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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1985-1989

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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**May 2, 1985**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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'It takes commitment...'  
ABN Day of Prayer  
Sunday, May 12

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

May 2, 1985  
**Arkansas Baptist**  
NEWSMAGAZINE

## On the cover



ABN photo / Betty J. Kennedy

Pages and pages of labels are attached to about 60,000 copies of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine fresh off the presses. Sunday, May 12, marks the annual Day of Prayer for the Newsmagazine and its staff (see related article and photos, pp. 8-9).

## In this issue

### 7 spanning generations

First Church, Nashville, celebrated 150 years of ministering to generation after generation in Howard County with a week of activities.

### 13 no exit

As the African drought and famine worsens, the desert creeps into Mali, bringing with it hunger, disease and death.

## Corrections

The tentative 1986 ABCS calendar, published in the April 25 issue of the ABN, needs to be corrected at two points. The Aug. 8-9 Pastor/Director Retreat at Camp Paron actually is sponsored by the state Church Training Department. Left off the calendar entirely was the Oct. 20-23 CWT National Seminar in Fort Smith, sponsored by the state Evangelism Department.

The dates for the Church and State Conference sponsored by the state convention at Immanuel Church, Little Rock, also were listed incorrectly in an advertisement. The correct dates are June 27-28.

## Pastor named in lawsuit opposing obscenity ban

Lynn Robertson, pastor of First Church, Stamps, has been named as a defendant in a \$1 million lawsuit filed in protest of a 1983 ordinance banning obscene material from the shelves of Stamps stores.

The lawsuit was filed by owners of a Stamps video store who were informed last month by the Stamps city attorney that materials in their store violated the ordinance. Also named as defendants were the mayor and five of the town's six councilmen.

According to Robertson, the ordinance has been in effect since 1983, when the availability of adult magazines in a convenience store near a grade school sparked a community petition drive, led by Robertson.

As a result of the petitions, the Stamps council adopted an ordinance, based on a similar ordinance in effect in Magnolia, which banned the sale of obscene material.

Although the convenience store complied with a council directive to remove the material, owners of the newly-opened video store have refused orders to remove material from their shelves, Robertson said.

The lawsuit, recently joined by the Arkan-

sas chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, alleges the ordinance violates the First and Fourteenth Amendment rights of the store owners. The suit seeks \$250,000 damages in lost profits and \$750,000 in punitive damages.

According to Robertson, the store has remained open since the order and has not removed any material from their shelves.

Members of the six-man city council had viewed portions of a video tape rented from the store before ordering the store to remove materials in violation of the ordinance. One councilman abstained from the otherwise-unanimous vote. The sixth councilman was not named in the suit.

"The issue was that we had a law in our town that was being violated, and I felt I had the right as a citizen to bring it before the council," said Robertson about his being named by the suit.

Robertson also told the *Newsmagazine* he has acted to retain legal counsel in the matter. Legal fees alone will entail a serious financial hardship for him, Robertson said.

## State's first church planting conference planned

A conference on starting and developing new congregations—the first of its kind in Arkansas—has been set for May 17-18 at the Ramada Inn in Jacksonville.

Sponsored by the Missions Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, "New Congregations and How They Grow" will feature Joel Land, director of the New Church Growth Department of the Home

Missions Board. Bible study sessions, discussion groups and other conferences will be led by Bill Foote and Troy Prince.

Persons interested in attending may contact Floyd Tidsworth in the ABCS Missions Department, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791. Room reservations may be made by calling toll-free 1-800-228-3344. The program will begin at 3 p.m., Friday, and close at noon, Saturday.

## OBU to recognize distinguished alumni May 11

ARKADELPHIA—Two Ouachita Baptist University alumni will be presented with the school's Distinguished Alumnus Award during university commencement activities Saturday, May 11.

Ed Snider, president of Citizen's First State Bank of Arkadelphia and chairman of the Executive Committee of First National Bank of

Fordyce, and Otis Turner, an Arkadelphia attorney and member of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission, will be recognized at the Former Students Association annual meeting and will receive the awards during commencement exercises at 4 p.m. in the OBU Physical Education Center.

## Southern College names athletic director

Tim McGraw, a coach at Springdale's Shiloh Christian High School, has been named athletic director at Southern Baptist College.

McGraw is a graduate of John Brown University, where he played varsity basketball and ran cross country track. He has coached at the Springdale high school since his graduation in 1980. McGraw will complete a masters degree in sports management from the University of Arkansas this summer.

In addition to his duties as athletic director and men's basketball coach, McGraw also will serve as professor of health, physical education and recreation.



McGraw

## Our commitment

The commitment of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* is to serve our people in good times and in bad. Since the forerunner of the present-day Arkansas state paper for Baptists was started in January 1902, our purpose has always been to provide Baptist news, inspiration and interpretation. These elements are absolutely essential, since each Baptist church determines its own policies and priorities.

In presenting the news, it is necessary to be accurate. The employees of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* across the years have worked to maintain the confidence of our readers by providing correct and beneficial information. Yet accuracy alone is not enough. To meet the needs of our readers speed is required, as well as accuracy. This calls for commitment on the part of the staff of the ABN.

Often, in order to get the news right, the *Newsmagazine* staff has had to follow-up on rumors. Recently, such suspicious statements have been researched by the staff of the ABN. One example was the rumor that Madelyn Murray O'Hair was making efforts to eliminate religious broadcasts from the airways. A phone call to the Federal Communications Commission let us know immediately that the rumor was false.

A second rumor maintained that *Modern People* magazine was in the process of filming Jesus involved in sex activities. A phone call to this company indicated that they had been approached but had turned this down and that the rumor was totally untrue.

The *Newsmagazine* carries news on all kinds of subjects that would be of interest to Baptists. We carry news on events that are transpiring in local churches, in associations, in the state convention and in the Southern Baptist Convention. Some articles tell how local churches are reaching people, while others feature the erection of new buildings or historical events, such as a 150th anniversary. Across the years, the *Newsmagazine* has carried news articles on such subjects as gambling, alcohol and a Landmark-Southern Baptist split. In each instance, the purpose has been to provide facts and guidance, so that committed individuals under the leadership of the Holy Spirit could make the right decisions.

Events and issues not covered by other publications will be dealt with in the ABN. The point of view also will differ from the secular news sources. When one desires information on Baptist events, the Baptist state paper is the best source. Normally, the ABN will provide more news about Baptist activities than any other news source. Usually, a secular publication lacks the space

## The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



or qualified reporters to provide perspective on the events that are taking place in the Southern Baptist Convention.

A second goal of the staff of the *Newsmagazine* is to provide inspiration for our readers. Inspiration is offered through Sunday School lessons, editorials and special articles, as well as through the contributions of our regular columnists. Inspirational writing is designed to assist our readers to understand the scriptures and to respond in a Christian manner to the claims of Christ. As disciples, we should each seek to understand and follow the teachings of God's Word.

Finally, the commitment of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* is to provide interpretation of current events. This is accomplished primarily through the editor's page. The Charter and bylaws unanimously adopted by the messengers to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention in November 1980 state that the *Newsmagazine* is to "... interpret events and movements that affect the welfare of the constituency of the Convention." It further says that "the editor shall be accorded full freedom with respect to the expression of his opinions, in the selection and use of all printed matter and the make-up of the paper and in all other matters incidental to the discharge of his editorial duties, to the end that the rights and privileges of a free press shall be maintained, with the understanding that the editor shall embrace the statement of belief adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963...."

In interpreting the movements and events that transpire within the Convention and affect the welfare of Southern Baptists, it is obvious that the editor must sometimes deal with controversial matters. The intent, however, in dealing with controversy must always be to provide perspective which will cause each person to think for himself. When an editor or a pastor claims his right to speak out on a controversial issue, he also must shoulder the responsibility which goes with that freedom. The responsibility demands that he inform himself to the best of his ability of all the facts, that he deal with them honestly and that he never use his position to belittle the convictions of others.

It is absolutely essential in a day when morals are declining that Baptist state papers take a stand on moral issues and lay the questions open to discussion. For the staff of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, this means that it is more than a job, it is also our Christian commitment. Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, we believe that we can effectively assist committed Arkansas Baptists in serving the Master.

# Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

Arkansas' third largest publication,  
meeting the information needs of Arkansas Baptists

VOLUME 84

NUMBER 17

J. Everett Sneed, Ph.D. .... Editor

Betty Kennedy ..... Managing Editor

Erwin L. McDonald, Litt D. .... Editor Emeritus

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine Board of Directors: Lane Strother, Mountain Home, president; Mrs. J. W. L. Adams Jr., Texarkana, Charles Chesser, Carlisle; Lyndon Finney, Little Rock; Leroy French, Fort Smith; Mrs. Jimmie Garner, Truman; Marie Milligan, Harrison; Tommy Robertson, El Dorado; and the Hon. Elsjane Roy, Little Rock.

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. They must be marked "for publication."

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

Copies by mail 50 cents each.

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

Advertising rates on request.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer.

Member of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

The *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* (USPS 031-280) is published weekly, except the third week in April, at July 4 and Dec. 25, by the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc.*, Little Rock, AR. Subscription rates are \$6.36 per year (individual), \$5.40 per year (Every Resident Family Plan), \$6.00 per year (Group Plan) and \$19.00 per year (to foreign address). Second class postage paid at Little Rock, AR. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.



many of the warped minds of professors and presidents in our seminaries and universities.

Are we going to continue to allow these huns and vandals to take us down the road of infidelity or shall we under God call a halt to it? We must go to Dallas to see to it that Stanley is re-elected and to begin replacing every liberal professor and president with men who holds to the inerrancy of scripture. We must have men on the faculty of our institutions who will walk together with our people. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" — Vaughn W. Denton, Memphis

### Is it too much to ask?

I have read with disappointment and dismay the remarks recently attributed to former SBC President James Draper concerning the possible collapse of the Cooperative Program if current President Charles Stanley is not re-elected this June in Dallas. He seems to infer that First Church of Atlanta would be justified in cutting back their support of convention causes if their pastor loses the election. He also suggests that his own church might escrow their mission gifts "to force people to sit down and adopt a strategy to resolve our problems."

This seems to me a most inappropriate and immature response to the outcome of an election and reveals a spirit unbecoming to a leader in the denomination. The Cooperative Program is our primary means of support for a worldwide missions enterprise. The cause it represents is much bigger than any personal agenda or supposed theological argument. To withhold support from the entire thing because of disagreement with a small percentage of programs or personnel is petty politics, not a courageous stand upon principle.

Would Draper approve of a church member's decision to "escrow" his tithes and offerings to the church because of a disagreement with two or three of the pastor's sermons or a problem with a few small items in the church budget? Surely the use of God's money as a bribe or a threat is unacceptable in the church or the denomination.

I have been a messenger to the last five sessions of the SBC. During this period, I have never voted for a winner in a contested election for president. Over the same period, the church I serve has, at my recommendation, increased its Cooperative Program giving from 11 percent to 18 percent. Whether I get my way in the Dallas voting or not, I will continue to lead my people to give liberally and sacrificially to mission causes through the Cooperative Program. I believe in the work it supports and the cooperative spirit it exemplifies. Is it too much to ask for those who lead our convention to share in this conviction and commitment? — Tim Reddin, Hot Springs Village

### A sorry commentary

I am very much concerned about two things which seem to be in the air at this time regarding the convention in Dallas.

The first is there seems to be some indication in the discussion about the churches sending a full quota of messengers that these messengers will go with instructions to vote in a certain way on specific issues. This disturbs me because of the implications which have not been taken into consideration. When they go with specific instructions, they go as "delegates" and not messengers. Under such circumstances, the church binds itself to abide by the decisions of the convention regardless of the way the vote goes. This does not leave the messenger free to examine the issues and new facts that may come to light in the conduct of business and cast his ballot in such light. It ties the hands of the representative.

The other matter that gives me concern is the "threat" that if you do not play my way, I am going to withdraw or withhold funds from the Cooperative Program. This is a most childish attitude and is a sorry commentary on the spiritual attitude of some whom we have thought were our leaders. Not only is the childishness of such action to be regretted, but it is evidence these individuals are unaware of both the privileges and responsibilities of participation.

Whenever one pulls out his support of an agency, he loses the privilege of expression about what that agency is doing or not doing. As long as one gives support to an agency, it is his privilege and responsibility to provide constructive criticism of such agency's activities. When one withdraws support, the right is lost and the activities of such agency are no longer any business of such an individual or body.

It is my hope and prayer that we will go to Dallas determined to seek the mind of Christ and the will of the Holy Spirit, regardless of the will and mind of our favorite preacher. — Carl Overton, Benton

### Staffer gets state awards for Newsmagazine work

ABN managing editor Betty J. Kennedy received three first place awards in the annual communications contest by Arkansas Press Women.

The awards, presented April 20 at the group's spring meeting, were for a historical brochure produced for the ABN emphasis in May of 1984, for a news photo of the fall Citizens United Against Gambling rally at the



### Seminary journal offers perspectives on SBC crisis

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has recently published a special issue of their academic journal, *The Theological Educator*, in an effort to present perspectives on the current controversy within the Southern Baptist Convention from a variety of viewpoints.

Included in the journal are articles or interviews with the following persons: Russell H. Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; James T. Draper and Franklin Paschall, both former convention presidents; Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies; Paul Pressler, a layman from Houston, Texas; Porter Routh, former SBC executive secretary; and Walter Shurden, a Southern Baptist historian from Mercer University.

The final article in the journal is "the longest and most detailed history of the controversy to have appeared in print," according to Fisher Humphreys, journal editor.

Copies of the publication are available through Baptist Book Stores or by sending \$3 to *The Theological Educator*, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126.

### Two mission congregations searching for leadership

Two congregations located in different new work areas of the Southern Baptist Convention are seeking pastoral leadership.

New Hope Chapel, a mission church in Rutland, Vt., is searching for a bi-vocational pastor. Persons interested in responding may contact Frank Kramer, chairman of the pastoral selection committee, at New Hope Baptist Chapel, 80 Harrington Ave., Rutland, VT 05701.

Glacier Valley Church, Juneau, Alaska, seeks a pastor for their 20-year-old congregation. Interested persons may address the chairman of their pulpit committee at Glacier Valley Baptist Church, 8205 Aspen Ave., Juneau, AK 99801

state capitol and for work on a speech delivered as the Newsmagazine's report to the state convention messengers last November.

Other awards were for a feature photo used on the June 7, 1984, cover to promote annuity, a sampling of original graphics in the ABN, a feature on pastoral care, and examples of page layout.

While competition in the Arkansas Press Women's communications contest is generally categorized by publications of similar size, two of Kennedy's first place awards, for a brochure and for a speech, were in open classifications for statewide entry.

# Nashville First celebrates generations of Christian ministry

by Mark Kelly

Southern Baptists, like most Americans, tend to measure success by counting "nickels and noses." That "more is better" mindset has helped make us the largest non-Catholic denomination in the world and lent impetus to Bold Mission Thrust, our stated intention to carry the gospel to every person in the world by the year 2000.

But in our drive to "enlarge the place of our tents," we often fail to appreciate another standard of success: the consistent, faithful ministry of a congregation in the life of a community over a period of many generations.

First Church, Nashville, celebrated the latter sort of success April 7-14 as they commemorated 150 years of uninterrupted ministry in Howard County.

Assisting the congregation in their sesquicentennial celebration were Frank Patterson, pastor of the church when it celebrated its centennial in 1936; Jon Stubblefield, president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention; Randall O'Brien, Charles Wright and the Ouachita Singers from Ouachita Baptist University;

Herschel H. Hobbs, Southern Baptist historian and pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City; Walter Grindstaff, a home missionary in Arizona originally licensed to preach by the church; and Robert Naylor, retired president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and pastor of the church 1932-35.

First Church, Nashville, has had a rich history in light of the caliber of people it has produced and the mountains and valleys it has experienced in ministry, said Pastor John Holston, who has served the church for 14 years.

Patterson, the former pastor who spoke Easter Sunday, left the Nashville pastorate to direct the Southern Baptist Spanish publishing house in El Paso, Texas. Naylor eventually became president of what would become under his tenure Southern Baptists' largest seminary. Grindstaff entered home missions in Arizona. Bud and Jane Fray, who recently joined the staff of Ouachita Baptist University, are foreign mission products of the church.

First Church, Nashville, was chartered the year before Arkansas was admitted to the Union and 50 years before the town around it was incorporated, said Jimmy Dale, chairman of First's Sesquicentennial Committee.

Organized in 1835 as the Mine Creek Church by Isaac C. Perkins, an itinerant preacher and church starter, the congregation has traveled through mountains and valleys of ministry, according to the church history published for the anniversary.

The congregation struggled through brief, often intermittent pastorates until 1890,

when they called C. W. Strickland, the first man to serve them as a full-time pastor.

Three years into Strickland's tenure, however, a serious blow was dealt the church on a single March weekend. A daughter of the pastor came home sick with pneumonia from Ouachita College. Her two sisters also took ill. The very weekend the first daughter and one sister died, the church building also burned to the ground, and the funeral had to be conducted at the Methodist Church.

After the turn of the century, First Church shared the rising fortunes of their county seat town, which more than doubled in population from 1900 to 1910. In April and May 1909, O. E. Bryan, the newly-elected "state evangelist," held two revival meetings which resulted in 96 additions and raised \$600 for missions.

The congregation began to prosper, raising a brick building on a new location in town in 1911. Other building expansions followed in 1927 and 1930. In 1925, the church reported \$2,221.60 in gifts to missions. In 1931, a bus route was added for Sunday School and worship services. A two-story educational building was completed in 1953. A mission congregation, now Ridge-way Church, was begun in 1963. A third sanctuary replaced the 1911 building in 1969.

In 1984, First Church, Nashville, received 48 by letter or baptism. Records indicate a resident membership of 329 and a Sunday School enrollment of 652. Their \$33,900 in 1984 Cooperative Program gifts represents 17 percent of their undesignated receipts.

But although they have experienced the kind of numerical success Southern Baptists value highly, it was the consistent witness

over several generations that captured the imagination of the congregation during their celebration of 150 years of ministry.

"We may not minister to great numbers of people like some city churches," observed committee chairman Dale. "But we have ministered to generation after generation of people in this community. There were three generations of some families present in worship services today.

"This congregation has a rich history of long years of community service," he concluded. "They can be proud of that."

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



First Church, Nashville's present sanctuary, constructed in 1969, is the third worship facility for the congregation in its 150-year history.

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



Robert Naylor, retired president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and former pastor of Nashville First Church, greets members of the congregation after his Sunday morning message climaxing that church's celebration of 150 years of ministry.

Mark Kelly is a staff writer with the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

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Robert Naylor, retired president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and former pastor of Nashville First Church, greets members of the congregation after his Sunday morning message climaxing that church's celebration of 150 years of ministry.



Editor J. Everett Sneed often faces multiple stacks of mail and must make many decisions to sort out possible content for the paper. News value must be weighed before assignments are made when coverage is requested. Letters to the editor must be scrutinized to see if they meet criteria for publication. Then there are finances to manage, staff meetings to conduct, and a speaking schedule to meet. In spite of the schedule, Dr. Sneed finds time to teach occasionally at his local church, Park Hill in North Little Rock, and sometimes supplies the pulpit there.

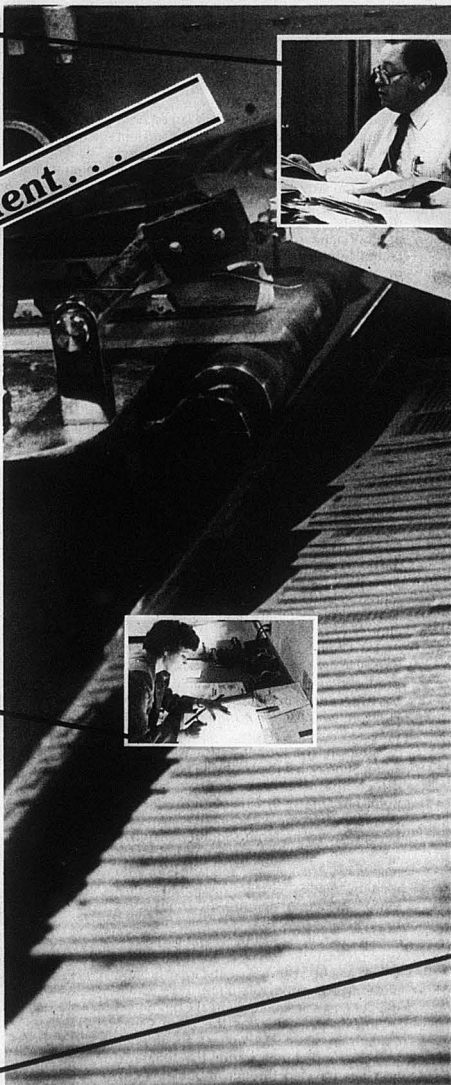


## It takes a lot of commitment . . .

Betty J. Kennedy, ABN managing editor, looks for opportunities to add a creative touch to the publication whenever possible. Graphics, whether in ads or to help communicate visually the words of articles, are the result. Besides design for better communication, she turns out news, feature and opinion articles and works to plan promotion in the magazine for the programs of the state convention. She sings in the choir at Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock, and has served on the pastor search committee that just completed 14 months of work.

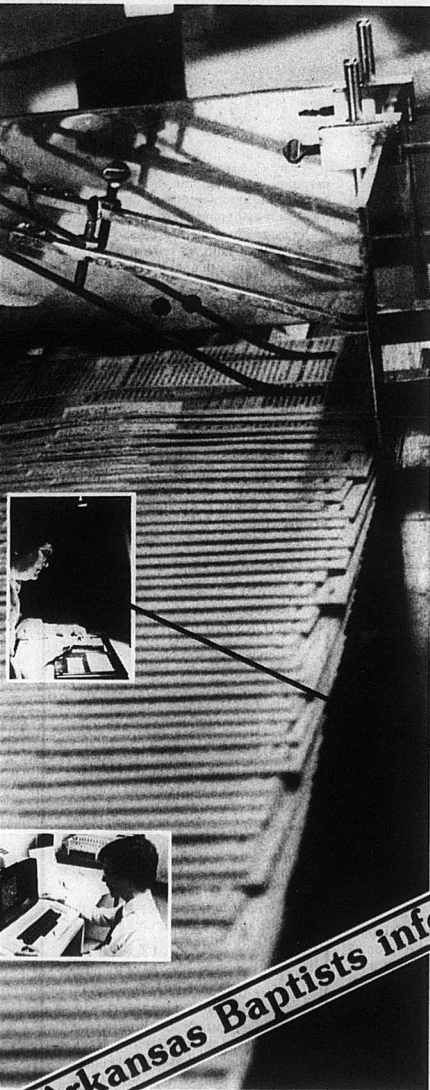


Mark Kelly, staff writer and copy editor for the Newsmagazine, besides writing articles, works with the content of the ABN from the styling and sizing process through proof reading to preparing mechanicals of pages. He uses the latest technology to prepare articles so they are already formatted into pages when they come from the computerized typesetter. He also travels the state covering news and gathering materials for features. Mark is a deacon at Otter Creek Church in Little Rock, and serves as Church Training Director, which may include filling in to teach the preschoolers.



Pages and pages of labels are attached to about 60,000 copies of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine fresh off the presses at Twin City Printing & Litho in North Little Rock.

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Arkansas Baptists, through a Cooperative Program allotment, are committed to providing each week an average of 3¾ tons of newsprint, 65 pounds of ink and \$1640 of postage fees to produce and distribute a publication that gives them a multifaceted look at their state convention, their denomination and their world.

Arkansas Baptists can be justifiably proud of their support for keeping the issues and events before the Baptists in the pew as well as the leaders of the local congregations and the denominational servants. The story of what Baptists are doing together is not privileged information when Baptists have a state paper. Most times it is good news, but there are days when the events Baptists must face are stories of disagreement, difficulties, or a dilemma, calling for God's people to act to remedy the situation.

When Baptists have the right information, they can be trusted to make the right decision. George W. Truett, long-time Dallas pastor, phrased it this way: "If you give Southern Baptists the facts they'll do the right thing."

But the publication would not be possible without another level of commitment—personal commitment. A full-time staff of six and two part-time staff average 320 hours per week, 400 miles on the road, and they work under deadline pressure constantly. But personal commitment goes even deeper. Whether the position is editor, reporter, photographer or clerk, it is more than a job. The workday often is not counted by the clock. In addition the commitment does not stop with the work necessary to produce a publication.

One staff member is Church Training director at his church. Another has committed to playing the piano for a fledgling mission congregation. One staff member preaches, teaches and holds revivals, while another sings in the choir and serves on her church's Pastor Search Committee.

The commitment is more than professional. Your state paper staff works in their own local churches, spending hours preparing and serving. It keeps them in touch with the Newsmagazine's reason for being—serving those local bodies of believers.

*Millie Gill's work as photographer for the ABN takes her to all corners of the state and often includes working on her knees or on a step ladder for a better vantage point. Getting news and feature photos takes her out in storms and into sweltering darkrooms. She collects information and composes the popular feature "Update" about people and churches around the state. She is active in singles activities at Second Church in Little Rock, where she is a member, and often uses her musical skills to play the piano where she is needed.*



ep Arkansas Baptists informed



## One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

### Endowments and giving for tomorrow

It is not easy to give money away wisely, even when there is plenty to give. Wealthy foundations with large staffs have discovered giving away their money is no small job. How can they be sure it will be spent for a good cause? Which of the many good causes is most important? If a good cause supported today dies tomorrow, was it really worth it?

The answer to at least one of those questions is found in giving to establish endowments. I have always had a favorable view toward endowments because, as a child, I heard my father tell how the endowment of Ouachita Baptist College during the Great Depression kept Ouachita from closing its doors when Arkansas Baptists could not provide financial support.

Indebtedness and threats of bankruptcy were the harsh realities of the 1930s, not only for business institutions, but for many Baptist institutions as well. Ouachita was one of

the fortunate ones with at least a modest endowment. Professor J. G. Lile, father of R. A. "Brick" Lile of Little Rock, was one of those dedicated leaders who helped raise the first half-million dollars of Ouachita's endowment. Without it, Ouachita could never have survived the Depression.

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Occasionally someone asks, "Doesn't it show lack of faith to raise long-term endowments, rather than to depend entirely on new gifts every year?" There is a difference between presumption and faith: going to the pump and waiting for the water is presumption; but holding out the cup and pumping like the dickens is faith supported by work.

Some gifts are spent almost immediately for a Christian cause, and that is good. Other gifts endow a Christian cause, invested to ensure support in good years and bad, for all time to come, and that is even better. I have seen God bless both kinds of gifts in support of Christian education.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.



## Woman's viewpoint

Mary Maynard Sneed

### When our little one dies

The *Inferno*, Dante's poetic drama of a journey through hell, speaks of a region called Limbo as the abode of unbaptized children. Here, according to the poet, the lost child is condemned to spend eternity in a state of melancholy and desire without hope.

Fortunately, the scripture makes no such pronouncement concerning the child who dies before reaching the age of moral consciousness. While every child born into this world is a sinner by nature and in need of salvation, yet, compared to those who have personally disobeyed God, the little child is relatively innocent and possesses the attributes of dependence and trustfulness regarded as evidence of Christian character.

Jesus tells us unless we are converted and humble ourselves like little children, we will not enter the kingdom (Matt. 18:3-4). Paul assures us the unborn child, having done neither good nor bad, is called according to the purpose of God's election (Rom. 9:11).

Children are assured of Christ's special compassion and are under God's grace until they reach the age of accountability. "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me," says Jesus, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Moreover, he says, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for... in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father... Even so, it is not the will of your Father... that any of these little ones should perish" (Matt. 18:10,14).

The words of Christ do not imply either that little children are sinless or subjects for baptism but only that they possess the trust which is basic to salvation. In no case is baptism prerequisite to salvation. It is, quite simply, an illustration of the new birth which has taken place in the believer. Jesus promised the thief on the cross, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Can you imagine Christ rejecting anyone in the next life that he has received in this world?

His words are, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine... and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:14-16). When our little ones open their eyes in paradise, we know that they shall be with him.

Mary Maynard Sneed is a North Little Rock homemaker and an adult Sunday School teacher at Park Hill Church.

*April 17, 1985*

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*Margaret Denney*



## One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

### Endowments and giving for tomorrow

It is not easy to give money away wisely, even when there is plenty to give. Wealthy foundations with large staffs have discovered giving away their money is no small job. How can they be sure it will be spent for a good cause? Which of the many good causes is most important? If a good cause supported today dies tomorrow, was it really worth it?

The answer to at least one of those questions is found in giving to establish endowments. I have always had a favorable view toward endowments because, as a child, I heard my father tell how the endowment of Ouachita Baptist College during the Great Depression kept Ouachita from closing its doors when Arkansas Baptists could not provide financial support.

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## Foreign Mission Board responds to China opening

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Quickly expanding opportunities for professional and social service in China have led the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to create an office to help Southern Baptists respond.

The Cooperative Services International office, approved by Foreign Mission Board members at their April meeting in Nashville, Tenn., will help Southern Baptists identify and meet needs expressed by Chinese Christian and secular institutions.

The office eventually may seek service opportunities in several other countries closed to missionaries, in cooperation with the board's geographic area directors. But involvement beyond China is at least a year or two down the road, according to Charles Bryan, senior vice-president for overseas operations.

Potential opportunities may include openings in China for Southern Baptist educators technicians, medical and professional personnel, as well as development of Chinese-American institutional relationships and pro-

vision of material resources.

"We will not be sending missionaries," said Bryan. "We will not be initiating anything." The board will respond to opportunities and needs as groups in China identify them, he said.

Foreign missionaries have not been able to work in China for more than 30 years. There is no indication from either the Chinese government or Chinese Christians this is going to change. But China's increasing openness to the outside world, coupled with eased restrictions on religious activities, has enabled Chinese Christians to expand their work and their contacts with church groups outside China.

The Three-Self Patriotic Movement, China's officially recognized Protestant movement, has opened or re-opened some 2,000 churches nationwide, along with a number of seminaries. Estimates of attendance at thousands of home meetings, often

called house churches, range from 5 million to 50 million.

In March, Chinese Protestant leaders announced they will form an independent foundation to promote "health, education and social service projects" in China. They said involvement in the Amity Foundation will be open to overseas Christians and religious institutions. The foundation will channel both funds and personnel to humanitarian projects in China, without sacrificing Chinese Protestants' "three-self" principles of self-support, self-government and self-propagation free of foreign control.

The director of the Cooperative Services International office, whom the board hopes to elect in May, will gather information on China opportunities, develop relationships with Chinese Christian leaders and secular institutions (such as universities) and help Southern Baptists seek appropriate involvement.



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## Desert creeps into Mali, brings hunger in its wake

MOPTI, Mali (BP)—The unknowing visitor could almost slip through Mali's Niger delta without seeing the hunger there.

But Southern Baptist missionaries Norman and Beverly Coad recognize the signs of an ancient culture crippled by an increasingly hostile environment. And they're working to see Mali's hungry people receive 4,000 tons of grain in the critical time just before harvest.

Hunger in Mali isn't seen in the massive refugee camps which collect the suffering in some parts of Africa. Instead, it shows in the faces of families struggling to survive as the desert sand covers the land where their people have grazed livestock and farmed for centuries.

Throughout the Niger River delta, traditionally Mali's breadbasket, the signs of devastation of an environment pile up. Three

men bend in the broiling sun, attacking the hard ground with short hoes. Three years of drought have given farmers every reason to give up. Last year, some farmers sowed four times and reaped nothing. But across the delta, fields are tilled, ready if the rains come.

Mali's nomadic tribes of the north move south into more populated areas as their animals die and they sell off other resources. They go as far as their resources will take them and stop—usually on the edge of a town, a foreign environment for them.

One group of 13 nomadic families has built its huts in a millet field outside Koro. The owners let the families camp there because their animals' dung will enrich the field. When planting time comes, they will have to move on. Already they have buried seven of their group—a man, a woman and five children—in that millet field.

(BP) photo / Joanna Pinneo



The future looks bleak for nomads like this woman camped outside Koro, Mali. In five months, this woman has seen seven friends die of hunger and disease.

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# Your state convention at work

## Missions

### New work and PGG

Many churches in Arkansas are willing to sponsor new work. Yet they do not have enough finances to purchase property, build a building and support a pastor. In some cases, the association can supply some resources, but not all that is needed.

The gap can be filled by the Mission Site Fund, Church Pastoral Aid and the Revolving Loan Fund. One of the Cooperative Program's great blessings is that churches join forces in putting their missions money together so it can go where it is most needed.

Now, more new congregations are being started. That demands more mission funds.

As Planned Growth in Giving helps church members develop in stewardship, churches will be supported better. The church then has more to share for missions through the Cooperative Program. — **Floyd Tidworth Jr.**, church extension director



Tidworth

## Christian Life Council

### Can Sunday

Action was recently taken during a meeting of the Arkansas Baptist World Hunger Committee to encourage churches to designate one Sunday a month "Can Sunday." Canned goods would be brought then.

Last year, Arkansas Baptists had an excellent increase in monetary world hunger receipts. It is hoped more Arkansas Baptist churches this year will enter more

vigorously in meeting the hunger needs, beginning at home.

Besides contributing money, please consider facilitating the suggestion of the World Hunger Committee and have a "Can Sunday" each month. These canned goods would be used for local and area needs of hungry people. Some could be used by the state Brotherhood's Disaster Relief program.

Great blessings carry great responsibilities. We must be responsible in endeavors to practice the Golden Rule. If your church is not involved in doing something for hungry people, pray positive efforts will be soon carried out. Such efforts add credibility to our efforts to win people spiritually.

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat" (Matt. 25:35). — **Bob Parker**, director



Parker

## Annuity/Stewardship

### Is PGG for you?

Is Planned Growth in Giving designed primarily to benefit the denomination? While it is possible some may interpret Planned Growth in Giving as another program to raise money, it is first of all a call to commitment.

The call to commitment is an individual call. Church members are asked to study their giving and to set vision goals. Planned Growth in Giving calls our people to better money management. It urges Baptists to increase their giving to local churches beyond the present two percent level in Southern Baptist life.

All the teaching, goal setting, programming and visiting takes place on the local level. These activities in Planned Growth in Giving will help church members understand how Baptists minister together.

If the church increases its gifts to associational missions, it will be by a vote of the members. If, through Planned Growth in Giving, a church increases its mission support through the Cooperative Program, it will come as a result of local church action.

When 20 percent of the members give 80 percent of the gifts in the average Baptist church, we need growth in giving. The non-givers need a challenge and the marginal givers need encouragement. Planned Growth in Giving picks up on Paul's challenge to the Corinthians to "abound in this grace also" (2 Cor. 8:7). — **James A. Walker**, director

## Woman's Missionary Union

### Fun at GA Camp

Jennifer Allen is a sixth grade GA at Immanuel Church, Little Rock. She has been active in attending state GA events. Jennifer shares her experiences at GA Camp.

"At GA Camp, we learned games that introduced us to new friends. It was a great experience to get to know many counselors and our own cabin friends. In the cabin, we were very supportive of each other. At night before we went to bed, we got in a group and talked about our experiences. At the end of camp, we collected addresses and phone numbers.

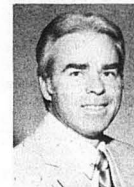
"My decision at GA Camp was to become a missionary. I had not made it public until recently. If you want to have fun this summer, go to GA Camp. It is an experience you'll never forget."

GA Camp provides a missions learning experience at Camp Paron. The dates for GA Camp are June 17-21, June 24-28, July 1-5, July 8-12. All girls finished 3rd-6th grades are welcomed. For information contact the state WMU Office, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. — **Pat Glascock**, GA/Mission Friends director.

## Sunday School

### People Search training

Training for Associational People Search/Literature Distribution leadership teams will be provided on May 7 at Fayetteville, First; Hope, First; Ozark, First; and Mountain Home, First. On May 9, the training will be repeated at North Little Rock, First; Brinkley, First; Jonesboro, First; and Monticello, First.



Hinkson

Each association enlists seven leaders who will attend one of the above training sessions. These leaders will train local leaders in associational clinics at a later date. In addition to the People Search chairman, the following chairmen should be enlisted: territorial, packets and materials, task force, publicity, cultivation and processing.

This is a must meeting for associational teams in order for them to provide enthusiastic leadership for church teams.

If you have questions about the Evangelistic People Search/Scripture Distribution please feel free to give us a call in the Sunday School or Evangelism departments.

— **Ed Hinkson**, assistant director

## Family and Child Care

### This is a safe place

Emergency receiving homes in Little Rock, Sherwood and Camden provide immediate care and protection for abused, neglected or abandoned children until an appropriate plan for the child can be worked out. These shelters provide physical, emotional, educational and spiritual care in a loving Christian environment. Immediate needs are met: if the child is hungry, we offer food; if dirty, we bathe; if sick, medical attention will be provided. We may need to be close, or distant, be verbal or non-verbal, be touching or not touching. Usually, our first words are something like "We're glad you're here. This is a safe place."

We are glad to serve these children. Last year, the three shelters provided care for 278 children (many victims of sexual abuse). Two hundred forty-eight of these children were 12 years old or younger. One hundred seventeen were pre-schoolers. Twenty-six were less than a year old. The largest age group was 30 six-year olds. The average length of stay was 21 days.

Thank you, Arkansas Baptists, for providing a safe place for the abused, the neglected and the abandoned, for Jesus said, "... Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brothers, ye have done it unto me." — **David Perry**, director, Little Rock area office

## International

### *Faith in spite of suffering*

by Mark Coppenger, First Church, El Dorado

Basic passage: John 40:1 to 42:6

Focal passage: John 40:1-9; 42:1-6

Central truth: Suffering can damage our spiritual judgment.

Through the centuries, men have offered arguments for the existence of God. But there is, on the flip side, an argument against the existence of God as the Bible pictures him. Our text for this week addresses this challenge to Christian faith, the argument from evil. In a nutshell, it claims that the suffering of innocents proves that God lacks either power or love.

abbi Kushner's popular book, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, provides an answer. But his answer does not square with Scripture. He makes the outrageous claim that God is not in total control of the universe, that he is not sovereign. This comforts Kushner because it allows him to love God. By believing that God could not prevent his son Aaron's early death, he can steer clear of blaming God for not rescuing the boy.

Christian Scientists and Hindus take another tack. They simply deny that evil is real. On their account, it's just an illusion. But this ignores Scripture too.

The third response, the Christian one, the one which finds support in this Sunday's text, maintains both God's power and love. It claims that God's goodness is compatible with suffering and evil. It calls for faith that God, in his infinite wisdom, allows suffering to serve his loving purposes.

We're all familiar with ways in which suffering produces good things, such as patience and compassion, and even the book of Job. God demands that we trust him to manage things properly. And when we question this, he quite rightly confronts us, as he confronted Job, with "Who do you think you are?" Anything but faith at this point is sin. Job did well to "repent in dust and ashes." So should Rabbi Kushner.

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## Life and Work

### *Perils of prosperity*

by Clyde P. Spurgin, First Church, Piggott

Basic passage: Amos 3:10, 15; 4:2; 6:1, 4-8

Focal passage: Amos 6:1, 4-9

Central truth: Things are not always what they seem to be.

It is so easy for us to criticize and point judging fingers at others deceived by riches and prosperity. Instead, we should learn by observing those suffering such deception.

One man was a victim of such deception. He was industrious, even as a boy. He was blessed with a good marriage, children, adequate income and a comfortable home. They were respectable church members.

An overwhelming desire for wealth obsessed them. They moved to Florida and embarked upon their quest for wealth. New relationships were formed. "Wining and dining" cultivated the right friendships to help him achieve his goal.

It seemed he had succeeded. He had acquired a beautiful home, swimming pool, expensive cars, etc. But in pursuit of prosperity, Bible study, church attendance and family worship were neglected.

Eventually, alcohol, marital problems and unwise business investments left him a broken man. At age 52, he died broke, divorced and alienated from his children.

Oh, the perils of prosperity! One of the dangers stated in Amos 3:10 is that it can cause people to lose their respect for righteousness and honesty.

Prosperity also can create a false sense of security. Amos warns, "How terrible it will be for you that have such an easy life in Zion and for you that feel safe in Samaria. . . ."

False pride is another danger. God issues a solemn warning, "I hate the pride of the people of Israel; I despise their luxurious mansions. . . . God's displeasure with them was not their comfortable living, but they had forgotten the source of their prosperity (God) and were thinking only of their own pleasure and satisfaction.

"Give him enough rope, and he will hang himself" is a close equivalent to what God was saying, "As the Sovereign Lord is holy, he has promised, the days will come when they will drag you away with hooks; everyone of you will be like a fish on a hook. . . ."

Prosperity can be dangerous for individuals, families, churches, conventions and nations. As we are prospered by God, let us ever be grateful for his blessings and show that gratefulness by dealing fairly and honestly with God and our fellowman.

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## Bible Book

### *Kingdom: present and future*

by James C. Walker, Archview Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Luke 17:1-37

Focal passage: Luke 17:20-32, 35-37

Central truth: The nature of God's kingdom demands that Christians always be faithful.

The question put to Jesus by the Pharisees, and his answer, are well worth the serious study of Southern Baptists today. Doubtless, these Pharisees, whether sincerely searching for an answer or simply trying to entrap Jesus, were thinking in terms of an earthly, political kingdom. Jesus was building a kingdom that involved, first of all, the complete surrender of men to his rule and lordship. The kingdom rule must begin in the hearts of men before it can be expressed in any visible, measurable way.

We stand in danger of making the same basic mistake as those first century Jews. In our quest for "noise, noses and nickles," in our drive to look good on the Uniform Church Letter to the association, in our "additions at any cost" mentality, how really different are we? We need to be reminded that the Kingdom of God consists of the hearts of men and therefore is not always easily measured by our external methods of computation.

The statement of Jesus concerning a time when the disciples would long to "see one of the days of the Son of Man" seems to indicate a time of difficulty and suffering. Popular theology and many popular preachers of our day seem to have totally missed this and other plain references to the suffering of God's people. The blanket promises of health, wealth and freedom from trouble for those who know and follow Jesus are not found in the New Testament. Cannot the power of God be seen as surely when one is delivered through a time of trouble as when he is delivered from it?

The sins of the days of Noah and Lot emphasized by Jesus were not the sins of the flesh as we normally think of these. Indeed, the activities mentioned were not sinful in and of themselves. Rather, their sinfulness was in the careless disregard for the things of God with which they did these things. Because of this carelessness toward God, they were totally unprepared for divine judgment when it came. Since the same danger exists for our generation, let us share the message of the certainty of our Lord's return rather than debating particular questions about that event.

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## 'Increase CP giving' ex-SBC president urges

LOUISVILLE, Miss. (BP)—The last lay president of the Southern Baptist Convention is asking churches to resist suggestions they cut mission giving and increase their contributions through the Cooperative Program.

Owen Cooper, president of the SBC for two terms 1973-75, spoke to the spring meeting of the Winston County Association in Louisville, Miss., April 15.

"I speak as one former Southern Baptist Convention president who urges you not to withhold money from the Cooperative Program, but rather you dispatch your money regularly and promptly, also that you not decrease Cooperative Program giving but rather that you increase it progressively over the years to come."

He was responding to recent remarks by the three past presidents of the SBC concerning the Cooperative Program, the voluntary, national unified budget of the SBC.

James T. Draper Jr., SBC president 1982-84, has said the Cooperative Program might col-

lapse if current president Charles Stanley is not re-elected, due to a "massive attempt" by SBC institutional heads opposing him.

Draper said his own church might withhold its Cooperative Program gifts if it would help move the convention beyond "gripe sessions" and to "force people to sit down and adopt a strategy to resolve our problems."

Bailey Smith, SBC president 1980-82, said his church already had cut its gifts by \$50,000 as a protest against a "seminary president who is going around the country on Cooperative Program money trying to defeat Charles Stanley."

Adrian Rogers, SBC president 1979-80, has said his church, "has some deep theological convictions and I will not crucify those convictions on the altar of cooperation."

In contrast, Cooper urged his audience to remember the task before them as Christians: to fulfill Jesus Christ's Great Commission to "go into all the world and make disciples."

## Missouri Baptist executive board affirms unity, CP

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)—Calling for "healing among Southern Baptists" and for "God's will, not man's, to be accomplished in our denomination," members of the Missouri Baptist Convention executive board unanimously resolved to commit themselves to "earnest prayer" for those two concerns.

The resolution also called for faith in the Holy Bible speaking for itself; re-emphasis on the Cooperative Program and Bold Mission Thrust; Christian statesmanship within SBC controversy, and cooperation among messengers to the 1985 SBC annual meeting.

Board member Max Glover, who presented the resolution to the full board, said the resolution was written in response to "bitter attitudes" within the SBC.

Referring specifically to former SBC president James T. Draper Jr.'s recent comments, Glover declared, "I thought he went too far when he said he would withhold Cooperative Program gifts" if Charles Stanley is not re-elected SBC president.

Glover said his goal was "to stir people to be sure we're within God's will in everything we undertake."

## Parks won't back Stanley; sees threat to missions

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—The head of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board said April 19 he will not support the reelection of Charles Stanley as SBC president.

R. Keith Parks said his decision was based on a threat to the cause of missions which he sees in recent developments within the 14.3-million member denomination.

The mission board administrator said attacks on Southern Baptists' cooperative mission approach and suspicion cast on SBC agencies have erupted into a distrust of Southern Baptist missionaries.

Parks said he felt compelled to speak out after he attended the funeral of Baker James Cauthen, FMB executive-director emeritus, who died April 15. Parks said he "remembered how this spiritual giant had given 40 years to calling us to our central task (missions)."

For 60 years, Southern Baptists have supported missions and other denominational programs through the Cooperative Program. The denomination's home and foreign mission programs receive more than two-thirds of all money made available to support denomination-wide programs.

When threats are made to withhold funds

and churches begin to reduce Cooperative Program giving, Parks said, the result is that "the missionaries are the ones becoming hostage to the conflict and the lost of the world are the losers."

Parks described Stanley as an outstanding preacher and said he has nothing against him personally. But he urged Southern Baptists, when they meet for their annual convention, to choose officers and agency trustees "who are unquestionably committed both to the Bible and to our cooperative convention approach to missions."

Parks said there is no drift toward liberalism in the convention. He said he resented implications agency heads are not "Bible-believing Southern Baptists" and declared "without equivocation that I and the other agency heads believe the Bible and are as committed to it as any of those who would seek to dismantle our convention."

The accusations have come, Parks said, at a time when "our denomination continues to grow in missions, in students in our seminaries, in evangelism, in giving and in every other way convention strength can be measured.

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