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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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How far love reaches
through home missions

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February 20, 1986

Arkansas Baptist
Newsmagazine

On the cover



Love reaches to every person, every situation, every circumstance, every need—when it's the love of Christ. Southern Baptists are seeking to share Christ's love with America through home missions. Take part in this massive endeavor by observing the March 2-9 Week of Prayer for Home Missions and by giving to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

Southern College spring enrollment up

WALNUT RIDGE—On-campus enrollment at Southern Baptist College for the spring semester of 1986 set a 15-year record, according to college president D. Jack Nicholas. Enrollment reached 451, the largest spring enrollment since 1971, when college enrollments were temporarily enlarged by

the Vietnam conflict.

Two categories, night and transfer students, were slightly down, but enrollment data revealed increases in both returning and new student categories, Nicholas said. The number of new students was the largest in more than 10 years.

Ouachita to host foreign missions rally March 7

A Foreign Missions Rally sponsored by the SBC Foreign Mission Board and featuring recently-appointed missionaries with Arkansas connections will climax a full week of emphasis on foreign missions at Ouachita Baptist University March 3-7.

The weeklong celebration, which is part of Ouachita's centennial activities, will include furloughing foreign missionaries

speaking in classes. The Friday night rally March 7 will offer testimonies from recently-appointed missionaries from Arkansas, a parade of flags, a film spotlighting Ouachita graduates serving in overseas missions and special music by the university choir. R. Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board, will deliver a charge to the new missionaries.

Summer study course in England planned

ARKADELPHIA—Ouachita Baptist University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., are offering a summer travel course entitled "Theology and History in Old and New England." The travel course will include a study of the early Puritan dissenters and separatists in England and their influence on the history and theology in early Colonial America.

Tom Greer, associate professor of philosophy at Ouachita, and Bill Leonard,

professor of church history at Southern Seminary, will direct the study.

Departure will be July 25, with return August 12. Included will be excursions to Edinburgh and Amsterdam. Total cost for the trip is \$1,500 plus tuition if the trip is taken for credit.

Anyone interested in the course, should contact Greer at OBU, P.O. Box 3658, Arkadelphia, AR 71923 or call (501) 246-4531, ext. 232.

In this issue

5 in search of revival

Two Arkansas Baptist leaders are looking for accounts of unusual spiritual awakening among state Baptists for a book they hope to publish in 1987 on the history of revival in Arkansas.

14 up and down

Statistics just released by the Baptist Sunday School Board show Southern Baptists recorded a mixture of gains and losses in their programs during 1985.

Retreat site changed

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention pastors' Retreat Feb. 24 and 25 has been moved to the Arkansas 4-H Educational Center at Ferndale, 10 miles west of Little Rock. Mechanical problems at Camp Paron made the change necessary.



ABN photo / Millie Gill

New chapel dedicated—Families and patients at North Little Rock's Memorial Hospital who seek a haven in time of crisis will be greeted in the new chapel by the image of Jesus offering healing at the pool of Bethesda. The chapel was made possible by gifts, including a generous one by the Junior League of North Little Rock. The new chapel is located closer to critical care areas and is also close to a new office for chaplain Bob Klutts, a Southern Baptist. A dedication Feb. 7 marked the switch from the old chapel to the new. Architects from the Blass Chilcote firm in Little Rock designed the room, which features the back-lighted stained glass window by David Soos of NLR. He also designed a matching panel for the chapel's door. The marble altar was imported from Italy. Subdued gray carpet and wall covering, movable seating and adjustable lighting complete the atmosphere. The room will provide a quiet place for prayer or for counseling by Chaplain Klutts (left) and other ministers. Memorial Hospital is owned by the City of North Little Rock and operated by the Baptist Medical System.



Recently we heard someone questioning the benefit their church derived from being a part of the Southern Baptist Convention. There are so many advantages to such a relationship that it would require far more space than we have to enumerate them. But we might do well to consider a few.

Perhaps the most important ingredient of our work is our cooperative mission effort. Through our joint participation, we are currently able to support approximately 3700 foreign missionaries and about 3600 foreign missionaries in 106 countries. While we should never feel that we have arrived, this is the world's largest non-Catholic missionary enterprise.

For a moment let us explore some of the possible alternatives to our cooperative method of mission support. One procedure is for each local church to support missionaries directly. This method would completely eliminate small churches from being involved in mission support. At least 80 percent of our 1269 churches are incapable of completely supporting even one home missionary, let alone sending a family to the foreign field. If churches are responsive to the Great Commission, they must in some way join other churches in supporting world mission causes.

A second way some groups have supported world missions is by sending mission volunteers directly to churches pleading for support. Each church agrees to provide a share of the missionary family's support. This method is called "debutation." There are many inherent weaknesses in this plan. First, a God-called mission volunteer is placed in the position of a beggar. He must plead with churches for support. The plan makes each volunteer reliant upon his personal sales ability, or "charisma," to even reach the mission field. Far more serious is the danger of one of the supporting churches suffering financial reverses. A mission family could be left stranded in a foreign country without support or a way back home.

As one examines the alternatives it becomes evident that our Cooperative Program is the best method devised in supporting world missions. It is, indeed, gratifying to know that we have a part in home and foreign missions, Christian education, and a multitude of benevolent ministries.

A second benefit a congregation receives from being a part of our Great Convention is the excellent materials developed by our leadership across the years. Many non-Baptists will readily admit that our evangelistic methods are the best. We have consistently utilized the finest education techniques in our literature.

The literature we have developed for our Sunday School,

Church Training, missions education and Church Music are not only as fine as can be obtained anywhere at any cost, but almost without exception, their cost is lower than similar materials of non-Southern Baptist origin.

Available upon request are a host of specialists who are able to give assistance in almost every area of a church's program. Such things as stewardship development, evangelistic methods, Sunday School enlargement, and architectural guidance are but a few of the special services offered to any cooperating Southern Baptist church. In Arkansas, a phone call to the Baptist Building will secure immediate help either in written form, or by some specialist coming directly to the church to provide assistance.

For the Southern Baptist pastor, the Annuity Board provides great security. The benefits are expanding rapidly. This program basically guarantees that the participating minister will have an income when he retires. It, also, insures that his family will not be left without income in the event of his death.

The objective of the Annuity Board is to provide the highest possible protection for Southern Baptist pastors. This is done by investing the money given to them by the local church and the State Convention. The Annuity Board works to get the highest practical return on the investment in order that benefactors may obtain the highest possible benefit each year. The Annuity Board has a tremendous track record and is always striving to provide the best help for Southern Baptist pastors.

We would hasten to agree that the Southern Baptist Convention is not perfect. No institution is without fault or error. Several years back, a preacher friend was visiting a talented lady who had moved into his community. The new resident listed all the faults of the church she had ever heard, and boastfully declared, "When I find a church without problems I'll join it."

The pastor quickly replied, "My dear lady, if you or I should join a perfect church it would no longer be without problems."

The same principle applies to our denomination. It is composed of mortal, fallible people. People make mistakes, so errors sometimes occur. But we do have an excellent system of checks and balances. We have implicit confidence that when Baptists are given information, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, their decision can be trusted.

There must be something we continue to do right, since God is blessing us with the greatest growth of any major evangelical denomination in the world. We are glad to be Southern Baptists.

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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

VOLUME 85 NUMBER 8

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

Copies by mail 50 cents each.

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Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer.

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One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Christian stewardship, even after death

Some of the best preaching I have ever heard has been at funerals. I am not sure why this is true, but I suspect it has something to do with what teachers call "the teachable moment," or perhaps "the preachable moment."

Quite often, the funeral is a time when both the preacher and the listener are compelled to be on the same wave length. Not only is the preacher under pressure to focus on the meaning of life and death in the light of Christ, but the listener is already emotionally committed to hearing what is said.

Even funerals in the Soviet Union provide special opportunities for evangelical Christian preachers that are not available at the regular worship services of the church. British Baptist preacher Ron Goulding tells the story of being invited to preach at the funeral of the senior pastor of the Moscow Baptist Church many years ago. He still remembers the exchange he had at the Moscow Airport, after his arrival from Lon-

don, with Michael Zhidkov, son of the deceased pastor.

Goulding asked Michael if there was anything he thought his father would want him to say at the funeral service. The reply was, "Forget about Papa and preach the gospel!" He went on to explain that funerals are one of those occasions when non-Christians can be invited to the church in large numbers without fear of governmental interference or reprisal. He added that many more people are won to Christ in the Soviet Union at funerals than at any other time.

The recent funeral for Ralph Davis, former director of Church Training for Arkansas Baptists, was a beautiful time of rejoicing over the victorious life of one who lived out the Christian life in a way few mortals do. In the hands of Pastor Bill Elder, it also became a remarkable "teachable moment" when he shared with all of us the strong desire and plans of Ralph Davis to continue his Chris-

tian stewardship, even after death.

Not only did he ask that, in lieu of flowers, contributions be sent to Ouachita Baptist University to a scholarship fund to assist students who are committed to a career in religious education, but he provided in his own will that a substantial sum be set aside to begin the endowment of this scholarship. When I visited with him shortly before his death, he openly expressed his joy about these arrangements and about the commitment of his daughter to join him in helping endow the scholarship.

During his lifetime, Ralph Davis trained hundreds of young people for more effective Christian service. Because of his remarkable vision and a little bit of special planning, he will continue to give education and training to Christian young people, even after his death.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.



Woman's viewpoint

Mary Maynard Sneed

Christian influences in the home

I grew up in a Christian home. My father was an ordained Baptist minister. Though his opportunities of service as a pastor were somewhat limited by ill health and a delayed theological education, my father's spiritual life had a profound effect upon me. My mother, having been reared in the Methodist church, moved her membership to the Baptist church when she married Daddy.

David and I were deeply impressed by the Bible stories Mother read to us each evening at bedtime. Both my parents were active in the church, and Daddy was deeply committed to witness wherever he went. I committed my life to special service when I was 12 years old, and my brother was ordained to the ministry shortly after he married.

Yet we have seen others who grew up under circumstances apparently conducive to the best in Christian living now maintaining only a nominal connection with the church. Still others, who had very little previous contact with the church and little interest in Christian living, have become influential Christian leaders.

Why? What factors in the home exert the strongest influence upon the children to choose a dedicated Christian way of life? What home influences bring about reactions against Christian standards and church loyalty?

It is a personal experience with our Lord Jesus Christ that draws us into a life centered in his will. Even individuals who were reared in unchristian or non-christian home environments do sometimes encounter Christ directly as they seek a better way of life. Many of these are drawn into the ministry, world missions and other church-related vocations.

Yet, certain positive or negative qualities in the home bear greatly upon the youth's response to or rebellion against the way of life their parents set before them. We are grateful to Rosalind Street for her outline of these aspects of the Christian life:

1. Parents set an example of Christian living for their children in the daily routine of the home, as well as in the church.
2. Parents administer consistent discipline

in fairness and love.

3. Children are respected as persons and included in family plans, activities and decisions.

4. Parents do more practicing and praying than preaching or prescribing.

5. Parents make no secret of their love for one another. Tension and quarrels are resolved through prayer and mutual consideration.

6. Loyalty to the church, it's pastors and leaders is as natural a part of family life as school attendance and good manners.

7. Appreciation of others and patience with their shortcomings is habitual among family members.

8. Children will learn the principles of right and wrong from their parents.

9. Reverence for God and respect for the Bible are instilled as naturally as fresh air and nourishing food.

Mary Sneed, the wife of the editor and mother of two daughters, is an active member of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock.

You'll be glad to know...

...Hard times bring good times! Hurricane Betsy was bearing down on New Orleans. The mighty Mississippi seemed as quiet and still as a ribbon of asphalt on which the mighty storm could roll on its mission of destruction.

Every kind of alert had been given but one. Then it came. Up and down the streets of our neighborhood passed vehicles with loud speakers ordering us to evacuate the area. Rather than going to schools, which would be so terribly crowded, we made our way to the church. It was a masonry structure and had a second level if high water came.

Both wind and water assaulted and battered the area. The first 12 of the 88 killed were in the area where we had taken refuge. Water kept rising until we were driven to the second floor. The only books or files saved were those we managed to place desk-top high.

Our cars were immersed with a baptism of salt water pushed 100 miles inland from the Gulf. Engine and transmission lubricants displaced by the salt water soon formed a scum that spread all over everything. It was devastation.

After a night and a day, we were able to swim to a railroad and walk it to secure boats that we would motor down the streets to take out the women and children.

Something very good happened through all of that. The best was being spared the loss of life. But it was so good to see the people known for hardness, sensuality, irreverence and impatience as they suddenly turned from an almost animalistic existence into caring and helping people. Everyone helped everyone! Two days before, they might have cussed you at a traffic light, but in hard times they were helpers.

Throughout much of our state, there is unemployment, collapse of farming operations and other hardships. I pray these hard times for some may bring out the good in the rest of us so that we all will help. We may not be able to replace lost jobs or lost dollars, but we can show consistent love and concern for everyone in such a position.

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



Moore

Arkansas revival history subject of research

The history of unusual spiritual awakening in Arkansas is the subject of a book being planned jointly by the Arkansas Baptist Historical Commission and the Evangelism Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Projected for publication in 1987, the book will focus on "accounts of extraordinary revivals... within the boundaries of Arkansas," according to a letter mailed to Arkansas Baptist churches by Mark Coppenger, chairman of the Arkansas Baptist Historical Commission, and James Lagrone, ABCS Evangelism Department associate.

The collection of revival accounts will be based on the "conviction that, by noting what God has done in our midst in days past, we might be encouraged to seek and antici-

pate fresh and greater movements of his power in our day," the letter said.

Coppenger and Lagrone indicated they would like to receive reports from Arkansas Baptists regarding extended revival meetings, "extraordinary spiritual turning points" in church histories, events which resulted in "radical spiritual and social change" in communities and spiritual movements resulting in "great numbers of public decisions in a short period of time."

The letter emphasized the importance of specific "names, dates and numbers" in the testimonies documented and that taped interviews, news clippings, photographs and other memorabilia are welcomed.

Lagrone may be contacted at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, telephone 376-4791.

Arkansan receives endorsement from HMB

An Arkansas pastoral counselor is one of the first private counselors in the nation to receive the endorsement of the Chaplain's Commission of the SBC Home Mission Board. Larry P. Henderson was endorsed in December as a member of the staff of the Family Life Clinic in Little Rock.



Henderson

The designation is a new form of recognition by the HMB, which also endorses Southern Baptists for chaplaincy positions in the military and other areas. Dr. Henderson

is the first Arkansan to be so designated.

The Home Mission Board requires counselors endorsed by Southern Baptists and members of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. They also must maintain lines of accountability with the local Baptist community. The endorsement is valid only as the counselor is associated with a counseling center, according to an HMB spokesman.

Henderson is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Ky. He has served as pastor, associate pastor and interim pastor of churches in Indiana, Kentucky and Arkansas. He also has been a chaplain at the Arkansas Youth Services Center at Pine Bluff.

March 1 deadline for scholarships

ARKADELPHIA—March 1 is the application deadline for academic scholarships for the 1986-87 school year at Ouachita Baptist University, according to Harold Johnson, director of student financial aid.

Incoming freshmen and transfer students desiring to apply for an academic scholarship at Ouachita should obtain an application by writing OBU, Box 3776, Arkadelphia, AR 71923, or calling 246-4531 ext. 570.

Singing Men to perform in New York City

ARKADELPHIA—The Singing Men of Ouachita Baptist University have been invited to participate in the Midwinter Men's Choral Festival in New York City Feb. 26-March 2.

The 21-member group has traveled extensively presenting concerts of sacred and secular music. Under the direction of Paul Hammond, associate professor of music and chairman of the school's church music department, the group from OBU will join men's choruses from six other colleges and universities for a concert in St. Bartholomew's Church on March 1.

The other colleges and universities asked

to perform at the festival are: University of Georgia in Athens, Ga.; Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C.; Miami University in Oxford, Ohio; Jersey City State College in Jersey City, N.J.; Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Ind.; and Wofford College in Spartanburg, S.C.

The director for the concert will be Pierce Arant from the University of Georgia, and the group will be accompanied by the American Brass and organist William Trafka.

The Singing Men will spend four days prior to the concert in rehearsal. While in New York City, there will be time for sightseeing, evening theatre and Broadway shows.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people



Keith Clutts has joined the staff of Hot Springs Second Church as minister of music. A Russellville native, he is a graduate of Russellville High School, Arkansas Technical University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has

served churches in both Arkansas and Texas. Clutts is married to the former Gayle Shaver of Fort Smith. They have two daughters, Rachel, age four, and Sarah, age one.

Howard Cartwright has joined the staff of Hot Springs Second Church as minister to senior adults. He has attended the Calumet extension of Indiana University and Northwestern Bible School in Minneapolis, Minn. He served as both a home missionary and pastor in Pennsylvania. Cartwright and his wife, Winifred, moved to Hot Springs in 1980 and have been members of Second Church since that time. They have three adult children, Kenneth Cartwright of Denton, Texas; Elaine Webster of Watauga, Texas; and Marilyn Martin of Oxford, Miss.

Wayne Fowler is serving as pastor of Winfield Church at Waldron. He came there from Heavener, Okla.

Frank Gantz is serving as interim pastor of Greenfield Church.

Larry White has been called to serve as pastor of Calvary Church in Harrisburg. He has been serving as pastor of Riverdale Church.

Kim Bridges has resigned as director of youth and music at Maple Grove Church, Trumann, to move to Little Rock.

David Butler is serving as pastor of Summit Church, where he was licensed to the gospel ministry in December.

Harry and Rachel Jacobs of Pine Bluff, due to his illness, recently moved to Nashville, Tenn., to be near their daughter. They will reside at 311 Cana Circle, Nashville, TN 37205. Jacobs was a long-time pastor of Osceola First Church and more recently served as chaplain with the Arkansas Department of Corrections.



Cartwright

Glenn Martin Crenshaw began serving Feb. 9 as pastor of First Church, Lead Hill. He graduated from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Dec., 1985. Crenshaw and his wife, Patsy, have two children, Becky and Mark.

James Powell is serving as pastor of Childress Church.

Don Allred is serving as pastor of Needham Church at Jonesboro.

Louis Criswell observed ten years of service Feb. 9 as minister of music at Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock.

Lawrence Vowan is serving as pastor of Friendship Church at Marianna, going there from Vilonia. He and his wife, Helen, are natives of Lonoke County and graduates of Ouachita Baptist University.



Fling

briefly

Pulaski Association is sponsoring a women's prayer retreat March 8 from 9:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the chapel of Immanuel Church in Little Rock. Helen Fling of Birmingham, Ala., who recently retired from the staffs of the Home Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, will be speaker.

Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock will initiate a new weekly single adult program "Friday Night in the Heights" Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. B.J. Sams, news anchorman for KTHV in Little Rock, will be speaker. Activities including games, lectures, potluck dinners and movies are planned for each Friday evening in the church recreation building.

Tuckerman First Church ordained William E. (Zeke) Smith and Rickey Huskey to the deacon ministry Feb. 9. Pastor Lannie Younger served as moderator.

Lakeland Church at Omaha honored pastor Elmer F. Cox Feb. 16 with a reception, recognizing the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the preaching ministry. In his 60 years of service, Cox has served numerous Arkansas churches as pastor and he has served as both an association and state missionary.



McGehee First Church received its first bequest Feb. 9 when Mrs. C.D. Kennedy presented \$50,000 from the estate of her late husband, designated to be used for building debt retirement. Buford Connor, chairman of deacons, received the gift on behalf of the church. A resolution of appreciation, written by pastor Mason Craig, was read following the presentation. Harry Trulove, president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, was speaker.

Laity Abroad: the cutting edge of Southern Baptist missions

by Roy Nix

"Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

Because of Baptist's convictions about the priesthood of believers, they believe the responsibility for the extension of the gospel belongs to every Christian.

The Foreign Mission Board looks to career missionaries as basic, being supplemented by missionary associates, special project workers and missionary journeymen.

There are hosts of others who, for one reason or another, are not among this group. These persons may not qualify for medical reasons, ages of children, education or may not feel led to apply for appointment or employment. But they do feel there is something the Lord would have them do in missions in an overseas setting. Such devoted laypersons make strong allies for missionaries and national leaders in the extension of Christ's kingdom.

The purpose of Laity Abroad ministries is to identify and equip Southern Baptists moving or traveling abroad in relationship to secular jobs or in study programs, to actively participate in the denomination's total mission thrust and to equip the receiving Baptist communities to effectively use them in mission service.

According to the best estimates available, there are between 130,000 and 150,000 Southern Baptists living beyond the borders of the United States. This number includes laypersons working with government, business, oil companies, industry and the military, as well as professors, students and tourists. The primary task of Laity Abroad is to identify these "real live people" and involve them in the mainstream of Southern Baptist foreign missions.

About 4,500 Southern Baptists living abroad are involved in the ministries of local English-speaking Baptist churches. Another large group of Southern Baptists who spend a great deal of time overseas are those who travel in relation to their business. As many as 2,000 Southern Baptists can be identified with this group. A challenge at this time is to identify ways to tap the ministry resources of these lay persons.

One of the most exciting developments within the last year affecting the Laity Abroad program is the opportunity for service through secular employment in China. Chinese Protestant groups last April established Amity Foundation, an agency which acts as a clearing house for Western assistance. The foundation is part of the officially recognized "post-denominational" Protestant presence in China. Also included are the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the China Christian Council. The Amity Foundation will channel funds, resources and personnel from throughout the world to service in China.

Within the last few years, the Foreign Mis-

sion Board has had a relationship with several Southern Baptists who have lived and worked in China. Most of them have been teachers of English as a second language; however, there also have been persons in the medical profession, petroleum companies, engineers on contract to government agencies and computer engineers.

This summer, it is expected 50 Southern Baptists will be among 100 teachers of English who will be assisting Chinese secondary school teachers of English to improve their teaching methods. Of this group, as many as five students from Ouachita Baptist University are being considered to assist.

Opportunities for employment in the People's Republic of China by qualified persons will expand. Recent reports indicate a preference for Christians to fill these positions since "they cause less trouble and are more dependable than others." Laity Abroad will work closely with Cooperative Services International in expanding this ministry.

Ted Ward of Michigan State University makes an interesting point about the possibilities for new missionary activities in China in an article he wrote entitled, "China Is Open to the Gospel." He does not say China is open to missionaries. There is a difference between being open to the gospel and being open to missionaries. The difference is sociological. There are plenty of countries that are closed to missionaries, but there are relatively few that are closed to the gospel.

Ward illustrates in his article how Laity Abroad works in China and other countries whether they are "open" or "closed" to missionaries. He writes of a Christian man who was sent to China as a chauffeur for the first diplomatic delegation sent by President Nixon to reopen relations with that country.

Everywhere the chauffeur went in the world with a diplomatic delegation, he set up a Bible study. Having been with the diplomatic service for many years and having worked all over the world, he knew wherever he went he could count on finding a group of young people anxious to practice English. His Bible studies offered them a chance to practice their English and offered him a chance to share his Christian witness.

Laity Abroad seeks to track all persons from the time they are first identified with this ministry until they return to the U.S.

To make the "full circle" with lay persons and their families who go abroad, Laity Abroad maintains contact during the overseas experience. Prior to their return to the United States, we seek to relate them to a director of missions or a pastor in the area where they will be living when they return to the United States. The director of missions or pastor is encouraged to use the lay persons by asking them to share about their opportunities for mission ministry while they lived abroad. In this way, other lay persons will understand from firsthand experience

how important their task is at home and abroad.

Many Southern Baptist lay persons abroad are excellent representatives of the Christian faith. They bear positive testimony to Christ, sharing in fulfilling the mission of Christ by their committed involvement in various phases of mission work.

The number of persons who are involved in missions while abroad can be increased dramatically if foundations are laid prior to their departure for foreign assignments. All should have adequate spiritual preparation for adjustments they will face in other lands. They need specific information concerning opportunities for missions involvement in the area where they will live. They need guidance in bearing effective witness to the Christian faith within the culture and under the circumstances in which they will find themselves. The Foreign Mission Board wants to help when members of Southern Baptist churches go abroad by offering assistance in witnessing as they go.

According to an article printed recently in the *California Southern Baptist*, many of the benefits of Laity Abroad are hidden. An Air Force officer who was being assigned to the Peruvian Air War College stopped by the Laity Abroad booth at the California Baptist state convention and learned about the Laity Abroad program for the first time.

The man was put in touch with Doyno Robertson, pastor of the English-language church in Lima, Peru, who was on furlough in Little Rock. Robertson telephoned him at home and told him about the church, informing him that if they needed anything when they arrived in Lima to let him know.

What a blessing it was for this Air Force family to know they would have a ready-made church family in a foreign country, waiting for them, ready to help them adjust to living in a strange culture. And the help would be a two-way street. They would be able to use their experience in stateside churches to "plug in" to the work there. Not only would they benefit from their "missionary family," but the work of the Lord would be strengthened also.

Our task is to get all 130,000 to 150,000 laymen abroad involved with missions in their area. We must get the word out that Laity Abroad exists!

When the pastor learns that a church member or family has received an assignment abroad, he should write the Foreign Mission Board, Laity Abroad, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230, or contact Roy Nix, Laity Abroad coordinator, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, phone 376-4791, ext. 5149.

Roy Nix is a Mission Service Corps volunteer coordinating Laity Abroad information for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

LOVE REACHES OUT TO PACIFIC PEOPLE—

As a home missionary serving in Honolulu, Ray Villamu (right) teaches Samoans what it means to be born again as he does here with Samoan chief Leota Fata Toamato.



Week of Prayer for Home Missions

March 2-9, 1986

LOVE REACHES OUT WITH THE GOOD NEWS—

Home missionary Curtis Griffie trains pastors and laypeople in four Chicago-area associations to do evangelism by developing strategies, materials, and budgets for comprehensive evangelism.

HOW • FAR

LOVE REACHES OUT TO ETHNICS—

Home missionary James Underwood uses an old school bus as a Chapel on Wheels, complete with games and Bible stories, to reach young children and families in Spanish-speaking communities in Las Cruces, New Mexico.



• LOVE • REACHES

LOVE REACHES OUT TO THE PIONEER AREAS—

The population of the Frontier and Energy Basin associations near Cheyenne, Wyoming, is about 160,000. Paul Lewis (left), Home Mission Board appointed director of missions for the two associations, estimates that only 12 to 14 percent are churched. Starting new churches is a priority of his work, like the Misión Bautista Emanuel, the only language work in the association.



LOVE REACHES OUT TO BEGIN NEW CONGREGATIONS—

In the past five years, home missionary Dottie Williamson has begun two churches in metropolitan Richmond, Virginia, and is busy starting a third. After teaching school for nearly a decade, Williamson caught the church planting vision as a seminary student.



LOVE REACHES OUT TO BLACK STUDENTS—

Home missionary Bill Filppin (right), here with Edward Davie, director of Georgia Baptist black church relations, coordinates black Baptist student work on the college campuses across Georgia. Through his influence, many students will enter the ministry, providing trained leadership for black Baptist churches.



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Clear vision of Jesus gives grace to bear life's burdens, minister

by Mark Kelly

"Singles" can be a diverse group, involving youthful college-agers, median adult "single agains" and even senior adults. Yet, despite their diversity, singles do have common needs and experiences that bind them together.

The burdens each persons bears through life, especially the pain of being alone, means "there is both good news and bad news in singleness," Alan Hawkins of Knoxville, Tenn., told a group of 220 persons attending the opening session of the Arkansas Baptist Single Adult Conference Feb. 7-8 at Olivet Church, Little Rock.

Hawkins recalled a pained confidence shared with him by a single on one occasion: "We have a lot of fun and fellowship, but I still go home alone."

"Is the grace of God adequate for such pain?" Hawkins asked. He defined "grace" as "the ability to endure that which is not good and say it is good." Such grace is useless until it becomes a "living reality and you embody it," he added.

Too often, Christians spend time together never knowing the burden carried by those near them, Hawkins said. Absorbed in their own concerns, the needs of others go unnoticed and untouched.

Hawkins held up the model of John the Baptist, who was able to say, "I must decrease that he (Jesus) might increase," simply because he had seen Jesus as "the Lamb of God." Seeing in Jesus the glory of

God enables one to "absorb the hurts and pains of this world and still be able to love and forgive," Hawkins said.

He shared a parable from Henri Nouwen's *Wounded Healer* which told of a band of lepers sitting at a pool of water washing their sores. Each leper had taken off all his bandages in order to flush his wounds with the clear, cold water. One leper, however, removed only one bandage at a time, cleaning the sore and replacing the bandage before removing another one.

Asked why he soothed only one sore at a time, the leper responded, "I do it so I can be ready to help if I am needed."

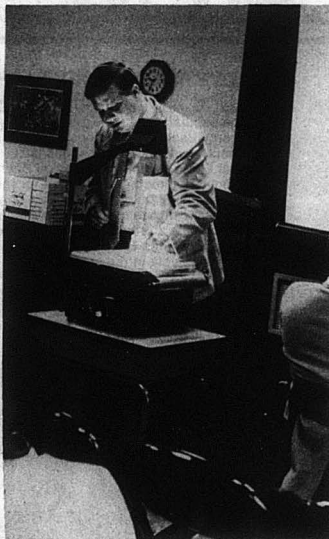
Hawkins urged the singles to take a similar approach to their own burdens and pains.

Quoting Hebrews 2:8, Hawkins said a clear vision of Jesus enables one to turn one's attention away from self to helping other persons, he said. Such a vision enabled the apostle Paul to endure hardship, beatings and imprisonment and still lift praises to God's goodness, he pointed out.

"The good news is we are accepted in the Beloved," Hawkins said. "The good news is that 'to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.'"

"Only submission to the Lord puts you in a position to receive his grace," he concluded.

Mark Kelly is a staff writer for the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.



ABN photos / Millie Gill

Members of the singles group from Beech Street First Church, Texarkana, presented Grady Nutt's adaptation of the biblical story of Samson and Delilah at the Arkansas Baptist Single Adult Conference at Olivet Church in Little Rock Feb. 7-8.



Nashville church prepares for 'Good News America'

(Left) Larry Page, vice-president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, presented a seminar on "Legal Concerns for Single Adults" at the Arkansas Baptist Single Adult Conference Feb. 7-8 at Olivet Church, Little Rock. Estate planning is particularly urgent for singles, especially those with minor children, Page pointed out, since they have no spouse to oversee the welfare of children and the administration of the estate. As important as estate planning is for married adults, it is even more urgent for singles, Page asserted. He counseled singles of all ages to make their own legal plans for trusteeships and guardianships, rather than allowing the state to do it for them after death.



(Above) Host single adults from Olivet Church, Little Rock, provided refreshments for participants in the conference.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—"Sharing God's Grace in the Heart of Downtown Nashville" is a commitment First Church makes through its advertising.

The 2,500-member congregation obviously is serious about the commitment as it gears up for Southern Baptists' 1986 evangelistic emphasis, Good News America, God Loves You, with multi-faceted witnessing and discipleship training activities.

"Most churches in our downtown situation are going to die if we don't get back to an emphasis on personal evangelism," said Charles Page, who became pastor of the church in 1985.

Evangelism is "absolutely our first priority," Page said. He added heartfelt, person-to-person evangelism must be supported with prayer, education and discipleship.

Preparation for the Good News America revival, scheduled April 6-11, began on Witness Commitment Sunday, Jan. 26, with a churchwide campaign to encourage members to read the book, "Concentric Circles of Concern," by the late Oscar Thompson, professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. The book emphasizes lifestyle evangelism through personal spheres of influence.

The church training equipping center module, "Training Sunday School Workers to Witness," will be taught beginning Feb. 9, with Page leading the large-group sessions.

"I am personally leading these sessions because I feel so strongly that Sunday school workers must be committed and trained to be witnesses," he said.

A one-day training blitz, "The People Challenge," is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 22. Ongoing training of as many as 150 encouragers, persons who will help new Christians get started in their faith, is under way, along with Continuing Witness Training and five MasterLife discipleship groups. Page leads a MasterLife group made up of church staff members.

"We do not have visions of being a mega-church," Page emphasized. "We hope to win people and disciple them for ministry and mission. A stream stays fresh only as you have continuous inflow and outflow."

The method of witnessing through personal spheres of influence in "Concentric Circles of Concern" emphasizes identifying non-Christians, praying for them and seeking opportunities to be a witness, actions anyone can do, he said.

In his Witness Commitment Day sermon, Page listed several things "we can all do" to be witnesses. "We can commit our lives to concern for the lost, start our own prayer lists and begin to make ourselves available," he said, also urging church members to take advantage of witness training opportunities.

"We must take Bold Mission Thrust seriously," Page said in his closing challenge. "Let's quit talking about it and start doing it."

SBC asks dismissal of U.S. District Court suit

ATLANTA (BP)—Citing the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the Southern Baptist Convention has asked dismissal of a federal court lawsuit against the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination.

The motion, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, seeks to have federal judge Robert Hall decline jurisdiction over a suit filed Dec. 5 by Robert S. and Julia Crowder of Birmingham, Ala., and Henry C. Cooper of Windsor, Mo.

The suit—and a parallel one in Fulton County (Ga.) Superior Court—revolves around events at the 1985 annual meeting of the SBC concerning the election of the Committee on Boards, Commissions and Standing Committees, which nominates trustees for the 20 national SBC agencies.

In January, the Crowders and Cooper were joined as plaintiffs by retired Marine H. Allen McCartney of Vero Beach, Fla.

In the reply, filed in late January, the SBC and its Executive Committee seek to have the suit dismissed, claiming the U.S. District

Court does not have jurisdiction because the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution "precludes this court from exercising jurisdiction. . . ."

The motion to dismiss also claims the federal court lacks jurisdiction, citing a federal statute which says jurisdiction "exists only if the matter in controversy exceeds the sum of value of \$10,000."

It goes on to add the plaintiffs "claim no entitlement to an award of damages in excess of \$10,000; instead, they seek only to prove and then vindicate their alleged ecclesiastical representational rights within the four walls of a religious organization."

The motion to dismiss the federal suit was filed by James P. Guenther of the Nashville, Tenn., lawfirm of Guenther and Jordan, and former U.S. Attorney General Griffin Bell of the Atlanta lawfirm of King and Spaulding.

In the motion, the attorneys argue the SBC "is a religious body, incorporated and created 'for the purpose of eliciting, combining and directing the energies of the Baptist denomination of Christians (and) for the

propagation of the gospel. . . ."

They also note the convention exists "...for three days each year when that year's duly elected and registered messengers convene for an annual meeting to conduct the convention's ecclesiastical affairs" which includes election of officers and persons to fill trustee posts.

The motion points out the Crowders and Cooper "were three of some 45,000 Baptist messengers who converged in Dallas...in June 1985 to conduct the internal ecclesiastical affairs of the convention for 1985." It also adds the plaintiffs' "claims are premised upon their past status as messengers in 1985 at a religious convention that has permanently and forever adjourned."

It adds the election of the 1986 Committee on Boards was elected by "a substantial margin" of 57.8 percent of those present and voting, and that on the day after the election two messengers "made a motion to end further discussion of the election. . . and that motion was passed by a majority of the registered messengers present and voting."

Florida group responds to 'conservative' campaign

DeLAND, Fla. (BP)—Vowing they will not be forced out of the Southern Baptist Convention, a group of Florida Baptists who are opposed to recent actions by "conservatives" in the state have met for the first time to map their own strategy.

Thirty-five people, many of them laypersons, gathered at First Church, DeLand, Feb. 4 and agreed to hold several rallies in the coming months to encourage and organize like-minded Baptists in Florida.

David Medley, pastor of Stetson Church, DeLand, organized the meeting, which he said was prompted by recent rallies headed by Jacksonville pastor Homer Lindsay Jr. Lindsay, of First Church, Jacksonville, has sponsored several meetings in the state as part of what he said is a nation-wide effort to control the election of the SBC president

and rid the denomination of "liberalism."

"In light of what has been happening, we felt the real conservatives in Florida needed a voice," said Medley, one of two pastors to address the two-hour meeting, which was spent primarily in open discussion about what action the group would take.

In discussion, several participants said they felt excluded by other Baptists who take the "conservative" label for themselves while condemning all others as "liberals." Others criticized reports that some Florida pastors are "handpicking" messengers to the 1986 SBC meeting who will vote for a certain candidate for president.

Robert Mulkey, pastor of First Church, DeLand, said a feared split in the denomination "is not going to be a simple matter. We need to find a way of communicating to say,

"Look what we are going to lose if we lose each other."

"I'm not leaving this convention, and nobody is going to drive me from it," vowed Medley. He said he felt hopeful after the 1985 SBC meeting at which a peace committee was established to try to ease tensions in the denomination but added the political activity in recent months "shattered that confidence."



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Vacation Bible School can be key to evangelism

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Vacation Bible School has been a fixture of many Southern Baptist churches for so long that leaders may be overlooking its greatest benefits, a Bible teaching expert believes.

Vacation Bible School can be one of the most significant evangelistic tools of the church program, said Wayne Etheridge, a Bible study administration specialist for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Last year's national VBS statistics reveal an increase in the number of professions of faith in Christ and prospects discovered as well as a national Cooperative Program offering of more than \$1 million for the first time, he said, citing these as some of the strengths of Vacation Bible School.

Those statistics are increasing even though enrollment in Vacation Bible Schools declined slightly and the number of schools declined by more than 2,000. Etheridge attributed the drop in enrollment to a decline in the number of children and preschoolers in the post-baby boom years.

Reports from 34,073 Vacation Bible Schools, Backyard Bible Clubs and Mission Vacation Bible Schools conducted in 1985 show 57,455 professions of faith by participants. The 1985 total is an increase of more than 4,000 from the 53,417 professions of faith reported for 1984 schools.

Churches reported 609,533 prospects discovered through Vacation Bible Schools in 1985, compared with the 592,258 listed for the previous year.

"VBS prospects can be a gold mine for churches if they follow up on them. Many times they aren't added to the church's pro-

spect file," Etheridge pointed out.

The more than 600,000 prospects from VBSes throughout the convention translated into 16 children and 24 parents, or 40 prospects, for each church conducting a VBS, he reported.

"Those are prospects that already are interested in your church and have shown interest in attending," he said.

The possibility of those persons making professions of faith is even greater if they are enrolled in Sunday school after attending a VBS, Etheridge added. One out of every three VBS prospects enrolled in Sunday school makes a profession of faith within a year of attending VBS.

The 1985 report shows 8,332 professions of faith that were listed as follow-ups from 1984 Vacation Bible Schools. "The key is enrolling those persons in Sunday school and ministering to them," he said.

Vacation Bible School also can teach participants about the Cooperative Program—Southern Baptists' national unified budget for missions and education—and its role in Southern Baptist work. Vacation Bible Schools in 1985 gave \$1,030,213 to the Cooperative Program, up from \$935,219 in 1984. Cooperative Program offerings were collected by 78.8 percent of the Southern Baptist churches that conducted schools.

The 34,073 Vacation Bible Schools, Backyard Bible Clubs and Mission Vacation Bible Schools in 1985 reported a combined enrollment of 3,183,489. That total is down from the 36,415 schools with enrollment of 3,240,727 in 1984.

Kaemmerling resigns as Advocate editor

DALLAS (BP)—Russell Kaemmerling, editor of the *Southern Baptist Advocate* since its founding in 1980, has resigned "for personal reasons."

Kaemmerling told the *Baptist Standard*, newjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, his resignation was effective Dec. 30, 1985.

Robert Tenery, pastor of Burkemont Church in Morganton, N.C., has been named interim editor. Tenery has been editor of *Baptist United News*, a voice of the inerrancy movement in North Carolina.

Although the *Advocate* carries "Southern Baptist" in its name, it is not a publication of the Southern Baptist Convention, nor of any SBC boards, agencies or commissions. The magazine has been a voice of the inerrantist movement in the denomination.

Kaemmerling told the *Standard* his resignation was "a personal change of direction" and that he remains "100 percent in sympathy" with the inerrantist movement and the individuals involved in it.

Tenery, pastor of Burkemont church for 14 years, said he has agreed to be interim editor until June. He said he intends to carry a statement from Kaemmerling on the resignation in the next issue, but did not indicate when the next issue will be released.

Neither Kaemmerling nor Tenery would identify any of the directors who have not previously been identified by the magazine. Both, however, said the directors will be revealed in the next issue.

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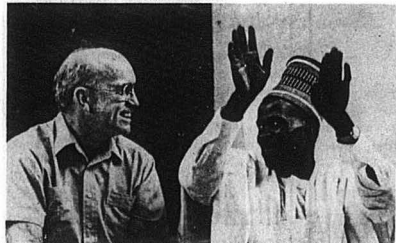
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Moderate gains, losses reported for SBC in 1985

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—A mixture of small gains and losses characterizes the final report for 1985 statistics tracking the ministry efforts of Southern Baptists.

The most impressive gain for the year was recorded by the largest program, Sunday school, which increased by 1.3 percent, or 103,459 members, over last year, reaching a record total just short of eight million.

Overall, the statistics reveal results in Southern Baptist Convention programs close to projections which were released in December, with all areas reporting totals higher than anticipated.

The loss which has raised the most concern is baptisms, which decreased by 5.6 percent, or 20,957, in 1985, to a total of 351,071. Baptisms were projected to decline by 6.9 percent or 25,670.

The baptism total reflects that in 1985 it took 41.3 Southern Baptist church members to win one person to Christ. That baptism ratio has been worsening for the past several years. In 1955, when the membership of the denomination was 8.5 million, the ratio was one baptism to every 20.3 members. As late as 1975 the ratio was one to 30.2.

This decline comes at a time when church staffs are bigger than in the past, more students are enrolled in seminaries than ever

before and there are more evangelism workers throughout the convention.

Church membership recorded a gain in 1985 of 1.0 percent, or 136,746, to reach 14,486,403. Membership was projected to increase by 0.7 percent, or approximately 100,000.

Of the 14.5 million members reported in Southern Baptist churches, 4.2 million are reported as non-resident members, which leaves resident membership at about 10.2 million.

The number of churches in the convention increased by 239 in 1985, to a total of 36,979. The number of churches has increased by about the same number for each of the past several years.

Church programs which experienced losses this year are Church Training and Woman's Missionary Union.

The Church Training enrollment decrease of 0.2 percent, or 3,869 members brings the new enrollment to 1,969,038 and is better than the projected 1.1 percent decline. This is the second consecutive loss for church training, but it follows four straight years of increases.

Enrollment in WMU decreased by 0.4 percent, or 4,390 members to a new total of 1,165,240. This program was projected to

decrease by 0.5 percent.

The program of church music recorded its 20th consecutive gain, with an increase of 0.6 percent, or 10,353 participants, bringing enrollment to 1,677,738. The projected gain was the same as the actual increase.

The increase in Brotherhood enrollment was 0.9 percent, or 5,357 members, rising to 573,740. Brotherhood was projected to increase by 0.4 percent.

The 1.3 percent increase for Sunday School was more than the projected a 1.0 percent gain and was the fourth consecutive record high for the denomination's Bible study program.

Giving in the denomination continued to increase at a pace ahead of inflation.

Total receipts in Southern Baptist churches increased in 1985 by 6.0 percent, or more than \$220 million, to \$3.89 billion. The projected increase was 5.7 percent.

Mission expenditures for the year increased by 7.5 percent, or \$42.6 million, to almost \$611 million. A gain of 6.7 percent was projected.

Information in the annual statistical report for Southern Baptists is compiled by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board with information taken from Uniform Church Letters.

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Be servant of all

by Nan Ashcraft, Hurricane Lake Church, Benton

Basic passage: Mark 8:34-35; 9:33-37; 10:35-45

Focal passage: Mark 9:33-37; 10:35-45

Central truth: True greatness comes through humility and service.

Who will be greatest in the kingdom of Heaven? This was the subject of a squabble among the disciples on the road to Jerusalem and the cross.

Earlier Jesus had tried to communicate to the Twelve the events soon to take place concerning his death and resurrection, but they refused to understand.

James and John were cousins of Jesus, and they went to him with presumption; because they wanted first place. Their petition—"Grant unto us that we may sit, the one on the right hand, and the other on the left hand in thy glory"—evidenced they had neither fully grasped the nature of his reign, nor the implications of first place.

Jesus called them to him to teach them about true greatness. He reminded them of Gentile great ones and their authority over others. Not so in his reign: "But whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister: and whosoever will be chiefest among you shall be servant of all" (10:43-44).

Jesus' rebuke was placing a child before them to demonstrate his teachings. The assumed superiority within the group must have quickly dispelled as opportunity for a humbling learning experience followed.

Jesus taught by precept and example that true greatness in the kingdom of God comes through humility and service to others. "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many" (10:45).

The principles of Jesus' teachings often run counter to our natural bent. Adults are not naturally characterized by humility or servanthood. Introspection can show specific areas in our lives where Jesus' view of greatness can be applied.

Though Jesus was equal with God, he emptied himself and became a servant. He came with singleness of purpose to do the will of the Father. It meant death. He did for us what we never could have done.

The key verse gives the requirements for discipleship. One who follows Jesus must say no to selfish interests that would hinder and take up his cross (8:35).

Life and Work

Compassion for the needy

by C. Michael Anders, First Church, Sherwood

Basic passage: Matthew 15:29-39

Focal passage: Matthew 15:29-39

Central truth: Christians feel compassion for people and seek to minister to them.

Jesus drew people to himself by his compassion. Because he loved people so, he always had an eye on their special needs. The crowds of Gentiles gathered around Jesus because of his loving ministry of healing. After ministering to their physical needs, the people were ready to worship the God of Israel (v. 31). Through similar ministries of healing and helping, we can cultivate people who will be ready to hear the good news of a loving God.

Jesus clearly stated his concern by saying, "I have compassion on the crowd..." (v. 32). Jesus cared for those Gentiles with no strings attached. He knew their needs and desired to minister to them. If we learn to care with no strings attached, we too will minister to the needs of others. Our ministry begins by developing a God-like love for those who are destitute and needy. Far too often, Christians look on the less fortunate with contempt rather than concern.

Jesus had been walking along the Sea of Galilee in the country of the Gentiles. The religious people of Jesus' day would have been very hesitant to minister to these Gentiles. But the gospel of Christ is a gospel for everybody. Jesus demonstrated his love for the foreigner just as much as for his fellow countrymen. Limitless love knows no boundaries and no restrictions. We need to join Jesus in the task of tearing down the barriers that divide. God is one; so are his people.

Isn't it just like God to provide so much food that they can gather seven baskets full of left-overs? God supplies more than people need. His generosity is so great that our "cup runneth over." Surely God's goodness and mercy shall follow us.

Jesus did not perform this miracle out of nothing. Rather he chose to use the resources that the disciples had on hand. The seven loaves and few fish were blessed and multiplied by Jesus to do a miraculous work. Today more than ever, God's miracles are performed by using the resources of his disciples. As Christians yield their resources to God through such means as the Cooperative Program, God blesses and multiplies them to show his grace.

Bible Book

A faithful minister

by Steve Kelley, Brumley Church, Conway

Basic passage: 2 Timothy 2:1-26

Focal passage: 2 Timothy 2:1-15,19,22

Central truth: Christians should be single minded in dedication to the task, assured of their future with Christ.

Faithfulness is important to the Apostle Paul. In 1 Corinthians 4:2 he says, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." In our lesson Paul encourages Timothy to be a faithful servant of Jesus Christ. The source of strength needed for faithful ministry is found not in ourselves but in Christ (v. 1).

Like Timothy, Paul instructs us to be faithful stewards of the ministry to which Christ has called us. Service for Christ need not be characterized by spectacular success. It should, however, reflect a faithful commitment to whatever task the Lord has entrusted to us. The strength to meet this unique challenge is provided for us by our Lord Jesus Christ as we affirm our limitations and acknowledge our dependence.

Paul uses a soldier, athlete and farmer to illustrate the nature of faithfulness. A soldier endures the hardships of battle in order to please his commander. An athlete disciplines himself in order to master the event in which he competes. The farmer perseveres in planting, cultivating and harvesting a crop in order to feed his family (vv.3-6). Each illustration offers a characteristic element essential for servanthood.

As Christians, our faithful service for Christ should be characterized by endurance, discipline and perseverance. There is always the temptation to give up when faced with difficult circumstances or when we fail to experience immediate success. We can be confident that a faithful dedication to the task pleases the Lord.

Paul persevered in faithful ministry so that people might come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Paul loved those for whom Christ died. This love inspired the Apostle to labor steadfastly in the Lord's work (v. 10).

This same love for souls should serve as our motivation for faithful service. We should labor faithfully in the Lord's work because we possess a deep desire to see others share in the redemption Christ offers. When people take advantage of us, misunderstand us or fail to take the message of Christ seriously, we should be inspired by Paul's courageous example.

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Hastey debates role of judicial activism

WASHINGTON (BP)—Amid increasing disagreement over the role of the government's judicial branch, a Southern Baptist church-state spokesman and a U.S. Department of Justice representative met to debate the issue of judicial activism.

Stan Hastey, associate executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, and Terry Eastland, director of the Justice Department's office of public affairs, argued the role of the Supreme Court in regard to the U.S. Constitution during a session of the National Association of Evangelicals' annual Federal Seminar.

The current national debate involves the issue of judicial review, said Eastland, who described that activity as "the review by a court of a piece of legislation or an action by a government to determine whether the legislation or that activity was in conflict or was consistent with the Constitution of the United States." Judicial review is one of three aspects of the broader concept of judicial power, which also involves interpretation of statutes and determination of equity, he added.

Arguing that the ideas of judicial activism and judicial restraint involve a larger idea than simply the Constitution, Eastland noted, "They go to this larger issue of judicial power and, in general, the role of the court. Those who support judicial activism generally favor a very large role for the court. Those who preach the gospel of judicial restraint typically believe that role should be limited."

Hastey said judicial activism is not a new trend but rather "a noble part of our national tradition and an essential component of our American experiment in self-government." He added that at the heart of the current debate is the question of what the nation's founders intended.

Eastland, however, said he believes the role of the court was intended by the country's founders to be limited. That role has expanded tremendously during the past 30 to 40 years, he added, describing the expansion as being less by design or by intention of the people than by a combination of other factors, including the legal profession itself.

Eastland, who does not hold a law degree, criticized legal commentators, law school professors and those he called "verbal elites"—persons who write for newspapers and magazines and who, he said, "may not be educated in the law but nonetheless are sophisticated or, in the alternative, think themselves sophisticated."

"These people typically have been in favor of a larger and larger role of the court," he said. "I think that has something to do with intellectuals who often have a stake in the aggrandizement of their own power."

Eastland also pointed to Congress' tendency to write into legislation a "private right of action," which allows anyone who thinks he has a remedy under a particular law to

go into court and sue, and to judges who "have had perhaps an oversized sense of their own ability."

To illustrate his view, Hastey focused on the founders' intentions in drafting the religion clauses of the First Amendment. After mentioning several recent Supreme Court decisions regarding the separation of church and state, he specifically explored the dissenting opinion of Associate Justice William H. Rehnquist to a 1985 decision that invalidated an Alabama statute authorizing local school boards to require a daily period of silent prayer in public schools.

"In what can only be described as a legal treatise designed for future use by a more sympathetic majority on the Supreme Court, Justice Rehnquist draws a blueprint for a revised version of the First Amendment's establishment clause," Hastey said. "Rehnquist's lengthy dissent suggests that the court reassess all its church-state decisions of the past four decades in light of what he describes as the framers' intent to do no more in the establishment clause than forbid the establishment of a national church or favor one Christian sect over another."

Hastey contended that Rehnquist denigrated the role of Thomas Jefferson and the convictions of James Madison in the inclusion of religious guarantees in the First Amendment. The justice also refrained from mentioning Congress' insistence on language forbidding an establishment of religion, Hastey added.

Another failure on Rehnquist's part, he said, is his view that the duty of the Supreme Court is simply to discern the intent of the framers.

"In the case of the religion clauses of the First Amendment, of course, such a posture would virtually force the justices into a judicial straitjacket," Hastey argued. "When the framers gathered in Philadelphia, the new nation harbored scarcely a dozen religious groups. Today, the United States protects the rights of some 3,000 separate religious bodies. No other nation on earth boasts such diversity. In no other nation in the world do as many as four in 10 citizens voluntarily attend houses of worship every week. And no other nation comes close to matching the 70 percent of American citizens who of their own accord belong to a church, synagogue or mosque.

"Accordingly, application of the religion clauses of the First Amendment has of necessity been dynamic rather than static, elastic rather than inflexible."

In opposition, Eastland said he advocates the approach of "interpretivists," who he said take the Constitution seriously and believe any theory of constitutional interpretation should be grounded in the text of the Constitution as that text is illuminated by the intentions of those who framed, proposed and ratified it.

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