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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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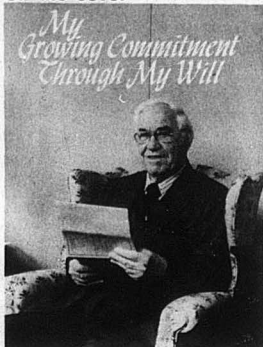
My Growing Commitment Through My Will

**Making a will is just
good Christian stewardship
page 2**



January 5, 1984

Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE



Forrest Feezor is only one of many Baptists who will testify to the need for every person to have a will. Planning for the distribution of an estate of any size is a reflection of Christian stewardship, and Baptists are urged to take action on a will during January, which is Make Your Will Month.

Stewardship commitment expressed by will

by Harry Trulove

Is making a will important? Forrest Feezor, retired pastor and denominational executive, thinks that it is.

Dr. Feezor says, "It is hard to understand why so many people (seven out of 10) die without even making a will. My wife died not long ago. Because she had a will, we knew just exactly how she wanted her possessions distributed. Otherwise, the state would have decided."

Linnie Mae Davis thought a will was important. As a result, specific gifts were made to various members of her family and most of her estate went to provide for Christian education.

Ben and Pearl Lee thought a will was important. They provided for their local church, gave gifts to friends who had cared for them, and made a generous contribution to the Cooperative Program endowment account managed by the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. As a result, Ben and Pearl will continue to have a part in Baptist ministries "til Jesus comes."

Mr. and Mrs. John Blythe thought that a will was important. Together they made their plans and directed that their real property would be used to provide continuing financial support for home missions.

Dale and Glenn Kirkland thought that a will was important. Because they planned ahead, this blind brother and sister team provided for each other and members of their family, but, more importantly, they planned in a way that would allow all of their possessions to eventually provide financial support for a number of Baptist ministries.

As a result, neglected and abused children will be given an opportunity to discover the real meaning of love. Association and state mission projects will have added resources, and through a special tape ministry, the blind of Arkansas can "read" the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* each week. These are only a few of the projects the Kirklands loved and supported. Though they were blind, the Kirklands were persons who never lost their vision.

The above are only a few of those who recognize the importance of having a will. The value of their estates ranged from a few thousand dollars to well over a quarter of a million. By planning ahead, they took control of the distribution of their possessions. They provided for the care and guardianship of minor children; they conserved their estates by reducing taxes, thus allowing more funds to be used for those causes they loved.

Is a will important to you? It is if you want to be the one to say how your possessions are to be distributed; if you want to give guidance in the selection of the guardian for minor children; if you want any part of your estate to go to any charitable cause; if you want to conserve your estate from being eroded by excess taxes.

For further information on writing a will, contact the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, or by telephone at 376-0732 or 376-4791.

Harry Trulove is director of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

In this issue

8 state sends 20 tons

That's 40,000 pounds of rice for the starving people in Ghana, and it is only the first of six shipments through the efforts of Arkansas farmers and other Baptists who gave to purchase rice from other sources.

14 back to basics

Long-time SBC leader Grady Cothen has called for Southern Baptists to return to their mission of making disciples and teaching them, rather than fighting over who knows what all other Baptists should believe.

Reagan to push Senate for new tuition tax credit vote

WASHINGTON (BP)—Despite a recent Senate vote decisively rejecting them, President Reagan has renewed his commitment to push for tuition tax credits in the 98th Congress.

Reagan told 21 Catholic, Jewish and evangelical supporters of tuition tax credits he will push the Republican-controlled Senate for a new vote as early as next spring. According to one participant in the Dec. 7 meeting, Reagan said it is wrong to say he failed to lobby the Senate hard enough to insure passage of his measure before it was voted down, 59-38, on Nov. 16.

Robert P. Dugan Jr., director of the Washington office of the National Association of Evangelicals, told Baptist Press after the 30-minute meeting that another, unidentified participant confronted Reagan with the accusation that his effort had been inadequate. Reagan replied that senators "knew he was all out for it," Dugan said.

Dugan, who recently joined a Southern

Baptist congregation in Falls Church, Va., praised Reagan for what he called the president's "tenacity" and added: "The president is certainly committed" to a new effort to push the controversial proposal through.

Dugan also expressed disagreement with opposition to tuition tax credits by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, saying, "I think it's a crock that (tuition tax credits) will destroy the public schools."

The Southern Baptist Convention and numerous state conventions have gone on record repeatedly in opposition to tuition tax credit legislation.

Asked if reasonable hope exists that a new Senate vote as early as next spring might succeed in light of the Nov. 16 defeat, Dugan said participants in the White House meeting told Reagan "there was an inadequate grass-roots call" before the November vote. Reagan "needs to articulate (support of tuition tax credits) as part of his broad vision for America," he said.



The coming of a new year reminds us of the rapidity with which time passes and the shortness of life. Though we are generally preoccupied with other thoughts and unaware of the passing of time, we are always just one heartbeat from eternity. Added to the uncertainty of the length of life is our natural fear of the future. Will this year bring joy or heartache? Though none can predict with a safe degree of accuracy, we can be certain of our victory in Christ.

David, in his flight from King Saul, underlines the uncertainty of our present life, as he said to Jonathan, "... there is but a step between me and death" (1 Sam. 20:3). Everyone who has reached maturity knows the reality of death. Many of us have come close to death and must confess that it is only by God's grace that we live.

Another of the awesome realities of the new year is the fact that, perhaps, some we know and love will depart before the year's end. Equally disturbing is the possibility of sickness. Some may become disabled, and others may have the task of caring for them.

Uncertainty is evidenced nationally and internationally. Will the Middle East situation become more stable? Will we be able to bring our troops home from Beirut, Lebanon? Will we succeed in obtaining an agreement with Russia to limit atomic weaponry? And if so, will it be to our advantage or disadvantage? These and many more questions make this a year of uncertainty.

What, then, is the certainty? All of our certainty grows out of the precious fact that we, as Christians, are in the hands of God. Paul emphasizes this great truth by saying, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31). He continues by asking, "What shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8:35). In reply he lists an almost endless number of difficulties with the conclusion that none of these could "separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39).

There are at least four ways that people live their lives. First, there are those who try to ignore God, the inevitability of death, and life's problems. Such an attitude is foolish and disastrous. The passing of earthly life is as certain as the coming of the new year.

There are some who blame God for their problems. These people believe that God arbitrarily chooses those whom he will bless or curse. An attitude such as this not only holds to a non-spiritual view of God, but also attempts to place the

blame for one's own failures on God.

The third group attempts to grin and bear its problems. Even though this may be more noble than the other views of life, this is not the way God wishes his children to live. Such an attitude will rob the Christian of life's joys and victories.

God wants the Christian to live his life victoriously, based on a personal relationship with Christ. This concept eliminates a feeling of defeat because present circumstances are apparently bad. The Christian can be happy because of the continual presence of the Holy Spirit in his life.

Paul reminds us of the work of the Holy Spirit in helping us with "infirmities" (see Rom. 8:26). The Greek word used by the apostle is "sunantilambanomai". The word paints a beautiful picture when the various elements of the word are analyzed. "Sun" means "together." The Greek prefix "anti" means "against" and the verb "lambano" means "to live". The idea is that the Holy Spirit, face to face with us, assists us in lifting the load of our burdens.

The concept communicated by this beautiful word chosen by Paul describes a load too heavy to be lifted by a single individual. But the ever-present Holy Spirit assists us in lifting our burdens. This is the reason the Christian is assured of continual victory day by day.

The individual who faces life in his own strength will always live his life in uncertainty and fear. But a second way in which God assists us in dealing with our problems is through fellowship. The Greek word "koinonia" carries with it the idea of joint participation, partnership or possessing things in common. So, a Christian is cheating himself by not allowing his partner, God, to share in all of life's joys and problems. When a Christian allows the Holy Spirit to help lift his burdens and God to be his partner his joy and peace will not be contingent on outer circumstances.

The apostle Paul faced life's problems victoriously because of his relationship with God through Christ and the continuing presence to the Holy Spirit. As he was confronted with death at the hands of Nero, he counseled Timothy, "... God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind (self-discipline)" (II Tim. 1:7).

As we step out into the uncertainty of a new year, we can rely on the certainty of our relationship with Christ. We know that the victory is assured for those who are held in the hands of God.

Arkansas Baptist

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meeting the information needs of Arkansas Baptists

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Follow first church

I would like to comment on the work of women in Baptist churches, and on ordaining of women to serve as pastors and deacons.

We say as Baptist we are a people of the book. If that is true let us go to the scriptures, which are to thoroughly furnish us unto all good works (II Tim. 3:17).

First, I want to raise some questions. (1) Was the first church intended to be an example or model for all churches? I maintain that it was. (2) Where are these people getting their insight in ordaining women? It is not found in the Bible. There is no precept or example in scripture for ordaining women to do the work God called men to do.

Paul laid down some prohibitions on women and their place in Christian service. (1) They were not to speak in public in mixed assemblies (I Cor. 14:37). (2) They were not to lead in public prayer in mixed assemblies (I Tim. 2:8-9). (3) They were not to teach men (I Tim. 2:12). (4) They were prohibited from having any place in our churches that puts them in authority over their brethren.

What is a woman's work and place of service? (1) They were to be keepers at home (I Tim. 5:14). (2) They were to be mothers (I Tim. 5:14). "Paul enjoins younger women to marry, bear children, guide the home". (3) They were to be chaste keepers at home (Titus 2:5). A noted preacher said, "Too many women have traded the skillet for a

typewriter". (4) Women were to teach women (Titus 2:4). (5) They were not to teach men (I Tim. 2:12).

In the first church our Lord called men to the preaching (Luke 6:13; I Cor. 12:28; Matt 10:1). The first church called men to serve as deacons (Acts 6:3). Paul states those who were to qualify for bishops or pastors, were to be the husband of one wife (I Tim. 3:2). This does not rule out the great place women had as helpers in the New Testament churches. But they were never to be in authority over men or act as overseers in the churches. As Baptists, we must mold our churches according to the pattern set forth in the New Testament—A. E. Cooper, Muskogee, Okla.

Program in danger

I want to take this opportunity to applaud our Arkansas Baptist State Convention for helping to bring a high quality program of theological education to our state. I have been part of the Seminary Studies Program, which is based in Little Rock, from its inception in the spring of 1982. I feel that we are receiving an education that is unequal anywhere in the world because of the caliber of the instructors which have taught here. I have had the privilege of learning from Dr. Roy Fish, Dr. Tom Urrey, Dr. Wayne Ward, Dr. Bill Tolar and many others including our own Dr. L. L. Collins. I also feel that the quality of leadership which Lehman Webb has shown is outstanding.

This program is in danger of being eliminated after the coming spring semester if there is not a marked increase in the enrollment. We need an enrollment of approximately 50 in the three classes offered to continue on a cost efficient basis. Our fall enrollment was under half of the required number. We are assured that classes will be held this spring with some excellent courses being offered.

I hope that every person who has at one time been enrolled in the Seminary Studies Program will prayerfully consider the spring semester. I also hope that anyone who might be interested in seminary level education without having to leave their place of service, will contact either myself or Lehman Webb of the Missions Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. — Larry Danks, Camden.

Resources meeting needs

Southern Baptist family ministries are "beginning to meet felt needs with effective resources," says Douglas Anderson of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

During 1982-83, 13,686 persons attended family enrichment conferences, 2,787 participated in family enrichment leadership training and 1,160 couples attended marriage enrichment retreats. Single adult events at Glorieta and Ridgecrest drew 6,256, and 18,699 attended senior adult events.



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Bad news and good news on the moral scene

There is bad news and good news for Arkansans concerning the moral scene these days. Taking the bad news first, a state legislator from Sherwood has launched a campaign in favor of a state-operated lottery. If successful, it would make Arkansas the eighteenth state to follow that tempting siren song. It is tempting because it seems to promise millions of dollars in easy new revenue while providing fun-loving citizens with a little daily low-cost innocent pleasure.

The bad news is that public lotteries, like other forms of gambling, are seriously addictive, especially with lower income and poorly educated people who can least afford to spend their wages on the futile quest of something for nothing.

I have never forgotten the sadness—indeed the tragedy—of the addition of the poor people in Bangkok, Thailand, to the daily purchase of national lottery tickets when

family income was already perilously low.

During the year that I lived in Thailand it was clear that the government was placing its stamp of approval on this morally and economically bankrupt tradition. It is clearly bad news for such to be proposed for Arkansas.

But what is the good news? It is good news, and some might even say surprising news, that the *Arkansas Gazette* has come out in strong editorial opposition to a state lottery for Arkansas. Some are surprised at this because the more sophisticated among the working press and the various forms of mass media of communication, all too often seem to delight in branding those who oppose legalized gambling as narrow-minded bigots who are opposed to fun of all kinds. The old stereotype fits closely with the pattern of southern "Bible-belt" states that have thus far resisted the temptation to have their

government operate a public lottery.

It is especially encouraging for the *Gazette* to declare that "the idea of setting up state lotteries is reprehensible"... that "it is a harmful device for preying on popular vices"; and that the penalties for "the encouragement of human frailty"... "would be grave and the process demeaning to the state."

When I consider the progress the national press has made in educating the public to the health consequences of cigarette smoking, it is just a short step to wonder how much more progress we could make, with the active opinion leadership of the press, in attacking our nation's number one drug problem—beverage alcohol. But now this layman has stopped his preaching and started meddling.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

You'll be glad to know...

by Don Moore

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 11 23
8 9 10 11 12 13 14	5 6 7 8 9 10 11	8 9 10 11 12 13 14	8 9 10 11 12 13 14	6 7 8 9 10 11 12	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
15 16 17 18 19 20 21	12 13 14 15 16 17 18	11 12 13 14 15 16 17	15 16 17 18 19 20 21	13 14 15 16 17 18 19	10 11 12 13 14 15 16
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29 30 31	26 27 28 29	25 26 27 28 29 30 31	29 30	27 28 29 30 31	24 25 26 27 28 29 30

...Two churches set bold example. One church has recently involved leadership from neighboring black churches in their personal evangelism training. One of these participants has been inviting neighbors in for fellowship at which time he, a deacon, gives the clear and simple gospel presentation with an opportunity given for them to pray and receive the gift of eternal life. Eleven out of 15 in one recent meeting made this life-changing, destiny-changing decision.



Moore

What a wonderful thing it is for pastors and churches to have such a relationship that they are happy when their members can be trained in another program. Actually, the church which invited the black leadership to participate had themselves been trained by a sister church. That's great! We all benefit from such experiences.

The other church that has inspired me is one which has exceeded their budget and actual expenses and find they are faced with a surplus at the end of the year. They have voted to divide their blessing as if it were a receipt, 17 percent for the Cooperative Program, 5.5 percent for associational missions and four percent for world hunger. This is a generous and Christ-like approach to stewardship. You can imagine that God will continue to bless that fellowship. (Luke 6:38).

...West coast seminary sees remarkable growth. Our Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, started by two Arkansas Baptist preachers many years ago, has had a 20 percent increase in enrollment this year. This is so significant because of the gigantic spiritual needs along the west coast. They are out of space—two branches to the north and south absorb some of the students! All of our seminaries combined have shown an eight percent increase in enrollment. Praise the Lord!

Those graduating from our seminaries now, at mid-term, would be thrilled to have an opportunity to serve.

Don Moore is Executive Director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

January 8, Witness Commitment Day. A time for members of local churches to commit themselves to share the gospel. Increased personal witnessing would aid Arkansas Baptists with reaching a goal of baptizing more than 16,367 persons, a record set in 1950.

January 9, Spring registration at Southern Baptist College, Arkansas Baptists' school at Walnut Ridge.

January 9-10, Media/Library Conference at Central Church in North Little Rock. Workshops will train local church workers plus pastors, staff or associational directors of missions in providing and promoting the church library and media materials.

January 10, Spring registration at Ouachita Baptist University, Arkansas Baptists' school at Arkadelphia.

January 12, National and Southern Baptist State Joint Committee meeting at Baptist Building in Little Rock. Black and white Baptist representatives will plan for their cooperative work.

January 12, Associational Sunday School faculty training at Ozark First, Jonesboro

First, Pine Bluff Matthews Memorial, and Hope First. Conferences will train Associational Sunday School Improvement and Support Teams.

January 16-20, Baptist Building At Home Week. Designated days for state convention personnel to schedule no out-of-office work.

January 22, Baptist Men's Day. Suggested day for local churches to celebrate their Baptist Men organization's contribution to involving men in missions.

January 23-26, Area Preschool/Children's Workshops. Six workshops around the state to train those who work with children and preschoolers in Church Training to understand the age group, the curriculum materials and planning processes.

January 30-31, State Evangelism Conference at Little Rock Immanuel Church. Series of speakers for a time of spiritual renewal for both preachers and laymen.

January 30-Feb. 1, Associational Training Schools for Sunday School. Suggested dates for associations to provide training for local church workers.



Woman's viewpoint

by Norma Kirkpatrick

Cheer Up!

"Cheer up! Things could be worse." That's a statement we often make when there have been so many calamities in life there's little left to do but laugh. It seems there are days when our own private black cloud follows overhead to keep us in the shadows of gloom.

It would be more helpful if we learned to cheer up because of a grateful heart. Even though the machinery breaks down, family members embarrass us, friends disappoint us and the budget won't balance, we can be thankful to God. Those experiences are evidence that we are living life. Of course we do not seek out difficulty or hope that it comes our way, but when it does, as it must, be grateful for the marvelous source of strength we have in Christ.

Dealing with problems and coping with life develop spiritual muscles as we lean upon the Lord to make it through. Remove the things which demand so much of you and you will remove the larger portion of

your life. Take away the machinery, the family, the friends, the finances; and your problems would be gone. So would your conveniences, the objects of your love, and the means of your support. For every benefit there are responsibilities, problems and the need to cope.

Some of the most beautiful things in life emerge from struggle. The new plant pushes away the sod; the baby bird breaks the shell; the child achieves the independence of walking by first falling. You are a real person, living in a real world, with a real Christ to call upon for help. Aren't you glad the struggling is there? Aren't you glad the Lord is present to help you? Cheer up! Things have never been better.

Norma Kirkpatrick is the wife of Jerry Kirkpatrick, pastor of First Church, Heber Springs. Mother of three, she has been a Sunday School teacher for young married adults for 14 years.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

H. A. Moore died Dec. 18 at age 92 in the Oak Lodge Nursing Home in Fort Smith. A native of Sebastian County, he was a member of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith. He had been an ordained deacon for 75 years. Moore was also a farmer and stone mason. Survivors include his wife, Dessa; three sons, Don, Executive Director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention; Trueman, pastor of East Side Church in Fort Smith; Neal, of Chicago, Ill.; three daughters, Mrs. George O'Neel of Bella Vista; Mrs. Afton Looney of Charleston and Mrs. Walter Watts of Fort Smith; 14 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Lillian A. Sneed

of Batesville died Dec. 25 at age 84. Mrs. Sneed, a retired teacher, was both a member and Sunday School teacher of the Batesville Emmanuel Church. She was also a member of the Retired Teachers Association and Women's Christian Temperance Union. Funeral services were conducted at the Batesville church Dec. 27 by pastor Billy Goynes and Robert A. Parker of Little Rock. Survivors include a son, J. Everett Sneed of North Little Rock, editor of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, two granddaughters, Cheré and Cathy Sneed, both of North Little Rock and a sister, Lena Barnhart, of Whittier, Calif. The family requests that memorials be made to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions and mailed to the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.

D. Hoyle Haire

celebrated his 50th anniversary as a Southern Baptist minister Dec. 18 when he preached the morning message and was honored with an afternoon reception at Booneville First Church where he serves as pastor emeritus. Haire attended Tulane University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He served during World War II as a U. S. Army chaplain, receiving six battle stars during this three-year period. He has pastored churches in both Louisiana and Arkansas, leading each church in a major building program, the last being the sanctuary/education complex at Booneville. He has also served on the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Haire and his wife, Mary, have been married 47 years. They have four daughters. Mrs. Haire is a graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary with a master of Christian education degree.

James Hill

has resigned as pastor of the Central Church in Hot Springs following 25 years of service.

Leroy Rogers

is serving as pastor of the Branch Church, moving there from Dyer.

Michael Keen

has been called to serve as minister of music and youth at First Southern Church of Bearden. He is a senior at Ouachita Baptist University, pursuing a bachelor of arts degree in family life ministries and church recreation.

Ralph Douglas

is serving as interim pastor of the Lee Memorial Church in the White Hall community of Pine Bluff.

Amos Greer

of Paragould is serving as interim pastor of the Valley Church in Calvary Association.

Jerry Kinney

of Little Rock was awarded a diploma in Christian Ministry from Boyce Bible School during the school's 19th commencement Dec. 16 on the campus of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Friendly Hope Church

at Jonesboro recently observed homecoming with former pastor R. L. Williams as guest speaker.

Dardanelle First Church

ordained Joe Morris to the ministry Dec. 11. Morris, for five years, has served the church as minister of music and youth. Pastor Tony Berry preached the ordination message.

Mark Jones

is serving as music director of the Mandeville Church at Texarkana.

Steve Lowry

was ordained to the ministry recently at the Hickory Street Church in Texarkana where he serves as associate pastor.

Danny Hubbard

has resigned as pastor of the Temple Church in Waldron to enroll in Mid-America Seminary.

Richard Overman

is serving as pastor of the First Church of Cove.

Frances Clay

was recently honored by Calvary Association for her 13 years of service as associational secretary. Ray Meadow, chairman of the personnel committee, presented her with a plaque and camera.

briefly

Forest Highlands Church

in Little Rock held deacon ordination services Dec. 21 for Charles Selby. Pastor Johnny Jackson was moderator.

Swifton Church

children's choir presented the musical "It's Cool in the Furnace" at the church Dec. 11 and at the Swifton School Dec. 22.



The Brotherhood of Ceyer Springs First Church in Little Rock chose the Christmas holiday season as a time to present 49 Bibles to the Pulaski County elementary and secondary Schools media centers. Rick Caldwell, church minister of youth, views one of the Bibles and its gift label with Retta Patrick, director of library media services for the county. Brotherhood members assisting with delivery were (left to right) Gary Rayburn, Mike McCarthy and Doyle Moore.

Executive Board holds annual organizational meeting

by J. Everett Sneed

The Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention convened on Dec. 15 at the Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock. Most of the business of the board centered around organization and election of various committees.

Executive Director Don Moore shared a number of significant events which had occurred or would take place in the near future. He was exceedingly pleased, he said, that we were running 10.62 percent ahead of last year's giving and that we would reach our entire budget if we had a good December.

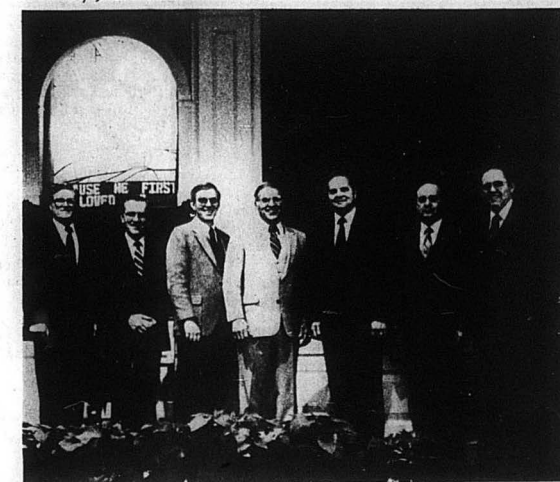
Executive Board President Jerry Wilson, pastor of West Side Church, El Dorado, said that he hoped to preside in such a manner as to provide opportunity "for everyone's opinions to be presented, respected and valued. We want to hear all sides of every issue."

Wilson pointed out that membership on this board provided opportunity to establish friendships and for individuals to be supportive of each other's ministries. "We need to remember that when one suffers we all suffer," he said. "When one is successful we all share in the victory." Wilson emphasized that the Executive Board is important for setting the proper atmosphere in the state. He said, "This board needs to be supportive of those whom it employs. We, also, need to tell the associations and churches with which we come in contact of the actions taken by this board. If the Bold Mission Thrust is to succeed, it must come about as we work together."

After brief meetings were held by each of the committees reports were presented to the Executive Board. Finance chairman Thomas A. Hinson said that a sub-committee would soon be appointed to work with each agency or institution. He expressed hope that each sub-committee would be able to meet with its respective board or agency for one of their regular board meetings.

Program Committee chairman Cary Heard said that the Program Committee has studied a method to assist pastors or full-time staff persons that are terminated without any place of service. A motion was passed that the Convention give a maximum contribution of \$500 per month for four months to an individual whose income does not exceed \$800 per month, including the contribution. The fund is to be administered by the Emergency Relief Committee of the Finance Committee.

The Program Committee also recommended that the annual convention close on Wednesday night, eliminating the Thursday morning session. The motion passed unanimously, after Convention President Jon Stubblefield, pastor at Central Church, Magnolia, spoke to the motion. Stubblefield said there were three main reasons for conducting the convention. These are (1) to trans-



A new Executive Committee of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board was appointed at the board's annual organizational meeting Dec. 15 in North Little Rock. Committee members are (left to right) Don Moore, Thomas A. Hinson, Cary Heard, Jerry Wilson, Jon Stubblefield, Eddie McCord and Kerry Powell.

sact business; (2) to hear reports; and (3) to provide inspiration.

Operating Committee chairman Kerry Powell reported that the committee had voted to construct a new swimming pool at Siloam Springs. "This was necessary," he said, "because the existing swimming pool no longer functions properly."

The following committees were appointed on the recommendation of the nominating committee:

Operating Committee, Kerry Powell, chairman. (1984) Bill Milam (Dist 4), Kerry Powell (Dist 6). (1985) Bernard Beasley (Dist 2), Eddie McCord (Dist 5) Jack Ramsey (Dist 1). (1986) Nina Hamilton (Dist 7), Jimmy Shults (Dist 8), and Atherton Hiatt (Dist 3).

Program Committee, Cary Heard, chairman. (1984) Jim Adams, Leonard Baker, Charles Barfield, Winfred Bridges, Bill Burnett, Clytee Harness, Jerre Hassell, Cary Heard, Milton James, Earl McVherter, Maxine Murphy, John Robbins, Johnny Ross, Paul Sanders and Guy Whitney.

(1985) Mark Baber, Jimmy Burks, Ron Cox, Pete Crager, Rick Erwin, Bill Ferren, Bill Lewis, Jere D. Mitchell, Walter McNew, Janet Osmon, Melvin Thrash and Emil Williams.

(1986) Mrs. Perry Butcher, Joe Campbell, Alfred Gallant, Klois L. Hargis, Harrison Johns, Doris King, A. Hilton Lane, H. D. McCarty, Robert McDaniel, James Newman,

Ben Rowell, Al Sparkman, Harold Stephens, Nelson Wilhelm and Tate Woodruff.

Finance Committee, Thomas A. Hinson, chairman. (1984) Sardis Bever, Norma Lee Bowers, S. Mikael Carrier, Ron Ford, Jimmie Garner, Lawrence Harrison, M. M. Hill, Thomas A. Hinson, John Holston, Ted Houston, Norman Lewis, Herman McCormick, Ed North, T. J. Richardson, Joe Statton and Bob Stender.

(1985) Darwin Anderson, Randall Cross, Betty Gibson, Bill Gresham, Billy Hammonds, Helen Henson, Carl Kluck, Captain Lovell, Ray Meador, Ferrell Morgan, George O'Neal, Ron Raines, Bob Wilson and James Wilson.

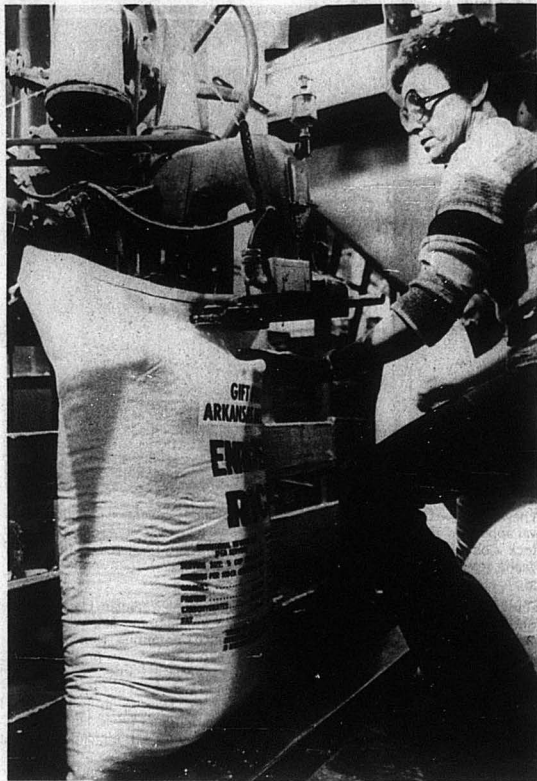
(1986) George Domeser, Don Elliott, Gary Fulton, Curtis Mathis, Charles Osborne, Ken Price, Dorothy Ritter, Keith Robbins, Gerald Taylor, Dale Thompson, Allen Thrasher and John Wikman.

Nominating Committee, Eddie McCord, chairman. (1984) John Holston and John Robbins. (1985) Eddie McCord. (1986) Allen Thrasher and Gerald Taylor.

Christian Life Council, Joe Statton, chairman. (1984) Norma Lee Bowers, Lawrence Harrison and Joe Statton. (1985) Mark Baber, Jim Burks and Emil Williams. (1986) Harold Stephens.

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine (1985) District 7—Mrs. J. W. L. Adams Jr.

First Arkansas rice headed for famine-stricken Ghana



The first 40,000 pounds of rice given by Arkansas Baptists for famine relief in the West African nation of Ghana left Cormier Rice Mill in DeWitt Dec. 9. (Above) Emogene Simpson stitches one of 400 hundred-pound bags—a gift from Arkansas Baptists to Ghana's starving. (Top center) Tommy Watts loads the rice into a Burkett Truck Lines trailer for transport to the Port of New Orleans, where it will be shipped to Southern Baptist missionaries in Ghana. (Top right) Children at a school in Nalerigu, Ghana, reach for bowls of food supplement in a previous effort to minister to that nation's hungry. (Bottom left) People wait in line for rice and grain in Upper Volta, West Africa, another country that has suffered from prolonged drought. (Bottom right) A woman receives a food ration in an unidentified African village.

Arkansas Baptists have committed themselves to providing five more 40,000-pound rice shipments, one a month through May. Persons with rice or cash to contribute to the project may contact Lehman Fowler at Brinkley or John Relyea at Stuttgart. Milled, unpolished rice in 100-pound vinyl bags will be accepted. Cash contributions are also being taken by the state Brotherhood office to pay for 5,000 blankets sent to help victims of a yellow fever epidemic in Ghana.

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



FMB photo



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Your state convention at work

Evangelism State Evangelism Conference

The State Evangelism Conference is a very important time for Arkansas Baptists. This has been known for many years as a



Shell

The 1984 State Evangelism Conference will be Jan. 30-31 at the Immanuel Church in Little Rock. The first session of the conference will be Monday afternoon at 1:30. The conference will close at 9 p.m., Jan. 31.

The theme of the conference this year is "Commissioned to Boldness". The theme comes from our Lord's commission in Matthew 28:16-20. Following are the different session themes: "He Gave Some Evangelists", "Do the Work of an Evangelist", "Authority for Bold Evangelism", "Making and Baptizing Disciples", "Maturing and Assuring Disciples." These themes develop our concept of total New Testament evangelism.

I want to challenge you, fellow Arkansas Baptists, to join with me and help make this a victorious conference. Pray each day for the speakers and the spirit to move upon the conference. Promote the conference as you have opportunity to share with others. Plan to attend this great celebration of evangelism. — Clarence Shell, director

Family and Child Care Services "Open your hand wide to the children"

"Open Your Hand Wide To The Children" — this theme has been before all the Baptist churches in Arkansas who participate in the annual Thanksgiving love offering for our child care ministry. We have deep feelings of appreciation and gratitude for your interest and your sharing that makes possible our ministry to hundreds of children and their families. To those churches and individuals who make monthly contributions or take their offering at another time, we also want to say "thank you."

We depend on these offerings for approximately 1/3 of our budget needs to provide food, clothing, housing, education,

medical needs, and other ministries to our children.

Arkansas Baptists have demonstrated their concern and compassion for "their children" down through the years. Because of this intense interest, the Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services has grown in its ministry to boys and girls and is recognized for its multiple services.

It will be helpful if we can receive these offerings from the churches by Dec. 31, 1983. A list of these contributions by churches will be published in the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*.

We are grateful that Arkansas Baptists have always been concerned about the hurts of children and support a child care ministry to meet these needs. — Johnny G. Biggs, Executive Director

Church Training Preschool/children's area workshops

During the week of Jan. 23 the Church Training Department will conduct six area preschool-children's workshops across the



Holley

state. These workshops are planned especially for those who work with preschoolers and children in Church Training. Each workshop will provide two separate conferences—one for preschool leaders and one for children's leaders. Participants will gain a better understanding of the age group with which they work, an understanding of the curriculum materials and other resources, and help in planning for the Sunday night sessions for these ages.

The dates and locations of the six workshops are as follows:

Monday night, Jan. 23, First Church, Fayetteville and Central Church, Jonesboro;

Tuesday night, Jan. 24, Calvary Church, West Memphis and South Side Church, Ft. Smith;

Thursday night, Jan. 26, First Church, Pine Bluff and Calvary Church, Little Rock.

The conference leaders for the preschool conferences include Eula King, First Church, Ft. Smith; Janet Williams, Calvary Church, Little Rock and Jean Burton, Bellevue Church, Memphis. The children's conference leaders include Roma Zeltner, Immanuel Church, Ft. Smith; Delores Lynn, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock and Evelyn Vaughn of Jackson, Miss.

The workshops in each location will meet from 7-9 p.m. — Robert Holley, director

Christian Life Council Opportunity for whom?

I like the motto Arkansas is named "the Land of Opportunity." When that slogan was first conceived,

those who thought it up did not mean to include people who would use our state as an opportunity to harm others. Some people will do anything for financial profit.

Sadly, pleasure drugs including ethyl alcohol, horse racing, dog racing and pornography interests

are already using Arkansas as a land of opportunity.

With a large percentage of elderly people, Arkansas is also a land of opportunity for con artists. These prey on older people, often bilking them out of large amounts of money.

Sects such as the Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses and the Unification Church are using Arkansas as an opportunity of seeking increased credibility and acceptability.

All the above simply points to the truth that freedom and liberty carries with them dangers as well as opportunities. As Christian citizens our opportunities for good are unlimited. We have opportunity to obey to the fullest, The Great Commission. We must do all we can to leave coming generations a state uncluttered with opportunities to bring harm to self, family and society in general. Please do not sign a petition calling for the lottery. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy path." Prov. 3:5-6. — Bob Parker, director

Stewardship Department Biblical guidelines for New Year actions

Nineteen hundred eighty-four presents new giving opportunities. Many faithful Christian stewards have already increased their level of giving. They have responded to the budgeted ministries of their churches. The beginning of the new year is the time to examine biblical principles for sharing.

"Receive whatever offerings any man wishes to give" (Exo. 25:2, GNB).

"Each man is to bring a gift as he is able, in proportion to the blessings that the Lord your God has given him" (Deut. 16:17, GNB).

Your state convention at work

"All the tithes . . . is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord" (Lev. 27:30).

"Bring the full amount of your tithes to the temple" (Mal. 3:10, GNB).

"Give to others, and God will give to you. Indeed, you will receive a full measure. . ." (Luke 6:38, GNB).

"There is more happiness in giving than in receiving" (Acts 20:35, GNB).

"Every Sunday each of you must put aside some money, in proportion to what he has earned. . ." (1 Cor. 16:2, GNB).

"We want you to be generous also in this service of love" (2 Cor. 8:7, GNB).

Discover the grace of giving, in 1984.

— James A. Walker, director

Woman's Missiary Union National Acteens Convention

Excitement is building among Arkansas Acteens as they plan to attend the National Acteens Convention at the Tarrent County Convention Center in Fort Worth, Texas, July 18-21, 1984. Approximately 14,000 girls are expected to attend this Southern Baptist Convention-wide event. Since NAC is held only once every five years, it's a once-in-a-life-time experience for most girls.

One teenager who attended the last NAC described it as "a time of deep commitment

in my life that has changed my outlook toward God." The 1984 NAC could provide the same turning point for other girls.

At NAC girls will experience missions through the testimonies of Southern Baptist home and foreign missionaries. They'll tackle contemporary issues facing youth today. They'll have the opportunity to respond to God's call to them.

Registration begins Jan. 1, 1984. The forms as well as information on accommodations are published in the January issue of *Accent* magazine. — Betty Jo Lacy, Acteens director.

Missions Hispanics

You don't have to know 'dos, tres,' to know Hispanics are 'uno'... In American society, Hispanic-Americans are a charter-member minority. Their ancestors settled in the Southwest United States long before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. And they have continued to come up from Central and South America, across the Rio Grande from Mexico, over the Caribbean

from Puerto Rico—millions of legal and illegal immigrants, all seeking to escape the desperation of their homelands for a new beginning in the 'land of promise.'

Over the decades, by their numbers and by their diligence and by their pride, they have influenced the social, cultural and economic development of the nation. Yet until recently, despite their pervasiveness and their earth: ever present, but never seen—domestic workers in Southern California; clerks and laborers in Florida; crop-gatherers in Arkansas, their migrant bands for years the calloused hands of farm labor. They still are. But now they're also doctors, lawyers, even politicians.

Time Magazine predicts, "the 1980s will be the decade of the Hispanics".

This is true for Hispanics in Southern Baptist Convention life. The Convention's largest minority, they grow in numbers and in influence. 'If we respond with openness,' says an S B C leader, the result will be uncontrollable. We are going to affect a lot of the Spanish-speaking world for Jesus Christ.' — Randy Cash, director

Dayspring



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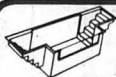
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Former WMU Executive Board Members' Banquet

1988 marks the year of the centennial celebration for Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union. To help commemorate the first 100 years of WMU work in Arkansas, Jan Watson of Immanuel Baptist, Little Rock, is writing a history of Arkansas WMU.

Former WMU Executive Board members could help in compiling historical information. To provide an opportunity for contributing information, the current WMU Executive Board is hosting a former WMU Executive Board members' banquet during the WMU Annual Meeting in March. The banquet will be held in Benton at the Holiday Inn, 4:45 p.m., March 20. The cost will be \$7.00 per person.

Each one is responsible for her own expenses. To make a reservation, please use the form below. Send form and check for \$7.00 (make check payable to Woman's Missionary Union) to Mrs. Ken Hughes, 216 West North Street, Benton, AR 72015. Deadline for making reservation is Feb. 1.

Reservation Form for Banquet

Name _____ Address _____

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Amt. Enclosed _____ Date of years when on WMU Executive Board _____

At midpoint, 98th Congress is rejecting social agenda

by Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (BP)—Resisting White House pressure, an assertive 98th Congress stayed the course on volatile public policy questions during its first session.

Fueled by Reagan administration support, these controversial social issues were again the focus of numerous congressional hearings and heated political rhetoric. Two proposals—a constitutional amendment on abortion and President Reagan's tuition tax credits package—were considered on the floor of the Republican-controlled Senate.

Although Senate rejection of these measures came as no surprise, the votes against them were stronger than expected. In June, a constitutional amendment sponsored by Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, to overturn the Supreme Court's landmark *Roe v. Wade* ruling that the Constitution protects a woman's right to privacy in abortion decisions was defeated 49-50, one vote short of a simple majority and 18 votes shy of the two-thirds required for passage of a constitutional amendment. Near the end of the session, the Senate handed the president another setback, rejecting his tuition tax credit measure, 59-38.

While these sharp defeats do not guarantee the two issues will not resurface next year, they at least signal their administration and congressional backers face a steep, uphill battle.

Lack of broad support for Hatch's abortion amendment became obvious early when it almost failed to get out of the same Judiciary Committee that a year before had approved a more restrictive version. Although Congress continued its restrictions on federal funding of abortions and placed a new ban on abortion insurance coverage for federal employees, anti-abortion legislators suffered another defeat in November when a rider offered by Sen. Roger W. Jepsen, R-Iowa, aimed at reversing the high court's *Roe v. Wade* decision, was tabled on a 42-34 vote.

President Reagan's proposed constitutional amendment to allow state-sponsored oral prayer in public schools also ran into trouble in the Senate Judiciary Committee before a compromise action sent it, along with a "silent prayer" version pushed by Hatch, to the Senate floor without recommendation.

The lack of consensus among school prayer amendment proponents and the absence of a clear endorsement by the Judiciary Committee could spell problems for the measures when they reach the Senate floor. Full Senate consideration could come as early as February or March, according to a spokesman for Judiciary Committee chairman Strom Thurmond, R-S.C.

In a related area, the Senate Judiciary Committee favorably reported a bill to bar public elementary and secondary schools from denying equal access to students

meeting for religious purposes during non-instructional periods. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Jeremiah Denton, R-Ala., is expected to face competition on the Senate floor from a version sponsored by Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., which applies only to secondary school students.

Similar bills are pending in the House, but those measures would bar federal funds from schools which deny equal access rather than provide the judicial remedy contained in the Senate bills. One measure, sponsored by Rep. Trent Lott, R-Miss., applies at the elementary through college levels while the other, sponsored by Rep. Don Bonker, D-Wash., follows the Hatfield bill in limiting its scope to secondary schools.

Most observers give the equal access measures, requiring only a simple majority for passage, a better chance at enactment than the constitutional amendments on school prayer.

On another church-state front, Congress repealed a 115-year-old ban against U.S. diplomatic ties with the Vatican. The repeal, included in an authorization bill for the State Department, was pushed initially by Sen.

Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind. The action, however, does not guarantee resumption of diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Should President Reagan decide to pursue appointment of an ambassador to the Holy See, Congress would still be directly or indirectly involved in funding decisions for a new diplomatic mission.

In what is considered one of its major accomplishments, the 98th Congress moved early to bolster the nation's troubled Social Security system with a major reform package. The bipartisan action included a sharp hike in Social Security rates for ministers and all other self-employed persons.

To partially offset this increase Congress agreed to provide Social Security tax credits of 2.7 percent in 1984, 2.3 percent in 1985, and 2.0 percent in 1986-89. After that, the new law would replace the tax credits by lowering the self-employment tax base and by providing a tax deduction of 50 percent of Social Security taxes paid.

Ministers participate in Social Security as self-employed persons by law, though Congress is looking at legislation to give churches and ministers the joint option of par-

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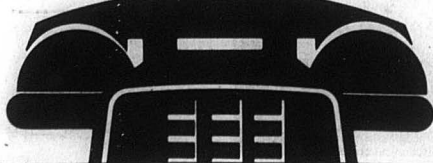
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ticipating as employer-employee.

The Social Security reform package also extended mandatory coverage to all employees of non-profit organizations, including non-ministerial employees of churches. Previously, non-profit employee participation was optional.

On another clergy tax policy issue, some members of Congress seemed inclined to reverse an early 1983 Internal Revenue Service ruling which eliminated a double housing benefit for ministers. The ruling disallows the normal deduction for mortgage interest and property taxes to the extent a minister has received a tax-exempt housing allowance for these expenses.

Separate bills introduced by Rep. Stan Par-

ris, R-Va., and Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., would reverse the ruling's application to clergy. The Senate bill, which links ministerial and military housing tax policy, may have a better chance of moving. Despite a large number of co-sponsors, the Parris bill has not moved in the House, lacking the support of Ways and Means Committee chairman Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill.

Other first session actions included: Passage of legislation designating the first Monday in January as a national holiday in honor of black civil rights leader and Baptist preacher Martin Luther King Jr. King became the second American, along with George Washington, to be so honored. The House passed the bill 338-90 in August;

the Senate followed in October, 78-22.

Preservation of current non-profit postal rates by rejecting President Reagan's request to drastically cut a postal subsidy which provides reduced rates for non-profit mailers. The measure approved by Congress keeps current rates through fiscal 1984.

A House-Senate split on the nuclear freeze question with the House voting 278-149 in favor of the freeze resolution while the Senate rejected its version, 58-40.

Failure to pass the Equal Rights Amendment as the House of Representatives fell six votes shy of the required two-thirds on a 278-147 vote. No vote occurred in the Senate, though a judiciary panel held hearings on the proposal.

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Secular values, individualism confusing SBC, Cothen warns

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—“Any Baptist who thinks he knows what another Baptist ought to be is in danger of not being a Baptist,” Grady C. Cothen has warned.

Cothen, president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, told state convention leaders attending December planning meetings he believes the adoption of secular values within Southern Baptist churches and the “vociferous individuality of our day” have contributed to a confusion in the denomination.

“We have had a generation of folk grow up in Southern Baptist life who think they know what Southern Baptists ought to be and what Southern Baptists ought to believe,” said Cothen. However, he emphasized, the heart of the issue is Baptist polity, not personalities.

“Believe or depart is not the prerogative of any single Baptist or group of Baptists,” said Cothen. “The assumption of authority by any group of Baptists is to cease to be Baptists.”

Four issues which are creating confusion in the denomination, according to Cothen, are charges of liberalism in institutions, debates about creeds, elections of trustees and efforts to make peripheral issues a test of faith.

Cothen said he has heard charges of liberalism in denominational institutions for 40 years. “The time has come to say, ‘Who is it? We’ll help you get rid of him.’ We need some specifics. It is time, if they (liberals) are here, to say so and identify them. If not, let’s get on with the work of the Lord.”

‘Theology of the laity, not for the laity’ urged at convocation

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—A call for Southern Baptists to develop a “biblically based, generally proclaimed theology of the laity” was sounded at a first-time Convocation of the Laity at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

About 200 persons from a broad spectrum of Southern Baptist life heard W. Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., say: “The greatest heresy among Southern Baptists is we have divided the people of God into two groups... the ordained and lay persons.”

Cooper claimed lay persons “are considered without a call, without a ministry, largely exempt from the Great Commission and relegated to a second-class position among the people of God.”

Cooper, the last lay person to serve as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was keynote speaker for a three-day convocation which was to explore many aspects of lay ministry in local churches and denominational agencies.

Cooper said, “I find no basis in the scripture for this division of ordained and laity. There seems to be no theological justification for it and it has resulted in irreparable losses to the kingdom of God.”

Concerning creeds, Cothen said, “I am personally against anybody’s creed, including my own. I am adamantly opposed to measuring your faith by my statement of what faith ought to be.”

He called the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message an “excellent statement.” However, he said, “It in no sense can possibly include all that I believe.”

“I personally believe Southern Baptists should stop trying to adopt a creed everybody can agree on. If everybody can agree on it, it’s not going to be worth much,” said Cothen. “Holy Scripture is an adequate creed.”

He noted he served on several boards of trustees before becoming a chief executive officer and then worked with boards of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California, Oklahoma Baptist University, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and the Sunday School Board.

“The Sunday School Board needs on its board of trustees the finest legal, financial, organizational and theological minds in the Southern Baptist Convention,” said Cothen.

“We don’t need anyone trying to grind a biased axe. We need people as trustees of all the agencies and institutions of the states and denomination who can help the institutions be what Southern Baptists created them to be.”

On the positive side, Cothen said Southern Baptists enjoy many strengths, including freedom, a common heritage, common bonds of interdependence and great

resources.

“Our freedom allows for differences without rupture of fellowship,” said Cothen. “Our freedom lets God do with us what he chooses to do.”

“Basically what we’re going to do is make disciples, baptize, teach them to observe all things and try to get them to do the same kind of things,” he emphasized.

Cothen said he believes the denomination has great resources because “honest and intelligent effort is going on at every level of the denomination to reach people for Christ and teach them to be disciples.”

He cited Southern Baptists’ theological education system as “unparalleled in the world,” but noted, “I am sure they make mistakes. I am confident they are not all perfect who teach on the faculties. But I can also say the finest basic theological education in the world today is available to Southern Baptists.

“If we’ve got problems with it, let’s change it; let’s not kill it,” said Cothen.

“When my father passed the torch of my little fragment of Southern Baptist life on to me, it was a joyous, free, exhilarating and hopeful faith that said ‘be all you can be, do all you can do, love all you can love, reach all you can reach without the strictures of small minds telling you what you can and cannot do,’” said Cothen.

After his Feb. 1 retirement, Cothen said, “I’m going to go right on doing what I’ve been doing all my life—help try to confront a lost world with the gospel of Christ.”

Cooper urged a series of steps to develop “a theology of the laity, not for the laity,” that would heighten lay leadership in church and denominational life.

“There is a need to multiply many times the channels and places to serve God through our churches, state conventions, SBC and Baptist World Alliance by opening new and challenging places of service and involvement to the unordained,” he said. “Less than five hundred positions are available to challenge the eight million members of the Southern Baptist laity.”

Cooper said, “Any theology is inadequate that does not provide for God calling and using all of his children. I need a theology that will help me validate my call to serve where I am and to challenge me to the same degree of commitment for Christian ministries as the person who is ordained.”

He added, “It is rare to find an unordained person who believes they are performing a ministry. They have seldom been told this, they are called laymen or amateurs, and they are not aware of a theology that acknowledges they, too, are ministers.”

Porter W. Routh, a layman who retired in 1979 after 28 years as executive secretary-

treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, told the group: “There should be no hierarchy in the realms of Christian service... one of our problems may be a predetermined view of the laity. The New Testament says there is a variety of gifts.”

He added, “We laymen can make our most effective contribution as kingdom builders when we work in the local churches.”

Mary Crowley of Dallas, told the convocation’s opening session: “In our busy-ness, Christianity is not a way of doing certain things; it is a certain way of doing all things.”

The famed businesswoman, head of a large-home furnishings company with 39,000 saleswomen worldwide, added, “We train our company leaders through the book of Proverbs... every person who claims the name of Christ is a minister... people’s needs don’t fit into a nine-to-five schedule. Their needs can be felt at some of the most inconvenient times.”

Crowley added, “Southern Baptists ought to change the name of the Cooperative Program to Cooperative Ministries. People don’t want programs anymore; they want ministries.”

International

What God expects

by Wm. M. Burnett, Beebe

Basic passage: Isaiah 5

Focal passage: Isaiah 5:1-7

Central truth: True children of God are identified by what they produce.

The description of God's expectations of the vineyard is the clearest possible expression of that which any person would expect if he had invested the best material and effort in any project or endeavor.

The figure is applied to Israel, whom God chose as his special instrument. He gave her his law, defended and provided for her. He spared nothing that would contribute to her piety, obedience and happiness, yet she became corrupt and rebellious.

It is not reasonable nor right to keep pouring valuable resources into a project which does not produce the expected yield. This is poor stewardship for one entrusted with resources of an employer and is certain to break the owner who allows it. God did not do this with Israel, and he does not do it with us. The lesson is taught throughout the scripture.

Though God's mercy and forbearance are great, ultimately God is working out his purpose. He will destroy the fig tree that has no fruit (Luke 13:6-9). The branch that bears no fruit he takes away (John 15:2), and the vineyard that produces wild grapes he will reduce to pasture land.

Perhaps it would be best to discuss for a moment the outward similarity of the false and true—the real and the fake. As was the case in the days of Jesus' earthly ministry (Matt. 21:33-41), the people to whom Isaiah spoke carried on the outward form of religion.

God's people looked like a vineyard. The watch tower, the vines, the hedge—everything was there but fruit. God looked for judgement and saw violence and bloodshed; he looked for righteousness and heard the clamor of greed and confusion.

It is possible to go through the motions of worship and outwardly conform to the things that are taught in scripture but to have little or no fellowship with Christ.

Such empty fruitless exercises which deny God's power and presence will lead to grosser sin. The reason many so-called Christians do not believe "God is able to keep that which we have committed to him" is they have not proved his power in their lives.

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Life and Work

Breaking with tradition

by Joe A. Thompson, pastor, Calvary Church, Blytheville

Basic passage: Mark 2:18-22; 3:1-6

Focal passage: Mark 2:18-22

Central truth: Jesus Christ the Lord of both the law and the sabbath.

Fasting was one of the traditions of the people of Jesus' day, especially the Pharisees. When they noted Jesus and his disciples were not observing their tradition they naturally wanted to know why.

Jesus realized the opportunity to explain his position. He used the Jewish wedding as an illustration. The Jewish wedding, unlike our weddings, was a week-long affair of feasting with both bride and groom.

Jesus reminded his critics that fasting was not part of the wedding party. He likened himself to the groom and his disciples to the invited guests. But he reminded them that the time for fasting, namely his crucifixion and burial, would soon come. Fortunately for us, that time was short-lived. For in just three days he came forth from the grave. Today we celebrate his resurrection every Sunday.

Then Jesus returned to the synagogue where there was a man with a crippled hand. This was a wonderful thing for Jesus to do. He knew he was being watched and would be accused of Sabbath-breaking.

Knowing the outcome, Jesus proceeded to ask one of his probing questions: "What does our Lord allow us to do on the Sabbath?" (Mark 3:46) His question put the people in the synagogue in a dilemma. They had to say to do good (and it was a good thing he proposed to do); yet they were duty-bound to oppose his cure of the crippled man.

I am delighted that the scripture says Jesus was angry. Do we ever become angry at the inconsistencies in the church? Are we ever really mad at doing business as usual?

It is so sad, but it is never easy to break with tradition! We today build our sanctuaries and set up our standards. Then we say to sinners: "Come to our churches, embrace our standards and we will help you."

Let us look unto Jesus and follow his example. Let us fellowship with sinners—knowing it will bring the incrimination of the religious community. Let us heal the sick—knowing that it will bring the commendation of Jesus. "Well done, thy good and faithful servant!"

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Bible Book

Elisha's concern for human needs

by H. E. Williams, President Emeritus of Southern Baptist College

Basic passage: II Kings 4:1 to 6:7

Focal passage: II Kings 4:13-20, 32-36

Central truth: The prophet Elisha demonstrated unusual sensitivity to the tragedy of human need in the early days of his ministry.

In II Kings 4:1-7 Elisha saves the widow of a prophet from bankruptcy, starvation and the loss of her two sons by miraculously multiplying the olive oil. The contents of a small jar was used to fill many jars her sons borrowed from neighbors. Elisha told her to sell the oil, pay her debts and use the surplus for her family needs.

Because of her faith in God, the widow appealed to the prophet for help which he granted in measure far beyond expectations.

Next we see Elisha meeting human needs on a different level as he deals with a wealthy woman in Shunem (II Ki. 4:8-35). This woman of Shunem recognized Elisha as an unusual man of God, and opened her home to him and his servants as they passed through Shunem. She also implored her husband to build a special "prophets chamber" for his party. In return for her kindness, the prophet offered to introduce her to the "high society" of the two nations. She refused, saying she was content to "dwell among my own people".

Elisha, seeing that worldly honor meant little to her, acceded to Gehazi's suggestion to ask God to give her a son, despite the fact that she and her husband were advanced in years. Fearing disappointment, she begged not to be made a victim of a hoax. Bearing a son was the greatest thing that could happen to a Hebrew woman.

God granted the request, and she bore a son who grew to young manhood. When he went out to help with the harvest, he suffered a sun-stroke and was carried to his mother where he died in her lap. She retained her great faith, even in the midst of great calamity. She would not listen to her doubting husband and servants, but traveled three days to find the prophet Elisha. Finding him she implored Elisha to return with her. Seeing her great faith he returned and raised the son to life again.

In this lesson we see the prophet providing sustenance and security for a widow. Then we see him give a child to a childless couple, then raise that child from the dead.

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Hamptons bring good hope to South Africa's Cape

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (BP)—Several years ago, Charles Hampton might have taken offense if someone had told him he had "a white face but a black heart."

But not now. That's a compliment when a black man says it to a white man—as one did to the 62-year-old Hampton—in Cape Province, South Africa.

But rebuffs have come to Charles and Evelyn Hampton, and how they've responded to them has shaped their ministry as Southern Baptist missionaries on the South African Cape of Good Hope.

Some rebuffs have been the every day kind; others more difficult as the Hamptons have gone about a remarkably successful effort to bridge the gulf between white, "colored" (mixed race), Indians and blacks in Cape Province.

The Hamptons won't soon forget the time they drove through a black South African township after losing their way enroute to a colored township.

A crowd of black people, going through a period of rebellious attitudes against whites, picked up rocks and began to yell: "Out, Whitey, Out, Whitey. What're you doing here, Whitey?" Instead of stepping on the gas, Hampton stepped out of the car.

"My what a lovely looking group of people," he said in his best Arkansas accent. "Your community is so clean; your flowers are so pretty."

His attitude and his accent worked wonders. Someone hollered, "He's an American. He's an American." They dropped the rocks and asked, "What are you doing in our township? What are you doing in South Africa?"

"I'm a Southern Baptist foreign missionary," Hampton replied, and a woman began to shout, "He's a preacher. He's a preacher." She took out a little New Testament, beat it on her hand and said, "Preach to us. Preach to us."

Hampton read some Scripture. By that time he had an audience of about 100 people, so he did what came naturally. He preached.

Diverse blacks, Indians, coloreds and whites call the Hamptons a "pivot point" between the races, a "hand in the glove of South Africa," a "bridge" over which love and relationships flow, a "common ground" on which the racial groups can relate in Baptist efforts to reach the Cape for Jesus Christ.

Leaders in the Baptist Union of South Africa have made progress in dissolving racial barriers in their churches and outreach in South Africa. But representatives of all groups admit the apartheid environment creates a gulf between them—a gulf they have eased by relating to the Hamptons.

"We need neutral people to stabilize us," said Desmond Hoffmeister, a young colored pastor in the modern colored township of Mitchell's Plain. "South Africa sits on the

potential for either a major revolution or a major spiritual revival. The Lord must come and work in all of our hearts so we can have revival rather than revolution. We need people like Hampton and Evelyn to help us."

Michael Dwaba, black pastor in the black township of Langa, echoed Hoffmeister. "To many Christians, the biblical Great Commission to win people to Christ is the 'great omission.' They just sit in their church and don't reach anyone. If we can win more people, we can have revival, not revolution," said Dwaba.

"When the Hamptons came here, no one wanted to accept them," Hoffmeister recalled. "Four years later, just before they left on furlough, the response to them was overwhelming. Our people just couldn't believe a white man would love us or would put on his work clothes and get his hands dirty helping us build a church without an ulterior motive. Hampton has wiped out those suspicions."

When the two Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary graduates came in 1977 to do church development and religious education, the association had 43 churches. Now it has 110 churches and outreach points, including 67 new ones made up of 52 colored groups, eight white, six black and one Indian.

Syd Hudson-Reed, white executive coordinator of the Western Province Baptist Association, sees the Hamptons as "active catalysts in getting the work going." Hudson-Reed said the Hamptons found a solid base on which to build when they arrived, but they brought historical perspective, experience, maturity, expertise and understanding of what would work in religious education and church growth.

Currently, Southern Baptists have 20 missionary personnel under appointment for work in various South African locations and would like more. But some missionaries privately have expressed concern that world opinion about South Africa may blind some potential missionary candidates to the great needs and opportunities for ministry there.

Although racially-divided living areas and other problems make integrated worship difficult, it is legal and the number of mixed Baptist congregations is growing.

The Baptist Union of South Africa has joined a number of other denominations in officially protesting the Group Areas Act which designates living areas by race, but it continues to do what it can to reach people for Christ now.

Baptists on the Cape of Good Hope see their work here as a model for what can happen in race relations throughout South Africa.

Adapted from an upcoming issue of The Commission, magazine of the Foreign Mission Board.