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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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April 16, 1987

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine



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Why do we give?

Fostering missions and ministry
"Missions Advance 87-89"

On the cover



ABN photo / Millie Gill

Why do we give? Because our Cooperative Program dollars help foster ministries like Pulaski Association's new fire station chaplaincy program. Above, Ray Branscum, pastor at Holly Springs Church and part-time chaplain for Little Rock fireman, looks in on activities at the downtown Little Rock station. Your church's participation in "Missions Advance 87-89" will help keep Arkansas Baptists pushing onward to new heights of ministry.

In this issue

8 through it all

One Arkansas pastor and his family struggle with cancer and find God at work in the midst of their trials.

13 raising up leaders

As Baptists minister to students around the world, they reach generations yet to come. Zambia will one day be a better place because one student—now a new Rhodes scholar—was touched by Baptist missions.

Larry Lewis elected HMB president

by Jim Newton
Home Mission Board

Larry L. Lewis, president of Hannibal-LaGrange College in Hannibal, Mo., has been elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board.

Lewis, 52, was recommended to the position by a seven-member search committee during a called meeting of Home Mission Board directors on April 10.

Troy L. Morrison, chairman of the search committee recommending Lewis for the position, said the committee was unanimous in its choice.

Before assuming the college presidency in 1981, Lewis was pastor of Tower Grove Church in St. Louis. Previously, he had been director of religious education for the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey, and pastor of a New Jersey church and a church in Columbus, Ohio.

Lewis was one of 64 candidates for the position to succeed William G. Tanner of Oklahoma City, who resigned last June. Morrison said the committee interviewed 10 candidates and felt Lewis was best qualified for the nomination.

"After an interview with Dr. Lewis on March 9, we became convinced that God was leading the committee to nominate him as president," said Morrison.

"Larry Lewis is deeply committed to missions and evangelism and comes with a background of both state convention experience and service as pastor of three fast-growing churches in urban settings," said Morrison. "We believe he can give creative direction to the Home Mission Board's emphasis on reaching America's great cities with the gospel!"

A native of Missouri who grew up on a family farm near Centralia, Mo., Lewis said he understands both the problems of reaching the cities and the needs of rural people.

He said he appreciates all the Home Mission Board has been doing to reach the cities and minister to victims of the farm crisis and is anxious for the board to do more in these areas.

"I'm a church planter at heart," he said. "My greatest joy and fulfillment in life has come in starting a new church and building it into a strong, vibrant witness for Christ. I have a deep, life-long commitment to the Home Mission Board's efforts of starting new churches."

A graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, Lewis also is a graduate of Hannibal-LaGrange and the University of Missouri. He has a doctor of ministry degree from Luther Rice Seminary in Jacksonville, Fla.



ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed

Lone Rock dedication—Lone Rock Church dedicated the remodeling of its facilities on April 5. Remodeling costs totaled approximately \$10,000 with donated labor. The ABSC Missions Department donated \$2,500 toward the cost. The remodeling included interior paneling, carpeting, a new ceiling and roof, three new classrooms, and new pews and light fixtures. When Pastor Paul Huskey accepted the church two years ago, the church had ceased to meet for approximately six months. The congregation is now averaging 45 in Sunday School and 55 in worship. On April 5 eight people were baptized. Those participating in the dedicatory service included former pastor and associational Director of Missions Troy Melton, who brought the dedicatory prayer, State Director of Missions Conway Sawyer, and Pastor Paul Huskey. The morning message was delivered by ABN editor J. Everett Sneed.

He arose!

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



This coming Lord's day is Easter. The resurrection of Christ is fundamental to the Christian faith. Without this marvelous event, Christianity would be reduced to a system of meaningless philosophy. But the historicity of the resurrection of our Lord is attested to better than most of the events of history. Hence, it is important for Christians to take a moment to review both the proof and the purpose of the resurrection.

Christ made at least 10 separate appearances after his resurrection, providing ample evidence of the event. The disciples did not expect Christ to be resurrected from the dead (Luke 24:11, 21ff; John 20:24-25; Matt. 28:17). When their leader was crucified all hope was gone and total despair fell upon them. When they came to believe the resurrection, it was because of the certainty of the evidence.

The people to whom Jesus appeared attest to the validity of the resurrection. The angels instructed the women who came to the sepulcher, "... go your way, tell his disciples and Peter ..." (Mark 16:7). It would have been normal for those who had been loyal to Christ to have hated Peter for the denial he had made of him. But the risen Lord made one of his first appearances to the errant disciple, so that his strength could be renewed.

Another appearance was made to James the half-brother of Jesus. None of Jesus' own family accepted him as Messiah until after the resurrection. His family believed him to be mad (John 7:5; Mark 3:21). When Christ appeared to James, he not only became a believer but a key leader in the Jerusalem church.

Further witness to the validity of the resurrection is gained from the testimony of Paul. Prior to Paul's experience on the Damascus Road, it was his intent to destroy Christianity. But after Christ's appearance, Paul became one of Christianity's greatest evangelists. This evidence comes in the letters of Paul.

The empty tomb further attests to the validity of the bodily resurrection of Christ. Other religions have carefully preserved the burial site of their founder. Christianity is unique in that an empty tomb declares the resurrection of Christ.

Skeptics have labored ardently from the first century in an attempt to explain away the resurrection of Christ. For example, the Sanhedrin gave money to the soldiers who were left to guard Christ's grave. They instructed the soldiers on what they were to say to anyone who might approach them. The council's instruction was, "... His (Christ) disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept" (Matt. 28:13).

It is illogical to believe that the disciples of Christ would have stolen his body, destroyed it, and then died for an untruth. Of the

original 11 apostles, all died martyrs' deaths except John the beloved disciple.

The resurrection gives purpose to Christianity. The fact that Christ was not held captive by the bonds of death means that he will be victorious over all adversaries. False teachings will never stop the spread of Christianity. Many of the adversaries of Christianity must have felt that the few fishermen who started out to tell the story of Christ were absolute fools. The heathen religions were well established. These false religions were beautiful, lavish, and appealed to the nature of man. Any unbeliever who lived in the first century would have said to the fishermen, "Go home! Do you think that you are going to overthrow the religious system of our day?" But today the religions of the Greeks and Romans are gone, and Christianity has grown to worldwide proportions.

Finally, Christ's victory over the bonds of death declares that Christians, too, will have this same victory. John, the beloved disciple, said, "Now we are the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

The Scripture further teaches us that Jesus will be the same in eternity as he was after the resurrection. Therefore, examination of the resurrected Christ will reveal the manner of Christians' heavenly existence. We will be substantive beings. We will know and be known as we are. But sorrow, grief, disappointment, and death will be wiped away.

After the resurrection, Christ possessed a body of flesh and bone. Jesus offered Thomas the opportunity of feeling his hand and his side (John 20:27). Much stress is placed on the physical body of Christ both before and after his resurrection in the New Testament. This was essential, since the Gnostics, a pseudo-Christian cult, denied the bodily existence of Christ.

The resurrected Christ also was easily recognized by his followers. The only exception to his quick identification was when he walked with the two men on the road to Emmaus. In this instance, their eyes were "beholden that they should not know him" (Luke 24:16). Paul emphasizes that Christians will know each other, just as they did prior to the resurrection, by saying "... then shall I know even as I also am known" (1 Cor. 13:12).

The power of the resurrection is the greatest power in the universe. Because Jesus triumphed over sin, Satan has been defeated. As we contemplate the resurrection, we should shout with the songwriter, "He arose! He arose! Hallelujah Christ arose!"

And we should renew our fervor in carrying the message of God's redeeming love.

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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meeting the information needs of Arkansas Baptists

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What are your plans for mission support?

by Don Moore

Plans are already being made in most churches for revivals, mission trips, Bible schools, Easter pageants, homecomings and building programs. Why? The answer is simple. Evangelism, Bible teaching, buildings and fellowship are important! No one would deny that these are all valid and good.

What are your plans for leading your church to grow in stewardship and mission support? It is strange that we feel that it is necessary to plan for evangelism, attendance at Bible study, and fellowship, and leave growth in stewardship and mission support to chance. Do we not believe the commandments and promises of God about tithing and giving that are clearly given in Scripture? Think about it. Why is there no program, plan or special teaching effort made in stewardship in most of our churches? Is it lack of material? Is it lack of motivation? Is it lack of biblical foundation? Is it that we know of one or two who do not agree with or appreciate what the Bible says on giving, and we do not want to cross them? If we only preach and teach in those areas when there is total agreement in the church, there would not be much teaching or preaching done.

If the youth need transportation, the senior adults need help, the music program needs music, and the buildings need a face-lift, someone will be present on the

finance-budget committee or in the business meeting to see to it that these areas are properly supported. Who "goes to bat" for our missionaries around the world? The Cooperative Program has survived and sustained tremendous programs of missions and ministry for 62 years. This is amazing when you realize there is no one to champion the cause in most of our churches like those who champion the other causes. Thank God, in some churches there is a pastor or deacon or WMM member who knows what is involved and dares to speak as a "voice in the wilderness." This is the main reason our churches have continued their support.

Money is a most spiritual matter when it is given to God. He does great things with it and blesses the giver! Total commitment involves what we do with the money God gives us. A new boldness really needs to emerge on this spiritual matter. Someone in every church needs to take the initiative and get a Task Force member to come and help their people understand better God's plan for financing his work.

This could be the first step toward a great new day of mission awareness and support in your church.

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

Together for the cause of Christ

by Carroll Caldwell

What a thrill it has been to be associated with the Task Force of 100! This Task Force is composed of physicians, attorneys, pastors, church staff members, contractors, housewives, farmers, and businessmen. One thing that they have in common is that they are all concerned and committed Southern Baptists who live in Arkansas. Southern Baptists are those people whose convention was created in 1845 "for the purpose of eliciting, combining, and directing the energies of the Baptist denomination of Christians for the propagation of the gospel." The following of this purpose brought into being the Cooperative Program in 1925. Since then, God has wonderfully and gloriously blessed these people called Southern Baptists.

However, today Southern Baptists in Arkansas are facing a financial crisis. Our state convention is committed to increasing its share of Cooperative Program money to nation-wide and world-wide missions. Because our local churches are not increasing their Cooperative Program giving proportionately, our state convention's ministries are beginning to suffer. We have been directing our state convention to do more, to give more, and to take on added responsibilities, and we have not done more through our

churches to make these things possible. Therefore, the crisis.

The Task Force has accepted the responsibility of alerting our churches and encouraging them to respond to the challenge: missions advance in Arkansas. We believe that when Arkansas Baptists see the need, the responsibility, and the opportunity, they will respond courageously and generously.

To me, the beautiful thing about the Task Force is this: though our theological views are as varied and diverse as our professions, we are absolutely together in our concern for and commitment to the cause of Christ in Arkansas, our nation, and our world. Our interest is not control, but cooperation. Our message is not eschatology, but encouragement. We want to share both the crisis and the challenge Arkansas Baptists are facing.

I would urge every church in our state convention to invite one of these wonderful Task Force members to speak in a worship service. Our people need to know that our situation can become very serious. Informed Baptists are better Baptists.

Carroll Caldwell is director of missions for Southwest Association.

Task force speakers scheduled in 77 churches

Three additional churches have scheduled Task Force speakers, bringing the total to 77. These new churches and pastors are listed below. For more information, contact Jimmie Sheffield at 376-4791.

First Church, Heber Springs
J. A. Kirkpatrick

Highland Heights Church, Benton
Robert McDaniel

Vimy Ridge Immanuel Church, Alexander
Ron Mims

Letters to the editor

Not so

This is in reply to the man who wrote an article entitled, "Who wrote Hebrews?", stating he thought Priscilla did, and that she was always mentioned before her husband, which is wrong according to my King James. He may have been repeating what was in the Preschooler Teacher, which was also wrong. I have two concordances, and I find them mentioned six times, he first three times and she first three times.

He is first in Acts 18:2, Acts 18:26, and 1 Corinthians 16:19.

She is first in Acts 18:18, Romans 16:3, and 2 Timothy 4:19. I do not care who says it, I look it up for myself. I do not claim to know it all.

Also, figs do not bloom (Hab. 3:17). I have had figs for about 40 years, and have never seen a bloom. The figs grow out at each leaf.

I do not know all the answers, so please take this in love.—Louise Whitehead, Redfield

a smile or two

At a church where D.L. Moody was invited to preach, he was warned that some of the congregation usually left before the end of the sermon.

When Mr. Moody rose to begin his sermon, he announced, "I am going to speak to two classes of people this morning: first to the sinners, and then to the saints."

He proceeded to address the "sinners" for awhile, then said they could leave. For once, every member of the congregation stayed to the end of the sermon.

From a sermon in which the man of the cloth touched on the relationship between fact and faith: "That you are sitting before me in this church is a fact. That I am standing here speaking from this pulpit is a fact.

"But as for faith, it is only faith that makes me believe anyone is listening to me."

Don Moore

You'll be glad to know...

What an opportunity is awaiting someone! It's north. It's cold! But it's wonderful!

An Arkansas pastor and his wife have been at Emerado, North Dakota a little more than a year. He has baptized 60 people and seen Sunday School enrollment go from 167 last September to 297 today. This is a church next to an air base with the closest community 15 miles away at Grand Forks. The base chaplain reports there are 1,400 Southern Baptists on base. The response has been tremendous, but the needs are great. A full program of ministries is being maintained with just the pastor and his wife leading. Office work, cooking, teaching, and training are all headed up by this couple. Preschool, day care, nursing home, crisis closet and many other ministries are being carried on. This church even has a mission at Hallock, Minn., the only Southern Baptist work in 20 counties of northwestern Minnesota.

The needs revolve around the constant turnover of leadership, young airmen with families whose needs are great, but whose income is small. New Christians who have not had time to begin practicing tithing. No permanent people to build around as leaders and supporters.

It would be so great if someone reading this should feel called to help with this fertile field. It is expected that with the placing of the B-1 Bomber on that base, another 6,000 people will be moved there within the year. Could a retired couple with good health go and help? Perhaps! Could a church provide salary for an associate or minister of music or education to go and work full-time? Could a team of BSU students help? I believe some can. Please call my office at 376-4791 if you want to help.

Students everywhere—that's the way to describe what it was like at Camp Paron for the BSU Leadership Retreat. Camp Paron can sleep 200. One hundred additional cots were borrowed from the scouts to take care of the 300 college and university students who attended. Great things are happening with students at BSU. We rejoice in both our leaders and our students.

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



Moore



Woman's viewpoint

Mary Ida Tidsworth

'Outside the orbit of God'

Leslie Brandt has written a collection of psalms based on his response to the Psalms in Scripture. This collection, *Psalms Now*, has spoken to me often. Today I read Brandt's version of Psalm 78. From it the phrase, "outside the orbit of God," stuck in my mind.

Brandt describes us as self-centered sheep who take off on our own. We think we can find the good life. But we actually find hurt and a hollow life "outside the orbit of God." "Aha," I thought. The psalmist of Scripture, Brandt, and those of us who read their words know about wandering off on our own. That letter I wrote our daughter about her problems in marriage was on my own. The cutting words I spoke to my husband were on my own. I am a foolish sheep that wanders off.

A space capsule travels in a very narrow orbit in space. A person who came out of the capsule and cut himself loose would be very foolish. Cut loose in space is how I feel when sin separates me from God.

Although I feel "lost in space" after stepping out of the purposes of God, his orbit

is not narrow. God's orbit comes under the other meaning of orbit — "region or scope of activity, influence, etc." My actions outside of his activity and influence bring pain instead of joy. But because God's region of influence includes even his rebellious children, I can reconnect with him.

Could the person "lost in space" feel any more joy upon being rescued than I find when I return to God's will for my life? I think not. Forgiveness, love, praise, and joy fill my life. How I thank him for pulling me back.

The Easter season reminds us of the great price God paid to make it possible for us to come to him. Why would anyone want to stay outside the orbit of God's great love and will? Inside that orbit, God walks with us in every circumstance of life. That is joy. May you have a joyous Easter within God's orbit.

Mary Ida Tidsworth has taught conversational English for four years and is currently director of International Friendship, Little Rock. She is a member of Calvary Church, Little Rock.

Photo by Russell Miller



Arkansas Baptist Men elect officers—The Arkansas Baptist Men's Fellowship group met at Camp Paron recently. Russell Miller, out-going president, presided over the sessions that included business, inspiration, challenges, and seasons of prayer. Paul Seal, from Mountain Home First Church, led in the worship periods. A layman, M. B. Howard from Tennessee, told of the many productive construction projects the men's fellowship group had conducted. Ed Bullock, from the national office of the Brotherhood, spoke on the work of the National Fellowship. Some of the men present are going to be involved in renovating the chapel at the Booneville Colony where Chris Copeland serves as chaplain. Officers elected were: (left to right) Alan Mashak, secretary; Don Gephart, vice-president; and Emmett Chapman, president.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people

Sedric D. Wesson of Little Rock has accepted a call to serve as pastor of New Liberty Church near Blytheville. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College, Arkansas State University, East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Wesson, a native of Crosssett, has served as pastor of churches in both Arkansas and Texas.

Eldon Thomas has resigned as minister of music at Delaware First Church.

Mike Halliday has resigned as pastor of Immanuel Church, Russellville, effective June 1. He will move to Little Rock, where he will be a counselor with Care Unit of the Baptist Medical Center.

John Mueller will serve Hot Springs First Church as a special summer youth worker. He is a junior at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

Bryan Webb has resigned as pastor of Hatfield First Church, effective May 10, to attend Mid-America Seminary. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and has been attending the Seminary Studies Program at Little Rock.

Lillian Mathews was honored April 5 by the Ruth Sunday School Class of Calvary Church, Benton, in recognition of her service as their first teacher and for her years of service at the church, where she is a charter member.

Lee Gwin is serving as pastor of Huntington Church, coming there from Bow Legs, Okla. Gwin also has served as pastor of other Oklahoma and Arkansas churches. He and his wife, Mary Elizabeth, have two children, William Lee, and Charlene Kay.

Gary Akers will begin serving May 1 as pastor of Pine Bluff Central Church, coming there from East Church, Wynne. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College and Ouachita Baptist University. He attended Mid-America Seminary and is participating in the Seminary Studies program of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Little Rock. Akers and his wife, Lynn, have a son, Josh.

briefly

Stuttgart First Church will host a 16-hour literacy workshop April 24-26 as an outreach of Centennial Association.

Carolyn McClendon of the Baptist Friendship House in New Orleans will be the leader.

Park Hill Church in North Little Rock celebrated 40 years of ministry April 5 by observing the Lord's Supper in the morning service and baptism in the evening service.

Riverside Church in North Little Rock recently ordained Raymond Robinson and Joe Shellnutt to the deacon ministry.

Marion First Church observed a week of renewal April 12-19 with services led by Robert Tucker, director of missions for Tri-County Association. Eugene Ray is pastor.

Lonoke Church recently approved a proposal to build a new auditorium estimated to cost approximately \$465,000. A church-wide banquet will be held April 26 to launch a building fund campaign, according to Pastor Ed Simpson.

Roland Church was in revival April 12-17, according to Pastor Leroy Patterson. Wes Kent of Arlington, Texas, served as evangelist, and David Bell of Maumelle directed music.

Crystal Hill Church in Little Rock hosted the handbell choir from Benton First Church for a concert April 5.

Smackover First Church inaugurated a new "Love Team" visitation program April 2. The team is composed of eight members from each Sunday School class.

Marianna First Church youth council has announced "Super Summer '87" activities which include vacation Bible school, a week at Siloam Springs Baptist Encampment, and a trip to the Gulf Coast.

Little Rock Calvary Church women will hold a "Gifted to Serve" seminar April 25 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Marjorie Grober will be leader.

Wynne Church nine-member mission team will leave May 4 for Buenos Aires, Argentina, where they will assist missionary Robert Rockett in an evangelistic crusade. Team members are Pastor Donald R. Dunavant, Rick Proctor, Haynes Ragsdale, Billy Garner, and Robert Tucker.

Elmdale Church at Springdale held a prayer conference April 9. Tom Elliff,

pastor of First Southern Church of Del City, Okla., was leader, according to Pastor Mark Brooks.

Russellville Second Church women have organized a Baptist Women's Group under direction of Martha Flud, Woman's Missionary Union director.

Beech Street First Church in Texarkana ordained Doug Porter, minister of youth, to the preaching ministry April 5.

El Dorado First Church will have an evangelist/dental/medical mission team in southeast Para, Brazil, May 10-20. Team members will be Pastor Mark Coppenger, Marty Baumgardner, Doug Bradley, Tim Mason, Wade Parker, Billy Ponder, and Rick Pyron.

West Helena Church women have organized a mission action and fellowship group which will meet for Bible study and to conduct mission projects both in the community and abroad. The group met April 7 to assemble exam survival kits for members of the Baptist Student Union at Phillips College.

Corning First Church will observe its 100th anniversary with a Centennial Celebration May 2-3, according to Pastor Dennis R. Jones. "Old Fashioned Night" will be observed Saturday evening, beginning with a 6 p.m. country style dinner that will be followed by a 7 p.m. service in the sanctuary. Sunday activities will include Sunday School, worship service, and a noon dinner in fellowship hall.

Rock Creek Church at Mansfield recently ordained Nelton Henley to the deacon ministry. Participating in the service were Charles Whedbee, Johnnie Darr, director of missions for Buckner Association, Robert Schlinker, Pastor Charles Scantling, Jean Kinard, Linda Brown, and Gary Martin.

Concord Association youth will hold a rally April 25 at Fort Smith First Church. Gary Floyd and Al Fike, both of Dallas, Texas, will be the speaker and musician.

Lincoln First Church ordained Jon Martin and Bob Bush to the deacon ministry March 29. Pastor Earl Adams preached the ordination message, and Phillip Harold Gateley led the ordination prayer.

Cassville Church at Nail has completed an exterior improvement program that included installation of white vinyl siding.



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Bad news and good news on college-going in Arkansas

Bar graphs and the "new graphics" cranked out by modern computers for television and newspapers are a mixed blessing. They bring joy into our life when they dramatically report good news, but they make it very difficult to sweep the bad news under the carpet. All of these "news-in-a-nutshell" graphics are especially great for college presidents who are inundated with newsletters in the daily mail by the bushel basketful.

One of those newsletters is the Arkansas Higher Education Review, published by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. A recent issue brought bad news and good news. Arkansas ranks at the very bottom among states in the percentage of college-going population which attends college. That's the bad news. The good news is that the college-going rate in Arkansas increased for the second year in a row, after several years of decreases. In 1982 the rate of high school graduates in Arkansas going on to college was only 38.2 percent. Now, after a concerted effort by the Department of Higher

Education, in cooperation with representatives from the colleges and universities, the rate has risen to 42.9 percent.

Admittedly, it's small comfort to know that, while Arkansas is on the bottom, we are beginning to close the gap between fiftieth and forty-ninth in the nation.

In this layman's opinion, Christian parents have a strong responsibility to be good stewards, not only of the minds that God gave them, but of the minds of their sons and daughters. Long before a certain fund-raising campaign used the slogan, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste," Jesus told his disciples the Parable of the Talents. The good and faithful servant did not bury his talent. He developed it for even greater service than when the talent was originally given by God.

Arkansas Christians, and particularly Arkansas Baptists, need to be more dedicated and more sacrificial in teaching and helping our young people to get a college education. If we are going to share the gospel with every person around the world

by the year 2000, it is going to take brain-power that has been trained in electronics, communications, medicine, business, music, computer science, the histories of all nations, political science, educational methods, and the languages of all peoples, including biblical Greek and Hebrew (to name only a few fields of college knowledge).

A bright signal on the horizon is the news that new student applications to attend Ouachita Baptist University next fall are running significantly above this time last year. If Arkansas Baptists would take seriously the two-fold obligation in our Church Covenant ("to religiously educate our children"), both Ouachita and Southern would have to double or triple the capacity of their dormitories and classrooms!

Similarly, there would never be a moment's hesitation in paying the difference between the tuition at Ouachita or Southern and the tuition at our state colleges and universities. Churches would gladly include "Tuition Equalization Scholarships" in their annual budget to assist their young people to attend Ouachita or Southern. Churches would enthusiastically observe On-to-College Sunday.

Churches would regularly increase the percentage of their budget allocated to the Cooperative Program, strengthening Christian education. They would follow up the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering with the observance of Make-Your-Will Month in January, and Christian Education Month in February, focusing on such questions as "How can we help train our young people better to share the gospel at home and abroad?"

If we could lead our churches to begin focusing on even part of the above, our Arkansas bad news would change to good news about sharing the Good News.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

Chaplaincy Awareness Conference

May 4-5, 1987
Camp Paron

Featured Speaker:

Russell Bennett, Executive Director,
Long Run Baptist Association,
Louisville, Kentucky



Dr. Bennett will emphasize the skills of Human Relations in the context of ministry. His experience includes serving as a pastor, Home Mission Board employee, seminary professor, and associational director of missions.

All endorsed chaplains, directors of missions, volunteer chaplains, and persons interested in chaplaincy ministries are invited to attend this excellent conference.

Make reservations by April 24!

Sponsored by the Missions Dept., Arkansas Baptist State Convention,
P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; (501)376-4791

Television cameras for sale

Two (2) JVC-KY320, three (3) Plumicon tubes, less than 50 hours use, less than one year old. Original cost more than \$30,000. Includes complete studio configuration. Excellent buy for \$22,000. Contact University Baptist Church, Fayetteville, (501)442-5312. Ask for Jay.

Even through cancer, pastor and wife find God is with them

by J. Everett Sneed

It appeared on Nov. 17, 1986, that Jerry Holcomb's condition was terminal. The physician came out of surgery and announced, "The malignancy is inoperable."

Mrs. Holcomb asked, "Isn't there anything that can be done?" The surgeon said, "I'm going to let you get over the shock of this before we discuss it anymore." Later in the day, the physician did return and talked to the family about alternative treatment.

The Arkansas Baptist Pastor's Conference, which precedes the state convention, had special prayer for Holcomb, pastor of the Cabin Creek Church in Lamar. Mrs. Holcomb said, "It was about this same time, standing at the foot of Jerry's bed, that I was assured he would live."

Holcomb first detected something was wrong when he began to experience weight loss. It was not unusual for him to gain or lose 10 pounds, yet this time he had lost 15 pounds but did not go to see his family physician.

A short time later he was shampooing the carpet of his house and started down the steps to the basement when his wet tennis shoes slipped from under him. He hit the small of his back on three or four of the basement steps. Mrs. Holcomb insisted he go see their family doctor.

When the physician examined Holcomb, he found a tumor in his right lung about the size of a large lemon. Within a few days, the tumor had enlarged to the size of a large orange.

Holcomb's family physician sent him to Baptist Medical Center immediately. Surgery was performed on Nov. 17.

The malignancy, located in the right lung, was squeezing the pulmonary artery. The original plan had been to remove the right lung, but when the surgeon discovered that the malignancy was squeezing the pulmonary artery, it made surgery impossible. The surgeon feared the pulmonary artery would collapse before the incision could be closed.

Holcomb was moved from the fourth floor of the Baptist Medical Center to the tenth floor, which is set aside for those who are taking chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

Holcomb then began to receive treatment at CARTI (Central Arkansas Radiation Treatment Institute). This treatment extended over a six-week period. Holcomb said, "The Lord used the people at Baptist and at CARTI to minister to us. And we were able also to minister to others during this time. We came in contact with many people who had cancer and did not know Christ as Savior."

Holcomb recalls that, about half way through the treatment, he began to feel pain from the internal burning. He felt no pain during the treatment itself.

Holcomb received one treatment a day for 30 days, excluding Saturday and Sunday.

During the treatment, Holcomb received 6,000 units of radiation, or the maximum a given part of the body can receive. This means Holcomb can never have radiation in this part of his body again.

The Holcombs believe it is probable all of the malignancy has been eliminated. Reports from the physicians have all been positive regarding the success of the treatment.

Because of the severity of the radiation treatment, Holcomb was placed on morphine for a period of three weeks. He feels that, without the morphine, it would have been impossible for him to bear the pain.

From the very beginning of the treatment, a feeding tube was inserted, because the esophagus was so irritated from the radiation that Holcomb couldn't swallow.

Mrs. Holcomb recalls that the worst night was approximately two weeks after the radiation had been completed. Several medications were given to Holcomb, but he was never able to sleep. After that, his condition began to improve.

On three occasions, however, Mrs. Holcomb was informed that her husband might die. She recalls that, in each instance, she felt confident that her husband would get well because she had received this assurance from God.

Holcomb recalls he had little concern about dying. He said his wife, Judy, continually said, "You're not going to die." Mrs. Holcomb simply refused to discuss the death of her husband with anyone.

Holcomb said he did briefly discuss funeral arrangements with his brother, Bill, on one occasion. But he said that he had given only a minimum of thought to the possibility of his dying.

The people at Cabin Creek Church had also refused to accept the possibility of their pastor dying. Holcomb commends the congregation for the excellent way they cared for the church and its' pastor's needs. He said, "I have some of the best leadership you would find anywhere in the world. They not only cared for the church but also for our home."

When Holcomb came home, he had to sleep in a recliner for the first few nights. He recalls his emotions went up and down. "But my wife," Holcomb continued, "saw to it that my depression would not last long. She also saw to it that I ate properly." Radiation treatment often makes individuals reject food, but Mrs. Holcomb would stay by Holcomb's chair until he had finished all he was supposed to eat.

Holcomb's weight fell to 155 pounds from his normal weight of 180. He has now gained back to approximately 180.

In reflecting over the four months ordeal (two months in the hospital and two months since the surgery), Holcomb said, "I now have a different perspective. There is a pur-

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



Jerry Holcomb and his wife Judy feel that, although he was diagnosed as having terminal cancer in 1986, God still has work to do through them.

pose for everything, and I can empathize far better with people who are ill than I could previously."

Holcomb is the first pastor of the Cabin Creek Church. The church was organized in February 1983, and the Holcombs came to serve the church the following May. When the Holcombs came, the church had approximately 80 members and was averaging about 60 in Sunday School. The church now has over 300 members and is averaging approximately 125 in Sunday School and about 225 in the morning worship service.

Holcomb expresses his appreciation to everyone for all they have done for him and his wife. He said, "I particularly want to thank those who prayed for me. I am sure that, without their prayers, I would not have lived."

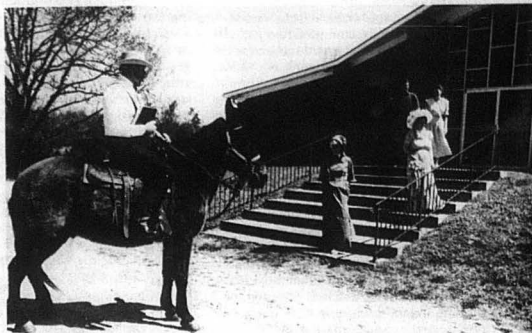
Holcomb has definite advice for anyone who is seriously ill. He said, "First, commit your illness to God and remember that you are in God's hands. Second, if an individual has not been born again, it is imperative he become a Christian."

Third, Holcomb advises patients to go to Baptist Medical Center or some other care facility of equal quality. Finally, Holcomb said, "Get the best doctor you can and commit the doctor and nurses to the Lord."

Holcomb emphasized that the Lord has a purpose in all of his activities. He said, "We feel the Lord brought us through this because he wasn't finished with us here at Cabin Creek. We are committed to finish the work he has for us to do."

J. Everett Sneed is editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

Salem First Church celebrates centennial: the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow



(Above) With Bible in hand, Boyd Hickinbotham arrived at Salem First Church April 5 for its 100th anniversary celebration riding a mule as a reminder of the mode of transportation used by those who founded the church in 1887. He was dressed in the simplicity of his forefathers, as was Mrs. Hickinbotham and others who gathered on the steps to watch his arrival. Earl Chadwick (upper left) paused at the memorabilia table to read a 1901 membership role on which he found his grandfather's name listed. Looking toward the future, youth also were involved in the spirit of the day. Rebecca Whitlock (lower left), wearing an old-fashioned bonnet and dress, participated with open Bible in Scripture reading at the morning worship hour.

ABN photos / Millie Gill



Salem First Church chose the theme "The Same Yesterday, Today and Forever," to celebrate its 100 years of service April 5.

Members were reminded by Pastor James Whitlock and Larry Bone of Little Rock, guest speaker, that the same God who led their forefathers to organize Salem First Church was still leading them in service today and would continue to lead them in the future.

"The future of Salem First Church is to be found in our children and youth. We must teach them God's Word through in-depth Bible study and then we must train them, placing them in responsible leadership roles in the church and lovingly assist them as they glorify God through their service," Whitlock said.

Bob Coleman, in afternoon services, gave as future goals for the church: (1)

the institution of a program to help the needy of the community, (2) a visitation program to shut-ins, (3) the enlargement of its missions vision both locally and world-wide, (4) the establishment of an active library, and (5) to assist in launching a mission church north of Salem.

Currently the church has an active Woman's Missionary Union, a weekday radio program led by Whitlock, and a van ministry.

Salem First Church was organized Feb. 12, 1887, with nine charter members, according to minutes written by J.F. Barnes in 1905. The first church, a one-room building with a belfry and steeple, was built sometime between 1887 and 1905 in the northwest part of Salem on property donated by Mrs. Alfred Simpson Burgess. Two of her great granddaughters, Mildred Sears and Vida Copeland, are on the current membership role.



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Christian Life Commission exec testifies on lottery advertising

by Kathy Palen

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—The head of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission urged a House subcommittee to reject proposed legislation that would loosen federal restrictions on advertisement of various forms of gambling.

CLC Executive Director Larry Baker, testified April 2 before the House Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Governmental Relations on the proposed Lottery Advertising Clarification Act of 1987 (H.R. 1568). The bill—sponsored by subcommittee chairman Barney Frank, D-Mass.—would amend federal law to allow additional advertising of state-operated lotteries, casinos and charitable gambling.

"The most troublesome part of this legislation is its removal of interstate advertising prohibitions," Baker testified. "The argument that the federal government should not be concerned about regulation fails to acknowledge the possible entanglements which would result if gambling activities in one state could legally advertise their activities in other states which do not have legalized gambling."

Baker said present federal law provides the best assurance of neutrality since it strikes a balance between allowing states that want legalized gambling to have it and providing states that do not want it the opportunity to avoid the consequences associated with legalized gambling. Interstate advertising of legal gambling operations also could

influence laws in other states, he added. "Advertising for state-operated lotteries could become a powerful force for changing the laws of other states," he testified. "This advertising, conducted by an agency of one state, would become a form of government-subsidized propaganda in another state. The neutrality required by present law better serves the interest of state self-determination."

Baker described casino advertising as

"even more troublesome." Noting state after state has refused to legalize such gambling, he said, "Some of the consequences of casino gambling can cut across state lines and contribute to problem concerns for other states."

In concluding his testimony, Baker pointed to a resolution adopted during the 1986 SBC annual meeting in Atlanta. The resolution voiced opposition to legislation that would eliminate lottery advertising restrictions.



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BJCPA study committee works on final report

by Marv Knox
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The report on a study of Southern Baptist participation in the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs is almost complete, the chairman of the special committee that is conducting the study said.

The nine-member fact-finding committee was appointed in September by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. It has been charged with studying the relationship between the denomination and the Baptist Joint Committee, a religious liberty advocacy organization composed of representatives from nine Baptist bodies in the United States and Canada.

The fact-finding committee was formed in response to an effort at the 1986 SBC annual meeting to sever ties between the convention and the Baptist Joint Committee and establish an "exclusive Southern Baptist presence" in Washington.

The study committee drafted its final report during a meeting March 27 in Nashville, Tenn., and a three-member writing team worked on the final version March 28, said Chairman Gary Young, pastor of First Southern Church of Phoenix, Ariz. As soon as the report is typed, a copy will be sent to each member of the fact-

finding committee, and that group will hold a telephone conference call to secure its final approval, Young said. Then the report will be sent to members of the Executive Committee and released through Baptist Press, the denomination's news service, he added.

"We hope this final release will take place before May 1, which is 45 days before the SBC annual meeting," he said.

The final report "will include an introduction, a description of our meetings and procedures, the scope of our research, information relative to the SBC Public Affairs Committee and our recommendation concerning the revision of Bylaw 18, a report of our committee findings and our committee's recommendations," Young said.

The SBC Public Affairs Committee is the 15-member group through which Southern Baptists relate to the Baptist Joint Committee. Bylaw 18 of the SBC constitution governs the formation of the Public Affairs Committee.

The proposed bylaw revision would increase the size of the Public Affairs Committee in accordance with a recent Baptist Joint Committee restructuring plan. Consequently, the SBC representation on the Baptist Joint Committee would increase from 15 to 18 members. The revision also would decrease

the number of SBC agency heads who hold permanent seats on the Public Affairs Committee from seven to six, do away with two other seats available to agency heads on a rotating basis and increase the number of at large positions from five to 12.

The bylaw revision already has been approved by the Executive Committee and will be presented to messengers to the SBC annual meeting June 16-18 in St. Louis.

The fact-finding committee's report is the result of three commissioned research studies, hundreds of pieces of information submitted to the committee by individuals, two public hearings and two brainstorming sessions, Young said. Documentation for the study fills a large suitcase.

As custom dictates, messengers to the SBC annual meeting will receive only the committee's recommendations, as approved by the Executive Committee June 15, Young said. He noted cost and logistics of printing and distributing the lengthy report to all SBC messengers is prohibitive. However, the full report will be the basis of the Baptist Press account of the fact-finding committee's research and recommendations, he said. The full report also will be available to individuals by requesting it from the Executive Committee, 901 Commerce, Nashville, TN 37203.

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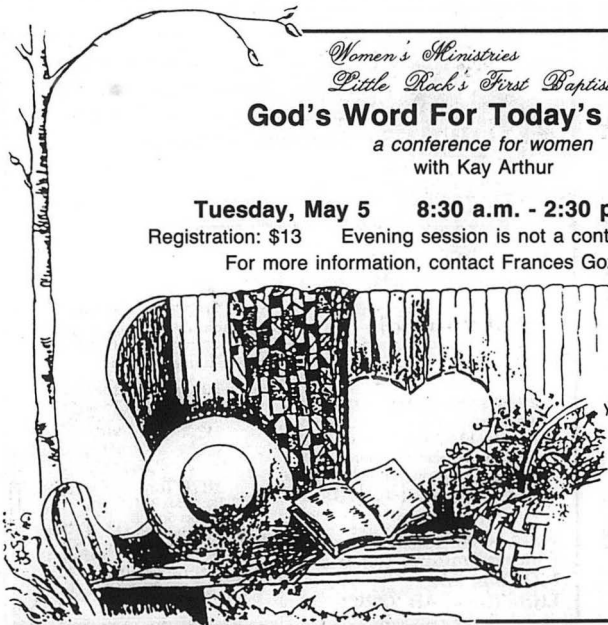
Registration: \$13 Evening session is not a continuation of day session

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Kay Arthur is a teacher, author, conference speaker, and the co-founder of Precept Ministries. She is the author of 25 *Precept Upon Precept* inductive Bible study courses and seven books, including *Lord, I Want To Know You* and *How Can I Live?*

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Dr. John B. Wright, pastor



Missionary couple robbed at gunpoint

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay (BP)—Two men who gained entrance on the pretense of asking for food robbed Southern Baptist missionaries Jimmy and Peggy Bartley of money and other items valued at \$1,600.

The Bartleys, from LaGrange, Ga., and Harlingen, Texas, were in their home in Montevideo, Uruguay, preparing to leave for their church's Wednesday night service March 18 when the robbers appeared.

After gaining entrance, the men displayed a gun and a knife, demanding all the money in the house. Included in the money taken was \$75 in offerings from the previous Sunday service which Bartley was taking to the church treasurer and \$250 in funds from the Baptist Theological Seminary where he is the administrator.

The robbers also took Bartley's car and house keys, two tape recorders he uses to record a daily radio program, four pairs of tennis shoes and Mrs. Bartley's jewelry. Then they locked the couple in the bathroom.

This was the first time in more than 33 years as missionaries that the Bartleys had been robbed.

Baptist hospital sold to Jordanian government

AJLOUN, Jordan (BP)—The hospital that inaugurated Baptist work in Jordan 35 years ago closed March 1 but is expected to reopen soon under the direction of the Jordanian government.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board completed the \$1.5 million sale of Baptist Hospital at Ajloun to the Jordanian government in March.

It was the only hospital capable of full emergency care in Ajloun, a city of 6,000 people. But government officials have said they intend to reopen the hospital as quickly as possible, probably sometime in April, said Isam Ballenger, the board's vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Disappointment lingers among Jordanian Baptists over the sale, Ballenger said. But he believes they have "faced the realities which have made (it) reasonable and necessary."

The hospital had been suffering from a declining patient load. Its capacity was pared down from 50 to 30 beds in 1978. Even so, the average inpatient load was 15 to 20. Last year, the hospital treated nearly 2,500 inpatients and 9,750 outpatients.

Contributing to the drop in patients is the Jordanian government's policy of providing free health care, although the nearest government hospitals are more than an hour away. The government had announced plans to open a 24-hour diagnostic medical clinic in Ajloun.

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Zambia's Rhodes scholar Baptist student worker

by Craig Bird
SBC Foreign Mission Board

LUSAKA, Zambia (BP)—Zambia's lone Rhodes scholar for 1987-88 is an integral part of Baptist student ministries at the University of Zambia.

Monde Muyangwa, 23, will enter Oxford University in London in October to pursue a master's degree in international relations. She was selected from among hundreds of applicants for the prestigious scholarship.

She was graduated from the University of Zambia (UNZA) in July 1986 and began working with Southern Baptist missionaries Lonnie and Fran Turner later that summer.

"We hired Monde because of her Christian commitment, her personality and her high moral standards," Turner says. Much of her time is spent counseling female students dealing with moral pressures on the 4,000-student campus.

Freshmen girls are a special interest group for Muyangwa. "During your first year at UNZA it's easy to fall into the way things are done," she explains. "The urban setting puts a lot of pressure on, but that's part of life and you have to deal with it as best you can. Zambians watch 'Dallas' and 'Dynasty' (on television) and think that is the way to live.

"People ask me why I don't get a 'real' job, but I enjoy helping people develop—and I hate working in an office all the time," she says. "School years determine a lot of a person's character. I believe this is a 'real' job."

Turner says Muyangwa is very effective: "The female students relate to her because she's been where they are. She knows the pressure on girls to drink and be sexually

immoral. She understands the cultural adjustment of moving from a rural-oriented, close, extended family to a campus environment where all the old rules are challenged but new rules aren't firmly in place."

Muyangwa saw newspaper advertisements about the Rhodes scholarship and applied, "even though I didn't expect to hear back." In January she was notified she had made the "short list" of six candidates and was told to write two papers and submit them to the committee.

"The committee spent about 30 minutes interviewing the other candidates, and when I was finished in 10 minutes I knew I had blown it," she remembers. "We were told we'd be notified within a week and I prayed and asked God to hurry. I told my niece that if the letter came when I wasn't home, not to open it if it was a big one [a rejection] but if it was a small one to open it and then come find me and tell me."

Instead, the very next day, a medium-sized envelope arrived. Her niece didn't know what to do, and Muyangwa did not learn she had won until she got home from work at 10 p.m.

Her only previous trips out of Zambia have been into the neighboring countries of Zimbabwe and Malawi and her only airplane ride "was when I was a little girl—I really can't remember it."

Although Turner regrets losing Muyangwa from the student center staff, he is thrilled by her stay at Oxford. He expects it to allow her to make an even greater impact as a Christian in Zambia in future years.

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Convention Uniform*Raised from the dead*

by Erwin L. McDonald, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine editor emeritus

Basic passage: Luke 23:50-24:12

Focal passage: Luke 23:55 to 24:11

Central truth: Jesus conquered death; he is risen.

In his great chapter about the resurrection of Christ and the significance of this tremendous event for every person who ever lives, Paul used the first 11 verses to present the facts of the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-11). Read this as part of the background for today's lesson.

(1) Caring for the dead Savior (Lu. 23:50-56)

Time and space permit only a mention here of a distinguished member of the Sanhedrin who had not consented to the action against Jesus—Joseph of Arimathea (vv. 50-53) and of his loving deed in the burial of Jesus. (See John 19:39 for another Sanhedrin member who assisted).

The loyalty of the women mentioned here is an eternal credit to womanhood at its best and presents one of the greatest examples of the abiding quality of true love.

(2) Finding the empty tomb (Lu. 24:1-7)

The highlight of this passage is found in the message of an angel to the sorrowing women: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen..." (vv. 5b-6a).

As a result of the Lord's resurrection falling on Sunday, the first day of the week, this day almost immediately became the new day of worship and rest and has thus been observed by most Christians ever since.

(3) Sharing the good news (Lu. 24:8-11)

As a reward for their faithful and devoted service to their Lord, this faithful and devoted group of women had the thrilling assignment and wonderful privilege of being the very first to carry the good tidings of the resurrection to the world, beginning with the apostles. In this they "showed the way" for their fellow Christians of every generation, including those of us now living and all who are to live after us.

Why is it that women, far more than men, are among the most faithful worshippers and givers and doers in the week-to-week and year-in-and-year-out services of the local churches? Surely this is not as it should be. For Christ died for the atonement of all of us and he is the living and reigning Lord of all his followers, not just the women!

Life and Work*The living Lord*

by Harry T. Kennedy, Calvary Church, Hope

Basic passage: Luke 24:1-11

Focal passage: Luke 24:5-6a

Central truth: The power of the Christian life comes from the discovery that Jesus is alive.

The Jewish Sabbath has come to an end and we find certain women, Mary Magdalene (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; Jo. 20:1), Mary the mother of James (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1), and Salome (Mark 16:1)—coming to anoint the body of Jesus. Their love was so great, they would not miss the opportunity to complete the burial process that gave a sense of respect for the dead. They had been so overwhelmed by the death of Jesus at Calvary, that they had apparently forgotten the resurrection promise of Jesus. The events of that morning were to change the entire course of the gospel message. After this day, there would be no question about the claims of Jesus as being the Messiah, as well as the power that he had! The discovery of a living Lord is what the celebration of this day is all about for Christians. That's why we worship on Sunday, the Lord's Day, in celebration of the resurrected Christ who completed the pay of God's redemptive plan for mankind.

Just as these women discovered the tomb to be empty, they were asked a startling question, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" The challenge of this question causes us to face our approach to the Easter account. Jesus will not be found in the place of lifelessness. He has come to release us from the emptiness of dead religion and powerless living. "He is not here, but is risen!" is the declaration of our faith.

No longer are we following one teacher or hero of the past. No longer do we spend time comparing one religion after another in hopes of finding the answer to life. No longer do we look for a better life to pattern ours after because he is not among the dead!

The celebration of Easter reminds us that Jesus is true to his word and is a living presence in our life once we accept him as our Savior.

No wonder these women returned with an account of their experience that was so packed with emotion and excitement that they were not believed. No wonder Peter ran to the tomb and marveled. No wonder a world can be turned around when we, too, discover the living Lord. Then we have something to really "celebrate."

Bible Book*Evidence of the resurrection*

by Jimmie Sheffield, Arkansas Baptist State Convention associate executive director

Basic passage: John 18:38-20:31

Focal passage: John 20:1-8, 11-16

Central truth: The empty tomb and Jesus' appearance to Mary are evidences of his resurrection.

Jesus is alive! The message of the resurrection rings loud and clear today just as it did on that Sunday described in John 20. We need to proclaim that wonderful truth just as the early disciples told their world.

Mary Magdalene could hardly wait until Sunday morning. She had to wait for the Sabbath to conclude before she could make the trip to the tomb. She loved Jesus very deeply and probably wanted to pay tribute to him again.

When she arrived at the tomb, she found the large stone that sealed the tomb rolled away. Mary's first reaction was to tell someone. She chose to share the good news with Peter and John.

Peter and John literally ran to the empty tomb. Can you imagine the excitement they felt in their hearts. John reached the tomb first but wouldn't enter. Peter didn't even slow down. He ran right into the tomb.

They found the burial linens all in place with the head cloth rolled up by itself (20:7). The scripture indicated that when John saw the situation he "believed" (20:8). He believed that Christ had risen though he did not understand the scripture that said he must rise from the tomb (20:9).

The disciples left, but Mary remained at the tomb. She was broken hearted. She just knew that someone had taken Jesus' body (20:13).

Note that Jesus chose to reveal himself first to Mary, not any of his apostles. When Jesus called Mary by her name, she recognized him immediately. She called him, "Teacher" (20:16).

The evidences of Jesus' resurrection are many. The empty tomb, the empty grave linens, and the head cloth rolled up serves as good evidence. The angel's message to the women should have supported the truth that Jesus had risen from the dead (Lu. 24:4-7).

Finally, the appearance of Jesus to Mary presented the ultimate evidence. This was an eye witness. Later, Jesus would appear to all the apostles to prove his resurrection.

As Jesus told Mary to tell the others, let each one of us has met Christ personally share the good news—Jesus Christ is alive!

Convention Uniform

The Emmaus encounter

by Erwin L. McDonald, Arkansas Baptist News Magazine editor emeritus

Basic passage: Luke 24:13-49

Focal passage: Luke 24:13-19, 20-23

Central truth: Jesus proved his resurrection to his disciples by his personal appearance and his teaching.

Only Luke gives us the details of this appearance of the risen Lord. Internal evidence indicates that Luke must have gotten his information for this account from one of the two disciples from Emmaus, most likely from Cleopas.

(1) A walking conversation (Lu. 24:13-19)

The two disciples mentioned here apparently had been present when the women had given the news of their visit to the empty tomb (v. 9). But they were not at all convinced that the Lord was risen. It was probably due to their continuing great sorrow that they failed to recognize Jesus.

(2) A wayside explanation (Lu. 24:27-29)

The Emmaus disciples, like most of the Jews of their day, had envisioned the Messiah as one who would come to give their nation freedom from the oppressive yoke of Roman rule and establish a great and powerful earthly kingdom. Jesus' frequent reference to his role as suffering servant, so definitely a part of the Old Testament prophecies concerning him, had been interpreted by the rabbis as being applicable to the nation of Israel, not to the Messiah. It is ironic that the disciples of Jesus, the Lord's specific teaching notwithstanding, were not able to accept and understand his death on the cross until after he was risen from the grave.

(3) A mealtime revelation (Lu. 24:30-35)

In his resurrection body, Jesus was able to be seen, to touch and be touched—even to eat. But no longer was his body limited as it had previously been by time and space. Now he could appear and disappear instantly, without the opening or closing of doors. So, when his hosts had their eyes opened, with his returning of thanks and breaking of bread at the evening meal in their home, he suddenly was no longer with them. But, actually they now realized he was with them for all eternity. No longer were they tired or sorrowful. Despite the lateness of the day, they immediately and joyfully began their return trip to Jerusalem to give their own witness to the assembled apostles.

What evidence do you and I have, in these dwindling years of the 20th century, that the Lord really is risen and reigning?

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Life and Work

Witness to a living Lord

by Harry T. Kennedy, Calvary Church, Hope

Basic passage: Luke 24:30-39, 45-48

Focal passage: Luke 24:45-48

Central truth: When Jesus is allowed to open our understanding to the scriptures; they become alive with meaning and purpose. The purpose is to share a witness to our world.

The events of our passage are part of that first Easter. As soon as the word of the resurrection comes to the disciples, they begin to move about the area. Two of these disciples are on the road to Emmaus and unknowingly walk with Jesus. As they share a meal with him, Jesus breaks the bread, blesses it, and gives it to them. Immediately their eyes are opened and Jesus vanishes. The two suddenly realize why the Scriptures seemed to have such power as Jesus spoke to them on the road. They had to hurry to Jerusalem to witness this event to the disciples.

Excitement must have illuminated their report of the events as the men listen and, suddenly Jesus appears. In similar fashion, each man is startled and frightened as they thought they were seeing a ghost. Yet, Jesus calms their fears and assures them that he is flesh and blood and they need not fear to touch him.

He further proves himself as real, by eating before them and as with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, he opens the Scriptures to them. Suddenly they hear and comprehend the Word of God. The same comprehension that comes to all who will allow the Scriptures to be part of their life. Only then will we learn it's design is to set you free (Jo. 8:31-32) as well as instruct us in a life of fruitbearing (Jo. 15:4-5,8).

Jesus does not hesitate to remind his disciples that they have a God given message that is to be preached to all the world, beginning where they live. That mandate to witness has never changed over 1900 years. We can go around it all we want, but God will never release us from his command to tell the world of the living Christ.

This is a tremendous responsibility that can only be carried out as we move under the authority of Jesus' name. As we share as co-laborers in this responsibility, we are to leave nobody out as the object of our witness. Jesus is the only way of salvation and only hope for the world in which those disciples lived and for the world in which we live today. Have you shared a witness of the living Lord recently?

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Bible Book

Do the wicked really suffer?

by Jimmie Sheffield, Arkansas Baptist State Convention associate executive director

Basic passage: Job 15:1-21:34

Focal passage: Job 18:5-8; 19:23-27; 21:7-16

Central truth: Job's response to the traditional teaching that the wicked are always punished illustrates that material success is not always based on faithfulness.

The three sets of scripture in the focal passage have three different themes. Bildad, in Job 18:5-8, claims emphatically that the wicked will be punished:

Bildad used three illustrations to make his point. First, he says the wicked man's light will go out. We use that thought today when referring to someone who is knocked out in a fight or in a sporting event. Bildad uses it in the sense of death.

The second illustration deals with the way a person walks. At first the wicked man is sure of where he is going and what he is doing. But, as his wickedness catches up with him, he begins to stumble. He is not so sure of his direction. Eventually, he falls.

The third illustration shows how wickedness is like a trap. Eventually the wicked person steps into a trap—"a" net (v. 8), a snare (v. 9). The point of these illustrations by Bildad is that the wicked will pay for their wickedness.

Job responds to Bildad in the second passage of scripture in focus for this session. In Job 19:21-22, Job cries for pity from his friends, not persecution or torment. Job indicated that God had already persecuted him enough. What he needed now were friends who would support him.

The third set of scriptures in the focal passage deals with Job's thoughts about the wicked not being punished. Job wrestles with the question: "Why does God let evil men live, let them grow old and prosper?" (Job 21:7,TEV)

Job said several things about the wicked: They have children and grandchildren. They do not experience disaster. They never have to live in terror. Their cattle breed and give birth without trouble.

Their children are healthy and enjoy life. They die with suffering. They tell God to leave them alone.

In wrestling with these thoughts, Job concludes that he cannot accept their way of thinking and living. Do the wicked really suffer? We need to examine this question thoroughly.

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Plan to collect tax from churches appears dead

by Greg Warner
Florida Baptist Witness

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (BP)—Florida's attempt to force churches to collect sales tax apparently has fizzled.

Following the lead set in Gov. Bob Martinez's proposed budget, the Florida House Finance and Taxation Committee is expected to propose that the state retain the law that exempts churches and other non-profit groups from charging sales tax on services they provide.

"There is no sentiment to tax the services rendered by churches," said Bill Townsend, general counsel for the Department of Revenue in Tallahassee. "They will have the same status they currently enjoy."

The sales-tax exemptions for churches and other non-profit groups were cancelled late last year when the Florida legislature voted to raise revenue by forcing accountants, dry cleaners and most other service-oriented professions to charge customers sales tax.

The new law, which will take effect July 1, reportedly would force churches to collect sales tax on certain activities, such as

retreats, weddings and funerals, if those services are offered for fixed fees.

But a special study commission, which since December has been re-evaluating the exemptions, has recommended that churches not be included in the new law.

"What the commission did was pick up the governor's package," Townsend said.

Martinez's proposed budget does include sales tax on some professional services but not those performed by churches. In addition to bypassing non-profit organizations that qualify under section 01(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, the governor also exempted medical and social services, insurance and some other services.

If as expected the House Finance and Taxation Committee adopts the recommendations of the study commission, the committee likely will ask the state legislature to reinstate the exemption for churches.

Final word on the committee's intentions will have to wait until all its work on the sales tax bill is completed later in April. Both the House and Senate then will have to approve any amendment.

Court rejects challenge to religious dress law

by Kathy Palen

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Supreme Court has refused to hear a challenge to an Oregon law that prohibits public schoolteachers from wearing religious dress in the classroom.

By a 6-3 vote, the justices dismissed the appeal of a Eugene, Ore., teacher who was fired for wearing traditional Sikh garb—white clothing and a white turban—on the job.

Janet Cooper, who also lost her Oregon teaching certificate, challenged the state statute, contending it violated her First Amendment right to the free exercise of religion.

Cooper first took her case to the state appeals court, which upheld the law's provision for suspension from teaching duties. But the court ruled revocation of a teaching certificate was a greater sanction than needed to maintain a school district's religious

neutrality.

The Eugene School District appealed to the Oregon Supreme Court, which reversed the lower court's decision holding the statute "when correctly interpreted and applied" was a valid penalty. The state's high court said the law was needed "to avoid giving children or their parents the impression that the school (approves) the religious commitment of one group and perhaps finds that of others less worthy."

The court said a teacher could wear a simple religious symbol, such as a crucifix or Star of David, and on an occasional basis could even wear more elaborate religious dress.

Justices William J. Brennan Jr., Thurgood Marshall and Sandra Day O'Connor voted to hear arguments in the case. Supreme Court rules require the vote of at least four justices to grant review. (86-701, Cooper v. Eugene School District)

High court to review Falwell-Flynt case

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Supreme Court has agreed to review a case involving television evangelist Jerry Falwell and *Hustler* magazine publisher Larry Flynt.

The high court will determine if a lower court was correct in awarding \$200,000 to Falwell, who alleged an advertising parody in Flynt's magazine caused him "emotional distress." A key issue will be whether individuals who have not been libeled still can recover damages for published opinions or parodies that cause them emotional distress.

Falwell—founder of Moral Majority, which now is known as Liberty Federation—filed a

\$45 million suit against Flynt and *Hustler* for libel, invasion of privacy and intentional infliction of emotional distress because of a parody, published in the magazine's November 1983 and March 1984 issues, that portrayed Falwell as an inebriated drunkard.

During a 1984 trial, Falwell testified he was very angry and "felt like weeping" when he saw the parody. Flynt, who testified on videotape, said one of his objectives in publishing the parody was to "assassinate" Falwell's reputation.

Arguments in the case will be heard during the Supreme Court's 1987-88 term.

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