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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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November 26, 1987

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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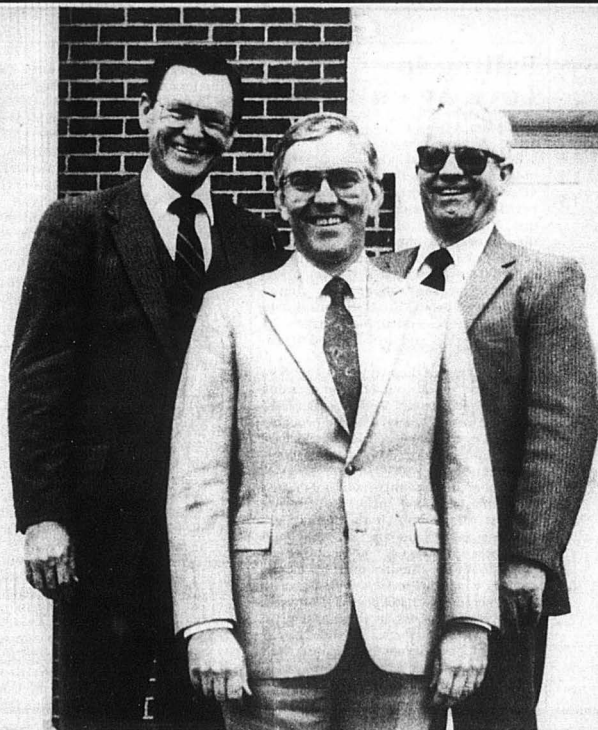


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Anti-Gambling Setbacks

Arkansas Baptist

November 26, 1987



1987
Annual
Meeting
Report

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IT'S UPLIFTING

Canada Seminary Dedicated

CALGARY, Alberta (BP)—Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary was dedicated during the third annual meeting of the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists Nov. 3-5 in Calgary.

Nearly 160 convention messengers also elected a convention president, adopted a philosophy of student ministry on 14 college campuses and recognized the emergence of ministry to ethnics as a key part of Canadian Southern Baptist work.

The messengers represented 91 churches and numerous ethnic groups, including Chinese, Cambodians, Laotians, Koreans, Filipinos, Hispanics, French, native Americans and Haitians.

The seminary dedication service was held in the nearly completed main

academic building on the 149-acre campus near Calgary. The 16,000-square-foot structure houses administrative offices, classrooms, a chapel, library and lounge.

Classes started Sept. 1 with 20 students. Future plans include separate classroom and library buildings and a gym.

Canadian churches have raised about half of their \$300,000 "Share the Dream" goal for financing seminary construction, said Allen Schmidt, convention executive director-treasurer. The campaign will continue until the goal is reached, he added.

Southern Baptists in the United States have contributed more than \$575,000 for seminary property and construction through the SBC Foreign Mission Board and individual gifts. Hundreds of Canadian and American Southern Baptists have donated vacation time to help personally with construction efforts.

GOOD NEWS!

Falling in Love Again

Revelation 2:1-7

Ephesus was legal in actions but lacking in love. In Ephesus the church was 40 to 45 years old by this time. The church had heard the best preachers of the first century. Yet, with all of this preaching and their outreach to the towns in the valley of the Caystrus, this group of Christians drifted away from their first love.

They were busy about their church work. They "acted" like Christians should act. Jesus commended their loyalty, "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience" (v. 2).

The contrast of the two words, "works" and "labor," points out a deeper meaning in Christ's statement. "Works" is translated from the phrase *ta erga sou* and probably referred to the actual services performed by the congregation in the name of their Christian duty.

"Labor," on the other hand, might better be translated "toil" in our modern concept. It carries with it the idea of exhausting labor and the suffering and weariness it brings.

No doubt the listeners must have been startled when this letter was first read to the gathered church in Ephesus. They were surely ready to bask in the sunshine of more praise, when the reader said, "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou has left thy first love" (v. 4).

The first love they have left is not a

defection from God's grace but a cooling of the fervor that characterized their first activity as Christians. They had programs without power. Their motive for worship was all wrong.

The threat to remove the candlestick is not carried out immediately, we know, for John returned to Ephesus and the church was spared for a while.

Apparently the church did not continue to heed this warning, for today the church and city are both gone. His threat to remove the candlestick (identified as the church in Rv. 1:20) is complete. The grassy marshes and ancient ruins bear silent testimony to God's promise today. The truth has not changed; his churches today will know the consequences if they leave their first love and return not.

The requirement to "overcome" (2:7) holds the key. The victorious concept is this: "In its context in this book it appears to mean living a life of service to God out of a heart of love. . . . He is able to provide all their needs, but he expects victorious living on their part."

Many churches today are under the same condemnation as Ephesus. Their buildings remain intact, and their activities are carried on as usual, but their power, their lampstand, is in danger of being removed. Christ's admonition to churches today is the same: Repent and recapture that first love, or face losing everything.

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A Fine Convention

J. EVERETT SNEED

The 1987 Arkansas Baptist State Convention may have been the best convention that we have ever had the privilege of attending. The convention was characterized by truly great preaching, good music and a spirit of harmony. There were many factors which contributed to this unusually fine convention.

The election of Cary Heard, pastor of Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, as president of the convention and Jerre Mitchell, pastor of the First Church, Fayetteville, as president of the Executive Board will assure top leadership for the days that are ahead. Executive Director Don Moore is also to be commended for his excellent leadership and the truly challenging message that he delivered during the convention.

Dr. Heard is well equipped to serve as president of our convention. He possesses the kind of leadership skill which will assist in moving any organization forward. He is an excellent organizer and will be fair with everyone.

First Church, Fort Smith, deserves the applause of Arkansas Baptists. Pastor Ron Herrod and his staff provided well for the needs of the messengers and guests.

Another element which made this year's convention so harmonious was the good-natured humor used by President Lawson Hatfield during the convention sessions. He was ably assisted by parliamentarian Winfred Bridges, pastor of First Church, Paragould.

Although the convention has been shortened in length, we believe that all of the messengers appreciated the excellence with which the convention program was planned and the fine presentation made by the Executive Board regarding its recommendations.

The passage of the budget by the convention means that all Arkansas Baptists are doing together in our state and around the world will continue in 1988. But special note should be taken of the fact that this year's budget represents an increase of only 4.2 percent over the 1987 budget, which had an increase of only 0.76 of one percent. The budget adopted calls for \$12.87 million for 1988.

The budget represents an increase of approximately 5.5 percent over the projected receipts which will be received in 1987. It also will send 40.89 percent to the SBC



Cooperative Program for worldwide missions programs.

A major emphasis was placed on "Missions Advance 87-89." The campaign currently underway is designed to encourage churches to send more money to world missions. Churches are encouraged to have a Missions Advance speaker to come to present the Cooperative Program and world mission causes. Executive Director Don Moore pointed out that at the end of the Depression a larger percentage of the church budget was going for world missions than is being given today. He emphasized that the purpose for our giving was so that "all nations of the world would be blessed."

The resolutions committee chaired by Earl Humble, pastor of First Church, Osceola, is to be commended for the ex-

cellent resolutions presented. The excellence of their resolutions is reflected in the fact that only one resolution drew any negative discussion. This was the last resolution on abortion. The resolution, however, stood as presented.

Ervin Keathley, music secretary for Arkansas Baptists, and the musicians enlisted are to be commended for outstanding musical presentations. The music was inspiring and thrilling and gave support to the rest of the convention program.

The inspiration in this year's convention was truly outstanding. The scholarly yet heartfelt presentations of D. L. Lowrie, director of the Texas State Missions Commission, was of the highest quality. We believe everyone present was moved by his excellent presentations. We were particularly moved by his message Tuesday evening emphasizing "the strengthening of missions through cooperation." He emphasized that cooperation is God's way of conducting business. He said, "the greatest threat to cooperation is carnality."

Other speakers to whom special commendation should be given includes Trueman Moore, pastor of East Side Church, Fort Smith, and Keith Parks, president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.

This year's convention should assist Arkansas Baptists in moving forward in service to the Lord during the coming year. If Arkansas Baptists make "strengthening missions" through bold preaching, increased giving, education and cooperation, and personal commitment our priority then 1988 will be a great year for our Lord. Our success, as always, depends on our working together and allowing the Holy Spirit to be our guide.

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RODNEY REEVES

Southern Accent



What Kind Of Rich?

I want to be rich. After all, it is popular to pursue wealth.

There are even religious leaders who have sanctified such a pursuit of happiness. Gold is the theme, greed is supreme. Yet those who seek "his Kingdom" have discovered that an affection for divine investments supersedes any hunger for "money markets." Beauty does depend on the eye of the beholder.

The apostle Paul encouraged the Colossian Christians to find hidden treasures that paid spiritual dividends. For Paul it was imperative to "set your mind on things above, not on the things that are on earth" (Co. 3:2)—a dangerous piece of advice for believers who were tempted to worship angels (Co. 2:18).

However, the apostle's directive was intended to redirect the desires, goals, hopes, and dreams of newborn believers. It is natural for impatient, immature children to demand immediate satisfaction—to cash in the inheritance. But Paul wanted to focus the Colossians' attention on eternal values: "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory" (Co. 3:4). The glory of precious metals tarnishes; the eternal weight of glory which is to be "apocalypted" in those of a higher calling will escape corruption—wealth beyond wild imagination.

I will be rich. Yet the wealth that waits for every believer is not popular to some. Nevertheless, to me, it is worth waiting for. *Maranatha!*

Rodney Reeves is assistant professor of religion at Southern Baptist College.

A SMILE OR TWO

Open hands can give, open eyes can care, open minds can learn, open hearts can share.

Fear paralyzes, faith energizes; fear blocks, faith unlocks.

The refrain of fear is, "Don't try... you may fall." The chant of courage is, "Give your best, you can do it!"

A good memory is one that remembers the day's blessings and forgets the day's troubles.

Letters to the Editor

Change Agents

Currently, school prayer and Bible reading are illegal. Now comes the newest progressive theme, that of promoting the international child.

Change agent Dr. William Pierce of Harvard University told 2,000 teachers recently in Denver, Colo., "Every child in America who enters school at the age of five is mentally ill, because he comes to school with an allegiance toward our elected officials, toward our founding fathers, toward our institutions, toward the preservation of this form of government. . . . All this proves the children are sick, because the truly well individual is one who has rejected all of those things and is what I would call the true international child of the future" (*New American*, Sept. 28, 1987, p. 7).

Also, the Nov. 27, 1985, issue of *Education Week* said, "The director of a leading U.S. education association this month urged representatives of 10 other Western nations and Japan to press for the development of a world core curriculum. . . ."

Edward Cornish's "Changing World" column in the *L.A. Times*, Oct. 10, 1986, states that licensing parents is needed, just like in China. He advocates "parent education" and "home visits" by education officials to ensure proper environment.

Ed Froggia, California Teachers Association president, says "However much our teachers try, they cannot overcome the liabilities that so many young people carry into the classroom their first day of school." He too advocates "programs for parenting."

Finally, Eugene M. Boyce writes in his *The Coming Revolution in Education*, "The school base. . . is a 24-hour a day operation. . . making the elongated day possible, providing both privacy and group relationships."

This won't happen here in Arkansas say? Look at the Oct. 20, 1987, *Arkansas Democrat*, p. 4B. Headlined, "Teachers' workshop on global studies set," a free workshop was held for "global studies" teachers at the UA Graduate Education

Bldg. at Fayetteville. The workshop was titled "Global Thought, Local Action—Internationalizing the Classroom."

In sum, the choice is ours now, before this progressive theme becomes entrenched. Be alert, identify change agents locally, and endeavor to win, not just hold your ground. Our national identity, family tradition, and religious freedom depend on our victory.—**Steve Albert, Natural Steps**

Different Accounts

Inerrancy advocates, in their zeal to defend God's Word, forget two very important facts: First, neither God nor his Word need any defense from us, for God is quite able to take care of himself, and his Word has withstood all the attacks of critics and atheists through the centuries.

The second fact is, that in taking the position of inerrancy, these folks ascribe inspiration to scribes, copyists, and translators. It is a fact that mathematical errors are found in Scripture, for example, in 2 Samuel 24, the account of David's census says that the Lord moved David to take the census, and the fighting men numbered 800,000, including 500,000 men of Judah. In 1 Chronicles 21, it said that Satan moved David to take the census, and the fighting men of Israel numbered 1,100,000, including 470,000 men of Judah. Both accounts show that 70,000 died in the plague that followed.

To say that these different accounts do not exist is unrealistic; to say that both are true is nonsense. Two different scribes who recorded that event were given different figures, and this in no way disproves that the census and plague did actually take place. Nonetheless, here is an example of a mathematical error. There are no theological errors in Scripture, nor any that affect the way of salvation. This is what really counts.

In the first copies of Scripture written, there may have been no mathematical errors, but where are the first copies? All we have are copies of copies.

Matthew, in chapter 8, says Jesus healed two demons; both Mark and Luke say he healed one. Did Matthew err in reporting two, or did Mark and Luke err in only reporting one? Did Jesus in fact heal two, and Mark and Luke only report one? In any case, here is a mathematical conflict, or error, which is not of real importance. Jesus did in fact heal one or two demons, and this all Bible lovers can believe. We are not required to turn our minds off when we read Scripture, but to turn them on.—**Walter H. Watts, Fort Smith**

STRESS!

Wanda Stephens, M.D.
Christian Psychiatrist
501-225-9750

LOCAL & STATE

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed

DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



There is considerable evidence of widespread spiritual awakening in many parts of the world. Who can ignore the power of the Word of God working behind the Bamboo Curtain in communist China? Korea has for more than a decade been the star example of what happens when a people pay the price in prayer. The world's largest evangelical church is in Seoul, Korea. Our recent experience in our Brazil partnership confirms the fact that the masses are ready to hear and receive the gospel. The stirring story of conversions and church starts in parts of Africa have excited us. Many of our people have been ministering in the Philippines where the response to the gospel has been overwhelming.

Is the world ready to hear the good news? It would be an overstatement to give an unqualified "yes" answer. It would be an understatement to say "no." It appears there is more need and more openness now than in our lifetime. Not only is there more openness, we have more young people and lay people volunteering to go share the message than ever before.

Two more pressing questions face us. Are our church people ready to support and our pastors ready to go to the mission fields of the world? The two questions may really be one. The cry is constant, "We need more to come as preaching or evangelistic missionaries." Only a fraction of the requests are filled each year. I can't help but believe that the support of missions revolves around the pastor's commitment.

Will we have another opportunity as great as today's? Even if we should, we should not deal recklessly with the opportunity that now is presented to us.

Secularization of our churches, declining commitment to missions, internal strife, and preoccupation with our own local ministries threatens to dull the edge of what we might do as churches.

War, violence against gospel messengers, and closed doors are forbidding forces with which we must contend.

Since "the night comes when no man can work," we need to be "on our toes" and "at our best" in this fateful hour. God has put "the keys" in our hand that will determine the destiny of the masses.

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



Noteburning—Mount Olive Church, Crossett, held a noteburning service Nov. 8 to celebrate early payment of a \$150,000 note. The congregation is currently averaging approximately 355. Last year there were a total of 112 new members. Those participating in the noteburning service were (left to right) James Hoot, chairman of deacons; Emil Turner, pastor; Ferrell Morgan, a former pastor and director of missions for Concord Association; and Brown Simmons, building superintendent when the facility was constructed. Morgan was guest speaker.



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'Magnificent Obsession'

A disturbingly powerful call to world missions confronts messengers at the annual meeting in Fort Smith

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Despite speculations that conflict would mar their 134th annual meeting, Arkansas Baptists gathered at Fort Smith's First Baptist Church Nov. 17-18 for what many observers felt was the greatest convention in memory.

Messengers to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention were confronted by enormous world needs and challenged by both state and national leaders to make missions their "magnificent obsession." And the rumored conflict never surfaced, allowing the Spirit of God to work virtually unimpeded in the convention sessions.

The rumors centered around an article in the Nov. 16 *Arkansas Gazette* which reported "at least two secret meetings" had been held to discuss plans to extend an SBC-style "conservative takeover" to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Among the plans reportedly discussed were the termination of J. Everett Sneed, editor of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, and gaining control of various ABCS agency trustee boards. The election of a "conservative" president also was reportedly a part of the agenda.

When messengers began arriving for pre-convention activities Monday, Nov. 16, the reported "conservative" activities and their possible impact on the annual meeting were widely discussed in the halls and exhibit area. But none of the reported plans, including a publicly-declared "conservative" candidate for president ever materialized. Instead, messengers found themselves confronted by a disturbingly powerful call to world missions.

Tuesday Morning

Messengers thronged into the registration area at First Church on Tuesday morning, after rainy weather had slightly depressed attendance at pre-convention activities the day before. Tuesday's clearing skies and sunshine held out a promise of the week that was to come.

The strains of an organ prelude set a meditative tone for the opening session, and messengers sat quietly as they waited for the annual meeting to begin. The stately First Church sanctuary gradually filled like most Baptist churches—from back to front.

At 8:45 a.m., ABCS Music Secretary Er-

vin Keathley led the congregation in singing "All Hail The Power of Jesus' Name" and "We Are Called To Be God's People." Billy White, pastor of Little Rock Second Church, brought an invocation.

D.L. Lowrie, director of the State Missions Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, brought four Bible studies—one each session—to interpret the annual meeting's theme, "Strengthening Missions." Lowrie's first message focused on the topic, "Strengthening Missions Through Bold Preaching."

Lowrie used Mark 16:14-20 to show messengers that preaching the good news of the kingdom of God was central to Jesus' ministry. And those who follow Jesus, the Risen Lord, are under mandate to carry the message of God's transforming power to all the world's people.

"There are still 3.5 billion people waiting for you to come and tell them about the Savior, and they're being born and dying faster than we're getting there," Lowrie declared. "If this generation is going to hear about Jesus, we're going to have

to do it, and if we're going to do it, we're going to have to get started—seriously."

After Lowrie's stirring theme interpretation, ABCS President Lawson Hatfield gavelled the annual meeting to order. Host pastor Ron Herrod welcomed the messengers, and several matters were routinely dispensed: appointment of convention committees, the seating of the messengers, and the adoption of the program.

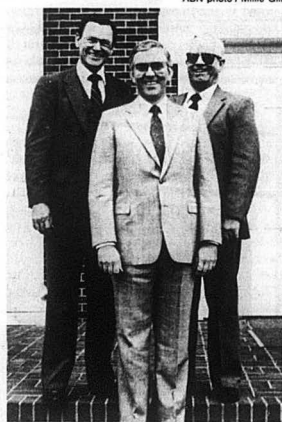
Messengers then heard a first reading of three proposed changes to the constitution and bylaws and a second reading of two other changes before turning their attention again to worship in song. After Keathley led the congregation in "How Great Thou Art," the Arkansas Music Men performed two pieces, one of them a Portuguese rendition of "Heavenly Sunlight," which was received with enthusiastic applause by the assembly. Thirty-five of the Music Men had only recently returned from Brazil, where they participated in the Manaus citywide crusade and area revivals.

At 10:13 a.m., ABCS Amar Coordinator Glendon Grober took the platform to introduce Thome E. Tavares Filho, executive director of one of the two Brazilian Baptist conventions with which Arkansas Baptists have been paired in an evangelistic partnership for the past three years. The Oct. 22-Nov. 1 crusade and revivals in Manaus climaxed the partnership.

Filho, with Grober interpreting, told messengers that the Amar partnership was "the greatest thing that happened in our field in 30 years." He said 10 new churches, had been begun during 1987 and that the Brazilian convention itself had become more missionary as a result of the Arkansas efforts in the state.

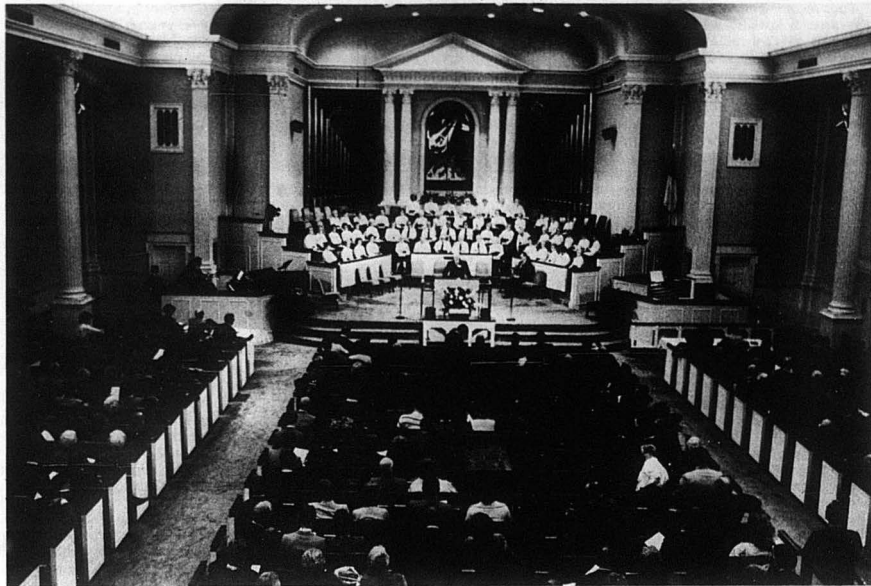
Noting the intense moral and social crises his country is facing, Filho charged Arkansas Baptists to realize that there was "no more time for discussions about theological positions" when they alone had the solution to the crises facing mankind. "Every Baptist is called, first and foremost, to be a soul-winner," Filho declared.

First Vice-President Eddie McCord assumed the gavel and announced that 917 messengers had registered as of 11:00 a.m. He then introduced Convention President Hatfield, who delivered his President's Address.



ABN photo / Millie Gill

ABCOS officers for 1987-88 (from left): L.B. Jordan, first vice-president; Cary Heard, president; and Noble Wiles, second vice-president.



Taking Luke 19:1-10 as his text, Hatfield preached on Zacchaeus' response to the grace of Jesus. Struck by the fact that Jesus had called him personally and moved by his grace, the tax collector not only met the legal requirement of fourfold restoration to those he had cheated, he also gave half of his wealth to the poor, far exceeding any legal precedent.

God will bless Arkansas Baptists if they will be persons of grace, rather than merely Old Testament legalists, Hatfield promised. Challenging messengers to give one another "leg room," he quoted Puritan leader Richard Baxter's well-known phrase: "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; but in all things, love."

Gene Crawley, pastor of Newport First Church, pronounced the benediction at 11:53 a.m.

Tuesday afternoon

The bright jubilation of the Glen Ennes Brass greeted messengers as they returned for the Tuesday afternoon session. Ervin Keathley led the congregation in "Marching to Zion" and "Tell The Good News," accompanied by the brass ensemble.

Lawson Hatfield informed the messen-

gers that registration had reached the 1,000 mark at 1:30 p.m., and he welcomed Max Deaton, pastor of Otter Creek First Church in Little Rock, to the platform to deliver the invocation.

D.L. Lowrie's second Bible study drew on Luke 16:1-13 to interpret the theme, "Strengthening Missions Through Increased Giving." He told messengers that money has an enslaving capacity and is guaranteed to fail those who place their trust in it, yet God has given it to his people as a trust, and they must act as responsible stewards.

Lowrie pointed out that Christians should ask some of the same shrewd questions regarding their eternal investments that the worldly investor asks his client: "What are your goals?" "Where do you want to invest in order to achieve your goals?" "How much are you willing to invest?" "If we are ever going to be serious about missions, we've got to step up the investment program of the people of God in the work of God," Lowrie concluded.

At 2:30, messengers returned their attention to the constitution and bylaw changes read to them earlier. Three items were approved on first reading: minor rewording of Bylaw 5 and changes in Bylaw 4 and Article VIII which clarified the guidelines

governing the financial operation of ABSC agencies. These matters also must be approved by messengers in the 1988 convention before taking effect.

Two other changes were approved on second reading and became effective. A new statement of purpose replaced paragraph one of Article II: "The purpose of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention is to assist the churches of the Convention in fulfilling their mission, and to encourage cooperative support of and involvement in our worldwide mission enterprise."

In addition, a new section was inserted in Article V: "The Executive Director of the Executive Board or his designee is authorized to execute and sign all official and legal documents involving transactions in agreement with the Constitution and Bylaws and/or approved by the Convention, the Executive Board or its Operating Committee."

In the absence of any miscellaneous business, the convention proceeded to other matters of concern. After a men's quartet from Booneville First Church performed "Great Day" and "Undivided," messengers received and adopted the report of the convention Nominating Committee.

LOCAL & STATE

Four recommendations from the ABSC Executive Board also were adopted. The first was a \$12.8 million budget which represented an increase of 4.2 percent over 1987. The 1988 budget provides \$7.6 million for state causes and passes along \$5.2 million to Southern Baptist worldwide programs.

Messengers also approved a recommendation to participate in the 1990 SBC Simultaneous Revivals and agreed to allow the Arkansas Baptist Foundation to use for operating expenses income earned from the investment of undesignated funds during a five-year period.

The fourth recommendation approved by messengers concerned "Church Arkansas," a major emphasis on starting new churches in the state. "Church Arkansas" goals call for 25 new church starts in 1988 and 45 in 1989, followed by 30 in each succeeding year.

Three amendments to the Charter and Bylaws of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation also were presented to messengers for their approval. Changes were made in the statement of purpose and Article III in order to "strengthen the services offered" by the Foundation and to "minimize the possibility of descending and ascending liability."

Ervin Keathley, who will retire next spring as ABSC Music Secretary, brought special music immediately prior to Executive Director Don Moore's annual sermon. Keathley sang "To The Ends Of The Earth" and "You Don't Have To Go Far To Tell The Story."

Moore told messengers that, like Paul, every Christian has been called by God to be "a chosen vessel" to bear his name before the nations (Ac. 9:15). As with his calling of Abraham, Joshua, and David, God's call to each Christian is a call to bless all the nations of the world.

"Now, why did God save you?" Moore asked the congregation. "Do you suppose his purposes have changed? "No!" he thundered. "God is still saving people and blessing churches so all the world may know him."

And while world evangelism is plainly the focus of Christian mission, the God-given method of mission work also is clear, Moore said. The fact that Paul taught each new church he started to send their gifts to Jerusalem for distribution to the world's needy leaves Baptists with no need to guess about how they should organize themselves for world missions. Moore challenged pastors to go back to their churches and magnify the scriptural basis for Southern Baptist cooperative missions.

Moore also told messengers that if the harvest of souls is to be multiplied, the number of workers must be multiplied. Although hundreds of requests come each year for evangelistic workers abroad, only a handful are supplied. "God will not bless our evangelistic work here because we are not concerned for souls abroad," Moore declared.

The size of the harvest around the world can be determined by the magnitude of the investment Southern Baptists will make in world missions, Moore continued. More harvesters, more supporters, and more sacrifice will mean a greater number of

money on themselves. When they repent of such hypocrisy and "get right on missions," God will begin to bless their other endeavors, Moore said.

The afternoon session closed with a benediction by Joel Faircloth, pastor of Mansfield First Church.

Tuesday evening

Messengers who returned on time from their evening meals were blessed by a 20-minute concert from a Fort Smith area choir—composed of singers from nine churches in two associations—which sang

"I Have Been Redeemed," "Praise To The Lord," "In the Name of the Lord," and "The Majesty and Glory of Your Name."

After another congregational hymn, messengers were informed that registration had reached 1,032 at 6:00 p.m., and Rick Erwin, pastor of Pine Bluff South Side Church, brought an invocation.

First Corinthians 3:1-15 provided the text for D.L. Lowrie's third Bible study, which focused on the session theme, "Strengthening Missions Through Education and Cooperation."

Lowrie said that the principle of cooperation found in verse 9—"we are laborers together with God"—was thought by early Baptists to conflict with the principle of local church autonomy. "It was a great day when we discovered that none of God's principles contradict each other," Lowrie declared.

In fact, the principle of cooperation complements local church autonomy and the priesthood of the believer, Lowrie said. Cooperation is God's way of doing his work, he said, but it requires a spiritual people, each one doing his part.

The problem in Corinth was that they lacked the spiritual discernment required to appreciate their God-given, divinely-created diversity,

Lowrie explained. A carnal person will decide that his is the only way to accomplish a goal, an arrogant notion which threatens to destroy cooperative fellowship.

"Each of us should do what God has enabled him to do," Lowrie asserted, "and as we do it together, God's work gets done.

Once a person gets a vision of just how large a field is waiting to be harvested, he will start looking around for someone to join hands with, Lowrie concluded. "The only hope we have of doing what needs to be done is joining hands together with each other and God," he declared.

The world missions theme advanced by



ABN photo / Millie Gill

D.L. Lowrie delivered four, powerful Bible studies.

souls won to Christ.

While more are volunteering for mission service, mission support is not comparably increasing, he added. While Southern Baptists boast the largest mission force in the world, they stand near the bottom of the list in individual support, contributing barely \$10 each to world missions. Consequently, the Foreign Mission Board has a budget of only \$110,000 for each country in which it witnesses.

Every day, Southern Baptist missionaries place their lives on the line, Moore reminded the messengers. While they risk their lives, their brothers and sisters at home are looking for more ways to spend more

Moore was continued by Allen Thrasher, who took to the platform to promote "Missions Advance 87-89," a state convention plan to broaden the base of missions giving.

Thrasher reported that one east Arkansas congregation which had caught a fresh vision of mission needs when they had a Missions Advance speaker address them. Despite difficult economic circumstances, the people voted to increase their Cooperative Program gifts by \$1,500—an increase of 15 percent.

"It is time to renew our zeal for the Cooperative Program," Thrasher declared. "The hour is late, and the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few."

Prior to the annual Convention Sermon, messengers received three reports.

D. Jack Nicholas, president of Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, told messengers that the college has begun the first semester of its baccalaureate in business and has graduated two senior classes with degrees in Christian ministries. Despite a slight decrease in on-campus enrollment and an extremely tight finish in last year's finances, several successes give cause for optimism. Nicholas noted that, while the school is among the smallest of the Baptist colleges, it ranked in the top 10 last year in the number of student summer missionaries sent out.

Daniel R. Grant, president of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, outlined some of the major projects involved in OBU's "Second Century" emphasis. An audiovisual presentation prepared for the convention reported that the fall semester had seen an increase of 15 percent in freshman class enrollment and a 20 percent increase in the number of students in the Christian ministries program.

Floyd Tidworth Jr., director of church extension for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, introduced a videotaped presentation on the "Church Arkansas" emphasis, which had been adopted earlier as part of the Executive Board recommendations.

The Convention Sermon was delivered by W. Trueman Moore, pastor of Fort Smith East Side Church, who captured the spirit of the annual meeting in his sermon title: "The Magnificent Obsession—Missions."

Taking as his text the same passage in 1 Corinthians 3 that D.L. Lowrie had used barely two hours earlier, Moore shared his personal perspective as a former foreign missionary and as pastor of a church committed to new work.

Moore recalled that he and his fellow

missionaries had planted faithfully in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) for four years with only one convert. Every village they entered was resistant to the gospel, he said, yet they faithfully planted seed. Years later, after a vicious civil war had destroyed 4.5 million lives, missionaries found in every area people eager to hear and respond to the good news about Jesus.

Moore noted that the congregation he pastors in Fort Smith had grown from 27 members to 484 and decided to start a new church in another part of town. Despite the fact they had given members and money to the new work, their own congregation



Committed to pray daily for world missions.

had continued to grow and prosper itself, he reported.

"Planting seed is all we were doing," both in Bangladesh and in Fort Smith, Moore said, "and you can do that. What we need is a magnificent obsession. Our master and his mission must become our obsession."

Commenting that many are "tired of being stirred but never changed," Moore commented, "I hope you'll go home stirred so much you'll be changed for the rest of your lives."

Mark Brooks, pastor of Springdale Elmdale Church, offered a benediction at 9:40 p.m.

Wednesday morning

After two full days of activities, weary messengers were straggling into the sanctuary Wednesday morning. ABSC Music Secretary Ervin Keathley called them to worship with what he called an "appropriate" hymn, "Open My Eyes."

By the close of congregational singing, however, the sanctuary was filled to capacity, including the balcony, in anticipation of the much-discussed presidential election. After an invocation by Bob Parsley of Prescott First Church, President Lawson Hatfield opened the floor for nominations.

Two men moved to the platform. Wilbur Herring, pastor emeritus of Jonesboro First Church, placed in nomination the name of Rex Holt Jr., pastor of the same church. Randal Everett, pastor of Benton First Church, nominated Cary Heard, pastor of North Little Rock Park Hill Church.

Messengers listened to instructions given by Tellers Committee Chairman Eddie Simpson and marked their ballots for the presidential post. After the ballots were collected, they sat back and enjoyed a brief concert by the J.O.Y. Singers, the senior adult choir of Fort Smith First Church.

At 9:04 a.m., D.L. Lowrie rose to deliver his fourth and final Bible study. He drew on Luke 4:42-44 to interpret the morning session's theme, "Strengthening Missions Through Personal Commitment."

The offer to settle down in Capernaum must have tempted Jesus, Lowrie theorized. The openness of the people there would have meant he could find in Capernaum a "comfort zone" where he would be accepted and loved.

Yet Jesus' response was unequivocal: "I must preach" (v. 43). His answer reflected a sense of "divine compulsion," Lowrie said, an understanding that he had been sent by the Father to accomplish a mission which would have been incompatible with settling down in Capernaum.

Just as God's Son was sent, God's people also have always been a people on mission, Lowrie contended. And just as Jesus was obsessed with his divine mission, so must God's people.

"It's one thing for us to be mission-minded," Lowrie declared. "It's another thing for us to be obsessed with missions."

"It will be a great day for us when finance committees meet and their primary concern is not with the bottom line but with the question, 'How well are we doing what we were sent to do?'"

The primary purpose of the church is

missionary, Lowrie insisted. "We are here to be sure every creature has heard the good news of salvation," he said. "Every Christian's heart ought to throb with a concern for missions" as readily as that of any elected missions leader.

"We've got the only word of salvation there is," Lowrie concluded. "And we've been sent to tell it to everybody."

At 9:32 a.m., ABSC President Hatfield rose to announce that North Little Rock pastor Cary Heard had been elected president by an overwhelming 57 percent of the votes. Of 676 ballots cast, Heard received 385 (57 percent), compared to Holt's 291 votes (43 percent).

When the floor was opened for nominations for first vice-president, two names were brought to the microphone: L.B. Jordan, director of missions for Red River Association, and Sonny Simpson, pastor of Pine Bluff Watson Chapel Church.

Messengers cast their ballots and proceeded to receive the report of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas. Foundation Executive Director John Finn focused his report on the initiative petition currently circulating in behalf of state-sponsored lottery gambling.

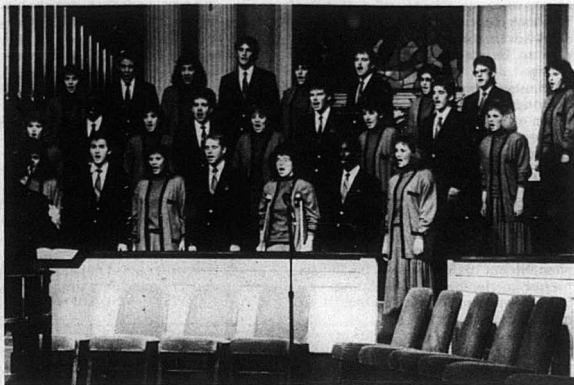
Finn outlined several reasons lottery gambling is objectionable: (1) it preys on the poor, (2) it puts the state in the role of a huckster, (3) it makes the people the means to a governmental end, thus making a mockery of democratic government, (4) it constitutes a bureaucratic boondoggle, being 25 to 30 times more expensive to administer than a tax, (5) it is a severely regressive form of taxation, (6) it fosters illegal gambling and government corruption, and (7) it is a boon to gambling promoters, politicians, and organized crime, but only a "sucker bet" for the people.

At 9:50 a.m., Zane Chesser, pastor of Malvern First Church, led the convention in its annual "Memorial Moments," a time to remember, Chesser said, "the fallen soldiers of the cross and the daughters of Israel."

At 10:00 a.m., Lawson Hatfield announced the results of balloting for first vice-president. Of 593 ballots cast, L.B. Jordan had received 355 (60 percent). Sonny Simpson had received 238 (40 percent).

Before taking up nominations for second vice-president, the messengers turned their attention to the business of resolutions.

Twelve resolutions were presented to messengers by Resolutions Committee Chairman Earl Humble. All but one were approved without discussion. They included resolutions pledging prayerful support for the SBC Christian Life Commission, calling for enforcement of laws governing obscenity, opposing state lottery gambling, and encouraging churches to contribute to the support of the Christian Civic Found-



The Southern Baptist College Choir inspired messengers.

ation.

Other resolutions addressed the issues of teenage pregnancy, AIDS, beer labeling, and the expanded modern gun deer season. One resolution voiced commendation of the state's bivocational ministers.

A resolution on abortion, however, sparked some discussion. The resolution noted the Christian responsibility to "stand up against this abhorrent practice and voice the biblical conviction on the value of human life, even fetal life." It called on

Arkansas Baptists to support "responsible and appropriate legislation," called upon churches to provide alternatives to abortion, and asked state convention agencies to "provide aggressive leadership... by providing literature" to clarify abortion issues and alternatives.

One messenger, however, rose to challenge language in the resolution which recognized the possibility of exceptions in cases of rape, incest, and when the life of the mother is at stake. He offered an amendment to delete rape and incest as possible exceptions.

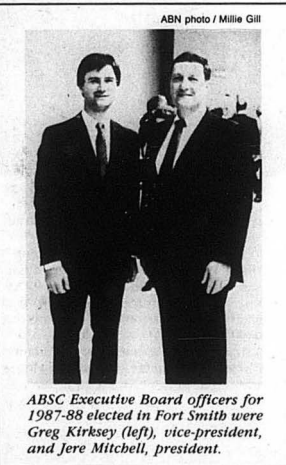
Messengers turned aside that suggestion on a voice vote, however, and adopted the resolution as printed. Messengers to the 1985 annual meeting in Arkadelphia passed a similar resolution, allowing for possible exceptions for rape, incest, and life of the mother, after an attempt to narrow the language.

The floor was opened for nominations for second vice-president, and four names were presented: Jerry Wilson of El Dorado West Side Church, Don Nall of Batesville First Church, Sonny Simpson of Pine Bluff Watson Chapel Church, and Noble Wiles of Oxford Church.

Messengers cast their ballots for that position and turned to a final miscellaneous business session.

Dillard Miller of Mena moved that the new convention annual be dedicated to two longtime stalwarts of the state convention: W.O. Vaught and Don Hook. Messengers approved that suggestion.

Paul Williams, pastor of Greater Grace Baptist Church in Little Rock, came to the platform to express that congregation's commitment to work with Arkansas Bap-



ABSC Executive Board officers for 1987-88 elected in Fort Smith were Greg Kirksey (left), vice-president, and Jere Mitchell, president.

tists in missions and education. Greater Grace Church was organized in 1987 as the first black Southern Baptist congregation in the state. The annual meeting in Fort Smith was the first in which blacks were received as messengers.

After another congregational hymn, "Because He Lives," messengers sang a chorus of "Happy Birthday" to ABCS Executive Director Don Moore, who was celebrating his birthday during the annual meeting. Then, with First Vice-President Eddie McCord presiding, they received reports from the SBC Annuity Board and Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services.

Annuity Board President Darold Morgan reassured messengers that the pension programs had weathered the recent stock

market crash because of the board's investment policy which focuses on securities rather than stocks. He said that a 25 percent increase in benefits for current annuitants would be in effect Jan. 1, 1988.

Family and Child Care Executive Director Johnny Biggs told messengers he was studying possible uses for an El Dorado plantation home recently given to the agency. He said one possibility, a home for unwed mothers, seems to merit some consideration, based on an informal survey.

At 11:10 a.m., a runoff election between Don Nall of Batesville and Noble Wiles of Oxford was announced, and ballots were cast.

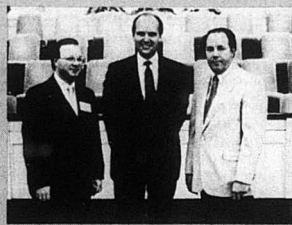
Harry Trulove, president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, echoed the message from the Annuity Board in his report.

Foundation assets were secure, despite market turmoil, Trulove said. In fact, the Foundation had taken a 1987 profit of \$1 million before the crash, and opportunities for reinvestment at post-crash lower levels were being studied.

J. Everett Sneed, editor of the *Arkansas Baptist News* magazine, introduced ABN Board President Lyndon Finney, who delivered the first portion of the ABN report. Finney outlined for messengers the changes which had been made in the *Arkansas Baptist* during the previous year in response to a reader survey. Sneed mentioned initiatives regarding abortion, pornography, and state lottery gambling which the magazine would promote during 1988.

At 11:28, Lawson Hatfield announced

ABSC Auxiliaries Elect Officers



Maxwell, Davis, and Veteto



Everett, Tippit, and Thrasher



Stogsdill, Lynn, and Dixon

ABN photos / Millie Gill

Pastors

Members of the Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference elected officers during their annual meeting Nov. 16 in Fort Smith.

Elected to serve during 1987-88 were Randy Maxwell, pastor of Batesville West Church, first vice-president; Stephen P. Davis, pastor of Russellville First Church, president; and Danny Veteto, pastor of Gravel Ridge First Church, second vice-president.

The Pastors' Conference theme, "Preach The Word," was developed by a number of experienced and skilled preachers. Featured speakers included D.L. Lowrie, state missions director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas; W.O. Vaught, pastor emeritus of Little Rock Immanuel Church; and Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Wives

The Arkansas Baptist Minister's Wives Conference held an afternoon tea prior to the annual meeting in Fort Smith Nov. 17-18.

Elected to serve as officers during 1987-88 were Sheila Everett of Benton First Church, president; Kathy Tippit of Fort Smith Fianna Hills, secretary; and Linda Elder of Little Rock Pulaski Heights Church, vice-president.

Emily Herrod, whose husband Ron is the new pastor of Fort Smith First Church, delivered the afternoon address. Julie Russell, Miss Arkansas 1986-87, provided the special music. During the program, Mrs. Everett presented a silver bread server to outgoing president Sherry Thrasher of Booneville.

Educators

During their annual meeting Nov. 16 in Fort Smith, members of the Arkansas Baptist Religious Education Association elected officers for 1987-88.

Serving the group next year will be Ken Stogsdill, minister of music and media at Fort Smith East Side Church, first vice-president; Delores Lynn, minister of childhood education at North Little Rock Park Hill Church, secretary-treasurer; Snookie Dixon, minister of education at Arkadelphia First Church, president; and Charles Reed, associate pastor for education/ministry at Little Rock Immanuel Church, second vice-president.

Mancel Ezell, director of the church media library department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, was the featured speaker for the program.

that Noble Wiles had been elected second vice-president with 62 percent of the 414 ballots cast. Messengers then received the annual report of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, which is launching a year-long celebration of its national centennial.

ABSC Executive Director Don Moore presented a plaque of appreciation for WMU to State WMU Director Julia Ketter. The plaque acknowledged the "deep debt of gratitude" owed the organization for a century of work challenging Arkansas Baptists to broaden their mission vision.

State WMU President Katsy McAlister presented copies of the recently-published centennial history of Arkansas WMU to Don Moore and Lawson Hatfield. The history, which is available through the state WMU office, was written by Jane Watson of Little Rock Immanuel Church.

After special music by David Hayes and Tim Hess of Fort Smith Southside Church, Keith Parks, president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, took the pulpit to deliver the final address of the convention.

Like the Greeks of John 12:21 who said, "Sir, we would see Jesus," the world today is filled with history's greatest multitude crying out for word of the Savior, Parks said. Yet, for the lack of messengers, the word has not come, and those multitudes rightfully ask, "Has God forgotten us?"

God has not forgotten the world's lost billions, but his children have failed to be faithful in telling others about him, Parks declared. Like Philip and Andrew, Southern Baptists are not certain Jesus came for those "Greeks," the heathen of the world. An impartial observer of church activities would suggest Baptists believe the church is primarily for them, he alleged.

Southern Baptist churches spend 97 percent of their offerings on themselves, Parks pointed out, and 95 percent of their preachers are content to stay at home and minister to five percent of the world's population.

"If God was truly concerned about the world, he would not be so stupid a general as to send 95 percent of his forces to five percent of the world," Parks declared. "We must conclude that God is saying something to some of us that we aren't hearing."

God has not forgotten the lost billions;

his children have refused to die to self so that the lost might know him, Park continued. "Too many Southern Baptists would like to see the world saved only as long as it is someone else's child who goes to the mission field."

He added: "We bring people to our churches by telling them how little we expect of them. That's why the world thinks God has forgotten them, because we have refused to live in a spirit of sacrifice."

While Southern Baptists are first in the number of missionaries in service, they rank ninth in the number of church members required to send each missionary, Parks explained. And the world's largest non-Catholic denomination ranks thirteenth in per capita missions giving.

Reaching the world for Christ will require Southern Baptists to give up their lives, their children, their dollars, and, most importantly, their time in prayer, Parks declared. "When we become so burdened about the lost that we cannot keep from praying, then God will begin to stir us," he concluded.

Parks then asked ushers to distribute commitment cards which messengers would sign as a promise to pray daily for missions needs around the world. Parks told them a toll-free number, 1-800-ALL-SEEK, would provide them with fresh concerns from the fields of the world.

The 1987 annual meeting closed as Lawson Hatfield called the new officers to the front, and President-Elect Cary Heard offered a prayer of benediction.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine board officers for 1987-88 are (from left) Joanne Caldwell, secretary; Lyndon Finney, president; and Harold Gateley, Fayetteville, vice-president.

Correction

The Nov. 5, 1987, issue of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* carried an article on page 10 on the appointment of Arkansas couples to the foreign mission field. The couple pictured as "The Smiths" are not Arkansans S. Gregory and Sue Smith, due to a mix-up at the Foreign Mission Board. The ABN regrets the error.

Immanuel Pageant

Immanuel Church, Little Rock, will present the second annual "The Glory of Christmas Pageant" on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 4:30 and 7 p.m.

The pageant is under the direction of Lynn Madden, minister of music. Individuals or groups may reserve complimentary tickets by calling Immanuel at 376-3071. Brian Harbour is pastor.

October Cooperative Program Report

Received	\$1,019,852.06
Budget	\$1,028,489.58
Under	\$6,308.77

Year-to-date	
Under	\$198,443.78

Same time last year	
Under	\$578,348.08

How close we are! Through October, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention churches have given 98.07 percent of the budget requirements for the year. With only a slight increase we can go over the top this year. Thank you, Arkansas Baptists!—Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director

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ABSC Board and Committee Members Elected

Executive Board

Terms to expire in 1990:

Arkansas Valley	Ted Houston, Marianna
Ashley	Dan M. Webb, Crossett
Bartholomew	Dennis Dodson, Monticello
Calvary	James R. DeBusk, Augusta
Caroline	Bill Hilburn, Ward
Centennial	Don Hubbard, Almyra
Clear Creek	John C. Matthews, Ozark
Concord	Jim Files, Fort Smith
Concord	Ken Lilly, Fort Smith
Current-Gains	Jerry Muse, Piggott
Dardanelle-Russellville	Bobby Walker, Danville
Delta	Sardis Bever, Tillar
Faulkner	J. Troy Prince, Conway
Garland	Eugene Anderson, Jessieville
Greene	John Edwards, Paragould
Harmony	David Moore, Pine Bluff
Liberty	Greg Kirksey, Camden
Liberty	James Weedman, El Dorado
Little River	Glen Power, Nashville
Mississippi	James Gardner, Blytheville

Mount Zion	Jerry Cooper, Jonesboro
North Pulaski	Jack Kwok, North Little Rock
North Pulaski	Lee Lawson, Jacksonville
North Pulaski	Bratton Rhoades, Sherwood
Pulaski	James D. Gattis, Little Rock
Pulaski	Billy White, Little Rock
Southwest	Lynn Robertson, Stamps
Southwest	J.D. Webb, Texarkana
Southwest	Roy McLeod, Waldo
Tri-County	Harrison Johns, Cherry Valley
Tri-County	Eugene Ray, Marion
Trinity	Kyle Sumpter, Marked Tree
Washington-Madison	Brad Sheffield, Prairie Grove
District 5	Billie Sharp, Benton
District 8	Pauline Tucker, Dumas

Term to expire 1988

Big Creek	Ray Taffar, Viola
Trinity	Captain Lovell, Harrisburg
District 2	Alice King, Mt. Home

Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services

Terms to expire in 1990

William W. Fowler, Bearden
 Craig A. Bradley, Monticello
 Tommy Jones, Fayetteville
 Bob Shell, Little Rock
 Jimmy Jenkins, Heber Springs
 Melynda Emerson, Jonesboro

Arkansas Baptist Foundation

Terms to expire in 1990

Winfred Bridges, Paragould
 Ben Elrod, Sherwood
 Barry Crow, Pine Bluff
 Charles Fager, Hot Springs
 Victor Gore, DeQueen

Term to expire in 1988

Allen Smith, Little Rock

Arkansas Baptist Historical Commission

Terms to expire in 1990

District 1—Jamie Jones, Fayetteville
 District 4—Dillard Miller, Mena
 District 6—Lane Strother, Mt. Home

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Terms to expire in 1990

District 4—Nelson Wilhelm, Waldron
 District 6—Bert Thomas, Searcy
 Member at Large—Lane Strother, Mt. Home

Term to expire 1988

District 3—Jimmy Anderson, Leachville

Baptist Memorial Health Care Systems, Memphis

Terms to expire in 1990

Mike Gibson, Osceola
 Dick Trout, Blytheville
 E. B. Coleman, Jonesboro

Baptist Student Union Advisory Committee

Terms to expire in 1990

District 1—Max Harrall, Fayetteville
 District 2—Randy Maxwell, Batesville
 District 7—Bob Parsley, Prescott
 District 4—Neil Jackson, Russellville
 District 7—Kay Kincl, Magnolia
 Member at Large—Martin Thielen, Fordyce

Term to expire in 1989

District 3—Faron Rogers, Pochontas

Christian Civic Foundation

Terms to expire in 1990

James Box, Bald Knob
 Rick Hyde, Murfreesboro
 Keith Blackman, Jonesboro
 Clyde Harness, Hot Springs
 Ed McDonald, Little Rock

Term to expire in 1988

Jim Sweedenburg, Benton
 Ronnie Mayes, Beebe

Term to expire in 1989

William H. Elder, III, Little Rock

Ministry of Crisis Support Advisory Committee

Terms to expire in 1990

Robert L. Spray, Fort Smith
 Sam Atkins, Sheridan

Ouachita Baptist University

Terms to expire in 1990

Kathleen Burton, Little Rock
 Mrs. Clarence Anthony, Murfreesboro
 Del Medlin, Cabot
 J. Michael Carroll, Fort Smith
 Rex Terry, Fort Smith
 Gene Layman, Springdale
 Don A. Nall, Batesville
 Carroll D. Caldwell, Texarkana

Southern Baptist College

Terms to expire in 1990

S. D. Hacker, Harrison
 E. R. Coleman, Cord
 Steve Fowler, Brinkley
 Maurice Caldwell, Rison
 Frank Shell, Clinton
 John Miller, Melbourne
 Michael Todd, Paragould
 Jerry Frankum, Newport

State Joint Committee Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists

Dillard Miller, Mena
 Mrs. Joseph Hogan, Harrison
 Don Moore, Little Rock
 Tommy Cunningham, Little Rock

Constitution and Bylaws Committee

Terms to expire in 1990

Jim Pate, Russellville
 Betty Harp, North Little Rock

World Hunger Committee

Terms to expire in 1990

Mrs. Buck Rusher, Jonesboro
 Larry Horne, Charleston

Term to expire in 1988

Mrs. Adella James, Clarksville

1988 Convention Program Committee

Term to expire in 1990

Michael Huckabee, Texarkana

1992 Convention

Date: Nov. 17-18, 1992
 Place: Pine Bluff Convention Center

1988 Convention

Preacher: Ron Herrod, Fort Smith
 Alternate: Brian Harbour, Little Rock

Anti-Gambling Setbacks

NASHVILLE (BP)—Voters in Texas and Virginia approved gambling proposals in statewide elections Nov. 3.

In Texas, legalized race track gambling won approval for the first time in 50 years as voters turned out in unexpectedly large numbers. The pari-mutuel gambling referendum, which would allow wagering on horse and greyhound races, led 57 percent to 43 percent.

Virginia will become the 29th state to operate a lottery as a result of the vote, in which voters by 57-43 percent favored a state-operated lottery.

Pari-mutuel wagering drew heavy backing from the San Antonio area with more than 73 percent support, followed by Austin at 68 percent and Dallas, Houston and Fort Worth all at 57 percent. Statewide, proponents of pari-mutuel drew about 1.2 million votes, while opponents polled 927,000. It was considered a heavy turnout for an off-year election.

Supporters of pari-mutuel gambling claimed racing would be a financial boon for the state which has suffered economically because of the collapse of the oil industry. But Sue Cox, campaign manager for the chief opposition group Texans Who Care, said voters who favored the gambling issue may have been "duped" by claims that pari-mutuel will bring economic prosperity.

"I think it was the lure of jobs to a state that has had a serious loss of jobs which made the difference," Cox said. "I think it's sad because they are going to be disappointed when the projections do not materialize."

"I am really grateful for the support of Texas Baptist churches," she said. "In a way this was a moral victory since in June most polls showed the anti-gambling forces to be trailing by as much as 40 percent."

"It is now our responsibility to be watchdogs of the industry, to be sure economic benefits are realized, animals are not abused and crime is kept out," she said.

Phil Strickland, director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, noted that gambling proponents spent twice as much on their campaign as did Texans Who Care.

"Despite the fact we did not have as much money as the proponents of gambling, our efforts did succeed in communicating to Texans the problems that accompany legalized gambling and in broadening the base of concern about whether or not legalized gambling is good for Texas," he said.

Texas Baptists were heavily involved in the campaign against pari-mutuel gambling, contributing more than \$326,000 to

the effort and forming local committees across the state to organize people to oppose the referendum.

The Virginia vote ended a decade-long debate over the issue of a state-operated lottery. Although the state may begin the lottery on Dec. 1, it will be several months before the state agency which will oversee the games can be organized and a director and five commissioners can be appointed by the governor.

The victory by proponents came despite the opposition of nearly every state leader who took a stand, including most of the General Assembly, the attorney general—and at the last minute—Gov. Gerald L. Baliles. Three former governors, including Charles Robb, often described as the most popular politician in the state, also urged the lottery's defeat.

In addition, leading Virginia business figures and the state organizations of Southern Baptists and United Methodists opposed the lottery. Although the Episcopal and Catholic dioceses of Virginia did not take a position on the issue, both of their bishops warned the lottery would cause hardship to the state's poor.

The anti-lottery forces outspent lottery advocates by about \$160,000. Of the \$400,000 raised by the anti-lottery camp, \$100,000 came from United Methodists and \$70,000 from Southern Baptists.

The pro-lottery camp spent \$240,000, \$200,000 of which was raised by out-of-state gambling companies and related interests, according to the Richmond *Times-Dispatch*. Scientific Games Inc., a Georgia-based company that develops instant lottery games, contributed \$104,000.

The new law prohibits advertising to encourage people to purchase lottery tickets. But J.W. (Billy) O'Brien Jr. of Virginia Beach, a member of the House of Delegates who has been the strongest supporter of a lottery, promised to make an effort to abolish that limitation, which he called "an exercise in futility."

Although Virginia is only the second Old South state to approve a lottery, Florida also operates one. The nearby states of Maryland and West Virginia and the District of Columbia all operate lotteries and many Virginians have crossed state lines to participate in the games.

The referendum divided the state along clear urban-rural lines. The so-called Urban Corridor, stretching from the suburbs of Washington, through Richmond to Norfolk, heavily favored the lottery, while the farming regions of the southern and southwestern parts of the state rejected it, as did the isolated mountainous areas west of the Blue Ridge.

CP Enjoys Best October

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program enjoyed its best first month this October, when receipts topped \$11 million, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the convention's Executive Committee.

October receipts totaled \$11,004,930, Bennett reported. That makes it the best October in the 62-year history of the program, and the seventh-best month overall, he said.

The monthly receipts were \$67,815 more than receipts for October 1986, for a gain of 0.62 percent, he said.

Moyers Special To Air Dec. 16

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Southern Baptists are the topic of one documentary in a three-part series on, "God and Politics," produced by Bill Moyers to air on the Public Broadcasting Service in December.

Moyers, press secretary to President Lyndon Johnson and former commentator on CBS-TV, filmed portions of the documentary at the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis. Other parts were filmed this fall when Moyers visited Fort Worth, Dallas, Houston and Midland, Texas.

The segment on Southern Baptists is titled "The Battle for the Bible." It is scheduled to air Dec. 16 in most areas. Due to the independent nature of PBS affiliates, dates may vary by location. Check local listings for details.

'Human Rights Day' Dec. 6

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Baptist World Alliance's Human Rights Commission has asked all Baptist churches to mark Sunday, Dec. 6, as "Human Rights Day."

The day will celebrate the 39th anniversary of the United Nations' adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In a paper delivered to the commission, Per Midteide of Norway noted a gap between the concern of Baptists for human rights and the actual interest in churches.

The struggle for human rights is not really on the agenda of many Baptists, Midteide said. Human rights have not yet become an integral part of the mission of the church, and Baptists have been slow to discover that in participating in the struggle for human rights Christians are joining God's healing passion for the world, he added.

Convention Uniform

Providence and Evil

by Vester Wolber, Arkadelphia

Basic passage: Genesis 45:1-5, 14-15; 50:15-21

Focal passage: Genesis 45:4-5; 50:20

Central truth: Although moral evil is contrary to the will of God and is not a part of the divine plan of operation, the results of moral evil can be feathered into the total pattern of events which bring about the ultimate purpose of God.

(1) Personal freedom and accountability are the two foundation stones on which the entire human enterprise was founded. Man was made in the image of God—a person—and one of the essential marks of personality is its ability to exercise free choice.

(2) Moral evil is a potent force in society. Many philosophical thinkers have seen the presence of evil in the world order to be a strong indication that God is not altogether good or not altogether in control. These conclusions are defective, however, in that they overlook the element of time; if God is moving in time toward the eradication of evil from his order, that intellectual problem is no longer potent.

(3) The Creator is working through Christ to remove all evil from his order. John wrote that Christ came "to take away sins" (1 Jn. 3:4-8), and Paul wrote that ultimately all things will be united under the headship of Jesus Christ (Ep. 1:10).

(4) God does not see fit to override human freedom, even when people use it to oppose God and his purposes. He did not interfere when Joseph's brothers threw him into a pit and left him to die, not when they sold him into slavery; but the Lord did make good use of Joseph the slave to do some good in the Potipher home.

The Almighty did not interfere when that frustrated sex kitten lied about Joseph and had him sent to prison, but he did make good use of Joseph the prisoner to do some good while in jail.

God did not interfere when Jewish religious leaders, Roman officials, and the common people combined their evil efforts to bring about the death of Jesus, but he did make good use of the crucifixion.

Therefore, Joseph was speaking a great theological truth when he told his brothers that while they meant evil in what they did, God made use of the results of their evil to bring much good.

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Life and Work

Fellowship That Conquers

by Curtis L. Mathis, First Church, Harrison

Basic passage: Philippians 1:12-14, 18b-21, 27-30

Focal passage: Philippians 1:21, 27-30

Central truth: Regardless of circumstances a Christian always experiences victory through God's power.

Paul in prison gives witness that living triumphantly does not depend on circumstances; a Christian experiences joy rising above every circumstance on the wings of faith. God is sovereign, therefore, God will use Paul's imprisonment for the furtherance of the gospel. Nothing ever just happens to the believer. All circumstances are under his control either directly or by his permissive will.

The secret of Paul's triumphant joy and for all believers is found in Philippians 1:21, "for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Death is only defeat for the unbeliever, but for those in Christ, death is an "abundance entrance" into the presence of Christ. Yet, the last part of the verse cannot be true without the first part. Christ must be the object of our faith, and then, "to die is gain."

True conversion is a conquering reality in that the believer's conduct conforms to the gospel of Jesus Christ. One does not live a Christian life to become worthy of the gospel. All are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ep. 2:1). Therefore, one must become "alive in Christ" and as a result his manner of life will give evidence that he has been saved.

The believer's new nature carries great responsibilities. In Philippians 1:27 the word "conversation" usually interpreted as "speech" has a far wider meaning. It refers to our total lifestyle. Our life is to measure up to our profession in Christ as Savior and Lord of our life.

Suffering is part of our humanity. Sin and rebellion always takes its toll. Yet suffering for Christ's sake brings a spirit of conquest to the yielded believer. Man is not to be pained when suffering is a result of his own misdeeds. For the believer to suffer as a result of loyalty to Christ is to bring glory to God and inner peace (1 P. 4:14-16).

Therefore, believers are encouraged to live triumphant lives even in suffering, revealing God's glory and sharing their faith with a lost world.

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Bible Book

God's Mercy

by Don Miller, First Church, Trumann

Basic passage: Genesis 18-19

Focal passage: Genesis 18:17, 20-24, 32; 19:15-17, 24-26

Central truth: Love/mercy and justice/judgment find perfect balance in the Lord.

In reading Genesis 18 some might come away with the impression that Abraham was "bargaining" with God concerning Sodom and Gomorrah. But one must examine this passage closer or make some serious errors. Viewing Abraham as bargaining with God places Abraham in a position where he is more merciful than God, it has God being rather fickle in his justice and judgment, and it gives one the impression that one can "strike a deal" with God as one prays. To draw any one of these conclusions is wrong.

One must look beyond the surface appearance and ask some probing questions. Who inspired Abraham's petition? How did he know to seek God's mercy? God is always willing and desires to show both mercy and forgiveness. Yet he waits for man to seek them. Abraham's walk with God caused him to realize this.

One must realize and recognize that God also is just. We tend to view sin too lightly. God always sees the serious consequences of sin. He delays judgment, seeking to be able to demonstrate his grace. But when he is continually rejected and ignored, there comes a day of judgment. Often the innocent and righteous suffer along with the guilty. This is part of the terror of sin. Here, however, God seeks to spare Lot and his family, but is only partially successful.

The judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah should cause us to reflect upon our own society and its ways. America has turned from God's ways like never before and is arrogant in her sin. God is long-suffering, yet he is still the God who brought judgment upon the cities of the plain.

Let us also remember to be intercessors in our prayer life. As we pray let us recognize our responsibility to be faithful witnesses, offering to a world already under judgment the mercy of God. Parents need to notice what happened to Lot's family. He failed to effectively communicate his faith in his own home. In one degree or another he lost his entire family as well as his neighbors.

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WORLD

Refugees Among Lebanon's Woes

by Art Tolston
SBC Foreign Mission Board

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (BP)—If Lebanon's civil war ended today, it could take 100 years to reunite the nation, a Lebanese Baptist says.

"Maybe a hundred years is too long," says Jean Boucheble, "but it would take a long time, because there has been so much bloodshed." Boucheble is associate pastor of Bikfaya Baptist Church, 20 miles northeast of Beirut.

Well over 100,000 people have been killed, many of them innocent civilians, during nearly 13 years of civil war among so-called Christian, Muslim and Palestinian political factions.

"We need God's intervention to pull us out of where we are," Boucheble says, adding, Baptists and other evangelicals in Lebanon need the support of fellow believers around the world.

Unfortunately, few people in the West know the depth of Lebanon's crisis, he says, citing newspapers and newscasts he monitored during an October visit to the United States. "There is nothing, absolutely nothing about Lebanon," he notes.

"It is a duty of Christians worldwide to protect and assist the church in Lebanon. If the church worldwide does not feel the pain of the church in Lebanon, I think something is wrong. We need to stand before God about how we are going to support brothers and sisters in Christ wherever they are suffering."

Heartache abounds in Lebanon, says Boucheble, who also directs relief work in Lebanon for World Vision International. One-sixth of Lebanon's 3 million people have become refugees. When civil war broke out in 1975, Maronite Catholics, Greek Orthodox and evangelicals lived throughout the country. Now they are confined to 15 to 20 percent of the land, essentially in the East Beirut area.

"For most of them, there is no hope of returning to their homes anytime soon," Boucheble says. "Other political factions now control those regions. Many had to suddenly leave where they were living and run for their lives. Many are still in a state of shock, unable to believe what has happened to them or adjust to it."

"Many live in one room—parents and two or three children with husbands or wives and children of their own, 16 or 17 people in one room. I have seen it myself."

The government is in disarray. "The people are living under the law of the jungle," Boucheble says. The economy has collapsed, bringing poverty to many who once were in the middle class. There is no

redress for losses due to war or social chaos. There are no social services.

"Every political party is supported from outside, by a different country, so it's not left entirely to the Lebanese people to decide their future," he notes.

One out of three youth in Lebanon have become drug addicts, he says, and other young adults are pulling any strings they can to leave the country.

Somewhat, the church is alive and well—and ministering, Boucheble says.

Bikfaya Baptist Church, for example, is helping nearly 400 families from four villages return to homes they abandoned in the midst of heavy shelling. With two-thirds funding from Southern Baptist human needs donations and one-third funding from World Vision, the church is helping repair battle-damaged doors and windows. World Vision also is assisting two other small Baptist congregations with projects to help their communities.

Middle East Work Continues

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Several Southern Baptist missionaries formerly assigned to work in Lebanon have transferred to new assignments.

Various others remain determined to return to Lebanon, says Dale Thorne, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board director of work in the Middle East and North Africa.

Two dozen Southern Baptist missionaries left Lebanon in late February and early March after the U.S. government ended passport privileges for Americans in the war-torn country. The group temporarily relocated in Cyprus.

Thorne believes missionaries may someday get their wish to reside in Lebanon again "unless there are fundamental changes in the nature of the country," such as an ongoing chaotic environment.

The U.S. State Department will decide next February whether to extend its passport restrictions affecting Lebanon.

Karl and Thelma Weathers and Nancie Wingo have transferred to Gaza. Weathers now directs the Baptist School of Allied Health Sciences and Wingo teaches English there. Mrs. Weathers teaches English at the Baptist Center of Culture and Light. Also, retiree Mabel Summers teaches children of missionaries in Gaza. Both the Weatherses are from Earle, Ark.; Wingo is from Santa Anna, Texas; and Summers is from Bardstow, Ky.

Other missionaries in Cyprus are pursuing other areas of ministry or are handling the responsibilities they had while in Lebanon.