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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1980-1984

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5-17-1984

**May 17, 1984**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

The association:  
Churches reaching all peoples  
page 8

May 17, 1984

Arkansas Baptist  
NEWSMAGAZINE



ABN photo / Millie Gill

Paul Williams, pastor of Grace Church, Little Rock's new black mission sponsored by Life Line Church, applies a rollerfull of paint to a building they are renovating for a worship center. Below, Pulaski Association director of missions Glenn Hickey mixes a bucket of paint and Phillip Strickland and Michael Rowe hang a sign.

## 'Planned growth' blends excitement, intent

by Mark Kelly

While boldness and excitement permeate Bold Mission Thrust—the Southern Baptist vision of taking the gospel to every person by the year 2000—achieving such an ambitious goal requires a workable, intentional plan, said Cecil Ray, director of the SBC Executive Committee's "Planned Growth in Giving" emphasis.

Ray, former general secretary of North Carolina Baptists, is charged with the responsibility of leading Southern Baptists to give \$20 billion a year by the turn of the century.

Planned Growth Giving is "at heart a spiritual movement of commitments," Ray said. "It is intended to enable churches and the denomination to achieve the great vision of Bold Mission Thrust."

Characterizing the 15-year program as the "commitment side of Bold Mission Thrust," Ray outlined the program's objectives.

Planned Growth in Giving is geared "first and foremost to personal and church growth," he explained. Beginning in 1985, families will be asked to adopt a 15-year plan for incremental increases in giving to their local churches. A goal of \$20 billion has been set for 2000, an increase of \$17 billion.

Although contributions in the Southern Baptist Convention have grown steadily over the past 30 years, that increase has resulted from increased memberships, higher incomes and inflation, Ray said. Since the mid-1950's, Southern Baptist families have given annually an average of two percent of their income to their church.

"Our commitment level has not increased," Ray observed. "We are asking that it will, but the possibility of such growth is predicated on a new level of commitment. It cannot be 'business as usual.'"

Each family will be asked to select its own "bite-size growth goal, one which will be challenging but attainable," Ray noted.

Presently, 20 percent of SBC resident

members give 80 percent of the funds received, according to James Walker, ABCS Stewardship director. Another 30 percent give 20 percent of the receipts; 50 percent give nothing at all, Walker said.

There are objectives for congregational gifts to associational missions and the Cooperative Program, as well, Ray added. Churches are being challenged to increase their giving each year "by a factor of 7.5 percent," he said. For example, a church giving 11 percent to missions would be asked to set a 15-year goal of 18.5 percent.

The objectives continue to address state convention and SBC missions allocations, too. The former are encouraged to increase gifts to world causes through the Cooperative Program, pursuing growth plans most have already adopted, Ray said. The denomination has previously set its growth goal: increasing from 67 to 75 percent the amount of Cooperative Program money allocated to the Foreign and Home Mission Boards.

1984 will be a year of preparation, Ray explained. With state conventions drawing up their plans, Ray sees the year as a "prior commitment time" for elected and employed leadership to make a personal commitment "as a model and witness" to others.

1985 will be a kick-off year, Ray explained. Seminars will be offered to train pastors and local Planned Growth in Giving leaders. Arkansas has 12 such seminars scheduled for March - August 1985.

1986-2000 are seen as "growth years," when Southern Baptists will rise to the challenge of making Bold Mission Thrust a reality, according to Ray.

Concluded Ray: "Planned Growth in Giving is a spiritual movement of commitments with three effects: greater people, greater churches and greater missions."

Mark Kelly is an ABN intern.

## In this issue

### 8 reaching all peoples

Associations are composed of churches that should reach into every strata of society and potentially touch every person in the community. Associational Emphasis Week articles focus on that potential.

### 14 three streams

Three approaches to biblical interpretation were discussed by three Southern Baptist professors at the recent meeting of the SBC Historical Commission and Society.

### Correction

In the April 26 issue of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, an ordination service at the Glendale Church, Booneville, was incorrectly reported as being at Grand Avenue, Fort Smith. The congregation ordained pastor Kenneth Barnard Jr. and deacons Montie Lairmore, Bill Robbins and Webster Watts.

## Prayer for SBC meeting sought

"That the blessings and power of God may be sought in behalf of the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City, June 11-14," John Sullivan, SBC first vice-president, has called for a special day of prayer Sunday, May 27.

Sullivan, pastor of Broadmoor Church, Shreveport, La., has asked 35 state prayer coordinators to organize Southern Baptists in their respective areas for a concerted prayer effort preceding and during the annual meeting.

Arkansas' prayer coordinator, Jere Mitchell, pastor of First Church, Fayetteville, has asked state Baptists to observe the suggested "Prayer Sunday and participate in intercessory prayers for the meetings and personnel of the convention.

In addition to pre-convention prayer, Mitchell announced Arkansas will be responsi-

ble for two one-hour shifts in the prayer room at convention headquarters during the meeting. Continuous prayer for the convention is planned in two locations during the sessions.

Mitchell extended an open invitation to all Arkansans for those two times—Tuesday, June 12, 6-7 a.m. and Wednesday, June 13, 9-10 p.m.—in room 364 of the Radisson-Muehlebach Hotel. The convention center prayer room will be located in room 204 West, Mitchell said.

A prayer list offered by Sullivan includes pre-convention meetings, local evangelistic efforts in Kansas City, denominational personnel with convention responsibilities, SBC officers, SBC boards and agencies and their leaders, convention committees, the spirit of business and debate sessions and the progress of Bold Mission Thrust.



Man's very nature demands that he look up to God. If there were no God, inevitably, man would invent one. Without God, man's life and existence would become meaningless. For without God, man is simply a biological animal, one step removed from the beast. Man would simply be cast about by blind emotion and chance. He would not know his origin or his destiny. His world would have no purpose, and the darkness of the world would offer him no protection from a multitude of enemies.

If there were no God, man would be compelled to look to himself. In looking to himself, he might accumulate possessions. But the possessions would bring him no final comfort, and as death's cold hand reached out for his immortal soul, he would discover that he must leave the world as he entered it—with nothing.

Without God, man would utilize each day to search after power, by which he might hope to improve his lot and have dominion over nature and other men. In gaining power, he would feel strong and would glory in what power could do for him. He would rejoice that the powerless were subject to his whims, and would exploit them for his own benefit. His power would allow him to play the role of a god made in his own image.

There is a void in every life that power cannot fill. The fulfillment for which one yearns continues to elude him. And in the sleepless moment of the long night, he must see and confess his loneliness. Power can not bring peace.

Without God, man may work feverishly for fame, his earnest desire being to establish an identity by which all men will know him. He wants his name and his image paraded before the world in newspapers, books, television and radio. He dreams that history will note his presence and pay tribute to his genius. He establishes repositories for his papers so scholars of a future age can earn degrees by thumbing through the genius of his work. But fame, like power and wealth, is transitory. It brings attention and acclaim, but the price is high. The truth is that as fashions change, heroes come and go. The hero of today may become the enemy of tomorrow. When the younger generation arises, the inquisitive may ask their elders, "Who was he?"

When man has no god, love cannot exist. Each individual must follow the instincts of the beast. He hates, hurts, desires, crushes and knows fear. The survival of the fittest becomes the principal of action. Left to his own devices, selfishness, pride and desire become the order of the day. The only commandment he follows

is, "Do whatever you wish, as long as you don't get caught." Each man becomes a law to himself. Love is self-giving, but the man who knows no god cannot give to himself. True love puts the interest of others before those of self, but the godless man gives priority to his own self-interest. True love flows from a fountain outside of man, not within him. When an individual drinks at the true fountain of love, he must acknowledge something above and beyond himself, something greater than himself. To accept the idea of love is to accept the reality of God. Since love brings man full circle to God, he cannot embrace it without embracing God. To reject God is to reject true love. And to reject love is to endorse hate.

Everything about man provides evidence of the existence of God. Even atheists weep as they bury their husbands, wives and children. Even marked graves testify to man's never ending quest for immortality. Even atheists, for want of a better way, call on God to be witness to their testimonies, for they know well that without an appeal to something greater than self, their actions become suspect.

Years ago, a preacher was engaged in discussion with an individual who ardently professed to be an atheist. After several hours of discussion and the atheist's refusal to accept any evidence, the man boasted, "The Bible says nothing to me, for me or about me."

"The Bible has everything to say to you," the preacher replied; "For it is written, 'The fool has said in his heart there is no God' " (Ps. 14:1).

Man's greatest discovery of all is the truth that, without God, he himself cannot be. He discovers himself when he discovers God, for he is rooted in God. It is ironic, indeed, that, when man thinks he has destroyed God, he discovers that he has destroyed himself.

But God is, and so man is. And because God is, man is far more than a beast. Man is of value, because God has created him and placed within him dignity and worth. Because God is, man can know God and can magnify God.

The supreme evidence of God is made known to man, in that Jesus Christ revealed God to man. Man's search for reality, power, fame, and love come to an end when he discovers the perfect revelation of God through Jesus Christ. Man, with God, becomes significant, even as man, without God, becomes meaningless.

# Arkansas Baptist

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

VOLUME 83

NUMBER 19

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### Investigation needed?

The Christian Life Commission story, page 8, April 26, 1984, made my blood boil. To think my money was spent to display such people as Helen Caldicott, Pablo Deiros, and Jack Nelson, among others, before the American public under the canopy of the Southern Baptist Convention is unconscionable!

Where were the leaders from the Freedom Foundation, Senator Jessie Helms, and other such national leaders overlooked in reference to Mark Hatfield and Claude Pepper?

Am I a conservative? You bet I am. A patriot? Yes, and a believer in the Cooperative Program, but I protest this expenditure of those funds. Maybe an investigation of the personnel of the Christian Life Commission needs to be conducted.

Betty Kennedy's article on page 9 apparently was intended to soften the impact of the page 8 article, but comparing the new Religious Right to Poland, Iran, and Latin America was too much.

Let us pray that the CLC will not "make decisions and set the agenda for action" (quote from Kennedy article) for the Baptists in our country. Let us pray our believers will speak out against such practices.—Allene Anderson, Bentonville

### Don't deny the power

In reading Toby Druin's article on James Robison, I was reminded of a Pharisee nam-

ed Gamaliel, who gave the Hebrew council some good advice concerning Peter and the apostles they had on trial. He said to them: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God".

I have been listening to James' message of truth for about two years. I have never heard or read anything that would warrant such a discrediting article as printed in the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* of May 3, 1984. It does a total disservice to those who seek truth and are willing to trust in the Word and the divine guidance of the Holy Spirit who Jesus said was to guide us into all truth.

Do these critics propose that there are no demons and devils at work today in people's lives? Am I to understand that these critics do not believe that God can heal a sick person? Am I to believe that these critics do not believe God can do anything, even cause the sun to stand still and the sea to part if he wishes?

The Old and New Testaments are saturated with the warnings of demonic powers. They are saturated with supernatural healing from God. They are saturated with God's supernatural powers we call miracles. Are we to believe that God lies to us when he states that he is the same yesterday, today and forever?

My heart grieves for those critics who would deny the power of God in men's lives

today. I would hope that Southern Baptist doctrine has not reached the place that to be a Baptist one would deny the supernatural power of the Almighty God.

It is my prayer that God's prevailing Word will be performed in all our lives. Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.  
—Halton Primm, Paris

### Tradition or the Bible?

The slanderous attack upon James Robison and Milton Green in the May 3 issue of *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* was an indictment upon itself. Neither man is accused of being unbiblical, but rather that they do not preach traditional Southern Baptist Doctrine. Since when does Baptist doctrine supersede Bible doctrine? Also, the fact that Milton Green was twice divorced before he became a Christian, why was this even brought up? Weren't these sins covered by the blood? Much emphasis is placed on Milton Green being a carpet cleaner with only a ninth grade education. This suggests that unless a person is seminary educated he cannot know God's word and therefore cannot be a Bible teacher.

Frankly, I think that much of the problems we have today result from many preachers being "man made" and not "God called." It appears to me that rather than defending Bible truth, these critics are defending a religious system that is beginning to look like the religious system that crucified Jesus.

In closing, I would like to call your atten-

## One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

### Sacrifice when dog bites man

Just as a picture can be worth 10,000 words, so an exchange of letters can often describe mountain peaks in human history far better than a detailed monologue. Not long ago I wrote the following letter to Lloyd Cloud, senior development officer at Ouachita Baptist University, after hearing from Vice President Roger Harrod that Lloyd suffered a dog bite while in the line of duty:  
Dear Lloyd,

Ouachita's glorious history is replete with accounts of unselfishness in Ouachita's dramatic record of service and growth. People have given sacrificially, and faculty and staff members have served Ouachita in spite of more lucrative offers elsewhere. But never in all of my life have I heard of anyone's offering his own leg as a personal sacrifice to the dog of a person who is a potential benefactor of Ouachita! This amazing rumor, if it proves to be correct, should certainly en-

title you to some kind of Purple Heart Award, or perhaps a "Purple Leg" Award, and this act of remarkable martyrdom should be recorded in the Ouachita history that is to be published as part of our Centennial celebration!

Sympathetically and gratefully yours,  
Daniel R. Grant

Not many days later I received the following reply:

Dear President Grant,

Your solicitous concern about my dog bite was so moving and touching I am now ready to offer my other leg on the "purple and gold" altar of sacrifice. Your references to martyrdom and the inclusion of this epic example in the Ouachita Centennial History is most appropriate. In my obvious and admitted humility, I have even compared myself to Paul, Polycarp, Justin, Latimer, Ridley and

other great martyrs of the past. It is a tragic loss to Christian history that I cannot be included in Fox's Book of Martyrs.

Whatever unusual honor and celebration you are planning, please do not make them too elaborate. Public displays and accolades calling attention to my courage and devotion tend to embarrass me. It is enough to say I deeply regret that I have only two legs to give to my university.  
Your humble and obedient servant,  
Lloyd Cloud

I am still trying to decide on the appropriate way to reward this heroism, consistent with his humility, but I feel sure God has already prepared just the right degree of reward in heaven for Lloyd.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

tion to the results of the Morals and Religion poll in the May issue of *Arkansas Times* magazine. Only 40.6 percent of the people polled say that homosexuality is a sin, 90.7 percent say abortion is justified, 76.8 percent say divorce is not a sin, and 64.8 percent say that the Bible is not a literal, exact accounting.

The majority of the people who answered these questions were Baptist with 22.2 percent, followed by Methodist 22 percent. Only 1.9 percent were atheist. I rest my case.—**Steven Hambrick, Des Arc**

## Electronic illusion

In May of 1978, I wrote a letter to the editor of the *ABN* discussing the fallacies of TV churches and electronic preachers. I received compliments from many pastors within the state and one from out of the state. Now there is a related issue which I pray each reader will consider.

The April 26th issue of the *ABN* reported the quarterly receipts of Cooperative Program gifts of Arkansas Baptists. This year's receipts were only 98 percent above last years for the same period. This is less than 1 percent and the average for the past five years has been an increase of 10.70 percent over the previous year. There are perhaps several reasons for the decline, but I feel the major reason is the state of our economy. I believe Baptist giving is a true indicator of the state economy.

I hope the unbelievers in the churches will see that government policies have a definite influence on our mission work. The *Gannett News Service* made this comment about our nation. "America is rapidly turning into a class-mass society, comprised of an elite that reads, votes, and runs the community and a mass that vegetates in front of the TV set."

The late Jim Ranchino reported a national survey in 1968 which asked "Which of the following influences you most in your decision to vote?" The overwhelming majority was television with 62 percent, followed by newspaper with 25 percent, radio 5 percent, and other 8 percent. From these findings, it is obvious that our government is the product of an electronic illusion. The candidates which possess photogenic charisma or acting ability will continue to be elected while we suffer the consequences.

Every Christian needs to read *The Selling of the President 1968*. No church library should be without a copy of this shocking revelation.—**Jim Glover, Sulphur Rock**

## SBC in Europe

In the United States, many military and their families have their spiritual needs met by on-base chapel programs while others seek fellowship in local churches within the community.

Serving overseas however poses a problem for those worshipping off-base, because of language differences and other reasons.

Military personnel, who may serve several years in overseas assignments, have oftentimes overcome this by meeting together to form English-speaking congregations. This has enabled them to continue their spiritual growth in a church of their choosing without interruption. These churches are staffed by these "temporary" members and often the pastor comes from their ranks. These English-speaking fellowships have allowed those who choose to do so to continue their spiritual growth in a church of their choosing without interruption.

English-speaking churches have fared well in Europe where Southern Baptists currently have more than 40 churches and missions and some 4,000 members. These churches consist of military families, civil service, and other seeking English-speaking fellowships. Because some denominations are not found overseas many of these people seek fellowship within these Southern Baptist churches.

Because the European Baptist Convention is made up of churches from 10 countries, it often means that training and fellowship meetings between the churches require extensive travel and overnight stays. This usually means sharing one's home with one or more guests. Of course, these trips enhance fellowship and provide sightseeing opportunities.

Once each summer those who are fortunate enough to have leave, travel to Interlaken, Switzerland, for a week of worship, fellowship, training, and just plain fun and relaxing.

The churches of European Baptist Convention do not just serve themselves but serve alongside other Baptists in Europe and the world in many types of ministry.

Anyone desiring more information concerning the work in general or a church in a specific part of Europe can contact: European Baptist Convention, Sonnenberger Str. 60, 62 Wiesbaden, West Germany.—**Ken Lyles, Walters, Okla.**

## You'll be glad to know...

Don Moore

### ... College students can be reached!

Record numbers of young people on our college campuses have responded to the ministry of the Baptist Student Union this year. Their response has not been a shallow superficial nod toward God while pursuing their social desires. They have been touched deeply and responded deeply to the realities of Jesus Christ. Their witness on and off campus, their gifts toward summer missions, their willingness to go in large numbers as missionaries: these all indicate genuine spiritual life. To hear them pray and share their faith is to realize the depth of their understanding of the Christian life.

... **Moms, dads, and grandparents** can perform a vital ministry. They can send the names and addresses (if possible) of their son or daughter or grandson or granddaughter to the BSU office, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, giving the college they will be attending this fall. A contact can be made that may result in that young person finding Christ or staying in touch with the Lord Jesus throughout their college years.

Schools are no longer allowed to ask the religious preference of students, so we must depend upon getting that information from other sources.

... **Youth directors, ministers of music, pastors and Sunday school workers**, you can help in the same way. You can further inform the BSU of special talents and abilities a student may have that could be developed and utilized through the Baptist Student Union.

... **Students can be reached and challenged through BSU** (Baptist Student Union). I was reached, challenged and called through BSU. Please do what you can to help our young people.

Pray! Give to the Cooperative Program! Send the names and addresses of incoming students with the school name! Encourage the student to make BSU a part of their campus experience.

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



Moore

## Communication *A Family Tradition*

through your state Baptist paper since 1902



# Arkansas all over

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

## people

**Noble R. Wiles** is serving as pastor of the Oxford Church. A native of Zion, he attended Southern Baptist College at Walnut Ridge and was ordained to the ministry in 1951 by the Finley Creek Church. He has served as moderator for both Little Red River and Rocky Bayou Association. Wiles has also served as a member of the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. He has pastored churches at Mount Pleasant, Maynard, Melbourne, Concord, Ozark, Evening Shade, Keiser, Moorefield and Batesville in Arkansas and at Gainesville in Missouri. He and his wife, Virginia, have three children Jerry, Gene and Reta Kay.



Wiles

**Bob Barnett** will begin serving May 17 as minister of music and youth at Gravel Ridge First Church. His wife, Gloria, will serve as church pianist and work with the children's choir ministry. They are both natives of Jonesboro. Barnett has served as an interim staff member at both Conway First and Cabot First Churches.

**Steve Clifton** has resigned from the staff of Harrisburg First Church to move to Nashville, Tenn.

**Jerry Hill** has joined the staff of Benton Ridgecrest Church as music director.

**Travis Covington** of Batesville is serving as pastor of the Marcella Church

**Steve Pelz** is serving as pastor of Desha First Church.

**R. B. King**, pastor of Lakeshore Heights Church in Hot Springs, has returned from Whitehall, N. Y., where he participated in the Northeast Thrust, an evangelistic effort sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention.

**Boyd Baker**, a former chaplain at the Human Development Center at Booneville and a resident of Texarkana, has moved to Santa Fe, N. M.

**Marianne Elizabeth Smith** died May 5 at age 64. The widow of Henry B. Smith, she was a retired dormitory staff worker for Ouachita Baptist University and a member of Arkadelphia First Church. A memorial service was held in Berry Chapel of OBU at 3 p. m. May 7. Survivors include a daughter, Maribel Speir of Little Rock, a brother, three sisters and

four grandchildren.

**Mildred Berry** of Walnut Ridge died April 22 at age 64. She was a member of the Walnut Ridge First Church. Survivors include her husband, Robie, a deacon in the Walnut Ridge church, three sons, Tony, pastor of Dardenelle First Church, Don, of Jonesboro and Ty, pastor of a church in Bettendorf, Iowa, and four grandchildren.

## briefly

**Waldenburg Church** celebrated payment of a church building program with a noteburning service May 5.

**Fayetteville First Church** is conducting a program entitled "Greater Visions for First Church" as it prepares for future growth. William Thorn was speaker for a kickoff rally May 13.

**Clear Creek Association** sponsored a hymn singing and playing and songleading tournament at Ozark First Church April 16. Charles Mayo, association music director, was coordinator.

**DeQueen First Church** held a mission recognition service May 6 that featured members of the Mission Friends, Royal



A noteburning service and dedication of a memorial library highlighted the homecoming services of Beryl Church at Vilonia May 6. The noteburning service (above left) celebrated the early payment of \$45,000 borrowed to complete construction in 1978 on a \$75,000 auditorium and educational building. Pastor Lawrence Vowan coordinated the service at which William L. Kreis, director of missions for Faulkner



Association, was speaker. Participating in the noteburning were (left to right) Troy Bittle, V. M. Davis, Vowan, Kreis, Noble Henderson, Heber Avra and Paul Graddy. Prayer was led by Wendell Hensley. (Above right) Paul Krisell, library committee chairman, is shown assisting Doris Scroggin with a check-out in the reference library established as a memorial to Burton Graddy, a trustee. Krisell led the dedication service.

ABN photos / Millie Gill

Ambassadors and Girls in Action.

**First Southern Church** at Bryant youth musical groups and drama group presented "If We Had Been There" April 29.

**Beech Street First Church** in Texarkana has launched a "Four Fellowships" ministry for the purpose of increasing Christian fellowship within the congregation.

**Wynne Church** held a Royal Ambassador service May 9 to recognize members for

their involvement in the study of missions.

**Jessieville Church** has completed educational buildings and a worship center valued at \$250,000. They were constructed as a result of a growth program led by pastor Gene Anderson. Members have also increased church budget missions gifts to 18 percent.

**Imboden First Church** held deacon ordination services May 6 to ordain Ben Foley, Jim Smith and Wally Upton.

**Rogers First Church** honored their pastor, Ben Rowell, and Mrs. Rowell April 8 in recognition of their 35th wedding anniversary. Activities included recognition in the morning worship service, an evening reception at which the couple repeated their marriage vows and the presentation of a car to the couple.

**North Pulaski Association** Pioneer Royal Ambassadors will do mission work in Houston, Texas, June 17-23, assisting a church there with backyard Bible clubs and survey work.



## Woman's viewpoint

Henri E. Walker

### One thing is needful. . .

"Better move out of the way fast. Henri's coming through!" a co-worker jokingly remarked as I rushed past her desk. Laughing I kept on going. Later, however, I thought about her comment.

She certainly had me pegged right. I was hurrying, as I so often do, to tackle the next task. When I finished that, I would hasten to another one. And so it went.

What had happened to those days when I would sit outside, watching and thinking? I delighted in studying squirrels, birds and caterpillars. Lying in meadows of soft grass, and smelling multi-colored flowers. Observing clouds gliding through the sky.

Even as a child, I reveled in the handiwork of God. For it seemed to draw me closer to

him and fill me with fresh insight into his wondrous ways. I would sit for hours, pondering the meaning of life. The greatness of God. The mystery of the future.

But who has time now for such things? Often I think I don't. You know what I mean. We all must care for families and nurture friendships. Prepare meals, launder clothes, clean houses. We handle jobs outside the home, pay bills and balance checkbooks.

And the list goes on. Who can take time today to sit and meditate? We feel we must keep busy, or the work won't get done.

"Martha, Martha. . ." I can hear Jesus saying, "one thing is needful. . ." (Luke 10:41-42). Not for sister Mary to help with the chores Martha felt so burdened about,

but for Martha to set her priorities straight.

How like Martha I am. She needed to take time to sit and be with Jesus, to listen to him and enjoy his presence. So do I.

Who had more to do on earth than our own Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? Yet, who took more time to be alone with God? If Jesus himself felt the need to withdraw from the busyness of the day, how can any of us say we don't have the time?

"One thing is needful. . .": giving Christ first place in our lives. Taking time for him puts all else in proper perspective.

**Henri Walker is a home-maker and part time employee of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.**

## Dallas First Church sets attendance record Easter Sunday

DALLAS (BP)—The First Church of Dallas went down in the record books Easter Sunday when 12,058 persons attended Sunday school, the highest attendance in Sunday school ever for Southern Baptists.

Tom Melzoni, executive director of ministries for the church explained a great deal of preparation went into the record-setting event. "It was a combination of several old-fashioned Sunday school methods. The first step was what we called the Blockbuster Survey. Each Sunday school department spent a Sunday morning going door-to-door taking a household census. In this way, they made contact with more than 25,000 homes. At the same time, the class members left a Scripture at each home.

More than 20,000 Scriptures were distributed during a three-month period."

Melzoni also asked Sunday school leadership to use a Survival Kit, a tool developed by the church training department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. Each Sunday school leader was challenged to strive for spiritual growth first, and the numerical growth would follow.

Also, each Sunday school leader and individual church member was encouraged to fill out a commitment card to indicate how many visitors they would try to bring to Sunday school on Easter Sunday. These cards, in turn, were given to the Intercessory Prayer Ministry for extra prayer.

To top off the effort, an area-wide media

campaign was developed to raise public awareness of what First Church, Dallas, is doing and what ministries it has to offer. The campaign used various mediums, including newspaper ads, radio and television spots, billboards, direct mail, and an eight-page, four-color newspaper insert, which was delivered the Sunday before Easter.

Melzoni says, "All of these elements, the old-fashioned and the new, worked together to help us reach this great plateau. But, none of it would have been successful were it not for the fact God answered our prayers and blessed our efforts to reach those in our great Metroplex area who need to be reached."

This year marks Criswell's 40th anniversary as pastor.



# The Association:



## Churches Reaching All Peoples



If the church is God's primary unit for evangelism in the local church, why is the association emphasized as a means for evangelizing the world?

James Lewis, director of the Associational Missions Division of the Home Mission Board has a response. "As the basic unit of denominational interaction," he points out, "associations are composed of churches that reach, or should reach, into every strata of society and potentially touch every person in the community."

Baptist's missionary zeal is what brought them together as associations, historian Walter Shurden notes. The association is in the unique position of being able to assess local needs as a whole and then being able to tie these needs to local and denominational resources. Rather than overshadowing or competing with the local church, the association of churches should encourage individual responsibility for missions. Yet they can develop an inclusive vision and support each other in tasks.

In a recent issue of the *Associational Bulletin* James Nelson said, "If the association is going to fulfill its role, it must accept the pluralism of these years and at the same time seek to be redemptive in relationship with all people." He recommended involving cultural groups through fellowship groups, bilingual programming or other approaches.

Baptists across America will focus on the association as a way of "churches reaching all peoples" this month. Because they are located in this vast, diverse mission field at home, Baptist churches of all kinds can work together as associations to break down barriers and build bridges of love to reach all peoples with the gospel.

In Arkansas associations of local churches reach out to a cultural mosaic of peoples. They are Christians on mission, in their communities, to the world.



In Mississippi County Association a Korean Baptist Fellowship meets weekly in Blytheville and ministers to Koreans in the

Northern Arkansas, West Tennessee and Missouri Bootheel areas.

Southern Baptists have made great strides in reaching all peoples. In the United States, Southern Baptists can be found worshipping in approximately 80 languages.

Oscar Romo, director of the Home Mis-

sion Board's Language Missions Division, says, "Our goal is not to Americanize ethnics, not to squeeze from them their last drop of cultural heritage or identity. We aren't seeking to change cultural patterns, rather, we want to allow language and culture to be the medium for our sharing the love of Jesus Christ with all the mosaic people of the United States."



*Delta Association has begun a satellite migrant ministry in association with the Bartholomew Baptist Migrant Center and Ariel Herandez at Hermitage.*

Edward R. Dayton suggests the way to reach peoples of the world is through their needs. "We need to know them as God knows them, attempt to meet their needs as they see them and communicate the gospel in their language..."



*North Arkansas Association has begun to search, for property they will buy to provide an emergency receiving home for young people 13-17 years of age, to be operated by Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services.*

While "Southern Baptists are reaching other people groups besides ethnics—the blind, the handicapped, the elderly—there are still scores of people in every community who have never heard the gospel.



*Trinity Association is planning a department for senior adult work, beginning in 1985. They are seeking a retired person to lead it and working on funding.*

Ralph Winter describes the ideal of doing different ministries with the aim of world evangelization. It is the "gathering together of a great symphony orchestra where we don't make every new person coming in play a violin in order to fit in with the rest."

The logo for Associational Emphasis Week 1984 describes the concept. It is an abstract illustration of persons reaching in different directions, signifying that churches in associations are composed of individual Christians who are responsible for sharing Christ with others. All of these Christians will not reach out to the same people. Each will reach out in a different direction so that all peoples can be reached with the gospel.

### Behind the cover

#### 'I found three pennies'

The need for a black church in southwest Little Rock nagged at Paul Williams.

The Missions Committee of the Pulaski County Association had discovered a 475 percent increase in the area's black population since 1970. If that trend continued, there would be more than 4,000 blacks in the area by the end of 1983, more than 38 percent of the population. Two black congregations served the area, claiming 500 members between them.

Williams agonized over the situation, feeling God's call to start a new congregation. He decided to ask for a sign.

"I asked God to let me find a penny while I was out jogging, if he wanted me to start a church," Williams recalled. But as carefully as he searched, he found no coins.

He arrived at his home discouraged. When a neighborhood dog began barking at him, he stooped in disgust to pick up a rock.

On the ground he found not one, but three pennies.

His mind was made up. "I'm going to do it," he declared.

Williams shared his burden with Bob Ferguson, ABCS director of cooperative ministries with National Baptists. In turn, Ferguson introduced Williams to Gerald Taylor, pastor of southwest Little Rock's Life Line Church.

Williams discovered Taylor had a similar concern for reaching black families in the area. Although a few blacks attended Life Line, the congregation "just never had been able to break the barrier," Taylor said.

The two began to pray together and look at possible sites for a building, envisioning the ministries that could be started. Life Line deacons and the congregation wholeheartedly endorsed the idea, and the Pulaski County Association voted \$22,000 for the project.

All they lacked was a place to meet. Life Line offered its sanctuary, and on Feb. 5, 1984, Grace Mission met for its first worship service.

In March, Life Line helped Grace purchase a building, obtaining an interest-free loan from Metropolitan Bank in Little Rock. The building, on Lew Drive, is currently being renovated by Ross Parks, a member of the sponsoring church, with the assistance of volunteers.

In the meantime, Grace meets at Life Line for Sunday morning worship and Thursday evening Bible study. A recent high attendance of 40 encourages Williams, who reports weekly conversions.

"There's a harvest ready to be picked here," said Williams. "We have high expectations because God is in it."

Three pennies convinced him of that.

## Missions bond Baptists, Parks tells Georgians

ATLANTA (BP)—R. Keith Parks is not a fighter by nature and as president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, he doesn't see his role as one of creating controversy.

He is a man of deep convictions, however, and has grave concerns about trends in Southern Baptist life. He feels compelled to voice those concerns, even at the risk of provoking ripples on Baptist waters.

In the April meeting of the Foreign Mission Board in Biloxi, Miss., Parks spoke of Baptists getting "sidetracked" from their historic basic principles.

"If we lose our historic perspective," he said, "and unintentionally or unknowingly allow a substitute for missions to be defined as our distinguishing characteristic, we will have changed the basic nature of our Southern Baptist Convention. This will distort our past, change our present and jeopardize our future."

A few days later in Atlanta, Parks picked up the theme.

"God is smiling on Southern Baptists for special reasons that we need to understand," he said. "Our world is changing, with more radical swings than ever before. . . . In the midst of these world changes, God is pouring out his blessings on Southern Baptist foreign missions efforts as never before. We don't need to dilute those blessings by forgetting our purposes and our directions."

In an interview with the *Christian Index* (the Georgia state Baptist newsjournal), Parks elaborated on the dangers he sees.

"I travel all over America and all over the world," he said. "I hear many Baptists say many things. And I watch what is happening in churches, in pulpits and in institutions. I fear a subtle shift is taking place in what holds Baptists together. Many people don't know this shift is taking place; others seem determined to hasten it by their preaching and actions."

"I am truly frightened at the lack of awareness of what makes a Southern Baptist a Baptist. Historically and theologically, we have been distinguished by our commitment to missions, worldwide missions, as the hallmark of Baptist belief and practice."

## India crusades report 1,800 new believers

CALCUTTA, India (BP)—More than 1,800 people in northwest India professed faith in Jesus Christ during a Sunday-to-Sunday evangelism crusade in which 46 Southern Baptists participated.

The Americans worked alongside the Northwest India Association near the cities of Calcutta and Chandigarh.

"It was a place of extremes," said missions volunteer Harvey Kneisel, who came to the country six months ago from Conroe, Texas, to help prepare for the crusades. "When the devil makes himself most conspicuous, the Lord makes himself most obvious."

India is emerging as one of the world's most responsive areas to the gospel. "Some

"We have believed in the local church, but we have always taught that these local churches had a global mandate to share the gospel everywhere."

"But in recent years a growing number of voices within our fellowship have begun to say that missions is not the Southern Baptist distinctive. Their voices would tell us local evangelism and biblical orthodoxy are our vital Baptist distinctives."

"This sounds good on the surface and is popular in the current national mood. But it is simply not true to historic Baptist principles. Our denomination has never been a doctrine-making body. We always have believed in evangelism, but we have given a global vision to that belief. That commitment is now in jeopardy across our Southern Baptist fellowship."

Parks, who has been FMB president four years, added: "I guess I can be expected to voice a concern for foreign missions. I have been a missionary all of my adult life."

"I am not just speaking out of administrative or professional concern. I am speaking out of my heart, as a loyal member of my Southern Baptist family. We simply must be more vocal and more courageous in articulating our basic commitment to the Great Commission around the world."

The Texas native added: "I believe the Bible with all my heart. I don't know a Southern Baptist missionary who doesn't. But, because of the Bible, I believe in global missions. To be truly biblical, a church must have a global ministry with a local base, but I hear fewer and fewer pastors and denominational board members voicing that belief."

Parks said the new emphasis on local evangelism and biblical orthodoxy "manifests itself by leading churches down two distinct tracks."

He described one of these tracks as "churches supporting any kind of missions effort that comes along, whether it is Southern Baptist or not. These churches see no conflict with giving lukewarm support to missions programs of their convention; they give equal support to every missions project which seems 'evangelistic' or 'orthodox.'"

teams spoke to 3,000 people at a time, in areas where it is difficult to even imagine where all of the people came from," said Southern Baptist missionary Jack Ollis, who accompanied groups to West Bengal. "One team alone spoke to 10,000 people."

Most Southern Baptist work has been concentrated near Bangalore Baptist Hospital in the south, where 11 missionaries work. But about a year and a half ago, Jerry Rankin, associate to the Foreign Mission Board's director for Southeast Asia, began training and leadership programs throughout the northwest—in Calcutta, Bombay and Chandigarh churches.

As part of the Southern Baptist Foreign

He added: "These same pastors would be scandalized if their church members followed suit; that is, if they supported every other church that seemed to be 'evangelistic' and 'orthodox.'"

"There is a dichotomy here that needs to be analyzed and articulated. It might not be intentional or deliberate, but it is just as deadly and self-defeating as if it were."

The second track Parks mentioned is "the track of doing their own missions program, like our independent Baptist brethren, without full support of their denominational missions ministries."

He said this growing trend to do "Lone Ranger" missions projects is not limited to any one region of the country.

He did relate it to current tensions in the SBC: "Controversy tends to push people to extremes," he explained. "When that happens, we tend to twist our basic nature."

"In that context, I have a grave concern that our convention must—I repeat—must elect officers and board members who are mainline, centrist types of Southern Baptists. Extreme people tend to hasten this erosion from historic convictions."

"Unless we elect those who have a true concept of supporting who we are as Baptists, they will inevitably lead us away from our basic principles of global missions and evangelism."

Voicing again his commitment to local churches, Parks cautioned: "Sometimes we have been so committed to local church autonomy, we have emphasized localism out of balance to biblical teachings about worldwide responsibility."

"This extreme localism is conducted by culture—the 'me generation,' permissiveness, anti-establishment mentality, etc. And it often produces one-issue leaders who champion one cause and one church to exclusion of all else in the Christian enterprise."

"Southern Baptists need to embrace the entire world spectrum of the Christian gospel and we need to choose officers and board members who understand, articulate and preserve that commitment."

Mission Board partnership evangelism project, each of the 17 American teams held two services each Sunday and six during the week. Total attendance was 54,128.

"They're real hungry for the gospel," said Wayne Driggers of Plant City, Fla., who worked in the town of Dagshai. "There were just multitudes of people who made commitments to Christ, and they were very meaningful commitments."

The Northwest India Association was organized in 1976 by a Baptist group from Florida. Now about 5,000 people worship in 36 churches and preaching points with 17 national pastors, who baptized 600 new Christians last year.

# Your state convention at work

## Missions

### Campers rally set

Arkansas Campers on Mission Spring Rally is scheduled for June 1-2, 1984, at Wilderness Point Campground located on Lake Norfork near Henderson, Ark.



Petty

Activities begin Friday evening at 7:00 with a potluck supper. An important part of the program will include making plans for hosting the national rally in 1986. Early Bird campers will take a trip to Blanchard Springs

for a picnic and a trip through the caverns on Friday.

Arkansas Campers on Mission is an organization made up of persons in Arkansas interested in camping. The organization places emphasis on witnessing and ministering in the campground setting. The Great Commission could be quoted, "Since you are going into the world, share Christ."

Campers on Mission is open to any Christian person who enjoys camping. There is excellent fellowship and a great opportunity for mission involvement. Active campers are urged to join and help with our hosting the national rally in 1986.

For further details, watch for our ad in the May 24th issue. — Pete Petty, director

## Evangelism

### Revival in our day

In I Kings 18, there is a beautiful description of a great spiritual revival. At this particular time, there was both an economic and spiritual famine.



Shell

God's judgment was upon the land because they had turned away from him. As a result of this, it had not rained for three years. This created an economic famine. Even more serious, there was a spiritual famine. The people had turned away from

God. There was no one to call them back to God because the prophet Elijah was out of town.

The spiritual awakening unfolds as the man of God, Elijah, was used as the human instrument. He was used of God because he was a prepared man. Elijah had spent time at the brook of preparation before coming to the Mt. Carmel of service. He was used of God because he was a praying man. When Elijah picked up the spiritual receiver and said, "Hello, Father",

God didn't say, "Who is this talking to me?" He knew Elijah because he was a great man of prayer.

Elijah was also used of God because he was a persistent man. He kept on keeping on. He did not easily give up. When he came back to the country, he was confronted by Obadiah. He was persistent in telling Obadiah that God wanted to bring a great spiritual awakening. He was persistent in telling the wicked King Ahab that the problem was through him and those who had forsaken God. — Clarence Shell, director

## Woman's Missionary Union Aceteens Camp

Sunset on Lake Winona, flag fluttering in the breeze, singing in line at the dining hall, the last dying embers of the campfire,

whispering in your bunks after lights out are memories of Aceteens Camp. Friendships developed with other girls from over the state, coming to know missionaries as people, quiet time with God while the birds sing make Camp Paron a special place.

July 9-13 is the time for Aceteens to travel to Camp Paron this summer for a week of Christian growth, recreation and making new friends. GAs will be at camp that week also, and reservations are taken in the order received, so don't procrastinate about sending in your reservations.

Missionaries for the week will be Julia Garner, MK from Malawi and Gerry Odum, missionary to Taiwan. There will be a special Bible study and a time to learn more about Aceteens methods.

Aceteens Camp is a place where good memories are made. You can have a place in that memory. If your Aceteens leader does not have registration forms, write WMU, Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. — Betty Jo Lacy, Aceteens director

## Stewardship

### Money management

Money management seminars attract those who want to control their finances. Families, tired of budget hassles, seek outside help in managing runaway expenditures and red-ink balances. Financial institutions, with a product or service to sell, offer free money management seminars.

Religious groups also get in on the act. Participants in one Christian money management seminar were advised to cash in their whole life insurance policies and

purchase term insurance. Sponsors of the seminar made term insurance available to participants.

Southern Baptists focus on Christian families during May. Families should give attention to money management. Families probably argue over finances more than any other one subject. Economic problems are a major factor in divorces.

Should the local church sponsor money management seminars? It should. The Stewardship Commission publishes materials to encourage churches to sponsor money management studies. A free study booklet, *Biblical Insights For Christian Money Management*, is available from the Stewardship Department. The Department can also provide sample money management packets for churches upon request.

Money management books line book store shelves. *Your Money: Frustration or Freedom* by Howard Dayton Jr. is an excellent resource book. Broadman Press will soon release *In Charge: Managing Money for Christian Living* by Lee Davis.

Contact the Stewardship Department for further information on money management materials or conferences. — James A. Walker, director

## Christian Life Council

### Thoughts on expropriation

The slang term is *spitting*. A recent news report from mainland China tells of preparations for the visit of President and Mrs. Reagan. The Chinese leaders encouraged their people to tidy up, not to spit, etc. This effort, of course, honored our President and the First Lady as world leaders.

While encouraging voter registration, sometimes I tell of standing by a friend's

grave on a lonely Pacific island during the fall of 1945. For me not to register and vote would be like spitting on Kenneth McCrary's grave! Voting is only one way to honor the memory of thousands of American service personnel who died while securing our freedoms.

By the way, it is incomprehensible that such sacrifice was made to give freedom to dispense pornographic trash publicly or privately. Whether found in a so-called adult theater, bookstore or on television, such garbage outlets really spit on the memory of many fine people who made the supreme sacrifice.

Let's honor the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in every way possible. We



Parker

must encourage John Finn and the Christian Civic Foundation staff in their efforts to magnify civic righteousness. "Righteousness exalthe a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. 14:34) "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream" (Amos 5:24). — Bob Parker, director

### Family and Child Care Services The best-kept secret

"Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services is the best-kept secret in the Arkansas Baptist Convention". This was the reply made by one of our pastors after being informed about our child care ministry. "Everybody ought to know" was his admonition.

Some observations made by our pastor friend included:

(1) He did not know that we had three Emergency Receiving Homes for abused, neglected children, located in Little Rock,

Sherwood and Camden, and a fourth being planned in cooperation with Calvary Association in Searcy.

(2) He did not know that we had five area offices, located in Little Rock, Jonesboro, Fayetteville, Harrison and Hope, providing ministries to troubled families and children. Anyone can receive help from these offices.

(3) He did not know that, out of our area offices, we have satellite offices located in Pine Bluff, Dermott, Blytheville, Bentonville, Fort Smith, and Camden, offering Christian counseling one day a week. Churches and associations are providing the space and secretarial assistance so that our workers may respond to these pressing needs in their area.

Our ministry, "An Arm of the Church Reaching Out", wants to serve the needs of hurting children and families as an expression of God's love and concern of Arkansas Baptists. That's no secret. Help us to get the word out. It is also no secret what God can do. — Johnny G. Biggs, executive director

## Crucial Questions for Christians

Glen D. McGriff

In this article I shall continue to address the question sent in by the pastor experiencing conflict after 26 years of marriage. The couple's two children have recently married and they are irritable with each other and need help in resolving present conflict.

In addition to the "empty nest syndrome" discussed in the previous article, there are other factors to consider. A very significant factor is a developmental change which usually occurs about the same time as the empty nest. This change, often called the mid-life crisis, is the passage from adulthood to old age.



McGriff

Adulthood is concerned with establishment of position. The procreation of descendants and the care of the young is a primary focus. That care involves the accumulation of resources necessary for their security and the gain of social status providing a position of heritage. During this stage it is necessary to refine one's focus. Most men will specialize attention to the particular demands of vocation or profession.

Passage into old age, or movement through the mid-life crisis, affords a broader focus. There is opportunity to consider personal fulfillment. One can allow consideration of interests that were crowded out by the necessity of vocational demands. Things sacrificed for career can again be revived. People may rediscover their originality and thus become themselves in a much more authentic way.

Unless the married couple has maintained a growing intimacy this can be a very difficult time. The consideration of revived personal interest may appear as desertion to the spouse. It may seem to be very selfish and therefore create tension. There is a real need for good communication at this stage of marriage. To be able to share with each other without defensiveness is very helpful. To be honest in confessing short-comings and mistakes can bring freedom. To acknowledge having been pulled into the whirl of professional and social expectation and the spouse neglect that results can ease tension. Then to reaffirm devotion to each other and commitment to the marriage can help to restore security and provide a good climate for problem solving.

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

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## Opinion

### This hero tarnished his halo

Billy Graham is a hero to most Southern Baptists. He is a preacher without equal and God apparently blesses Graham's evangelistic efforts everywhere he goes.

That is part of the reason it was disheartening to learn of Graham's role in helping President Reagan establish formal diplomatic relationships with the Vatican.

According to a spokesman for Graham, President Reagan asked the evangelist to informally survey evangelical Protestant leaders to see how they would react to diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

Graham reportedly contacted Jerry Fallwell, head of Moral Majority; Pat Robert-

son of the Christian Broadcasting Network; Billy Marvin, president of the National Association of Evangelicals; David Hubbard, president of Fuller Theological Seminary; and Gilbert Beer, editor of *Christianity Today* magazine.

In a seven-page letter to national security advisor William P. Clark, with whom Graham was asked to work, the evangelist concluded, "If anyone can do it and get away with it, it is Mr. Reagan."

That Graham would be a party to helping establish formal relations between the United States and the Vatican is shocking. Following the Watergate crisis and the

resignation of President Nixon, Graham said he was through with politics. He said he felt used. Yet, now Graham has been the President's main behind-the-scenes mover in an appointment that strikes at the heart of church-state separation. Graham's actions are certainly hard to understand.

The fallout from this episode will not affect the ability of Graham as an evangelist, but the hero certainly tarnished his halo on this one.

**Bob Terry is editor of the Word and Way, newjournal of the Missouri Baptist Convention.**

## SBC tension decreasing, Draper tells missionaries

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention President, James T. Draper Jr., told Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in Nairobi they'll find decreased tensions between so-called moderates and inerrantists and favorable support for missions when they return to the United States on furlough.

Draper, pastor of First Church, Euless, Texas, addressed 35 missionaries at a dinner meeting soon after his arrival in Nairobi on the first leg of a 25-day tour of missions in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco.

"I'm sure it (the inerrancy squabble) has been either amusing, perplexing or disgusting for you, depending on what you've heard or how you relate to it," he told the missionaries, who have experienc-

ed concern about what they will find at home after several years' absence.

"Polarization in the SBC has occurred primarily in the academic community and among the large church pastors—or the visible names you'd recognize," Draper said.

"You're coming back at a time when there'll be less of that," he said. "It really has been very uncomfortable for the last four or five years. I feel like some things had to be done, and it was very, very stressful. Nobody liked what was going on, and I hope we're past the worst of that." Draper assured the missionaries of his personal commitment to missions support, declaring "the mission of winning people to Christ around the world is the only reason we have for having a convention."

Although he predicted a good convention in Kansas City in June, he foresaw controversy over women's ordination and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. Draper pointed to "a crisis in leadership" and "a lack of trust" as part of the SBC's problem.

### Family of Rev. J.I. Owens

Planners of family reunion would like to contact the above. Please notify Dr. Tom T. Walker, 718 West FM Road 1626, Austin, Texas 78748 or Ms. Nan Owens, 708 Haney, El Dorado, AR 71730.

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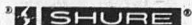
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## Cothen calls ACTS, BTN 'miraculous intervention of God'

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The emergence this year of two Baptist communications networks—ACTS and BTN—is a "miraculous intervention of God," said Grady C. Cothen, former president of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

A study seven years ago said Southern Baptists would have to wait until the late 1980s to start a telecommunications network, Cothen told the annual National Conference on Broadcast Ministries.

Instead the denomination will inaugurate two satellite-fed TV systems in June. "What is going to happen is nothing short of a miraculous intervention of God," said Cothen, who in 1981 founded one of those systems, the Baptist Telecommunication Network (BTN).

Almost 800 church media workers, pastors and others participated in the broadcasting conference. It was the last training before start-up of BTN, a teaching and training network for churches, and the American Christian Television System (ACTS), a TV network for homes.

Despite all the preparation and excitement, however, Southern Baptists still haven't gauged the full impact of their adventure, Cothen said.

"We don't understand a fraction of what ACTS and BTN can do for churches," he said. "Southern Baptists will have more time on television in the first month of ACTS than in the history of the denomination. From the outset it will be the best distribution system for home television that any denomination has ever had."

Cothen said BTN is not a substitute for established church programs, but will support and enhance them. BTN will multiply a pastor's ministry potential by helping with his primary function of "equipping the saints"; "We are not proposing an electronic denomination," Cothen said. "BTN is aimed at helping you be all you can be."

Cothen said ACTS and BTN will help Christians grow spiritually "by getting them involved in what God is doing around the world. I wish every Southern Baptist could

feel the needs of the missionaries. They can't experience that first hand by being there, but they can experience it in the comfort of their church or living room.

"They can go to Glorieta and never leave Texas. They can go to Hong Kong and never leave Mississippi," he said.

Cothen said Southern Baptists cannot afford to ignore this chance to develop a TV ministry. "It's high time someone said 'no' to the way of life presented on commercial television, because that's not the way life is supposed to be.

"No one who has ever lived has had the opportunity to share the gospel that you have," Cothen told the group. "It will cost some money. But if any church invests in ACTS and BTN with any degree of imagination, it will not cost you anything but will bring in money you didn't know was there."

## NBC special describes making of ACTS

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The National Broadcasting Company network will feature a one-hour documentary on the American Christian Television System (ACTS) which the producer describes as "almost awesome" in its plans for satellite communications.

The system is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. The NBC program is scheduled for May 20 (1 p.m., EDT) but time broadcast may vary in local areas.

Stan Lozack, producer and director of the program entitled, "ACTS: A TV Partnership," said the documentary will show what "goes into the making of a TV network." He describes the system as "the most ambitious telecommunications effort ever attempted by a private group." He said there was nothing special about such basics as satellite, cable, low-power stations, "but it's the scope of this thing that is almost awesome."

Jimmy R. Allen, president of both the

Radio and Television Commission and the American Christian Television System, was among several executives interviewed for the program.

The documentary will be telecast on Radio and Television Commission Sunday as designated by the denominational calendar committee.

## Memphis pastor Sanford Western Recorder editor

MIDDLETOWN, Ky. (BP)—Jack Sanford has been elected editor of the *Western Recorder*, newjournal of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, effective July 1, 1984.

He succeeds Chauncey R. Daley, who is retiring after 27 years as editor.

Sanford, 58, pastor of Colonial Church, Memphis, Tenn., since 1976, holds three degrees from Southern Seminary and has served churches in Kentucky, Tennessee and Illinois.

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# Panel discusses traditions of biblical interpretation

by Stan Hasteley

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—A trio of Southern Baptist scholars put liberal, moderate and fundamentalist traditions in biblical interpretation under the light of historical examination and concluded that while Southern Baptists uniformly love the Bible, they are divided over how to interpret it.

In a panel discussion at the joint Southern Baptist Historical Commission and Society meeting, Glenn Hinson, professor of religion at Wake Forest University; Claude Howe, professor of church history at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and Richard Land, vice-president for academic affairs at Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, addressed respectively the liberal, moderate and fundamentalist traditions in Southern Baptist life between 1845 and 1945.

Land, a leader of the inerrantist wing in present-day Southern Baptist life, repeatedly sought to dispel what he called widely-held misconceptions about fundamentalists in the denomination, declaring they are fundamentally unlike the followers of the late J. Frank Norris, who left the SBC after disrupting it during the 1920's.

By demanding "parity" in educational institutions, Land said, inerrantists prove they are "inclusive" fundamentalists, unlike Norris's brand of "exclusive" fundamentalism. Present-day inerrantists will not leave the Southern Baptist fold, he added, because they are loyal to the denomination.

Land also disclaimed responsibility for a recent statement by Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center, that if he were president of a Southern Baptist seminary, he would want all faculty members to be inerrantists. Land said he prefers "more parity by addition," an apparent reference to filling new faculty positions and vacancies.

He renewed the oft-repeated inerrantist complaint that the inerrancy viewpoint is not adequately represented on Southern Baptist institutions' faculties as presently composed.

Land also protested treatment of the fundamentalist/inerrantist movement in the denominational press, saying, "it is at least as diverse as the non-inerrantist" camp rather than a monolithic movement.

In an exchange with Hinson over the importance of specific views of biblical interpretation to the average Southern Baptist, Land said Southern Baptists were relatively unaffected by the fundamentalist debate of the 1920s largely because they uniformly held to the inerrantist viewpoint that the Bible in its original autographs is without error in any respect.

Only after World War II and the rise of "pluralism" and "heterodoxy" were Southern Baptists threatened by the liberal onslaught that hit other Protestant denominations earlier, he said.

But Hinson, who recently announced he will rejoin the faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., next fall, said his experience growing up in the Missouri Ozarks taught him that what matters for most Southern Baptists is not what they say they believe about the Bible, but whether they practice its teachings.

"Orthopraxy," not "orthodoxy," Hinson declared, is what has always mattered most to Southern Baptists.

In his address on the liberal tradition and biblical interpretation in Southern Baptist history between 1845 and 1945, Hinson said one must search "far and wide" to find Southern Baptists fitting the category.

He defined liberal interpretation of the Bible as a "nearly uncritical and complete acceptance of critical historical methodology wherein the Bible would be treated like any other writing or collection of writings."

The only Southern Baptist biblical scholar who embraced liberalism, he went on, was Southern Seminary professor C.H. Toy, who left the faculty in 1879 after a stormy 10-year tenure and eventually became a Unitarian.

More prevalent during the period was the approach to liberalism of Southern Seminary President E.Y. Mullins who, Hinson said, "sought to learn from the liberal tradition without swallowing it whole." Hinson reminded his audience while Mullins wrote one of the 12 tracts known as The Fundamentals, "he refused to defend the Bible as a book of science" and regarded it "a great mistake and contrary to Scripture to insist that the Bible teaches science."

Apart from Toy, Hinson concluded, "Southern Baptists scarcely did more than flirt with the liberal tradition during their first hundred years."

Howe, a church history professor at New Orleans Seminary, urged caution in categorizing historical figures as liberals, moderates or fundamentalists because "the Moderate of 1845 is not quite the same as the one of 1890 or of 1930, and the same may be said of Fundamentalists and Liberals."

Given such definitional limitations, Howe declared nevertheless, "Liberals most often regard themselves as advocating change in or reversal of the status quo, Fundamentalists envision themselves as defenders, while

Moderates contemplate some adjustment in light of current conditions."

In Southern Baptist life from 1845 to 1945, Howe asserted, "no doubt more (Southern Baptists) defended a Fundamentalist view than a Liberal one, but most maintained a high view of Scripture expressed in rather general terms that reflected moderation."

He continued: "Southern Baptists affirmed that the Bible is uniquely inspired but most hesitated or refused to regard one theory of inspiration as essential. All insisted the Bible is authoritative for faith and practice but few denied some flexibility in interpreting the faith or describing the practice. Southern Baptists asserted the Bible is the Word of God but recognized it was mediated through the words of men."

In his presentation, Land said whereas fundamentalism has often been over-simplified with "the so-called 'five points of Fundamentalism' (inerrancy of the Bible, virgin birth of Jesus, substitutionary atonement of Christ, bodily resurrection of Jesus and physical second coming of Christ,) clearly the crucial issue was the inerrancy of the Scripture."

Although Southern Baptists were relatively unaffected by the liberal-fundamentalist battle in other major denominations in the 1920s, "the controversy... was present within their communion," he said.

After World War I, Land continued, fundamentalism changed "as the debate grew ever more acrimonious." The movement then split into two groups, one developing "an increasingly negative attitude toward scholarship, mainstream culture and social involvement." Among Southern Baptists, Norris, pastor of First Church, Fort Worth, Texas, from 1909 to 1952, "exemplified this type Fundamentalist." Norris's brand of fundamentalism, Land said, largely withdrew from the convention by 1945.

But, Land added, "another type of Fundamentalist persevered... espousing 'the fundamentals' without anti-intellectual and isolationist tendencies." Further, "this second type fundamentalism... designated by a lower case 'f,' existed both prior to The Fundamentals, and subsequently alongside the more strident Fundamentalism of Norris. The absolute veracity of scripture, occasionally described as inerrancy, was the touchstone of this fundamentalist tradition within Southern Baptist ranks."

Stan Hasteley is bureau chief for Baptist Press in Washington, D.C.

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## International

### *Be responsible to God*

by Nick Garland, pastor, Second Church, Hot Springs

Basic passage: James 4: 1-17

Focal passage: James 4: 1-10, 13-17

**Central truth:** Submission to God keeps us from a lifestyle of sin and motivates us to Christian living.

Many products today carry warning labels so that consumers may be aware of the potential dangers of cancer caused by extended usage of that item. The Word of God has done this for hundreds of years trying to help us avoid the malignancy of sin.

James enumerates several areas in which sin is manifested. Sin engenders wars and fighting (v.1). It is the root cause of lusts (vv.1-2). Sin left alone leads to murder and ever expanding covetousness that is insatiable (v.2). Sin damages prayer because in sin we ask from impure and selfish motives (v.3). James collectively regards these sins as friendship with the world which is enmity with God (v.4).

As is true of God, he always provides a means of escape. The way to avoid enmity with God is to submit to him. He will then come near to you, even as you resist the devil (vv.7-8). The result is humility on our part (v.10). By his forgiveness, we are able to wash our hands and to purify our hearts (v.8). When we recognize our unworthiness, we will convert frivolous laughter into deep mourning for men's spiritual condition (v.9).

One other word of caution is written by James to encourage us not to be presumptuous. Life at best is frail and is no more substantial than a vapor (v.14). As we conduct our business, we should do so mindful of the fact that the Lord is in control of tomorrow and acknowledge that by saying, "If the Lord wills" (v.15).

James' warning label is "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin (v.17)." We need no other commentary on sin.

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## Life and Work

### *The believer's family*

by Lawson Hatfield, First Church, Fordyce

Basic passage: Matthew 13:53-58; 12:46-50; 10:34-39

Focal passage: Matthew 13:54-57; 12:46-50; 10:35-37

**Central truth:** A believer is a member of the family of God and is strengthened and encouraged by this family to do God's will.

A Christian is related to several distinct families. The believer has an immediate or physical family, an extended family including relatives living in various places, and a spiritual family or the family of God. The relationship to more than one of these families does not wipe out the other family ties. Instead, a believer retains his immediate and extended family and gains a larger family.

It is many times difficult for the homeowner to make good at home. Jesus experienced this and felt rejection by his home-town friends at Nazareth. They simply did not have faith in the grown up boy they once knew on the streets and in the synagogue to be the divine Son of God. Since they had no faith in him, Jesus was unable to do many miracles there. In Matthew 12:50, Jesus said that his disciples made up his spiritual family. He did not reject his parents, brothers and sisters in saying this. What he did was to use the occasion to teach the truth of the higher relationship of the family of God.

In the tenth chapter of Matthew, Jesus taught that a proper faith relationship to him and becoming a member of the family of God can result in alienating some immediate family members.

This lesson should help the adult believer know he has obligations to his earthly family but larger and eternal obligations to God and God's spiritual family. Another lesson is that the larger family gives stronger spiritual and inspirational support than can a mere human family alone. A final lesson could be to apply a loving witness to all immediate and extended family members to join in the family of God by faith in Jesus.

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## Bible Book

### *Israel's moral decay*

by W. Coy Sample, First Church, Morrilton

Basic passage: Hosea 4:1-7:2

Focal passage: Hosea 4:1-2, 6-9, 5:15-6:6

**Central truth:** God suffers when his people forsake him.

As Hosea agonized over the infidelity of his wife, he found himself in a position to look deep into the heart of God. What he saw was something akin to the New Testament truth, that "God is love." His own experience had taught him how love can cause unimaginable pain.

The relationship between Jehovah and the people of Israel was unique. The Lord had chosen them to be special to him. He had cared for them in a unique way. Now, Israel had forsaken God.

Hosea lived among a generation which had departed from the Lord. The departure was no sudden decision on their part, but a slow, gradual inner decay. It was as if a dreaded disease had spread through the whole system before being detected and diagnosed. It affected all the people, including the civil and religious leaders, king, priest, prophet and people.

God's pain over their departure is clearly expressed in verse 4, "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? For your goodness is a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goes away." This verse is the key to this focal passage. The heart of the people was wrong. No matter what they said or did, they were operating from a heart that had forgotten God. They hurt God! God is crying out, "What am I going to do with you?"

God speaks after the manner of men, that we may appreciate him. His heart overflows with compassion. "Your rebellions and iniquities have not exhausted my love. I am still ready to show you mercy."

The failure to know the Lord in a personal, loving way was a special concern in Hosea's preaching. His message cannot be understood today apart from an acceptance that God is a personal being and responding to him in love and living.

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## Southwestern plans 'chair of prayer'

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Years ago, as a pastor, Jack Gray was "trying to prepare 'meals' for church members when I wasn't eating well myself."

Now, at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, Gray is teaching future church leaders "how to eat a balanced meal out of the riches of prayer and God's word and teach other people to do the same."

Gray will retire this year as professor of missions, a post he has held since 1956, but during the coming year he will be adjunct professor of the new Chair of Prayer and Spiritual Formation.

"Southwestern has been a pioneer among seminaries in the field of teaching spiritual development," said seminary President Russell H. Dilday Jr. The chair is part of an emphasis that gained momentum in 1970, when Gray inaugurated a Spiritual Foundations for Missions course, now listed as

Spiritual Formation for Ministry.

Dilday noted the seminary "should not only prepare its students in professional skills, but also in the areas of prayer, devotional disciplines and Christlikeness.

"While many seminarians have had a long pilgrimage of spiritual growth, many others come to Southwestern from recent initial encounters with God," he added. "They have had very little experience in the dynamics of personal spiritual growth, much less in how to lead others in spiritual formation."

The chair is consistent with a recent emphasis on spiritual formation within the Association of Theological Schools, Dilday pointed out.

Future catalogs will detail the seminary's spiritual development plans, he said, adding, "There also will be a strong emphasis on the role of the local church in providing worship, prayer and discipleship opportunities for students."

## Festival honors Wayne Oates

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—More than 650 ministers and educators from throughout the nation gathered in Louisville, Ky., recently to honor Wayne E. Oates, senior professor of pastoral care at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The three-day event featured seven plenary lectures on the theme "Spiritual Dimensions of Pastoral Care: The Agenda for Tomorrow." Approved as a pre-conference

workshop of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, the conference also offered 17 workshop topics for its 458 registrants.

To top off the celebration, Southern Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt announced his goals to seek funds for endowing the Wayne E. Oates Chair of Pastoral Care and Psychology of Religion at the 125-year-old institution.

## Woman's Committee honors Carter

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter has been named recipient of the first Distinguished Christian Woman Award by The Woman's Committee of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Carter, an active partner in her husband Jimmy's political career, will be honored officially during Southern Seminary's first national conference for women, Oct. 15-16.

According to Betty McGary Pearce, conference and award coordinator for The Woman's Committee, the award has been

established to annually recognize women making outstanding achievements benefiting humanity and reflecting the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The selection committee chose Carter because of her international reputation as a committed Christian and a devoted church and family woman, Pearce said. The two-day conference for men and women also will feature plenary and workshop sessions on "The Changing Roles of Women in Church and Society."

## Householder elected PR council president

ST. LOUIS (BP)—A Southern Baptist communicator, Lloyd T. Householder, was elected national president of the Religious Public Relations Council during its 55th annual convention in St. Louis.

Householder, director of the office of communications of the Baptist Sunday School Board, will head the interdenomina-

tional organization, which includes 11 local chapters and approximately 500 members. He had been the RPRC secretary for two years.

Communications staffers from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and the Sunday School Board also gathered in the annual RPRC competition.

## Wife of Alabama executive dies

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)—Louise Green Potts, wife of A. Earl Potts, the new executive secretary-treasurer of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, died May 5 in Montgomery after an extended illness.

Mrs. Pitts, 64, was the first woman Baptist Student Union director at Alabama Polytechnic Institute (now Auburn University) in 1944. She retired as Mission Friends director for Alabama WMU in August, 1983.