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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Arkansas Baptist

newsmagazine

APRIL 4, 1968

personally speaking

Arkansas writers



ABERNATHY, Berryman, Coleman, Cooper, Hollaway, McDonald (Photo by Robert Jackson).

WRITING Life and Work Sunday School materials is really not as hilarious an assignment as this picture of Arkansas writers might make it appear. (The group were in Nashville last week for three days of briefing before beginning assignments for 1969 and 1970 materials.)

Pointing to writing instructions he and his associates had worked out for the conference in advance is Ernest L. Hollaway, native Arkansan, Ouachita graduate, and former missionary to Japan, who is now editor of Life and Work materials for Young People, with the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Others in the picture:

Jerry Don Abernathy, pastor of First Church, Crossett; Jim Berryman, of the faculty of Ouachita University; and myself, all of whom have assignments for Young People; and L. H. Coleman, pastor of Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff; and C. Don Cooper, pastor of First Church, Star City, who have assignments for adults.

Incidentally, 60 per cent of the total orders received by the SS Board now are for Life and Work materials, as compared with 40 per cent for the Uniform, or International series. The publishing of two series of studies rather than one gives the churches a choice and there is no effort being made to promote one series over the other.

Arkansas' group was the largest of any of the state representations, with the possible exception of the Republic of Texas.

Erwin L. McDonald

IN THIS ISSUE:

MECHANIZATION has established itself as a definite part of American business life—and if one SBC executive has his way, it will be part of Southern Baptist life as well. Turn to page 12 for the story of the recent feasibility study resulting in a proposal for setting up a Baptist computer center which would involve the entire SBC network of operations.

THE 79th annual Arkansas WMU Convention has come and gone. Harriet Hall attended, and reports the events of the meeting to our readers. It's on pages 8-9, with pictures.

COVER story, page 7.

Arkansas Baptist newsmagazine

Volume 67, No. 14
April 4, 1968

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Opinions expressed in editorials and signed articles are those of the writer. Member of Southern Baptist Press Association, Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press, Association.

Abbreviations used in creating news items: BP Baptist Press; CB Church Bulletin; DP Daily Press; EP Evangelical Press; LC Local Correspondent; AB Associational Bulletin; EBPS European Baptist Press Service.

On social issues

FURTHER evidence of a growing concern of evangelicals for applying Christianity to social issues is reflected in a statement issued in Washington recently by leaders of several evangelical denominations. The group of 25 listed five ways conservative evangelicals have failed to present a "whole gospel" to the world:

"1. We have not made clear the full implications of the love of God for all men;

"2. We have been insensible to the biblical concern for justice and mercy;

"3. We have failed to present to many men the living reality of Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord, as an alternative to the frustrations, despair and spiritual death in which they exist;

"4. The church has not demonstrated before the world the oneness of the body of Christ across all boundaries of race and class; and

"5. Our personal contacts have often been limited to our own race and class, to the disregard of the body of Christ and the entire family of man."

The statement expressed determination that evangelical Christians give meaning to what some called "the social implications of the gospel of Christ."

One spokesman from the group said that evangelicals have preached a partial gospel, "the same as the liberals have done."

This was the third time the group has met in what have been called "Key Bridge" meetings to explore ways and means of developing evangelical ecumenism. All of the meetings have been held in the Marriott Motor Hotel on the Virginia side of the Francis Scott Key Memorial Bridge, Washington, D. C. The recent meeting was the first to be open to the press.

Convenors for the third session were Leighton Ford, associate of Billy Graham, and Carl F. H. Henry, retiring editor of *Christianity Today*.

Commented UPI correspondent Louis Cassels: "The millions of American Protestants who call themselves 'evangelicals' traditionally have been conservative not only in their approach to theology but also in their attitudes toward social issues. But within the past year, there has been in-

creasing evidence of evangelical concern about racial discrimination, urban blight, poverty, and other problems which they've hitherto tended to treat as 'political' rather than moral issues."

One of the most significant movements among Southern Baptists toward applying Christianity is, as we have said before, the week-day ministries programs sponsored by the Home Mission Board for local churches and associations and state conventions.

That the broader concept of Christianity—which shows concern for the well-being of persons not just spiritually but in their totality as human beings—is becoming more widely accepted among us is one of the really hopeful signs of our day.

Attitude on war

An opinion survey conducted by several religious magazines reveals that anti-war sentiment is much stronger among ministers than among laymen. Fifty-seven percent of the ministers replying, but only 28 percent of the laymen, favored a bombing halt. Thirty-seven percent of the clergy and 60 percent of the laity were flatly opposed to the idea, and the rest were undecided.

On the question of whether the United States "should use all military strength short of nuclear weapons to achieve victory," only 30 percent of the clergy but 60 percent of the laymen answered affirmatively.

Magazines conducting the poll, which received 35,000 replies, were *The Christian, Church and Home, The Episcopalian, The Lutheran, Together, Presbyterian Survey, United Church Observer, United Church Herald and Presbyterian Life*.

There is much to indicate that we are caught in a hopeless situation in Vietnam and that the tragedy will become greater in direct proportion to how much we escalate our efforts and how long before we find our way out. When a man is caught in quicksand, the more he fights and the more he increases his load, the faster he sinks. Some of us have not yet been convinced that communism can be destroyed by destroying people.

Minitorial

WE doubt that the ancient Greeks were anticipating our 20th Century beatniks when they said: "Enjoy the season of thy prime...One summer turns the kid into a shaggy goat."

The people speak

Faith in Christ

I have recently read the statement of Dr. Paschall, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, concerning faith in Christ. And I say Amen, Amen. It is cheering to have an outstanding leader as this to take a firm stand for faith in our only Savior. There are so many forces today trying to destroy that faith.

I am an oldster, a has been, but I still think, yes I know that a true faith in Christ Son of God, Divine son of the virgin Mary is the supreme power to fulfill the need and solve the perplexing problems of this uncertain age of mankind.

But when many theologians advocate and promote the theory that we have reached such a state of intelligence in a scientific age that we should no longer believe in "the superstitions of a decadent age" I see the walls of Jerusalem being torn down and the enemies of Christ coming in to take possession of his Church and plunging the souls of this generation into a devil's hell.

When our so-called intelligencia write best seller books of pornography and teach that Jesus was a bastard, the illegitimate son of Mary and a priest or Roman soldier how can we expect our churches to prosper, racial problems solved, mission work to succeed, or souls to be saved?—Fred H. Ward, 324 Spring Ave., Camden, Ark. 71701

On beauty contests

I read the Arkansas Baptist with great interest, because I am a Baptist and interested in every phase of our work.

I would like to express some of my views and interests concerning our Christian Colleges. I am the mother of three sons. The two older ones got their degrees from State Colleges. They are Christian boys, but I know from some of their conversations many times it wasn't easy.

Our youngest boy is a ministerial student at Southern Baptist College and now I have become very interested in our two church schools. I have made visits to Southern Baptist College and appreciate the instructors and the great work they are doing. However, they need our prayers and financial assistance.

But one thing that has aroused me very much is concerning the Beauty Contest recently conducted on Ouachita campus. I am sure the girls who won the contests are good Christian girls but why have them to expose themselves in bathing suits to be judged? After all aren't bathing suits to be

worn in water?

This is a worldly event, carried on in our cities, various organizations and State Colleges.

I am sorry that I never had a daughter, but I am proud of all beautiful girls. "Beauty is as Beauty does" is an old saying but very truthful. If I did have a daughter I would never be in favor of her entering any Beauty Contest; more especially if not fully dressed.

Let's have clean fun, sports, and recreation at our Christian Colleges, but some where we are going to have to be different. Don't we as Christians need to show the world we are different?—Mrs. Loyd Byler, Sage, Ark.

Arkie in Bangkok

Thank you so much for sending me a copy of the article "Saigon Story" written by my husband and printed in your magazine. I was very happy to see it and appreciate so much your interest.

Although our permanent address released by Richmond is Decatur, Ga., where my husband's mother lives, I am a native of Arkansas. I grew up in Springdale and lived there most of my life. My parents still live there. I was a member of First Church, Springdale, for many years, and also First Church, Fayetteville, and I graduated from U of A. Arkansas still is home for me, and has a very special place in my heart.—Mrs. James F. Humphries, Box 832, Bangkok, Thailand

Called at 67

With the trend as it is today, I do not suppose that a Man in his senior years can get recognition whatever.

Well I am not averse to teaching, but I am a strong believer in God called people.

Now I am what you call an elder citizen, I was called to preach 3 years ago. I am an ordained Baptist minister.

I only know what the bible teaches, and I base my messages on that.

I am not afraid to preach about sin and Hell. But many college trained preachers will not preach on it.

I am 70 years old, I was called by God to Preach when I was 67, I fought that call for about a year, but finally I come to the conclusion that GOD did not place an age limit on his servants.

Since then I have done pastor supply, held two revivals, was pastor of a small church for 17 months.—L. A. Elliott, P. O. Box 46, Mountain Home, Arkansas 72658

Nero fiddled!

When you have an essay contest on: WHY I QUIT SUNDAY SCHOOL, my entry will be something like this.

Religion's purpose is human salvation. The maximum number of souls can be saved under the conditions of maximum social justice. The better the government the better the climate for the salvation of souls. Sunday Schools should, by all means possible, work to improve government.

The notion that religion and politics should not be mixed seems largely responsible for our Sunday Schools' detachment from present reality. No religious group should seek to force its sectarian views on others through secular government. However, beliefs in human rights shared by most religions should be the basis for continual efforts for better government at all levels. All voting age Sunday School classes should spend a considerable part of their formal sessions toward this end, instead of rehashing certain platitudes and theological ideas.

If I knew a local Sunday School doing anything of significance, directly or indirectly, for better secular government I would be a regular attendant. Nero fiddled. Can there be any doubt of an analogy between him and adult christian Sunday Schools?—John G. Jackson, Ashdown, Ark.

Reaching the lost

The church stands in need of revival. Christians today must recommit themselves to reaching those without Christ. The lost will come to the church if the church will go visit the lost.

The lost are not easily won to Christ, but how can they be won unless we at least communicate with them? The lost will not be won through ignoring them.

America is becoming more pagan through the passing years rather than more Christian. America needs a Christian witness desperately.

Let's begin by asking the lost to come with us to the house of God, where Christ is preached.—L. H. Coleman, Pine Bluff

Languages used

JERUSALEM—The Hebrew language, dormant since the days of the Bible, has come back to full flower as the common language of Israel today. Approximately a million Jews in other lands also now regard it as their mother tongue.

Until 1900, Hebrew was reserved for scholarly writings and exchanges between learned Jews. (EP)

McGibney accepts

N. C. church post

William B. McGibney, minister of music and youth at Beech Street Church, Texarkana, will become minister of music and youth at First Church, Albenmarle, N. C., on April 28.

Mr. McGibney is a native of Kentucky and a graduate of Georgetown College. He has completed his residence work for the Master of Church Music degree at Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Worth.

He is married to the former Martha McMullen, a graduate of Wichita State University and Southwestern Seminary. The couple has a son and a daughter.

Dr. Elroy Lamb is pastor of Albermarle's First Church.

Williams to Russellville

Ed Williams has been called as minister of music for First Church, Russellville, on a part-time basis. He will



direct the adult and youth choirs, supervise the graded choir program, and direct the music in the worship services. Mr. Williams has the B.M.E. degree from Southern State College and the M.Ed. degree from the University of Arkansas. He was band director of Stephens Public Schools, 1960-1962, and of Lewisville Public Schools, 1962-1965.

He has served First Churches of Magnolia, Stamps, and Lewisville, as minister of music. He was interim minister of music for First Church, El Dorado, in 1967.

From 1965 to 1967 Mr. Williams was manager of Rushing Oil Company, El Dorado. He is presently employed as music instructor, Arkansas Valley Cultural Enrichment Project.

Mrs. Williams is the former Miss Dixie Rushing of El Dorado. The Williamses have two children, Diane and Edwin.

Correction

In the March 21 issue of the News-magazine the May 6-7-8 Pastors' Retreat was mentioned as a part of the promotion of the Crusade of the Americas. This retreat has no official connection with the Crusade, but subjects dealt with would contribute to the overall evangelistic emphasis.

Advance registration for the Retreat must be made to J. T. Elliff.



CHARLES TILTON JR.



JIMMIE FRANKS



JOEY FRANKS

Pilgrim's Rest can boast three star athletes

BY MARY ANN MESSICK

Baptist boys make good basketball players. The Pilgrim's Rest Church, Route 1, Gassville, can boast of three district all-stars and two all-staters in their congregation.

Joey Franks and Charles Tilton Jr. were named to the all-tournament team in the Class B junior boys, Area 3, tourney.

Jimmie Franks made the Area 3 senior boys all-star team and was voted the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

Jimmie and Joey are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Dean Franks. Charles' parents are Mr. and Mrs. Charles Tilton. All three are the grandsons of the late Herbert A. Messick, a well known White River Association minister.

The boys attend Cotter High School, which this year had the honor of having both the Junior and Senior Boys Basket-

Goodson to Missouri as academic dean

Carl Goodson, Arkadelphia, has accepted the position of Academic Dean for Missouri College, Saint Louis campus, it was announced by Dr. L. A. Foster, president. Dr. Goodson, now professor of religion at Ouachita University, will assume his new work June 1, at the close of the current school year.

He has taught in his present position since 1961. Previously, he was on the faculty of Southwest College, Bolivar, Mo., as professor of Bible and Greek, a position he filled for 15 years.

Dr. Goodson is a graduate of Southwest College and of William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo. His theological training was taken at Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky. and Central Seminary, Kansas City, Kan. He received the Master of Theology degree from Southern and the Doctor of Theology degree from Central.

ball teams go to the semi-finals of their state tourneys. Both teams won the State Sportsmanship trophies. The senior boys also won the district sportsmanship trophy and the sportsmanship award for the Green Forest Holiday Tournament.

Jimmie Franks and Charles Tilton were named to the all-star teams in their respective state tourneys. For Jimmie, who will graduate this year, it was the culmination of a successful basketball career in the Cotter schools. As a sixth-grader he was voted the Most Valuable PeeWee player in his district.

In 1965, when the Junior Warriors won the state tournament, he was voted the tourney's Most Valuable Player. Last year he was Area 3's MVP and tied with two other boys for MVP in the North Regional tourney and was named to the state all-star team.

SBC registration cards

Registration cards for messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston, Tex., June 4-7, are now available from the office of S. A. Whitlow, Baptist Building, 401 West Capitol, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201.

Churches and individuals are reminded of the increasingly rigid requirements for messengers to the Convention. Persons without properly church-endorsed certification cards are required to go before the Credentials Committee for approval.

Please write for your messenger registration cards at your earliest convenience.

Second Church, Jacksonville to hold dedication service



A public dedication service will be held Sunday, April 7, at 2 p.m. for the new 500-seat auditorium of Second Church, Jacksonville, pastored by Andy A. Kerr.

J. T. Elliff, State missions and evangelism secretary, will bring the dedicatory message. A coffee hour will follow.

The new plant contains over 7,000 square feet of space and was built at a cost of \$100,000. Bricking of existing buildings and the construction of open walkways are included in the total costs. Also included are new upholstered pews.

R and W Construction Company, No. Little Rock, was the builder.

Rascher visits OBU

Sigurd Rascher, world-famous saxophone virtuoso, made a three-day concert and lecture appearance at Ouachita University, April 1-3.

Easter program planned by Harmony Church, NLR

A special Easter Sunday program will be observed on April 14 by Harmony Church, North Little Rock.

Beginning at 10 a.m., with regular morning services, featured events include a dinner-on-the-ground, an Easter egg hunt for the children, singing and community fellowship.

A burning of the mortgage will be the highlight of the day, marking retirement of the church's indebtedness in half the originally scheduled time.

Major improvements to the church plant include eight new classrooms, air conditioning, heating, carpeting of the aisle and auditorium rostrum, new church furniture and a new piano.

Rev. Roy Stillman is pastor.

"Good News" concert

More than 600 teen-agers were present for a concert by the Singing Young Americans from Second Church, Little Rock, which was held March 15 at Cullendale First Church, Camden.

The concert followed the church's annual Spring Youth Banquet and an associational youth rally.

Interspersed in the "Good News" folk musical were testimonies by various group members and an appeal from Bill Bramlett for teen-agers to stand up and be counted for Christ. Mr. Bramlett is a former inmate of Tucker Prison farm, and currently serves as director of Hope House, a home for released prisoners which is operated by Second Church.

Robert A. Parker is pastor of Cullendale First Church.

TU attendance tops

Kenneth Andrews is training union director of Grand Avenue Church, Ft. Smith. His minister of education, Andrew Setliffe, has announced that the church's recently completed Training Union was the largest in the history of the church. The highest previous month was February, 1964, with an average attendance of 356. We believe that the increase in attendance was due to a great extent to the exceptional literature now available for every department of the Training Union. With these units of study we just cannot afford not to attend Training Union.—Ralph W. Davis



MR. ANDREWS

Churches merge

West Side and Dennison Street churches, located in Little Rock, recently voted to merge.

The real estate and buildings and some specified equipment, along with the membership roll, are a part of West Side Church, which is pastored by R. A. Hill. (CB)

Available for supply

Rev. Rick Goodrum has returned to Arkansas after a stay of three years in Georgia, and announces that he is available for supply work or a pastorate.

He formerly served the Ouachita Association and in Siloam Springs.

He may be reached by phone (MI 6-7741) or by letter at 4612 So. 29th St., Ft. Smith, 72901.



DEACONS ordained by First Church, Fayetteville, are shown here, left to right: Dsoin Martin, Leon Martin, Art Palmer, Jack A. Roberts and Jesse McCartney. An ordaining council of 40 participated in the service. Rev. Gilbert Morris of Greenland Church delivered the sermon. Dr. Andrew M. Hall of First Church, Fayetteville, offered the charge; and Dr. Alexander Best led in the ordination prayer. Dr. Don Brown, chairman of the local deacons, presented the official certificates.

JOHN THAD DUCKETT, 76, Enola, former chairman of the Faulkner County Democratic Central Committee, March 20.

A native of Florence, Ala., and a graduate of Florence State College, Mr. Duckett was a member of Enola Church, where he was a deacon. He was a member of the Enola Board of Education for 25 years.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Lucy Brady Duckett; a son, J. B. Duckett, North Little Rock; four daughters, Mrs. Brenton Hulsey of Alabama and Mrs. Kitchell Wilson, Mrs. Willie J. Cardin and Mrs. Arthur Havens, all of Conway; a sister, Mrs. Charles F. Dillard of Alabama, and 13 grandchildren.

MRS. DESSIE WOOD MATHIS, 65, Little Rock, March 20. The widow of William V. Mathis Sr., Mrs. Mathis was a member of First Church.

CHARLES E. FULLER, 80, heard for nearly 43 years over the Old Fashioned Revival Hour radio broadcast, in Pasadena, Calif., March 19. The pioneer radio evangelist began preaching in 1925 over a 100-watt station in Santa Ana, Calif. Gradually the broadcast was extended to cover the Western states, then coast to coast over the Mutual—and later the ABC—radio network. At present the broadcast is heard weekly on every continent over more than 500 radio stations with a combined total of 4,450,000 watts of power.



DR. FULLER

MISS EDNA TEAL, 88, emeritus Southern Baptist missionary to China, March 11, in Villa Rica, Ga. A native of Villa Rica, Miss Teal had made her home there in retirement.

A registered nurse, she was appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1910. She nursed and directed nurses' training at a Baptist hospital in Kiangtu (formerly Yangchow), China. From 1927 through 1941 she did general evangelistic work in Yangchow.

Interned briefly by the Japanese early in World War II, she was repatriated to the States in 1942, and retired the next year.

Johnson to Little Rock

Scott Johnson, who had served a year as minister of education and youth for Park Place Church, Hot Springs, has resigned to accept a similar position at Lifeline Church, Little Rock. O. Damon Shook is pastor of Park Place Church. (CB)



SINGING for dystrophy—The MIL Singers, sponsored by the Student Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, shown here left to right: Janette Thompson, Jerry Blaylock, leader, Becky Casteel and Lealon Worrell. The group will appear Easter Sunday on Little Rock's KARK-TV, Channel 4.



MISS GENNINGS



MR. CLAYBROOK

Miss Ouachita 1968

Helen Gennings, a sophomore from Batesville, was recently crowned Miss Ouachita Baptist University, in the second annual Miss OBU pageant.

The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Gennings of Batesville, Miss Gennings is a music education major at Ouachita. She is a member of Gamma Phi Social Club, the Association of Women Students, Serenaders, and the Ouachitones.

Other finalists were Diane Kirk, Morrilton, first runnerup; Brenda Bryan, Forrest City, second runnerup; Nancy Fray, North Little Rock, third runnerup; and Fran Rice, Waldron, fourth runnerup.

Miss Gennings will represent Ouachita in the Miss Arkansas contest July 10-13 in Hot Springs. She will also receive a one-semester tuition scholarship from Ouachita.

MIL Singers to appear on KARK-TV April 14

In a special salute to the Muscular Dystrophy Associations of America, Inc., the MIL Singers will appear in an hour of song at 2 p.m. Easter Sunday, April 14, on KARK-TV, Channel 4.

The group, directed by Jerry Blaylock, is sponsored by the Student Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

One of the nation's major national health agencies, MDAA's objectives in Arkansas are to foster scientific research into the cause and cure of muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular diseases; to render services to patients, locally through its affiliated chapters in Little Rock, Ft. Smith and Texarkana.

Local MDAA chapters are authorized to provide the following services to patients in their areas: pay fees for a consultative diagnostic examination and for physical therapy when recommended and supervised by a physician; pay for the purchase and repair of wheelchairs and various orthopedic devices where prescribed by a physician; conduct and pay for a wide variety of educational and recreational programs adapted to the capacities of patients; and to grant support to a clinic in a recognized medical institution, upon prior approval of the national office of the Association.

Information may be obtained by writing to Bill Shelby, Little Rock Chapter, MDAA, Inc., P. O. Box 1107, Little Rock, Ark. 72201.

Heads college board

Rev. P. E. Claybrook, Paragould, has been elected to the presidency of the board of trustees of Southern College, Walnut Ridge.

Mr. Claybrook is a graduate of Friendship High School, received the B. A. degree from Union University and the B. D. degree from Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

He has pastored churches in Tennessee and Kentucky and has been pastor of First Church, Paragould, since March, 1962. He is presently on the board of trustees, Arkansas Children's Home; advisory board, Southern College; and a member of the area advisory committee, Arkansas State University BSU. He participated in the Home Mission Board's 35th Simultaneous Alaska Crusade in October, 1963, and Lake Michigan's Simultaneous Crusade in 1966.

Mr. Claybrook was chosen Distinguished Baptist Minister of the Year by Southern College in 1967.

WMU Convention echoes from West Memphis

BY HARRIET HALL



BETWEEN SESSIONS—Taking time out to discuss the program are (from left, Mrs. Roy E. Snider, Camden, state president; Dr. Jesse C. Fletcher, Richmond, Va., secretary for missionary personnel, Foreign Mission Board; Miss Elaine Dickson, Birmingham, Ala., assistant to director, Promotions Divisions, WMU, Southern Baptist Convention, and Mrs. J. O. Spotts, day WMS president of the host church. Hundreds of women from all parts of the state were present for the three-day meeting.

Guests arriving for the 79th annual meeting of Woman's Missionary Union of Arkansas, held March 25-27, at First Church, West Memphis, were greeted by warm sunshine which gave little hint that only three days before the area had been buried in snow.

Mrs. Roy Snider, president, presided at each session and Miss Nancy Cooper, executive secretary-treasurer for the WMU Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, presented "Dear Ones Who Care", a devotional theme of excerpts of letters from Arkansas missionaries.

Among the many guest speakers were Mrs. James Watson, missionary to Spain; Rev. Jesse Kidd, missionary to Brazil; and Dr. and Mrs. J. W. Carney and family, missionaries to East Pakistan. Dr. Jesse Fletcher of the SBC Foreign Mission Board was also a featured speaker. Other keynote speakers included Dr. Arthur Rutledge, Executive Secretary of the Home Mission Board, Dr. Eva Marie Kennard, missionary to Internationals in the San Francisco Bay area of California, and Miss Elaine Dickson, representing the Promotion Division of WMU, SBC, Birmingham, Ala.

Special music included the Nightingale Singers, 54 nurses from Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis; the Shelby County Music Men; the Ladies Ensemble of the West Memphis church, and the Southern College choir. Miss Nancy Blair led congregational singing. R. D. Roberts, organist, and Mrs. Larry Peebles, pianist, assisted with the music.

One of the highlights of the Convention was the emphasis on the Crusade of the Americas. Flags of the Americas were presented at the closing portion of the Tuesday morning session—and as each flag "bowed" to the Christian flag it was a most impressive pageant. As Dr. Rutledge spoke on Tuesday he told of the vast amount of work that has gone into the planning and preparation for this great Crusade.

Here are some quotes from some of the guest speakers:

Dr. Rutledge: "Recently I was in Vietnam. My appreciation for our chaplains is even greater after seeing them in action. Let's remember them in prayer."

Dr. Kennard: "I am afraid that the church has been playing it safe—that it has not been changing culture, but rather it has been changed by culture."

Rev. Jesse Kidd: "The success of the evangelistic campaign in Brazil was not so much big things, as it was a product of many, many little things, such as a woman teaching scripture, a young girl inviting her unsaved friends to her home, and many other 'little' things."

Elaine Dickson: "The threats to the success of the Crusade of the Americas may be internal. Are we willing to pay the price of commitment?"

Dr. Kennard: "If we are to win others to Christ, particularly the internationals, we must first establish a deep, personal relationship."

Dr. Rutledge: (Referring to Project 500) "We want to carry the gospel to people in need."

Dr. Kennard: "Some of us have built our own cardboard version of a world in preference to God's world."... "There is something in all of us that would hate and condemn, rather than love. Jesus came to a world in need of love, life, and encouragement."

While there were moments of high inspiration, there were also moments of humor, as in every convention. Miss Dickson told the audience that over 7,000 cards for PACT have already been received in the Birmingham office. She referred to the card which may be sent



LOOKING over PACT cards at the WMU West Memphis meeting are, left to right, Miss Nancy Cooper, WMU executive secretary-treasurer, Arkansas Baptist State Convention; Mrs. Andrew Hall, First Church, Fayetteville; Mrs. Roy Snider, Camden, State WMU president; and Miss Elaine Dickson, WMU, SBC.

to the WMU office on which the sender requests a prayer partner for the Crusade of the Americas. One sender wrote, "Please send a partner for my daughter, which she will be interested in receiving."

"We're not sure how she meant that," Miss Dickson added.

Dr. Fletcher asked, "What are missionaries?" and commented, "Sometimes I think our own Baptist people don't understand what makes missionaries 'tick.' Missionaries are real people."

He further defined them by adding, "Missionaries are a group of people who know their limitations and have committed them to God. They don't know all the answers, but they have decided to work with the answers they have."

Here are a few additional quotes from the speakers:

Dr. Kennard: "The world cries—people don't always know they are crying, but they need us; as Christians we are called to be sign-posts, to point the way."

Mrs. Watson: "In Spain there are 10 cities of over 100,000 people with no evangelical witness." She added, "Pray for our 56 Baptist churches in Spain where 12 missionary couples are working."

Dr. Fletcher: "God takes ordinary men and uses them to perform extraordinary tasks."

During the business session the following officers were elected: President, Mrs. R. E. Snider, Camden; vice president, Mrs. J. A. Hogan, Sweet Home; recording secretary, Mrs. Jack Royce, Little Rock; treasurer, Miss Nancy Cooper. District representatives are Central, Mrs. Robert Gladden, Little Rock; East Central, Mrs. Coy Tommey, McCrory; West Central, Mrs. Faber Tyler, Ozark; North Central, Mrs. Harold Elmore, Mountain Home; Southeast, Mrs. Phillip May, Smackover; Southwest, Mrs. Carl Kluck, Arkadelphia; Northeast, Mrs. Wayne Friday, Blytheville; Northwest, Mrs. Andrew Hall, Fayetteville.

The closing message on Wednesday morning was given by the host pastor, Dr. Thomas A. Hinson. Here are key phrases from his message: "All that God puts into us, He expects to flow out; all that God makes available to us, He expects us to make available to others; and all that we enjoy for ourselves, we must make certain that someone else enjoys." He also reminded us that "some were sent, but never went, some went but were never sent, and some were sent and went. . . Here am I, Lord, send me."

The warmth of God's sunshine and spiritual renewal were strongly felt at the WMU Convention in West Memphis.



TIME for a chat—Mrs. Roy Snider, Pastor and Mrs. Ronald S. Griffin, Marshall Road Church, Jacksonville, and Rev. James Watson, missionary to Spain.

Baptist beliefs

The eternal deity of Christ

BY HERSCHEL H. HOBBS

Pastor, First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma,
past president, Southern Baptist Convention

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

In this one terse verse John speaks of the eternal preexistence of Christ. "In the beginning," whenever that was (cf. Gen. 1:1a). Whenever it was Christ *always* was before the beginning. So He was prior to creation.

"In the beginning was the Word." The word "was," used three times in this verse, is the imperfect form of *eimi*, the verb for essential being, like our verb "to be." It has no reference to beginning or end, simply to essential being or existence. Literally, it reads, "always was." So "in the beginning always was the Word."

"And the Word always was with God." "With God" renders *pros ton theon*. *Pros* means face to face. It expresses equality and intimacy. If in that day you had entertained two rulers equal in power but different in height, you would need to seat the shorter on pillows. Thus neither would look up or down at the other. They would see each other face to face or *pros*. We would say that they looked at one another eye to eye, or on a straight, even line. This indicated that they were equal. So Christ was *pros ton theon*, face to face or equal with God. He always was equal with God.

"And the Word was God." He *always* was God. In the Greek text it reads "and God always was the Word." Thus "God" is in the emphatic position. We would say, "And the Word always was God Himself."

Had John wanted to say that Christ was "divine" he would have used *theios* not *theos*. *Theios* would mean that He was a divine being. But that was not strong enough. So he used *theos*, God, emphatically, God Himself. This is strong language stating the absolute essential deity of Christ.

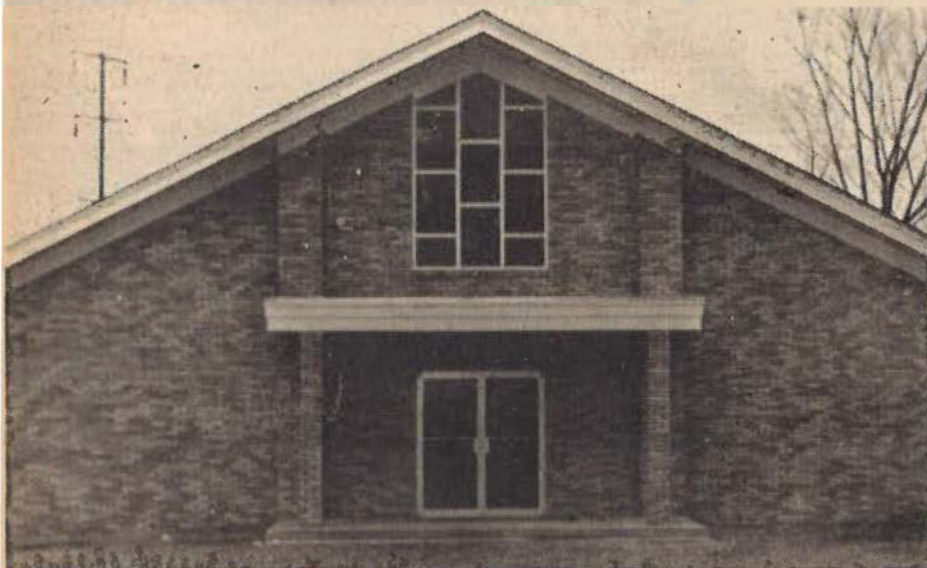
Why did he use such strong terms? One purpose of his Gospel was to refute the Gnostic philosophy which when applied to Christ made Him a created being, divine, but much lower than God. So John takes pains to express in no uncertain language that Christ was not a created being but eternal in His being. Furthermore, He was not merely a divine being but lower than God. He was God Himself in His essential being.

In Colossians Paul was opposing these same philosophers. And in 2:9 he said literally, "Because in him [Christ,] and in him alone [emphatic position] is permanently and abidingly at home all [not some] the very essence of deity, the state of being God, in bodily form."

Neither John nor Paul held back in attributing full deity to Christ. Anyone who would do any less runs head-on into these two statements.

From the churches

Diaz dedication service



DIAZ Church auditorium and educational building.

Dedication ceremonies marking the completion of an auditorium and educational building were held recently by Diaz Church, pastored by Tommy J. Carhey.

Rev. Sedic Wesson of Paragould, a former pastor, presented the message to the congregation. Honored guests were Cecil Guthrie, missionary of Black River Association; Dr. Fred Savage, professor at Southern College, Walnut Ridge; Rev. Leslie Riherd, pastor, First Church, Newport; Rev. J. C. Smith, pastor, Immanuel Church, Newport, and Rev. Bobby Walker, pastor, First Church, Grubbs.

Refreshments were served in the dining hall of the church following the dedication service.

Cox to Clarksville

First Church, Clarksville, has called Ronnie Cox as director of music and youth. Mr. Cox is a junior student at Arkansas Tech, Russellville, where he is a music major. He comes to the church from a similar position with First Church, Atkins. During the summer months Mr. Cox will be a full-time staff member of the Clarksville church.

He is married to the former Sherryl Adams of Ozark, who is also a junior student at Arkansas Tech. Mr. and Mrs. Cox presently reside in Russellville.

Mr. Cox succeeds Billy Jones, who resigned to enter the United States Army.

Hicks to Childress

Rev. Glen Hicks, who was serving as moderator of the Arkansas Valley Association, has resigned his pastorate at Lexa Church to serve as pastor of Childress Church, near Monette.

To become church

Runyan Chapel Mission, North Little Rock, pastored by Eugene F. Irby, has voted to become a fully organized church.

Runyan Chapel is a mission of Gravel Ridge Church, North Little Rock, Edward L. Smith, pastor.

In the meantime, church letters will be granted by the Gravel Ridge Church and a program will be planned for the organization ceremony, which is tentatively set for May 5.

Interest and attendance at Runyan Chapel has grown rapidly during the past few months—W. B. O'Neal, reporter

Clinton Church groundbreaking

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held March 17 by First Church, Clinton, signaling construction of a \$69,000 brick and block educational building and sanctuary.

Those participating were James Tyson, chairman of the building committee; Carl Barnes, chairman of the finance committee; J. W. Treece, the newest baptized member of the church, and Rev. E. A. Pipkins, church pastor.

The new educational building will accommodate 250 people in the Sunday School area, and will contain a suite

of three nurseries, kitchen and restroom facilities. The large dining and fellowship areas will be convertible for use as educational space. The sanctuary will seat 300 people, and will be newly furnished. A steeple will be an added feature.

Construction will be done by the R. and W. Construction Company, North Little Rock, and will take approximately four months.

Adequate parking facilities will be provided with the new building.



CLINTON church members on site of new facilities following groundbreaking ceremonies.

Youth in charge

Towson Avenue Church, Ft. Smith, recently observed Youth Week and selected Larry Spradley as its Young Man of the Year. Marshall Neely was guest speaker.

The youth assumed places of leadership in Sunday School and conducted the evening services. Choirs for both services were filled by the young people. Charles Nichols, a high school senior, served as preacher, and Larry Spradley led the singing.

Gene Palmer is pastor of Towson Avenue Church.

There were two professions of faith and 30 rededications.

Davis to Sparkman

Rev. Jim R. Davis, who has served as pastor of Barton Church since April, 1964, has resigned to accept the call as pastor of First Church, Sparkman. Mr. Davis surrendered to preach as a member of El Dorado's Temple Church. He graduated in 1965 from Ouachita University, and is working on a master's degree in religion from Ouachita. He served as pastor of Harmony Church, El Dorado, prior to going to Barton.



MR. DAVIS

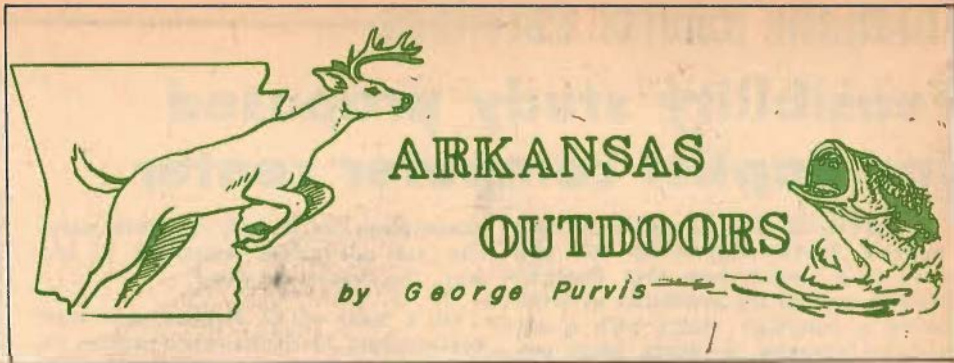
Mr. Davis is married to the former Gloria Pyle of El Dorado. The couple has two sons, Douglas, 5, and Donald, 2.

New chaplain intern

Gilbert Nichols, a native of Mountain View, had joined the staff of the Little Rock State Hospital as chaplain intern, where he will be engaged for the next year in clinical training and assisting Chaplain James M. Conard.

Mr. and Mrs. Nichols have returned to the States after serving for eight years as missionaries to Paraguay. They plan to return in 1969.

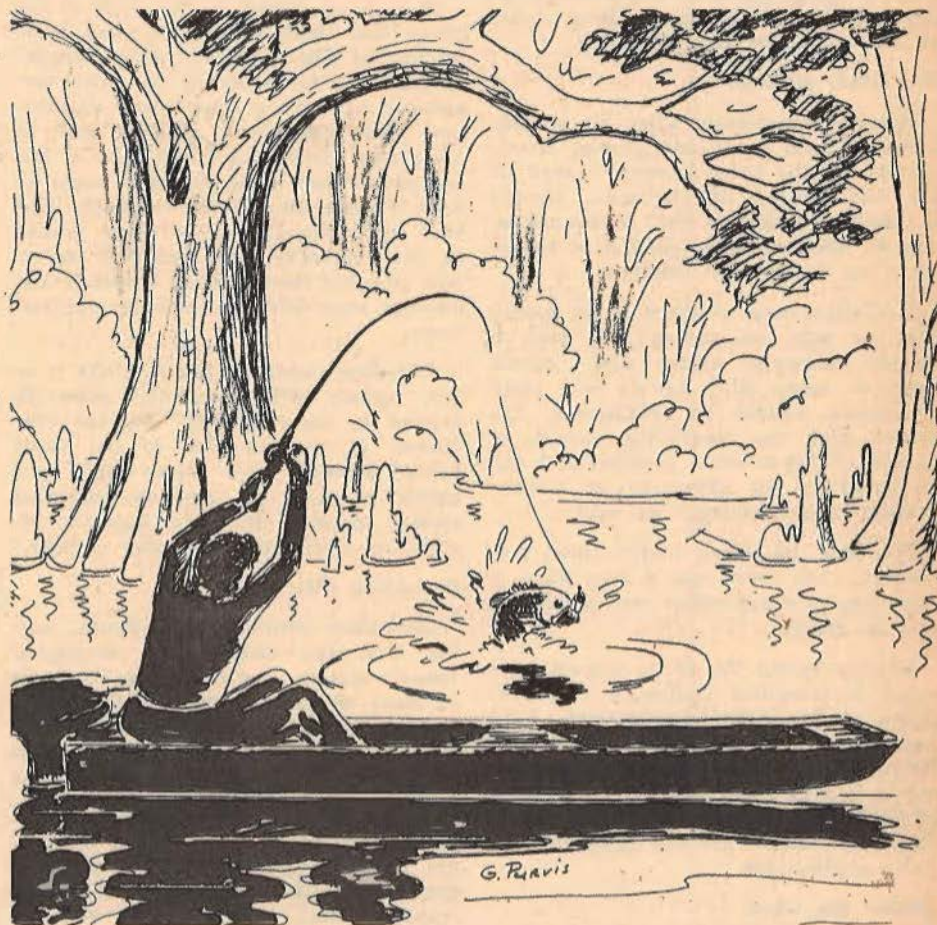
Mr. Nichols is a graduate of Ouachita University and Southern Seminary, from which he has the Bachelor of Divinity degree. He and Mrs. Nichols have four children, and maintain a home in Cabot.



Advice from an old angler

'Fishing fever' has reached epidemic proportions in Arkansas and is affecting young and old of both sexes. Each year a new crop of anglers (along with an army of veterans) take up rods and reels or simple cane poles and head for the numerous good fishing places in the state. Some of them are successful—many are not.

Without doubt those who have mastered the use of their equipment, whether



it is fancy or simple, stand a better chance of catching fish. Being at the right place at the right time (luck) is certainly important.

Beginners should purchase good equipment, since it is easier to learn to use than cheap tackle. Good tackle doesn't necessarily need to be expensive. Usually the difference between good and cheap tackle is slight, but the difference in cost is more than outweighed by the difference in quality.

Skillful use of fishing tackle comes only with much practice.

The only cure for 'fishing fever' is to go fishing. Those anglers who are outfitted properly and have developed some skill will probably be the most successful.



Feasibility study proposed for Baptist computer center

NASHVILLE—An executive of the Southern Baptist Convention has proposed in a speech here that Southern Baptists explore the possibility of establishing a computer center with a network of consoles in every state convention and every SBC agency.

Albert McClellan, program planning secretary for the SBC Executive Committee here, made the suggestion during one of three presentations to the SBC Inter-Agency Council on the use of computers in society today and Southern Baptist life.

McClellan specifically proposed that a study group from the Inter-Agency Council Administrative Committee join with a group of state convention executives "to explore over a long period of time computer possibilities."

New study planned

Almost immediately after his speech, a motion was made and passed unanimously by the Inter-Agency Council of the SBC asking its chairman, Merrill D. Moore, to appoint such a committee, and its administrative committee to set forth its duties and functions.

McClellan made it clear in his speech that he was not saying that such a Baptist computer center with console units at every SBC agency and state convention should be established, but rather that the possibility should be studied. "This is not a problem that can be faced in an afternoon of empty-headed brainstorming," he said.

The idea, he added, might sound far-fetched, "but there was a day when a telephone in every office was far-fetched," he added.

Earlier during the entire morning devoted to computer studies, a representative of Honeywell Corporation, Kenneth Inman, showed films depicting creative uses of computers by industries, and a Baptist news editor, Jim Newton of Nashville, presented a report on what Southern Baptists are now doing in computer applications.

Behind the times

"Southern Baptist agencies seem to be at least five years, and perhaps in some cases as much as 10 years behind business and industry in computer usage," said Newton, assistant director of the Baptist Press, news service of the SBC.

There are only six agencies of the convention that are now using computers, Newton said, and most of these are only for accounting functions and

subscription fulfillment. Thirteen agencies are not using computers in any way, the report indicated.

Of a total of 23 Baptist state conventions and 23 Baptist state papers replying to a survey, seven conventions and four weekly papers are using computers for accounting and subscription list maintenance, the report indicated.

State conventions using computers for accounting functions include Georgia, Texas, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Maryland, California, and Hawaii; while state papers using computers include Texas, Oklahoma, Florida and Illinois.

Correlation need

Newton concluded on the basis of his study that there already is some overlapping at SBC agencies using computers, that there needs to be more correlation among agencies using computers, that there is a general lack of knowledge concerning capabilities of the computer, that some Baptists seem to have a basic fear of the computer, and that professional studies were needed on the feasibility of a computer center, and on what state Baptist hospitals and colleges were doing in computer applications.

"Whether Southern Baptists like it or not, society will more and more be shaped by the computer," Newton concluded. If we are five to ten years behind already, we'd better begin now trying to catch up, else we will find society shaping Southern Baptists, instead of Christianity shaping society."

Reshaping society

McClellan amplified this theme, saying that the computer is reshaping today's society, and that it is the basis of most of the important decisions affecting the world today. "They have reshaped basic human communication and problem-solving processes to give man an entirely new environment," he added.

He described in detail what computers were doing in the fields of commerce, industrial management, medicine, transportation, income taxes, national security, dress making, design, printing, inventory, libraries, politics, and education.

"They have become so much a part of the American way of life that if they were to quit working, air traffic would be hopelessly snarled, commerce would come to a halt with banks and stock exchanges buried under mountains of unprocessed paper, automobile factories and steel mills would shut

down for months, chemical plants would close and hospitals and department stores would fall into impossible confusion," McClellan said.

As one of many examples citing the fantastic capabilities of computers, McClellan said that "all the calculations it took one year for a group of scientists to accomplish at Los Alamos in 1945, a college undergraduate can do in one afternoon while sharing the computer with 30 other people."

New opportunities

He declared that the Christian must not be blind to the new kind of world the computer is creating, but rather the Christian must help men being shaped by the computer to understand what is happening. "They [Christians] must show the new man the way to find himself."

McClellan listed 13 perplexing problems that the computer forces man to face, including such things as destruction of past landmarks, disturbance people face when they have to retrain for two or three careers eliminated by computers, shifts in society, etc.

"Somehow," he observed, "Southern Baptists must come alive to these questions, not merely in the seminaries, but in these halls, and in the halls of the churches. Somehow our pastors must be pulled into the new times with all its computer-bred problems.

"We can't kick the computer, for it will kick back. We've got to realize that the computer world is here and get on with our job of spiritual understanding and spiritual leadership."

McClellan maintained that Baptists can better do this job with the help of the computer as a tool.

He cited creative ways Baptists could use the computer in the areas of book-keeping, statistics, research, pastoral placement, long-range planning, program evaluation, church-related vocations, program planning, long-range forecasting, assistance to churches, compatibility with other denominations' computers, and the computer center idea. (BP)

Fortune telling plea

SEATTLE—Members of Seattle's Romany Gypsy Church recently appealed to the City Council to permit fortune telling as part of their church's religious rites.

"King" of the gypsies here, Ephraim Stevens, informed the Council that his group was determined "to become active, solid citizens of Seattle."

A city ordinance prohibits fortune telling or palm reading for compensation. (EP)

Christian seminar Chides churches for evading issues

A former Southern Baptist minister, now director of Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), contends that Southern Baptist churches have not escaped the race issue by moving out of the downtown areas to the plush suburbs.

William H. Crook, the VISTA director, speaking at the Christian Citizenship Seminar in Washington last week, cited the findings of the report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (the Kerner Report) to indicate that the racial action is now in the suburbs instead of the inner city.

A Southern Baptist from East Texas, Crook contended that racism exists in and has been encouraged by the white churches of America.

"Now the church is where the action is, for there is racism in the church," he said. "It has a second opportunity to be relevant, if it will deal with its members in rooting out bigotry and racism."

Crook characterized churches moving to "better" neighborhoods as being "like a fastidious woman, grabbing her purse, gathering her skirts about her, and fleeing the scene [the inner city] to the safe suburbs."

He urged the churches not only to deal with racism in their suburban situations but also to return to the inner city and "follow the example of Jesus Christ in ministering to the poor."

Dorothy Routh, daughter of Porter Routh, executive secretary of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, described conditions of the poor encountered in her role as a VISTA worker in Atlanta. "The greatest poverty," she said, "is the spiritual and mental poverty that lets poverty exist. The guilt is on those who do nothing about poverty and who condemn those who suffer it." She said that she would "like to see the church more closely involved in the fight against poverty."

David Ginsburg, executive director of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, urged the group to take the first step toward Christian action, which he said must be "the ex-termination of the roots of racism from our institutions, our laws, and ways of life."

'Open churches to all people,' Southern Baptist pastor pleads



The approaching Crusade of the Americas affords Baptists an opportunity to "turn their backs on selective evangelism and open their churches to all groups for attendance, conversion, baptism, and church membership."

So declared Lewis Rhodes, pastor of Broadway Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn., in an appearance before the Christian Citizenship Seminar held last week in Washington under the auspices of the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Speaking to 200 religious leaders from across the nation, Rhodes reminded them that they have an opportunity in the 1969 hemisphere-wide evangelistic crusade to demonstrate the spirit of Christian love.

"We are now involved in an inter-continental, inter-racial, international and inter-lingual effort, in the Crusade of the Americas," he said. "Will the Crusade of the Americas insist that all cooperating churches open their doors for revival, for attendance, conversion, baptism, and church membership to all groups?"

"Pastors and local churches must do more than speak," he continued. "They must minister and witness to all the community. This includes the deprived Negro, deprived whites, and language groups."

"We cannot say we will feed and clothe no one since we cannot feed and clothe everyone. If we do, we should apply this principle to evangelism also, saying we will witness to none since we cannot win everyone."

Rhodes suggested that conventions and

assemblies include a large variety of speakers, including some who will confront Southern Baptists with the challenge of a disordered society.

Rhodes described the majority of Southern Baptists as constituting "a cultural, historical and religious phenomenon, more committed to cultural than to Christian values."

He charged that the organization of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845 "was not for theological or missionary reasons but for the preservation of a slavery-centered culture." He said that "one shudders to think what would happen if we required our members to be more committed to Christ than race, more committed to the universal church than to denomination, and more committed to humanity than to nationalism."

"A common loyalty to a social structure has been our cohesiveness," he said, "and a prevailing fear of division over the race issue is convincing evidence that our loyalty to Christ is not stronger than our loyalty to our culture."

Taking note of the fact that Baptist preachers "in some sections of the country" might face expulsion if they were to invite Negroes to church, encourage support of the poor and poverty programs, and advocate support and cooperation with the National Council of Churches, Rhodes suggested a plan of financial aid for such ministers.

He said that a pastoral emergency fund should be set up to support "for a reasonable time these prophets without portfolio," and that such funds could be made available by state Baptist conventions and by the Southern Baptist Convention.

Baptisms

ASSOCIATION	1965-66	1966-67	Inc.	Dec.
ARKANSAS VALLEY	215	333	118	.....
ASHLEY	158	216	58	.....
BARTHOLOMEW	136	187	51	.....
BENTON CO.	161	303	142	.....
BIG CREEK	72	37		35
BLACK RIVER	174	270	96	..
BOONE-NEWTON	138	146	8	.....
BUCKNER	121	112		9
BUCKVILLE	29	19		10
CADDO RIVER	54	59	5	.....
CALVARY	236	196		40
CAREY	95	98	3	.....
CAROLINE	170	289	119	.....
CARROLL	37	61	24	..
CENTENNIAL	138	142	4	.....
CENTRAL	522	558	36	.....
CLEAR CREEK	329	412	83	.....
CONCORD	773	762		11
CONWAY-PERRY	49	41		8
CURRENT RIVER	180	199	19	.....
DARDANELLE-RUSSELLVILLE	134	148	14	.....
DELTA	241	205		36
FAULKNER	193	158		35
GAINESVILLE	72	48		24
GREENE CO.	131	177	46	.....
HARMONY	534	764	230	.....
HOPE	355	356	1	.....
INDEPENDENCE	248	186		62
LIBERTY	460	528	68	.....
LITTLE RED RIVER	53	89	36	.....
LITTLE RIVER	178	250	72	.....
MISSISSIPPI CO.	543	381		162
MT. ZION	312	432	120	.....
NORTH PULASKI	636	739	103	.....
OUACHITA	86	63		23
PULASKI	790	970	180	.....
RED RIVER	110	213	103	..
ROCKY BAYOU	80	61		19
STONE-VAN BUREN-SEARCY	116	128	12	.....
TRI CO.	584	555		29
TRINITY	234	224		10
WASHINGTON-MADISON	315	338	23	.....
WHITE RIVER	174	132		42
Russellville, First Church	10	13	3	.....

Total 10,376 11,598 (Plus) 1,222
Director of Evangelism
Jesse S. Reed

All Pastors are urged to:

Preach on the Cooperative Program of World Missions.

Interpret the Cooperative Program as an extension of local church witness.

Explain Cooperative Program budget pointing out division of funds to convention, institutions, and agencies.

All Sunday School superintendents are urged to:

Distribute Cooperative Program tracts to Sunday School.

Use assembly speakers to discuss the Cooperative Program.

Interpret Cooperative Program budget.

All Training Union directors are urged to:

Discuss the church as a place to train members to give.

Call attention to the Cooperative Program record since 1925.

Use the tract entitled "A Cooperative Program Quiz" to inform the members about the Cooperative Program.

Any pastor, Sunday School superintendent, or Training Union director who wants more of the material that was mailed to the church can get it free by writing to Ralph Douglas, 401 West Capitol, Little Rock 72201.

Age grade or school grade?

Southern Baptists are in a period of many significant changes. This could probably qualify as the understatement of the year. But how to cope with some of the changes is a very relevant problem.

What's a church to do about the grouping-grading transition dilemma?

First, identify the problem. Simply stated it is, "changing grading date away from April 1st and changing organization from present recommended age-group structure."

Some churches have already changed. Some are changing now. Some will change before Oct. 1, 1970.

All educational literature, for example, Sunday School lessons, will be newly written and suited to the new grouping-grading plan starting October, 1970.

Secondly, what is a church to do about the change?

Generally speaking, it is good to leave the Nursery, Beginner and Adult Departments unchanged from the present system. Change only the departments that are related to public school age at

Cooperative Program Day

Sunday, April 21, is a special day for 338,471 Arkansas Baptists. On this day these 338,471 Arkansas Baptists in 1,191 churches remind themselves that they do not work alone, but in a larger fellowship of Southern Baptists who cooperate in taking the gospel to the world. The channel of financial support for this work is the Cooperative Program, which came into being in 1925.

On Cooperative Program Day, 1,191 churches made up of 338,471 members will join 11 million other Southern Baptists in 33,672 churches to commemorate the establishment of the plan. On

this date, April 21, the Cooperative Program will be emphasized at all services.

A package of Cooperative Program material has been mailed to each church.

All churches are urged to:

Present facts, figures on Cooperative Program budget.

Emphasize the urgency of giving the united way to World Missions through the Cooperative Program.

Commend tithers for making it possible for church to send funds regularly through the Cooperative Program.

Use bulletins and paper to interpret the Cooperative Program.

the present time. This may separate some Primary pupils who are in school from pre-schoolers. You may want to write for a free leaflet on the new grouping-grading system.

Thirdly, what to do with literature now being used under the new system?

Most churches find it not very difficult to evaluate the pieces of literature and adapt it to the appropriate school grade.

Now, what of the future?

Prior to 1970 the Southern Baptist Convention agencies will conduct special interpretation clinics for state leaders. State leaders will in turn conduct state, Associational and regional clinics for the churches.

Now is a right time to major on reaching the unenrolled for Bible Study. We have good literature to assist us in understanding and teaching the Bible. Teach to meet the needs of today. Reach all possible prospects. Lead the lost to Christ. Lead members to worship, witness, learn and minister daily.—Lawson Hatfield, State Sunday School Secretary

"To urge people to 'support the budget' may be superficial until they catch the impelling urgency of a lost world."—W. E. Grindstaff in Principles of Stewardship Development (Conven-Press, 1967)

Home Board to new home; votes summer ghetto priority

ATLANTA—The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board will move this summer to a new, larger building to keep pace with a staff that has grown from 40 to 78.

The mission agency has leased a near-completed, seven-story building on the fringe of downtown Atlanta. Representatives of the Home Mission Board and the builders have agreed to a 10-year lease, with option to purchase in three years for about \$1.8 million.

Responding to the President's Commission on Civil Disorders report calling for mammoth efforts in big-city ghettos, a Christian social ministries subcommittee urged the agency to channel every possible ministry into the troubled areas of metropolitan America.

The report, approved unanimously, read in part:

"No mammoth venture of the Crusade of the Americas nor of Project 500 can atone for our unwillingness or inability to be alerted sufficiently, distressed or repentant to relate redemptively to these hundreds of thousands of our neighbors who are all but bereft of human dignity and hope."

Edwin Perry, pastor of Broadway Church, Louisville, Ky., said the report was not intended to squelch activity in the two projects, but to say "that we can't do one and ignore the other."

"God will not hold us guiltless," he said, "if we don't make some attempts out of the ordinary to deal with this critical problem."

The subcommittee's recommendations did not include a request for special appropriations, but urged that current programs be focused on urban centers, with particular regard to Baptist centers—mission points often placed in inner-city areas and that major on providing weekday activities.

One recommendation urged immediate communication "with all persons and responsible groups at the local level, with the immediate purpose of preventing needless hurt, bloodshed, loss of property, and further agony of many thousands of persons."

Current program budgets include more than \$1 million to be spent in inner-city areas. (BP)

State Training Union Youth Convention

Robinson Auditorium, Little Rock

Friday, April 12, 1968 10:15 a.m. — 8:15 p.m.

1. Hear Dr. Gordon Clinard. Morning: "Free Enough to Fail."
Afternoon: "A Place for Bare Feet."
2. Hear "Miss Mississippi's" testimony Friday morning.
3. Be involved in the 8 case studies Friday afternoon.
4. Enjoy the mammoth "Youth Fellowship" from 4:30-6:00, led by Cecil McGee. Deadline for "hamburger supper" tickets — Tuesday, April 9.
5. Don't dare miss "GOOD NEWS" on Friday night.
6. Arrange bus loads and come!

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARKING

If you are planning to bring a bus load of young people to the Youth Convention, Robinson Auditorium, Little Rock, Friday, April 12, please notify your bus driver that he can park the bus that day at MacArthur Park on East 9th Street. Those coming by cars will need to find a parking lot and make definite arrangements as to the time the cars must be removed from the parking lot. The convention will be concluded at about 8:15 p.m.

TO TRAINING UNION DEPARTMENT

306 Baptist Building, Little Rock, Ark. 72201

Enclosed is \$..... Please send tickets (\$1.00 each) for box suppers for Youth Convention Fellowship, April 12 (4:30 p.m.)

Name _____
Address _____

The Bible . . . its own witness

BY BERNES K. SELPH, TH.D.
PASTOR, FIRST CHURCH, BENTON

One object of churches is to get people to read the Bible. Our view is that it carries its own witness under the ministry of the Holy Spirit. One of the clearest evidences of this fact is a story told by the Rev. John R. Maddox, pastor of First Church, Camden. Rev. Maddox is the son of Dr. O. T. Maddox, missionary to Brazil. This incident happened when John was a young boy.

He said, "Father was on a train going to the city of San Paulo. He came into the diner on the train to get his lunch and all the chairs were taken except one, and this was a chair at a table for two. There was a gentleman seated already, and Father asked him if he would mind if he joined him. The man courteously replied, 'No, please do.'"

As they sat and talked Dr. Maddox learned that the Brazilian was a businessman and the latter learned the former was a missionary.

"Before the meal was over," John continued, "this man turned to my father and said, 'Sir, would you please do me the kindness, and give me the privilege of paying for your dinner?'"

"Well, when something like this comes up in Brazil it would not be very nice to turn it down, and Father very graciously accepted the offer. Thinking quickly he made this statement: 'Yes, I will be most happy to accept your most kind gesture of generosity if you will allow me to send you a gift after I get home.' And, of course, the man had his gesture accepted and he couldn't turn down Father's gesture.

"Father got the man's address. When he got home he purchased the very finest Bible he was able to, of the very finest leather. He wrote a note in it and made several suggestions for the man in the use of the Bible, and then mailed it with a prayer.

"Father did not hear from this man. Years after that the doorbell rang at our house one day and I answered the door. There stood a very nice looking, well dressed man, whom I had never met before. He wanted to know if this was the O. P. Maddox residence. I said, 'Yes, he is my father.'

"He said, 'Is he in?'"

"I said, 'Yes.'

"He asked if he might see him. I said, 'Certainly,' and showed him in. He was seated.

"I called Father and said, 'Father, there is a man here to see you, and I do not know who he is.' Father went into the room but did not recognize the man until he told of the experience on the train. He had only seen the man the one time. Of course, my father remembered.

"Then our guest told this story: 'You know, when the Bible came and I saw that it was a Bible, immediately the first thought was to throw it away, because I was not even permitted to read the Bible. But, it was such a beautiful book and I could not throw it into the trash can, so finally I put it on a shelf in the closet, and left it there. Months passed, and one day I went in there to get something and there I saw the Bible, and I felt it, and I looked at it, and then thought, no, I cannot read this, this would be against my church—and put it back. I did this several times. Then one time I took it down and said I'm going to read it. I started reading, and the end of the story is that I found Christ, from reading the Word of God. I joined the Baptist church in the city of San Paulo.'

"On this particular day he was in the city of Belo Horizonte for the purpose of carrying on some business and he wanted to see the missionary, and thus he came to the house and said,

"'Sir, what I wanted to do was to thank you. To thank you so much for the gift that you sent me because that particular gift brought eternal life through Jesus Christ.'"

Taken from a letter to the author from Rev. John Maddox.

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Revivals

First Church, Kensett, March 15-17; Youth team from Ouachita University; Fred Selby, evangelist, Mark Coppenger, music director, Ginger Murdock, pianist; Sharon Pryor, First Church, organist; 7 for baptism, 2 additions, 11 rededications.

Calvary Church, North Little Rock, April 1-17; Jack Hazlewood, evangelist, Dennis Baw, song leader; William L. Kreis, pastor.

First Church, Fayetteville, April 7-12; Dr. Kenneth Chafin, evangelist, Don Edmondson, music director. Andrew M. Hall, pastor.

Bayou Meto Church, Jacksonville, April 7-14; Jerre Hassell, Arkansas Baptist Medical Center Chaplain, evangelist; Louis Jeffers, song leader, Mrs. J. W. Huggman, pianist. Howard R. Porter, pastor.

Central Church, Jonesboro, March 3-10; Dr. Robert G. Lee, pastor emeritus, Bellevue Church, Memphis, Tenn., evangelist; Les Stanley, singer; 7 by letter, 30 professions of faith, 1 sur-

render to the ministry, numerous rededications. Paul McCray, pastor.

Southern Church, Junction City, Kan., March 3-10; Jack Hazlewood, staff evangelist, First Church, Little Rock, evangelist; 21 professions of faith, 7 by letter, 96 rededications. Doug Wooderson, pastor.

First Church, Stuttgart, March 10-17; Rev. Bruce Cushman, pastor, First Church, Van Buren, evangelist; Henry Don Fletcher, Stuttgart First Church music director, director of music; 10 professions of faith, 4 by letter, numerous rededications. D. B. Bledsoe, pastor.

Fairoaks Church, Fairoaks, March 10-17; Evangelists: Robert Bauman, manager, Baptist Book Store, Little Rock, March 10; W. W. Dishongh, pastor, Trinity Church, Searcy, March 11-12, Bill Brunette, superintendent, Calvary Association, Beebe, March 13-14; C Lamar Lifer, pastor, Emmanuel Church, Forrest City, March 15; Henry D. Aplegate, pastor, Ingram Boulevard Church, West Memphis, March 16; 3 rededications, 1 profession of faith, 2

accepting the call to the ministry. Rev. Archie Butts, pastor.

Halton Road Church, Wichita Falls, Tex., Jack Hazlewood, evangelist; 10 professions of faith, 4 by letter, 30 rededications. Dan McKee, pastor.

Liberty Church, March 18-24, Dr. Oscar Wells, evangelist, Bethany, Oklahoma, evangelist; 8 rededications, 5 professions of faith, 5 for baptism. Eddie W. James, pastor.

Second Church, Jacksonville, March 18-24, Jack Hazlewood, evangelist; 20 professions of faith. 4 by letter. Andy Kerr, pastor.

First Church, Glenwood, April 1-7; Homer Haltom, pastor-evangelist, Joe Williams, singer; services each evening at 7:30 p.m.; nursery will be open.

Second Church, Little Rock April 14-21, Dr. C. A. Roberts Jr., evangelist. Dr. Dale Cowling, pastor.



Give!
As God has prospered

The bookshelf

The World Book Dictionary, Clarence L. Barnhart, Editor in Chief, published exclusively for Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 1968, 2 vols., \$50.20

Scientists have determined that the average grown-up person uses only about 3,500 of the multitude of words that make up the English language.

In this two-volume set, with bindings to match those of the famous World Book Encyclopedia also produced by Field Enterprises, nearly 200,000 words and phrases are catalogued.

This is said to be the first reference work of its kind ever designed expressly for use with an encyclopedia.

One distinction the new dictionary claims for itself is coming up with the meaning of a word with a minimum of things in between. Whereas the dictionary style has previously been to give a paragraph of derivations, obsolete meanings, and variations before giving the meaning of today, this dictionary aims at giving today's definition first.

Here are some illustrations:

Dermatologist, a skin doctor; nugatory, worthless; petard, an explosive device formerly used in warfare to break

doors or gates or to breach a wall. (An accompanying drawing shows how a petard works.)

Take the word sinister. Look it up in this new dictionary and you find that: "(1) it's pronounced SIN-is-ter (2) means 'threatening' (3) once meant 'left' because (4) it comes from the old Roman superstition that omens seen on the left side were unlucky (5) a good synonym for sinister is 'ominous.'"

With the dictionary comes, in Vol. 1, A Guide to Your Dictionary, which gives directions on how to get more out of the dictionary, something especially useful for teaching young people.

There is also a special section on vocabulary development and use, providing inventories for testing the scope and range of one's vocabulary.

An article on pronunciation carries a pronunciation key for learning how to use the symbols that follow each word in the dictionary.

Still other features are "A Handbook of style," and "How to Write Effectively."

The Springfield (Mass.) Republican says of the new World Book Dictionary: "This is one of the most modern

dictionaries to reach the market to date . . . The type is easy on the eyes and the high quality of the paper adds to what proves to be an enjoyable and worthwhile experience."

Missionary notes

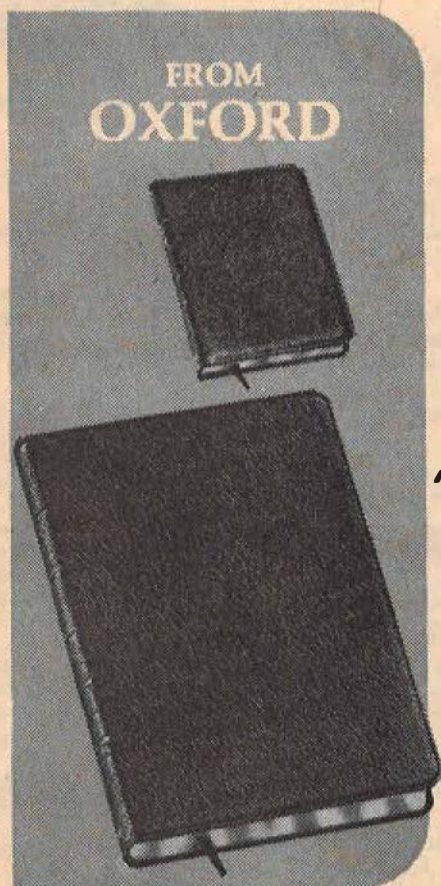
Two Southern Baptist MKs (missionary kids), Linda Bumpas and David Lingerfelt, were married on Feb. 17 in the Lins de Vasconcelos Church, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Linda is the daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Claud R. Bumpas, of Rio; David's parents are Rev. and Mrs. James E. Lingerfelt, of Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil. Linda, recently graduated from Ouachita University. David graduated from Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn., last year. They plan to continue their studies in Curitiba, Parana, Brazil.

Rev. and Mrs. Marvin R. Reynolds, Southern Baptist missionary appointees to Botswana, are living in Bulawayo, Rhodesia, while awaiting completion of their house in Francistown, Botswana (their address is 14 Caithness Road, Hillside East, Bulawayo, Rhodesia). He is a native of Pine Bluff, Ark.; she, the former Elizabeth Haley, was born in Monticello, Ark., and lived in Pine Bluff and Little Rock, Ark., during childhood. At the time of their missionary appointment in 1967 he was pastor of First Baptist Church, Antlers, Okla.

Rev. and Mrs. Billy Bob Moore, Southern Baptist missionaries to Uganda, have moved to Mbale, following language study. (Their address is P. O. Box 1176, Mbale, Uganda.) Mr. Moore was born in El Dorado, Ark., but grew up in Texas; Mrs. Moore, the former Aletha Lane, is a native of Glen Rose, Tex. At the time of their missionary appointment in 1966 he was pastor of Rosedale Baptist Church, Beaumont, Tex.

Rev. and Mrs. Billy O. Gilmore, Southern Baptist missionaries, returned to Brazil Feb. 10 after a year of furlough in the States. (Their address is Caixa Postal 284, Juiz de Fora, Minas Gerais, Brazil.) He is a native of Leverett's Chapel, Tex.; she is the former Lee Anne Cole, of Raymondville, Tex. (she was born in Alma, Ark.). Prior to their appointment by the Foreign Mission Board in 1962 he was pastor of First Church, Hawkins, Tex.

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Meet Mr. Cicada, the seventeen-year-old baby

BY RONALD D. SCHMITZ

Do you know of an insect that remains a baby for seventeen years? Or, one that lives most of its life in a tunnel under the ground? How about an insect that jumps right out of its skin?

A cicada (pronounced sih KAY dah), or harvest fly, does all of these things and more!

A mother cicada lays a tiny egg in the twigs of a tree or shrub. In a few weeks, the heat of the sun hatches the egg. The baby which appears is called a nymph. Like all new nymphs, the baby is hungry. As soon as he is able, the nymph drops from the twig, bur-

rows into the ground, and eats the tender roots of trees and bushes.

For years, the baby nymph lives under the ground and grows and grows. While searching for tender roots to nibble, he digs long tunnels. After seventeen years of tunneling, the nymph is a full-grown cicada. He pops up out of his tunnel into the bright, shiny world.

The grown-up cicada has a heavy, thick body about two inches long, with four thin wings that fold over his back. His head is short and wide. He has two short, stiff antennae. He peers out at the world through two large, black eyes.

First, Mr. Cicada must jump out of his old skin. He climbs up a tree or large rock and sheds his dusty, dry outer skin by simply stepping out of it through a hole which appears in his back.

After shedding his old skin, Mr. Cicada is weak and pale. In a short time, he will be strong enough to begin flying from tree to tree. His wings unfold and his pale color changes to a bright red, brown, yellow, or green.

Now that Mr. Cicada is grown, he begins a hurried search for a wife. Once he leaves his tunnel, his life is almost over. In fact, he will become old and feeble in a few short weeks.

In addition to a colorful skin, Mr. Cicada has another aid for finding a wife. Nature has given him the ability to play a special song. He has a thin piece of skin on his stomach which he can vibrate rapidly. This vibration produces a loud, fast clicking sound, which is the cicada's song. Female cicadas who are looking for husbands like this song. Mr. Cicada's wife might come from as far away as three miles to listen to his song.

In spite of the fact that Mr. Cicada plays his loud song to attract attention, he doesn't like anyone but female cicadas to bother him. If he is disturbed, he will make short protest noises and fly to another tree.

The next time it is warm outside, listen for the loud, fast clicking song of Mr. Cicada. When you hear it, look around carefully. You may see an insect that has been a baby for seventeen years.
(Sunday School Board Syndicate rights reserved)

Old Dog Tray

BY MAXINE ALLEN

Stephen Foster, our first and possibly greatest composer of American folk music, was Old Dog Tray's master. A folktale set to music has given this dog an everlasting place in American tradition.

According to Stephen Foster's brother, Morrison, Tray was a real dog. He was a handsome setter. He came to Foster as a present from his good friend, Colonel Matthew I. Stewart.

Can't you picture Foster walking about the countryside with his pet at his heels? During the walks, many tunes came to Foster's mind, and he whistled snatches of them. Dog Tray listened. When the melodies were pleasing, he rolled over and jumped for joy. When they proved bad, he whined with displeasure. Foster loved his faithful companion and put much stock in his antics.

Then a folktale story is told about the dog. There came a period when he disappeared every afternoon. Where did he go? It was unusual for him to desert his master in this way. A fine afternoon came when Foster, his wife, and little girl were taking a stroll through the village green. Suddenly they came upon a dog leading a blind soldier by means of a cane hooked through his collar. The blind soldier and the dog came to rest in the sun on a bench. The blind man unhooked his cane and patted the head of his canine friend in a kindly and loving way.

Foster recognized his pet and started

to speak to him. Foster's wife hushed him, however. Recognition was in the dog's eyes. He pleaded silently with his master not to give him away. With curiosity, Foster engaged the old man in conversation.

"He is a fine friend. I call him Tray. He hasn't been my friend very long. He comes to visit about three o'clock each day, and that is the reason I have named him Tray. If it weren't for this smart fellow leading me, I couldn't get out in the sunshine," related the blind soldier. "Come, Tray, it is time to be getting back."

From then on, Foster tried to take his own walks early in the morning in order to leave the dog free to lead his blind charge.

One afternoon some time later, Foster heard what sounded like his dog barking frantically. This seemed strange as it was at the time he ordinarily was with his old soldier-friend. Following the barking sounds, Foster came to a clearing. Smoke was pouring out of a small hut. Rushing in, Foster was able to drag the aged, blind man to safety.

If it hadn't been for the dog's frantic actions, his blind pal might have perished in the fire. Foster felt a tribute should be paid to his clever pet. The natural way for Stephen Foster was to compose a folk tune. Thus, for evermore, the American people will relate in song the tale of Old Dog Tray.

The enduring word

BY DR. L. H. COLEMAN, PASTOR,
IMMANUEL CHURCH, PINE BLUFF

Life and work

April 7, 1968

Matthew 5:17-20

2 Peter 1:19-21

Introduction:

The Sunday School lessons for the month of April deal with the Bible, the Christians' textbook. All of us would do well to reexamine our attitude toward the Bible. One's view of the Bible determines to a large degree his view of the Christian faith. One's regard for the Bible influences what he believes and all his actions.

Robert E. Lee once said, "In all my perplexities and distresses, the Bible has never failed to give me light and strength." Daniel Webster stated, "The Bible is our only safe guide." These testimonies affirm the marvelous influence of the Bible upon the lives of those who attempt to follow the principles contained therein. "The Book" is the best seller of the week, month, year, and the ages. It should be read more and made more a vital part of our lives.

1. The Bible reveals the glory of God. (Isaiah 40:1-8)

The background of this passage points to the fall of Jerusalem and the writer presents God's message of comfort and consolation to those in exile. The circumstances pressing upon the Israelites would cause the most stouthearted to become spiritually depressed. Hence these words gave encouragement. Note the emphasis of the word "comfort" in verse one. Jerusalem in 587 B. C. fell because of her sins (v.2); God had given recompense because the people had broken God's commandments. Our nation today would do well to study God's dealing with Israel in the Old Testament. Will he not treat America as He treated Israel?

Verses three and four deal with John the Baptist's preparing the way for the coming of Christ. Christ had a forerunner to make straight God's highway as the Messiah came to earth.

The next four verses indicate the word of God as bringing to man God's glory, which endures forever. Men and nations come and go; but the words from the mouth of the Lord will stand forever in fadeless beauty and glory. His word is eternal.

2. Christ, the fulfillment of Old Testament scriptures. (Matthew 5:17-20)

Christ never intended for his followers to discard the Old Testament scriptures. Christ wanted his disciples to study and heed the words of the law

This lesson treatment is based on the Life and Work Curriculum for Southern Baptist Churches, copyright by The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

and prophets because by so doing man stands in new appreciation for all that Jesus accomplished through his life, death, and glorious resurrection (which will be discussed next week). A person needs a knowledge and background of the Old Testament to better comprehend the words and ministry of Christ. The law was inadequate, incomplete, anticipatory, and unattainable. The law lacked; Christ filled the void. The law is our schoolmaster pointing us to Christ (Cf. Galatians 3:24). Likewise the prophets presented the promise of the coming Messiah, who was Christ. In a word, Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Christ (see verses 19 and 20) wanted his disciples to take his words and bear a good witness to others. He instructed believers not to be selfish but to share and teach others His commandments. Note the law of influence mentioned here. One thing is worse than breaking God's commandments—teaching others to do so. Likewise something is greater than keeping His commands—teaching others to do so. Receive the words of Christ, then disperse His truth to others.

3. The Bible comes from the very hands of God. (2 Peter 1:19-21)

This passage is precious because it reveals to us how our Bible came to us. Even Napoleon Bonaparte admitted, "The Bible is no mere book, but a living Power that conquers all that oppose it." The Bible has endured and survived and shall continue to survive because God Himself gave to man the Bible. Note in verse 19 that man has a "sure

word of prophecy." The prophets were correct in what they said relative to the first coming of Christ. Therefore this gives believers a sure guarantee of His second coming. In both instances the prophecy is sure. (Please read this passage from The New Testament From 26 Translations.)

Verse 20 is somewhat difficult. One interpretation (and the one I accept) is that when the prophets wrote and spoke they were not passing on their own private, personal opinions; they were presenting God's revelation. What they wrote came from God. It was God's word, not their own.

The final verse indicates that our scriptures were inspired of the Holy Spirit. The word of God came to us as God's message of God from God to man through man. The Bible was and is divinely inspired. God uniquely inspired the thought and the various authors or writers put these thoughts in their own words or vocabularies. Therefore when we read the Bible it is God himself speaking to man. God, not man, is speaking.

Conclusion:

Believers do not have an option concerning obedience. A person cannot come to Christ for salvation nor following salvation on his own terms. Man is saved on God's terms; and if saved, he will be obedient. Man knows how to live and what to believe through the Bible. Herein God tells man what he expects of His children.

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Jesus endured the cross

International

April 7, 1968

John 19:17-30

BY VESTER W. WOLBER

PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION, OUACHITA UNIVERSITY

Chapters 18 and 19 of John are covered in this lesson with concentration on 19:17-30—the account of the crucifixion. The larger lesson includes an account of the arrest (18:1-11), the Jewish trial (12:14); (19-24), Peter's denial (15-18; 25-27), and the Roman trial (18-28-19:16).

These two chapters give valuable supplements to the other Gospels. (a) They indicate that it was a slave of the high priest who lost an ear to Peter's sword in Gethsemane (18:10-11), and it was a relative of this man who identified Peter as he warmed himself beside the courtyard fire (25-27). (b) John also states that the Lord was first carried before Annas, Caiaphus' father-in-law, for trial. (c) John's tone is more sympathetic toward Pilate and leaves the lasting impression that Pilate was not a bad man, but a weak one. His example reminds us, however, that men of weak character who are in high positions will do awful deeds when under pressure. (d) The fourth Gospel gives more prominence to the mockery of the soldiers as they dressed Jesus in purple and crowned him with thorns (19:1-3). (e) Finally, the larger lesson indicates that it was the subtle suggestion by the Jewish leaders that they would use their influence with Caesar against him that caused Pilate to yield to their demands (12-16).

A title for His cross (17-22)

The execution squad had three prisoners to dispose of that day. They issued a cross to each and instructed each

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to carry his own cross to the place chosen for execution—the outcropping hills to the north of the city. As the procession moved out, they met a man coming into town, seized him, and pressed him into service to bear the cross of one of the prisoners (Luke 23:26). Whether this man Simon was conscripted of necessity because the Prisoner was too weak from enduring the soldiers' sadistic abuse, or from a growing admiration of the quiet dignity of the Man is anybody's guess; but when the execution was complete, the army officer in charge said that he was the Son of God (Mark 15:39).

Pilate prepared a superscription to identify the Prisoner as "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The title was embarrassing to the Jews who wanted it to read that Jesus claimed to be "King of the Jews," but Pilate refused. Perhaps, having been forced to yield to the Jews on the big issue, he enjoyed some measure of delight in being able to deny their request. Weak men often compromise their character on major issues and make all-out stands for truth and right in minor issues. It's better to stand for right and lose the fight on important issues than it is to gain victory on insignificant matters.

Gambling for His garments (23-24)

John's purpose in recording the gam-

bling events was to indicate that the free acts of wicked men were sometimes foretold in Scripture; especially those acts directly related to the redemptive work of the Lord (Ps. 22:18). But the soldiers, their senses deadened by sadistic hostility, were unaware of the significance of their malicious deeds.

A home for His mother (25-27)

Gospel records give the women a better record of loyalty than the men. Close by the cross were four women whom John identified—one of them the mother of Jesus—and one man. The fact that John, "the disciple whom he loved," stood near indicates that he was more loyal than the others. Perhaps his standing in the community gave him an additional sense of security, but it cannot be knocked that he was faithful when others fled. In giving Mary unto John, Jesus placed her under the protective care of his most reliable disciple. The author seems to take delight in reporting that "the disciple whom Jesus loved" took Mary to his home.

Vinegar for His thirst (28-30)

In three short sentences John managed to leave six pertinent items of information: what Jesus felt—thirst; what he knew—that his redemptive work in the flesh was complete; what he said—that he was thirsty; what he received for his thirst—vinegar; what he announced—"it is finished"; and what he did—yielded up his spirit.

Jesus came into the world to reveal God and redeem men; and when he was aware that the total task was complete, he was ready to depart. John had made it quite clear that men could not really take Jesus' life from him but that he would lay it down of his own accord (10-18). So here, having announced that his mission had been complete, he yielded up his life. Although hostile men murdered him, Jesus died as a victor and not as a victim.

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