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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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January 19, 1984

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE



Ministry :
a look at the how,
why, who, when
and where in '84
page 2



ABN photo / Wilma Gill

Pat Johnston (left), whose seventeen-month-old son, Jason, has been hospitalized for eight months at the Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock, talks with Chaplain Charles Johnson (right) and Barbara Luningham of Little Rock's Ronald McDonald House. A page two article on ministry and a page seven article by T.B. Maston open an ABN look at various aspects of New Testament ministry.

Exploring the many faces of ministry

Response to needs so obvious has traditionally (and almost unquestionably) worn the title of ministry. Witness the ministry to the family of Jason Johnston, who has been a patient at Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock for eight of his seventeen months. While he is being cared for, his mother, Pat, finds help is needed so she can be with him.

Ministry to her means providing a place to stay, at no charge, near the hospital because their home is Texarkana. (Her husband, Wayne, and another son will move to Little Rock soon.) It is this retreat, the Ronald McDonald House, where Barbara Luningham, a member of Little Rock Geyer Springs Church, ministers as a staff member.

Mrs. Luningham coordinates others who minister to families of sick children. Churches provide meals several times a week to free parents from cooking. One brings a van to take parents shopping regularly. Even laundry detergent is provided by a group.

Prayer and emotional support are also needs of parents such as Pat Johnston,

and friends in Little Rock, as well as from Trinity Church in Texarkana, have ministered this way. Chaplain Charles Johnson (he's a Southern Baptist employed by the private hospital) is also there to offer support to families.

But ministry has no single form, no single face. Arkansas Baptist churches and the individuals in those churches meet needs when and where they are found. Some ministering may be done in unique ways because those unique ways meet the eternal need of persons for the Good News of God's provision in Jesus Christ.

Ministry's different faces will be explored in the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* during 1984. We plan to take a look at ministry situations that show response to unique needs. Also explored will be the biblical basis of ministry, and ways Baptist people have carried out Christ's commands to minister. To begin this process, T.B. Maston opens a two-part examination of New Testament ministry in this issue.—
Betty J. Kennedy

Explosion empties New York Convention offices

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (BP)—An underground transformer exploded and sprayed PCB over a 12-story building which houses the Baptist Convention of New York Dec. 21.

Oil containing the deadly chemical was blown through an open grate in the sidewalk outside the building. Officials sealed the building and began cleanup work immediately—including hauling off deep accumulations of snow.

Baptist convention employees were not allowed back into their offices which occupy part of one floor of the structure, for any reason until Dec. 29.

That meant several who had not picked up their paychecks did not get to do so until after Christmas. Fortunately church pastoral assistance checks from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board for December had been mailed early because of the holidays.

On Jan. 3 the basement of the building was still sealed while additional tests for contamination were being conducted. Contamination would have been much more severe if the explosion had resulted in a fire. When burned, PCB produces two even more deadly chemicals—dioxin and furans.

Jameson named Oklahoma associate editor

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)—Norman W. Jameson joined the staff of the *Oklahoma Baptist Messenger* as associate editor Jan. 1, 1984. R.T. McCartney, editor, has announced.

Jameson will move from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, where he has served as associate director of news and information since 1982. He has also been working on a master of divinity degree at the seminary.

A native of Portage, Wis., Jameson, 31, is a 1976 magna cum laude graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University. The *OBU Bison* was named best small college newspaper under his editorship. Jameson is a former feature editor for Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville.

Jameson will fill a vacancy created by the retirement of Fern Hurt who has served on the publication's staff since 1947.

K'ekchi hymns recorded for first time

COBAN, Guatemala—Hymns in the K'ekchi language were recorded on audio tape for the first time during a workshop in Guatemala, in October. Media consultants David Daniell and Larry Gay of Mexico

taught eight K'ekchi how to improve the quality and effectiveness of their radio program, "Christ, the Only Hope." The program is broadcast four times a week in the K'ekchi language in Guatemala City.

In this issue

7 God's basic call

T.B. Maston says that Christians are likely to make a serious mistake in discerning the will of God, if they fail to understand that his basic call to every Christian is a call to minister.

12 righteous indignation

President Reagan caused an uproar Jan. 10 when he appointed William A. Wilson the first U.S. ambassador to the Vatican in 116 years. Southern Baptist leaders have responded and are urging others to voice their sentiments.



It would be difficult to over-emphasize the importance of Christian involvement in politics. Unfortunately, some have interpreted the doctrine of separation of church and state as requiring a complete withdrawal from politics. If this policy were followed, government would soon become totally corrupt. For some, proper involvement requires seeking political office. For every Christian, it means using his or her influence in the legislative process.

There are several myths which are attached to our political process. First, there is the idea that all politics is dirty. If this is true, then government itself is dirty.

Second, there is the myth that voting is the most important thing that a citizen can do to have a good government. Voting is important. But properly expressing one's opinion at a crucial time may do more in encouraging good government than casting a vote at election time.

Finally, there is the idea that the independent voter has a greater impact on government than one who is affiliated with a party. Actually, the individual who is active in the party selection process may be more effective since he has a voice in the initial selection of a candidate.

The reason for Christian involvement in the political process is evident. First, our freedom of religion is contingent upon our involvement in government.

It is true that our right to worship according to the dictates of our own conscience is guaranteed in the Constitution. However, no law is any stronger than the people involved in it. Russia's constitution guarantees the right to worship just as ours does. A piece of paper is worthless unless it carries out its promises.

It is only through Christian involvement that proper benevolent activities will be conducted at home and abroad. The eradication of hunger, disease and poverty can best be accomplished when Christian principles are used as a guide.

All of us are affected by our laws. Many of the ideals that Christians consider fundamental are best supported by our laws. Without national, as well as local laws, even the most basic rights would soon be in danger. The best way to preserve the type of society which supports Christian ideals is through legislation. Only through Christian involvement can we expect to retain and strengthen such laws as protect us from pornography and the open sale of harmful drugs.

The majority of us do not wish to become candidates for public office, so how can we influence legislation? It is impossible to properly confront issues without being informed. Every

Christian should utilize such resources as radio, television, daily newspapers and newsmagazines to properly inform himself on current issues.

Before committing themselves on any issue, most legislators consider two factors: (1) their personal conviction; and (2) the public opinion. As elected officials, they are usually extremely sensitive to public opinion. This may be particularly true in an election year. We, as Christians, should be aware that others will register their opinion. It is vital, therefore, that we let our law-makers know where we stand on important issues.

If we are to effectively communicate our interest, we must contact our legislators. The best communication is personal or by phone. Often, however, these types of contacts are impossible because of the demands on the time of our legislators. Letters are usually the best way to influence our legislators.

The time of writing may be extremely crucial. It is obvious that one should write before a decision is made. Many are unaware that the majority of decisions are made in committee. So communication can be very helpful when proposed legislation is in committee. According to the *Register Citizen Opinion*, 90 percent of all bills are passed in the form they were reported out of committee. Sometimes one or two words can alter the effect of a bill.

It is of great importance that we always communicate with the proper person. We should always write to the chairman of a committee handling a bill in which we are interested. It is, also, important to contact our own representatives and senators.

Often, a few well-placed letters can be vital in obtaining the desired legislation. Here are a few suggestions to be observed in writing letters: (1) Keep the letter brief; (2) Emphasize the moral issues involved; (3) Make the letter personal (form letters or petitions receive little hearing); (4) Be courteous and positive; (5) Stimulate a reply if possible; and (6) Point out the weakness in the legislation.

When possible, we should become acquainted with our legislators. This should be done in a Christian manner. Such contacts will be of mutual benefit. It will help us to understand their problems and will afford us an opportunity to be heard.

We should remember that the greatest enemy to government is apathy. Our legislative system will be Christian to the extent that we, as Christians, accept our responsibility.

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

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

VOLUME 83 NUMBER 3

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Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double-spaced and must be signed. Letters must not contain more than 350 words and must not stamp the character of persons. They must be marked "for publication."

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

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One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

The secret of long pastorates

The recent retirement of H. Franklin Paschall after 28 years of service as pastor of the First Church of Nashville, Tenn., reminds me of a persistent mystery in Southern Baptist life. What is the secret of long pastorates? Dr. Paschall's predecessor in that church, Dr. W. F. Powell, also had a long pastorate, serving 33 years in the strategic Nashville pulpit. I would venture a guess that having only two pastors in more than 60 years happens in less than one percent of Southern Baptist churches.

Is it primarily the result of certain outstanding qualities of the pastor? Is it instead the result of a uniqueness or unusual qualities of the church congregation? Or is it an act of God unrelated to the qualities of either the pastor or the congregation?

Because both Franklin Paschall and W. F. Powell were my pastors (Powell for six years before he retired), I know personally of their many outstanding qualities. I remember their consistently good preaching, but I really doubt if that by itself is the secret of long

pastorates. Each was well educated, in the formal sense, but so are many others who have a pattern of much shorter tenures.

If some personal quality alone were the key, I suspect it would be a strong ability and determination to be a peacemaker within the church fellowship. I can remember (29 years ago!) serving as a member of the pastor committee that recommended calling Paschall to succeed Powell. We all had been impressed with Powell's phenomenal record as a peace-maker for our church, and were sure Paschall could not equal him in this respect. We expected vigorous leadership from Paschall, possibly at the expense of a little less peace and harmony, but we were willing to pay the price. As it turned out, Franklin Paschall was an even stronger peacemaker than W. F. Powell and almost dared anyone to start a church fight.

But what about the "character" of the church congregation? Old First Church in Nashville has a strong tradition of loyalty to the pastor and of loving one another, even

in the midst of differences on particular issues. I have always believed some of the credit for this goes to the remarkable quality of Southern Baptist denominational leaders in various convention agencies in Nashville, who have joined this church in large numbers through the years. As a layman I have developed a healthy respect for these unusual servants of God and learned to respect and support the pastor from their example. A loving congregation certainly seems to produce long pastorates.

The answer is probably "both/and" rather than "either/or". The qualities of the pastor (such as peacemaking) and of the congregation (such as loving loyalty) undoubtedly work together to produce a long and happy marriage between pastor and church.

Come to think about it, if this really is a secret, we need to get busy and spread the word.

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

Leadership development object of new U of A BSU fund

A "major and perennial need" for the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Baptist Student Union has been met through the generosity of a Fayetteville woman.

Mrs. John W. White, a long-time member of First Church, Fayetteville, whose late husband was the University of Arkansas' first vice president for agriculture, has established the John W. and Trannye White Endowment Fund for the U of A BSU. Annual earnings from the endowment will be used to

train the BSU's elected student leaders, according to BSU director Jamie Jones.

The gift "will meet a major and perennial need" for the BSU, Jones said. "Because Baptist Student Union is student-led, leadership training is indispensable to the success of its ministry."

Two programs are provided by the endowment. A leadership training seminar, conducted each year in Fayetteville or a nearby retreat center, will enable students

to benefit from the experience of "an able person with . . . expertise in training students for leadership in a Christian group," said Jones. A scholarship program will provide assistance for student leaders who attend leadership training meetings on the state or national level.

The endowment will be managed by the Arkansas Baptist Foundation in Little Rock, an agency of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

letter to the editor

No meaningless label

Understanding Jimmy Draper's concern should not be difficult. To object to his concern regarding the need for believing in at least the bare essentials of Christianity in order to be of like faith and order implies that it makes no difference what one believes if he simply labels himself a Southern Baptist.

The logical extension of such rationale is that we must accept into full fellowship persons who have no particular faith but wish to carry the label of Southern Baptist. If the term does not signify belief in the virgin birth, the resurrection, the divinity and humanity of Jesus, and salvation by grace through faith, we have little more than a meaningless label to be hidden behind for

the respectability that the label could no longer maintain. If members could believe simply anything, membership could include even libertines and heretics if they cared to lay claim to the name. Should we render ourselves so paralyzed regarding any steadfastness of the faith as to allow ourselves to be thus infiltrated? Can light have fellowship with darkness?

"A rose by any other name still smells. . . ." I would rather believe in the essentials mentioned by Jimmy Draper and be called a Meaningful Baptist, God's Redeemed, or whatever, than be called a Southern Baptist and not believe in such. I joined the Southern Baptist fellowship 45 years ago because I appreciated the doctrines they espoused and the distinctives they

represented.

If the label becomes little more meaningful than that one has a desire to belong to some group, how could we continue to enjoy God's blessings as a group of baptized believers?

If forces try to push us between the horns of a dilemma, I will take my chances that God would be pleased with willingness to stand for the aforementioned essentials. The alternative is its own kind of thought control, the kind that considers nihilism more virtuous than straight doctrine.

If we do not need to believe in anything, why should we believe that there is any value in calling ourselves Southern Baptists? — Paul J. Rea, Phoenix, Ariz.

You'll be glad to know...

by Don Moore

... God is moving in our lives. A growing conviction had led us to conclude the prayer needs of our churches, pastors, staff and their families were so great that we must have a continuing prayer ministry within the Baptist Building family. The ground work had been laid for this when we had our annual Staff Retreat (Jan. 5, 6). In those meetings God touched down in deep convicting power. On our knees we met him and he met us. Our appetite for a real spiritual awakening was intensified. It confirmed to us that God wanted to use us as prayer warriors and instruments to bring spiritual awakening.

We will implement the prayer ministry early in February. A small storage room is being converted into a prayer room. The first 40 of our people who volunteer will be given an hour a week to go there to do the work of intercession. We will bear your burdens to the Lord in prayer many times a day. We will also be praying for God to intervene and send a great awakening. There is desperate need for this.

We believe God wants to do far more with us than he has. More than methods, procedures and programs, we want his life and concerns to be communicated through us in all of our experiences with you. I hope you will feel and sense an added depth of concern and anointing on our lives when we are with you.

Pray for us as we try to be all he has called us to be and to do all you need us to do.

Let us know when you have crucial prayer needs and we will be faithful to support you before our Lord's throne of grace!

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

34 pre-teens accept Christ

PATTAYA, Thailand—Thirty-four boys and girls stepped forward almost as a body during the invitation at the closing service of a camp for pre-teens conducted by the Thailand Baptist Mission. After careful counseling, leaders confirmed the decisions, and the youngsters wrote their statements of faith. One-day retreats are planned for early 1984 to teach them the responsibilities of Christianity. Thirty-nine children from 11 churches participated in the camp.



Woman's viewpoint

by Norma Kirkpatrick

Middle time

Who wants to be in the middle? Middle child, middle of the road, the middle seat are all unsettling positions. One side or the other, first or last, anything has to be better than "middle".

Yet, I have found a "middle" in life which has been beneficial. It is middle time, a description I have coined to replace what others call middle age. Whenever we speak of being middle aged, visions of things spreading, sagging and turning gray come to mind.

Thankfully, the middle in the time of living does none of those things. Instead, here I stand looking back and looking forward, stepping back a little further from the mirror to focus my eyes and a little closer to life to focus my perspective. The imperfect past behind, good memories are carefully stored in the treasure chest of my heart. Hope grows, for I am only halfway through the new experiences God has planned for my life, and I now have the maturity to understand that plan in a better way. How exciting to be in middle time!

It is the perfect opportunity to get out the charts and check the compass. Does Christ continue to be my "Northern Star", my

point of reference? For some it has been fairly smooth sailing. For others the gale forces of life have tossed and torn and pulled.

Here in middle time is a good place to renew and repair. We can gather what God has taught us in our youth and build upon that knowledge in preparation for old age. Remembering, we ask, "What was I?" Looking around us, we ask, "What am I?" Looking forward, we ask, "What shall I be?" Middle time is when those three questions will benefit us most of all.

Let us ask God to show us know to live, no matter what our age might be. But should you be with me in middle time, look both ways and learn, for it is as fleeting as was youth. When life whispers "You are no longer young" in our ear, and "You will soon be old" in the other, thank God for a pause in the middle. It could well be the best time of all.

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.

Boyce Bible School term begins Jan. 27

Six courses will be offered at Boyce Bible School in Little Rock during Term III, Jan. 27 - March 17, 1984. Boyce director Ralph Davis has announced.

On eight successive Friday nights, Dr. W.T. Holland will teach Old Testament Survey (0520C) and Interpreting Amos. Dr. J. Everett Sneed will teach Greek Grammar III from 8:20 to 10:15 p.m.

On Saturday mornings, Dr. Cary Heard will teach Biblical Backgrounds (0512) from 7:45 to 9:40 a.m. Kathy Ferguson will teach Introduction to Music (0870), one of two required music courses, from 10:15 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.

On Saturday afternoons, Ralph Davis will teach The Bible and Missions (0660), one of

two required missions courses, from 12:50 to 2:45 p.m.

Davis urged students to pre-register by sending \$25 per course, up to a maximum of \$85 for four or five courses, to Boyce Bible School, 2121 N. Van Buren St., Little Rock, AR 72207.

Regular registration will be held Friday, Jan. 27, from 4:30 to 6 p.m. The school meets in Room 5B of the Baptist Rehabilitation Center, 11th and Marshall Streets. Students driving in from out of town are allowed to sleep at the school on Friday nights free of charge.

Boyce Bible School is a division of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary of Louisville, Ky.

Annual writers' workshop scheduled in Nashville

The editor of *The Illinois Baptist*, Bob Hastings, will be the major speaker at the annual Sunday School Board Writers' Workshop in Nashville, July 16-20.

The workshop is planned for persons interested in learning or improving writing skills and learning about writing opportunities through BSSB publications.

Hastings will lead sessions on getting started at writing, finding and filing resources, writing clearly and getting

materials published.

Sunday School Board editors will lead sessions on writing for different age groups and on writing various kinds of materials such as devotionals, articles, curricula and books.

Participants also will be able to obtain evaluations of their work.

Requests for additional information should be sent to: Church Program Training Center, Baptist Sunday School Board, P.O. Box 24001, Nashville, TN 37203.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

Clyde Kramer

died Jan. 6 at the age of 71 in a Little Rock hospital. A resident of Rosie, he was a member of the Rosie Church. Survivors include his wife, Genevieve Hazelbrigg Kramer, four sons, two daughters, five brothers, six sisters and nine grandchildren.

Rev. and Mrs. T. F. Cupples

celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Dec. 30, 1983. He is a retired Southern Baptist minister, having served Arkansas churches in Mountain View and Bryant.

Paul E. Taylor

died Dec. 20 in Harrison at age 74. Funeral services were conducted at the Bellefonte Church where his son, Charles, is pastor. Taylor had served as pastor of Arkansas churches, including those in Everton, Western Grove, Grubb Springs and Parthenon.

Matt Hibbard

has joined the staff of Rogers Immanuel Church as music/youth director.

Ronnie Bond

has voted to purchase a mobile trailer to be used as a temporary meeting place. The church plans to construct a building in the near future to replace the one destroyed by fire on Christmas Eve. Men of the church will serve as carpenters and have requested that anyone in Little Red River Association wanting to assist with construction contact David Miller, director of missions, or Ed Lauderdale.

briefly

Grand Avenue Church

in Fort Smith held an evangelism banquet Jan. 10 for Sunday School outreach leaders, deacons, department directors teachers, along with those having special interest and training in the church's evangelism program. Nick Garland, pastor of Hot Springs Second Church, was speaker.

Malvern Trinity Church

exceeded its Lottie Moon offering goal of \$1,500 by \$1,951.30, bringing the total offering to \$3,451.30, according to pastor Terry Floyd.

Moro Church

Brotherhood, as an outreach project, will build a home for a senior adult member in the near future. Pastor Charles Jones reported the house will include a living and bedroom combination, bathroom and kitchen.

Blytheville First Church

held deacon ordination services Jan. 8 for Calvin Hollingsworth, Bill Inman, Don Quarles and Buck VanCleve.

Forrest City Second Church

recently held deacon ordination services for Carl Giles, James Fletcher and Billy Emerson.

Carolyn Sue Marks of Pine Bluff. They have two daughters, Misty, age 17, and Kelly, age 14.

Lanie Jones

has resigned as pastor of the Mount Zion Church in Little Red River Association to become pastor of a church in Amory, Miss.

James Eaves

is serving as interim pastor of Little Rock Immanuel Church. He is professor of evangelism at Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary, having served in this position since 1973. A Tennessee native, he is a veteran of the U. S. Air Force and has served as pastor of Texas, Tennessee and New Mexico churches.

Billy Burford

has joined the staff of Pine Bluff South Side Church as director of the church's bus ministry.

Brownsville Church

Philadelphian Church of Jonesboro recently dedicated a 1,000 square foot expansion of its sanctuary which increases seating capacity from 235 to 345. The \$60,000 expansion, completed in four months, also houses eight classrooms and a library. New sound and lighting systems were also installed during construction. Kenneth Pinchback was building committee chairman.

Mr. and Mrs. Larry L. Bailey, missionaries to Togo, have arrived in France for language study. Their address is: 3, allée de l'Etoile, Apt. n° 1168C, 37300 Joue-les-Tours, France. They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Wynne and considers Jonesboro his hometown. She is the former Sheila Forsee of Jonesboro. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1983.

Mr. and Mrs. Steve Ford, missionaries to Upper Volta, have arrived in France for language study. Their address is: 9, allée du Troenes, 37300, Joue-les-Tours, France. He is a native of Magnolia and she is the former Sharon Curtie of Memphis, Tenn. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1983.

Mr. and Mrs. Truett W. King, missionaries to Korea, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service. Their address is: Yeo Eui Do P O Box 165, Seoul 150, Korea. He was born in Little Rock and considers Hope his hometown. The former Nancy Lee, she was born in Ardmore, Okla., and

Larry Plummer

has joined the staff of Forrest City First Church as associate pastor in charge of the church's bus ministry. He and his wife, Jane, moved to Forrest City from the Hot Springs area.

Trent Edwards

has joined the staff of the Earle Church as minister of music and youth.

Marshall Boggs

is serving as pastor of the Mayflower First Church, moving there from Lead Hill.

Herbert Holley

was recently in Atlanta, Ga., to attend a chaplains' orientation meeting. Holley is employed by Arkansas Department of Correction, serving as chaplain at the Pine Bluff Diagnostic Center. A former missionary to Singapore, he is a member of Watson Chapel Church at Pine Bluff.

buildings

missionary notes

considers Little Rock her hometown. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1983.

Mr. and Mrs. James M. Simmons, missionaries to Japan since 1977, resigned from missionary service Dec. 31. They were stationed in Tokyo, Japan, where he served as a general evangelist and she was a church and home worker. She is the former Camille Bishop of Nashville, Ark. They may be addressed c/o Mambirino Baptist Church, Rt. 1, Box 45-C, Granbury, Texas 76048.

Mr. and Mrs. Lee R. Walker Jr., missionaries to Chile, have completed language study in Costa Rica and arrived on their field of service. Their address is: c/o William Geiger, Casilla 18-D, Vina del Mar, Chile. A native of Arkansas, he was born in Texarkana and considers Little Rock his hometown. The former Phyllis Orr of Louisiana, she was born in Monroe and considers New Orleans her hometown. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1982.

Crucial Questions for Christians

by Glen D. McGriff

Dr. McGriff, it seems to me that moral convictions are vanishing rapidly, even among Christians. Have I become pessimistic, or is there a significant change?

Pastors sometimes lose objective perception when frequently confronted with flagrant immorality. One can easily develop an Elijah syndrome and feel that "I, even I only, am left" as the defender against evil. While such syndromes are not uncommon among the clergy significant moral erosion is evident.

Erosion of morality has resulted from our being desensitized. This is accomplished by the development of a new vocabulary. "Whatever Became of Sin" was the title of a popular book a few years ago. The word is seldom used today except in a humorous context.

The media, especially television program material and musical lyrics, has further desensitized us. One may respond with strong negative reactions to a sexually explicit movie first seen on television. However, if that person watches several similar programs, his reaction will be greatly diminished.

Continuous suggestions that a behavior is not only prevalent, but also acceptable, will alter one's attitude toward that behavior. Intimidation and ridicule is directed toward those who hold traditional values. This creates an assumption that such ideas are antiquated. The result are silence at first and identification at last.

Glen D. McGriff is director of the Ministry of Crisis support, Arkansas Baptist State Convention



McGriff

New Testament ministry: first of two articles

Understand 'basic call', prevent mistakes

by T.B. Maston

I never considered preaching as my main task.

Let me share some of my personal experience. I am not an ordained minister. I felt "called to preach" when 17 years of age, a few months after my conversion. For some reason which I did not understand, I did not believe I was ever supposed to be the pastor of a church. I shared this feeling with my wise old Christian Dad. His advice to me was, "My boy, as long as you feel that way about it, don't be ordained. We have too many ordained preachers who do not preach."

I struggled for years in my search for the will of God concerning my life. There was a gradual conviction, which would take too much space to enlarge on, that my area of ministry was teaching.

My struggle to find the will of God caused me, in later years, to examine more carefully than I would have otherwise the concept of the call of God in the New Testament. I came to the conclusion that God's basic call was and still is a call to minister or serve. This call is or should be a call to every child of God.

But I also discovered that the New Testament revealed that some individuals are called to perform distinctive functions in and for the Christian fellowship: "And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints..." (Eph. 4:11-12; cf. I Cor. 12:27-30). I also concluded that within the realm of these specially called ones there was not supposed to be a hierarchy of callings. The highest call of God for any child of God is to do the will of God.

Furthermore, I had a growing conviction that God called me to preach as a 17-year-old because that was the only call I knew except missionary service, and I was certainly not ready for that. In other words, our heavenly Father adjusted himself to my limitations. Also, he was unusually kind to me to impress on me that my calling was not to the pastoral ministry. I have supplied pulpits frequently in years past, but I have

My judgment is that many young people even in our more enlightened age could be saved from making mistakes concerning the will of God, if they understood that his basic call is a call to minister or serve. They would then realize that preaching, teaching, music, etc. are simply means or methods whereby one serves God, the Christian fellowship, and ministers to people in general.

This might mean that there would not be so much talk about "a call to preach" but rather "a call to minister or serve." After all, Paul referred to himself as a "preacher" only a couple of times (I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11). In both of these places he also referred to himself as an apostle and teacher. It is true that he rather frequently mentioned his proclamation or preaching the gospel (I Cor. 2:4; 15:14; II Tim. 4:17; Titus 1:3). In three of his epistles he introduced himself as a servant or slave (RSV) of Christ (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:1; cf. I Cor. 9:19; Gal. 1:10).

The preceding, along with the fact that an increasing number of young people, including young women, are feeling the call of God to various types of ministry, may mean that we should re-study the nature of the call of God and re-examine the generally accepted idea of the call. We may decide that the prevailing concept of the call and its resulting ministry differs in some important respects from what is found in the New Testament.

At least we should have the curiosity and the courage to study this matter with searching minds and a willingness to change, if we are persuaded that we and our churches have been wrong. May our heavenly Father through the Spirit give us the wisdom that we need.

T. B. Maston is emeritus professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

mission needs

Ohio church needs musician, literature

Community Church, Ashtabula, Ohio, has expressed a need for used literature, Survival Kits for New Christians and a person willing to work with youth and music needs in the congregation.

Pastor Mike Rasberry is looking for used Sunday School, Church Training and Vacation Bible School literature, as well as 100 adult, 50 youth and 50 children's Survival Kits.

The congregation's "third great need" is

for "someone to respond to the call of our dear Lord to come to Ashtabula to work with youth and music," says Rasberry. The church needs a volunteer able to provide his or her own support.

Community Church is located on the shore of Lake Erie, 50 miles east of Cleveland. According to Steel Valley Association director of missions Cary Harden, the church was ready to close its doors in May of 1981, after being pastorless

nearly three years. However, on May 22, 1983, there were 200 in worship, with 30 persons awaiting baptism.

Rasberry says the area is one in which "industry is moving out and unemployment still stands at nearly 20 percent. Many families are moving south in search of work, but the people here are very responsive" to the gospel.

The church's address is 604 W. 57th St., Ashtabula, OH 44004.

Grady Cothen reflects on multi-faceted career, evaluates Sunday School

by Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—As Grady Cothen reflects on 40 years of ministry which encompass virtually every level of the denomination, he recalls satisfying experiences at each juncture, "all of them directly related to what I conceive to have been God's purpose for me."

Cothen, 63, will retire from the presidency of the Baptist Sunday School Board Feb. 1, 1984, after heading the church programs and publishing agency since February 1975.

He will end a professional career that has included the presidencies of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Oklahoma Baptist University, as well as executive secretary of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California.

Earlier, he was pastor of First Church, Birmingham, Ala., Olivet Church, Oklahoma City, and White Oak Church, Chattanooga, Tenn. He also served two years as a U.S. Navy chaplain during World War II which included duty in the Philippines.

As executive secretary in California 1961-66, Cothen recalled, "I had an opportunity to see the denomination at large for the first time and become acquainted with how it functions. I had the very satisfying opportunity of trying to lead a state in transition from a newer convention into a full-fledged denomination entity."

At OBU, 1966-70, Cothen observed, "The necessity for studying academic administration was laid on me. I had to learn a little bit about many things, and it was very stimulating." Also, he noted, "We were able to steer the university back to a close relationship with the denomination."

Cothen described his four years, 1970-74, as president of New Orleans seminary as the job "that was perhaps closest to my own sense of personal call. There was a direct relationship between what we did for and with the students and what the churches did."

"This was discernible, and the results were almost immediate," added Cothen. "It was a tremendously fulfilling experience to help re-shape the seminary in keeping with the needs of churches as we understood them at that time."

Elected president of the Sunday School Board in February 1974, Cothen called the board "the most complex of our institutions. It has taxed all my knowledge of finance, administration, organization and relationships to our many publics."

Cothen said the most difficult side of being president of the board has been the fact that the chief executive is "constantly in the public eye. There is little privacy and little personal social life."

On the other hand, Cothen cited the board's 1,500 employees as the most rewarding part of being president. "The kinds of people we have at the Sunday School Board, many of whom have come in these nine

years, are a constant joy to me," he said. "Southern Baptists, through the board, have the opportunity to enable a lot of fine people to do very fine work."

When Cothen became president in February 1975, he set forth four priorities for his administration: to provide in-depth Bible study for the masses, equip the saints for the work of the ministry, enrich and support family life and encourage and aid pastors, church staffs and their families.

"I think we have made very substantial progress on these priorities, but I wouldn't be true to myself if I didn't say we have not done as well as I wanted us to do," said Cothen.

On Bible study, Cothen cited the purchase of the Holman Company as an opportunity

for the board to become a distributor of scripture and the efforts to increase the denomination's Sunday school enrollment to 8.5 million by 1985.

"I recently told Harry (Sunday school department director Harry Piland) I'm going to be the best unemployed support he's got in 8.5," quipped Cothen.

Related to equipping the saints, Cothen noted, "We have church training growing again. We still need many other kinds of training opportunities available to Southern Baptists."

In ministering to families, "We're doing more than we were doing, but we aren't doing anything like we can do," said Cothen.

Evaluating the fourth priority of serving ministers, he cited a broadened scope of in-



BSSB art/Phyllis Jolly

ool Board tenure

fluence including an enlarged program of continuing education training.

"I'm very grateful for what we have done," said Cothen. "I'm looking forward with keen anticipation to what the board will do in all these areas."

Despite the fact he has spent the last 22 years in state and denominational institutions, Cothen remains convinced that the focal point of the denomination is the local church.

"The work of the Lord is done basically by the local congregation of believers," said Cothen. "Denominational institutions support the churches. All a congregation has to do to negate anything the denomination does is ignore it. Any denominational program is totally dependent on whether a church wants to do it. If they want to do it, there are many materials available. If they don't want to do it, nobody ever says a word."

After cancer surgery in 1980 and several subsequent hospitalizations (but no recurrence of malignancy), Cothen announced in 1982 he would retire 18 months before his 65th birthday, a decision he continues to believe was right. "Any person who has been in the middle of the denomination's activities will miss them," Cothen observed. "Obviously, when I am no longer a part of it all, it will change the way I live my life."

However, he emphasized, "The Sunday School Board needs a president of vigor and physical health, who can work long hours for extended periods of time without undue fatigue. So, while I shall miss the activity of being president, what has been done is proper."

In preparing to turn over the reins of leadership to Lloyd Elder, elected in February 1983 to succeed Cothen, he said at first he had wished "to tie up loose ends in neat little packages," but quickly realized that was impossible in an institution where many plans in the Cothen administration will be implemented after Elder becomes president.

"I come to these times not with regret, remorse or tears but with rejoicing that, whether I am here or not, all of this will continue to go on," said Cothen. "Southern Baptists will continue to get church literature, have field service events and emphasize growing Sunday schools. This is inherent in God's plan of redemption and in the continuity of institutions."

Of Elder, Cothen said, "I feel he is the Lord's leader for the next era at the Sunday School Board. He is bright, learns quickly, remembers well. He knows Baptists, is administratively oriented and organizationally knowledgeable."

After Feb. 1, Grady and Bettye Cothen will move to the Mississippi Gulf Coast where he plans to rest several months to regain his

health. Then he will respond to invitations he has received to teach at several seminaries and colleges and to preach.

"I will be available to help institutions and churches of the Southern Baptist Convention in any way I can," said Cothen.

And, added the man who relishes his

Mississippi roots and the childhood when he roamed rural creeks with a cane pole, "I expect to reserve an appreciable amount of time to fish."

Linda Lawson is a writer for the Baptist Sunday School Board.

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Ratton

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Foundations for spiritual growth are laid during the early years. As we teach preschoolers we are beginning the training for our church leaders of the future.

Last but not least in importance, a young couple may decide to attend the church that makes the best provisions for their preschooler. If their preschooler is happy at church, they will probably be more regular in attendance. They can enjoy their Bible study and the fellowship of other young adults, if they are assured that their preschooler is having good Bible learning experiences.

Every church is responsible for providing good teachers and the basic teaching equipment and supplies needed for good teaching in every preschool department.— Pat Ratton, preschool consultant

Evangelism In-state speakers

Arkansas Baptists are fortunate to have many great evangelistic pastors. A committed evangelistic pastor will lead his church to do New Testament evangelism. New Testament evangelism makes disciples, marks disciples and matures disciples in Christ.



Shell

Clifford Palmer, pastor of First Church, Springdale, will speak on "Doing the Work of an Evangelist in Pastoral Preaching". Palmer's church is consistently one of our leading churches in Arkansas in evangelism. In 1983, he led our state by baptizing 348 people.

Dennis Sewell, pastor of Mt. Carmel Church, Cabot, will speak on "Making Disciples through the Local Church". Mt. Carmel Church, under the leadership of Sewell, led the state in baptisms in 1982 with 304.

Jack Nicholas, president of Southern Baptist College, will speak on "Sin: The Need of Salvation". Dr. Nicholas is known through his preaching and his leadership as a committed person in evangelism.

Testimony time is always a refreshing time. Harold Ray, Dr. Jon Stubblefield, Terry Fox and Gerald Jackson will share special testimonies.

The place is Immanuel Church, Little Rock. The date is Jan. 30-31.— Clarence Shell, director

Family Ministry Single adult conference

Dale Younce will be the featured speaker at the third annual Single Adult Conference sponsored by the Arkansas



Younce

Baptist State Convention and the Baptist Sunday School Board. The conference will be held Feb. 10-11 at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock.

Dr. Younce served several years as Minister to single adults for the Dauphin Way Church in Mobile, Ala. He presently is pastor of a new mission in an area of Mobile with a large population of single adults. He has received special training in single adult ministry from the Sunday School Board's family ministry department and served as speaker and conference leader for state and national conferences.

"We Really Do Need Each Other" is the conference theme and will be featured in worship experiences and interest and leadership conferences. Conference sessions are scheduled for 7-10 p.m. Friday, Feb. 10, and 8:30 a.m.-12 noon and 1:30-3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 11.

Pre-registration for the conference is requested. Information about costs and registration has been received by pastors and church staff. Contact the Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, Ark., 72203, for additional information.— Gerald Jackson, associate

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Church Training Area DiscipleLife Conferences

An exciting training opportunity is coming for youth Church Training leaders, youth ministers and other youth leaders Feb. 13, 14 and 16. The Area DiscipleLife Conferences will be held in the following six locations:



Jenkins

Monday, Feb. 13—Grand Avenue Church, Fort Smith and First Church, Jonesboro
Tuesday, Feb. 14—Calvary Church, Little Rock and Immanuel Church, El Dorado
Thursday, Feb. 16—South Side Church, Pine Bluff and Beech Street First Church, Texarkana.

These area conferences will be led by Wayne Jenkins, youth specialist, Church Training Department, BSSB, and Bill Falkner, associate, Church Training Department, ABSC. The conferences will begin at 6:30 p.m. and adjourn by 9 p.m. Conference content will include an interpretation of DiscipleLife and its related emphases, including DiscipleYouth, along with training in starting or improving discipleship training through youth Church Training. Youth Church Training curriculum and other training resources will be covered.

The conference leaders will be available for individual church consultations prior to conference times. For further information about the conferences or to arrange a consultation, contact the Church Training Department, Box 552, Little Rock, Ark. 72203, phone 376-4791.—Bill Falkner, associate

Stewardship Department Tax seminar

Churches and church staff members are discovering that it is difficult to know how to "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's."



Walker

For the first time, churches are required to pay the Social Security tax on all employees. Pastors, as self-employed, flinch under increasing tax demands.

A tax seminar, sponsored by the Stewardship/Annuity Department, is designed to show par-

ticipants how to comply with tax laws and save on taxes. Topics to be covered include: recent tax law changes, Social Security for clergy, itemized deductions, clergy resources for tax planning and how to use tax forms.

The seminar leader is Manfred Holck Jr. Holck is an ordained Lutheran minister, a Certified Public Accountant, publisher, writer and lecturer. He is the author of eight books on church and clergy finance.

The one-day seminar is scheduled for Feb. 1, 1984, 9 a.m., at Little Rock's Immanuel Church.

All church staff members may attend the seminar. Church treasurers, financial secretaries and committee members will also find the seminar helpful as they seek to comply with new Social Security regulations.

Information on the seminar will be mailed to all pastors.—James A. Walker, director

Family and Child Care Services New staff member

John A. Ross has been named by the Board of Trustees of the Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services, to serve as Director of Development effective Jan. 10, 1984.



Ross

A graduate of University of Central Arkansas, Ross comes to the agency from a successful career in sales. He is an active member of Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock, where he has served as a deacon for 15 years. He has served in almost every level of the organization of the church programs. He is deeply committed to the needs of people.

A native of Bald Knob, Ross is married to the former Lou Kuykendall of Marshall. They have two sons: Mark, a junior at UCA, and Todd, a McClellan High School senior.

Expressing his excitement about his new position he says, "I have had a desire to work with and on behalf of young people, especially the young people who are served by this agency. This opportunity is like a dream come true for me. I'm convinced that this is the Lord's will for me at this time and that he has prepared me for this opportunity. I look forward to becoming acquainted with Baptists throughout our state". He expects a continuing growth in prayer and financial support for the ministry.

I would encourage you to extend an in-

vitation to Ross to come and share the exciting ministry of Family and Child Care.—Johnny G. Biggs, Executive Director

Christian Life Council On goofing up

"We goofed up!" Such was the response of one air controller after two passenger jets with a total of 500 passengers aboard barely missed each other recently by approximately 50 feet.



Parker

Even under ordinary circumstances, everybody goofs up occasionally. Goof ups or mistakes are not intentional. Many can be attributed to memory lapse. Common carelessness is yet another cause.

Statisticians tell us that about half of all accidents, fatal and otherwise, are related to drug usage. In most cases the drug is ethyl alcohol. These include vehicle and plane accidents, falls and drownings. The human brain cannot escape being affected by even a small amount of alcohol.

In our time there is much concern regarding drunk driving. There ought also to be concern by the goof ups caused by the "one or two drink" driver. These are not counted in statistics because the amount of alcohol consumed was under that required to be D.W.I. The drinking driver and those involved in other activities can and often do cause tragic goof ups also.

The simple fact is that goof ups ought to be kept at a minimum. Leaving alone the brain poisoning drug, ethanol, will go a long way in accomplishing just that.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Proverbs 20:1 — Bob Parker, director



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Baptist leaders condemn U.S.-Vatican relations

WASHINGTON (BP)—Despite strong and growing objections from most religious quarters, the United States established full diplomatic relations with the Vatican Jan. 10.

Announcement of the new relationship was made from Vatican City in a brief statement which read: "The Holy See and the United States of America, desiring to develop the mutual and friendly relations already existing, have decided by common accord to establish diplomatic relations at the level of apostolic nunciature on the side of the Holy See and of embassy on the side of the United States beginning today, Jan. 10, 1984."

Southern Baptist reaction was swift and predictable.

James T. Draper Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Church in Euless, Texas, issued a statement through his church office which expressed, "extreme disappointment" and warned President Reagan has, "greatly endangered the support of millions of evangelical Christians" by pushing for the establishment of formal diplomatic ties.

The move, "violates every rule of reason as it relates to church and state," Draper said. "The Vatican controls no country so there is absolutely no reason for any formal tie," the statement said.

In a news conference at First Church in Albuquerque, N.M., (where he was atten-

ding an evangelism conference) Draper enlarged on his feelings.

He told reporters he would have been just as disappointed had the White House named an ambassador to the Southern Baptist Convention because he opposes any action which elevates one religion to a special status.

Draper reminded listeners President Harry S. Truman had backed away from a similar plan in 1951 after he was deluged with opposition from across the country. The head of the 14-million member SBC urged people to, "Call the president at 202-456-7639 and register your opposition."

James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said in Washington the action "is one more evidence of massive misunderstanding on the part of the Reagan administration of the appropriate relationship of church and state."

Dunn, whose agency has fought establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican for more than 40 years, said further: "Such an appointment is a clear violation of the principle of church-state separation, a dangerous and divisive precedent of government meddling in church affairs, and the occasion for practical problems for all those engaged in the farflung missionary venture in developing countries."

Dunn pledges to fight new U.S.-Vatican ties in Congress—or courts

WASHINGTON (BP)—President Reagan's appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican will be fought in Congress and challenged in court if necessary, according to James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

In the aftermath of the joint Vatican-U.S. announcement Jan. 10 that full diplomatic relations will be restored after 116 years, Dunn said: "We are not giving up. The president's action is not the final word."

Dunn said BJCPA will seek to rally opposition to the confirmation of William A. Wilson, the longtime Reagan friend and California real estate developer designated by the president as ambassador. The committee also will oppose a request by the State Department that Congress reprogram the fiscal 1984 budget to permit funding for the new diplomatic relationship, he said.

If those efforts fail, Dunn added, the Baptist Joint Committee will support a legal challenge in federal court. Americans United for Separation of Church and State announced Jan. 10 it will file suit challenging the action if efforts to derail it in Congress fail short.

A likely leader of congressional opposition appears to be Democratic presidential hopeful Ernest F. Hollings of South Carolina, who said Reagan's action "is a violation of the First Amendment and sets a bad precedent of policy."

Hollings, ranking minority member of the subcommittee where the State Department reprogramming request will be debated, declared "sending a diplomatic representative to the Holy See constitutes the recognition of one religion over all others."

But Sen. Richard C. Lugar, R-Ind., sponsor of the 1983 amendment which cleared the way for Reagan's action, hailed the move: "The Vatican is a vital focus of international affairs, and it is fitting that we should have a full-fledged ambassador representing our interests there."

A key dispute in the upcoming debate on Capitol Hill undoubtedly will be the sharply differing views between the administration and its opponents over the question of whether the new arrangement violates the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state.

Presidential spokesman Larry Speakes and State Department spokesman John Hughes insisted repeatedly the move did not violate the First Amendment's ban on an establishment of religion.

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Reacting to an Associated Press report quoting sources within the administration that the principle of separation of church and state will not be violated because the move to establish full diplomatic relations confers special status not on the Roman Catholic Church but on the Vatican as a state, Dunn declared: "For the administration to pretend that the naming of an ambassador to a church has nothing to do with religion is a ludicrous leap of logic smacking of Orwell's 1984."

In Richmond, Va., SBC Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks also responded strongly. "I am disappointed President Reagan has decided to proceed with a diplomatic relationship which so flagrantly violates the principle of separation of church and state and also threatens to hinder Baptist missionary witness overseas," Parks declared.

Elaborating on his concern about the implications of the move for foreign missions, Parks said: "Obviously it will hurt us most in countries which are non-Catholic in orientation, but I believe it will also affect our work in nations which are predominantly Roman Catholic."

"It has been more than 115 years since the United States put one religious group in such a favored status. To do so now will confuse those with whom our missionaries work in 103 countries around the world."

"It's not a violation of church and state," Hughes told reporters, "because for a long time we have recognized the Holy See as having an international personality distinct from the Roman Catholic Church."

In a White House briefing Speakes likewise discounted the argument the move improperly entangles church and state, saying instead Reagan merely responded to an opportunity provided him by the congressional action lifting the 1867 ban.

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German congregation finds new home in old Nazi warehouse

by Bob Stanley

AUGSBURG, West Germany (BP)—It's not quite turning swords into plowshares, but it comes close.

English-speaking Calvary Church, overflowing space rented from a German-speaking Baptist church, has found a new home in an old Messerschmitt factory warehouse, part of the manufacturing empire which powered the Nazi war machine in World War II.

The facility, dedicated Oct. 30, resembles a conventional church only in its sign. A taxi driver, bringing a member to a worship service, admonished: "That's no church. You can't go in there. That's no church."

But missionary pastor James Leeper and the 120 who attend services disagree. With \$10,000 from the European Baptist Convention and lots of labor from members, the congregation has transformed the second floor of one wing of the old warehouse into a sanctuary and educational-fellowship space.

During the dedication, Leeper disputed the common idea a church is some kind of beautiful edifice designed by an architect. "There never has been a church made out of stone," he said. The church, he explained, is made up of "living stones—bricks Jesus Christ poured—you and I. We make up the church."

Calvary Church, started 24 years ago, mainly serves personnel stationed at Four American military installations in the Augsburg area. Networks of old tunnels, too dangerous to explore because of abandoned ammunition dating back to World War II, still exist as a reminder of the key role this

Bavarian area played in the Nazi war effort.

For the past 12 years the English-speaking church had rented space from the Augsburg Church, a German-speaking congregation affiliated with the German Baptist Union. But Leeper and the members decided it was time to look for more room when five Sunday school classes were having to meet in the church auditorium.

After almost a two-year search, Leeper answered a newspaper ad for "warehouse space." He was told the owner probably wouldn't want to lease less than 2,000 to 3,000 square meters—far more than the

church needed.

But when the pastor finally made contact, the owner readily agreed to lease 520 square meters. Later the church leased another 400, giving it some 9,000 square feet of space.

Working in the evenings or during their off-duty hours, the members have gradually transformed two big empty rooms into an auditorium and fellowship area and have built 16 classrooms and a kitchen.

Bob Stanley is director of news and information services of the Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.



This warehouse in Augsburg, West Germany—once part of the Nazi's Messerschmitt manufacturing complex—now houses Calvary Church, an English-speaking congregation which leased the second floor of this wing for its expanding congregation.

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led by

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February 1, 1984

9:00 A.M.

Immanuel Baptist Church

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Southern Baptist College's Homecoming 1984 will be a wonderful blend of cherished memories and rekindling friendships anew. Plan to rejoice with us in the blessings our college has received.

Festivities begin with a concert Friday, Jan. 27, at 8 p.m. Saturday will be a day for remembering with a morning coffee at 10, followed by a luncheon, tours, open house, and much more! Lively basketball action begins at 5:30. Make this the homecoming you absolutely can't miss . . . come home to SBC!



Homecoming 1984

January 27 - 28

SOUTHERN
BAPTIST
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Widow of Liberian leader prays for peace, understanding

by David R. Wilkinson

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—More than three-and-a-half years after her husband was assassinated in a military coup, the widow of Liberian president and internationally-known Baptist leader William R. Tolbert Jr. still prays daily "for love to forgive my enemies."

Tolbert, president of the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention for 22 years, and president of the Baptist World Alliance, 1965-1970, was killed in an April 1980 coup led by the head of the country's national guard.

He was shot to death in the official residence on the eve of a three-week centennial celebration of Baptist work in the country. His wife, Victoria, who heard the shots from downstairs, was arrested and imprisoned, along with other members of the family.

For more than two years, Mrs. Tolbert said, she was emotionally unable to speak of her husband's death. But in an interview in her son's apartment in Louisville, Ky., she recalled the horrible sequence of events.

The president emeritus of the Liberian Convention's Baptist Woman's Union interspersed the account with frequent references to the "love and support" of Baptists and other Christians around the world.

Her only surviving son, William R. Tolbert III, is a first-year theology student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Tolbert, who was imprisoned for two years following the coup, hopes someday to return to Liberia to follow in his father's footsteps as a minister. In addition to his other responsibilities, the senior Tolbert served for 25 years as pastor of Zion Praise Church in Bensonville, his hometown.

Mrs. Tolbert was extremely careful not to criticize the current administration in Liberia, since some family members still live in the country and Southern Baptist missionaries continue to minister there.

"I've kept a low profile (since coming to the U.S.)," she explained. "I don't read the papers or anything else about what's going on (in Liberia). I just ask the Lord to bring peace to my country, to touch people's hearts."

On the day her husband was killed, Mrs. Tolbert was thrust into a single jail cell shared by 26 other persons—men and women. "For days I didn't know where I was," she recalled. "I had no idea what would happen to me."

Even so, she "found a sense of inner peace. We sang and prayed together. I knew the Lord would take care of me."

She received no word from the outside and wondered if her children had received the same fate as her husband. She was unaware of the many petitions for her release, including a resolution from the Woman's Department of the Baptist World

Alliance.

The jail had no windows, and it was two months before she was allowed to venture outside for brief, closely-guarded walks, Mrs. Tolbert said. After three months in prison, soldiers came to get her.

Rather than facing an execution as she anticipated, she was placed under house arrest and moved to a small house under 24-hour guard.

On the last day of 1980, Mrs. Tolbert was allowed to come to the United States for medical treatment. Four months later, however, she returned to Liberia to seek the safety of her children and other family members.

"I had promised to come back, she explained. "I wasn't going to stay here when all my children were still in Liberia."

Each of the seven children, except for elder son, A.B., was eventually released. A.B., representative in the legislature, was executed in October 1981, despite numerous requests for his release, including a petition from the Queen of England.

Today, most of the family lives in the U.S. One of five daughters, a physician, chose to remain in Liberia with her family.

After Mrs. Tolbert became seriously ill again, doctors convinced government authorities another trip to the U.S. was necessary for adequate medical care. After visiting a U.S. doctor, however, the pain and tension caused by the trauma ceased. Mrs. Tolbert wasn't surprised. She has no doubts that "the Lord made me sick so I could come to the U.S."

Though she left Liberia "with nothing," Mrs. Tolbert is grateful "just to be alive."

"I haven't been in want since I left Monrovia," she said. "Baptists and other Christians have been very kind to me. People have generously supplied my needs and those of my family. And I know they have prayed for me."

Mrs. Tolbert said she has no long-range plans, except for spending time with her children and grandchildren. "The Lord has been good to me," she said. "I'm willing to do whatever he wants me to do."

David Wilkinson was director of news and information services at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is now employed by the Christian Life Commission.

“President Draper has charted a course which all of us can follow.”

—Dr. Herschel H. Hobbs

The subject of biblical authority is a much-debated topic among Southern Baptists today.

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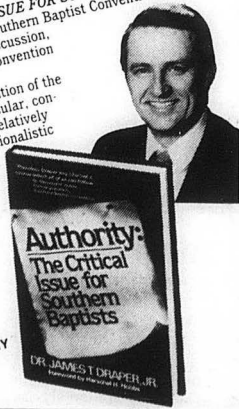
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Turn to the Lord

by Wm. M. Burnett, Beebe

Basic passage: Isaiah 30:31

Focal passage: Isaiah 31:1-7

Central truth: Those who trust in human resources will suffer the consequences of their evil ways, but God will deliver his true people.

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the vine; ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5.)

The principle involved in the passage under consideration is the same. Human beings are creations of God. They are made in his image, and their purpose is to reflect his glory, as the moon reflects the glory of the sun.

When they are cut off from him, as they are because of sin, they are like cut flowers. They have the appearance of life but the root has been cut and they are dead. They chart their own course in defiance of God's word.

Israel was disposed to lean on an alliance with Egypt's brute force—"Chariots, horses and horsemen because they are strong". She turned away from the Holy One of Israel to the arm of flesh. The consequence is recorded in the dismal record of death and judgment in the word of God.

Sagacity, wealth, influence and eloquence may in their turn seem to be what is required to satisfy a need or solve a problem. Safety may seem to depend on military might. But human resources, unless they are committed to God and used by him will be to the one who trusts them a bitter disappointment. The arm of flesh will fail you.

Judah overlooked her real strength and strong deliverer. Leaning on Egypt, "that broken reed", she disregarded the warnings and pleading of God's prophet. Had she listened God would have been to her as a fearless and irresistible lion for strength. Like a mother bird he would have tenderly received and blessed her.

But the application is for us. We have by our side a friend whose wisdom and almighty power is extended to us in love and tenderness.

No enemy can deter him, no army can resist him, no cunning can deceive him. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" Psalm 46:1.

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Life and Work

Offering wholeness

by Joe A. Thompson, pastor, Calvary Church Blytheville

Basic passage: Mark 6:5-56

Focal passage: Mark 6:5-7a, 12

Central truth: If men are to be made whole, Jesus must have disciples of faith.

When Jesus returned home, he put himself and his ministry to a most severe test. Mark 6:5 says it plainly: "He wasn't able to perform any miracles there. . . ." There can be no real preaching where the atmosphere is that of doubt and mistrust.

Our churches would be different places if the congregations realized the need of faith. If men come together to hate, they will hate. But if men come together in the love of Christ, there are no differences which cannot be made right.

Let every Christian realize that he has the responsibility of helping or hindering Jesus Christ as he seeks to make men whole. We either serve to open wide the doors to men's hearts or we slam them shut in Jesus' face.

We hear often the question: "When will the church ever reach the world?" Jesus felt the need to reach the world. He knew the best way to do that was to train disciples and send them out into the world. He trained his disciples and sent them out to preach two by two.

In Mark 6:12 we have a brief description of what the twelve preached. "So they went out and preached that people should turn away from their sins." Every disciple is important. He is important because of what he preaches.

What did Jesus' disciples preach? First, let us see what they did not preach. They did not preach their own message. That is, they did not create a message—they preached the message given to them by Jesus Christ. It was not their opinion, it was God's truth.

They preached a disturbing message—"repent!" They preached that men should change their minds and then change their actions to match their new minds. Repentance hurts because it causes us to admit that our way of life has been all wrong. That is why so few people ever truly repent.

But this world can only be made whole by God's message of repentance.

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Bible Book Series

The reign of Jehu

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

Background passage: II Kings 8:16 to 10:36; II Chronicles 21:1 to 22:9

Focal passage: II Kings 9:1-3, 24-26a; 10:17-19, 31

Central truth: Jehu's partial obedience indicates his flawed character—orthodoxy mixed with disobedience.

Elisha ordered the anointing of Jehu as king, evidently feeling that even though he was not ideal, he would do much to destroy pagan Baal worship, the major scourge of Israel. The anointing was carried out by one of the "children of the prophets", likely a young prophet, maybe a student of Elisha.

Jehu had been a very brave man in the battles of Israel. He was the grandson of Nimshi and the son of Jehoshaphat. He had a reputation of being a "wild charioteer" and reckless man of war.

Upon being declared king, Jehu took seriously the command of the young prophet that he initiate a crusade against Baal worship with the execution of the family of Ahab.

He met Joram (same as Jehoram) on the field of Naboth, who had been brutally slain on the orders of the evil Queen Jezebel. Joram attempted to flee, and Jehu shot an arrow through his heart from behind. His body was ignominiously displayed in Naboth's field as a reminder of the certainty of justice, even if delayed in coming. The dead king in the midst of the fields is a grim reminder that greed ultimately ends in death.

Jehu went to Samaria where he killed the remaining kinsmen of Ahab, making complete the purge of the land. Desiring to destroy the heart of Baal worship, he feigned loyalty to Baal and ordered that all prophets and followers of Baal assemble for a great national sacrifice he proposed to offer Baal, threatening death to any who refused to appear. Jehu filled the temple of Baal in Samaria, stationed 80 guards around the building, then ordered the guards to go in and kill the entire assemblage, and drag their bodies outside as a public spectacle.

However, Jehu did not completely follow the Lord. He still permitted idol worship by not destroying golden calf worship started by Jeroboam I. This is often the weakness of "super zealots"—they have glaringly evident blind spots in their spiritual vision and cannot see many sins around them.

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Baptists thrive under the sun in Puerto Rico

SAN JUAN, P.R. (BP)—In some ways, Puerto Rico is a paradise where the sun always shines, even when forecasters predict rain. But, at times, the weather also seems an ironic mockery against the island's poor.

On this tiny island are 3.2 million people—1,000 per square mile. Only Bangladesh has a higher density. Most of Puerto Rico's people are squeezed into metropolitan areas—San Juan has 435,000; Bayamon, 196,000; Ponce, 189,000.

Here houses sit on top of one another in a disorganized mishmash of colors, sizes and shapes; a tangle of wood, tin, cement and anything else salvageable.

Anywhere from metro areas is a completely different Puerto Rico. Cows graze peacefully by winding mountain roads where one can drive for miles without seeing another car.

Amidst Puerto Rico's panorama of extremes, religions of all kinds seek supremacy. The largest denomination, Roman Catholic, claims 75 percent of Puerto Rico's population, while mainline Protestant groups have small numbers of adherents.

Southern Baptists have been on the island for only 25 years. SBC churches have found it difficult to maintain stability; members were often transferred back to the States. Puerto Ricans preferred to remain with faiths that had been on the island since its discovery, faiths which understood their customs and held services in Spanish.

In many ways, accepting Southern Baptist doctrine was to reject family ties and heritage, a difficult decision because many on the island resented its U.S. Commonwealth status and sought independence.

As time passed, barriers slowly crumbled. Today, only six percent of all Puerto Ricans favor independence. And Southern Baptist missionaries realized a long time ago that services must be held in Spanish and Spanish customs must be adhered to in worship and church activities. Moreover, they grew to understand that for Southern Baptist work to become stable, natives must serve as missionaries and pastors.

Southern Baptist work in Puerto Rico has undergone a drastic change in size as well as in outlook. In 1981, Southern Baptists numbered only 3,000. Today, numbering more than 6,000, they are the fastest growing denomination on the island.

Many credit Ed Richardson, who became Puerto Rico Association's executive secretary in 1978, with the transformation. Despite Richardson's inability to speak Spanish, he is deeply devoted to training local leaders and has restructured the association, shifting many responsibilities from appointed missionaries to laypersons.

The six home missionaries serving on the island work out of the association's office in Rio Piedras and serve as pastors only when a crisis arises.

Central to the success of lay ministry development on the island is the Puerto Rico

Baptist Theological Seminary. Miguel Soto, the first native Puerto Rican to be appointed a home missionary, serves as its director. Richardson described the seminary as "the very heart of our plans for the future."

Throughout Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, Baptist congregations have many things in common. All struggle with problems of money and space. Land is a priceless commodity.

As a result, Puerto Rico Southern Baptists have adjusted well to makeshift facilities, perhaps because that's all most have known. In every church or mission, the services are jubilant and festive, full of thanksgiving and praise. They rejoice over small victories in jobs or family lives; they unite in prayers for sick or unchurched. Many are willing to give everything they have.

Baptist work is reaching a stage of leadership by the "incargado", the layperson, said missionary Hiram Duffer. "Throughout the association, laypersons are giving sacrificially and doing everything they can to fill important leadership roles."

"We've really come a long way," agreed Richardson. "Even up to two or three years ago, people in the churches relied on the missionaries for everything. Now we have many training in our seminary; before long they'll be pastors and church leaders."

He smiled. "And when a problem arises, someone in the church will be able to meet the need. I might not even know there's a problem. If I do, it's already been solved."

Richardson tapped his fingers on a map of Baptist work on the island, a map he knows well. "I'd say there have been some big changes in Puerto Rico. Some mighty big changes. And I'd also have to say that I like those changes. I'm proud of them. I think we're headed in the right direction."



Primera Iglesia de Bateyes meets in a tent, waiting for the completion of a building.

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