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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Language Missions
growing in state
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January 20, 1983

Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE

On the cover



ABN photograph by Jones

Dr. Kwang Lee, a professor of agriculture at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, leads a class teaching Korean to youngsters of Korean-American descent. The class, along with regular church services, is part of a language mission which meets in a home donated by Park Hill Church in North Little Rock.

Non-profit postal rates face 'normal' increase

by Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (BP) — Preferred-rate mailers such as Baptist state papers face only a one-step increase in postal rates following congressional passage of a catch-all funding measure to keep most government agencies running through fiscal 1983.

In contrast to the stop-gap funding bill Congress passed late last year which doubled postage costs for state papers and a wide range of other non-profit mailers, this year's version calls for a normal annual increase in preferred rates to be maintained through Sept. 30, 1983.

Specifically, non-profit rates will be maintained at step 14 of a 16-year phasing process Congress began in 1970 to adjust these rates toward full attributable costs in annual increments. Due to a shortfall in the 1982 funding of the postal subsidy, the phasing was eliminated last January, causing rates to leap from step 10 to step 16. But last summer, Congress appropriated additional funds for the subsidy, bringing rates back to step 13.

Rates had been expected to go somewhat higher than step 14 in 1983 after both Senate and House appropriations committees recommended funding the postal subsidy at \$708 million — a figure which would have put non-profit rates between steps 14 and 15.

But in its version of the stop-gap funding measure, the Senate decided to keep the rates at step 14 and Senate-House confer-

ees agreed to the Senate version. This puts cost estimates for the subsidy at \$789 million, well above the \$500 million recommended by the original administration budget which would have pushed rates beyond the step 16 levels.

Though the cost of moving to step 14 will vary among non-profit mailers, the increase will be in line with previous rate hikes under the phasing process.

For *The Baptist Record*, a Baptist publication in Mississippi, the new rates will involve a 16 percent increase in postage costs, according to Editor Don McGregor.

McGregor, who was president of the Southern Baptist Press Association when rates skyrocketed a year ago and has continued to monitor the rate situation, said his annual cost will climb from \$215,252 to \$250,094.

"I'm pleased," he said. "It's a whole lot better than it could have been."

Despite the fact that the phasing process is still two years ahead of schedule, McGregor said in light of last January's action, this year's funding level of the subsidy "is not a bad solution to the problem."

The Postal Service is expected to implement the new rates in early January. Congressional sources don't expect a regular 1983 appropriations bill for the Postal Service to be passed since the stop-gap measure provides funding through the end of the fiscal year.

In this issue

8 Relief goes on

Arkansas Baptists were there when tornadoes and flooding first struck the state Dec. 2. And, as victims of flooding from abundant rain continue to clean up, Baptists are still there to help. Our storms story is updated.

9 A two-way street

It's not only the foreign-born in Arkansas who benefit from language ministries through our churches. Baptists who teach and witness to internationals find awareness and appreciation for other cultures.

Editor's note: The one-step increase will cost the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine approximately \$17,400. But it is our hope that we will be able to maintain our present subscription rates. The editor and staff will carefully manage the 1983 budget and it is hoped that this will enable the ABN to maintain the current subscription rates. We believe that there are good reasons for maintaining the subscription rates whenever possible.

First, holding the subscription prices will give the churches opportunity to budget for any increases that may come in 1984. We

will do our utmost to determine what actions are likely to be taken by the Congress in next year's budget.

Second, the severe recession, large unemployment and the general economic conditions could affect the gifts to our churches. The ABN genuinely appreciates the churches and subscribers staying with the Newsmagazine through the years and desires to express appreciation by holding subscription prices, if possible.

Finally, it is hoped that the action of the ABN will encourage churches to keep the Newsmagazine in their budget or begin sending it to all resident members.

Church child care regulations debated

by Kevin Jones

The bill to exempt religious-affiliated child care services from state licensing would mean if passed, that no one would be checking whether the food that is served in such a center is nutritionally balanced, whether the rooms are overcrowded, and whether there are enough teachers and staff to adequately handle the number of children present.

Those are the assertions of Glenda Bean, of Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, a non-profit coalition which includes in its membership the Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services agency of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

"The bill sponsored by Rep. Lloyd George) will eliminate inspection by a

See church child care on page 11



It is easy for us to do our second best. A few months ago a state worker on his way to an important church meeting, stopped at a self-service gas station. Having filled the tank, he prepared to go pay the attendant. Just to make conversation, he asked the woman attendant, "Are things going well for you?" Eager to share her problems, she explained that her mother was in the hospital but her father's illness prevented her from leaving the station to visit. After expressing sympathy, the minister turned to leave without even inquiring into her spiritual condition. Suddenly, there came over him an overwhelming urge to determine the woman's relationship with God.

There were many excuses which he gave himself. First, he was nearly late for an important meeting. Then, too, his Bible was packed in his suitcase in the trunk of his car. Finally, being unable to overcome the great desire to witness to her, he remarked, "The greatest comfort and help you could have at this time would come from a faith in Christ. Are you a Christian?"

"No," she replied, "but I want to be. Can you help me?" He apologized for the fact that his Bible was locked in his car, but offered to quote a few verses of scripture. To his amazement, she reached under the counter and brought out her own Bible. Before he left she had made a profession of faith and surrendered her life to Christ.

In retrospect, it is obvious how close he came to missing this excellent opportunity to lead the woman to an experience of salvation.

So often we perform only the things that we have planned to accomplish. Many of the pastors of churches that are experiencing a great harvest of baptisms have a definite time to witness. These are placing much emphasis on training their members to verbalize and to present their salvation experience.

Christ utilized opportunities to confront people with the need to accept him as Master. One of the excellent examples is found in the encounter with the Samaritan woman. It would have been easy for him to offer excuses. Jesus was tired, having travelled a long distance across rugged countryside. He was cooling himself beside the "curb of the well."

She was a Samaritan, who the Jews considered even lower than Gentiles, and with whom they had absolutely no dealings. The quarrel between the Jews and the Samaritans was an old, old story. In 720 B.C. the Assyrians had invaded the Northern Kingdom of Samaria and had captured and subdued it. Many of the Jews were taken from the area and Babylonians were brought in. The Jews, Assyrians, and Babylonians all mixed to form the Samaritans.

Still another excuse or barrier that Jesus could have used to avoid witnessing to her was the fact that she was a woman. Strict rabbis would not even greet a woman in public. Some rabbis would not even speak to their own wives or daughters or sisters in public. For a rabbi to be seen speaking to a woman in public could bring the end of his reputation.

Finally, it was obvious that the woman was of poor character. No decent man, let alone a rabbi, would have been seen in her company, or even exchanging words with her. Yet, Jesus spoke with her and led her to examine her life.

The Samaritan attempted to sidetrack Christ. She attempted to get Christ to debate with her where people should worship. For years there had been a debate between the Samaritans and the Jews regarding whether one should worship at Mt. Gerizim or Mt. Zion (Jerusalem). Jesus skillfully told her that such discussions were irrelevant. But he also stressed the fact that the Jewish nation had a unique place in God's plan and revelation. In witnessing one should never allow others to sidetrack them from their main objective; namely, presenting the claims of Christ.

One of the most exciting things on the horizon today are the varied witnessing programs which are provided by the state evangelism department. These programs provide tools which can make Christians effective in witnessing.

Years ago an ancient philosopher said, "If one is confronted by two goods and chooses the lesser, he has chosen evil." Now we have the privilege of choosing the highest good as we become consistent witnesses for Christ. May God help each of us to become more involved in telling the Good News of Christ's redeeming grace.

Arkansas Baptist NEWSMAGAZINE

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

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

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

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Prayer in schools

Voluntary prayer in public schools: One instance reported recently was a little boy in school who bowed his head and said, "God is great, God is good, let us thank him for our food." Another little boy heard the above, and when he got home told his daddy, and his daddy filed two suits against the school, one of them a very large sum of money, for the little boy saying a voluntary prayer.

Another instance of voluntary prayer is in a public school in Lubbock, Tex. Some students wanted to have Bible study, prayer and discussion in a school building after the school had dismissed all classes for the day. The school board, elected by the people, gave permission for them to have this, but someone brought suit to stop it. So we see the trend of things happening to do away with the Lord's work.

Louisville, Nebraska — The Baptists there were operating a private school in their church building, but because the pastor would not do as the public school wanted him to do, he was sentenced to 3½ months in jail. After serving about half, he was let out, soon put back in jail, and soon let out. The public school had got the legislature to pass that law.

A well-educated person stated very recently that last year he was very encouraged, for there were only 14,000 teachers and students who were sent to hospitals from being beaten or other things done to them in the public schools by some students.

Truly, when we take God out of anything, the devil is there, and it is not nearly as bad in Arkansas, for our schools are only teaching evolution as a theory instead of a fact as in some other states. Also, since the Supreme Court said in that decision that the public schools could have their own voluntary prayer, there is nothing to prevent them from having a voluntary prayer every day, either before school starts or after school stops. Praise the Lord. — F. W. Finch, Monticello

Tongue problems

It seems to be a mistake of the tongue to allow oneself to get angry at sin or emotional in a public expression of opinion. In a Baptist meeting, it seems endlessly to be an error for the uneducated or the socially unprepared to speak their heart. Articulation and selection of words seem to mean more than conviction, concern and calling.

There is an even greater danger among us when we meet in public assemblies and conventions. There is a group of men among us who have been chosen. They are chosen to censor the words and attitudes of

those not among their number. They seem to be gifted as well as chosen. Their gifts allow them to be placed in prestige convention positions. But most important, they are chosen to monitor the attitudes of the unchosen. They call for "Christian conduct" from those who appear harsh or unsatisfied by the disregard of principles of their faith. They long for the day when the unchosen will be elevated to the position of chosen and no longer embarrass them and the Lord in public meetings.

It seems that this unnecessary effort to silence other voices may really reflect a greater mistake. That mistake is the very attitude of superiority. None of us is exempt from feeling that others are less capable and even less kind in their expressions, but perhaps we need to leave more room for the unchosen to speak their heart without censorship. — Wayne Davis, Van Buren

Separation of church and state and immorality

Shakespeare said that a guilty conscience doth make cowards of us all. In Louisville, Nebraska, the pastor of Faith Baptist Church, Everett Sileven, is in jail for refusing to bow to the State Department of Education. The church has a school and the state wants the church to have teachers approved and certified by the state. The church wants to have its own teachers. Because the pastor (who is also the principal with the approval of the church) hired the teachers of the church's choice, he was sentenced to a 3½ month jail term. Neither the state or the Federal Government has the right to tell that church who it can hire as teachers. That church nor the school receive any tax money, nor do the students attending. God fearing Southern Baptists should renew their commitment to the total separation of church and state.

For years, Southern Baptists believed in and practiced separation of church and state. In recent years, they have compromised by receiving tax money for schools and universities. In my opinion, we can no longer stand up with a clear conscience (unless we are hypocrites) and say that we believe in separation of church and state. As Shakespeare said, a guilty conscience doth make cowards of us all.

If you would like to write the pastor in Nebraska, his address is: Rev. Everett Sileven, Faith Baptist Church, Louisville, Nebraska. — John O. McMullen, Black Rock

About church insurance

While the losses in Arkansas from tornadoes and flood are still in our minds it is a good time to think about insurance on

church buildings as well as personal property. Too often the trustee, treasurer or pastor responsible for securing insurance coverage have as the primary questions on their minds, how much will it cost, or can you beat the price we have? Cost is only one factor and should not determine who sells you the insurance.

The need for coverage should be determined. If you are buying insurance against fire, flood, tornadoes, etc. then the current market value should be established. If we lost our building or buildings, what is the replacement cost? Institutions such as Arkansas Baptist Convention, Ouachita Baptist University and larger churches that have real property value in the 100s of thousands or millions need a study by a knowledgeable and reputable representative even if the study costs to establish the insurance needs. A local agent may not be capable of doing this. This study should be done annually or every two years.

Insurance should be purchased through an agent representative of a financially stable company. There are fly by night agents who represent poor companies. There are steps you can take to make God's house safer from thieves, fires, floods, etc. A film which was produced by Broadman Press, *Making God's House a Safe House*, could be shown by calling Dr. Sawyer's office at 376-4791. Local fire departments would most often be pleased to inspect your building to determine and eliminate potential hazardous conditions.

I am not an insurance agent but have an interest in churches to be adequately covered by dependable agents and companies. — John Ashcraft, Little Rock

ABN letters policy

Letters to the editor expressing opinion are invited. Letters should be typed double space and must be clearly marked "For publication". All letters must be signed original copies, although the name of the writer may be withheld at writer's request and discretion of the editor. Letters are limited to 350 words and must not defame the character of persons.

Baptist elected president of SACW

MARION, Ala. (BP) — The academic dean of Judson College, William D. Murray, is the newly-elected president of the Southern Association of Colleges for Women.

Murray, dean of Judson College since 1972, was previously chairman of the Division of Education and Psychology at Samford University, 1943-64, and dean of Louisiana College.

by Don Moore

You'll be glad to know . . .

... Your Sunday morning offerings are getting through. That is, if your church sends some of it on to the ministries cared for by the Cooperative Program. I know you often feel that your part is so small and insignificant that it just gets lost in the shuffle and never really does any good. This coming year you will help 33 very small, struggling churches keep a pastor. They could not afford to pay a pastor without your help. These pastors have to work at other jobs than pastoring. These 33 churches will receive a total of \$62,700. They requested \$85,560. You might remember that when the State Mission Offering comes around again.

... Your Sunday morning offerings are getting through. The government operated Rehabilitation Center in Hot Springs helps to train the people of our state who have been crippled by accidents, disease, and birth defects. They have allowed Arkansas Baptists to place a full time chaplain there. We are the only group with such witness and ministry. On 10 of the 27 college and university campuses in Arkansas, Arkansas Baptists are the only group with a student worker and ministry.

... You have a ministry to the blind, deaf, imprisoned, orphans, poor and afflicted, that is, if you are giving through the Cooperative Program. If you are not doing it through the Cooperative Program, tell me how you are doing it. You are not likely doing it except with a tiny handful right at your door step. Some folk have a vision big enough and a heart big enough to do something beyond their personal observation.

What would Jesus do if he belonged to your church? He couldn't go everywhere, just as you cannot. He would do all he did before through those who could go. He would likely find the Cooperative Program the most practical way to get his resources to human need.

Don Moore is Executive Secretary-Treasurer for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



Moore



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant/President, OBU

Acting one's age or feeling one's age

Lately I have been giving a lot of thought to the old admonition to "Act your age!" It was the advice — well, actually, the instruction — that my father and mother gave me at appropriate times in my growth as a child when they seemed to feel that I was not behaving "up to my years." It was a subtle appeal to my growing pride in approaching adulthood. Child psychologists would call it a strong tool for "behavior modification," because of children's almost universal desire to act grown up. Through the years I have asked my children to act their age, with varying degrees of success.

More recently, during the Christmas visit of my fully grown children and growing grandchildren, I had occasion to give that same advice to myself. It happened when I was showing them with considerable pride Ouachita's new health, physical education, and recreation center. My son and sons-in-law were inspired to suggest a little basketball workout in the beautiful new gymnasium. I thought any red-blooded American father and grandfather ought to join the

game and show them a few basketball tricks the way we did it "in the olden days." I soon learned, sadder but wiser, that should have acted my age because, on the following day, I was feeling my age. Turn-around jump shots are designed for the young in fact, and not for the merely young in heart. My heart turned around but for some reason my body never made it all the way around.

While nursing my muscles back to full health, I have been impressed with the Christian application of acting one's age. All too many of us are still acting like babes in Christ, with too little growth in Christian maturity during the years since we were born again. In contrast to the rise and decline of physical strength in the human life cycle, it is a wonderful promise God has given us for ever-increasing spiritual power if only we will "act our age" as Christians. Imagine what growing power centers our churches could become.

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



Woman's viewpoint

Berdell Ward

When life's hardships go on too long

An open letter to a Christian mother whose family is facing severe economic hardship:

Dear Friend,

I am writing to let you know that your fellow Christians care about your situation and want to help you. I know you have three children as we do and how hard it must be on you to face them with no money. Our church has a program of assistance for families like yours. We will see that your family receives attention from this program both in the way of money and goods.

The easy thing for us to do is meet your physical needs. It is much harder, however, to meet your spiritual needs. I know that if you have put your faith in the Lord, you may be wondering if He has not let you down. Also, it may be difficult for you to face your children's scepticism about God's love for them, considering your circumstances. I don't know if it will help, but consider these thoughts as you contemplate

your problems and God's love. God promises to keep us in his love, but the history of Christians on Earth shows us that the human condition is often outside of God's will. When Jesus prayed for God's will to be done on Earth, he was looking toward a time when there would be no poverty or disease or disappointment. But that time did not come in his lifetime on earth, nor is it likely to come in yours or mine.

We must be comforted by believing that there is more to life — that is, the life of the spirit — than the physical conditions in which we find ourselves at any particular moment. Please have faith during this time of trial that, as God has promised, even this will be used for your good in the future if you continue to look toward him. Remember that it is better for your children to be spiritually rich than physically rich and spiritually impoverished.

Our prayers will continue to surround you during this difficult time.

Revival brings new life

FORT-DE-FRANCE, Martinique — A revival which led six young people to know Christ as personal savior has brought new life to the Bon Berger (Good Shepherd) Baptist Church in Fort-de-France, Martinique. Average church attendance jumped from 15 to 40 after the week-long revival.

by Millie Gill/ABN staff writer

Rek Easterling

has resigned as pastor of the Open Door Church in Rogers following nine years of service. Easterling, pastor of three other Arkansas churches and one in Texas in his 20 years of ministry, is entering full-time evangelism. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.



Easterling

Kenneth Bunch

has resigned as pastor of the Chidester Church to enroll in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His wife, the former Susan Beshires, will also attend the seminary.

David Manner

will join the staff of Forest Highlands Church in Little Rock Feb. 15. He and his wife, Karen, will come there from Sanger, Texas, where he is serving First Church as minister of music. Manner, a native of Ardmore, Okla., and a graduate of both Oklahoma Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, will serve the Little Rock church as minister of music/youth.

D. A. Newman

has been named deacon emeritus of Ceyer

Springs First Church in Little Rock after serving as a deacon for more than 48 years.

Henry Applegate

began serving Jan. 13 as pastor of the Leonard Street Church in Hot Springs, going there from the Lamar Church.

Tony Woodell

is serving as interim youth director at Hot Springs Second Church.

Paul King

has resigned as pastor of the Lepanto Calvary Church to enroll in Ouachita Baptist University.

Danny Russell

has been called as pastor of Neals Chapel at Lepanto. He and his wife, Rhonda, are parents of a son. They live in the Needham community near Jonesboro.

Jack Smith

has resigned as minister of education at Blytheville First Church to return to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary where he will pursue a doctorate in education.

Robert Ellis

began serving Jan. 2 as minister of music at the Kelso Church at Rohwer. Ellis is a music major at the University of Arkansas at Monticello and also teaches private piano lessons.

George McGraw

is serving as pastor of the Bates Church in Buckner Association. He is the former pastor of the Huntington Church.

briefly

Park Hill Church

in North Little Rock held deacon ordination services Jan. 9 for Doug Ask, Roger Brune, John Cole, Laymon Lawrence, Harold Patrom and Gary Robertson.

Ouachita Church

near Sparkman recently voted to become a full time church. The congregation purchased and furnished a study for Pastor Charles (Buddy) Carter.

Shiloh Church

at Harrisburg recently dedicated a debt-free addition that houses four classrooms and fellowship area. A baptistry was also dedicated, according to Pastor E. W. Teague.

West Memphis First Church

held services Jan. 9 to ordain Donnie Crawford, Jimmy Swafford and Edgar Worman as deacons.

Fayetteville First Church

is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year with spiritual direction goals in witness, evangelism, Sunday School growth, ministry to University of Arkansas students, youth activities, the music program, mis-

sions and Bible study. May 1-June 25 will feature speakers that include Don Moore, executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and Paige Patterson of Dallas, Texas, Larry Baker of Kansas City, Mo., and Andy Hall of Del Ray Beach, Fla., all former pastors.

Midland Church

held services Dec. 5 to ordain Homer Michael Jr., Phil Hobbs and Lowell Schlieff as deacons. Gary Martin was also licensed to the ministry.

Alexander First Church

recently voted, in a regular business meeting, to build a fellowship hall and family life center. Pastor Aaron Thompson will lead the congregation in this building program.

buildings

Rector Heights Church

in Hot Springs will hold services Jan. 30 to ordain Bill Keener and James Standiford as deacons. Pastor Gene Bates and Ken Martin will lead the service.

Josephine Dew

was honored Jan. 9 by Central Church in Magnolia for 40 years of service. She has served as church secretary, financial/pastor secretary and is currently serving as administration secretary. In these 40 years, Miss Dew has also worked in the Sunday School, Church Training and Woman's Missionary Union organizations. She has also assisted the Arkansas Baptist State Convention in a study of doctrinal questions. The church honored her with an evening reception.

Gene Bates

is participating in a missions endeavor in the Phillipine Islands this month. He is pastor of the Rector Heights Church in Hot Springs.

SBC homecoming set

Homecoming weekend at Southern Baptist College will include Friday and Saturday, January 28-29, 1983. Highlights of the weekend include a gospel concert by Brian Kinder on Friday evening at 8:00 p.m.

The Southern Singers reunion will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday morning in the Maddox Fine Arts Center. The group will rehearse with former Director Marty Sewald, of Pine Bluff, for a Reunion Choir performance during intermission at the Basketball games that evening.

The Former Student Association will have a luncheon at noon in the North Dining Room of the Gwinup Cafeteria. A Class Reunion Supper is being planned for the classes of '71 and '72.

The Saturday evening basketball games will feature the Lady Eagles playing Jefferson College and the men playing Central Baptist College.

Coronation of a 1983 Homecoming Queen and performance of the "Southern Singers Reunion Choir" will complete a full schedule for the evening.

OBU yearbook honored

ARKADELPHIA — The 1982 "Ouachitonian" yearbook of Ouachita Baptist University has been awarded the Medalist rating from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association in New York City.

The "Ouachitonian" scored a total of 977 points out of a possible 1,000. The book also received All-Columbian honors in the fields of theme and structure, layout and design, coverage and copy, and advertising.

Editor for the Ouachita yearbook was DeAnna Travis of Lawson. Other staff members included Tim Wooldridge, assistant editor; Mark Shipp of Benton, copy editor; Matt Greene of North Little Rock, director of photography; and Nickol Northern of Benton, business manager. Dr. William D. Downs, Jr. was the adviser.



APR photo/ Everett Sneed

A good crowd was on hand for the dedication of the future site of the Fianna Hill Church, a mission of the Eastside Church of Ft. Smith. Among those present were: (left to right) Orville Haley, chairman of missions for Concord association; Bill Vines, mayor of Fort Smith; John Wikman, chairman of the Eastside Mission Committee; Wally Portman, Dixie Wiggins, Ferrell Morgan, Concord's director of missions; W. Truman Moore, pastor at Eastside; Perry Puckett, Warren McLellan, Claude Rush, Lew King, Mrs. Cleona Lane, Concord Association WMU director, Larry Wilson, Concord treasurer and Jack Bettis, moderator of the Association.

East Side Church dedicates mission site

The future site of the Fianna Hills Church, Ft. Smith, was dedicated on January 8. The mission will be sponsored by East Side Church of the same city. The Concord Association and the Arkansas State Convention have assisted in the purchase of the land.

The Fianna Hills area has more than 10,000 people living in the area. Many more houses are slated to be constructed in the near future.

East Side Church has carefully surveyed the needs and the opportunity of the area and the church voted on August 5, 1981 to purchase six acres of the strategic property where Fianna Hills and Fianna Heights join.

The land was purchased for \$108,000. Concord Association has given \$25,069 and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention has given \$25,000. When the land is paid for, the East Side Church will have given ap-

proximately \$65,000 to the mission project.

The dedication of the land and sign was directed by W. Truman Moore, pastor of East Side Church. Others participating included Lew T. King; Wally Portman; Farrell Morgan, director of missions for Concord Association; Conway Sawyers, director of missions for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and John Wikman, chairman of the Missions Committee for East Side Church. — J. Everett Sneed

buildings

Levy Church builds debt free

An overflow crowd, filled with enthusiasm to continue in its enlistment of new members, participated in dedication services Jan. 9 at Levy Church in North Little Rock.

Otto J. Brown, pastor, led in the dedication of a \$250,000 building, housing adult education classrooms and a fellowship hall.

Brown reported this building, the first phase of a Master Building program, was built debt free as a result of committed members, not only giving financially, but also donating their time and labor.

Doris Waymack, adult division coordinator, shared how the educational expansion would provide space to double the adult divisions from four to eight departments including work with single adults. "We were able to build this building debt free as members became committed to the task, under the Lord's leadership, of providing space for membership growth of Levy Church," she said.

Classrooms were already filled to capacity and partitions had been added on the day of dedication.

Speaker Don Moore, Executive Secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, commended the congregation on its attendance, and on their building program. He encouraged them to use the structure as a refuge for hurting people and as a place of

acceptance for all people.

Moore, speaking from II Chronicles, said, "Since man perceives visibly and God is invisible, you must let your building reveal God and what he is like in the lives of those who built it. Continue therefore in obedience to him by dedicating yourselves to the task of reaching out to a lost and

hurting world."

"As you do this, he concluded," this building will become a special place where people meet God through prayer, praise, worship and giving."

Bob Moore served as building committee chairman, assisted by Reba Westlore, Bill Brown and Clarence Walker. — Millie Gill



Gloria Brown (left, in picture at right) an adult division worker, chats with prospective members Kathleen Brewer and Ronnie Morrow on dedication day, encouraging them to place their names on the Sunday School rolls of Levy Church and become involved in the work there. A blazing log fire in the fellowship hall fireplace (in the picture at left) provided a cheerful setting for Becky Melton to feed her infant daughter, Sarah, at the noon hour fellowship meal.

APR photo/Carl

Some of the more than 1,500 Arkansas Baptist volunteers carry supplies to people stranded by the recent flooding. Besides material assistance, some of those in the affected area have said that some individual's hearts have become more receptive to the Gospel as a result of the help they received.

Baptists aid relief



Photo: Neal Guthrie

by Kevin Jones

The word came to Neal Guthrie, state brotherhood director, on December 3. Several rivers throughout the state were approaching flood levels and it appeared that the state convention's disaster relief van and crew of volunteers would be needed.

Five thousand meals, \$25,000 worth of groceries, and over \$16,000 in direct financial aid later, the work which has involved the volunteer efforts of more than 1,500 Baptists is still going on.

"We helped them clean up in Jacksonport once," Guthrie said. "But some later rains caused even more flooding — we were able to get the clean up crew back in the week of the 10th." The tiny town of Jacksonport, on the Black River, has been the site of the worst of the flooding — at one time over 100 of the town's 120 houses

were under water with some completely submerged.

After getting the call about the need at Jacksonport from Pastor J. R. Hull, of First Diaz, the relief crew set up a base camp in the church's fellowship hall. They set to work cleaning up homes, cooking meals, distributing groceries, clothing and furniture and sandbagging low areas. After two weeks it became obvious that the problem was going to be around for a while and operations moved to a warehouse in the town.

Though literally hundreds have helped, a few individuals stood out to Guthrie. "Two RA's, Scott and Jeff Edwards, from Levy Church, gave up two days and managed the boats that took groceries to people and carried people out," he said. "And a Pio-

neer chapter from Valley Church at Searcy cut wood and gave the proceeds to disaster relief."

The reason for the involvement of Baptists is plain to the Brotherhood Director. "We were there because we love the Lord," he said, "and we want the people there to realize that he's still in control. There was tremendous strife and real sorrow for their awful loss, but there was no loss of life. We think the Lord spared the folks in a dangerous situation."

There have also been numerous opportunities for witnessing to flood victims by the Baptist men. "I haven't heard of anyone getting saved as a result of that witnessing, but you never know what will come out," Guthrie said.

Help of a different nature has been offered by the State Missions Department. A total of \$16,438.88 has been given to churches and associations in the hard hit areas, with half the total coming from state office's emergency fund and the other half matched by the Home Mission Board. Black River Association (which includes Jacksonport) was given \$8,000 and another \$5,000 to Pulaski with smaller amounts going to other locations.

"We will be giving out more," said Conway Sawyers, director of missions for the state convention. "More will be needed as the people in the churches get back in and see what the problems are."

Several churches have given their contributions directly to those affected by the flooding, but by doing so they have actually deprived the people of all the help they could be receiving. "If a church or association sends its contributions through our office," said Pete Petty, director of missions ministries, "we at the state office will match it, if it's not a tremendous amount, and we can get what both of us give matched equally by the Home Mission Board," he said. For example, if a WMU chapter has a bake sale and raises \$100, it could send it directly to the flooded area or it could send it through the state office with the result that \$400 would go to those in need. "Liberty Association is sending their contribution through us, and we expect others to," Petty said.

Clean up and relief efforts will likely continue throughout January, according to Guthrie. "What is terrible is that this could happen again if it rains before the levies are repaired."

If it does, Arkansas Baptists will also be there again, by their presence reminding people that whatever the tragedy, God is in control of the situation.



The Missions Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, represented by Pete Petty, missions ministries associate, (right) gives a check for \$5,000 to J. R. Hull, pastor of First Church Diaz (center) and Black River Associational Missionary Marvin Reynolds for distribution to flood-stricken individuals in the Jacksonport area. Behind them is the disaster relief bus that the Brotherhood Department manned during the crisis.

Language missions helps Americans and foreign born

by Kevin Jones

Each thundering wave seemed to be higher than the one before. Mothers held tightly to their terrified children. Fathers wrapped one arm around their families and gripped the small boat's sides with the other.

It seemed to Minh Van Lam and the 47 friends, relatives and students he had led out of communist-overrun Viet Nam that they were about to die, their tiny boat swamped in the violent storm. As water dashed him in the face and ran off his already drenched clothing, Minh loosened his grip on the side of the boat. With a reassuring glance at his startled family members, he withdrew his arm from them as well. All of his nearly drowning, almost-beyond-hope fellow passengers watched in frightened amazement as Minh, the only Christian on board, knelt to pray.

Miraculously, he wasn't swept overboard. Even more amazing, they survived the storm and were picked up a few days later, hungry but alive, by an American ship bound for Thailand. Once there, Minh met Baptist missionary Doug Kellum and was granted permission to use his chapel to talk to his boat people.

"I told them that our survival and being picked up was a miracle God had done to show them that he was real," he said. "I told them he wanted them to believe in him." In response to his invitation, all 47 men, women and children came forward to receive Christ.

Before his experience in the boat, Minh was already a witnessing Christian, but while he was praying he promised God that if he saved them, he would offer the rest of his life in the Lord's service. As the Vietnamese people around Ft. Smith have learned in the past year, that was no idle commitment. When he took over the Vietnamese mission of Grand Avenue Church a year ago, there were only around 30-40 attending. Now the membership is over 100, and growing steadily as Minh and his members engage in regular door to door witnessing and visitation among Vietnamese families.

As successful as he is, Minh Van Lam is only a part of a growing language mission effort in Arkansas. Randy Cash, language missions associate in the missions department said, "There are around 40 churches involved in language ministry in Arkansas, ministering to about 500 people. There are Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, Phillipino and Rumanian." Cash said that there is a growing concern and enthusiasm for language missions in the state.

One of those most experienced in language missions in the state is Harold Gateley, director of missions in Washington-Madison Assoc. and a former missionary to Korea. When he was living in Little Rock he was instrumental in starting the Korean fel-

lowship that meets every Sunday afternoon at Park Hill Church, N. Little Rock.

To draw Koreans who would not ordinarily be interested in coming to church, a half hour before the services language classes are offered. For Korean children, the classes are in Korean, so that they will not lose touch with their heritage. For older people, there are classes in English.

"The classes teach them how to be good American citizens, but also to know who they are and where they come from," Gateley said. "They have a lot of cultural problems in adjusting to the way things are over here and the way people think." Gateley recounted an incident in which he had counseled a couple in which the American husband had jokingly told his Korean wife "aw, get out of here." "She didn't understand the tone and thought he wanted her to get out," Gateley said. "She became very angry and hurt."

Gateley sees the language and cultural classes as a necessary part of language ministry. "Church should help you to become all that you can be," he said.

Gateley, who is beginning another Korean fellowship at his new location, said that there are several things a local church can do to help in language missions. "They can provide a place, not too big, but big enough

to meet, hopefully with a kitchen, since many of these people like to eat when they come together," he said.

"They can help them learn English — there is a lot of material available for that, and the people themselves will often know about it. And they can try to learn about their culture, to show an interest in them as friends, to learn what culture shock is like."

At Grand Avenue, the cooperation has gone even further. Since Minh does not have enough qualified leadership to hold his own Sunday School, his young people up to the age of 15 attend Sunday School at Grand Avenue.

The ministering churches also gain from the relationship. "The churches who are involved gain a greater awareness of the world outside the United States," Cash said. "They learn to appreciate people and cultures which are different but they learn we all have a common ground in Christ," he said.

Jim Files, associate pastor at Grand Avenue, said that being involved in language missions has caused his people to understand and be involved in missions more than ever before. "Instead of having to go overseas, God has brought the mission field to us," he said.



Minh Van Lam preaches to the congregation he led in Thailand, made up largely of his 47 fellow boat survivors. In the group picture, Minh, his congregation and Baptist missionary Doug Kellum sit in front of the church they built with their own labor in Thailand. Minh is currently pastoring a Vietnamese congregation associated with Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith which has doubled in size since he came and is continuing to grow steadily and rapidly.



Arkansas gifts greatest ever

Arkansas Baptists gave more in 1982 than they have ever given through the Cooperative Program. The increase for last year exceeded the inflation rate. More churches participated and many of them gave a higher percentage to world missions. Arkansas Baptists gave more than \$8.98 million.

Although Arkansas Baptists gave the most money to the Cooperative Program in the history of the Convention, it represented 98.49 percent of the total budget. There were several factors which produced the slight deficit of \$137,611. Among these is the fact that the budget called for a 13.5 percent increase over 1981. Only one time during the past 12 years have the budget receipts exceed the previous year by more than 13.5 percent.

A second factor which impacted on the Cooperative Program gifts is the fact that in 1982 there was a recession and high unemployment. Several factories were closed and farm prices were depressed. Many people in Arkansas were out of work and unable to give to the churches. Finally, although the December gifts were excellent, the gifts were influenced by flooding and tornadoes.

The 1983 budget of \$10 million should be attainable since it represents only a 9.67 percent increase over the 1982 budget. The state leadership believes that budgets should be realistic and yet challenging.

"God has prompted our people to give because he knows our ministries exalt Christ and meet needs. How encouraging to learn of churches almost every week who are increasing their gifts to Cooperative Program ministries! I am proud of our churches for what they have done and are doing," said State Executive secretary Don Moore.



A plaque of recognition and appreciation for six years of service as a member of the Board of Trustees of Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services was presented to Arthur Melson, of Siloam Springs, by Johnny Biggs, executive director of Baptist Family and Child Care services at the December board meeting.



Choir Member — Before Bill Clinton was sworn in as Arkansas' governor, he was reminded by his choir director, E. Amon Baker, that he was still a choir member. Baker pulled Clinton off the dais at his dedicatory service at Immanuel Church and the dutiful Governor-elect took his place on the front row as the church's pastor, W. O. Vaught, looked on.

Governor dedicated at Baptist church

An interdenominational dedication service at Immanuel Church prior to the inauguration of Governor Bill Clinton drew hundreds of people Tuesday morning, January 11.

Several speakers, including three Black ministers, a Catholic Bishop, and a Church of Christ minister offered prayer for the new governor and read scripture before the church's pastor, W. O. Vaught, gave a short message. Vaught told Clinton, a member at Immanuel, that he was being called at a time of trouble and great challenge. Reading from Second Samuel, he reminded Clinton that "He that ruleth over men must be just; ruling in the fear of God."

Immanuel's Minister of Music, E. Amon Baker, pulled the governor out of his chair

when it was time for the choir to sing *This is my Country*, saying, "I always hate to see one of my choir members idle when it's time to sing." Clinton took up his accustomed place in the choir and the soon to be chief executive obediently followed his choir leader's direction.

The emotional highlight of the ceremony came during a soloist's singing of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* in which she substituted the line "Bill Clinton, keep marching on." At that point, Clinton wiped his suddenly red eyes and threw back his head and smiled, a bit overwhelmed.

After the service, Clinton and his entourage and many of those present went directly to the capitol for the administering of the oath of office. — Kevin Jones

Brazilians robbed of Christmas funds

RECIFE, Brazil (BP) — Southern Baptist missionary Clara Williams and two Brazilian co-workers were robbed Dec. 6, of \$2,000 set aside for Christmas gifts of clothing for the poor.

The robbery occurred at a fast-food restaurant in Recife where Williams and her two companions had stopped for a meal after withdrawing the money from a nearby bank. Two men who apparently had observed the bank withdrawal entered the res-

taurant, snatched the briefcase containing the money and fled.

Williams chased the men, who jumped into the trunk of a waiting car. When she approached the car one of the men pointed a revolver at her. She darted behind a lamp-post as the car roared away.

The money had been intended for purchase of clothing for poor families in a drought-stricken region of northern Brazil.

Church child care Continued from page 2

member of the Child Care Services Facilities Review Board," she said. The facilities would still be inspected by the fire marshal and by the health department. "But people think that the health department has all these regulations relating to child care," Mrs. Bean said. "They don't. They apply the same regulations to (child care centers) as they do to restaurants; just that the kitchen is clean."

Rep. John Ward, a deacon at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock and a seven year Sunday School teacher, was one of

those who voted to report the George bill out of committee. However, he does not support it. Instead he is for a compromise bill.

"I voted (the George bill) out of committee in order to encourage the introduction of the compromise bill," he said. "I think the compromise bill satisfies most legitimate arguments on both sides," said Ward, who in his private law practice represented Heritage Christian School in a dispute over licensing of its day care programs. "The church folks (bill advocates) are saying 'we

are opposed to licensing.' So the compromise bill says we will not require religious groups to be licensed. But they must meet minimum standards, the same standards that every other group has to meet to ensure that the children are properly cared for."

"Those who fear state intrusion into church affairs are afraid that in licensing they are submitting to the state as a higher authority than God," Mrs. Bean said. "The compromise bill removes that problem while safeguarding the children."

Rep. Lloyd George, who introduced the bill, told the ABN he did so in response to his constituents, a group of pastors from the area and Don Grendall, who runs the Circle H Youth Ranch, which has repeatedly fought state licensing of residential care facilities.

When asked if he was not afraid that some cults would abuse their freedom from licensing to run unacceptable child care centers, George said, "I know there are extreme groups in religion who bismirch the name of the hundreds of fine groups, but how are you going to take care of the legitimate groups and safeguard against the extremists? I'm open to a constructive suggestive suggestion on that."

Arkansas Baptist Single Adult Conference

Pulaski Heights Baptist Church

Little Rock, Arkansas

February 11-12, 1983

Speaker



Dr. J. Clark Hensley

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- Inspirational worship
- Personal interest conferences for single adults
- Conference for leaders of single adult activities

Schedule

Friday — February 11

7:00-9:45 p.m.

Saturday — February 12

8:30-11:45 a.m.

1:30-5:00 p.m.

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Church Training Department
Arkansas Baptist State Convention

Family Ministry Department
Baptist Sunday School Board

Tax Seminar

January 26, 9 a.m.

Geyer Springs First

Social Security Participation

Seminar Leaders:

Herbert Louks, Soc. Sec. Administration

Charlie Reynolds, Christian Stewardship Resources

Sponsored by Stewardship Department

Pastors, wives conference set

RIDGECREST, N.C. — The annual spring pastors/wives Bible conference will be held April 11-15 at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center here.

The conference, which begins Monday evening, includes daily worship, Bible study and special interest conference for pastors and wives.

Ginny Sisk, a pastor's wife from Lexington, Ky., will lead daily sessions for wives on the theme "Learning to Live in a Glass House." "How to Keep the Well from Going Dry" will be the topic for pastors led by Fred McGehee, Sunday School Board consultant.

Bible studies on the book of I Corinthians will be led by David Garland, assistant professor of New Testament at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

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Your state convention at work

Family Ministry

Single adult conference in February

Dr. J. Clark Hensley will be the featured speaker at the annual Arkansas Baptist Single Adult Conference February 11-12 at the Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock.

Dr. Hensley, recently retired as director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, is a nationally known speaker and conference leader for family life and single adult events. He has written several books and numerous articles for single adults. He has led conferences for several Arkansas Baptist church and convention family life conferences.



Jackson

The Arkansas Baptist Single Adult Conference will feature times for inspiration, fellowship and learning. Special interest conferences are planned for single adults and workers with single adults.

Tim Cleary, Minister of Education at the Sherwood Church in Webster Groves, Mo., will lead the special leadership conference. Tim is a special consultant and single adult conference coordinator for Missouri Baptists.

Conference participants are asked to preregister if at all possible. Contact the Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203, for registration information and costs. The telephone number is (501) 376-4791. — **Gerald Jackson, associate**

Church Training

Good news for the new year

The records are all in for the 1981-82 church year and there is good news as we begin a new year. The churches of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention have reported a gain of 2,511 in total Church Training enrollment which is a gain of three percent over the previous year. Twenty-eight of our 42 associations reported gains in enrollment. This reflects a renewed commitment to training in discipleship on the part of our churches.

The Church Training enrollment for the Southern Baptist Convention increased by over 107,000 or 5.9 percent over the previous



Holley

year. This was the largest percentage of enrollment growth reported for the past year.

The Church Training Program has a major role to play in Bold Mission Thrust as we launch the Developing Believers Emphasis. We must continue to make training members in discipleship a priority concern in our churches. In so doing we will help reverse the loss of new members, deepen the faith and commitment of believers, equip members for leadership and ministry, and provide a broad base of support for Bold Missions at home and around the world.

We are grateful for the Good News! — **Robert Holley, secretary**

Stewardship

Tax Seminar on Social Security

Social Security's problems are well advertised. Politicians hesitate to suggest realistic solutions. The public wonders about the future of the Social Security system even when assurances are given that the program will continue.

Ministers, because they are self-employed for Social Security purposes and pay 9.35 percent, have special questions. Some tax advisors say they have special answers for ministers who want to drop out of the Social Security Program.

The 1983 Tax Seminar will address the pros and cons of Social Security participation. The one-day seminar is set for January 26, at 9 a.m., at the Geyer Springs First Church.

Charlie Reynolds, Christian Stewardship Resources, and Herbert Louks from the Social Security office will lead the seminar.

The seminar is open to pastors, church staff members and others who have a special interest. — **James A. Walker, director**

Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting



Doris Diaz, WMU, SBC



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Your state convention at work

Evangelism

Last call for State Evangelism Conference

This is the last call for the State Evangelism Conference, January 24-25. This conference will open at 1:30 p.m. at Geyer Springs First Church with the singing of Weston and Davis. The out-of-state program personalities are very important to this conference.

Dr. Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church, Memphis, will be a keynote speaker. Dr. Rogers is a very popular speaker and will speak in the first three sessions of the conference.

Dr. D. L. Lowrie, pastor of First Church, Lubbock, Texas, will be our Bible teacher. Dr. Lowrie, who is now serving as president of the Baptist Eastern Convention of Texas, is a very popular speaker across the Southern Baptist Convention. He is a native of Tennessee and a graduate of



Shell

Southwestern Seminary. He is very active in our denominational work.

Dr. Richard Harris, Associate Director of Mass Evangelism Department, will represent the Home Mission Board. Harris gives direction to evangelism as it relates to revivals and crusades. He is a native of Kentucky and a graduate of Southwestern Seminary. He will speak two times in the conference.

Mrs. Huber Drumwright will give a special emphasis on "Women in Witnessing". Mrs. Drumwright is the widow of Dr. Huber Drumwright, former Executive Secretary of Arkansas Baptist State Convention. She has served as a member of Women in Evangelism Council, Home Mission Board and is present Assistant to Executive Vice-President, FMB.

Come now and let God's power touch our lives as we share together. — Clarence Shell, director

Christian Life Council

Another best kept secret

Occasionally an organization is referred to as one of the best kept secrets in the state or nation. The Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas is an organization which must not be kept secret. It deserves our prayerful and financial support. For many years the CCF has magnified the cause of civic righteousness in Arkansas. It has been the voice of temperance in the halls of our state House of Representatives and Senate, dealing specifically with the problem of alcohol and other dangerous drugs, gambling and pornography. The Arkansas Baptist State Convention,



Parker

several individual local churches and associations have the CCF in their budgets. It is hoped that many individuals throughout our state will also contribute their financial and prayer support.

Former Arkansas Baptist State Convention president and Director of Missions in North Arkansas Association, John Finn, has recently returned to Arkansas to serve as the new director of the Christian Civic Foundation. He is the first Baptist to serve this interdenominational agency. If God directs, and he will, mail your financial gift to the following address: Christian Civic Foundation, 1007 Donaghey Building, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201. Your gift will be tax deductible. "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" Proverbs 14:34. — Bob Parker, director

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International

Teaching about lostness

by Jere D. Mitchell, First Church of Fayetteville

Luke 15:11-24

Central truth: There is hope for the hopeless.

Lostness can be overcome.

There are times when we look at lost people in disgust and say, "They will never change." A friend of mine once said to me, "People never change." If that is so, then the gospel is a farce. The very nature of the "Good News" is such that it is "Good News." A new nature can be had. That's what Jesus was talking about when he told Nicodemus he must be born again. That's what Paul was talking about when he spoke of being dead. A new nature is possible.

Lostness is a condition which we choose.

It is our nature to rebel. We choose to sin and separate ourselves from God. There is a strong tendency to blame others for our failures and our sin. The truth is we choose to be lost.

Lostness is a condition that separates us from God. God is a holy God and sin drives us away from him.

Sometimes it takes awhile for us to realize how serious the situation is when we rebel against God. It often takes a great crisis in a person's life for them to be in a position to where they turn to God for help.

The loving Father is willing to receive us with open arms. When we "come to our selves," and turn to God, he is not one to make us prove ourselves before he forgives, but immediately calls for rejoicing that the lost has been found.

Those of us who have already experienced this should rejoice that there is hope for the most hopeless. This motivates us to keep on doing our main business. It causes us to be just as happy as the father when the lost is found.

If the one who is lost does not repent and turn to the Father, then the condition is forever. How tragic to be able to receive forgiveness and never claim it.

Life and Work

God's Word and God's Will

by Nodell Dennis, First Church of Trumansville

Basic passages: Matthew 5:17; 12:1-8; 21:28-31

Focal passage: Matthew 12:1-8; 21:28-31

Central truth: True religion is seen in caring hearts of believers.

According to Matthew 5:17, Jesus came to fulfill the law of God. In other words, he came to give it meaning that the scribes had never given it, and to live up to its intention. This is understood more clearly through two passages.

1. In Matthew 12:1-8 Jesus says human necessity takes precedence over legal technicalities. The Pharisees were surely familiar with 1 Samuel 21:1-6, but they had not comprehended it. David had entered the house of God and eaten the consecrated bread while fleeing from Saul. Jesus, also, reminds them that even the priests were permitted to set aside sabbath laws in order to carry out the ritual sacrifices (Num. 28:9-10). Human need always pre-empt's legalism.

The believer should always be more concerned with ministry than a strict observance of religion. For example, the Lord's day is always important to the believer. But if that believer, in his attempt to get to the house of God on Sunday to observe his religion, would pass someone in dire need on the street with no sense of caring or no desire to help, his actions would be displeasing to God. Religion is to have the heart of Christ in it, if it is to be true religion.

As human need takes precedence over a strict legalism in worship, repentance is needed over self-righteousness.

2. In Matthew 21:28-31 one son corresponds to the professionally religious whose self-righteousness prevented them from responding to the call to repentance. The Pharisees and hypocrites were unconscious of the need for repentance. The other son corresponds to the tax-gatherers and harlots who were at one time very far from repentance but later repented as a result of John's preaching.

All men, religious or otherwise, need to respond to God's message of repentance. Forgiveness of sin and salvation in Christ is the way to the kingdom of God.

Bible Book

Benefits through Christ's death

Basic passage: Romans 5:1-15

Central truth: Because of Jesus' death we who are saved are made the spiritual beneficiaries of all that God is.

Someone has said that, when a passage of scripture begins with the word therefore, then you should diligently seek to find out what it is there for. Paul wastes no time in affirming that because of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection experience, those who believe upon him not only have right standing with God, but are also made beneficiaries of multiplied spiritual blessings from God.

Among these are included peace with God, unmerited favor, eternal security, character, a lively hope and the Holy Spirit without measure. God is truly munificent in his grace gifts to his children.

These grace gifts came to us at a time when we were still helplessly entangled in the prison house of sin, incapable of understanding our situation, sinking ever deeper into the mire of our own rebellious nature.

At the exact right time Jesus offered himself on Calvary's cross for us, demonstrating the unfathomable depths of God's redemptive love for lost mankind.

Paul suggests that if he would do that for people who were in spiritual enmity to him, how much more would he pour out his gifts of love upon those who by faith have become, no longer enemies, but brothers and dear children.

All that takes place from Adam's fall to Jesus focused on man's inadequacy. It remained for Jesus to bestow not only salvation but manifold grace gifts as well, because he is the fulfillment of the law.

Sin through one man, Adam, had entered the human race, bringing death, disruption, disharmony and destruction to that which was made in the Image of God. Grace through one man, Jesus Christ, brought life, peace, security, character, hope and the presence of the Holy Spirit as the earnest or guarantee that what God has begun, he will complete.



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Social issues derailed in Congress

by Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (BP) — Expectations ran high among advocates of controversial causes such as tuition tax credits, public school prayer and abortion restrictions when the 97th Congress came to town two years ago.

The mix of a new President who promised to push these issues with a Congress expected to be decidedly more conservative seemed to spell the last chance for legislative movement in these areas.

But in the end the causes — all pushed by the New Right — fared no better in the 97th Congress than they did in the previous one. They stirred a lot of fury and debate,

heated debates they sparked may well have cost them supporters.

Though numerous tuition tax credit proposals were introduced from day one of the 97th Congress, none went anywhere until President Reagan began pushing a White House version late in the second session.

With this administration push, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Robert J. Dole, R-Kan., held together a shaky coalition of tuition tax credit supporters long enough to have a highly-modified and watered-down version of the Reagan proposal out of committee but it never was considered on the Senate floor.

Opponents of the measure charged that tuition tax credits would be a drain on the federal treasury in a time of mounting budget deficits and that they violate the First Amendment's ban on a government establishment of religion. In addition, proponents were divided over how tough to make the bill's anti-discrimination provisions against schools that discriminate on the basis of race.

Proponents of state-sponsored prayer in public schools moved on two fronts during the 97th Congress. Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., the veteran champion of New Right causes, pushed legislation to strip the Supreme Court and lower federal courts of jurisdiction of school prayer cases.

Although no hearings were held on his court-stripping proposal, Helms offered it as an amendment to a debt ceiling bill last September. But the measure failed after numerous unsuccessful efforts to end a filibuster against it.

Early last summer, President Reagan fulfilled a campaign promise by proposing a constitutional amendment on school prayer but it also failed to move.

The Senate Judiciary Committee held three hearings on the Reagan proposal but with time waning in the session, committee Chairman Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., told the President he would reintroduce the measure in the 98th Congress, indicating it wouldn't move in the 97th.

Reagan's prayer amendment met with even less success in the House of Representatives where Judiciary Committee leaders kept it bottled up and an effort to discharge the measure from the committee produced less than 60 of the necessary 218 signatures to bring it to the floor for a vote.

Abortion was a similar story in the 97th Congress with anti-abortion forces divided over which legislation to push. Some favored a Helms proposal, a human life bill which would have declared that life begins at conception and barred federal courts and the Supreme Court from striking down anti-abortion legislation.

Others supported a constitutional amendment by Sen. Orrin C. Hatch,

R-Utah, which would have given Congress and the states authority to restrict or ban abortions. Senate judiciary subcommittees cleared both proposals but only the Hatch amendment passed the full Judiciary Committee. But Hatch withheld it from full Senate consideration in exchange for commitment for early consideration in the next Congress.

One conservative cause — a court-burial amendment designed to end bus-ing — was attached to a Justice Department authorization bill in the Senate but died in the House Judiciary Committee. The House did attach an anti-busing rider of its own to a regular appropriations measure for the Justice Department, but it was deleted from the stop-gap funding bill Congress eventually passed for that agency.

Congress cleared one important piece of civil rights legislation which sparked heated debate — a 25-year extension of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. The extension applied to the preclearance section of the act which requires nine states and portions of 13 others to get Justice Department approval before making any voting law or policy changes. The Senate also modified one of the permanent sections of the act to make proving violations of the act easier in court.

The 97th Congress also made several tax law changes affecting churches and charitable religious organizations. The large tax cut passed during the first year of the Reagan administration liberalized both the amount and scope of foreign earned income which Americans abroad — including missionaries — can exclude from U.S. taxes. This change was urged by the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board. The new law also reduced the "marriage penalty tax" to prevent married couples with two incomes from being taxed at a higher rate than two single persons with incomes identical to those of the married couple. It also permits taxpayers who use the standard deduction in filing income tax returns to deduct charitable contributions.

In the tax hike passed during the second year of the Reagan administration, Congress increased the ability of churches and denominations to provide more adequate retirement plans for their ministers and lay employees.

Finally postal rates for non-profit mailers took a roller coaster ride during the 97th Congress. Late in the first session, a short-fall in a postal subsidy appropriation led to a doubling of non-profit rates in early 1982. But last summer Congress added some additional funding to that subsidy bringing subsidized rates down some but not to the point where they had been. Then in the stop-gap funding measure for 1983 Congress provided funds to allow for a normal annual increase in preferred rates.

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but brought about no significant change in the law of the land.

Based on early surveys and comments from members of the 98th Congress which convened here Jan. 3, the social agenda of the New Right appears to have missed its best chance.

With the 97th Congress concentrating on President Reagan's budget and tax cut from the beginning, controversial social issues were consigned to the back burner. When they finally surfaced late in the second session — mostly in the Republican-controlled Senate — they proved so divisive that the