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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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12-23-1965

### December 23, 1965

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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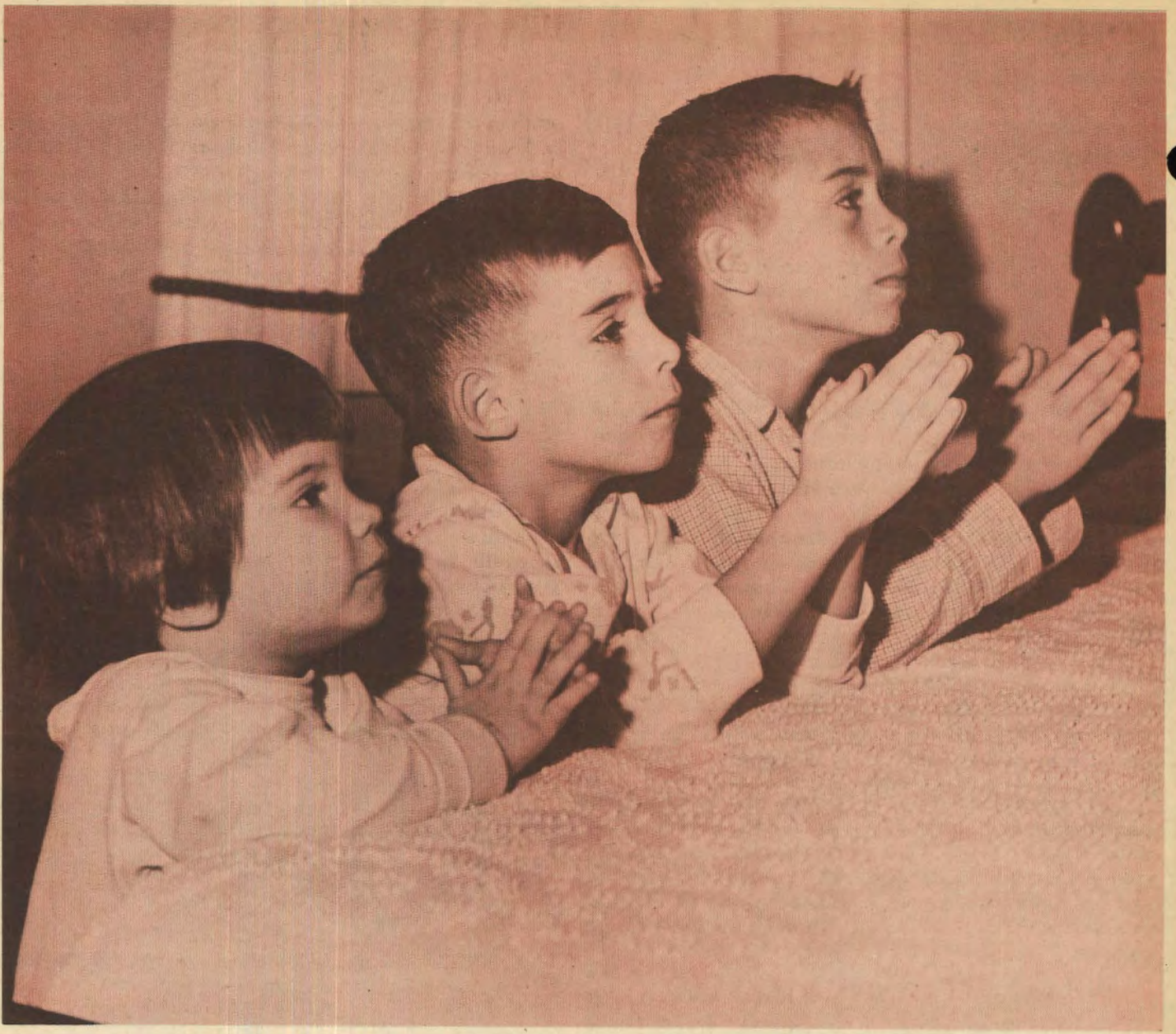
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**Arkansas**  
**Baptist**  
*newsmagazine*

DECEMBER 23, 1965



**'Forgive Christmases', page 4**



## *A Christmas prayer for 1965*

O GOD our Father, we are so busy this Christmas of 1965 that (unless we are careful) we will overlook thy gift. We are so rich that (unless we give heed) we will disdain thy gift. We are so self-centered that (unless we unthroned self) we will belittle thy gift.

THOU didst, in the long ago, hide thy Gift in Bethlehem. Only those who were humble, sought it. Only those who were seeking, found it. Only those who were unhurried, saw it.

GRANT that we may rediscover thy Gift this Christmas. That is, may we find Him, and He be found in us. May we praise Him, and his loveliness be mirrored in us. May we serve Him, and his compassion be revealed in us.

AND if—in thy mercy—thou dost choose to grant our wish, every day shall be Christmas and every star an ornament and every breath a paean of praise to Thee. Amen.

## Christian spirit

ON Wednesday night of last week First Church, Russellville, met to consider what its relation should be toward the Arkansas Baptist Convention, in light of the fact that the Convention refused to seat messengers to the Convention from the Russellville church.

The editor of this paper was present as one of five invited by the church to attend the meeting. Others present on invitation were Convention President Don Hook and Convention Parliamentarian Carl Overton. Dr. S. A. Whitlow, executive secretary of the Convention, and Executive Board President Rheubin L. South were the others invited but neither was able to attend, Dr. Whitlow being out of the state on Convention business and Dr. South having previous commitments in his church.

Members of the church spoke freely. But from the first speaker to the last the spirit reflected was amazingly Christian. That the church had been wise in prefacing the meeting with several weeks of prayer was obvious.

"We are Baptists and we believe that the Cooperative Program is the best means of working together with other Baptists in the cause of world missions," was the general view on which all seemed to agree. "We are in favor of continuing to work with the State Convention and to channel our mission gifts through the Cooperative Program."

While there was no doubt that the members who spoke felt the Convention erred gravely in its action against seating the Russellville messengers, all seemed to agree that any act of retaliation from the church against the Convention would be less than Christian. "Two wrongs would not make a right," one of the speakers said.

Sunday morning in the regular worship service, the church postponed action until the regular January business meeting.

Answering a request from the recent Baptist Student Union Convention that Russellville First Church serve as host church for the 1966 BSU convention, the church voted unanimously to do so. The church also voted to reconfirm two other meetings of State Convention groups in 1966, meetings which had been scheduled prior to the November Convention.

Regardless of differences of views on "close baptism" and "close communion," surely all of us can agree that the Russellville church has manifested a wonderful Christian spirit. We need more, not less, churches with this spirit in our State Convention.

THE staff of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* sends you its warmest wishes for a glorious holiday season with our own Christmas card and prayer on the opposite page. The children are Terry, 11, Kevin, 7, and Shannon, 3, whose father, Pat Murphy, is chairman of deacons of Calvary Church, Little Rock. The prayer was written by our "Perspective" columnist, Robert J. Hastings.

IT may well be true that Baptists today need to be more narrow and deeper, rather than more broad-minded and shallow, says Don Cooper, pastor, First Church, Star City. On pages 6 and 7 we are printing his sermon on "The New Testament Church and Its Ordinances," preached at the annual meeting of Harmony Association in October.

WE invite you to turn to the departmental section, beginning on page 12, to read the greetings prepared especially for you by some of our state leaders in the Baptist Building. You'll also find some of your favorite columnists interspersed in these pages. J. R. Cossey asks, "Don't Butcher the King's English." B. K. Selph stresses "The Importance of Subject Matter." Harriet Hall looks back at Christmases of by-gone days and family customs that enhance every Christian's dearest holiday. Herschel Hobbs has a spine-tingling topic, "Treading on Serpents and Scorpions."

AS is our annual custom, there will be no *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* published next week. So, today we are bringing you the Sunday School lessons by Dr. Ralph A. Phelps for December 26 and January 2. See pages 29 and 30.

THIS, the last issue of the year, brings you for your files our annual index. It begins on page 19.

COVER story, page 13.

**Arkansas Baptist**  
*newsmagazine*

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Associated Church Press  
Evangelical Press Ass'n

December 23, 1965

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Abbreviations used in crediting news items: BP Baptist Press; CB Church Bulletin; DP Daily Press; EP Evangelical Press; AB Associational Bulletin

Perhaps we need to go back to Bethlehem and look again at the first Christmas.

### 'Forgive Christmases'

A LITTLE girl who had been counting the days till Christmas could not help but be puzzled by what the day before Christmas was like, reports *Gospel Herald*.

On Christmas eve she had noticed:

Dad seemed to be loaded down with worries as well as bundles.

Mom's anxiety had reached the breaking point several times during the day.

Anywhere the little girl went, she seemed to be in the way more than usual. There was such a hustle and bustle by so many to do so much, all in the name of being "ready for Christmas."

By the time the child was hustled off to bed, the feverish planning for Christmas had completely unnerved her. So, as she knelt to pray the Lord's Prayer, she got part of it mixed up and prayed: "Forgive us our Christmases as we forgive those who Christmas against us."

Has Christmas in our day actually become a load for us rather than a lift?

In some Arkansas town not long before Christmas this year I saw a poor family trying to do what it expected of itself on a Christmas shopping trip. There were three of them—Dad, Mother and teen-age daughter. It was obvious at a glance that Christmas was an extra financial burden for them. The day was cold. While Mother and Daughter were comfortably dressed their apparel showed considerable age and wear. Dad wore overalls and two shirts, but no jacket or coat. As he walked his body seemed to be trying to nestle in itself, much as cattle left unprotected in winter blasts. His only mark of self-respect and sophistication was a half-smoked cigarette hanging jauntily between his lips, as he walked with hands in pockets. He seemed to me as being himself somewhat of a lamb being led to the slaughter.

The name of this family is Legion, for like them are many.

Is it not sad that we have laid upon ourselves so many impossible things in the name of Christmas observance that many "dread to see Christmas come," or "will be glad when it is over"?

There was no frenzied "getting ready" for that Christmas, for the world had not yet taken it over as its big holiday. And since affairs were still completely in God's hand, the emphasis was where it should be—on the Christ.

The only Christmas cards that year were oral, sung by the angels to shepherds watching their flocks on the hills overlooking Bethlehem:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). So there was no last minute rush to flood the mails with cards ranging from the sacred to the bawdy.

It is interesting to note that the impulse of the shepherds, first to receive the Christmas greeting, was not to go shopping to buy presents for everybody. Instead, they said: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us" (Luke 2:15b).

The shepherds were poor. If they took any presents even for the Christ child, we have no mention of it in the Scriptures. But it is obvious that they presented to the Christ what he desires of all of us far above rubies and gold: the adoration of human hearts.

Free of the burdens of Christmas as we have them today and with their eyes and hearts fixed on Jesus, the shepherds became possessed of the true spirit of Christmas. Luke reports that they ". . . made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child . . ." and ". . . returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

A lot of the hullabaloo called "Christmas" today could be eliminated if we could de-commercialize the season. Just a few brave souls refusing to have the Christmas emphasis anywhere else but on Christ might start a wholesome revolution. We might start by refusing to buy or accept "Christmas presents." Instead of buying for all the members of our families and for those who will "spend as much on us as we do on them," why not do our present-giving for loved ones on their birthdays instead of at Christmas and restrict our Christmas giving to those in need who cannot help themselves? This would not only eliminate the mad scrambles in the stores at this time of the year, it might help us to have the Christmas spirit as we have never had it before. But this year, again, the most of us will need to pray with the little girl, "Lord, forgive us our Christmases."

*Edwin L. McDonald*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# the people SPEAK

THE spelling and sentence structure in this department are those of the writers. The only editing of letters to the editor is the writing of headlines and, occasionally, deletion of parts that are not regarded as essential.

### Historic position

I AM still numb from amazement over the action of the Arkansas Convention in refusing to seat the messengers from the church which baptized me and nurtured my Christian life in boyhood and youth. While I am no longer a member of any Arkansas church, I was for fifty years active in churches at Russellville, Fayetteville and Little Rock and I believe that I have a right to be heard.

I am wounded over this affront to my Russellville brethren, but my chief concern is that the hasty and ill-mannered action of a few has reflected upon the whole body of Arkansas Baptists. I am confident it does not represent their judgment nor their spirit.

Let me try to speak the truth as I see it and in love as Paul enjoined us to do. At the moment, I am not primarily interested in the substantive issue, that is, whether or not the Russellville Church was engaging in improper practices. Who knows? My complaint is that they were not given a chance to be heard. By pre-emptory action and in a mood that appeared to be wholly inconsistent with our ideals of patience and human kindness, a church which had been faithful to the essentials for nearly a century was told they were not entitled to sit with their fellow Christians of the Baptist faith.

I presume I can hardly say what is on my mind without at least touching upon the issue which seemed to underlie the convention action and I do not want to beg the question. I simply want to insist as one Baptist that we try to place it in perspective. If a convention is to take over decisions as to who shall sit at the Lord's table and who shall vote in congregational matters, we are going a long way from the historic Baptist position. We cannot have it both ways. We cannot proclaim the principle of local autonomy in one breath and in the next say if their decisions do not fit some conventional thinking we will not sit with them.

But in any event they should have had the right to defend themselves. Wouldn't the Russellville Church's statement of faith, if known when the Convention acted, have influenced the decision? And shouldn't the pastor have had the courtesy of the floor to give that statement and to defend his flock?

What became of Baptist democracy when the Convention declined to hear all sides or even postpone judgment in order to make sure that fair treatment was accorded their fellows? This is the tragic aspect of the record as it now stands. It is largely a procedural question. Still the convention's hastiness was, I fear, sparked by a spirit of authoritarianism that is not in line with our standards and our performance in the past.

We have a mighty resource in the functioning of the State Convention and its agencies. We cannot afford to be indifferent to an assault by the larger body upon one member of our Baptist family.

Surely by Convention time next year, the Convention will be ready to correct this grievous procedural mistake.—Brooks Hays, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

### Why not scriptural?

IF a controversy, why not a scriptural controversy?

This Russellville controversy can't even be proved right or wrong by the scriptures. Therefore it should not have come up in the first place. After all, do we not have freedom of worship in this country? What does God think of people wasting so much time on something that isn't worth a snap of the finger? Instead all of that time should be spent on the more weightier matters. For instance, how many Baptist preachers are guilty of performing unscriptural weddings? How many church members are guilty of living in adultery? Besides all the other sins, which are committed knowingly. Is it not more sinful to commit a sin, which you know is a sin; than to commit a sin, which you are not conscious of?

We need more Amos and Isaiah preachers today.

If we are going to have a controversy, why not let it be on something that can be proved right or wrong scripturally.—Dalton Baptist

### A timid proposal

for a new article of faith:

"On an Intermediate State for Baptists"

[We believe] That our Lord teaches that all believers will live together in harmony and love in the life to come; that only those who demonstrate love

for each other are His disciples;<sup>2</sup> that speaking against our brethren usurps the rights of the Judge of all the earth;<sup>3</sup> that putting on the new man in Christ does away with human groupings based on race, religious observances, cultural and economic status;<sup>4</sup> that refusing to receive Christian brethren is wickedness;<sup>5</sup> that our Lord condemns partisan spirit<sup>6</sup> and Paul attributes divisions, jealousy and strife to an immature and carnal state;<sup>7</sup> that, therefore, there must be a Baptist purgatory through which we will pass to purify<sup>8</sup> our attitudes and make us willing and able to live with each other,<sup>9</sup> much more with believers of other names, through all eternity.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Jn. 17:17-26; <sup>2</sup> Pet. 1:13; Rev. 7:13-17

<sup>3</sup>Jn. 13:35; 15:12-17; I Jn. 4:20-21

<sup>4</sup>Jas. 4:11-12; I Pet. 4:17

<sup>5</sup>Col. 3:10-11; Gal. 3:28

<sup>6</sup>III Jn. 10-11

<sup>7</sup>Luke 9:39-55

<sup>8</sup>I Cor. 3:1-3; Rom. 13:13

<sup>9</sup>Mal. 3:2-3

<sup>10</sup>Zeph. 3:11-13

<sup>11</sup>I Thess. 3:11-13; Hebs. 12:21-23; 12:20-21; Jn. 10:16

(Any alternative proposals cordially welcomed)—C. Brownlow Hastings, Minister of Adult Education, Park City Baptist Church, Dallas, Tex.

### What languages?

IN the December 2 issue Dr. Hobbs states that "in all likelihood Jesus spoke both Aramaic and Greek." This is the second time he has spoken about Jesus in this manner in his column. How could he cast doubts on the inherent ability of our Lord to speak every man's language? Was that knowledge denied Christ, who knew men's very thoughts and who had power to raise from the dead?

Did not the Holy Spirit give the apostles knowledge to speak the language of all those present on the day of Pentecost? I believe that Christ is part of the Holy Trinity and can speak any tongue spoken by men, past, present and future, and that limiting the power of God is a form of blasphemy.—Jean, the Baptist

REPLY: God deliberately limited Jesus in sending him into the world in the body of the flesh.—ELM

### 'Why change?'

WITH reference to the confusion about the First Church in Russellville and Ouachita University, I write this letter.

God is not the author of confusion, I Cor. 14:33.

From the press, we gather the news of these two institutions. The First Church was rapped on the hand for deviating from Baptist Doctrine in receiving

(Continued on Page 11)

# THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH AND ITS ORDINANCES

BY DON COOPER,  
PASTOR, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
STAR CITY, ARKANSAS

[Preached at the annual meeting of Harmony Association, Pine Bluff, October 1965.]

"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

—Matthew 28:16-20

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

—I Corinthians 14:8

THE theme for Southern Baptist churches in the year 1965-66 is, "The Church Fulfilling Its Mission Through Proclamation and Witness."

We are to sound the trumpet. We are to warn men of judgment to come. "But if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?"

Our theme is evangelism, but our evangelism is based on our doctrine. History has proven that if we are not consistent as to our doctrine, we are weak in real evangelism.

The doctrines which we discuss today have a direct bearing on our theme of evangelism. The doctrines of the New Testament church and the ordinances play major roles in the drama of sharing the gospel. If we are to fulfill our mission, we must be sure as to the New Testament position on these doctrines. We dare not give an uncertain sound to the lost world.

Baptists have a unique mission in the world today. If we neglect the New Testament position on these vital doctrines, we forfeit our right to fulfill this unique mission for Christ.

Through the years, New Testament Christians have been characterized by these basic principles, namely:

1. New Testament Christians believe that the Bible is the sole authority for faith and practice.
2. New Testament Christians believe that the New Testament church is composed of baptized believers.
3. New Testament Christians believe in the priesthood of every believer and in the autonomy of the local congregation.
4. New Testament Christians believe in the principle of religious liberty and the principle of the separation of church and state.

These principles have been guidelines for Baptists. They are New Testament principles. Baptists cherish them today, as our Christian forefathers did in the yesterday.

## The church

WITH these principles in mind, what do New Testament "Baptizers" or New Testament Baptists believe is a New Testament church?

Matt. 16:18: "Jesus said, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The church that Jesus built is still here.

Acts 2:47: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Eph. 1:22-23: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

Baptists believe this about the church: "A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

"This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation, members are equally responsible. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

"The New Testament speaks also of the church of the body of Christ which includes all the redeemed of all the ages.

This is the full statement taken from our statement of faith adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963.

Our statement is fine, but we must be careful not to consider that the church is equal with the kingdom of God. Notice these differences in the church and the Kingdom.

1. The church began with Jesus Christ, while the Kingdom began much earlier.
2. The church is composed of believers in Christ, while the Kingdom includes all of God's children.
3. The church belongs to this world, while the Kingdom will continue in the world to come.
4. The church is visible, while the Kingdom is not visible. Some of us mean the Kingdom of God when we use the

term "universal church." The New Testament church is the local, visible body of baptized believers. We must not confuse it with the "over-all" Kingdom of God.

## Church authority

THIS New Testament church, instituted by Christ, was given a commission to "Go, teach all nations, baptize, and teach them to observe." It is at this point of commission or authority that we have our most difficulty when we come to the ordinances.

Does the New Testament church, the local body of baptized believers, have the authority as to baptism?

Does the New Testament church, the local body of baptized believers, have the authority as to the Lord's Supper?

To help us answer these questions, let us look again at the elements that distinguish the ordinances from other ceremonies that we practice in our churches.

1. We believe that it must be a specific command of Jesus Christ Himself.

2. We believe that the observance must in and of itself proclaim the gospel.

3. We also believe that it must be an act of the church.

This third element is the one that gives us trouble. Some would not agree that it must be an act of the church. However, consider for a moment, this third distinguishing characteristic sounds logical since we are talking about church ordinances.

If it is a church ordinance, it must be an act of the church. In this way it is distinguished from the other commands of Christ, and other forms of proclaiming the gospel which may be primarily personal or individual. To participate in communion or to be baptized is not a private affair, but it is rather to share in the declaration of the gospel of Christ, in obedience to His commands, within the church which He founded.

Both ordinances of the church then become actions of the church. It would seem then that the church, the local body of baptized believers, would have some authority as to the administration of the church ordinances.

Dr. J. Clyde Turner, in his book, *The New Testament Doctrine of the Church*, reminds us that in the New Testament there was no question of alien immersion or open communion. These are questions that must be settled, not by any direct teachings of the New Testament, but according to the principles laid down in the New Testament and by the practices of the New Testament church.

## Authority for baptism

LET us look more closely at the question of authority for baptism. We are generally agreed on the proper subject, a believer, the proper mode, immersion, the proper purpose, to give evidence of transformation within, but what about the proper authority?

Someone has said, "It takes more than baptism to make a Baptist and it takes more than immersion to make a baptism."

Jesus committed to somebody, or something, the authority to baptize. A scriptural baptism must have scriptural authority. If you have an improper subject, or an improper mode, or an improper purpose, or an improper authority, you have an improper baptism.

We repeat, if baptism is a church ordinance, it must be administered by church authority. Paul said to the church at Corinth, "I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you" (I Cor. 11:2).

So many are baptized today without the authority of any church that it compels us to exercise our commission and require a scriptural baptism.

## Authority for Lord's Supper

SHALL we practice "open," "close," or "closed" communion? One letter to the editor of our *Arkansas Baptist* has

pointed out that there is no uniform practice among Baptist churches. This however does not justify a wrong approach to the Lord's Supper. And neither does it make a practice necessarily right or wrong because it is practiced or not practiced by our Landmark friends.

We have been criticized more with reference to the Lord's Supper than any other doctrine. Many say, as they refer to "those narrow-minded Baptists," that it is the Lord's table and any may come who desire. Baptists believe in a New Testament order of things. Conversion is first, Baptism is next, and then the Lord's Supper, the Supper coming under "teach them to observe all things" as given in the Great Commission. Baptists believe that this constitutes New Testament order.

The point at which we disagree with others is that we do not accept their baptism. We do not believe that they have been scripturally baptized, so we do not feel that it is our place to invite them to the Lord's table. Actually Baptists are close on Baptism, rather than close on the Lord's Supper.

Dr. W. T. Conner, the great theologian of the Southwest, used to say, "Baptists cannot consistently invite to the Lord's table those whom they would not admit to church membership." We agree that Supper is for baptized believers. Baptists believe that the New Testament required a certain kind of baptism, and until that baptism occurs, we cannot invite them to the Lord's table.

Someone asked a Baptist, "What are you Baptists going to do about 'close communion' in heaven?" The answer was quite simple. "There won't be this observance in heaven. The scriptures say we observe this now to show the Lord's death till he comes again.

To those who would practice "open communion," let them be aware of these violations of New Testament principles, as pointed out by Dr. W. D. Nowlin in his book.

## Fundamentals of the faith

1. Open communion admits as scriptural the baptism of infants.

2. Open communion admits to the validity of sprinkling and pouring as New Testament baptism.

3. Open communion also must admit to baptismal regeneration.

4. The demand for open communion grows out of a false sense of fraternity. The Supper is not a love feast to show our love for one another. It is to show the Lord's death till he comes again.

Baptists must stand firm on their positions as to the proper New Testament observance of the ordinances of the church.

## Conclusions

LET us make these conclusions:

1. The New Testament principles on which we have based our practice in the past are still valid today.

2. We do not like what we see in other faiths that practice open communion and are not strict on baptism.

3. We fool ourselves and a lost world if we try to make Christianity easy.

4. The church must preserve and protect the ordinances. Also the ordinances must be used to preserve and protect the church. The ordinances can:

(1) Help make the gospel plain.

(2) Help keep the gospel pure.

(3) Help keep the church pure.

The church will have enough imperfection without us opening the gap any wider.

It is obvious that the strict application of the ordinances in church life will have a definite effect upon the message and character of the church.

It might well be true that Baptists today need to be more narrow and deeper, rather than more broad-minded and shallow.

"If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle?"



## Bible conference

DAILY schedule for the Mid-winter Bible Conference at Spring-lake Encampment, Lonsdale, Jan. 17-21, has been announced.

Morning sessions will be devoted to Old and New Testament studies and a study of the prophets. Speakers will be Homer Shirley, Damon Shook, Clarence Shell, Tommy Robertson, Herbert Hodges and Dr. Bernes K. Selph.

Afternoons will be free for recreation.

During the evenings S. A. Wiles will speak on a retired minister's view of the ministry. A layman's look at the ministry and ministers' looks at themselves will also be evening features.

The conference opens at 6 p.m. Monday and closes Friday noon. Cost is \$15. Reservations must be made with Dr. Selph, First Baptist Church, Benton, 72015.

## CORRECTION

THE annual Christmas tree and program announced in last week's edition of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* will be presented at Forest Tower Mission, Route 1, Hensley. The mission was incorrectly listed as Forest High. Forest Tower, a mission of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, has invited the public to the Christmas play at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 23.

## Hope Association

SOUTH Texarkana Church, J. P. Skinner, pastor, burned a note on its mission property on College Hill recently. The mission has had 35 to 40 in Sunday School. C. T. Jones is mission pastor. The mother church remodeled the present property and added more classroom facilities.

JAMES R. Wilson is the new pastor of Sylverino Church. He is now living at Commerce, Tex., where he is working on his doctorate. He will be here every week end.

## Rivervale pays off debt



RIVERVALE Church held a special note-burning service Nov. 28. Two years ago the church constructed five Sunday School rooms, borrowing \$1,000 to supplement funds on hand. The final payment was made recently when

a special offering was taken.

In the picture from left to right are Deacon Joe Truell, Associational Missionary, Trinity Association, L. D. Eppinette and Pastor, Raymond Anderson. Mr. Eppinette preached the special sermon.

## DEATHS

Thad D. Douglas, 71, of Hamburg, Dec. 14. He was a retired Southern Baptist minister and had held pastorates at Montrose, Arkansas City, Kilbourne, La., Urbana, Atkins, West Memphis, Cotton Plant and Belleville. He was associational missionary for three districts.

Mrs. Adeline Melissa Moore Holt, 97, at Little Rock Dec. 14. She was a member of First Church, Russellville. She leaves seven sons: Supreme Court Justice J. Frank Holt, Jack Holt Sr. and Harlan Holt, all of Little Rock, John Lockin Holt, Camden, Claude and J. B. Holt, Harrison and Dr. E. E. Holt, Ft. Worth; and two daughters, Mrs. B. G. Alexander, Mena, and Mrs. D. L. McCutcheon, Russellville.

RAY Brice, Dallas, Tex., is the new pastor of First Church, Coal Hill.

## Last of the year

THIS issue of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* is the last one of the year. Our next will be published Jan. 6.

In this issue we are printing the Sunday School lessons for Dec. 26 and Jan. 2. Our annual index is another feature with all issues of 1965 catalogued.

## Seek preacher

NEW Hope Church, five miles southwest of Dardanelle, is pastorless following the recent resignation of Herman Williams.

The church has a modern parsonage, with school bus, mail and telephone service.

Serving on the pulpit committee are Noah Kuhn, Frank Grace and John Edison. Interested persons may contact any of the committee by writing them at Dardanelle.

# Just in time

BY MRS. RALPH C. BETHEA  
MISSIONARY SERVING IN TANZANIA

ONE beautiful night last summer, as we sat around a safari campfire, under the incredibly clear African skies, we began quoting great passages from the Bible, including those that outline God's plan of salvation. The brown face of Redmon, the lithe African game scout, lighted up in the dwindling flames as visiting members of our family spoke of the beauty of repentance and of our Heavenly Father's forgiving love.

Judge John W. McCall, of Memphis, Tenn., our clan's 80-year-old patriarch, quoted quietly, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." He added, "I am not afraid to die." [Judge McCall is Mrs. Bethea's father.]

He turned to Redmon, sitting beside him, and asked if he believed in Jesus. The answer came earnestly, from the hunter's heart, "Yes, I believe in Jesus as my Saviour and Lord."

Redmon then told us of his hunting experiences, of how he had killed 38 elephants, becoming seasoned and crafty after he overcame his fear of the ferocity of the wounded animals.

A few days after our safari Redmon was called to shoot some rogue elephants that were destroying gardens and houses. He quickly tracked and located the leader. His first heavy bullet crashed into the animal's shoulder, and the second, hitting perhaps too far back, infuriated him. The third blast failed to bring down the hurricane of wild wrath that the beast had become.

Then, in consternation, Redmon realized he had loaded only three shells before handing his cartridge belt to a companion. And, he found that the other man had fled, taking the extra shells.

In fatal error, he called for ammunition. The elephant's sharp

ears located the hunter for his shortsighted eyes. Tons of dynamically agile animal gave no chance to the small, brave man. That evening the crushed and lifeless form of our guide was placed in a Land Rover by shocked and silent fellow scouts.

How we thanked God that his word had been spoken in testimony that night around the safari campfire, while Redmon's sharp mind and strong body were alive and responsive to the message of our Saviour's love.

## From the churches . . .

### Jacksonville First

HOW to run a church without money:

1. Every member will come to the services dressed so that the buildings will not have to be heated. This will eliminate the fuel bill.
2. Every member will spend some time each week cleaning the church, especially the part used by them. This will eliminate the janitor bill. Oh, yes, be sure to bring some brooms, mops, and cleaning materials.
3. Every member will bring a candle or a lantern to the night services. This will eliminate the light bill.
4. Those who want water while they are at church will bring it in their own containers.
5. Each member will furnish his hymnbook, quarterlies, and other literature. This will eliminate the literature bill.
6. Each member will spend some time in the church office getting out the bulletin, writing letters, keeping books, working on organizational records, and doing many other things that must be done in the office. This will eliminate the church secretaries' salaries. Of course, each member will furnish his own typewriter, mimeograph, and other office equipment as well as paper, ink, and office supplies.
7. Each member will spend some time building new buildings, and some time renovating and repairing the older

### Greene County

MRS. Charles Northen, associational clerk, has received the highest possible rating in the 1965 Better Minutes Contest. Notification came from Martin B. Bradley, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville.

A. W. PSALMONDS is the new pastor of Eight Mile Church.

OPEN house was held Dec. 5 for the new elementary building of First Church, Paragould. Adair Ellen is the new minister of music and education.

JAMES E. Stafford has resigned as pastor of Walcott Church, and A. W. Psalmonds as pastor of Unity.

NEW Friendship Church has a new pastor, Lannie Doucett.

JUNIOR Jernigan is the new pastor of New Liberty. (AB)

buildings. All materials and tools must be supplied.

8. Each member will spend some time working in all of our mission fields, at home and overseas. This includes the Evangelical, Medical, Publication, and Institutional Educational Work.

9. Each member will take his turn preaching, visiting, soul winning, conducting weddings, funerals, counseling at all hours, and directing the affairs of the church.

Yes, a church could be run without money, but who would want it that way?

### West Memphis First

ORDINATION of five deacons was held Dec. 12: Harry Denson, Ronnie Garner, Bill Kessinger, Sam Latham and Johnny Melton. Greer Garrott, pastor, Richland Church, Memphis, delivered the sermon.

### North Little Rock Pike Avenue

LISTEN to KMYO radio Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, every hour on the hour. The gospel story of Christ's birth will be repeated in lieu of news broadcasts. Our church is joining nine other local Southern Baptist Churches in presenting this program.

## Lewis on board



FLOYD W. LEWIS, Little Rock, has been named to the board of directors for the New Orleans Seminary Foundation. The foundation is responsible for major phases of the seminary's growth and development and also sponsors programs of theological research. A current project of the foundation is a \$1 million endowment campaign.

Mr. Lewis, executive vice president of Arkansas Power and Light Company, is a former trustee of the seminary.

## Johnson to Missouri

CHARLES H. Johnson, associate pastor and education director of Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff, for two and a half years, has resigned effective Dec. 17.

He will serve as BSU director in the Springfield, Mo., area. Before going to Pine Bluff he was BSU director at U.T.M.B. in Martin, Tenn.



I  
love  
a star,  
a wreath,  
a shopping  
list, a crowd,  
a gift, a time  
of worship, a toy,  
a child, a colored  
ball, a party, a kiss,  
a family together, the  
sound of laughter, turkey  
'n mince pie, joy and peace,  
a tree of lights, the glow of  
candles, the faith of a child,  
the sound of bells, an angel's song,  
a season of wonder and togetherness,  
a  
world  
at  
peace  
filled with love  
and good will  
toward all  
mankind.

## Beacon Lights of Baptist History

By BERNES K. SELPH, Th.D.  
Pastor, 1st Baptist Church, Benton

### The importance of subject matter

THAT religious leaders and churches face tremendous problems today anyone with a little knowledge of these affairs will admit. Many suggestions as to the reason are given. Criticisms are sometimes sharp. Many quick cures are offered.

Some of our problems are as old as man and deep as human nature. Without trying to probe the depths of cause or cures, a glance at history may throw light on our day and offer some timely help.

More than a century ago Baptist work in another state had fallen to a low ebb. Preaching brought little success. This was

not due so much to the ability of the preachers as to the subject matter of their discourses. Doctrinal differences created confusion and a bad spirit.

Instead of preaching Christ and warning men to repent, preachers spent their time, mental powers, and energies trying to disprove a brother in what they thought to be doctrinal error.

A story is told of David Truman who became discouraged in his pastoral labors. He lamented the same to his people. An aged widow pointed a bony finger at him and looking him steadily in the eye said, "I tell you what is wrong. Stop preaching John Calvin and James Arminius and preach Jesus Christ."

The pointed truth found its mark. Pastor Truman took her advice and immediately took as his text, "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus and him crucified," and preached a powerful sermon. Spiritual in-

terest quickened in that community, leading to a revival.

However, it is not to be thought that the preachers were all to blame. There was such a popular taste on the part of the people for controversy that those who attended Baptist preaching would not be satisfied with anything else. Only time helped.

It may be that in our day we are preaching about too many things and not enough about some few essential things. We may have become impatient with the old truths and ways and have turned to too many solutions and definitions of man. And it may be that far too many of our tastes have changed and we are not quite ready to accept Christ's way as yet.

In such muddled conditions and complexities of life we aren't likely to find quick solutions. But most likely the solution will be found in the truth of Pastor Truman's text.

## Recognition for Clement

LEON Clements, Ouachita University's NAIA All American center, was second highest scorer in the nation among players from both large and small colleges, according to the 1965 edition of Converse Basketball Yearbook.

Clements' 954 points were second only to Rick Barry of Miami (Fla.), who had 973. Another Ouachita Tiger, David Kossover, ranked 58th in the national scoring with 636 points.

Clements also ranks 33rd among the all-time top scorers in the nation on the basis of his 2,135 points scored during his final three years.

Both Clements and Kossover received honorable mention on the All-American team compiled by Chuck Taylor of Converse. Voting was done by 837 leading coaches, writers, and sportscasters.

WAYNE Allen has resigned as pastor of Conner's Chapel Church, Trinity Association, to accept a call to Looxahoma Church, Senatobia, Miss. (AB)

## Letters

(Continued from page 5)

ing members and communion. The doctrine I have been taught and practiced by the churches I have been a member is: Membership—Matt. 3:8, candidate for baptism (conversion) Acts 15:23, Romans 16:1, letter from a sister church, statement of Baptist baptism of a new defunked church, Matt. 3:16, Mark 1:9, 10, baptism

This doctrine was known to the Russellville church. Lord's Supper—Matt. 26:19, 20, Mark 14:17. I believe the church was instigated when Christ chose the twelve, and since they were the only ones in the room at the time and many had been converted (Luke 10:20), was it open or closed communion?

I believe in separation of church and state. If Ouachita is going to continue as a Baptist school, it should be supported by Baptists. If it is to be supported by the state, it should be a state school. The Bible teaches you cannot serve two masters.

Confusion over these matters can and will be very harmful to our effort

to witness and win. God has blessed, for a long time, Baptists who have held steadfastly to these doctrines—why change?

H. H. Wheeler, Hot Springs

## Approve resolution

FIRST Church, Highfill, went on record Wednesday, Dec. 1, voicing their approval of the "Don Hook Resolution," which was adopted by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at the 112th annual session.

Church Clerk, Betty B. Cherry  
Pastor, Jack E. Lawson

## Baptism, Lord's Supper

SHOULD Baptists invite christians of other denominations to partake of the Lord's supper with them, and should we recognize as valid, Baptism administered by other denominations? This, it seems is the real issue before us today.

In the past we have not done either of these things and have drawn criticism for being narrow-minded and bigoted on these issues. Many even within our own ranks feel that perhaps we have been too strict about these matters.

In trying to arrive at the answer we must keep in mind certain basic facts, one of which is the importance of sound doctrine. Paul, in the second letter to Timothy warned of a time to come when 'they will not endure sound doctrine.' We must remember too, that it is this close adherence to fundamentals that made Baptists a unique people in the past. If our forefathers were perhaps too rigid in their loyalty to the basic Baptist doctrines, it is equally true that they had a power we do not seem to have today.

Paul in the first Corinthian letter chapter 11 states that when Christians who are divided on doctrinal matters come together this is not to eat the Lord's supper, or as the American Revised puts it, 'it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper. This should be sufficient to show that christians who hold contrasting and conflicting beliefs on Salvation, Baptism, The Church, Etc. not only should not attempt to observe the supper together, but that it is impossible for them to do so, for they are not 'of one mind and one accord.'

Should we recognize baptism administered by other denominations? In answering this question we must remember that Baptism can be administered only by the New Testament Church, so the real question is, can we recognize as a New Testament Church an organization or denomination whose origin can be traced directly to a man or a place in history where it originated? All major religious denominations, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Etc. can be traced to their

founders. Now do these religious bodies, good in their purpose though they are, constitute a New Testament Church? Baptists of the past have said 'No.' We do not question the salvation of these Brethren, but rather their doctrinal position. Our view is that since they are not a New Testament Church, but merely a religious denomination founded by men, they cannot administer scriptural Baptism.

Now should Baptist Associations and Conventions seat messengers of Baptist Churches that do not hold rigidly to these traditional Baptist views? In trying to arrive at the answer we should avoid two dangers, one, of being too narrow and that of being too broad. Associations and Conventions might be so narrow as to not seat messengers whose home church differed from the general views on even minor points, or so broad as to seat messengers whose church practiced what we in general regard as heresy. Which is the greater danger today? From where I sit the greater danger today is in being too broad-minded, for we live in an age of compromise when there is clamor on every hand to break with the past and streamline everything. In the Bible we are told, 'Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set,' and this refers to fundamentals.

To depart from our traditional, scriptural Baptist position on even matters of doctrine and belief, could have the same weakening effect on our life as a people that departing from the gold standard has had on our currency, departing from the constitution has had on our government, taking religion from the class-room has had on our schools, and giving in to the whims of children has had on the home-life of the nation.

There is every indication that we Baptists need to rethin: restudy, re-teach and re-preach our doctrines lest we should become like ~~the~~ Paul wrote of who would not endure sound doctrine and would turn to fables.—Walter H. Watts, Pastor, Acorn Baptist Church, Mena, Ark.

REPLY: While it is true that Baptists have for the most part been observers of "close" baptism and "close" communion, this has never been an official requirement by the Southern Baptist Convention and many Southern Baptist churches over the years have accepted professions of faith and immersion from churches other than Baptist. But Baptists are all agreed on believer's baptism, with baptism by immersion as a church ordinance and symbolic of the experience of regeneration. Many Southern Baptist churches observe "open" communion, not restricting participation in the Lord's Supper to their own members or those from other Baptist churches. This is not to argue for such practices but to set the record straight.—ELM

Church Music

Our Christmas Greeting:

"SONG OF JOY"  
ELSIE E. THORNBURG

Sing for joy, O people sing;  
Good tidings to you today we bring,  
For unto you down Bethlehem way  
A Child is born—is born today.

Sing ye people, O people sing!  
Sing for joy; let your voices ring,  
For in Bethlehem in early morn,  
In David's city, a Saviour is born.

An Angel came to earth today  
To bring the message all the way;  
The baby born is Christ the King,  
Who to the world will gladness bring.

O come ye people and worship him!  
Let loud hosannas to Him ring  
Until this message covers the earth  
And hearts of men shall know re-birth.



Secretary

*Hugh A. Mulkey*



Associate

*Eleanor A. Howell*

OAK Grove Church, Van Buren, Dec. 7-12; Bob Shoemaker, pastor, evangelist; T. C. Farrar, music director; 6 for baptism; 40 dedications.

WITT'S Chapel, Current River Association, Jimmie Milliken, Southern College, evangelist; 13 professions of faith and rededications; Doyle Wesson, pastor.

FIRST Church, Tulia, Tex., Jan. 2-9; Dr. C. Gordon Bayless, Little Rock, evangelist; C. Nelson Rue, former pastor Beech Street Church, Texarkana, pastor.

FOREST Tower Mission, Little Rock, Dec. 5-12; Dr. Erwin L. McDonald, editor of Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, evangelist; 13 rededications; 1 for baptism; Cecil Webb, pastor.

Brotherhood

To all men and boys

THE Brotherhood department extends hearty Christmas greetings to all Baptist men and boys throughout Arkansas and to all of God's children everywhere. May all the blessings of the season be yours in abundance both now and throughout the coming New Year.

We are thankful to God our Father for the gift of His Son to be our Savior from sin and death and hell, and to redeem us to Himself and to heaven and to life everlasting. We are grateful that He came and lived and died and rose again, and that He is alive forevermore!

We are thankful for the church, for which Jesus gave all that He had; for the glorious work of the church, and for a place of service in it. We are thankful for our denomination, and for the wonderful truths upon which it is based; for its work and for its far flung outreach for Christ around the world.

We are thankful for our hopes for the New Year. They are as bright as the promises of God. May God help each of us to make of 1966 a year of prayer, of Bible reading, and of following the beckoning hand of our Lord as He leads us forth to serve Him.—Nelson Tull, C. H. Seaton

Plan for Soul-winning Commitment Day

THE beginning of a new year is a wonderful time. It is when we re-examine ourselves. We make many new resolutions and plans. This is a fine time to decide to present Christ to lost friends at every opportunity. To help in this, we shall have Soul-winning Commitment Day throughout the Southern Baptist Convention, Jan. 9.

The observance of this day in your church provides:

A list of potential witnesses.

A good up-to-date list of prospects.

An opportunity to focus special attention on the main task of the church.

An opportunity to re-emphasize that witnessing is every Christian's job.

Opportunities for training and involving church members in witnessing.

Opportunities to relate personal witnessing and training to the existing organizations of the church.

The pastor and church council should formulate plans for Soul-winning Commitment Day, present them to the church and, on approval, give them wide publicity.

Suggested plans have been mailed to each pastor. Cards should be ordered from the Book Store, and the Sunday School superintendent should ask the department superintendents to present this matter at the assembly program, Sunday, Jan. 2. Cards should be distributed at this time but not signed until Sunday, Jan. 9. Ask the people, at this time, to sign all propositions on the card.

In the pastors guide there are suggestions for witnessing to one's mate, witnessing to one's own child and witnessing to a neighbor.

Yours for a great day Jan. 9,  
Jesse S. Reed, Director

# Treading on serpents and scorpions

BY HERSCHEL H. HOBBS

*Pastor, First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and past president, Southern Baptist Convention.*

*"BEHOLD, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19).*

THE Seventy had just returned from their mission, rejoicing that even demons were subject unto them. Jesus saw in their victories a foretaste of the utter defeat of Satan (v. 18). And then He gave this promise.

Did Jesus mean that deliberately they might tread on serpents and scorpions without suffering harm? Was such to be done as a display of their faith? Most commentators relate this to Mark 16:18 upon which snake handlers base their practice. This same verse also includes the drinking of poison! Suffice to say that the best manuscripts of Mark end with 16:8. So the remainder most likely is not genuine scripture. Cf. also verse 16. Certain elements of this passage are found elsewhere in the Gospels, so they are not lost from genuine teachings of Jesus.

Others point Luke 10:19 to Paul's experience of picking up a snake without harm on Malta (Acts 28:3-6). But he did not deliberately pick it up to prove his faith.

To do such would be to put God to the test. And Jesus Himself refused to do so when tempted of the devil (cf. Matt. 4:5ff.). Jesus never took undue chances in order to test God's keeping power. It is highly unlikely that He would teach His followers to do so.



PSALM 67:4 "O let the nations be glad and sing for joy."

We do violence to the meaning of Jesus' words in Luke 10:19 when we take them literally — that is, as to treading on serpents and scorpions without harm. "Serpents and scorpions" is a symbol of the power of evil in the world (cf. Gen. 3:15). Thus Jesus imparted to the Seventy of His authority to tread under foot, and thus overcome, the powers of evil, even "all the power of the enemy." In so doing they are promised the providential care of God.

But their greatest source of joy was not even their power over demons. It was that their names are written in heaven. This is the true measure and fruit of one's faith.

Church	December 12, 1965		Ch. Addns.
	Sunday School	Training Union	
Alzheimer, First	131	61	
Berryville			
Freeman Heights	161	65	
Blytheville			
First	588	182	5
Chapel	83	51	
Gosnell	292	103	1
New Liberty	129	29	1
Trinity	205	73	
Camden			
First	548	155	
Cullendale, First	441	651	1
Crossett, First	572	155	
Dumas, First	300	65	
El Dorado			
Caledonia	41	27	
First	818	563	
Immanuel	493	226	1
Trinity	206	97	
Greenwood, First	283	126	
Gurdon, Beech Street	179	58	
Harrison, Eagle Heights	264	81	1
Hope, First	444	146	2
Jacksonville			
First	424	141	2
Second	296	100	3
Jasper	56	24	
Jonesboro			
Central	500	217	2
Nettleton	273	111	
Little Rock			
Forest Highlands	282	131	4
Immanuel	1,144	423	
Rosedale	272	108	
McGehee, First	386	155	
Chapel	71	38	
Magnolia, Central	713	260	
Marked Tree, Neiswander	112	77	
Norphlet, First	241	110	
North Little Rock			
Baring Cross	657	200	1
South Side	51	28	
Calvary	409	102	
Central	271	93	
Forty-Seventh Street	212	119	
Gravel Ridge, First	186	78	
Runyan	69	50	
Levy	504	185	4
Park Hill	866	267	
Sixteenth Street	39	36	
Pine Bluff			
Centennial	208	99	
First	775	203	
Second	226	86	
Watson Chapel	161	77	
Siloam Springs, First	326	147	
Springdale, First	472	154	2
Star City, First	246	107	
Sylvan Hills, First	347	121	
Texarkana, Beech Street	498	169	
Mission	73		
Van Buren			
First	452	167	4
Second	74	43	
Vandervoort, First	62	38	
Ward, Cocklebur	55	61	
Warren			
First	447	164	1
Southside	90	92	5
Immanuel	267	104	
Westside	95	84	
West Memphis			
Calvary	286	150	3
Ingram Blvd.	244	127	



*Merry Christmas, and, thanks, Arkansas Baptists*



**FROM us. It's our living, as well as our life**  
**FROM the office secretary**  
**FROM ten local BSU directors (and two volunteer**  
**directors) and, most of all,**  
**FROM 12,266 Baptist students in Arkansas**  
**(No, all of these don't know we are on the**  
**campus or why. Help us tell them.)**

*Far from Bethlehem*



I wish I'd been a shepherd on the  
hill  
To see the Glory of the Lord come  
low.  
I would have knelt in awe beneath  
the glow  
Of holy angel's wings and known  
the thrill  
Of angel-song echoing through the  
chill.  
I would have laid aside my staff,  
I know,  
And left the flock of resting sheep  
to go  
And find the Christ-child sleeping  
in the still  
Of midnight's gentle hush. . .But  
I am far  
In time and place from Bethle-  
hem's quiet way.  
Yet, knowing even now the angels  
sing,  
Bringing a message bright as  
eastern star,  
I think again of that first Christ-  
mas Day  
And bow my thankful heart in  
worshipping.

—Iris O'Neal Bowen

## Don't butcher the King's English

BY J. I. COSSEY

I CAME up in an environment where speaking good English was not one of our concerns. If we spoke a sentence correctly, it was an accident, not our intention. When I became a preacher I had to face the importance of saying what I had to say, in the best possible English.

"Don't butcher the King's English" was not what I needed. I needed help. I needed a teacher to tell me what was right. I had the kindest and greatest teacher in the world, my wife. She was my helper.

I went to the pulpit with my Bible and my best preparation. My helper went to the audience with a note-book. Every word I said incorrectly, she wrote it down correctly. I didn't get mad at her—I thanked her. Over and over I said the corrected forms in my study. Week by week I was able to eliminate my worst mistakes. I still make grammatical errors, but I still work each week on my program of trying completely to overcome my bad English.

I work daily in my study in sermon preparation with two books I can always reach easily from my chair. One is a dictionary to help to locate the right word to express the thought I have in mind; the other is a short and simple treatise on English Grammar. I never try to write a letter, prepare an article or prepare a sermon that I do not consult the dictionary for the right word to use and for the correct spelling. In spite of all my carefulness my mistakes are too many.

*and yet abideth . . .*



"Hush, all ye sounds of war,  
Ye nations all be still,  
A voice of heav'nly joy steals over the vale and hill,  
O hear the angels sing the captive world's release,  
This day is born in Bethlehem the Prince of Peace.

"No more divided be,  
Ye families of men,  
Old enmity forget, old friendship knit again,  
In the new year of God let brothers' love increase,  
This day is born in Bethlehem the Prince of Peace."

STATE WMU OFFICE STAFF

Nancy Cooper

Mrs. R. E. Hagood  
Mary Hutson

Mrs. Melvin Murphree  
Mrs. C. S. White

We preachers must watch our English every day, week, month, year as long as we live among people. It is hard to have to watch our talk all the time, but it is for Christ's sake and the price we have to pay in carefulness is not too much.

Please don't forget, my preacher friend, that every time you make a grammatical error some one cringes and perks up his eyebrows right out there in front of you. Please eliminate every possible error because each one is very expensive to you.

It is not sufficient to say, don't, don't, don't. Some one in each church should be willing to help the pastor to overcome his bad English. It is important for the pastor to pick out some one and supply them with a notebook for use in jotting down mistakes.

The use of fourth, fifth or sixth grade workbooks are very helpful. I have gone through all of these work-books many times and have received much needed help. The effort pays off in great dividends. The greatest room in all the world is for self-improvement.

## *A call to the wise*

Ye men from the east  
Who follow the star  
With treasures to offer  
From regions afar,  
The king whom ye seek  
Is now but new born;  
His day is not yet.

This time is the morn,  
The morn of a day  
Of sorrow and pain  
And even of death  
Till he's risen again;  
For he's coming to seek  
And to save what is lost.

The price he will pay  
Whatever the cost.  
Then glory shall crown  
His triumph at last  
When he is enthroned  
And sorrows are past.  
O, worship the king,  
The Lord in his might!  
Be glad he survives  
The manger's low plight.

—W. B. O'Neal



## Feminine philosophy -- or intuition

BY HARRIET HALL

### Christmas and the home

ABOUT mid-December we hear outbursts against the commercial side of the season, the rush and push, the busyness and confusion of last minute activities. We sigh and wish for a little quiet time—and then suddenly we find or make it.

We may have to get up early to discover it, but there it is: the stillness in the valley on a cold crisp morning; the left-over symbolism of a new moon in the sky; the rising sun with promises of warmth; the spiral of smoke and scent of burning seasoned logs; the pleasant crackling sounds in the fireplace, and from the mantle above comes the fragrance of fresh Christmas greenery.

Home is very much a memory book and for many of us some of the happiest memories are those of Christmas.

As I was growing up, our family numbered seven. We had certain family traditions which were faithfully observed each year. On Christmas Eve all the presents were placed under the tree. The next morning the doors to the living room were closed, and no one could enter until all had gathered to take seats together, waiting patiently—for a while at least—as Santa (our father) handed out the presents one at a time. This usually took about two hours because there were so many of us to put odds and ends on the tree, but they were about the happiest two hours of our lives.

The most fun of all was listening to Santa read the inscriptions on each gift. He kept up a running patter which as far as we were concerned would compete favorably with any present-day TV comedian. He always added his own version to the tags with such things as, "To Richard

from Elizabeth—let's see, it says 15c" or, "To my own dear Daddy because he is so sweet, from Daniel." Richard and George always gave me games they could tear up. There were always games which the entire family could play—and these lasted throughout the day.

Each of us usually received a nice fat package only to discover that it contained *Acquiring Skill in Teaching* or *Arkansas Yesterday and Today* or some other book authored by Santa that he had put on the tree over and over again.

At a late breakfast we had the reading of the Christmas story from Luke. There were always spontaneous times during the holiday time when we gathered around the piano to sing carols. And the food my Mother cooked was truly "the icing on the cake!"

The simple traditions or customs one family enjoys at Christmas might seem trivial or uninteresting to another, but the spirit of keeping secrets, sharing fun and excitement, and the sure knowledge of being loved can never be forgotten by the children who grow up in such a home.

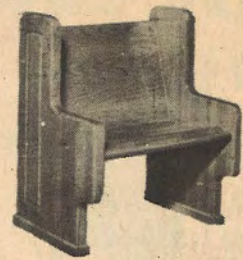
Mrs. Billy Graham has written of their family custom of eating oysters for breakfast on Christmas morning. This may not be your cup of tea—or mine—but it is an unusual tradition and a meaningful one for them as it is a carry-over from days in China with Ruth Graham's missionary parents.

Holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions are opportunities for the "extras" which take a little time and effort—but pay off rich dividends in the pages of each child's memory book.

We cannot measure the happiness at Christmas by the number of gifts or the amount each cost, just as we cannot determine the happiness of a home by the size or style of it, or the furnishings, or location, or the number of children, or the size of the budget.

The real spirit of Christmas is love—love that reaches out to en-

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fold strangers with friendship; love that means trust between parents and children, husband and wife; love that is sometimes full of laughter and sometimes full of tears; love that is willing to say, "I'm sorry" and bring forgiveness; love that means strength to live by each day.

Love is of God and God is love. The old proverb which says, "Home is a man's castle" should read for the Christian, "Home is God's castle."

Never is home more of a castle than when we celebrate Christmas in the true spirit of His story.

All children love stories and every home would do well to include a reading of the Christmas story as an annual tradition either on the eve of Christmas or on Christmas Day. Never was there enacted on the pages of history a more meaningful and beautiful story than that of our Savior's birth in Bethlehem.

I love Christmas. It is my hope and prayer that the God who gave His son may be honored in our hearts and lives at this season and throughout the coming year. Merry Christmas!

\* \* \* \*

Comments, questions, or suggestions may be addressed to:

Mrs. Andrew Hall  
Mount Sequoyah Drive  
Fayetteville, Ark.



## DID YOU MISS THE BOAT?

Numerous young ladies of the Mid-South did "miss the boat" when the new class of student nurses was enrolled at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis, Tenn. Those who were unable to squeeze in and any others who are considering nursing careers would do well to apply now for the 1966 freshman class.

People at BMH School of Nursing don't enjoy saying "no" to prospective students, but there is only room for a certain number each year. We're starting early this time to register our 1966 freshmen. We think such a move will eliminate some last minute disappointments.

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# The Bookshelf

**The Observer's World**, edited by Charles Preston, Dow Jones Books, 1965, \$6.75

Here are 450 pages of choice articles taken from the files of **The National Observer**, the well known weekly national newspaper. The articles range from serious to light, from tragic to joyous. Among them is General MacArthur's remarkable address to the cadets at West Point. Here, also, the reader will find such articles as the distinguished account of the assassination of the President and a father's thoughtful—and thought-provoking—advice to his son on morality in the modern world.

**Expository Sermons on Revelation, Volume Four, Chapters 11-17**, by W. A. Criswell, Zondervan, 1965, \$2.95

Dealing with a book of the Bible that is frequently misunderstood by Bible readers, Dr. Criswell keeps the layman in mind as he interprets the book of Revelation. He seeks to show how the principles found in this book can be applied today.

**Power for Today**, compiled by Norman E. Nygaard, Zondervan, 1965, \$3.95

A book of daily devotions, this volume contains contributions from 370 different ministers and laymen, representing a broad cross section of denominational background. It is especially recommended for family or personal devotions.

**How to Manage Your Money**, by Robert J. Hastings, Broadman Press, 1965

One of the Broadman Readers Plan books, this book came out of the experiences of the author as he attended a family life conference which featured such family life experts as Evelyn M. Duvall, Paul Popenoe and David R. Mace. Dr. Hastings discusses every aspect of family budgeting.

**Man in Conflict** by Paul F. Barkman, Zondervan, 1965, \$3.95

Dr. Barkman, a psychologist looks at man's problems and God's answers. He focuses the spotlight on the struggle between what a person is, what he wants to be, and what he ought to be. The book attempts to show how one can reach a psychological understanding of much that is involved in the inner spiritual conflict of the Christian.

**Pastor's Annual**, by William Austin, Zondervan, 1965, \$3.95

This book should prove a great boon to busy pastors who need some "sermon-starter" ideas. It contains a full year of Sunday morning worship sermons, outlines and illustrations; a full year of Sunday evening evangelistic sermons, outlines and illustrations. Also there are program ideas and material for mid-week meetings and for special days and occasions.

## IT'S CHRISTMAS!

"Christmas is for children,"

I heard a wise man say,  
And how I yearned to be a child  
again on Christmas Day!

A child with laughter in his heart  
and wonder in his eyes,  
And faith that sees a radiant Star  
in cold December skies;

Who listens for enchanted sleigh bells  
in the frosty night,  
And sets a candle on the sill,  
the Christ Child's way to light!

Yes, Christmas is for children!  
May this one special be,  
And bring its joy and magic  
to the child in you and me!

MAUREEN MURDOCH



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# INDEX

For all 1965 issues of the ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWSMAGAZINE. Refer to it when you are needing facts, figures and inspiration for your own enlightenment or the enlightenment of others on what we Baptists are doing and endeavoring to do. We suggest that if you are not already keeping a permanent file of the paper that you start doing so with this issue. We plan to give you a complete index in the closing issue of each year's papers. Key to listings: (E) editorial; (BL) Beacon Lights of Baptist History; (PS) Personally Speaking; (FC) From the churches; The first numeral is the number of the month, as 10 for October, the second number indicates the date in that month the issue was published and the third is the page number.

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 War crimes (letter)—4-29 p4  
 Warren: Westside now church—5-13 p13; First (FC)—8-12 p13; First (FC)—10-7 p14; First (FC)—10-14 p9

Washington-Madison annual meeting—10-28 p11; 11-4 p9; Workers Conference—12-16 p11  
 Wasson, Melvin, change of address (letter)—9-30 p4

Webb, Dr. Perry: Don't walk out (PS)—4-29 p2  
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Y  
 YWA Focus Week (letter)—4-1 p10  
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## Christmas time

There is a strangeness in the air  
 Of love and kindness everywhere  
 That makes us feel so warm  
 within

That sour old men will even grin  
 At Christmas Time.

It could be that I've not grown up  
 For I'm as frisky as a pup  
 And like to sniff those kitchen  
 smells  
 That always give me hungry  
 spells  
 At Christmas Time.

It's good to have the kids with me  
 When we all gather round the  
 tree  
 To give our thanks to God above  
 For blessings of His boundless  
 love  
 At Christmas Time.

—Carl Ferrell

## Celebrate anniversary

MR. and Mrs. Joe Holcomb, parents of four Baptist ministers, another son and two daughters, were honored Dec. 12 in Jonesboro on their 50th wedding anniversary. They are members of North Maine Church, Jonesboro, where he is a deacon and both teach Sunday School.

Their children are Rev. Jessie Holcomb, Paragould; Rev. James Holcomb, Monticello; Rev. Bill Holcomb, Pine Bluff; Rev. Charles Holcomb, Hot Springs; Jerry Holcomb, Jonesboro; Mrs. Virgil Robertson and Mrs. Alfred Thornton, Brookland.

**URGE YOUR  
 FRIENDS TO  
 READ THE  
 Arkansas Baptist  
 TOO!**



# ARKANSAS BAPTISTS



What better way could you GIVE this Christmas than by giving to the Children's Home so that needy children could be given a chance in life?

Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Without YOUR support, their chances will be few, indeed!

**DON'T FAIL THEM THIS LORD'S BIRTHDAY !**

**"THIS, TOO, IS MISSIONS"**

**ARKANSAS BAPTIST HOME FOR CHILDREN**

**Monticello, Arkansas**

BY VELDA BLUMHAGEN

DAVE ran all the way home from school. He had finally thought of something to make for Grandma Martin's Christmas present. He had learned how in school that day.

Grandma Martin wasn't Dave's real grandmother, but he loved her dearly. She had been his Sunday school teacher and a good friend. Now Grandma lived at the home for old people. Sometimes she felt lonely. Dave wanted to give her something special this Christmas.

Mother was at the door when Dave reached home. "I promised to meet Linda downtown to do some shopping," she said. "Baby Carol is sleeping. Please play quietly inside so you will hear if she wakens."

Dave was glad to stay indoors. He could make his present. He went right away to hunt for empty spools, glue, and stars. Then he tiptoed to the basement.

Dave found the box of pinecones he had saved last fall. He picked out three big ones shaped like evergreen trees. He glued a spool to the bottom of each cone. Then Dave glued the small cone trees to a thin, narrow board. He stuck a tiny star on top of each cone. When Dave stood back to look, he was pleased. He hoped Grandma Martin would like this present.

Soon after he took the tiny trees upstairs, Mother and Linda came home. Dave showed them the gift he had made.

"Do you think Grandma Martin will like it?" Dave asked Linda.

"Well," said Linda, "I don't see how she'll use it. And of course, she can't see it. I bought her a satin scarf, and Mother has knit a wool sweater. She can wear these."

Dave's face clouded. He had forgotten Grandma Martin was now blind. What could he do? He had no money to buy a gift. Tomorrow was the day before Christmas. He looked sadly at Mother.

She put her arm around Dave's shoulder. "Grandma Martin will be glad you wanted to make her



a gift," said Mother. "Knowing her, I'm sure she'll like it."

Although Dave felt better, he wished he had money to buy a really special gift.

The next afternoon, Mother stayed with Baby Carol while Linda and Dave took their gifts and Mother's to Grandma Martin.

They found her alone in her room. She was sitting beside the big window with its wide sill.

"Merry Christmas!" called Dave and Linda.

Grandma Martin smiled happily. "Merry Christmas, Dave and Linda!"

Grandma Martin loved the feel of the satin scarf from Linda and the soft wool sweater from Mother.

"They're both blue like the sky," said Linda.

"My favorite color," said Grandma. "How lovely! I'll think of summer skies and rainbows when I wear them."

Dave hesitated. His gift didn't seem wonderful at all now. Finally, he handed Grandma the long box he had put it in.

She took off the box lid. "M-m, I smell pinecones."

Carefully, Grandma Martin lifted out Dave's gift. She felt each cone.

"Little Christmas trees! They make me think of that row of pine trees beside the walk going to

church."

"The cones came from those trees," said Dave, proudly. "I saved them last fall when I helped rake the churchyard. Do—do you like it?"

"Like it? Why, Dave, I love it! I feel as though I were walking right into our own dear church. I can hear the organ music, the minister, the prayers."

Dave smiled. He had the best part yet to tell. "After Christmas, I'll bring peanut butter and crumbs to put on the pinecones. Someone can put them outside your big window. Then birds will come to eat."

Dave thought for a moment. "I forgot you can't see them," he said sadly.

Grandma Martin smiled and reached for Dave's hand. "The birds will say thank you with a song, and I'll hear them. When my friends come to visit, they can watch the birds. They will tell me all about them. I'll be seeing through their eyes — redbirds, chickadees, brown sparrows. With human friends and bird friends, I won't feel lonesome."

Dave felt happy as he gave Grandma Martin a big hug. His pinecone trees for birds were a special gift after all.

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# CPC's Highlight Medical Problems



Doctors gather for a clinical-pathological conference led by Dr. R. A. Burger (far right) at North Little Rock Memorial Hospital. These meetings help sharpen their skills with difficult diagnostic problems.

A group of staff doctors studied the colored slide which Dr. Lloyd Wilbur, a staff pathologist, flashed onto the screen. It showed a section of the brain from which a syst had been removed and it was an important piece in the jigsaw puzzle of information on which they were working.

Once a month, the doctors test their skill by listening to presentations of clinical and pathological data on a specific case and then venturing their own diagnoses. A general discussion of the case at hand, its treatment and related cases follows so that the participants get an in-service type of training.

The case under study on this particular occasion was a 22-year-old patient who had nervousness and blurring of vision. A colloid cyst was later removed. The patient's death two weeks later was the mystery the conference was attempting to solve. In the process, many points were discussed.

"What percentage of behavior disturbances in children have an organic basis?" Dr. Wilbur asked two neurologists present. Both agreed that it was probably pretty high. An ophthalmologist present saw special significance in the blurred vision and the loss of the upward gaze of the eyes. The pathologist presented embryo brain sections to illustrate the normal development patterns of the brain. The consensus at the end, after a study which led into many other facets, was that the removal of the pressure, which had built up to an extremely high level, caused a consequent dynamic disturbance to which the normal part of the brain could not adjust.

"What would have happened if the patient had not died?" asked one physician.

"I think he very slowly would have become vegetative," one of the doctors presenting the case declared. Involved in the presentation were a neurosurgeon, a radiologist, a phychiatrist, and a pathologist.

Dr. R. A. Burger, chief pathologist, said that agreements are not always

so easily obtained and that lively and enlightening arguments are often a part of the monthly CPC's.

"I often learn as much as anyone even though I may have worked up the case for presentation," he said. "I especially like to get information from the clinicians on new treatments."

Diagnoses are often differential, which means that they can be one of several possible explanations of the condition. The cases may or may not be taken from the Hospital records although the pathologist does try to work in a high percentage of local cases here so that the conferences will have practical value.

The preparation of each case takes approximately 9 man hours of the pathologists time Dr. Burger said. The pathologist first selects the case from a standpoint of variety with cases already presented, then obtains the charts from the Medical Records Room, if it is local. He then abstracts the chart information. The pathologist then spends another couple of hours making photographs through the microscope and makes more notes on the pathologic findings. After completion of this work, he gets a clinical doctor to make the presentation and he has all the material mimeographed for distribution to staff physicians prior to the conference.

The CPC's are held at ABMC at 8 a.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month in the Medical Arts Cafeteria private dining room and at North Little Rock Memorial Hospital at 8 a.m. on the third Tuesday of each month. Interns and residents at ABMC attend along with staff doctors at ABMC. Dr. Burger conducts the Memorial conference each month and Dr. Wilbur the ABMC one. Dr. William Harville also fills in from time to time. Each has an attendance of approximately 20 physicians each time. The CPC's, however, are open to all doctors on either staff and they last for 45 minutes. Surgery is closed during the CPC so that more doctors will be free to attend.

## Medical Center Name Becomes Official

Arkansas Baptist Hospital has officially become the Arkansas Baptist Medical Center following action of the Hospital Board of Trustees and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

The name change was requested by the Hospital because of the growth of its services and the diversity of its facilities. Besides its actual Hospital function, the present plant embraces a variety of clinics and special services and future expansion will departmentalize these services further.

Administrator J. A. Gilbreath said that forms and letterhead now on hand would continue to be used but that all new printed matter issued would bear the new ABMC designation.

The Hospital was originally known as Baptist State Hospital but the change from the name to Arkansas Baptist Hospital was made in 1948.

## Miss Tinkle Visits ABMC



YWA President Carolyn Dupree welcomes Miss Amanda Tinkle, missionary to Nigeria on leave, to a chapel service for Arkansas Baptist Medical Center students. Miss Tinkle is a graduate of the ABMC School of Nursing and is a missionary nurse.

## NEW MEMBERS ON BOARD

Three new members and three members who had previously served were appointed to the Arkansas Baptist Medical Center's Board of Trustees at the Baptist State Convention last month.

The new men who are serving for the first time are: Doyle Lumpkin of Lavaca; B. J. Daughterty and Floyd Chronister, both of Little Rock. The members who had previously been on the Board were: Rev. Don Harbuck of El Dorado; Rev. Harold White of Paris; and R. A. Lile of Little Rock.

## New Pediatrics Done in Pastels



Mrs. Marie Cook, pediatrics ward secretary, is shown at the new nurses' station in the remodeled pediatrics section, while student Bobbi Lawson works in the medications room.

Delicate shades of pastels which will blend with each other as furniture is shifted from room to room were used in the decorating scheme for the newly remodeled pediatrics section of the Arkansas Baptist Medical Center.

Mrs. Lois Keith, Hospital decorator, planned the colors to correlate with

those already in use in the south wing of the same section. She used basic background colors in the wall tile and flooring of gray, black and white. Painted walls in the rooms are in a soft peach tone and a celery green and accent colors of coral tones, olive green and gold have been used.

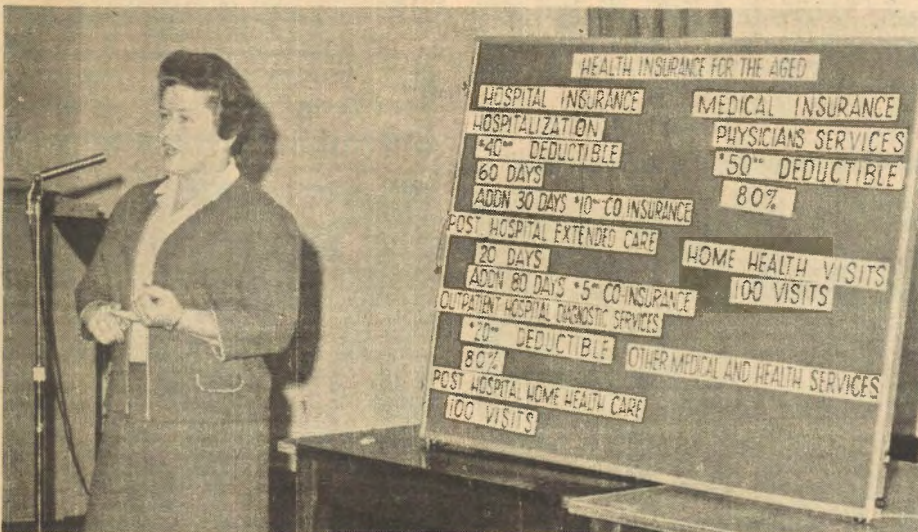
The new rooms provide space for 20 patients and all the rooms have either private or connecting baths with all rooms. This brings to 34 the total number of patients which the section can accommodate. All of the rooms can be used either for two patients or as mother-child rooms. Cost of the remodeling was \$100,000.

The new section includes a new nursing station, two nurseries for small babies, two isolation rooms for children with contagious diseases and it will, when completed include a recreation room on the north end of the hall. That section will not be completed until installation on the new elevator is complete.

Each room has a built-in dresser of walnut with a white Formica top and other furniture in charcoal with pastel panels. Two new molded plastic rockers have been obtained for use with small children and each private room will have a bed-a-chair which can become a bed at night. Drapes will be in the same pastel colors used for the painted walls.

When the recreation room is completed it will have several 30-inch square tables with black laminated tops bordered by birch with rounded corners and edges. These can either be used separately, put together or pushed against the wall. Chairs in varying sizes for small and large children will also be used.

## Speaker Explains Medicare Provisions



Miss Mildred Glover, Social Security office representative, used a chart to explain the provision of the new Medicare law to members of the ABMC Auxiliary.

Most people will not have to go to the Social Security office to qualify for the new health insurance program for the aged which goes into effect in July, 1966, Miss Mildred Glover, field representative for the local Social Security office, told members of the ABMC Auxiliary at a meeting on November 11.

Miss Glover explained the provisions of the new law, which is usually referred to Medicare, and handed out informational booklets. If a person who is 65 or over is already receiving social security or railroad retirement bene-

fits, he will qualify automatically for hospital insurance and an application card for the additional medical insurance benefits will be mailed by December 1965.

Miss Glover explained that participation in the medical insurance part of the program was voluntary and that people 65 or older by January 1, 1966 have an enrollment period in the medical plan until March 31, 1966. If they fail to enroll during this period they will not have another opportunity to enroll until the last three months of '67.

Under the medical plan, the person

enrolling must pay a small premium of \$3 a month with the Federal government matching this amount. This program pays 80 per cent of the covered services except for the first \$50 in a calendar year. The calendar year for 1966 will not start until the program goes into effect in July. The hospital insurance will cover up to 90 days in a "spell of illness", except for the first \$40, Miss Glover said. After 60 days, the plan covers all but \$40 daily during an additional 30 days. The program also will pay 80 per cent of the cost of diagnostic services received as an outpatient of a participating hospital during a 20-day period, except for the first \$20 for each 20-day period.

Nursing home care up to 20 days, or all but \$5 daily for an additional 80 days is provided following hospital treatment and posthospital home care by professional people such as physical therapists and visiting nurses of up to 100 visits will be provided, Miss Glover said.

Those who are receiving Federal civil service retirement annuities will also receive information by mail but people over 65 who have worked under social security but never applied for benefits and those who have never worked under social security should go to the local Social Security Office.

Those who received awards at the meeting were: Mrs. Stella Brier, 500-hour pin; Mrs. Kurt Harstein, 400 hour award; Miss Sadie Brown and Mrs. W. L. Taylor, 300-hour award; Mrs. J. O. Henry and Mrs. Ray Wilson, 200 hour awards; Mrs. Paul Wickoff, 100 hour award; and Mrs. James F. Lathrop, Mrs. Gordon McCain, Mrs. Reese Mitcham, Mrs. Arnold Norman, Mrs. James G. Sawyer and Mrs. Brace Sawyer, emblems.

# Dr. Porter Heads 1966 Medical Staff



Dr. J. O. Porter, seated at left, was elected chief of the ABMC Medical Staff for the coming year. Serving with him will be: standing, Dr. Grimsley Graham, chief elect; Dr. Carl Wenger, vice chief; and Dr. Ted Bailey, secretary.

Dr. J. O. Porter, a Little Rock obstetrician and gynecologist, was elected chief of the Medical Staff at Arkansas Baptist Medical Center.

Dr. Grimsley Graham was named chief elect; Dr. Carl Wenger, vice chief; and Dr. Ted Bailey, secretary. The new officers will assume their duties in January and serve for one year.

Section chiefs for 1966 are: Dr. J. P. Hickey, anesthesia; EENT, Dr. Charles Watkins; Dr. Julian Foster, general practice; Dr. Fred Kittler, pediatrics; Dr. W. W. Christeson, surgery; and Dr. N. H. Simpson, medicine.

## Maternity Section Receives Praise

Mrs. Don H. Lewis, a patient in Room 403, wrote this letter to the administration at the Arkansas Baptist Medical Center at the end of her stay on maternity:

"I am from out of state and have been a patient in maternity in several other hospitals. The Arkansas Baptist Medical Center is by far the nicest—clean and efficiently run. The nurses, practical nurses and volunteer workers have been wonderful to me. Also the food is excellent.

(Signed) Mrs. Don H. Lewis

## Occupational Therapy Open on First Floor



Mrs. Hellon Loflin, registered medical rehabilitation therapist, gets material from her crafts sewing cabinet to try out the new sewing machine in the occupational therapy department which opened last month.

The new occupational therapy department officially open last month in the space formerly occupied by ward 135 on first floor.

Mrs. Hellon Loflin, therapist in charge of the new department, has stocked the department with supplies for treatment programs prescribed by doctors in the manual and graphic arts. She also has scheduled activities

and recreational therapy for long-term patients. A small office for Mrs. Loflin was built in one corner of the new unit and she volunteers for special work with patients.

## Uniforms For Pediatrics



Students on Pediatrics began wearing these navy blue jumpers instead of white aprons over their uniforms when the new section opened. This one, made and worn by Mrs. Bobbi Lawson, has an upside down Humpty Dumpty for a pocket. These were adopted because they are more practical for rocking and carrying small children.

## Students Hear Colombian Missionary



Mrs. Donald Orr, Southern Baptist missionary to Cali, Colombia, at left wore a shawl and jewelry made by Colombians when she spoke to students at the ABMC School of Nursing November 29. She is shown with Sandy Wisener, Student Association representative.

# NEHEMIAH

BY DR. RALPH A. PHELPS JR.  
 TEXT: NEHEMIAH 1:1-6:3; 12:27-13:31  
 DECEMBER 26, 1965

IN leadership and godly statesmanship, few men in history surpass Nehemiah, who lived near the end of the Old Testament era. Son of Jewish captives living in a foreign land, he emerged as one of the great leaders of God's people.

Little is known of the background of Nehemiah, whose name means "comforted of Jehovah." He was the son of Hacaliah and lived in Shushan, the capital, when Artaxerxes was king of Persia. Nearly 160 years had elapsed since the fall of Jerusalem.

A descendant of the group carried from their homeland to Assyria by Nebuchadnezzar, Nehemiah held the position of cup-bearer to King Artaxerxes. It was a post of responsibility, since it was his duty to taste whatever the king ate or drank to be certain that no one was attempting to knock off the monarch. As the story unfolds, several sides of this remarkable leader become apparent.

### Man of concern

WHEN Hanani, his brother, returned from a visit to Jerusalem and described the dilapidated state of the Jewish sacred city, Nehemiah sat down and wept. The report that the walls were broken down and that the city's gates had been burned filled him with despair.

Although he "had it made" in the Persian palace and might have shrugged off the news with a casual "tough luck," Nehemiah was not the type to enjoy personal comfort while others were in need.

So deep was Nehemiah's concern that it showed in his face. When he appeared before Artaxerxes, the king asked, "Why is

your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing else but sadness of the heart."

### Man of prayer

THE first thing Nehemiah did upon learning about Jerusalem was go to God in prayer. Nehemiah 1:4-11 contains his beautiful, heartfelt petition to God as he asked forgiveness and mercy for his people. In genuine repentance he cried, "We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandest thy servant Moses." (His example might be a good one for America to follow.)

Nehemiah also prayed for God's direction in his personal life. When the king asked why he was sad, he prayed before answering.

Yet another example was at the rebuilding of the wall. Faced by obstacles which seemed almost insurmountable, he cried, "O God, strengthen my hands."

Despite the fact that he was a man of exceptional ability, Nehemiah did not try to walk in his strength alone. He rightly recognized the source of true power.

### Man of action

Although genuinely prayerful, Nehemiah did not leave all of the work to God but embarked upon a course of action of breath-taking magnitude and audacity. He asked Artaxerxes for a leave of absence and permission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. This request could well have led to his execution by the all-powerful monarch, for the walls had been destroyed in order to crush the military potential of the Jews.

Impressed by the earnestness of the request, the king granted it; and immediately Nehemiah asked for letters of authorization and

recommendation to facilitate his work. He even asked for a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king's forest, directing him to supply timber for rebuilding the fortress. Amazingly, Artaxerxes granted all of the requests. Nehemiah humbly explains his success thus: "The good hand of my God was upon me."

With permission to proceed, Nehemiah went at once to Jerusalem. The first thing he did was to survey the city—this at night and without fanfare, since he was interested in doing a job, not in gaining glory for himself.

He next called the people together, outlined his plan, and challenged them to build. His own enthusiasm for the task was contagious; for although the job must have seemed well-nigh impossible with the resources at hand, they shouted, "Let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach."

Work started immediately, and chapter three contains as splendid an example of a cooperative program as the world has seen. The work was divided so that all had a responsibility, and they plunged in with a vengeance. One can almost hear the ring of the axe, the thud of the hammer, the blow of the chisel, the heave of exertion as lumber was cut, trimmed, lifted into place, and fastened securely. A city began lifting her once-proud head from the rubble heap which had entombed her.

### Man of determination

Nehemiah, like nearly every person who has ever tried to lead out in anything, soon encountered opposition designed to defeat the project. But he was not a man easily discouraged, perhaps because he recognized that the only people who do not have opposition are either the dead or the living-dead who are attempting nothing. One by one he overcame the things which tried to thwart the work.

First, there was a threatened armed invasion by Sanballat and Tobias, two unruly neighbors. This Nehemiah met by dividing

his forces into two groups, one working while the other held swords, spears, bows, and shields in instant readiness. Each of the builders had his sword girded by his side while he worked; signals were arranged in case of attack; no man removed his clothes when he slept or took his hand off his weapon. In and out among the people moved Nehemiah, challenging, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes."

Thus they worked and watched "from dawn until the stars came out."

Next there were taunts and jeers. Enemies despised and derided the people, and Tobiah ridiculed construction by saying that if a fox were to jump on their stone wall he would break it down. All great projects have their carping critics, some of whom feature themselves as great wits—but are only half right.

Then followed lying rumors. Sanballat for the fifth time sent to Nehemiah a letter saying that he had it on good authority that the Jews were planning to rebel and that Nehemiah wanted to become their king. No calculated lie could have had in it more potential evil than this, for had the rumor reached the ears of Artaxerxes he would doubtless have been dismayed that his trusted servant was leading an uprising against him. Nehemiah flatly denied the rumor, telling his antagonist, "You are inventing these things out of your own mind."

The next matter with which he had to cope was a threat of assassination. Nehemiah was told that at night enemies were coming to kill him. Obviously the intent of this was to scare the leader into running away, for he replied, "Should such a man as I flee?" He continued his work.

As a result of his determination and ability, with God's help, to overcome opposition in its many forms, Nehemiah pushed the project; and in the amazing time of 52 days the walls were rebuilt. Even his enemies stood open-

mouthered.

#### Man of reform

Nehemiah was not a man satisfied with material accomplishments alone. With external renovations complete, he instituted social and religious reforms as well. He appointed the officers necessary for good government; had the people instructed in the Scriptures, about which they were woefully ignorant; put a qualified leader, Ezra, in charge of religious instruction; prompted a great revival among his people; celebrated the Feast of the Tab-

ernacles; observed a national fast, at which the sins of the people were confessed and a new pledge to Jehovah made; urged the people to avoid marriage with the heathen; promoted Sabbath observance and support of the temple; and provided for defense of the city.

There is no doubt that Nehemiah, God's volunteer for a great task, succeeded because of his dedication to and dependence on God. The world is crying for more such men in places of civic and religious leadership.

## THE NATURE OF BELIEF

TEXT: MATT. 8:5-13; HEBREWS 11:1-6

JANUARY 2, 1966

BEGINNING today and continuing through April 10, we shall be studying a series of lessons dealing with some fundamental Christian beliefs and their relation to Christian living. The first subject considers the nature of belief itself. Rather than devoting much time to abstract definitions of faith, the passages which serve as the basis of today's lesson deal primarily with illustrations of this quality. Indeed, most spiritual traits can better be described by illustration than declamation.

### I. An example of belief (Matt. 8:5-13)

ONLY twice did Jesus commend "great faith," and both times the people involved were Gentiles. One of them was a Roman centurion, an officer who commanded one hundred soldiers (in this case, in the army of occupation.)

That the officer was more than a hardened professional soldier is seen in the fact that he is deeply concerned over a sick servant. What's more, he shows a spirit contrary to many of his fellow soldiers in turning to a Jew for help. Why he turned to Jesus we do not know, but either through personal observation or the testimony of others he had become convinced that this Nazarene teacher could make his servant

well again.

The centurion's humility is evident in his works, "I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof." Similar were the words of John Sibelius to Marian Anderson when she sang in his home: "My roof is too low for your head."

His faith is equally impressive as he declares that Jesus need not come to his home; if he will only speak the word, the servant will most certainly be healed.

After a parenthetical statement in which he stated that some Gentiles were to be saved and some Jews ("sons of the kingdom") lost, Jesus granted the centurion's request, saying, "Go thy way; as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." The servant was healed that very hour. The Roman's mission was accomplished by (1) going to the right person and (2) going in the right attitude. Faith was the test which he passed with flying colors.

### II. Characteristics of belief (Heb. 11:1-6)

THE eleventh chapter of Hebrews has been called the faith chapter of the New Testament, and the first six verses tell several things about faith.

First, faith is certainly about things not seen. The materialistic

atheist says, "I will not believe in anything which I cannot see, touch, or hear." The believer replies, "Some of the most real things in the world are not subject to weight or measure. A mother's love cannot be put on scales or measured by calipers, but who doubts that it is a reality?" The believer's confidence in "things not seen" is not totally irrational and unscientific, for he has come to his position of belief through experience.

Second, faith helps us understand that God created the universe by his word and that what is seen was made out of what does not appear. The Bible declares that God created the heavens and the earth, but this Biblical record must be accepted on faith, since the reader was not an eye-witness to creation. By faith we believe that the visible came forth from the invisible.

Third, faith makes worship acceptable to God. Abel offered sacrifice greater and more acceptable than Cain's because his offering was characterized by faith. Although Abel died at the hand of Cain, he still speaks because of his faith. Faith has an enduring quality.

Fourth, faith results in fellowship with God. Enoch, a man who "walked with God" (Gen. 5:24), was taken up without experiencing death. Before he was taken he had pleased God, and it is the testimony of the Scripture that "without faith it is impossible to please him" (Heb. 11:5, 6).

Sixth, faith is absolutely essential to coming to God. The new Oxford translation puts it, "Anyone who comes to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who search for him."

Belief in God and experimental knowledge of his power give men strength to face life and courage to overcome reality. William James said, "Every sort of energy and endurance, of courage and capacity for handling life's evils is set free in those who have religious faith."

## A Smile or Two

### Plane talk

IT happened on one of those huge jets that wings across the continent. A businessman with a wry sense of the incongruous boarded the plane in New York and was soon airborne. He unfastened his seat belt and looked around. There were two or three stewardesses, a purser, and through the open door of the flight deck he could see a couple of pilots, a co-pilot and a flight engineer.

Otherwise, he was the only person aboard. There were 100 empty seats!

He wandered back to the pantry, picked up the intercom microphone, pressed the button and growled, "Good morning. This is your passenger speaking."

### Thumb fun!

THE diner was annoyed because the waiter had brought him a knife and fork, but no spoon. "This coffee," he said pointedly, "is going to be pretty hot to stir with my fingers."

The waiter reddened, and beat a hasty retreat to the kitchen. He returned shortly with another cup of coffee. "This one isn't so hot, sir," he beamed.

### Dear taxpayer

"YOUR Internal Revenue Service is pleased to refund the refund which you refunded, for that refund was not to be refunded as a refund."

### Emily Post

"THANK you for inviting me to your party, Millicent."

"You're welcome, my dear. It's been almost a pleasure."

### You name it

"Sir, can you help a man in trouble?"

"Sure; what kind of trouble do you want to get in?"

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### Service

THE new maid had been instructed to bring her mistress a glass of water. She delivered the drink, carrying the glass in her hand. The mistress exploded, "Don't ever do that again. After this, put it on a tray."

The next morning the maid appeared with a tray and a worried look. "Excuse me, ma'am, but do I give you a spoon with this or do you just lap it up?"

THERE'S a new drug on the market so powerful that you have to be in perfect health to take it.

"He gave some to be evangelists" Eph. 4:11



**THEO COOK**  
Evangelist

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North Little Rock, Arkansas

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# Religious News Digest

By Evangelical Press

## 'Citizen sabbaticals'

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—Notwithstanding some of the church-state problems inherent in the idea, the director of the Peace Corps and the U. S. war on poverty, has proposed that seminarians and members of religious orders be encouraged to go into service in these two areas as part of their practical training.

Sargent Shriver, speaking at the Catholic University of America, where he was recipient of the Gibbons Medal for outstanding contributions to the well-being of the nation, said the youth clergy and sisters of religious orders should be permitted "citizen sabbaticals" as part of their training.

They could serve two-year stints in the Peace Corps or in VISTA, he said, the banner under which much of the war on poverty is being waged. Service would be entirely of a voluntary nature.

## Klan doctrine

A CLERGYMAN in Charlotte, N. C., who denounced the Ku Klux Klan in a sermon has received telephoned threats. The Rev. Leland Stephens, minister of the Grace Baptists Church who spoke out against the "poisonous doctrine" of the Klan, said he "had no idea such pockets of hatred existed."

"One caller called my wife and wanted to know if Mrs. Stephens was a 'nigger' because her husband was a 'nigger lover,'" he said.

He said several ministers had congratulated him on his sermon, and that his daughter's school principal sent her home with the message that the school was proud of him and his stand.

## Dominican crusade

MIAMI (EP)—More than 6,000 residents of the Dominican Republic have made professions of faith in a massive evangelistic campaign that began the same week in April that the political uprising started.

Rev. Allen Thompson reported on the "Evangelism in Depth" campaign of 300 evangelical Dominican churches at the board meeting here of the West Indies Mission.

According to Mr. Thompson, 10,000 Christians were trained in evangelism classes the same week the government was overthrown. They have formed 2,000 prayer cells. During the first week of the crusade they visited 60,000 homes, leaving portions of Scripture and an invitation to attend church.

The campaign is scheduled to end with a three-month preaching crusade, beginning in January.

Mr. Thompson said that both sides in the political struggle have accepted the crusade.

## 'Apartment' churchgoers

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—As Washington's booming population soars, 50 percent of the newcomers move into apartments—and fewer than 5 of every 100 ever bother to become involved in the church.

Metropolitan Washington's population, up 500,000 since the 1960 census, spells trouble for the churches. They just aren't reaching the apartment dweller, entrenched in his sanctuary of privacy and recalcitrant when that privacy is invaded. Further, the churches appear not to be equipped to cope with the problem and the majority reportedly give it very little concern.

There are the startling details revealed in a 51-page report compiled by the Greater Washington Council of Churches.

If the picture is anything but rosy now, projections made by the researchers after their five-year study, look even more discouraging. By 1975 there should be 2 mil-

lion "churchless" persons in the metropolitan area, a figure equal to the entire 1960 population.

## Talk about God

CINCINNATI (EP)—Whatever else they may have done, the "God is dead" theologians have served to make Christian educators aware that traditional ways of talking about God are, for many persons, meaningless, a Methodist theologian declared here.

Dr. Harvey H. Potthoff, professor of Christian theology at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, told the National Methodist Conference on Christian Education that it "is not always clear" precisely what is meant by theologians who proclaim the death of God. "But in any event they are reminding us that there are many thoughtful persons for whom familiar and traditional ways of talking about God are dead."

## April 15 deadline

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—The Old Order Amish and members of other religious sects which object to insurance, and who can otherwise qualify, have been given until April 15 to register with their local Internal Revenue Service office for exemption from the Social Security Act.

Action on the long-pending issue was taken when Congress passed the Medicare-Social Security bill last Summer.

### Are You Moving?

Please give us your new address before you move! Attach the address label from your paper to a postcard, add your new address including the zip code, and mail the card to us.

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