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June 11, 1987

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Why, God?

Arkansas Baptist

June 11, 1987

Spring Brides



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Christian Witnessing

J. EVERETT SNEED



Southern Baptists have always believed in and emphasized New Testament evangelism. This has, perhaps more than anything else, accounted for our unparalleled growth. Yet, we have been self-satisfied at times or we have decided that all church outreach was the work of the pastor or the church staff. We have many healthy trends, however, which should provide excellent outreach. Among these are the emphases on biblical principles, effective involvement of lay people in witness, Christian fellowship, and a dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit.

At times we have placed the entire responsibility for evangelism on our paid church staff. Nothing could be further from the New Testament than this false concept, which developed during the Middle Ages.

During the Middle Ages, several false doctrines emerged. Among these were the concepts of baptismal and church regeneration. Under this concept, The minister (or pastor) became the dispenser of God's saving grace. As a result, lay people felt, "If God's grace is dispensed by the clergy, then we have little or no responsibility."

The New Testament, however, does not view outreach as the sole responsibility of paid church staff. For example, after listing some of the offices to which God calls individuals, Paul gave the purpose of their call as he said, "... for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ep. 4:12). So there are those who are set apart for the "equipping" of church members, and all are equally responsible for evangelism.

Today, however, lay people are becoming involved carrying of the Good News to relatives, neighbors, and friends. Lay witnessing is the cutting edge of effective evangelism. Besides bringing joy to the hearts of those involved, personal witnessing is both New Testament and strategically imperative. Without the witness of committed Christians, there is no way to carry Christ's redeeming message around the world.

Early Christianity was essentially a lay movement. Jesus was a carpenter (Mk. 6:3), and there was not one priest or Levite among his disciples (Ac. 4:13). Paul and Apollos were educated as religious leaders, but there were not many like them in the early church. Wherever great revival is happening, the laity is in the forefront.

Effective evangelism can best be accomplished by a credible witness. Luke said that Jesus "... was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (Lk. 24:19). It is important that our actions validate our witness. Among the greatest deterrents to the cause of Christ are the lives of Christians. Our actions, attitudes, and deeds should reflect our own experience with Christ.

Another development which is encouraging is the growing emphasis on Christian fellowship. Fellowship and witness must always be linked if true evangelism is to occur. The Greek word fellowship (*koinonia*) carries the idea of joint participation, partnership or possessing things common. Theologically, as Christians we have partnership with God the Father through his Son. If we are to be

successful in continuing witness, we must have the strength that comes from this partnership.

The New Testament letters have relatively little to say about evangelism. This is not because it is not important but because where true *koinonia* exists, evangelism will occur. Jesus made our relationship with the Christian community as well as the motivation for evangelism clear. Christ-like love is to permeate all our actions (Jn. 13:34-35).

The Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20) gives the most concise statement to be found in the New Testament of the major activities to be carried on by New Testament churches. As Christians go, they are to "discipline." Those who have been "disciplined" are to "be baptized." Finally the new church members are to be "taught." Interestingly, the only imperative used in the original Greek is in connection with "making disciples."

Finally, at the heart of evangelism must be personal commitment to the gospel and conviction of man's plight apart from God. Unless a person is convinced that men are saved through faith in Christ and that those who die without him are eternally separated from God, little evangelistic effort will occur. There seems to be a strong emphasis on these essentials in contemporary Baptist life.

Current trends are extremely encouraging. As we believe and proclaim the message of New Testament evangelism, and involve our lay people in witness and fellowship under the power of the Holy Spirit, our greatest days for outreach are ahead. Each of us should work and pray that these trends will continue to grow.

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J. Everett Sneed, Ph.D. Editor
Mark Kelly Managing Editor
Erwin L. McDonald, Litt. D. Editor Emeritus

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In This Issue



ABN photo / Millie Gill

Spring is a time for weddings, when mothers and daughters create special memories that will last a lifetime.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

After Three Years, Ordinances Observed

LAKE KYOGA, Uganda—Some of the Baptist churches around Lake Kyoga had not had a baptismal service or observed the Lord's Supper in three years when seven laypeople came to hold a church strengthening conference.

The five-day visit produced a "joyful atmosphere," according to Southern Baptist missionaries Jim and Linda Rice, of Virginia.

The baptism in Lake Kyoga started as a lone pastor immersed a man. That man immediately began baptizing others, then several other pastors waded in and began baptizing the converts from their churches.

On Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., the entire conference took the Lord's Supper, using orange juice and stiff boiled corn meal as

the pastors shared serving responsibilities.

Baptist work in the area (where there are no Baptist missionaries assigned) started when William Okidi returned home after becoming a Christian while living in another part of Uganda.

"People were saved, men were led by the Spirit to become pastors, and churches were born," Rice said. "But along the way they became bound to traditional ways—a blend of Catholic hierarchy and African chiefdoms. These new pastors were waiting for someone higher than themselves—basically more educated—to ordain, to baptize, and to give the Lord's Supper."

Rice said it was "fun" to demonstrate from the Scriptures that the disciples were unlearned men and that every believer is a priest, noting it was "a privilege to usher them into yet another freedom that is theirs in Christ."

GOOD NEWS!

God's Peacemaker

Ephesians 1:7, 20-23; 2:13-18

The most famous and tragic example of conflict in our world is the Middle East Crisis between Arabs and Israelis. Efforts for peace are made periodically by world leaders. Hopefully, some progress has been made, but many problems remain.

Leonard Griffith, in *Ephesians: A Positive Affirmation*, dreams of a mediator who would be able to bring peace to the Middle East. He would be of mixed parentage, combining both sides in his own person. He would convince both sides that peace is better than war; he would call them to their spiritual heritage; and he would die under the strain of the difficult effort, thus convincing all of the terrible effect of their hostility and drawing them together. This, Griffith says, would be parallel to what has actually happened in Christ. Jesus is God's peacemaker.

His life. Emil Brunner has pointed out that the bridge must touch the chasm which it crosses. In Jesus, the life of God touched the life of man. Christ not only brought God and man together, but he is also both God and man in his own person. The peaceful relationship between the two existed first in his own person so it then could be available to the world. He is the one new man who makes new life possible.

His death. Paul says the blood of Christ makes forgiveness possible. Blood in the Bible stands for life given sacrificially. Because of man's turning from God, nothing could restore fellowship short of the total giving to God of a perfectly obe-

dient life. The only one who could make such a gift was Jesus, the perfectly obedient Son of God. The sin problem was so serious that God could not accept sinful man without suffering himself. Hurt is inevitable when the holy God embraces sinful man.

His peace. We often undervalue the peace of Christ, either because we take it for granted or because we fail to practice it; but where it is practiced, it is impressive. When two people become Christians, all of their differences are slight compared to the one thing that unites them. Jew or Greek, male or female, slave or free, rich or poor, black or white, labor or management, Democrat or Republican, even Arab or Israeli: they become one in Christ. They can find harmony and love because they are one in Christ. The church sometimes fails to live up to this harmony, but it is never comfortable doing so for long.

His power. At first, Jesus humble self-giving does not impress the world with his strength. But it is not long before people are saying, "He speaks with authority." The cross seemed an act of weakness, but the resurrection shows him to be Lord. The power of God shines through him. He is the head of the church. He is establishing a kingdom in the world. He is able to counteract the other powers that hold people captive. In a dynamic world, peace must be supported by strength. He alone has the power to give peace to the world.

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



It had been 26 years since we had had a pastor when we united with the Geyer Springs First Church in 1982. What would it be like? I couldn't remember what it was like earlier in life just belonging to a church. Would I be nurtured and fed? What would it be like not having the faithful band around me to love, stroke, and support? How would it feel not being the leader of worship?

All of my fears were allayed as it all began to unfold. I went to every service with a prayer that God would speak to my needs, recognized or unrecognized. The pastor and people accepted us and provided the love and nurture needed. While we are in other churches most Sundays, it is a thrill to be back with our church family. We look forward to every service when we can be present.

Good churches come at an awfully high price, beginning with the death of Christ. There has to be a lot of death to self, pride, cliquishness, having your own way, and tradition, too. The price paid in time, money, and effort is great, too. Who can doubt that the product is worth the price—a good church. No one pays a higher price than the pastor.

You'll be glad to know that all pastors do not move every two or three years. When you read this, the Lord willing, I will have preached my pastor's 20th anniversary service. There are some reasons why a man can stay and lead a church for such a long time. Of course, the main condition is whether God wills and enables it.

From a human standpoint, God willing, a man can stay and pastor a long time, if he will be faithful as a pastor, preacher and friend; if he will be fair in his relationships and diligent in his responsibilities (including his family); if he will be firm in his doctrine and flexible in his administration; if he will build a fellowship that is benevolent toward all and committed to winning the lost at home and abroad; and if he will share the ministry with his deacons, committees, and staff.

Congratulations pastor! You have done it! Thanks for being a good shepherd and for being a good example.

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

Food & Fellowship

Remembering Fathers

VIRGINIA KIRK & JANE PURTLE



"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Pr. 22:6).

"Aren't fathers wonderful?" This was the comment of one person in a small survey we conducted. We wanted to learn what people remembered about their fathers as we approached another Father's Day. All of the people questioned were over 50 and their parents were no longer living.

My own father gave the gift of "wonder" to me. We looked at and talked of bugs, birds, plants, fish, trees, stars—multitudes of things that can delight a child. Decades later, this gray-haired woman enjoys sharing with a young grandson these same wonderful things in God's world.

Honesty was the theme that ran through people's remembrances of their father. One woman said that her father ran a garage in a western state. Ranchers would send him a signed blank check when ranch hands brought in a piece of equipment. They asked him to fill it in with the right amount after the vehicle was repaired. What a good testimony! My husband's life was deeply affected by the complete honesty of his father who always promptly paid his debts and was careful to be truthful.

Another person quoted sayings that her father "left" to her: "Penny-wise and pound foolish," "If something is worth doing, do it right," "Do your best," "Rainy days are when the Lord needs you at church." Fathers are still teaching bits of wisdom such as these to their children. With recent newspaper headlines, we wonder if some people are learning.

The best thing a father can do for his child is to teach the child about the love of God. How important it is for parents to take their children to church.

Not many men share their recipes with us, but the one this month was given to us by a father who is a member of First Church, Batesville. It makes an appropriate recipe for a Father's Day column. It is very good and easy to prepare.

George's chocolate cherry fudge squares

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix together by hand:

- 1 pkg. butter fudge cake mix
- 1 21-oz. can cherry pie filling
- 1 stick margarine
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 2 eggs, beaten

Bake in greased and floured 9x13 inch pan for 25 to 30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Icing

In a small saucepan, combine:

- 1 cup sugar
- 5 tablespoons margarine
- ½ cup milk

Bring to a boil, and stir constantly for one minute. Remove from heat and stir in six ounces of milk chocolate bits until smooth. Pour over hot cake.

Virginia Kirk, professor emeritus at Arkansas College, is a member of Batesville First Church. Jane Purtle teaches at Lon Morris College in Jacksonville, Texas. They have enjoyed cooking together for several years.

Letters to the Editor

New Commandment

Before our blessed Lord Jesus went to the cross, he left with his disciples and with us some important instructions. These instructions were not merely casual information but rather are given in the form of a commandment.

The late Dr. Hubert Drumwright of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary called the commandment the Eleventh Commandment. Our Lord simply referred to it as a new commandment.

It is found in John 13:34-35: "A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you love you love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for the other."

It is obvious that in the last few years in our beloved convention we have not seriously lived by this our Lord's commandment to us. It is my strong belief that we cannot and will not honor our Savior nor receive his full blessing until we turn back to his guidance and live accordingly.

Dr. Frank Pollard recently got my attention when he said, in effect, we are positioning ourselves according to what Scripture we are emphasizing. I believe he is correct, but I also believe that deep down in our hearts we want to honor our blessed Lord's commandment to us.

Our Lord also says in the commandment: "By this (i.e. love one for another) all will know that you are my disciples." My fear is that the converse is presently true. We are not showing much love for each other and the world may be wondering to whom we belong.

Our convention, some say, is being purified theologically. There is a thin line between purifying a convention and wrongfully purging the saved, which can lead in some being disenfranchised, which may eventually lead to non-reconcilable groupings. Beloved, let us stop this direction before it is woefully and tragically too late!

It is my strong belief that the time has come for servant role/mediating leaders to lead Southern Baptists.—Paul H. Mason, Douglasville, Ga.

Observations

My wife and I attended every session of the Inerrancy Conference, plus two of the seminars. My hearing is very good, but I did not hear one person say that he thought the Bible had errors in it. In fact, I never did hear "the question" that was suppos-

ed to be debated. We came away fully convinced that it (the SBC controversy) is not a question of "theology" but rather it is political and a quest for power!

I would offer four suggestions to the lay people, men and women, of our convention:

1. Go to your associational meetings, your state conventions, and to the SBC. Vote as messengers from your church, and vote your convictions—not the way someone else tells you to vote.

2. Work at each of the levels mentioned above until only 20 percent of any standing committee is composed of preachers and 80 percent lay persons, men and women! Women are being almost totally ignored on the committees that control our convention. Where would our churches and our mission programs be were it not for our women?

3. The committee chairperson must be selected from the membership of the committee by a majority vote of the committee.

4. All votes must be by voice vote. No more secret ballots!

If these suggestions could be incorporated into our business meetings, we would not have the factions we have now for very long! You see, when one has to stand up and be counted, has to voice his convictions aloud, votes the way he thinks he should and not the way someone else tells him to, then God and the church can count on the right thing being done. If you are praying to God and listening for the leadership of the Holy Spirit, you will vote correctly!

May God open our minds and our hearts to his understanding and to the leadership of his Holy Spirit!—Joe Arthur, Ft. Worth, Texas

'Baptist Fight'

The Southern Baptist Convention meets in St. Louis in a few days. Literally, the world will be watching and listening. Will we satisfy them with a good "Baptist fight?" Certainly, all Southern Baptists will be observing the events. Will we conduct ourselves in an orderly, Christian manner? No doubt, God will be concerned about how Southern Baptists deal with vital issues. Will we be Christian in our attitudes and actions toward each other? Will we be true to God and his Word?

Yet another is watching with great concern and anticipation—Satan. Yes, Satan has a great deal at stake in what happens in St. Louis. Wouldn't he be thrilled if we have a real knock-down and drag-out?

Southern Baptists could suffer irreparable damage in St. Louis. We could split asunder and lose much of our missionary support. A rift would make us a laughing stock in today's world. How happy Satan would be if Southern Baptists were to lose their place of influence and leadership in the religious world.

Unity among Southern Baptists is a worthy and much desired goal. All of us need to work and pray toward that end. But what price unity? Though physical unity is a noteworthy goal, spiritual unity is absolutely necessary and essential to real power from above. In fact, physical unity without spiritual unity will be a farce.

If it does not matter whether the Bible is or merely contains the Word of God, whether Genesis 1-2 is fact or myth, whether God opened the Red Sea or not, whether the biblical miracles are supernatural or natural, whether Jesus was virgin-born, whether the events about Jesus are fact or legend, etc., ad nauseam, then let unity prevail at any cost!

No one expects 100 percent agreement on any issue, but unity at any price is too high a price. Satan will laugh the loudest and will accomplish far more if Southern Baptists decide at St. Louis that it really doesn't matter what we believe as long as we agree to disagree. Jesus will weep once again and God will stamp "Ichabod" on Southern Baptists.—Herbert L. Stout, Mountainburg

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LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

John Paul Moccia will join the staff of First Church, Sherwood, June 21 as minister of music and youth. A native of Florida, he is a recent graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also is a graduate of Florida State University. Moccia taught public school music for one year in Dade County, Fla., and served part-time as music director at First Church, North Miami Beach. For four years, he was a professional actor. He also has served other churches in Texas and Florida, as well as serving as South Florida Association music director and as area coordinator for the Florida Singing Men in 1983-84.



Scott Salzman is serving Mountain Home First Church as summer youth worker. He is a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dick Sager is serving Grandview Church, Berryville, as minister of music.

David Doty was honored with a reception June 7 by Park Hill Church in North Little Rock in recognition of 10 years of service as minister of music.

Gerald H. Garrett is serving as pastor of Ash Flat First Church. He is a retired U.S. Postal Service employee and resides in Cherokee Village.

Brad Shaw has joined the staff of Little Rock Second Church as summer youth minister. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where he has been actively involved in Baptist Student Union. He also has served as youth director at Pike Avenue Church in North Little Rock.

Kay Kincl recently was in Birmingham, Ala., to attend the 1987 writers conference at Woman's Missionary Union, SBC. She is a member of Berryville First Church, where her husband serves as pastor.

Bob Bickford and **Randy Miller** are serving Springdale First Church as summer youth interns. Bickford is a student at the

University of Arkansas, and Miller is a student at Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Mo.

Harold Dunham resigned May 17 as pastor of Joiner Church to serve as pastor of First Church in Watts, Okla.

Gene Dixon resigned May 31 as pastor of Brown's Chapel, Manila.

Vickie Allen of Drasco was the recipient of the Lester E. Harrell Memorial Award when Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary held its annual awards day ceremony May 6. Allen, a master of church music student, was selected by the faculty of the school of church music on the basis of her Christian commitment, personal character, and scholastic achievement. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Allen.

Lois Van Deusen Cossey of Harrisburg died May 30 at age 85 as the result of a massive heart attack. She was the widow of J.I. Cossey, who served as editor of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* from 1933-1939. She was a member of Harrisburg First Church. A retired teacher, she also was a member of the National Retired Teachers Association. Survivors include a stepson, Robert Cossey of Wynne; a niece, Charlotte Cook of Lakeland, Fla.; and a nephew, Bruce Benedict of Green Valley, Ariz.

Mark Dose will join the staff of Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock Aug. 1 as minister of education. A native of Florida, he is a graduate of the University of Florida. He will graduate in July from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is serving as minister of education and music at Trinity Church in Dallas. He has served as minister of youth and music at First Church of Hawthorne, Fla. He is married to the former Susan Pittman, a graduate of Baylor University.

Tracy Watson will join the staff of El Dorado First Church July 1 as minister of youth and recreation. He will be completing his studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in mid-July. He and his wife, Tina, will move to El Dorado from Fort Worth, where he is currently serving as minister of recreation at Diamond Hill Church.

Thomas Miller has been called as pastor and was ordained to the ministry by Union Valley Church of Beebe. He is joined in this ministry by his wife, Vickie, and two children, Chris and Laura.

Sam Caery has joined the staff of Helena First Church as summer youth director.

Jerry Collins has resigned as pastor of Pines Church, Pearson.

Sheryl Cooper of Fort Smith was honored May 20 when Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary held its annual Honors Day. She was presented a certificate signifying her inclusion in the 1986-87 edition of *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*.

Wayne Edwards began serving June 7 as pastor of Reynolds Memorial Church in Little Rock, coming there from Cockleburr Church in Ward. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College and has served as pastor of several Arkansas churches. Edwards is married to the former Teresa Bailey. They have two children, Stephanie and Matthew.

Les Battles is serving as pastor of Cotton Plant First Church, having previously served the church as associate pastor.

Briefly

Rogers First Church commissioned Rick and Elizabeth Wolfe May 24 for service as Foreign Mission Board appointed missionaries to New Zealand.

West Memphis Calvary Church will observe its 33rd anniversary with homecoming June 14. Russell Clubb will be speaker.

Wynne Church youth and sponsors will depart for New Port Richey, Fla., June 4 where they will assist Westside Church in ministry through backyard Bible clubs. In addition, the youth choir will be ministering through six concert programs in Georgia and Florida under the direction of Robert Shaw, minister of music and youth.

Lonoke Church has planned an organized summer program which will include weekly activities for both youth and children age-level groups.

Immanuel Church in Little Rock chapel choir will be on tour June 21-28, performing in churches in Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, and Alabama, concluding with a performance in their home church Sunday evening, June 28.

Olivet Church in Little Rock ordained Paul Bunger to the preaching ministry May 31.

Fordyce First Church held an Acteans Service May 31, recognizing Danette and Deann Denton as Queens with Scepters, and Kristi Stewart as a Queen.

Midway Church at Judsonia has launched a summer youth emphasis entitled "Save the Summer for the Savior." Pastor John D. Davey reported the biblically oriented program is designed to meet the social and spiritual needs of the youth, who now comprise one half of the Midway congregation.

Alma First Church sought to liquidate the loan on its family life center June 6-7 with activities that included a banquet, featuring John Matthews, pastor of Ozark First Church, as guest speaker.

Osceola First Church youth will be in Indiana July 18-25 to assist Huntington Church with outreach efforts.

Mountain Home First Church will send a mission team to Clay City, Ind., June 36-July 3 to assist a Southern Baptist mission there.

Sugarloaf Church at Heber Springs ordained Don Waldrup, Roy Meadows and Craig Spengler to the deacon ministry May 13. Seated as deacons were Ed Douglass, Gregg Bettis, Carroll Griffin, and Leroy Griffin.

Foothills Chapel has purchased a mobile unit that will provide educational space for youth and children, according to Pastor J.R. Hull. This is a new work in Independence Association that is sponsored by Mountain View First Church.

Pilgrims Rest Church at Batesville has completed an improvement program that included the erection of a steeple on the auditorium and pavement of a parking lot and driveways. Landscaping improvements include planting of rose gardens. John Holston is pastor.

Desha First Church has paved its parking area and installed a canopy at the rear entrance to the building, according to Pastor Steve Pelz.

Pleasant Grove Church at Ferndale, the oldest church in Pulaski Association, observed its 135th anniversary with homecoming May 24.

Liberty Church at Lincoln ordained Bill Keen, Johnny Loftin, and Danny Pinkerton to the deacon ministry May 24. Pastor Jim Pelley preached the ordination message, and Harold Gateley, Washington-Madison Association director of missions, gave the charge to the new deacons and to the church.

Farmington First Church will direct a Vacation Bible School in Western Hills Mobile Home Park June 1-4 as an outreach ministry.

Sang Avenue Church in Fayetteville children are adopting grandparents at a local nursing home. Leana Luper is coordinating this outreach effort.

Ridgeview Church at Fayetteville recently held a mother-daughter banquet which featured Debbie Baker, missionary to Indonesia, as speaker.

Lincoln First Church recognized the second anniversary of Pastor Earl Adams by honoring him with a fellowship and by presenting him with a money tree.

Cross Goes To Virginia

Ann Cross of Fayetteville has been named Acteans consultant of the Women's Missionary Union of Virginia. She assumed her new duties June 1.

Cross, an Arkansas native, has been an outreach coordinator for the Baptist Student Union at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville since 1985. Previous experiences include a term as missionary journeyman to Surinam. She also was a public school music instructor in Corning.

Cross is a graduate of Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia and North Texas State University in Denton, Texas.

Five Arkansans Graduate Southern

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Five Arkansas students were among the 290 persons awarded degrees from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary during the school's 159th commencement May 22.

Leta Gwin of McGehee received the doctor of musical arts degree.

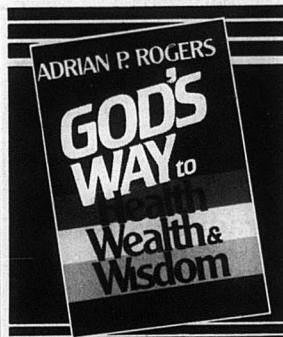
Lisa Nevin Moxley of Cabot received the master of church music degree.

Receiving the master of divinity degree were: Jonathan Mark Lawson of El Dorado, Jane Kendrick Lites of Arkadelphia, and Ford Wayne Massey of Crossett.

UCA BSU launches endowment drive

Alumni and friends of the University of Central Arkansas, Conway, Baptist Student Union have started a campaign to raise \$150,000 to set up an endowment to supplement the budget and strengthen the program on the UCA campus.

Dick Boyles, the BSU director, said approximately \$20,000 has been pledged so far, with \$7,500 in cash having been received.



God's Way to Health, Wealth, and Wisdom takes a look at contemporary issues from a biblical perspective. Containing concepts primarily from the Book of Proverbs, this book deals with prosperity, your thought life, the work place, friendship, anger, and six other relevant topics.

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Adrian P. Rogers is pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee.

At your Baptist Book Store

BROADMAN

Bledsoe Named Renewal Director

Bill Bledsoe of Hot Springs has been appointed State Lay Renewal Director by the members of the Lay Renewal Fellowship of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. He will work under the leadership of the ABCS Brotherhood Department in assignment of consultants and coordinators to conduct Lay Renewal Weekends throughout Arkansas.

Lay Renewal Weekends are held in local churches and are coordinated by lay people. All persons involved in the ministry of renewal are laypersons and travel and conduct the ministry at their own expense. Bledsoe will introduce qualified Lay Renewal coordinators to Southern Baptist churches in Arkansas and surrounding states which are interested in the Church Renewal Journey. He is a layman and member of Lakeside Church, Hot Springs, and will be serving on a volunteer basis.

New Orleans Graduates Two

NEW ORLEANS—Two Arkansans were among those who received degrees from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, La., at graduation ceremonies held May 16.

Robert Gordon McLane, from Mount Ida, received the master of divinity degree.

McLane, minister of education and youth at Holden Church, Holden, La., is married to the former Gwenia Irons of Story. He is the son of Mrs. and Mrs. Bob H. McLane of Mount Ida. McLane's home church is First Church, Harrison. He is also a graduate of Henderson State University, Arkadelphia.

George Hershel Thomas, from Fouke, received the associate of divinity in pastoral ministry degree.

Thomas, pastor of Weaver Church, Weaver, Tex., is married to the former Vickie Rushing of Fouke. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Aaron Thomas of Fouke. Thomas' home church is Macedonia Church, Fouke.

Boyce Graduates

Two Arkansas graduates of Boyce Bible School participated in graduation ceremonies at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., on May 22.

Dian W. Gephardt, from North Little Rock, is a member of Park Hill Church of that city. She also is a graduate of Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

Richard Larry Danley is from Vilonia.

Prayer Urged for Revival, Awakening

Ring challenges for Southern Baptists to seek revival and spiritual awakening were sounded in Hot Springs May 7-9 at the state's first Regional Conference on Prayer for Spiritual Awakening.

Approximately 200 persons from Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, Missouri, and even states as far away as West Virginia and Alaska gathered for three days at Hot Springs Second Church to hear nationally-known speakers address the need for revival in the churches and awakening across the country.

Prayer for Spiritual Awakening is an emphasis sponsored by the Evangelism Section of the SBC Home Mission Board. Growing out of the Asbury Revival movement of the 1970s, Prayer for Spiritual Awakening attempts to "share with Southern Baptists a vision of revival and spiritual awakening that is a sovereign movement of God," explained Darrell King of the Home Mission Board.

King defined revival as "what God does in a church to quicken it to vibrancy." Awakening, he said, is "what God does through the church to permeate the society around it in the atmosphere of revival."

Both are sovereign acts of God in response to the fervent prayer of his people, King asserted. Revival and spiritual awakening cannot be planned and scheduled. God's people can only pray for it, seek it, and not resist it when God gives it, he said.

Lewis Drummond, who holds the Billy Graham Chair of Evangelism at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., told conference participants

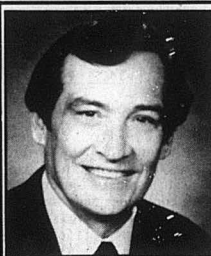
when to expect a spiritual awakening, outlining seven conditions of spiritual awakening laid down by the great evangelist, Charles Finney.

Drummond said spiritual awakening can be expected when: (1) the time has arrived that God is ready to give it, (2) wickedness grieves and humbles Christians, (3) ministers and Christians are consumed with a passion for it, (4) Christians confess their sins, (5) Christians make the necessary sacrifices, (6) Christians and ministers are willing to let God be God and do whatever he pleases with whomever he pleases, and (7) Christians have a God-sent hunger for prayer.

Other program personalities for the conference included Ron Long, pastor of Glenwood Hills Church, Lithonia, Ga.; Carlos McLeod, evangelism director, Baptist General Convention of Texas; Bob Coleman, evangelism professor, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill.; Ron and Patricia Owens, concert artists, Fort Worth, Texas; and Dwight Reighard pastor of New Hope Church, Fayetteville, Ga.

CRISES?

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Christian Psychiatrist
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Why, God?

Disabled Ask Tough Questions

by Scott Collins

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The question most asked of chaplain Nathan Lewis is, "Why did God make me this way?"

Lewis, a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, has only one answer: "God made you, and he made you unique. You're just different, but you're not worse than anyone else."

The questions come from Lewis' clients at the Fort Worth state school for developmentally disabled people. Lewis, a doctoral student, is chaplain there.

Karen Johnson, a religious education student at Southwestern seminary, works with Lewis as chaplain intern. Two other Southwestern students are doing field education work at the school.

Clients at the school range from the very young to the very old. Although some are in their 70s, few have passed a second grade level of mental development.

Working with adults on that level can be frustrating, Johnson says. So she stays with the basics.

"They know that prayer is talking to God, and they know what the Bible is, and they know that God made them," Johnson says. Upon that basic understanding, Lewis and Johnson develop religious education curriculum, hold chapel services, teach crafts and counsel the clients.

The result is the growth of relationships between chaplains, clients and families, Johnson notes. That growth comes through personal attention to clients, "not just throwing out information."

Lewis visits clients in the hospital and often is asked to speak at funeral services. During those visits, he often is asked by the families to pray. "Everybody wants you to pray, even those people who normally don't pray," he says.

The chaplains' work is part of the school's effort to develop the whole person, Lewis adds. "A person is integrated,

and all the parts flow together. We're part of a team."

Working with the "team" causes the seminary students to grow, he says. The students must learn to work with state school staff members and ministers from other denominations.

Both Lewis and Johnson say they have grown to appreciate their clients' uniqueness. "God really accepts them where they are," Johnson explains, "and he accepts me where I am."

At the state school, seminary students "broaden their understanding of what

ministry is," Lewis claims. "They grow in self-confidence through the uniqueness of the ministry."

To illustrate, Johnson cites a recent chapel service in the school gym. During the service one client wandered over to a trampoline and started jumping. That annoyed another client who went and jumped on the trampoline until she pulled the first man off.

The service continued, Johnson recalls, even when the entire episode was repeated a few minutes later.

Through their ministry, the student chaplains overcome fears of being around mentally disabled people. "Once you get to know them, you look past their problems. It teaches you to relate to people as people—to look beyond the person to the needs," Lewis says.

That, he says, is a principle students can transfer to any ministry situation.

SWBTS photo / Bobby Gilstrap



Karen Johnson, a Southwestern Seminary student, works with Jimmy Seabolt. He uses the device attached to his forehead to point to words on the board.

A SMILE OR TWO

After all is said and done, somebody's probably still talking.

The school of experience would be more pleasant if there were a vacation once in a while.

A Host Of Issues

by Dan Martin

Baptist Press

ST. LOUIS (BP)—Messengers will face a host of issues when they assemble in St. Louis June 16-18 for the 1987 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Informed observers of the convention say the annual meeting is the object of lessened interest this year. In the previous years, political rallies, activities and rhetoric blazed in advance of the June meetings. This year, there is a marked absence of "drum-beating" sessions to turn out the vote.

While there have been efforts to stimulate interest in the 1987 annual meeting, they have been less than in 1986 and 1985. Some moderate forces have indicated they don't want to fight anymore, and reports are circulating some churches, which in the last two years sent their full complement of messengers, probably will either send only a token messenger or two or will not come at all.

The 1987 annual meeting is the ninth in an announced 10-year effort to turn the convention to a more conservative stance which began in 1979 in Houston.

The conservative campaign has focused on four main planks: elect a conservative president who will appoint a conservative Committee on Committees, which will nominate conservatives to places on the Committee on Boards. The Committee on Boards, in turn, will nominate like-minded people to serve in places of responsibility on the 20 boards of trust of the SBC.

If the report of the 1987 Committee on Boards is accepted, the effort to gain conservative control of the national boards will be successful, as by most counts conservatives will have a voting majority on all but one national entity. Only on the board of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., will moderates still maintain a fractional majority. That, experts say, is because Southern has the largest board of all of the seminaries (60 members) and trustees may serve two five-year terms.

Highlights facing messengers will be: —Presidency. SBC President Adrian P. Rogers of Memphis, Tenn., has announced his willingness to be nominated for a new term as president. If he is elected, Rogers will be the first man in nearly 40 years to serve three terms as president.

He served in 1979, but declined a second term. He was elected again in 1986 and has announced his willingness to serve again "if the brethren want me." The last man to serve three terms was R.G. Lee, Rogers' predecessor at Bellevue Church, who served three consecutive terms, 1949-51. Now,

SBC bylaws limit a president to two consecutive terms, although a person may wait at least one year and be elected again.

Expected to be nominated against Rogers is Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix (Ariz.) Church, who is not an announced candidate but has said he will allow anyone to nominate him who feels he can make a contribution to the convention. Charles Redmon, pastor of First Church of Sulphur Springs, Texas, has announced he will nominate Jackson.

—Peace Committee. The 22-member SBC Peace Committee will make its final report during the 1987 meeting. The group, created in 1985 to seek the sources of the controversy, make findings and recommendations for ways to bring reconciliation, will report Tuesday evening, June 16.

The committee is expected to meet just in advance of the meeting to finalize its report but has not released the substance. Messengers are expected to see the report for the first time at the convention. It is expected to contain about 10 recommendations of items the diverse committee believes will be helpful to the process of peace.

—Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. An effort was made in 1986 to strip SBC funding from the BJCPA and establish "an exclusive Southern Baptist presence in Washington, D.C." The motion was referred to the SBC Executive Committee for a year of study.

The committee, which will report to the Executive Committee, is expected to recommend retaining ties between the SBC and the BJCPA, but with significant changes in the structure of Southern Bap-

tist representation on the nine-denomination religious liberty/separation of church and state watchdog organization.

—Bylaw 16. Messengers also will be asked to revise Bylaw 16, under which the Committee on Boards, Commissions and Standing Committees would be renamed the Committee on Nominations and the language of the bylaw would be revised.

—Representation. Messengers will be asked to approve six state and/or territories for representation on convention boards. Under bylaw revisions adopted in 1986, a "tiered" system was established to give smaller conventions representation.

The new states gaining representation include Alaska, Nevada, New England, New York, Pennsylvania-South Jersey and Utah-Idaho. Three conventions—Northern Plains, Hawaii, Minnesota-Wisconsin and Wyoming—still do not have the necessary membership to qualify for the basic tier of representation.

—Budget. Messengers will be asked to approve a \$140 million Cooperative Program allocation budget, which will fund the work of the 20 national agencies for 1987-88. The budget is up from \$136 million in 1986-87, and includes \$132 million in basic operating budget, \$6.4 million in capital needs and a Phase II of \$1.5 million.

—Resolutions and Motions. Messengers are expected to introduce a number of resolutions and motions relating to convention stands on various issues and instructions to convention agencies.

Generally, the topics are not known until the convention begins.

With such agenda, plus preaching and reports from all of the national agencies, messengers are expected to be kept busy from morning to night during the three days of convention action in St. Louis.

Fuller Says Evangelism Should Bind

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—A commitment to evangelism should be what holds Southern Baptists together, Charles Fuller told Baptist associational leaders meeting at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Conference Center May 11-13.

Fuller, pastor of First Church of Roanoke, Va. and chairman of the Southern Baptist Peace Committee, addressed the associational leaders one week after the first Southern Baptist Conference on Biblical Inerran-

cy held at the same location, where scholars gathered to discuss and debate the issue dividing Southern Baptists.

Southern Baptists' commitment to evangelism should be their main business, although their beliefs are very important, said Fuller in reference to the eight-year controversy.

"Some of us have been so involved in political matters in the denomination that we ought to be embarrassed," added Fuller, calling on associa-

tional leaders to make a fresh commitment.

"Our primary goal should be winning the lost," or non-Christians, to faith, he said.

Fuller added Southern Baptists should not confuse "our way as being the only way" when carrying out the tasks of missions and evangelism.

"Evangelism and missions," he added, "is not a style or method but an assignment. Preaching is not the only way to do evangelism."

Texas Rejects Lottery

by Ken Camp
Baptist General Convention of Texas

AUSTIN, Texas (BP)—Gambling opponents won an important battle when the Texas House of Representatives rejected a proposed state lottery May 14, but a Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission spokesman warned the fight is not over.

The lottery bill by Rep. Ron Wilson of Houston called for a constitutional amendment to do away with Texas' 142-year-old ban on lotteries. In addition to two-thirds approval in the House, the proposal needed Senate passage and voter approval in a statewide referendum. In the House, lottery proponents tallied only 72 of a needed 100 votes, while opponents registered 73 votes to kill the measure.

"We were enormously pleased with the vote outcome," said Phil Strickland, director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission. He said a motion to reconsider is possible in the regular session, which is scheduled to end May 27, but not likely. The motion would have to be initiated by a legislator who originally voted against the proposal. A simple majority vote could then approve reconsideration of the lottery, but the bill would still need a two-thirds majority on the final vote.

"The likelihood of lottery supporters turning around the votes they need in this regular session is slim," said Strickland. "However, a lottery is very likely to come up for consideration if, indeed, there is a special session this summer."

Sources in Austin have said that a special session appears increasingly probable as Texas lawmakers struggle to adopt a balanced budget during a time of drastically decreased revenues from oil, gas and agribusiness. During the last special session, a state lottery bill passed in the Texas Senate, but that earlier proposal died in the House Committee on State Affairs.

In floor debate on the recent bill, pro-

ponents claimed it could have raised up to \$650 million during the next two-year budget period. Opponents pointed out lottery income in the first two years would not significantly impact the budget deficit, projected by state Comptroller Bob Bullock to be \$5.8 billion by August 1989.

"Texans since 1845 historically have rejected a lottery, both in good times and bad. They have rejected it in good times because it is bad public policy, and they have rejected it in bad times because there are better ways to fund state government. Texans today have maintained that tradition," said Rep. David Hudson of Tyler, a leading lottery opponent in the House.

"We are grateful to the members of the Texas House who sounded a strong note against state-operated gambling," said Gary McNeil, Christian Life Commission legislative assistant. "We are also deeply grateful to Gib Lewis who acted as a true speaker of the House, letting the will of the representatives prevail."

Lewis, who included the lottery as part of his plan to help resolve the state budget crunch, did not lobby members of the House to support it. Gov. Bill Clements, who has maintained an official public position of "neutrality" on the lottery, met privately with several Republican legislators at his capitol office just before the House debate to try to persuade them to vote for the measure.

Richard Land, special counsel to Clements on moral and church-state issues, said that he and the governor had talked "on several occasions" about the lottery, and their views were "privately dissimilar." He said Clements believed the proposal should be decided by referendum.

"I believe the lottery is important, but frankly, it hasn't been high on my list of priorities," said Land, who is on leave of absence from Criswell College in Dallas. He indicated priorities for Clements and himself were abortion regulation, maximum local control for public schools, minimum government regulation of private schools, concerns about sex education and state licensing of church-related ministries.

CLear-TV Calls For Boycott

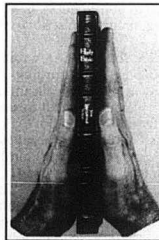
TUPELO, Ms.—The members of Christian Leaders for Responsible Television (CLear-TV), one of the largest and most diverse groups of Christian leaders to ever address a single social issue have voted overwhelmingly to call for a boycott of two of the leading sponsors of sex, violence, and profanity on television. The coalition has more than 1,600 members.

CLear-TV voted to begin a boycott of Mazda Motors of America and the Novell Corporation, which the coalition cited as among the very top offensive advertisers on television. Novell's products include Cover Girl, Clarion, and Marathon cosmetics and Claxema and Raintree creams.

"During the past year and a half, CLear-TV has made sincere efforts to express to Mazda and Novell our concern. We have repeatedly asked these two corporations to reduce the amount of sex, violence, and profanity they sponsor. Mazda and Novell have expressed no concern regarding the kinds of programs they help sponsor and the negative effects those programs have on our society," said Billy Melvin, chairman of CLear-TV.

"Mazda and Novell have displayed an extremely callous attitude. Over a period of several months, Mazda and Novell received five letters expressing the concern of CLear-TV. Mazda made no response and Novell responded only after the fifth letter and even then indicated no change in their program sponsorship," Melvin stated.

Melvin said that Mazda was the leading sponsor of sex, violence, and profanity in monitoring periods during the past five years. He stated that Novell had shown an increase in the amount of sex, violence, and profanity it help sponsor by 70 percent in the past five years. Mazda helped sponsor an incredible 24.88 incidents of sex, violence, and profanity with each 30-second commercial they ran during the fall of 1986, and Novell helped sponsor 17.79 incidents per commercial.



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New Graham Film Rated PG-13

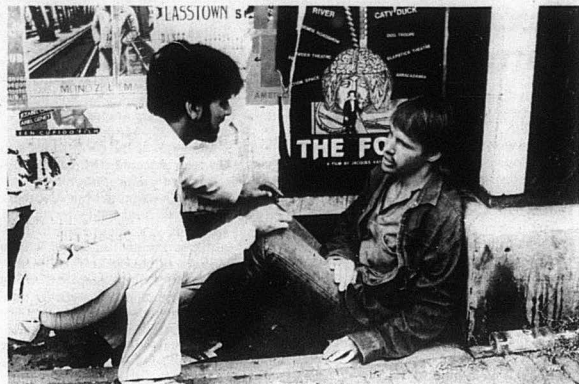
BURBANK, Calif.—“Caught,” a new Billy Graham film produced by World Wide Pictures, has received a PG-13 rating from the Motion Picture Association of America. With 20 feature films behind him, this is the first Graham film that has received such a rating.

“At first the rating concerned us” remarked Bill Brown, president of World Wide Pictures, “but we learned that any film that deals with drugs automatically receives a PG-13 rating—and the subject of drugs is vividly depicted in ‘Caught.’ The film is action-packed so several of the fight scenes in the film also may have contributed to the rating.”

“Caught” will be released in approximately 400 theaters across America beginning in September.

It is the story of 18-year-old American Tim Devon (John Shepherd) who goes to Amsterdam in search of the father he has never known. His mother (Janet Devon played by Jill Ireland) reluctantly admits that he was born illegitimately out of a college romance between her and a Dutch exchange student.

In a foreign city, with meager funds for support, Tim soon is reduced to thievery on the streets, finally becoming a pusher for a drug dealer, getting hooked on narcotics himself.



In the new Billy Graham film “Caught,” Indian evangelist Raj Prasad (Amerjit Deu) befriends Tim Devon (John Shepherd).

Raj Prasad (Amerjit Deu), an Indian attending Billy Graham’s historic 174-nation conference of evangelists in Amsterdam, befriends the troubled youth. The two men, of such widely diverse backgrounds and cultures, share a common bond: Raj, too, lost a father when he was disinherited by his family and declared “dead” by his father because of his conversion.

James F. Collier wrote the screenplay as well as directed the film on location in

Amsterdam, Sri Lanka, and southern California. Deeply moved by the film, Billy Graham said, “‘Caught’ is certainly the most outstanding film yet produced by World Wide Pictures.”

“‘Caught’ is so hard-hitting, reality-driven, gritty, and gut-level that it will never occur to many movie-goers that they’re watching a Billy Graham film except for one thing—the spiritual impact that comes through so strongly.”

Certification Law Upheld

by Stan Hastej

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court has left standing a lower court ruling that a state law requiring all teachers—parochial as well as public—to hold teaching certificates does not violate constitutional protections of religious freedom.

In a May 18 order, the high court refused to review a divided opinion of the Michigan Supreme Court upholding a 1921 law requiring teacher certification in all elementary and secondary schools in the state. The statute specifically mentions “private, denominational and parochial” schools. It further authorizes the state superintendent of public instruction to close down schools that refuse to comply with the teacher certification requirement.

Two church-operated schools in Michigan ran afoul of the law when they refused eight years ago to submit forms required by the state to demonstrate they met

the certification provision. In July 1980, the Michigan attorney general began administrative proceedings to suspend the schools’ operation.

The sponsoring churches—Sheridan Road Baptist Church in Saginaw and First Baptist Church of Bridgeport—filed suit in a state court on grounds the First Amendment protected their schools and the Ninth Amendment gave parents the right to send their children to schools of their choice. Both churches are unaffiliated, independent congregations.

Agreeing with those claims, the Ingham County Circuit Court ruled in 1982 the law requiring teacher certification did not ensure teacher competency and violated both religion clauses of the First Amendment by denying parents free exercise of religion and causing excessive governmental entanglement with religion.

That ruling was reversed two years later, however, when the Michigan Court of Appeals held the state had proved a “compell-

ing state interest” for the law. The Michigan Supreme Court affirmed that decision in 1986 on an equally divided 3-3 vote.

In a written appeal asking the U.S. Supreme Court to review the case, the church’s attorney—church/state specialist William Bentley Ball of Harrisburg, Pa.—argued the state had failed to prove a compelling interest in requiring teacher certification and had not sought less restrictive means to enforce its interest in quality education. Pupils in both schools, he insisted, had a long record of scholastic achievement.

Both schools were founded, he wrote, “for the sole purpose of affording a specific and pervasively religious education to children,” and “have refused all forms of local, state or federal tax support.”

Ball’s request also noted what he called conflicting decisions in several state courts over the validity of teacher certification requirements. He also noted that only six states—Michigan, Hawaii, Idaho, South Dakota, Iowa and Washington—impose certification on non-public schools.

LESSONS FOR LIVING

Convention Uniform

Without Excuse

by Jim Byrum, Toltec Church, Scott

Basic passage: Romans 1:18-32

Focal passage: Romans 1:18-32

Central truth: The righteousness of God is revealed against all ungodliness.

All of the people in the world are sinners. There is none righteous—no, not one. All like sheep go astray. They are without excuse. Paul groups people into three categories: pagans whose minds are reprobate; gentiles whose sins are not so offensive as the pagans, but sins none the less; and Jews whose sins are committed in spite of their having the law. In this lesson, we shall look at the pagan and his guilt. They are without excuse. Why?

First, God revealed truth to them and they suppressed it. Paul says that the pagan world is in darkness, not because they have not heard the truth, but because they suppressed the truth that God gave them. Because they love their unrighteousness and want to live in sin, they suppress the truth that would show them the way out of the darkness.

Second, even though God revealed his eternal power and his glorious nature, they ignored him. His invisible things are clearly seen. The heavens show us the glory of God. All of his creation bears his likeness. The beauty of God is seen in the sunset, the power of God is seen in the atom, the glory of God is seen in the rainbow, and the eternal nature of God is seen in the smallest piece of matter.

When people reject the light that God gives to them, they follow a path that leads to increasing darkness. The descent of the pagan world into personal, social, and spiritual degradation is described by Paul in verses 24-32. Three times he says that God gave them up. He gave them up to uncleanness and idolatry. He gave them up to perversion in the extreme, and he gave them up to a reprobate mind.

The reprobate mind always produces a reprobate life. The mind is the source of actions. It is the spring of life. If the source is contaminated, all of life is poisoned.

But there is good news. Jesus came down from heaven to take upon himself the awful sins of the world. Even indescribable sins are included. Jesus paid for all of them. He satisfied the judgment of God against all sin, and he offers forgiveness to all who will believe.

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Life and Work

A Missionary Church

by Bert Thomas, Valley Church, Searcy

Basic passage: Acts 11:19-14:28

Focal passage: Acts 11:19-24; 13:2-3; 14:26-27

Central truth: A church that believes in missions will witness in the community and around the world.

This week 37,000 messengers will convention in St. Louis at the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention.

The Convention is known for its missionary zeal. However, this zeal is no stronger than the commitment of the local churches to missions. Therefore it is important that each understand the characteristics of a missionary church. One must admit that the name "missionary" attached to a church does not make it missionary. Neither does merely expressing a belief in missions make a church missionary in nature. What are some of the traits found in a missionary church?

A missionary church is a witnessing body of believers. It is amazing how often we refer to the death of Stephen to see how God used it to win others to Christ. These disciples could not forget the supreme sacrifice Stephen had made. After fleeing to Antioch, they continued to witness about Jesus. These fearless men and women saw need for a church in Antioch and started planting a church there.

A missionary church is a reaching body of believers (Ac. 13:2-3). The church grew rapidly at Antioch. It was involved in ministering to those outside the city and to the local community (Ac. 13:2). The Antioch church had an impressive list of workers that included Barnabas and Saul. The Holy Spirit called these leaders to be missionaries. This church was a listening church and was obedient to the Holy Spirit. A missionary church is sensitive to the needs of all communities, will provide an environment so people can answer the call to serve as missionaries, and will faithfully support its missionaries.

A missionary church is a caring body of believers (Ac. 14:26-27). This body of believers believed mission work was a team effort and cared about the experiences of its missionaries.

Southern Baptists need each other to continue our great missionary spirit. What are you doing to make your church a missionary church? What will you do?

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Bible Book

A Song of the Law

by Jimmie Sheffield, ABCS associate executive director

Basic passage: Psalm 119

Focal passage: Psalm 119:1-4,105-112

Central truth: The benefits the psalmist described as coming from obedience to God's law challenge us to be faithful in studying and applying God's Word.

The first two verses of Psalm 119 sounds like the beatitudes are given by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. The emphasis of the beatitudes in this Psalm centers on obeying the law of the Lord. Probably there is no feeling in the world greater than a person knowing he is totally following and obeying God.

Three qualities can be found in the person who obeys God. First, the person who lives according to the law of the God lives a faultless life (v. 1). Second, the person who follows God's law never does any wrong (v. 3). Third, the person who obeys the law has a pure heart (v. 7).

Notice also the joy in a person's life who obeys God's law. In verse 7, the psalmist says "I will praise you with a pure heart" (TEV). In verse 14, the psalmist says "I delight in following your commands" (TEV).

Verse 105 describes God's Word as light. When circumstances of life seem to be the darkest, God's Word provides light to see in the darkness. When a person seems to have lost his way, God's Word shows us the right path.

Verses 109-112 speak of the psalmist's loyalty to God's law. Notice:

- The willingness to risk his life (v. 109).
- The memory of the law (v. 109).
- Even though men laid a trap, the psalmists did not disobey God's commands (v. 110).
- The eternal quality of God's law (v. 111).
- The joy of keeping God's law (v. 111).
- Commitment until death (v. 112).

All of the emphasis on God's Word,—his law, his commandments—should call us to a deeper appreciation and commitment to God's Word. As much as anything else, Christians need to learn and be committed to the study of God's Word. Its truths are applicable for every area of our lives.

When we realize this truth and learn how to appropriate God's Word in our lives, we shall find that it does work.

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Parks Sees Tough Times, Says Results Worth Risks

by Bob Stanley
SBC Home Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—The man who leads the world's biggest program of overseas Christian missions said May 20 he foresees some tough, risky times ahead for missions but believes the potential results are worth the risk.

R. Keith Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, told trustees the board is in no way suggesting its missionaries should court martyrdom. He noted, however, that in every enterprise there is a measure of risk.

"The rule of thumb is that we limit our risks according to the results that might come," he said.

At any given time missionaries in some countries are working with a degree of risk, and occasionally the missionaries have no choice but to leave. However, when the missionaries feel led of God to stay, concerned Southern Baptists sometimes question whether the board should allow its missionaries to remain in places of risk, Parks said.

He pointed out governments continue to risk the lives of their finest young men for the sake of their country. "I simply come this morning to remind us that the stakes we are seeking to gain are more valuable than anything else God has created. Jesus defined one soul as of greater value than the entire created universe."

Southern Baptists have committed themselves to Bold Mission Thrust, a program through which the 14.6-million-member denomination is seeking to do its part in sharing the gospel with all people by A.D. 2000. Through the Foreign Mission Board, Southern Baptists have about 3,800 missionaries at work in 110 countries and plan to have 5,600 missionaries in 125 countries by the end of the century.

He reiterated the board has a policy that it will not pay ransom if any of its representatives are taken hostage — "not because we do not value the individual taken hostage but because we do value all of our missionaries so much that we would not dare to jeopardize all the rest in trying to save one."

With more of the world's nations becoming hostile toward Christianity, the mission executive said, "I can't help but believe there will be some tough times ahead — that we will face crises we've never faced."

When and if such times come, Parks said, his prayer is that "we can be prepared to react from a sound biblical basis and from a solid policy posture, rather than being driven to react from an emotional level that might have serious repercussions in all that we try to do."

Missions research indicates there are between 60 and 70 nations inaccessible to traditional missionary approaches today, he said. If trends continue, he added, by the year 2000 there could be as many as 100 nations hostile toward the gospel. Their populations would include about 83 percent of the unreached world that Southern Baptists are committed to reach.

"We're talking about penetrating hostile societies with the gospel," he continued. "We cannot do that unless we are willing to take risks and to be responsible for running those risks."

Bold Mission Passion Won't Die

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptists' zeal for missions and evangelism remains strong, even though it is overshadowed by denominational controversy, Ellis Bush believes.

Bush is promotion coordinator for Bold Mission Thrust, the Southern Baptist Convention's plan to spread the gospel of Christ around the globe by the turn of the century. He led a recent conference in which state and national leaders worked on BMT promotion plans for 1990-95.

"The passion for Bold Mission Thrust will not die," Bush insists. "We have gone through days in the SBC that controversy would be our obsession. But that is not the case now. It (BMT) is alive and well."

Reports that theological/political controversy within the convention has damaged enthusiasm for BMT are only partially true, he says: "I have heard comments that Bold Mission Thrust enthusiasm and energy has been siphoned by controversy. This may be true and not true. At times, energy of leaders is siphoned by numerous crises or administrative matters. That would be true to some extent whether we had controversy or not."

"At the same time, there has not been any softening or lessening of desire with regard to the Bold Mission Thrust dream. The broad range of leadership—state leaders, associational directors of missions, home and foreign missions personnel as well as missions-oriented laypeople—has not allowed controversy to fragment their commitment."

Commitment has remained high for a couple of reasons, Bush notes.

First is the breadth of the BMT vision, he says, which is even greater than its typical description, "to give every person in the world an opportunity to hear the gospel of Christ by the year 2000."

"Actually, the vision of Bold Mission Thrust is even more challenging," he adds, noting the BMT program mandates that "the biblical faith be magnified so that all men, women and children shall understand the claim of Christ on their lives." It also recommends "full emphasis be placed on the Bible in the communication of missions, upon research as a fundamental necessity for missions, upon cooperation as a way of magnifying the missions witness of the church and upon doctrinal integrity as a way of preserving the faith."

Second, commitment is fueled by "the uniqueness of the Baptist denominational system that allows state conventions, associations and churches a freedom of action that is tremendously significant," he says. "It allows leaders to pick up on

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priorities and discover ways to implement them.

"Bold Mission Thrust operates off of this in that it provides a stimulus to individuals in leadership positions. It causes them to take program initiatives that we (national leaders) would never know about."

Some observers say BMT's unbridled potential for initiative has its downside in that some unrealistic goals can be set. But that does not bother Bush, who says monumental goals are part of the program's genius.

"Bold Mission Thrust—the term 'bold' itself—is an inducement to make bold goals and bold plans," he relates. "If you don't set high and worthy goals, you won't be likely to achieve so much as you would without them. The pull of Bold Mission Thrust keeps us from doing business as usual."

"On the other hand, goals can be frustrating to planners," he acknowledges. "Planners go through the dilemma of whether goals are motivators or hard-nosed figures by which their performance will be measured. We may set goals beyond practicality, but the question is this: Would we have done as much without them?"

Bush is responsible for guiding the process through which Southern Baptist national agencies and state conventions develop and coordinate promotion of BMT. He is a bridge builder "between these various centers of planning that will provide a greater unity and momentum in our cooperative work."

BMT leaders' biggest task is to "find ways to capture more adequately the attention of Mr. Average Baptist across the convention," Bush adds. "Baptist laypeople need to understand this mission vision and the importance of their place in it." That "place" includes giving to mission causes, prayer for missions and participating as volunteers in mission work, he notes.

"Bold Mission Thrust must become a commitment that fires the aspirations and energies of all Baptists," he insists. "My hope is to see the commitment continue to grow and the momentum continue to build so that this coming final decade of the 20th century will be Southern Baptists' greatest hour in missions, evangelism and church growth."

Lottie Tops \$69 Million

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Receipts for the 1986 Southern Baptist Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions topped \$69 million, representing more than 92 percent of the \$75 million goal.

When the financial books closed May 31, Southern Baptists had sent \$69,412,195.09 to help finance foreign missions work in 110 countries around the world.

Receipts for the 1985 offering totaled just over \$66,862,000. The difference represents a 3.81 percent increase in giving, "roughly comparable to inflation," said Carl Johnson, Foreign Mission Board vice-president for finance.

To reach the 1987 goal of \$75 million, Southern Baptists will be called on to increase their giving by about 8 percent. The 1987 goal was decreased in early May from the original \$81 million to \$75 million, maintaining the previous year's goal.

As they announced the decision, Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union leaders expressed regret that the goal had to be decreased but cited the need to be realistic.

Woman Abducted, Return Promised

MAPUTO, Mozambique (BP)—Mozambique right-wing rebels have announced they will free seven captured foreigners, including Southern Baptist Kindra Bryan of Texas, seized from a mission farm in a central province of Mozambique on May 13.

The group known as the Mozambique National Resistance stated May 20 in Lisbon, Spain, the seven whites would be freed with the help of international humanitarian organizations but did not specify when they would be released.

Bryan's mother, Mary Jo Free of College Station, Texas, said in a telephone interview May 27 that she had been assured her daughter was all right and was hopeful that she would soon be released.

Bryan, a member of Second Church in

Houston, and the rest of the group were abducted while setting up a medical clinic in a rural area 400 miles north of Maputo, Mozambique.

Bryan, a registered nurse, was thought to be the only American in the group. They are part of Youth With a Mission, headquartered in Hawaii.

Stephen Bradley, minister to single adults at Second Baptist, said Bryan was helping establish a medical clinic and missions station in what government officials called "one of the most suffering areas in the world." Their leader had gone for supplies and returned to find the rural church, their clinic and a truck in flames.

Villagers reported five men kidnapped the medical missions team. The villagers said the men talked rough, but no shots were fired.

Bradley said no word has been received on the whereabouts of the hostages, but he praised U.S. congressmen and State Department officials who seem to be doing all that can be done while keeping in touch with the church and Bryan's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Claude Free of College Station, Texas.

Members of the church are praying for Bryan and the other hostages around the clock through their 24-hour-a-day prayer ministry, Bradley said, adding, "We feel confident God is going to do something through her."

Missionary Notes

Charles and May Barham, missionary associates to Japan, report a change of address (7-4-18D Kamitsutsui, Chuo-ku, Kobe 651, Japan). He was born in Prescott. She is the former Mary Kveton of Texas. They were employed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1985.

Karl and Thelma Weathers, missionaries, have transferred from Lebanon to Gaza (address: P.O. Box 20, Gaza via Israel). They consider Earle their hometown. She is the former Thelma Williams. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1983.

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No Entry For India Mission

BANGALORE, India (BP)—Following the most recent "no" in a series of visa denials, Southern Baptist missionaries in India have decided to stop seeking entry for new co-workers, for now.

Missionaries learned in late April the Indian government had denied a visa for Cindy Howard, a pediatrician appointed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board last October. They had considered Howard their final test case in requesting visas. A request for visa extensions by college teacher David Travis and his wife has been pending for more than a year.

The modern Christian missionary movement began in what is now West Bengal, India, with the work of William Carey 195 years ago. But attempts by India's leaders to purify the nation of foreign influence could end missionary activity there, said Jerry Rankin, administrator for Southern Baptist work in India.

For the past six years India has denied entry to new Southern Baptist missionaries, including some who possessed highly sought-after technical skills. Before Howard's visa was denied, a 33-year-old Southern Baptist woman with a doctorate in plant pathology was denied the opportunity to teach at an Indian university. Medical personnel with very specialized training also have been denied entry.

"We're using this (Howard's visa denial) as a signal that it's pointless for us to continue to try to secure visas until there is some change in the political climate," said Rankin, who on June 1 became the Foreign Mission Board's area director for India and other nations in south Asia and the Pacific Ocean region.

"All over India among missionaries, more and more are being asked to leave, and visa extensions are not being granted," said Rebekah Naylor, administrator at Bangalore Baptist Hospital, where Howard was to work. "This is evidently the continuing policy of the government."

Until about four years ago most Southern Baptist mission work with Indian believers was centered around the hospital, near the southern tip of India. But in 1982 the Foreign Mission Board began helping an entity named National Indian Ministries.

National Indian Ministries pooled the efforts of Southern Baptists and other Baptist groups working in the country. One of its primary goals was to help train Indian Baptists to start churches in areas where no Christian witness exists.

If Southern Baptist missionaries were asked to leave India, Rankin ranks still should continue to grow, Ranks said. "By training nationals and equipping them to

evangelize India, we're at a point that our church development and evangelism work would not be affected one way or another," he said.

Meanwhile, Naylor and the Baptist Hospital staff are working feverishly to prepare the hospital to stand on its own, training nationals to take over jobs that have been filled by missionaries. While Rankin believes the presence of Southern Baptist missionaries in India enhances the Christian ministry there, he also does not fear what appears to be happening.

"I believe that India is so open and so responsive that the Lord will do it (evangelize India) in a way that brings complete glory to him rather than to any human institution," he said. "I can certainly foresee what happened in China readily happening in India," he added, referring to the growth of the Christian church in China during the years most foreigners were barred from the country.

Religious extremists who have persecuted Christians and accused foreign missionaries of being troublemakers will be stunned as their countrymen continue to turn to Jesus Christ, even without foreign missionary influence, Rankin said.

FMB Appoints Mooneys

RICHMOND, Va.—The Rev. and Mrs. Robert L. Mooney Jr. were among 32 people named missionaries May 19 by the SBC Foreign Mission Board at Huguenot Road Church in Richmond, Va.

The Mooneys will live in Zambia, where he will start and develop churches and they will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

He is pastor of Arrowood Church, Meridian, Miss.

Born in Marvell, Mooney is the son of the Rev. and Mrs. Robert L. Mooney of Picayune, Miss. He is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

A native of Louisiana, Mrs. Mooney, the former Janice Anglin, attended Mississippi College. She is a dietary assistant at Rush Foundation Hospital, Meridian, Miss.

The Mooneys have two children: Amanda Lyn, born in 1978; and Jennifer Colleen, 1982. The family will go to Rockville, Va., in September for a seven-week orientation before leaving for the field.

