 87 | | |
| 165 | 44 | 1 | |
| 80 | 52 | | |
| 21 | 21 | | |
| 279 | 96 | | |
| 78 | 38 | | |
| 141 | 67 | | |
| 329 | 35 | 1 | |
| 75 | 49 | | |
| 246 | 85 | | |
| 148 | 58 | | |
| 73 | 54 | | |
| 763 | 109 | | |
| 352 | 87 | 1 | |
| 93 | 32 | | |
| 189 | 2 | 2 | |
| 165 | 78 | 1 | |
| 165 | 65 | 2 | |
| 202 | 142 | | |
| 352 | 203 | | |
| 468 | 144 | | |
| 304 | 38 | | |
| 249 | | 10 | |
| 128 | 70 | | |
| 112 | 35 | 3 | |
| 580 | 81 | 2 | |
| 142 | 46 | | |
| 173 | 33 | | |
| 195 | 63 | | |
| 438 | 114 | | |
| 536 | 551 | 2 | |
| 778 | | 1 | |
| 461 | 70 | 5 | |
| 25 | 26 | | |
| 62 | | 2 | |
| 276 | | 9 | |
| 1,666 | | | |
| 351 | 63 | | |
| 126 | 63 | | |
| 304 | 173 | 4 | |
| 79 | 28 | 5 | |
| 412 | 63 | | |
| 67 | 39 | | |
| 223 | 87 | | |
| 226 | 109 | | |
| 117 | | | |

LA messengers to face broad, critical issues

by Dan Martin

LOS ANGELES (BP) — The denominational presidency, its incumbent and powers, head the list of issues facing messengers to the 1981 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention June 9-11 in the Los Angeles Convention Center.

Sandwiched among an array of critical issues will be usual matters: singing, preaching, praying, business, hearing reports from the agencies, adopting a \$93 million Cooperative Program budget and listening to testimonies on missions, evangelism and Bold Mission Thrust.

Among the controversial issue will be a proposed change in messenger qualification, the report of the committee on boards, which nominates trustees to the 20 SBC organizations, and the performance of those boards, agencies and institutions.

Floating underneath nearly every issue to come before the estimated 8,500 to 10,000 registered messengers is the question of doctrinal integrity, creedalism, biblical infallibility and inerrancy.

Much of the pre-convention thunder and lightning has centered on the office of president, a volunteer, nonsalaried post with a few key powers. Incumbent Bailey E. Smith, 42, pastor of First Southern Church of Del City, Okla., was elected on the first ballot in the 1980 St. Louis convention, and will seek the traditional second one-year term as president of the 13.6 million-member denomination.

Abner V. McCall, 65, president of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, has announced he will allow his nomination to challenge Smith. Supporters say McCall's candidacy offers a clear choice between factions.

Other candidates are expected to emerge at the convention, turning what has traditionally been an unopposed reelection into an all-out campaign.

Much of the controversy centers on one of the few powers a president has: appointments. Under SBC rules, a presi-

dent can exert enormous influence through appointments of the committee on committees, which in turn nominates the committee on boards, which is charged with nominating trustees to govern the 20 SBC agencies.

It is this power a faction of biblical inerrantists has focused on. Led by Paul Pressler, an appeals court judge in Houston, and Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, the group says it aims to control the presidency and with it the appointment of trustees, particularly those of the six seminaries.

In past years, presidential appointments have not been openly challenged. The issue arose during the presidency of Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church in Memphis, Tenn., who bowed out in 1980 after serving only one term.

Rogers, an avowed conservative and proponent of biblical inerrancy, was accused of "stacking" his appointments with fundamentalists and inerrantists. The impact of his appointments will come before the 1981 convention, when the 1980-81 committee on boards makes its report.

A group led by Cecil Sherman, pastor of First Church of Asheville, N.C., and Kenneth Chafin, pastor of South Main Church in Houston, will challenge the report.

One focus is the decision of the committee on boards not to reappoint some mid-termers, eligible for second terms.

Smith's appointments also have drawn criticism and praise, and both groups are closely watching for the nominees to the committee on boards.

Messengers will be required to deal directly with the question of presidential power in a recommendation from the SBC Executive Committee.

The recommendation would revise Bylaw 21, and require the appointment of the committee on committees by a committee of the president and the two

vice presidents. The change, one of its sponsors says, is not in reaction to Rogers, but is an attempt to enhance the vice presidential positions and to diversify the power.

Another recommendation from the Executive Committee is almost certain to draw fire. It proposes a change in Article III of the Constitution, changing the method of qualification of messengers. The most controversial part of the change requires Cooperative Program giving to qualify messengers.

At least one association has gone on record opposing the change, and biblical inerrantists are critical of it, since many designate contributions to SBC causes, but exclude the seminaries, which many charge are filled with liberals who do not believe the Bible to be infallible and inerrant.

Among the other matters expected to arise:

—An effort to disenfranchise denominational employees from attending the convention as registered, voting messengers;

—Another effort to enforce "doctrinal integrity" in the institutions, following a strongly worded resolution passed in St. Louis exhorting trustees to preserve the doctrinal integrity of the institutions, and to ensure belief in an inerrant Bible.

—A challenge to the SBC Christian Life Commission, over a speech made by a Bible translator which was sharply critical of biblical inerrancy. The CLC has disavowed responsibility for the remarks of the American Bible Society translator, but criticism has continued.

—Resolutions concerning conservative causes, including anti-abortion, pro-capital punishment and other matters.

Many observers predict Los Angeles will be a pivotal meeting. Others, however, say it will be simply a prelude to the main confrontation which will occur at the 1982 meeting in New Orleans, which will be held in a location nearer to grass-roots Southern Baptist strength and in a year when Smith's second term would expire.



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Little

International

May 24, 1981

Hebrews 9:11-15, 24-28

by Bob Little

Ashdown First Church

Between you and God

The real barrier that separated man from God was not a mere piece of material, such as the veil that closed off the holy of holies in the tabernacle, but was an inner spiritual barrier. Only with pure hearts were men free to fellowship with God. Animal sacrifices could bring only a ceremonial cleansing. Something better was needed which would enable man to come into God's presence. A way had to be provided for forgiveness and cleansing. This is accomplished in the new covenant provided by the blood of Jesus.

The blood of Jesus (Heb. 9:11-15)

How does the blood of Jesus purify? Why is it better than other bloods? Someone has fittingly suggested, animal blood is impotent to cleanse men from sin in that it is nonmoral. Human blood cannot accomplish the task because it is immoral. Only the blood of Christ could suffice because it is moral. So able and complete, is Jesus that we do not need to ever look for another.

The superiority of Jesus' sacrifice

Ancient sacrifices cleansed a man's body from ceremonial uncleanness; the sacrifice removed ceremonial barriers, but the door to God's presence was still closed, represented by the veil. The sacrifice of Jesus cleanses a man's heart, thus removing the veil.

Christ's sacrifice provides for man an eternal redemption and an eternal relationship. His kind of holiness is infused in us and we are transformed. His life becomes such a part of us that his character is expressible through ours.

The uniqueness of Jesus' sacrifice (Heb. 9:24-28)

Three elements compromise the sacrificial work of Jesus. First, he entered into the Holy Place, the very presence of God. This Holy Place was not the one man made. Second, his sacrifice does not have to be repeated as did the animal sacrifices. The sacrifice of Christ has been made and never needs to be made again. The road to God is forever open, "once and for all." Third, Christ entered into the presence of God, not only for his own sake, but for ours. The old sacrifices did not bring salvation to a man's heart. Christ's sacrifice is able to cleanse man within and usher him into God's presence.

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Wanted: Good Samaritan Christians to work with troubled youth. The youth have experienced family conflict, neglect, rejection and abuse. A Christian couple who will provide an Inn with a warm loving atmosphere is needed. The children will abide with you until their wounds have begun to heal. A qualified team of child care workers will minister to the wounds of neglect, rejection and abuse while the children abide in your cottage. Arkansas Baptists will provide

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Jesus Christ is with us

Where is He? In a world where terrorists push civilized people to the brink of destruction, where violent people mock human rights, where inflation rips moral values and immorality parades with wide acceptance, is Jesus still walking with us?



Walker

The early believers formed this question. Some wondered if Jesus' ascension meant he had escaped from a bad scene.

John, who suffered as a believer, assured persecuted believers of Jesus' presence. The Messenger had a message.

The message

John spoke directly to the needs of his readers. He identified with them as "brother" and "fellow-partaker." He was with them in "tribulation, and kingdom and perseverance" (v. 9, NASB). John ministered out of experienced suffering.

He refused to bow at Domitian's altar. The Apostle was exiled because he was faithful to God's Word. His tribulation did not produce bad results. Like wheat ground into flour, John saw good in suffering.

Being in the Spirit on the Lord's day prepared John to receive a message. Suffering sensitized him to God's presence.

The message was "to the seven churches" whose members suffered from Rome's sword. The message is also for us.

The Messenger

A voice spoke and John turned to listen. He saw seven golden candlesticks, churches, and "one like a son of man," Jesus, standing in the middle of the candlesticks. The voice sounded like a trumpet. It demanded attention.

Many of the symbols John used had an Old Testament background. He recognized Jesus' immediate presence because he was familiar with past revelations.

The robe emphasizes Jesus' priestly and kingly role. The adornment around his head shows holiness. His eyes suggest omniscience. Brass feet point to strength. His voice, like the waters John heard, command authority. The sword symbolizes conquest and the dazzling bright-

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Life and Work

May 24, 1981

Revelation 1:9-20

by James A. Walker
Stewardship Director
Arkansas Baptist State Convention

ness reflects his deity.

Such a strong presence caused John to fall at his feet. The living Christ touched and encouraged John, and through him, others.

The Messenger spoke a work of assurance. He was alive! The Living One is still among us. He resurrects his people from dead and dying situations.



Passmore

Bible Book

May 24, 1981

I Samuel 13:1-15:35

by J. D. Passmore
Current-Gaines Association

Saul's success and failure

Saul started out with the characteristics of one who would make a great king. He was humble, strong, a natural leader, brave and willing to depend on God. He had a fatal flaw; he let success go to his head.

Saul's sin

He had just begun his reign when conflicts began to develop. The Philistines, always a strong enemy, were more determined than ever to destroy the new king and his followers. They came against the Israelites with a strong army. Saul and his men waited on a word from Samuel as to what they should do. When Samuel did not appear when he was expected, Saul took to himself the role of a priest and offered sacrifices to God. When Samuel arrived and found out what had happened he told Saul that the kingdom would be taken from him and his family for this act of disobedience to God.

Saul's successes

A small band of soldiers under the leadership of Jonathan, the son of Saul, at God's direction attacked the Philistine army. God caused confusion to come among the Philistines and they turned on each other. The Israelites made the most of the confusion and routed the enemy with victory after victory that day. In the heat of battle the men of Israel were forbidden to eat by Saul. Jonathan was unaware of this and ate some honey. Saul was determined to put him to death when this was revealed to him. His men refused to let him for they loved Jonathan.

Saul's stubbornness

Saul and his army were commanded by God to destroy the nation of Amalek for what they had done to Israel as they came into the promised land. The destruction was to be complete. The command was only partially carried out. Saul told Samuel that the animals were for sacrifice. Samuel reminded him and us that God prefers obedience to sacrifice. This was Saul's final act that cost him his kingdom. He had refused to obey God.

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Baptist Building sold to foundation

DALLAS (BP) — The administrative committee of the Baptist General Convention of Texas has authorized sale of the Baptist Building to the W. A. Criswell Foundation Inc. for \$1.7 million cash.

The terms include placing \$100,000 in escrow with the remainder due at the time of occupancy. Anticipated moving date of the state convention offices is late summer or early fall.

W. A. Criswell, pastor of First Church, said the building will house the 600 students from the elementary school of the church and give it room to expand.

With the acquisition of the Baptist Building, First Church and the Foundation own seven square blocks of prime downtown Dallas property valued at \$25 million.

SBC resolutions committee expected to be moderate

by Stan L. Hasley

WASHINGTON (BP) — Although Southern Baptist Convention President Bailey Smith's appointments to the committee on committees have drawn fire from some quarters within the denomination, his committee on resolutions is being praised for the moderation and denominational loyalty of its members.

Numerous sources have told Baptist Press that virtually to a person, the seven men and three women named by the embattled Smith to process and recommend resolutions to the June 9-11 session of the Southern Baptist Convention in Los Angeles can be expected to deal with controversial subjects in an even-handed manner.

Committee chairman Charles D. Graves, pastor of Nichols Hills Church in Oklahoma City, appears to reflect the composition of the group. A self-described "conservative" in theological matters, Graves said he has a "real desire to be fair." He added that he considers himself conservative theologically in the same way "every Southern Baptist I know is conservative."

Graves said he has yet to feel pressure from other Southern Baptists who will be pushing their favorite causes in Los Angeles before the resolutions panel. But he expects he will.

He is asking that proposed resolutions be submitted in advance to expedite the committee's work. They should be mailed at the earliest possible date to: Charles Graves, Nichols Hills Baptist Church, 2825 Northwest Grand Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73116.

According to sources close to the Oklahoma City pastor, he can be expected to move the committee in a "positive" vein and to deal effectively with controversial matters.

Last year's resolutions committee was widely believed to have sparked more controversy than any previous panel, due in large measure to several members who pressed hard for their own causes.

As a result, messengers to the St. Louis convention last June reversed the position of the convention on a number of highly volatile issues, including abortion and the Equal Rights Amendment. In addition, the committee recommended and the convention adopted "Resolution 16," a strong statement supporting biblical inerrancy.

This year's committee, composed of seven pastors, two pastors' wives and one laywoman, is widely perceived to be much more "balanced" than last year's committee which was appointed by former SBC President Adrian Rogers of Memphis, Tenn.

Besides Graves, two other members of

the panel currently serve on the SBC Executive Committee, as required by convention bylaws. They are Gordon Dorian, pastor of Olivet Church in Wichita, Kan., and John Sullivan, pastor of Broadmoor Church in Shreveport, La. Both are described as loyal to the denomination, while conservative theologically.

Other pastors on the committee are Bob Bacon, Del Norte Church of Albuquerque; Billy Barber, First Church of Tampa, Fla.; Morris Chapman, First Church of Wichita Falls, Texas; and Joel Gregory, Gambrell Street Church of Fort Worth, Texas.

Although all seven of the pastors are described in varying shades of theological conservatism, most have solid records of involvement in denominational affairs, especially at the state convention level. Bacon and Sullivan currently are presidents of the New Mexico and Louisiana conventions respectively, while Graves is a former president of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

According to sources contacted by Baptist Press, none of the seven is known to be actively involved on either side of the inerrancy battle.

Of the three women named to the panel, two are wives of pastors active in denominational life. Jayne (Mrs. John) Dunaway is the wife of the current vice chairman of the SBC Executive Committee. Dunaway, pastor of First Church of Corbin, Ky.; also has held a variety of offices in Kentucky Baptist life.

Carol (Mrs. John) Swartz is married to the pastor of Bethel Southern Church of Escondido, Calif., who in turn has served as chairman of the executive board of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California. She is a school teacher.

The other woman on the committee, Vivian (Mrs. Henry) Simpson, is a veteran in denominational affairs, having served two terms on the Home Mission Board and as a member of the program committee for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Her husband is director of missions, Little River Association in Lillington.

According to those interviewed, none of the 10 members of the resolutions committee is known to be a crusader on any issue in the public arena. Although most have the reputation of being sensitive to the needs of people, none is known to be coming to the committee with a "pet" issue to be pushed through at any cost.

If such observations prove true, this year's panel can be expected to approve and recommend to the convention resolutions in the mainstream of Southern Baptist thinking.

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Dallas Baptist to honor Bailey Smith

DALLAS (BP) — Bailey E. Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will receive an honorary doctor of biblical studies degree when he addresses the 12th spring commencement at Dallas Baptist College, May 15.

In announcing the honorary degree, Marvin Watson, DBC president, said Smith has contributed to our time in a most significant and positive manner.

Smith, pastor of First Southern Church in Del City, Okla., since 1973, was elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1980 while also serving as president of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

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