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May 15, 1986

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

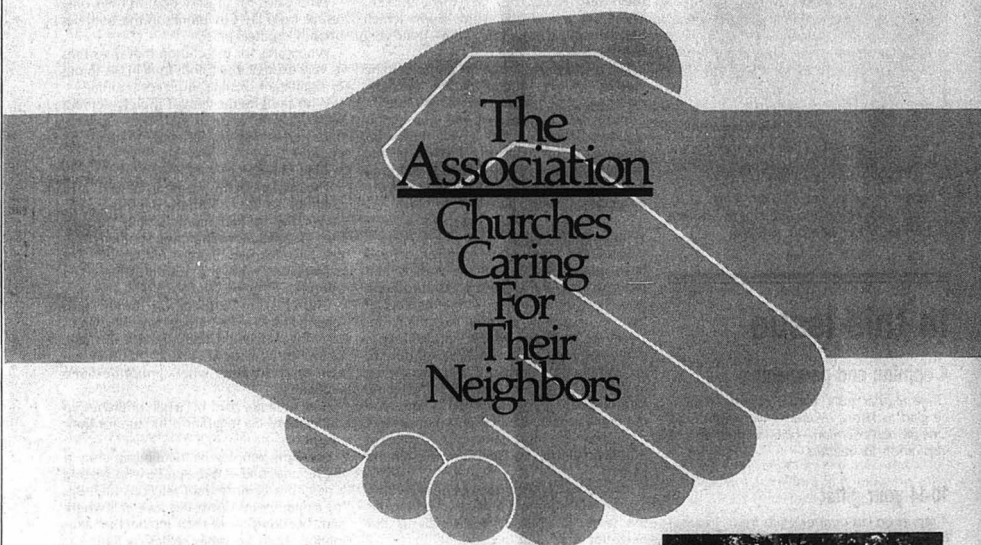
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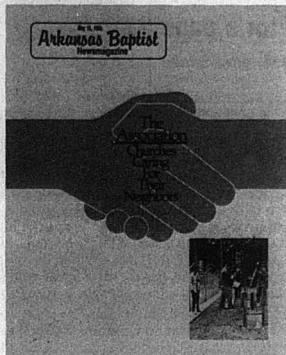
Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine



The
Association
Churches
Caring
For
Their
Neighbors

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ABN photo / Millie Gill

"Churches Caring for Their Neighbors" is the theme for the 1986 Associational Emphasis Week, May 19-25. A feature by ABN editor J. Everett Sneed focuses on the ministry of Tri-County Association and Director of Missions Robert F. Tucker (see pp. 6-7).

In this issue

4 opinion and perspective

Three regular ABN feature columns—You'll be glad to know, Woman's viewpoint, and One layman's opinion—offer information and inspiration for readers.

10-14 your gifts

A report on last quarter's gifts from Arkansas Baptist churches through the Cooperative Program.

Associational Emphasis Week

The association: churches caring for their neighbors

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and put him to the test, saying: Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And He said to him, What is written in the law? How does it read to you?" And he answered and said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:25-27 NASB).

These words are just as penetrating, just as revolutionary, just as shocking today as they were when they were first spoken. These are the pivotal words upon which believers must stake their faith—their very beings.

The message is simple, yet complex. The message is love—unequivocal, limitless, no-strings-attached, unconditional love.

Immediately, however, the message is clouded. Believers question, with the lawyer in Jesus' conversation, "Who is my neighbor?" And, while believers talk and debate and analyze love, the world cries out desperately, "Who cares?"

Who is my neighbor?

This is the question that followers of Jesus have uttered throughout the ages. When Jesus was posed this question by the young lawyer, he didn't answer with a theological treatise or a well-reasoned argument. Instead, he answered with a simple story, a story that went beyond a sense of duty to an overwhelming sense of caring. According to William G. Tanner, president of the Home Mission Board, "The Lord lifted the question out of the usual realm of speculation and set it down on the most dangerous 20 miles of mountain terrain in Palestine: the Jericho road."

In answer to contemporary Christians who ask this fatal question, Jesus' answer remains the same. Relentlessly, Jesus tells us our neighbor is anyone in need.

"The commandment of love means this: no one is a stranger to you; every man's welfare is your concern. Jesus rules out behaving toward one another as strangers when he says, 'The other man must mean as much to you as your own self. You must feel his welfare as your direct concern,'" according to Albert Schweitzer, writing in *Reverence for Life*.

Our neighbor is that person we meet on our Jericho road. Our neighbor can be Christian or non-Christian, church member or non-church member, black or white, rich or poor, Hispanic or Asian, young or old. Our neighbor is every person.

Who cares?

Who cares for the hundreds who have been left homeless in the mid-section of our country after all of their worldly belongings were swept away in a vicious storm?

Who cares for those who find their only refuge from life's inequities in the bottle of brightly-colored pills?

Who cares for the church that questions its very existence as it finds itself in the throes of significant change in its community?

Who cares for the faithful church member who, after 18 years of marriage, suddenly finds herself with no husband, no home, no church?

Who cares?

The answer to this question is, and must continue to be, "Southern Baptists care!"

Working in their communities through their associations of churches, Southern Baptists have learned that it is not enough just to know the truth, the truth must be acted upon.

Churches in association freely join together to do certain things together. Churches in association find strength in unity. Churches in association find that they are able to do together what cannot be done separately.

And a large part of what churches in associations do together is to care for their neighbors.

For many people, the local community is the Jericho road. It is the place where being a neighbor is more than religious talk. Being a neighbor is Christ-like love. It is where faith becomes more than intellectual affirmation. Faith becomes selfless action.

Southern Baptists working through their churches in association have heard and have heeded the words of Jesus:

"Which of these three do you think to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same" (Luke 10:36-37 NASB).

SBC live coverage plans announced

The 1986 Southern Baptist Convention will be broadcast live from Atlanta on the Baptist Telecommunication Network June 10-12.

The gavel-to-gavel coverage of the convention will begin Tuesday, June 10, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT), and will conclude with adjournment Thursday, June 12, at 4:30 p.m.

BTN subscribers are being urged to open their facilities to allow area persons to view the convention sessions. In addition, the BTN signal will not be scrambled for the live broadcast, and persons with satellite receiving equipment will be able to view the program on Spacenet 1 (120° W), channel 21.

Understanding the association

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



With the exception of the local church, no area in Baptist life is more important than the association to our denomination's well-being. Yet, in spite of the vital role the association plays, it is often misunderstood. The association, being the closest unit to the local church, performs a unique function in tying together all that Baptists do. The Associational Emphasis Week, May 19-25, will afford an excellent opportunity for churches to gain a better understanding of the role of the association in Baptist life and will provide opportunity for everyone to pray for the work of his or her own association.

It is somewhat difficult to define an association, since it is a volunteer fellowship of Baptist churches and individual members of these churches. This voluntary cooperation often enables churches to do things which no one of them could do alone. The organization is bound together by a common experience with Christ, common doctrine and common needs. The association is dependent upon the cooperating churches for its resources and is responsible to the churches for all of its actions. Yet it is autonomous in its own sphere of activity, in that no other body is able to give it instructions. It is the denominational unit which often reflects the needs and concerns of Baptist life better than any other.

Baptist historians and theologians have repeatedly affirmed the idea that associations are not composed of churches but of messengers of the churches. Messengers are elected annually to attend the yearly associational meeting with no instructions or delegated duties being imposed upon them. Yet, in practice, most Baptists think of churches "joining" or "withdrawing" from the association.

Historically, the modern association has its roots in England, having been a definite part of Baptist work by the middle of the 17th century. The first known association in America was founded in Philadelphia in 1707.

Although there is no direct reference to the association in the New Testament, the principles of cooperation which function in the association are quite evident. Several references deal with doctrinal problems while others deal with practical or financial ones.

Acts 11:1-8 tells of a conference which was held to discuss Peter's visit to the house of Cornelius where several Gentiles had accepted Christ as Savior. Some Jewish Christians in Jerusalem objected to a Gentile being brought into the church without circumcision. Peter recounted the events, and his critics were satisfied, at least temporarily. The Scripture says, "They held their peace,

and glorified God, saying, 'Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life'" (Acts 11:18).

Acts 15:1-35 is a lengthy discussion of what is often called "The Jerusalem Conference." The Antioch church sent messengers to the Jerusalem church to discuss a matter of doctrine and mission polity. Again, the issue was the circumcision of Gentiles. Some maintained, "... except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye can not be saved" (Acts 15:1). It was decided that circumcision is not necessary for salvation. But the incident illustrates the way they reached consensus and their unwillingness to coerce each other.

In II Corinthians 9:1-15, Paul relates how a group of churches in Macedonia provided financial assistance for the persecuted and needy Christians in Jerusalem. He was encouraging the Corinthians to follow the example of the Macedonians. The churches in the New Testament era cooperated in order to meet financial needs, deal with doctrinal problems, promote fellowship and carry out their joint mission endeavors. Every church needs the assistance of the association to promote "koinonia," or fellowship. Often the association can provide materials to churches which will make them more effective. Most associational offices have an abundance of helpful printed matter on almost every area of church life. By providing courses and leadership training, associations become an important link in denominational activities.

The local association is often thought of in relation to direct missions or special projects. It is frequently involved in the development of new mission sites, including making a census to determine the feasibility of beginning a new work in a particular area. Many associations also provide camps, assemblies, and retreats which assist young and old alike to understand God's will for their lives.

In most associations, it would be difficult for the work to be carried on without the leadership of a director of missions. The director usually carries a heavy responsibility and plays a vital role in the on-going activities of the association. In addition to other responsibilities, he serves as a counselor for both pastors and laymen.

We salute the 42 associations which serve the Baptists of Arkansas. The assistance provided to the churches by these associations and their staff members is vital to the on-going of the Lord's work. Please take time to remember your association during Associational Emphasis Week May 19-25.

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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

VOLUME 85 NUMBER 19

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Member of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

The Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine (USPS 031-280) is published weekly, except the third week in April, at July 4 and Dec. 25, by the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc., Little Rock, AR. Subscription rates are \$8.36 per year (individual), \$5.40 per year (Every Resident Family Plan), \$6.00 per year (Group Plan). Foreign address rates on request. Second class postage paid at Little Rock, AR. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, P. O. Box 882, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Don Moore

You'll be glad to know...

... Excitement reigns in many hearts as more and more of our people are involved in AMAR, the Brazil Partnership Mission. A recent report from Glendon Grober brought an unbelievable thrill to my heart. We are just halfway through the three-year partnership. We have 40 projects in process, that is, at various stages of happening. The largest groups and largest number of groups going at any time will be this month. Their projects are many and varied. They need the power and wisdom of God upon them.

The spin-off effect of this partnership continues to be great. We thank God for it and for you who have caught the vision and followed the Lord in true missionary fashion. God bless all of you who could not go because of age and health or work, but you have prayed and given so that your fellow church members could! All of us share in the joy of letting others know of Jesus.

We officially conclude the AMAR Partnership in November of 1987. We hope to have two Brazilian leaders from the State Convention we are helping to come and share in our annual convention in 1987.

... Southern Baptist Convention messengers have to be properly certified before they can be issued ballots for voting in Atlanta. I urge every church to send the number of messengers they are qualified to send. Please get messenger registration cards from your associational office or our office, and have them properly authorized and signed before you leave for Atlanta.

Each cooperating church may have one messenger plus one additional messenger for each 250 members or for each \$250 paid to the work of the convention during the fiscal year preceding the annual meeting. No church can have more than 10 messengers. Based on membership, a church would need to have 2,250 members to qualify for 10 messengers. Based on money, a church would need to contribute \$2,250 to the convention work to qualify for the full number of 10 messengers.

It is very important that we be involved, informed and in the Spirit as we go to Atlanta. Hope to see you there, June 10-12, 1986.

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



Moore



Woman's viewpoint

Sarah Anders

My home, a base for ministry

As a part of a MasterLife assignment, I recently had to give considerable thought to my life goals and to directing those goals toward God's purpose for my life.

In setting priorities in each area of my life, I had no problems setting goals until I reached the area of my home and daily work. As a non-working mother of two young children, how could I use my home and daily routine to accomplish God's purposes? It is easy to use these things as an excuse not to do God's work rather than as a base for ministry.

Then I remembered a time when I was able to care for the child of a young mother who was weighed down by the daily routine and the responsibility of caring for someone else constantly. She was able to take an hour or two to shop and regain strength and a better perspective.

I remembered when I was able to hold a small baby while his mother went to an

appointment. Through the friends that my children made at school, I had opportunity to be a witness to some parents who were not Christians and to encourage them to come to church.

I remembered a time when I was able to offer lunch to a busy mother who didn't have time to stop and fix something for herself.

As I examined what I actually do during a day and the opportunities that come with the routine, I realized there are many opportunities daily to share God's love with others. I did not even have to leave home to be a witness.

Sarah Anders is director of the preschool division of First Church, Sherwood. A graduate of Louisiana College, she is married to Sherwood pastor C. Michael Anders. They have two boys, Andy, age eight, and Will, age two.



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Thinking out loud about Homosexual Culture Week

The recent newspaper announcement about the observance of "Gay and Lesbian Culture Week" on a university campus in our state has caused me to look once more at my commitment to certain constitutional freedoms. The week was sponsored by the "Gay and Lesbian Students Association" and is defended by civil rights groups in terms of being just as American as apple pie, hot dogs, and the flag. As an American, I have real problems with honoring their freedom, and as a Christian educator I have even more serious problems with giving legitimacy to such a week on a university campus.

For starters, I have real problems understanding how our American courts can continue to say no to overtly Christian religious programs on state university campuses, while saying yes to a program that defends and even promotes homosexual culture. I have always understood the value of church-state separation to be primarily in the protection of religious freedom from government-imposed religion or anti-religion. When we end up with a set of court ground rules prohibiting formal advocacy of Christianity on campus but allowing formal advocacy of homosexuality on campus, I

simply don't see how any fair-minded person can say it is right.

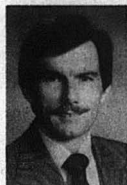
In my opinion, the court's interpretation of "sex discrimination" to include an elaborate umbrella of protection for homosexual behavior and advocacy, constitutes crawling out on a shaky limb far removed from the intention of either the legislators or the people as a whole. Homosexual practices and advocacy are violative both of the clear teachings of the Bible and of many laws on our statute books. The fact that such practice is both immoral and illegal should be reason enough to remove that shield of protection the courts seem determined to give it.

I continue to believe in free speech and separation of church and state, but I am increasingly worried about court decisions that seem to give anti-Christianity preferential treatment to pro-Christianity. I trust the courts are not yet ready to require the tolerance of gay and lesbian culture weeks on the campuses of Christian colleges and universities.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people



Ian Cosh has been named as the Carl Goodson Honors Council Scholar for the 1986-87 academic year at Ouachita Baptist University. Cosh, a junior business administration major, will be studying and travelling in four African nations during the month of July. The visit is being coordinated by the Foreign Mission Board and Zeb Moss, SBC media director for Africa. He will study the roles played by the media in SBC mission work and will present his findings in the form of an independent research study paper.

David M. Pierson was ordained to the preaching ministry May 4 at Fort Smith Trinity Church.

Rick Stevens has resigned as pastor of Lepanto Calvary Church.

Danny Smith has resigned as pastor of Neals Chapel at Lepanto to become pastor of the Lebanon Church.

Dillard S. Miller of Mena is serving as interim pastor of Ashdown First Church.

J.W.L. Adams has resigned as pastor of Beech Street First Church in Texarkana, effective May 18, following more than 12 years of service there. He has accepted a call to serve as pastor of a church in Madisonville, Texas.

Norma Blanche Dryer of Ozark died April 30 at Fort Smith while visiting her son, David E. Dryer. She was owner of Dryer Shoes in Ozark. She served as secretary-treasurer of Ozark Parent Teachers Association. Her funeral services were May 3 at the Ozark First Church where she was an active worker in Woman's Missionary Union. Other survivors include a daughter, Mrs. Robert (Nadene) Pesterfield of Ozark; a son, James M. Dryer of Ozark; three sisters; four brothers; nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Memorials may be made to Ozark First Church.

Jewel Morris of Fort Smith has been elected as second vice-chairman of the SBC Radio and Television Commission Board of Trustees. He is a member of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith.

W. Francis McBeth has been named a Fellow of the Academy of Wind and Percussion Artists, by the National Band Association, the world's largest association of bandmasters. He was presented a medallion, certificate and statue signifying the honor at a recent ceremony in Chicago. McBeth is resident composer and chairman of the theory-composition department of the School of Music at Ouachita Baptist University.

briefly

South Highland Church in Little Rock named Fred Walloch, Doyne Warren and E. C. Reed as deacons emeritus May 4, recognizing an accumulative of 97 years of service by the three.

Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock has voted to sponsor a Spanish mission in an effort to reach more than 3,500 Hispanics in Little Rock. The mission will be a cooperative effort of the Home Mission Board, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and Pulaski Association.

Junction City First Church will observe homecoming May 18 with former pastors A.W. Smart, H.B. Fuller and R. H. Dorris as featured speakers. Pastor Gene Thomas reported that all former pastors, music directors and members will be special guests.

Morrilton First Church voted April 23 to sponsor a mission at Center Ridge. Sunday School and worship services began May 4 in a mobile chapel, according to Refus Caldwell, director of missions for Conway-Perry Association.

Prescott First Church has voted to become a Macedonian Mission partner. This church will join with two other churches to sponsor a mission in the local area, according to pastor Robert Parsley.

Pulaski Association has established a missions sub-committee for the purpose of identifying and recommending a strategy for ministering to the needs of people living in mobile home parks within the association. Ocie Dee Miller, a member of Vimy Ridge Immanuel Church, is serving as sub-committee chairman.

Fayetteville First Church has received an Eagle Award from the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention for its enrollment growth and other Sunday School work achievements over the past two years, according to Pastor Jere D. Mitchell.

Brinkley First Church recently sponsored an Economic Crisis Encouragement meeting for the purpose of seeking ways to minister to Arkansas farm families. Jim Spott, Jimmie Sheffield and Don Moore, executive director of Arkansas Baptist State Convention, were featured speakers. James McDaniel is pastor.

Rison Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary May 28 with a centennial celebration. Ben Elrod will be speaker. Pastor J.T. Harvill reported activities will include a potluck luncheon and an afternoon program of music and fellowship.

‘Serve the Lord with Gladness’

While he served on the music faculty at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, B.B. McKinney was in great demand as an evangelistic singer. In addition to leading music in revivals, he also helped with a number of summer assemblies and encampments.

In the summer of 1930, Mary Virginia Lee, the Sunday School Board consultant for high-school-age young people, asked McKinney to write a song for this age group. The theme suggested was “Serve the Lord with gladness” based on Psalm 100.

Shortly after he received this request, McKinney traveled by train from Fort Worth to New Orleans. He thought about

the request and the challenge of this opportunity to write a song for this age group.

As he sat in the railroad car, he read and read again Psalm 100. The click of the train wheels seemed to provide a rhythmic support for the tune that took shape in his mind. As the train rolled on its way to New Orleans, the words and music came together.

When McKinney got off the train in New Orleans, the completed manuscript was in his briefcase. Robert H. Coleman of Dallas, the songbook publisher, published “Serve the Lord with Gladness” in 1931. — William J. Reynolds



Robert F. Tucker, director of missions for Tri-County Association, believes an associational director of missions must be an administrator, an encourager and one who promotes and provides opportunity for fellowship. He said, "A good director of missions must encourage training and the overall work of every church. While every association has its own personality, these key ingredients must always be present."

Tucker believes the greatest program in Tri-County at this time is Baptist Telnet. He said, "Although it is necessary to educate our pastors so they can use it, it provides leadership training in almost every area of our Baptist life."

Currently, the association has seven churches using tapes taken from Telnet in their weekly officers and teachers' meeting. Occasionally, still other churches will use it. The association has four recorders so four tapes can be made directly from BTN broadcasts.

Tucker said the churches using the taped Sunday School lessons feel they are the best things they have ever had to assist in good Sunday School teaching. The churches report they are having more indepth presentations of the Sunday School lessons. Some of the Sunday School teachers are even taking the tapes home with them so they can do additional study.

The first part of the tape is an exegesis of the Scripture, while the second portion is a teaching plan. Every tape has both the adult and youth lessons presented in all three curricula. Each exegetical section is approximately 20 minutes in length.

The association makes a complete master of everything broadcast by BTN each day. The association then indexes the material according to the index provided by BTN. Materials of similar type are placed on a single tape up to six hours. These taped materials are then catalogued and available for check-out to the churches of the association just as a book would be available in the public library.

BTN, Tucker observed, offers many other

The Association Churches Caring For Their Neighbors

Tri-County Association: encouraging fellowship and training

by J. Everett Sneed, ABN editor

types of leadership material. For example, Tucker noted, "the Sunday School Growth Spiral (a plan to enroll and involve individuals in Sunday School rapidly) is presented indepth in 10 sections. Many of our pastors are studying the material so they can provide training for their people."

Tucker believes other outstanding BTN presentations include How to Carry On and Conduct a Backyard Bible Study, Developing Believers, Shared Ministry, The Deacon-Servant Role and Planned Growth in Giving.

"An exciting tape that is coming out is the Deacon-Servant Role, which has eight to 10 segments," Tucker explained. "They are producing additional segments on the deacon ministry periodically. The presentations deal with each phase of the deacon's ministry, such as ministering to senior adults and visitation."

Tucker hopes Tri-County churches will make even greater use of the BTN materials. He said, "Some of our churches complained at first they didn't have proper equipment. So the association purchased equipment churches could borrow. But in many instances, after they had used the equipment for a short period, they would purchase their own. They found it difficult to move the equipment around. Actually, the recorder-player and the TV set are not expensive. They can be purchased for around \$650."

Tucker observed that the BTN tapes strengthen other things the association is

doing. He said, "I had hoped more of our pastors would participate in the Shared Ministry conference. But the best promotion for Shared Ministry are the pastors who attended. Since BTN has an excellent presentation on Shared Ministry, other pastors can receive the information."

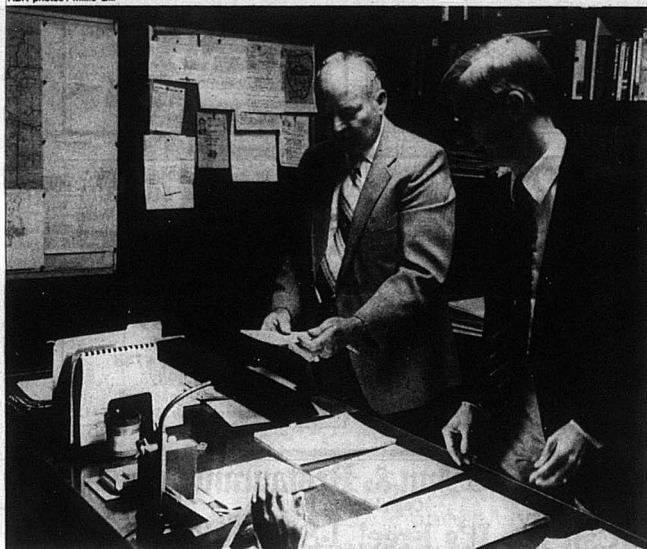
Tucker believes Shared Ministry can greatly assist the churches. He said, "The Shared Ministry program is one of the major emphasis of our association this year."

The leadership in Tri-County Association also is going all out to promote Planned Growth in Giving. At every Executive Board meeting, Earl Cumbie, education director at Wynne Church, makes a presentation encouraging others to participate.

In conjunction with Planned Growth in Giving, the association is using Jack Taylor's material on "God's Economy." The association currently has a retreat planned in which both will be emphasized.

The association also provides assistance in the area of family ministry. Recently the association held a retreat for pastors and their wives in which Glenn D. McGriff, director of the ABSC Ministry of Crisis Support, led a conference dealing with stress in family life, which provided a background for a general family life retreat.

Tucker said, "The lay members of our church have an even stronger need than do our pastors and wives. A conference for the lay people will be held in the near future."



Tri-County Association Director of Missions Robert Tucker visits Bob Massey, pastor of Fitzgerald Church, to help prepare program packets for an association-wide family finance retreat.



Tucker works at the associational camp with Gary Arnold, pastor of Tilton Church and Bill and Janet Headley, camp managers.

The association also has a goal of 100 percent of the churches conducting a Vacation Bible School. Last year, 13 of the churches failed to conduct a VBS. But Tucker knows several of these are already planning to have one this year.

Tucker indicated he also is excited about Tri-County's associational Brotherhood program. He said, "In the past we had a traditional Brotherhood in which the men would come together to hear a speaker and eat, with that being the extent of the activity.

"Our new Brotherhood director, Van Nowlin, a highway patrolman from Forrest City, is interested in developing a first rate associational Brotherhood program. He is seeking the best individuals possible to provide training for our men. For example, he had Neal Guthrie to provide training on disaster relief."

The camp program is another associational activity with which Tucker is greatly pleased. He said, "Every associational camp program I know about takes a lot of work and a lot of time. But it is worth it, if an association can develop a proper program."

The Tri-County Associational Camp is busy all summer. The facilities are booked solid from the first week in June to the first week of September. These activities include two weeks of children's camps, one week of youth camp, a WMU prayer retreat, and a number of children's day camps.

Tucker observed, "When an association

uses it's camp facility properly, it will undergird much of the work of the association. One of the advantages of a camp setting is that people get away from the hustle and bustle of daily life and are in a spirit of meditation. This makes it possible for them to respond more easily to the leadership of the Lord."

The facilities are usable all year, but in the winter they are used only about one week out of each month.

Tucker also is pleased the association has been successful in enlisting foreign missionaries. He said, "Sometime ago, every association was challenged to enlist at least one foreign missionary. We have had two couples to go as foreign missionaries from our association. These are Monte and Linda Mills, missionaries to Transkei (currently on extended leave), and Karl and Thelma Weathers, missionaries to Beirut, Lebanon." In addition, Tucker's own son has volunteered as a foreign missionary and is currently in language school preparing to go to Argentina.

Tucker observed the associational program has developed during his 14 years as director of missions. He said, "There has been a slow and sure increase in giving during the time I have served Tri-County."

Tucker also feels Planned Growth in Giving will help overall stewardship in the future. He observed that individuals are beginning to make stewardship growth commitment

pledges. He said, "Planned Growth in Giving will challenge many people who are giving little or nothing to start giving systematically."

Another associational emphasis has been various types of continuing education. Tucker said, "I am convinced we need to emphasize church study courses. Our churches were quite low in the number of individuals who had earned study course awards. I have been going from church to church emphasizing the need for training through study courses.

"One of the best ways in smaller churches is to get an individual to lead out in earning study course awards," Tucker continued. "When the award diploma is earned, we make a special presentation and commend the individual for their effort. After the award is presented, others begin to say, 'I can do this, too.'"

Tucker gave an example of how this works. Janet Headley, wife of the associational camp caretaker and a member of Tilton Church near Fair Oaks, earned a diploma. As a result of her excitement, the wife of the new pastor, Mrs. Gary Arnold, is now earning her first diploma.

The association also is encouraging continuing education through Seminary Extension. The associational office is the primary center for the teaching of Seminary Extension classes. Approximately 50 lay people, in addition to preachers, have participated in the Seminary Extension study. Tucker said, "I feel that by training lay people I can help the churches and the pastors."

Tucker is excited about what is transpiring in the association. He said, "By encouraging fellowship and training, we are able to assist our churches in becoming more effective for our Lord."

Credentials, Tellers Committees appointed

ATLANTA (BP)—The Credentials and Tellers Committees for the 1986 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention have been appointed by SBC President Charles F. Stanley of Atlanta.

Chairman of the 27-member Credentials Committee will be Charles Page, pastor of First Baptist Church of Nashville, Tenn.

Chairman of the 22-member Tellers Committee will be Jack Graham, pastor of First Church of West Palm Beach, Fla.

Stanley also shifted John W. Bryan from the SBC Committee on Committees, representing West Virginia, to membership on the Credentials Committee.

Bryan currently is a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board, as a representative from Virginia. The Virginia-West Virginia state line divides Bluefield, and Bryan's business address is in West Virginia.

Stanley named Robert Rice, pastor of Westmoreland Church in Huntington, W.Va., to replace Bryan.

Thomas A. Hinson, pastor of First church, West Memphis, Ark., was named to the Credentials Committee.

TROUBLED?

Wanda Stephens, M.D.
Christian Psychiatrist
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CHURCHES	COOPERATIVE PROGRAM	DESIGNATED GIFTS	CHURCHES	COOPERATIVE PROGRAM	DESIGNATED GIFTS	CHURCHES	COOPERATIVE PROGRAM	DESIGNATED GIFTS
STATE AT LARGE								
INDIVIDUAL RECEIPTS	50.00	4,046.40	LADELLE	242.77		BEDGWICK	225.24	452.10
ARK BAPTIST FUND	6,014.78	25,726.37	MACEDONIA	447.98	125.00	BRITVILLE	456.10	153.00
S A WHITLOW, MEM.			MARSHEN	25.00		SPRING LAKE	601.28	789.36
HAROLD L BRUNHART			MONTICELLO 1ST	8,837.27	4,357.33	BUFTON	856.03	493.03
WBU CONTRIBUTIONS		1,863.83	MONTICELLO 2ND	2,196.88	1,712.35	TUCKERMAN 1ST	562.50	1,706.50
SBU CONTRIBUTIONS			NO SIDE, MONTICELLO	356.39	87.00	MALNUT RIDGE 1ST	11,361.02	6,620.92
UNITY BAPTIST CHURCH	54.71	50.00	OLD UNION	35.51		WHITE OAK	50.00	50.00
CLARKVILLE 1ST	8,433.37	6,091.94	PLEASANT GROVE	30.00		CALVARY, WAL RIDGE	303.18	457.11
MT OLIVE, DISBANDED			PRAIRIE GROVE	349.02		SOUTHIDE	103.40	
MT PLEASANT, INACTIVE			SALINE	51.72		CROSSBARN CHURCH	222.00	362.00
JERICHO, INACTIVE			SELMA	184.71	202.00	WIRTH EVANGELISTIC		
VANDERBILT AVE, INAC			UNION HILL	194.71	202.00	ASSOCIATION TOTALS	37,050.69	21,812.27
ANTIOCH	27.60		WARREN 1ST	13,937.37	12,569.33	BUCKNER		
TEMPLE, N. MEMPHIS			WEST SIDE, WARREN	484.54	350.14			
NEW LIFE	4,331.00		WILMAR	481.76	959.64			
KIMBERLING HILLS			SOUTHIDE	431.86				
CALVARY, ASDOWN			SPANISH FELLOWSHIP	1,478.00	648.00	BUCKNER ASBN	211.98	100.00
GRACE FELLOWSHIP BA		200.00	CALVARY SOUTHERN		326.00	ABBOTT	279.68	
OPEN DOOR MISSION			ASSOCIATION TOTALS	39,479.24	648.26	CALVARY, DOONEVILLE	163.45	
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL, B			BENTON COUNTY			CALTHON		
CHURCH ON THE ROCK, D			BENTON ABBN		100.00	CLEAR CREEK	34.05	
NEW LIBERTY 80	112.26		BELLA VISTA	12,510.90	13,214.24	CLARKS CHAPEL	60.00	
VICTORY, DOONEVILLE	180.85	115.00	BENTONVILLE 1ST	7,537.96	7,856.07	DAYTON	472.00	375.00
ASSOCIATION TOTALS	19,204.57	38,103.54	CENTERSTON 1ST	1,170.00	1,095.00	DEXTON	124.80	
ARKANSAS VALLEY			CALVARY BAPTIST HIS	743.67	643.65	EVENING SHADE	514.42	948.71
ARKANSAS VALLEY ASB			DECATUR 1ST	2,054.15	2,530.78	FELLOWSHIP	23.78	
BARTON	713.05	67.00	DARFIELD 1ST	800.01	1,314.44	FRIENDSHIP	3,202.11	2,474.35
BRIDGECYS	232.87	214.64	DEWITT 1ST	3,259.05	3,489.29	HAWK CREEK	469.29	
BRINKLEY 1ST	13,333.32	19,421.94	GRUVETTE 1ST	829.07	573.00	HON	165.33	190.42
CLARKSON 1ST	3,696.43	1,836.45	GUN SPRINGS	424.27	418.71	HUNTINGTON 1ST		
ELAINE	5,544.43	505.50	HIGHFILL 1ST	1,297.40	2,457.00	LONE		
FRIENDSHIP	479.00	500.00	IMMANUEL, ROGERS	9,999.99	2,350.41	JAMES FORK	821.90	1,614.98
HELENA 1ST	5,505.41	3,422.85	LAKEVIEW	245.95	2,038.80	LONG RIDGE	284.91	
HUGHES 1ST	2,499.99	3,930.00	LOVELL	1,444.94	246.04	MANSFIELD 1ST	4,201.47	2,886.46
LADARROCK 1ST	276.98	32.00	MASON VALLEY	892.06	341.00	HIGHLAND 1ST	1,346.09	8.44
LENA	1,137.94	1,408.04	MONTICELLO 1ST	450.00	278.00	HOPE	133.00	
MARIANNA 1ST	4,862.70	4,728.79	OPEN DOOR	800.00	800.00	PARKS	411.98	310.45
MARWELL 1ST	3,525.00	362.75	PARK STREET, BENTON	6,369.44	2,184.45	PLEASANT GROVE #2	317.03	320.00
MARWELL 2ND	55.00		PEA RIDGE	204.01	2,038.80	PLEASANT GROVE #3	342.65	200.00
MORO	600.00	910.00	ROGERS 1ST	28,026.47	7,030.09	ROCK CREEK	342.65	200.00
NORTH BIDE, HELENA	257.96		SILGOM SPRINGS 1ST	11,898.59	16,896.99	SHILDN		
PETRYB CHAPEL	85.70		SILGOM CREEK	804.00	652.11	TEMPLE WALDRON	312.07	151.00
SNOW LAKE	64.94		SUNNY SPRINGS 1ST	212.83	226.25	UNION HOPE		
TAUNTER	505.75	119.00	SUNNY BIDE	132.49	500.00	UNITY	83.73	467.00
WEST HELENA 1ST	4,407.47	4,258.84	TRENTITY, ROGERS	132.49		WALDRON 1ST	5,025.49	1,803.09
BROADMOOR	2,226.54	489.00	TWELVE CORNERS	250.39	85.00	WEST HARTFORD	128.52	550.00
IRRAWADDI, ELAINE	1,500.00	2,547.85	TY-LYN HILLS	125.00	170.00	WINFIELD	160.46	
CALVARY WEST HELENA	444.71	132.64	FAITH	433.00	213.00	SOUTHWEST WALDRON	115.79	
HUGLY GROVE 1ST SOU	159.01	223.76	LAKESIDE	633.00	21.00	BOLES MISSION	55.25	100.00
BETHEL	43.23		CHARITY SOUTHERN BA	1,070.45	1,070.45	ASSOCIATION TOTALS	19,603.87	12,566.56
ASSOCIATION TOTALS	56,349.45	49,986.07	ASSOCIATION TOTALS	97,233.87	69,093.62	BUCKVILLE		
ASHLEY COUNTY								
ASHLEY CO ASBN			BIG CREEK					
CALVARY, CROSBETT			BIG CREEK ASBN			BUCKVILLE ASBN		
CORINTH	444.70	100.00	COUNTRY LINE	10.00		CONCORD	30.00	
CROSBETT 1ST	56,260.03	12,773.94	ELIZABETH	40.00	91.00	HT. TABOR	234.44	
CROSBETT 2ND	410.98	50.00	ENTERPRISE	100.00		ROCK SPRINGS	323.10	
EDEN	328.17	367.52	FLORA	20.00	20.00	ASSOCIATION TOTALS	587.54	
FELLOWSHIP	150.00	150.00	HANWORTH SPRING	90.00		CADDO RIVER		
FOUNTAIN HILL 1ST	270.00	411.98	MT. Zion	20.00	225.00	CADDO RIVER ASBN		
GARDNER	1,201.30	288.10	SPRING RIVER	135.00	178.85	BLACK SPRINGS		
HARBUR 1ST	6,252.00	4,002.15	VITOLA	405.00	848.34	CADDO	32.00	
JARVIS CHAPEL	147.50		ASSOCIATION TOTALS	860.00	1,363.19	GLENWOOD 1ST	3,691.85	1,216.58
MAGNOLIA	4,703.73	2,270.50	BLACK RIVER			LITTLE HOPE	570.52	2,217.64
MARTINVILLE	715.99		BLACK RIVER ASBN		250.00	LITBIDE		
MEDIANAH	2,154.00	254.00	ALICIA BAPTIST CHR	455.42	307.00	LAKE SAGHITA		
MT OLIVE	7,261.16	3,091.90	AMMON	85.00	79.00	LIBERTY		
MT PLEASANT	647.27	288.00	BANKS	633.86	209.00	LITTLE HOPE	201.00	200.00
NORTH CROSBETT 1ST	2,079.81	2,329.29	BLACK ROCK 1ST	433.00	209.00	MT IDA 1ST	2,797.04	2,531.56
SARDIS			CAMPBELL STATION	450.00	87.00	MURPHY		
SHILDN	125.12	41.71	CLEAR SPRINGS	330.00	0.00	MURRAY		
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COMINTO	186.63		IMMUEL, NEWPORT	872.00	1,544.00	PIKE RIDGE	50.00	
CORINTH	308.34	49.07	JACKSONPORT	950.24	50.00	NEWPORT BAPT CH	69.75	50.00
EGLE LAKE	215.29	43.81	MURPHY'S CORNER	50.00	50.00	NEWPORT #1, SMITHV		
EMMEZENER	681.65	544.00	NEW HOPE	31.20	321.55	NEW HOPE #2, HARDY		
ENON	975.00	832.33	NEW HOPE 1ST	13,361.46	3,900.47	NEW HOPE #3, BETHA	211.00	1,306.50
FINNANCE	54.50	86.00	OLD WALNUT RIDGE	249.52	100.00	ANTIOCH	9,866.00	3,233.49
HERNATTE	1,509.42	399.09	OTT	20.00	20.00	AUGUSTA 1ST	3,166.86	5,126.11
IMMANUEL, WARREN	5,661.31	7,069.17	DAVIDSON 1ST	571.00	248.00	BEESB 1ST	5,602.09	6,293.49
						BETHANA	344.64	
						CENTRAL, BALD KNOB	8,338.86	3,933.99

International

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

by Winfred P. Bridges, First Church, Paragould

Basic passage: 1 Corinthians 12-13

Focal passages: 1 Corinthians 12:4-13, 28 to 13:3

Central truth: The Holy Spirit gives Christians various gifts to use in love for the good of others.

God has purposes for every believer. We were chosen before the foundation of the world was established, having been predestined in love to be saved. Once we receive salvation, the Holy Spirit's presence brings the continual transforming power of the love of God. The gift of the Holy Spirit is his indwelling presence. This is a part of God's way of showing his love to others through us.

It is not coincidental that the "love chapter", 1 Corinthians 13, is between chapters 12 and 14. The most important factor in the expressing of gifts is the expression of the gift, love. Scripture says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Giving to the poor and even becoming a martyr without love is of no value to the Kingdom of God. Without it, God is absent.

There is some confusion these days in the difference between a gift and a talent. A talent is an inherent ability which can be expressed through the one who possesses it. Having a talent brings with it the ability to express it. Apart from being shy or inhibited, musical ability is expression. We may say, "He really loves; he does not know how to show it." This can hardly be because love is an expression. We could not love someone without their knowing it.

Spiritual gifts are talents inherent in the believer that have expression through the anointing presence of the indwelling Spirit of God. Talents demonstrate the ability of the performer. Gifts show forth Christ. The hearer or observer would say of a gift, "We saw Christ." A talent display would bring the response "Isn't he (the talented one) wonderful?"

All saved persons have a gift or gifts to be used of God to build up the body of Christ. Not all Christians, however, allow the Lord to manifest himself through them. We sometimes choose the lesser way of allowing our human abilities to take over rather than the Holy Spirit.

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Life and Work

At work

by Bert Thomas, Valley Church, Searcy

Basic passage: 2 Thessalonians 3:7-13; Colossians 3:22-4:1

Focal passage: 2 Thessalonians 3:7-13; Colossians 3:22-4:1

Central truth: Christians should allow Christ to be Lord of their work relationships.

A typical American worker spends more of the time he is awake with his fellow-workers than with his family. This work relationship presents him with an excellent opportunity to witness for the Lord.

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians to correct a misunderstanding about the second coming of Jesus and to correct views some of the Thessalonians had toward work. He came to Thessalonica on his second missionary journey and spent a short time there. During his visit to the city, he worked for his living and preached to the people. Paul may have worked as a tentmaker since this was his craft (Acts 18:3). Whatever work he did must have been pleasing to the Lord.

The first principle of work is that it must be pleasing to the Lord. There are some occupations a Christian should never consider. The Bible does not teach that jobs in alcohol, pornography, or legalized gambling are occupations that honor our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

A second principle is reactions to certain situations that may arise on the job. How would Paul respond to off-colored jokes that are told today? What kind of language did he use if he injured himself? How did he react to an angry customer? Would he steal from his employer? Paul could truly say, "You should follow our example; because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you" (2 Thess. 3:27).

Christians should remember the principle, "If anyone will not work, neither let him eat" (2 Thess. 3:10). The emphasis is related to the desire and not the availability of work.

The focal passage in Colossians relates to employee/employer relationships. The employee should remember that all work will face the judgment of God. Employers should remember to treat their employees in a fair and just manner because they are also accountable to the Lord. The employee should work as if the Lord were his employer, and the employer should act as if the Lord were his employee.

Our relationships will give us opportunities to encourage each other and to witness to the lost about our Savior.

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Bible Book

Correcting injustice

by Roy A. Fowler, First Church, Mountain Home

Basic passage: Nehemiah 5:1 to 7:73a

Focal passage: Nehemiah 5:1-8, 11-12a, 14

Central truth: Nehemiah's reform illustrates that God's people must take strong measures to correct problems of injustice.

The massive project of rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem brought on many economic hardships. There had been a poor harvest (5:3). Some did not have food for their families and mortgaged their property to buy food. They borrowed money to pay their taxes. In order to repay their loans, they were selling their children into slavery. Their Jewish brothers were exploiting their situation in violation of the law (Ex. 22:34, Lev. 25:35-38).

The people being exploited began to cry out against their brethren. When people recognize sin and wrong, they are responsible to cry out against it. Too many times Christians remain silent when they should speak out. So often it is only after great loss or hurt that we speak out against wrong.

When Nehemiah was made aware of what was happening, he became very angry. He called an assembly and rebuked all those guilty of exploitation. He demanded they restore their lands and their children.

The guilty people responded positively. They immediately promised to make restoration of the property they had wrongly exacted. Nehemiah called the priests and required each of them to take an oath to keep his promise. Then he pronounced the curse of God on them if they did not keep their promise. Nehemiah tells us then that they kept their promise (5:13). Some find it easy to rebuke their brethren for sin being committed, but too few of us have the courage of Nehemiah to positively require that sin be stopped and restoration and reconciliation be made.

The people divided against each other could not complete the wall. When sin was dealt with, their unity and spirit of work was restored. Now they could fulfill their purpose as God's servants. The wall was finished (6:15). What a great lesson this is for all churches. It makes a difference how we treat each other. When sin against a brother or brethren has been committed, we have a responsibility to cry out against it and require that it be corrected. Our purpose of building the church in our community cannot be fulfilled without Christian love and unity.

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Federal judge rules for SBC in lawsuit

from Baptist Press sources

ATLANTA (BP)—Saying the First Amendment of the United States Constitution prevents the intrusion of secular courts into the internal church matters, U.S. District Judge Robert Hall on May 5 decided a federal lawsuit in favor of the Southern Baptist Convention and its Executive Committee.

The decision did not address the merits of the case, only the question of federal court jurisdiction.

The suit was filed Dec. 5 in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia by Robert S. Crowder and his wife, Julia, of Birmingham, Ala., and Henry C. Cooper of Windsor, Mo., who asked the federal court to interpret SBC Bylaws, to enjoin the convention into compliance with the court's interpretation and to vacate the 1986 Committee on Boards, Commissions and Standing Committees.

In issuing his ruling, Hall wrote: "Defendants contend that this court lacks jurisdiction over this action because it involves the resolution of an ecclesiastical controversy in violation of the First Amendment's requirement of separation of church and state. This court agrees with defendants.

"It has long been a fundamental proposition of constitutional law that civil tribunals have no power to resolve disputes which are ecclesiastical in nature."

In his decision, Hall writes: "Plaintiffs characterize the dispute as a breach of contract, the contract being the SBC bylaws which defendants allegedly breached through an incorrect interpretation of Robert's Rules of Order. . . . The court views this characterization as an oversimplification of the dispute."

Hall continues: "What is actually at issue in this case is a question of church governance. Whether Reverend Dr. Stanley's rulings were correct or patently incorrect is irrelevant because a decision as to validity of his rulings would involve this court in the internal affairs of the Southern Baptist Convention, a position the court cannot assume.

"The fact that a civil court must not become involved in disputes of this type has been made abundantly clear by the Supreme Court."

Hall cited the U.S. Supreme Court 1871 ruling in *Watson v. Jones*:

"The right to organize voluntary religious associations to assist in the expression and dissemination of any religious doctrine, and to create tribunals for the decisions of controverted questions of faith within the association, and for the ecclesiastical government of all the individual members, congregations and officers within the general association is unquestioned.

"All that unite themselves to such a body do so with an implied consent to this government and are bound to submit to it."

That ruling adds, Hall wrote: ". . . (T)he judicial eye cannot penetrate the veil of the

church for the forbidden purpose of vindicating the alleged wrongs of excised members; when they became members they did so upon the condition of continuing or not as they and their churches might determine and they thereby submit to the ecclesiastical power and cannot now invoke the supervisory powers of the civil tribunals."

James Slotton, pastor of River Road Church in Richmond, Va., was the messenger who introduced the alternate slate of nominees to the Committee on Boards which set off the parliamentary wrangling which ultimately resulted in the lawsuit. Slotton was not a party to the lawsuit.

Slotton, who has a doctorate in church-state separation doctrine from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, said: "It is important Southern Baptists understand the court has not exonerated Charles Stanley's rulings in Dallas. The judge has clearly refused to pronounce one way or another on Stanley's handling of the issues surrounding my motion.

"I remain convinced it is well within the rules to offer a substitute slate for election to the Committee on Boards. I appealed from the chair to the convention, and by printed ballot the convention majority voted to overrule the chair. Wednesday night Stanley simply refused to be bound by the decision of the convention. He ignored all calls for points of order or discussion. That behavior constituted railroading and was patently out of order."

Crowder said the four plaintiffs have conferred and "believe we should appeal" the case to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit in Atlanta.

Crowder cited four reasons the plaintiffs are appealing the decision:

"One. The decision confuses Baptist congregational church government with hierarchical church government, for the cases relied on by the court deal mainly with hierarchical churches;

"Two. The decision may be interpreted by the officers of the Southern Baptist Convention and other religious groups and by other courts to permit any presiding officer to ignore or violate any church constitutional or bylaw provision with impunity and deny the rights of those who finally support the church organization in the expectation that the organization will observe its own policies and procedures;

"Three. The decision does not address the fact that not only is the SBC a corporation, but it sought and obtained corporate status from the Georgia legislature and as such is subject to civil law; and

"Four. The plaintiffs do not agree with the court's application of the precedents interpreting the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States."