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### November 29, 1984

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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November 29, 1984

# Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

'Because I Love Him'

Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions



## On the cover

Arkansas Baptist



(FMB)photo / Don Purledge

Ray Register (right) Southern Baptist representative to Israel, calls on a long-time friend, Abuhakam, an Arab noble and merchant whose sons studied at the Nazareth Baptist School. Lottie Moon gifts have helped support the Registers' 18-year ministry and built a number of churches and schools.

## In this issue

### 10 freed to do missions

Several Southern Baptist missionaries who used to work under other organizations have contrasted their former methods of support with the SBC's undergirding. They are free to do the mission work now, they say.

### 12 ministry's beginning

All Christians are called to be ministers and that ministry should begin as they are baptized and the church recognizes them as called, says a speaker at the twelfth annual Southern Baptist Lay Renewal Conference.

LINE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
1	2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4	5 6 7 8	9 10 11 12	13 14 15 16	17 18 19 20
2	8 9 10 11 12 13 14	15 16 17 18 19 20 21	22 23 24 25 26 27 28	29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

## Next month in Arkansas

**December 2, Associational and Church Carol Sing.** Suggested date for congregations and associations to meet for fellowship and praise in singing.

**December 2-9, Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.** Focus on foreign missions by local churches as Southern Baptists give to provide nearly one-half of budget for foreign work, and pray for present missionaries and for more persons to respond to God's call to mission service.

**December 3-5, Southern Baptist College Bible Conference, Walnut Ridge.** Bible study, preaching and evangelistic

music in six sessions on the campus of Arkansas Baptists' school at Walnut Ridge.

**December 6-7, Evangelism Workshop, Camp Paron.** Sessions of planning and training for associational leaders in evangelism.

**December 9, Foreign Missions Day.** Suggested day for foreign missions emphasis in Sunday School as local churches close the annual week of prayer.

**December 30, Student Day at Christmas.** Time for the local church to show students they care as the students share experiences and inform them about Baptist Student Union ministries.

## Southwest Association accepts Amazon challenge

During a regular board meeting on November 20, Arkansas' Southwest Association accepted the challenge of Glendon Grober, associate in the Evangelism Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, to develop a missions partnership with the middle Amazon region where former Arkansans, Rev. and Mrs. Richard Walker, are serving. The association will be involved in four areas of work:

(1) establishing 13 new churches; (2) providing leadership training; (3) assistance in personal witnessing; and (4) construction of a new camp and retreat center.

Associational Director of Missions Carroll Caldwell said, "Our association is excited about the mission opportunities that this project provides. We will be contacting adjacent associations to assist us in this endeavor."

## Social Security taxes up for ministers, churches

DALLAS (BP)—Social Security benefits will increase next year, but taxes will be higher for churches and ministers.

Approximately 37 million beneficiaries will see their monthly Social Security checks increase about \$15 a month, and another four million Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients will receive a 3.5 percent increase in their checks.

A report by the Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., said the average monthly Social Security check will increase from \$434 to \$449 in 1985, while those persons on SSI will have benefits increased from \$314 to \$325. A couple's average monthly check will increase from \$750 to \$776 if both individuals are drawing benefits.

Social Security benefits are increased if the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers rises 3.0 percent or more from the third quarter of one year to the third quarter of the following year. The CPI rose 3.5 percent from October 1983 to October 1984.

But while the benefits are set to increase so will the maximum wage base and tax rates.

The maximum amount of annual earnings subject to Social Security tax will increase

from \$37,800 to \$39,600.

The maximum self-employment tax for ordained ministers will increase by \$401.40 to \$4,672.80 in 1985. This figure represents both the wage base increase and an increase in the effective tax rate from this year's 11.3 percent to 11.8 percent in 1985. The increase is a continuation of a 1983 law which raised the tax rate for self-employed persons to 14.1 percent. A 2.3 percent tax credit was included for 1985.

The tax rate paid by employees and employers will each increase to 7.05 percent. Employees paid 6.7 percent and employers paid 7.0 percent in 1984.

The report said the maximum Social Security tax paid by employees in 1985 will be increased by \$259.50 to \$2,791.80. The maximum tax paid by employers on a worker's earnings will rise by \$145.80 to \$2,791.80.

A 1983 law made all churches subject to Social Security taxes last Jan. 1. Unless a church has filed for an exemption, it must to pay the employer share of the tax and deduct the employee share from the wages of non-ordained members on the church staff. Ordained ministers must continue to pay self-employment tax.

If you love me . . .

## The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



The following guest editorial was written by Al Shackleford, editor of the Tennessee Baptist and Reflector

Often when a person is dying, his loved ones gather around to hear his final words. Perhaps we feel that as life reaches its final moments, the departing person will be able to properly assess the importance of his life—to sum up life's significance.

Although Jesus' final words were uttered by one who was truly alive, the 11 disciples doubtless were anxious to hear his last words before he finished his physical life on this earth.

On a mountain in Galilee, Jesus gathered his disciples and declared, "Full authority in heaven and on earth has been committed to me. Go forth therefore and make all nations my disciples; baptize men everywhere in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you. And be assured, I am with you always, to the end of time" (Matt. 28:18-20 NEB).

These disciples, under the power of the Holy Spirit, responded in obedience to Jesus' last words. Their obedience led to persecution, poverty, prison, and even death.

Obviously, these early disciples remembered and responded to Jesus' teaching in John 14:15, "If you love me you will obey my commands" (NEB). This is the theme scripture for our Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions.

Throughout history, the test of faithfulness has been obedience. A slave or servant proved his loyalty to a master by

obedience—even when that obedience was required by law.

Yet, 20th century Christians—who have been freed from the condemnation of God's law—share that same commitment to obedience. Our service to Christ is not because of some "bill of sale" from a slave market, but our voluntary response to him "who first loved us."

The dictionary defines "to obey" as "to carry out the orders or instructions of one in authority or control."

Our Christian commitment is to carry out all orders and instructions of our Lord—who has been given full authority in heaven and on earth.

A part of that commitment to go forth and make disciples is our sharing in the missions and ministries of our Foreign Mission Board.

As we pray, we assure God's blessing on those he has led to go forth into 104 nations of the world.

As we give through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, we share directly in the work of our more than 3,400 foreign missionaries.

The goal for this year's offering is \$66 million—a challenging 13.7 percent increase above our 1983 offering gifts. Only our failure to be obedient to Jesus' last physical words on earth will keep Southern Baptists from reaching and shattering the goal for the 1984 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

As Jesus said, "If you love me you will obey my commands" (John 14:15 NEB).

### Unmet mission needs in 1984

Many good things are happening on the foreign mission field because of Southern Baptists' giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering—new churches and chapels, new hospital wings, audiovisual supplies, and missionary housing and cars. But some others had to be put on the waiting list because the offering ran close to \$2 million short of the \$60 million budgeted goal.

□ Missionaries in the tiny country of Belize asked for \$30,000 for a new bookstore ministry but were turned down. They also asked for \$15,000 for churches and chapels but the money was not available.

□ The Caribbean Baptist Fellowship publications ministry which provides English-language literature for all the countries in

the Caribbean did not get \$23,000 requested for new equipment; Nor did missionaries in Mexico get the \$50,000 they requested for seminary construction.

□ The Colombia mission requested money for eight chapels. Three of the churches had been on the needs list since 1982. Only one of the requests was met.

"The Foreign Mission Board budget is based on actual requests from the missionaries," said Carl Johnson, the board's vice-president for finance. "The items listed are real needs and do go unmet when the goal is missed. Missionaries are grateful for the tools provided but remind Southern Baptists many people still die without the opportunity to know Christ."

# Arkansas Baptist NEWSMAGAZINE

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meeting the information needs of Arkansas Baptists

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Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double-spaced and must be signed. Letters must not contain more than 350 words and must not defame the character of persons. They must be marked "for publication."

Photos submitted for publication will be returned only when accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Only black and white photos can be used.

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## Internationals meet and share 'people to people'

Arkansas' annual International Student Conference was held recently at the Ozark Folk Center, Mountain View. The meeting provides fellowship and interaction for international students enrolled in Arkansas colleges and universities and is sponsored jointly by Baptist Student Union and Woman's Missionary Union. Program personalities included Russell Begaye (below), consultant in the Language Ministries Division of the Home Mission Board; Julie Peacock, associate director in the Student Division of the Louisiana Baptist Convention; and David Pierce, minister of music at First Church, Benton. Students from 25 nations registered for this year's conference, organized around the theme "People to People." BSU directors and Christian students were available to lead small groups and develop relationships with the internationals.



Photos by George Sims

### First Church, Parks dedicates new building



*Dedicatory services were held for the new facilities at First Church, Parks recently. The new 4400 sq. ft. building was constructed at a cost of \$65,000 with the men of the congregation doing the work. The new auditorium has a seating capacity of 300 and the new building contains a pastor's study, secretarial office, nursery, two bathrooms and a large Sunday School classroom. The new facilities have heat and air conditioning throughout. The old auditorium has been converted into a Fellowship Hall. Pastor Price Neal led the church in baptizing 32 people during the associational year which recently closed.*



Don Moore

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

...We can live with imperfection! I know. I've lived with myself for 50 years. My wife knows. She has lived with me nearly 30 years. Even with heroic and sacrificial parents, we live with their imperfections. And, don't you know, we delight to live with and even enjoy imperfect children. I continue to visit a barber who once did a "whitewall" job on my hair. The newspaper I read has erred a time or two. The cafeteria I frequent at noon once served me a pitiful meal for the money. And, would you believe, the physician who cares for my health once made a costly mistake in the diagnosis of a friend's health? The leading car and drug manufacturers often have to recall their products for dangerous imperfections.



Moore

...We ought to be used to living with imperfections by now! I suppose we are at home, work and play. But at church, not! A perfect preacher, singer, sermon and song—that's a must. A pass receiver may miss a game-winning pass, but church workers had better not miss a name, an appointment or a hospital visit. Both church leaders and lay people need to make peace at the point of accepting the fact that both groups will have to live with imperfections.

...Denominational imperfections qualify for the same grace the other imperfections call for. Our child, spouse, parent, neighbor, doctor, preacher and friend remain important to us because we have grace toward their imperfections. Every denominational entity is not only capable of but certain to fall short of someone's standard, if not everyone's at some point. Thank you for grace like God's that "abounds where sin abounds" (Rom. 5:20).

...Our annual convention highlights the great things God is doing with us and tides us over those occasional times when some imperfection is found to exist. By grace we can live with imperfections

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



'Herein is love'...  
(1 John 4:10)  
**Pray for Arkansas'**  
**Brazil partnership**

## Two writers begin lesson commentaries

Two new writers begin this week writing the International and Life and Work series Sunday school lesson commentaries in "Lessons for living."

Randy Maxwell, pastor of West Church, Batesville, authors his first commentary on the International series lessons. A native of Paragould, Maxwell is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He has served as pastor of churches in Camden and DeValls Bluff and was recently elected moderator of the Independence Association. Maxwell is married to the former Nan Morris of Garland, Texas. They have one son, Scott.

Leroy Stringfield, minister of education and youth at First Church, Jacksonville, begins this week with the Life and Work series of lessons. A Louisiana native, Stringfield is a graduate of Louisiana State Univer-



Maxwell



Stringfield

sity and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Prior to moving to Arkansas, Stringfield served churches in Mississippi and Alabama and taught on the faculty of Judson College in Marion, Ala. He is married to the former Betty Joyce Smith of Prattville, Ala. They have two sons, Craig and Kevin.

## Letters to the editor

### On tabling 'equality'

The following resolution was presented by the Resolutions Committee in one of the sessions of the recent state convention in Ft. Smith.

*Resolution #7 - Concerning the Equality of Men and Women Before God*

*Be it resolved, that we affirm that men and women share equally in bearing the image of God and that both men and women reflect the dignity of God's creative work.*

*Be it resolved that we affirm that men and women share equally in the tragedy, guilt and condemnation of human sin.*

*Be it resolved that we affirm that men and women share equally in being the subjects of God's love, in being persons for whom Christ died, and in being potential recipients of God's gift of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Be it finally resolved that we affirm that men and women share equally in carrying out the Great Commission of our Lord.*

After brief discussion, a motion was made to table this resolution. The motion passed, and the resolution was tabled. During the brief discussion of this resolution, concern was expressed that the fourth statement in the resolution was ambiguous, possibly being a veiled reference to the ordination of women.

As co-author of the resolution with Benny McCracken, I wanted to offer this word of clarification. Due to the early action to table this resolution, we did not have an opportunity to voice this sentiment on the floor of the convention.

In no way did we intend this resolution to have anything to say about the ordination of women. We simply wanted to affirm that men and women share in the biblical doctrines of creation, sin, salvation and service. We have personalized our annual mission offering for years by naming them for

specific, dedicated Christian women—Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, Dixie Jackson. Our resolution intended to do nothing more than affirm the meritorious missionary service that many women—as well as men—have given to the kingdom of God through our denomination.

We hope the convention messengers did not strain at gnat and swallow a camel in the vote to table this resolution. — John H. McClanahan, Pine Bluff

### Fired ministers

The article by Jim Lowry about ministers that have been fired was very interesting. We have heard that the first year that a pastor is in a new church, he is idolized. The second year he is criticized. The third year he is scandalized.

One reason that a pastor does not realize that anything is wrong is that he is so pleased with what he is doing that he does not know that other people may not be pleased with the way he performs his job. One thing that would alert a pastor that things are not going well for him is when the congregation becomes less enthusiastic and seem to come to church because it is their duty.

When some of the deacons start opposing the pastor he is probably on his way out. It is a sad thing that some people seem to think that their mission in life is to get rid of the pastor of any church that they join. — Ben Fried, Mena

Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double-space and must be signed by one person, though the name may be withheld on request. Mailing address and phone number of the writer should be included. Letters must not contain more than 350 words and must not defame the character of persons. Letters must be marked "for publication." Only original letters will be considered.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

## people

**J. M. McCraw** is serving as pastor of the Cassville Church.

**Bill Riddle** is serving as pastor of Green Forest First Church.

**Allen Alford** is serving as interim pastor of Lambrook First Church. He is a student at Mid-America Seminary in Memphis.

**Donald Lee Pope** is serving as pastor of First Southern Church, Holly Grove. A native of Loris, S. C., he attended Wake Technical Institute and North Carolina Wesleyan College. He is now a student at Mid-America Seminary. He and his wife, Deborah, have a son, Donald Lee Jr.

**Charles Holcomb** has resigned as interim pastor of the North Main Church in Sheridan.

**James Hughes** began serving Nov. 11 as pastor of the Norman Church, coming there from the Huffines Church in Bevins, Texas.

**Stan Lee** has joined the staff of Mount Ida Church as minister of music and youth. He has been serving at Memorial Church in Waldo.

**Edward Sudbery** has resigned as pastor of the Lake Ouachita Church to move to Camden.

**Oneta C. Ussery** died Nov. 14 in North Little Rock at age 77. She was a member of Baring Cross Church. Survivors include a son, Billy R. Ussery of Clarksville; a daughter, Katherine Word of North Little Rock; a brother, William Baldrige of North Little Rock; 10 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

**Alvin A. Hams** is serving as interim pastor of the Needham Church.

**Orus C. Puckett** of Wynne died Nov. 17 at age 60. He was pastor of the Tilton Church.

**Daphne Hill** of Searcy was crowned 1984 homecoming queen Nov. 10 at Ouachita Baptist University during pre-game

festivities at the OBU vs. Harding University football game. Her court consisted of Lisa Anderson of Mesquite, Texas; Teresa Stout of DeQueen; Barb Griffin of Alton, Ill.; and Deana Doss of Beebe.

## briefs

**East Side Church** in Fort Smith will ordain Jim Russell as a deacon Sunday evening, Dec. 2.

**Grand Avenue Church** in Fort Smith will observe its 50th anniversary Dec. 14-16 with services that will feature former pastors, James Pleitz, Lloyd Cloud, Don Moore, Clifford Palmer, J. Earl Bryant and Paul McCray as speakers.

**Hot Springs Second Church** will present a "Festival of Light," a Christmas celebration at 7 p.m. each evening, Dec. 9-13. More than 500 people will be involved in the program, which presents the Christmas story, the life of Christ, his crucifixion and his resurrection in music, drama and light.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



**Hunger award**—Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, received the Pattern Setter Award for having contributed \$7,783.50 to world hunger last year, the largest amount among Arkansas Baptist churches. Above, Bob Parker, director of the Christian Life Council, presents a plaque of appreciation on behalf of the Arkansas World Hunger Committee to Cary Heard, pastor of the congregation.

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



Emmanuel Church, Conway, celebrated its 50th anniversary Nov. 18 with an afternoon program and dinner. A highlight of the program was the burning of an \$18,000 note on the purchase of four acres adjacent to the church property. The new land, which will be used for expansion, was bought by the congregation with the assistance of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Missions Department. Pictured above are (left to right) Jack Braizer, David Kelley, Jim Douglas and Carroll Brewer, deacon chairman.

**'Because  
I Love  
Him'**

**Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions**

**December 2-9, 1984**

**Lottie Moon Christmas Offering**

## **The Lord's hand is not shortened for Mississippi dentist and family**

**by Bonita Sparrow**

**BOUAKE, Ivory Coast (BP)**—For 10 years in Clinton, Miss., dentist Charles Deevers treated toothaches and attended church. He had a flourishing practice and a good life. But God had a better idea for the Deevers family.

Now assigned by the Foreign Mission Board to a mission point at Bouake on the Ivory Coast of Africa, Deevers still treats toothaches and attends church.

Today, however, many of the patients who come to him go from a pain in the mouth to a peace in the heart and the church Deevers attends is likely to be one that has sprung from his dental practice at Bouake, or from his work in the local prison there.

Both Deevers and his wife, Diane, were quick to acknowledge to Rosser McDonald of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission God's hand "is not shortened" in their lives. McDonald was on the Ivory Coast to film mission segments to be aired on "Our World," a weekly magazine-format program seen on the ACTS network.

Dental practice in Mississippi and on the Ivory Coast has some similarities—a toothache is a toothache in any language. But it has a number of differences.

In Bouake patients begin lining up outside the clinic at 5:30 in the morning. Deevers and his assistants will see 60 or 70 patients each day—8,000 to 10,000 a year.

The day begins at the clinic with Deevers and the clinic staff sharing devotions. That is followed by another devotional time with the people outside, waiting in line for treatment.

"We try to follow Jesus' example of healing the whole person—physically and spiritually," Deevers said. "We want the people to be physically healed but we also want them to hear the good news of Jesus."

After the devotions, as patients begin arriving, Deevers screens each one and then, under his direction, many of those patients are turned over to one of his seven assistants who are trained to give injections and extract selected teeth. The patients with difficult problems are reserved for Deevers' attention.

"These assistants aren't educated in terms of university degrees, but they have learned very quickly and are very capable," Deevers said. "They are all soul-winning Christians, able to disciple the patients. I believe God had a hand in guiding every one of them to us."

The assistants have all come to their jobs by different routes. Deevers told of one, a fellow church member, who came to him asking for prayer for "a problem."

"I asked him what the problem was and

he said he would tell me after we had prayed about it," Deevers said. "So we prayed, asking God to solve his problem. After the prayer the man said, 'My problem is that I want to work in the clinic with you as one of your assistants.' That man is now a very capable assistant."

The clinic serves as more than just a dental office, Deevers said. "There is a reading room here that is open in the afternoon and evening with one of the assistants on hand to talk with people who come in."

And from that reading room, and the ability of Deevers and the seven dental assistants to disciple new believers, has emerged a church with 150 members. Services are held a block away from the clinic.

That is not the only church which has resulted from Deevers' ministry. "There's a prison here with about 2,000 inmates serving sentences ranging from five years to life," Deevers said. "We got permission from the authorities to go in one day a week to provide dental care for about 15 or 20 people at a time."

Inmate patients are given slips of paper with Bible verses written on them, told to memorize the verses and to return the next week if they want copies of the book the verses come from.

"The Bible verses tell the plan of salvation," Deevers said. "When we talk to the people the second time we share who Christ is. We've been able to start a Bible study in the prison and it has grown into a church with 125 or so people holding worship services under a mango tree in the prison yard."

The walls of that church are defined by pieces of string tied to several trees. When the church is holding services, one of the pieces of string is untied, to represent an open door.

"There's a sweet spirit in that prison church," Deevers said. "The prisoners are now witnessing to other prisoners and each week we're seeing the Lord add to our number."

As the new church is able to meet physical needs—a blanket here, clothes; medicine or food there, the opportunities to witness increase.

Such activities provide Deevers with his own deep heart satisfaction—a satisfaction which does not come by just working for material things. "The Lord's hand is not shortened," Deevers emphasizes. "We have what we need. We are completely content."

**Bonita Sparrow is promotion director for the SBC Radio and Television Commission.**

(BP) photo by Jim Newton.



*Charles Deevers, Southern Baptist missionary dentist, treats a patient at his dental clinic in Bouake, Ivory Coast. He is assisted by Konan N'Groan (left). Deevers, a Mississippi native, has also developed an evangelistic ministry with prisoners at the penitentiary in Bouake.*



# Because I Love Him

## Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions

December 2-9, 1984

Lottie Moon  
Christmas Offering  
Goal: \$66,000,000

*A Christmas visit—Ray Register (right), Southern Baptist representative to Israel, calls on a long-time friend, Abuhakam, an Arab noble and merchant whose sons studied at the Nazareth Baptist School. As director of visitation and evangelism in Arab villages, Register has taught English to some of the merchant's relatives. Lottie Moon gifts have helped support the Registers' 18-year ministry in the Galilee area, where a number of churches and Baptist centers have been built with Lottie Moon funds.*





(FMB) photos / Don Rutledge

## A time for witness in a timeless land

For Southern Baptist representatives in Israel, Christmas is the best time of the year to share the gospel of Jesus.

In the land of the Savior's birth, crowds hear the Singers of Praise in a program ending with the "Hallelujah Chorus." Both Arabs and Jews look forward to visits in the homes of their Christian acquaintances. Chandler Lanier says the observance is "the one witness that is accepted without hesitation by Israelis."

Almost 50 Southern Baptists, supported in large part by the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, work from Ashkelon to Galilee. Mike and Elaine Greer, who live in Bethlehem, decided last year to walk with their three small children up the hill, just as Mary and Joseph did so long ago. After a visit to Manger Square, the family walked on to the Field of the Shepherds, where Mike helped lead a worship service.

As they returned home, Elaine asked Michael, six, what he had learned from the visit. "Mommy," he said, "I guess we live in the most wonderful place in the world!"



**Children: count it all joy**—Like youngsters everywhere, children of Baptist families in Israel find special happiness at Christmas, whether they're frolicking on the rocky shore of the Sea of Galilee as MK Sommer Hicks does with her dad, Ray (bottom photo), or taking part in a pageant retelling the story of Jesus' birth (top photo). Hicks, a Southern Baptist evangelist who works in Tur'an, and his daughter were not far from the village where Mary Magdalene grew up. The pageant at Baptist Village in Petah Tiqva featured children of refugees once housed at the George W. Truett Home. Pastor Suhail Ramadan narrates. Each year, about 20 of the former refugees gather for a reunion the week after Christmas.

## 'Because I Love Him'

### SBC support has freed us to work, missionaries say

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)—Seven Southern Baptist missionaries who formerly were missionaries with three other mission organizations in Africa say the Southern Baptist Convention's missions support system has freed them to do a better job.

They served a combined 42 years with those organizations before the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appointed them for three East African countries.

All were Baptists when they served with the other organizations, and three were raised as missionary kids with those organizations. Five formerly raised all their support. Two got fixed salaries—"barely enough to scrape by"—which they helped raise.

The seven love and respect their former organizations and colleagues, but they admit facts about contrasting support styles speak for themselves.

"Knowing the Lord has led 14 million Southern Baptists in 37,000 churches to support missions and missionaries has freed my wife and me to do a better job of reaching people for Christ than we could when we had to struggle constantly to raise support," said one.

"Many Southern Baptists, including some missionaries, don't fully grasp what a good thing we've got going for missions in the financial undergirding of the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering," he added.

Another said he just smiles when Southern Baptist missionaries complain about this or that. "They have legitimate complaints at times. But it'd sure make a difference in their outlook if they'd tried the type of missions in which some raise more than they need and others, with less exciting slides and speaking ability, barely get enough to exist."

Some of their former organizations, most referred to loosely as "faith" missions groups, have a pool approach. Excess support raised by some missionaries is shared with more poorly funded ones. Some groups have fixed salaries. Many, though, leave it to individuals to get what they can.

Missionaries who have gathered support through personal fund raising from churches and individuals say support has a way of shrinking as statewide commitments change. That disrupts family budgets and turns medical problems into tense financial situations.

"The beauty of the Southern Baptist ap-

proach is that the organization supports the individual, backing him with what he needs to do the job," one missionary said. "My former organization called on the individual to support himself as well as the organization."

Methods of organizational support vary among mission groups which don't have the wide base of support enjoyed by the SBC. But the organization he mentioned takes at least 30 percent off the top of the support raised by missionaries to cover home office administration.

Southern Baptists have a 1985 foreign missions budget of \$144,206,000, with only 12.3 percent set aside for home office expense, but they don't have money to burn with more than 3,400 missionaries in 104 countries and a Bold Mission objective of 5,000 missionaries in 125 countries by A.D. 2000.

Voluntary gifts must rise sharply for the SBC to meet its growing foreign missions commitment to appoint and send missionaries and fund their work, cover a variety of extra costs and pay a fixed, livable salary, with a variable cost of living factor.

The future calls for increased giving, but missionaries appreciate the SBC's current support system—unique in the history of Christendom—which allows them to be full-time missionaries, instead of spending at least half of their time raising funds. Most "faith" missionaries, for example, have to raise money not only for their salaries but also for such items as work budget, car, house, travel and freight expenses, medical needs, furlough expense, foreign income tax and schooling for children. Southern Baptists provide that and more.

"I used to cry at night as an MK after overhearing my parents (both "faith" missionaries) agonize over how they would pay the bills and get their work done," a missionary commented. "I even hated the bicycle they gave me one Christmas because I knew they couldn't afford it. My kids don't have to go through that in the Southern Baptist support system."

One missionary's aged "faith" missionary parents remained on the field well beyond normal retirement time because their organization and support churches had no guaranteed pension beyond Social Security. Some churches and organizations will follow through and protect aging and disabled "faith" missionaries, and some have

retirement facilities. But others either don't provide retirement help or don't do so adequately. Southern Baptists have a guaranteed pension and insurance program to meet those needs.

Furlough time provides another contrast. "I used to detest furlough," one former "faith" missionary admitted. "It became a struggle to renew fading support for the next term or there'd be no next term."

Fading support and the inclination of some churches to cut off funds during time spent in the States force some "faith" missionaries to find outside jobs on furlough. But Southern Baptists continue support during furlough, allowing time for rest, updating education and skills, visiting family and speaking in churches to tell the story of missions.

"What I liked best about my first furlough as a Southern Baptist missionary," was knowing that when I visited a church the bottom line didn't have to be "How much money can I raise from you?" he said. "Under the old approach the reality of the pitch for money from so many different directions often made church members defensive and wary of our motives. This time we could just share mission needs and have good fellowship without personal strings attached."

Some people have quipped that "faith" missionaries "go to the Lord" when they have a need but that SBC-supported missionaries "go to the board." "That's an immature way of looking at faith," said one missionary. "I can't believe many people would accept that."

The missionaries interviewed don't believe any one kind of missionary has the corner on the title "faith" missionary, although one commented that Southern Baptists need to work more at keeping contact with valuable prayer support from an individual local church.

"We need as much faith as we ever did," said one. "Now we just operate under a different way of using the Lord's money. We depend on the Lord to provide tangibles and intangibles the board can't provide directly and to continue to use the board and our churches to support us and increase giving and support so we can expand our efforts to reach people everywhere."

"Given our diverse nature, voluntary structure and the difficulties we face as a denomination, that really takes faith."



## One missionary, 55,000 patients: missions health work of future?

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptist missionary Ed Barnes may represent the future already happening today.

The pharmacist runs a clinic in Africa without a doctor or registered nurse on staff. In fact, he is the only missionary at the clinic. But 16 Malawian health workers saw 55,000 patients during 1983 at the main clinic and seven outlying village clinics.

For 27 missionaries, Foreign Mission Board staffers and other guests who recently gathered to discuss the future of Southern Baptist health care programs, Barnes' work was related to much of their discussion during a three-day meeting.

The group affirmed the need for a health care program dealing with the whole person. They see hospitals, clinics, community-based health care programs, evangelism, agriculture, literacy, economics and sanitation all playing a part in health care.

While Southern Baptists cannot provide a total health care program for any country, they can help promote such a program and help with some of its aspects. Hospitals and clinics Southern Baptists have supported through the years will continue, the group agreed, but they're looking at innovations such as the clinic in Malawi where health care is delivered without a doctor or registered nurse. And they believe health care and evangelism will continue to be directly related in missions overseas.

Barnes told what the Malawi clinic has

achieved by combining under-fives, prenatal, nutritional and dental clinics with an evangelistic outreach led by a Malawian chaplain. One man brought a friend—who had been bitten two hours earlier by a highly poisonous black mamba snake—on his back to the Barneses' house. The Barneses keep a vial of expensive anti-venom in their refrigerator. They gave it to the young man and two weeks later he was well. This December he graduates from the Baptist Bible School in Lilongwe to be a preacher.

Another man traveled six miles to a village clinic to hear the morning devotionals. He became a Christian and shared his story with nine friends who became Christians. They asked their Muslim village chief for permission to start a Baptist church there. He said no, but did agree to let them meet for Bible study as long as they met in his yard.

Barnes said the chief underestimated the power of such a group. Four weeks ago the chief himself accepted Christ, he reported, and the new church has constructed a mud building with a straw roof. It has an average attendance of 80.

Overlapping concerns for physical and spiritual welfare have characterized SBC missionaries from early days, said Charles Bryan, the Foreign Mission Board's vice-president for overseas operations.

The board's first medical doctor became so overwhelmed by the spiritual needs of the Chinese that he seriously considered giving

up his medical practice to give full time to evangelistic work. And an early field evangelist became so concerned about their physical needs that he practiced medical skills he had learned from his father, a doctor, said Bryan.

Today, community health and development must be connected with institutional care and a training center to be complete and adequate, said Timothy C. Pennell, professor of surgery and director of international health affairs at Wake Forest University Medical Center.

The group, almost half of them doctors, admitted that in developing nations doctors may not always play the central role in health care they play in the United States. Educators or social workers may be better equipped to bring needed changes in lifestyle, they said.

And it may not be easy to find people to staff less traditional approaches as well as existing mission hospitals and clinics. Health care missionaries must be missionaries first and health care workers second, said Giles Fort, missionary physician in Zimbabwe. He and others stressed the need for medical missionaries who are flexible enough to meet needs they find on the mission field.

Franklin Fowler, the board's senior medical consultant, said in the last 10 years the number of missionary physicians and nurses overseas has decreased slightly while the number of national physicians and nurses in Baptist facilities overseas has increased dramatically—168 percent for physicians.

This change shows missionaries have helped national leadership develop, he said. It also frees missionary doctors and nurses to open new work and develop new approaches.

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# Christians are 'ordained' at baptism, Miles says

by Sherri Anthony

TOCCOA, Ga. (BP)—All Christians are called to be ministers and should consider their baptism, like ordination, as recognition by the church of that call, a Baptist seminary professor told participants in the twelfth annual Southern Baptist Lay Renewal Conference.

Delos Miles, professor of evangelism at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., said there is very little in the New Testament about ordination, but much about baptism. He suggested Christians should either "equate baptism with ordination and tie that to a radical priesthood of all baptized believers" or else develop a more "pragmatic approach to ordination."

In an interview later, Miles said baptism should be considered ordination by the church to Christian ministry, and that any ordination other than baptism is strictly a practical thing added on to facilitate the administration of the church.

Most Baptists, he conceded, do not think of baptism as an ordination to ministry,

because they have confused the "pragmatic practice of ordination" as being based on Scripture, when it really is not. He said the "pragmatic practice" of ordination is the various different approaches to ordination used by churches of various faiths and denominations to facilitate the faith and order of that particular church.

Miles said he sees no evidence in the New Testament God has divided Christians into clergy and laity, male and female, ordained and unordained, or that God gives one group authority over another.

"The New Testament," Miles said, "is far more concerned with calling and ministry than it is with ordination and authority."

Thomas Starkes, professor of Christian Missions and World Religions at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, presented seven factors which will precipitate renewal in the church: (1) when people quit fighting the Bible and start reading it; (2) when people are not afraid to let miracles happen; (3) when the role of the laity is heightened to

what it should be; (4) when the proper role is given to the Holy Spirit; (5) when laymen realize discipline is based on freedom, not on "oughtness"; (6) when people begin to speak out from the church to the world; and (7) when Christians understand there are people who are hungry and hurting.

Jack Taylor, author of *The Hallelujah Factor*, led a study of biblical praise, stressing "every human was created to worship God; it is the reason we exist."

The conference, sponsored jointly by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and Home Mission Board evangelism section, ended in a praise and celebration service led by Reid Hardin, director of evangelism support for the Home Mission Board.

A record crowd of more than 500 attended the week-long conference.

**Sherri Anthony is an editorial assistant for the Home Mission Board, SBC.**

## Church's mission identical to Christ's, theologian says

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—Christians must hold the Great Commission and the Great Commandment in faithful balance, an Argentine theologian told students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Pablo Deiros, professor of church history at International Baptist Seminary in Buenos Aires, said the church's mission is identical to the mission of Jesus Christ. The church is the continuation of God's liberating and redeeming work in a world rampant with poverty and suffering, he said.

"Jesus is not physically present in the world anymore. . . . But the world was not left without his love and redeeming action. He has empowered his church with his Holy Spirit and the community of saints is now his body on earth," Deiros said.

Deiros, currently adjunct professor of

church history at Southeastern Seminary, told students the commission to preach the gospel to the world is inseparable from the command to love our neighbors. He said Jesus' life demonstrates the proclamation of the Kingdom is inseparable from compassionate ministry to concrete human need.

The theologian, whose parents were Argentine Baptist missionaries to Paraguay, said the gospel has come into a world where 75 percent of the world's population lives in poverty because they receive only 6.5 percent of the world's income. He said the average income for more than one billion people is just 30 cents per day. "This is our world! This is the world into which we must go to preach the gospel," he said.

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel," was the command of Jesus," Deiros

said. "It is very easy for us to understand his words in a geographical way. But, why not interpret them in a sociological way? If we approach his mission from this perspective, it would mean that we must go to every people in all human situations and conditions of life."

Focusing on the theme of incarnation, Deiros said: "As God was incarnate in Christ, so the church has to be incarnate in the world. The incarnate God, Jesus Christ, commissions us to go into the world this way, identifying ourselves with it. . . ."

Deiros said if the church really wants to follow Christ and to fulfill its mission, it must be incarnate in the world in service and ministry as well as preaching. "The mission of the church is no more and no less than being Christ in the world," he said.

## Southwestern faculty votes unanimous support of Dilday

Faculty members at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary have spoken out in unanimous support of seminary President Russell H. Dilday Jr..

In a special called meeting Nov. 13, faculty members approved without dissent a resolution affirming Dilday's right and duty to speak out regarding controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Of approximately 105 seminary faculty members, 15 were out of town when the meeting convened. Of those, most have expressed support for the resolution also, according to Scott Tatum, the professor of preaching who presided at the meeting.

Dilday and several other leaders of Southern Baptist seminaries, colleges and agencies have contended the convention is in danger of being taken over by a "fun-

damentalist political machine."

Since Dilday first voiced his concern at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Kansas City June 10-14, several critics—among them W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Church, Dallas—have charged denominational employees ought not speak out about matters of denominational controversy.

In the wake of those charges, several seminary faculties, boards of trustees and alumni organizations have voiced support of the right to speak out for denominational employees.

"As loyal Southern Baptists we value our denominational and support its worldwide witness in mission, evangelism and Christian education," the resolution stated. "We want the great body of Southern Baptist pastors and people to know where we stand during

the current crisis in our denomination."

The faculty resolved "President Dilday has spoken out on the issues facing the Southern Baptist Convention. We feel that he has both the right and the responsibility as a denominational leader to make his voice heard.

"We feel that our president has pointed out real and serious dangers which threaten this seminary, as well as the entire work of the SBC. We share his concern and support his courageous stand."

The resolution also reaffirms the faculty's commitment to the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963 and their loyalty to the SBC and the Cooperative Program, which finances cooperative church and mission activities worldwide.

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# Your state convention at work

## Stewardship/Annuity

### How much for missions?

The church budget is an expression of the church's ministries. These ministries represent the church's mission.



Walker

The major difficulty in defining missions relates to geography. We've divided missions into local, associational, state, national and world categories. Some debate the importance of one over the other. Any item that does not represent ministry in Jesus' name is not worthy of a line in the church budget.

Ministry action budgeting divides the church budget according to various ministries without geographic boundaries determining importance.

While missions is often debated, we aren't confused about the dollars. Figures do reveal our commitment to mission ministries. A church with no dollars earmarked for ministries three miles beyond the local church suffers from a lack of vision.

Increased dollars do not always reveal increased interest. A church may give more dollars for associational missions and the Cooperative Program than it did 20 years ago but only a fraction of the percentage it gave in 1964. Increased percentage is one measure of our increased interest.

The mission support survey form is a tool a church can use to look at its past, its present, and where it proposes to go. Request these forms from the Stewardship/Annuity Department. — James A. Walker, director.

## Christian Life Council

### Strange bedfellows

Shortly after beginning work with United Christian Action in Florida my predecessor indicated there would be times when you'd have strange bedfellows. That often proved true during those four years.

If victories over wrong are to be achieved, individuals and groups with differing beliefs are often teamed up whether we like it or not. A prime example is seen from World War II. Several million young Russian and German soldiers were killed during Hitler's attempt to conquer the U.S.S.R. Had the Soviets not been allies, our own losses might have been tripled. Some today can recall when we were glad the Russians were on our side.

The Arkansas Interfaith Hunger Task Force is made up of many religious groups in Arkansas. These represent different theological beliefs. The great big object of

the Task Force is to defeat another terrible enemy — hunger, domestic and foreign.

When one serves in the armed forces, in law enforcement and legislative bodies in all levels of government he becomes involved with those of differing philosophies, life styles and theological beliefs. Gratefully in this country we can cooperate without compromise in accomplishing great objectives. Aren't you glad you are not in countries like Iran where everyone must be a Moslem to have respect or expectation of cooperation.

There are worthy, effective organizations that deserve our prayerful support and participation whether we agree altogether with those participating or not.

"Ye are the salt of the earth...Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13a, 14a). — Bob Parker, director

## Evangelism

### Living and sharing

One of the purposes of the Lay Evangelism School is to help Christians know a daily cleansed life which will lead to greater power in witnessing. John, the beloved apostle, stated in I John 1:9 "If we will confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."



Shell

There is still a desperate need for Christian to confess their sins. God then does the cleansing.

Some people argue, "The best way to witness is living the life" while others frankly say, "Speaking verbally about Jesus is the best." Actually, these are two sides of the same coin. They are not opposed to one another, they complement one another. One without the other means the witness is incomplete.

Just as an airplane has two wings, so your witness has two parts, the life you live and the word you speak. If you were flying 30,000 feet and the pilot says, "One of the wings has to be dropped, which one do you want to drop, the left one or the right?" It would be disastrous to drop either. This is also true with witnessing. Both parts are mandatory. To drop either is to crash in our sharing. — Clarence Shell, director



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## Missions

### Where to start

Numbers of unchurched people in Arkansas indicate that we need more than 500 new churches. The question arises as to where specifically should these mission congregations be started?



Tidsworth

Several types of fields need consideration. New communities like Holiday Island in Carroll County may have no Baptist church or need another one.

Growing communities may need attention. Some towns in Arkansas have doubled in population since 1970. Perhaps a new area of town has come to be. Or there may just be more people scattered through the community than the present churches can reach.

New suburbs such as Fianna Hills of Fort Smith have come into being in many towns and cities. — Floyd Tidsworth Jr., church extension director

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## International

### *A source of instruction*

by Randy Maxwell, West Church, Batesville  
**Basic passage:** Psalm 19:7-11; 119:97-105; 2 Timothy 3:14-17

**Focal passage:** Psalm 119:97-105; 2 Timothy 3:14-17

**Central truth:** The Bible is a matchless source of instruction from God that is to be studied and heeded.

Around the turn of the century, a fire chief in San Francisco went to the city council, warning them that they had made a serious mistake for the main line of water supply for the city passed over San Andreas fault.

"Gentlemen, if this city ever had a major earthquake, it would occur at the San Andreas fault, and that main water line would be severed. If that happened, there would be no way to extinguish all the fires which would sweep the city."

The council heard the plea and understood the rationale of the chief, but, because of other matters, they tabled this problem to consider at a later date.

Several years passed, and in 1906 an earthquake shook San Francisco. The main water line was broken. The uncontrollable fire which ensued snuffed out the lives of nearly 700 people. Four-fifths of the city was leveled because water was not available to stop the catastrophe.

How many times God has admonished us about the wages of sin! How often in our study of the scriptures have we been impressed with the fact that the Spirit of God was calling us back to the point of beginning again with him? As we study God's holy Word, often its instructions come to our hearts with surprising suddenness for correction and reproof when we tend to go astray.

The Psalmist realized the tremendous importance of the scripture as a source of instruction. Indeed, God's Word is "perfect" and the "testimony" or witness to his will for our lives. In this complicated and confused world, we need desperately to return to God's instructions for daily meditation and instruction against false ways.

The main reason many of our young people are swayed into the cults is that they are not grounded in the true "lamp for our feet" and the genuine "light for our path." Since all scripture is God-breathed, it is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. As responsible adults, we need to commit ourselves to be more faithful in studying the Bible and in leading our families to do the same.

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## Life and Work

### *Zechariah*

by Leroy P. Stringfield, First Church, Jacksonville  
**Basic passage:** Luke 1:5, 11-16, 76-79

**Focal passages:** Luke 1:5, 13

**Central truth:** Anyone who announces Jesus to others needs spiritual preparation.

Many people appreciate knowing in advance when a special guest is coming for a visit. A written announcement is nice, but a personal and verbal notice can be even more impressive. John the Baptist was to become the forerunner who would announce the coming ministry of Jesus Christ. For his careful preparation, a special father was needed. Such was Zechariah.

Two major emphases highlight the life and ministry of Zechariah, whose name meant "Jehovah has remembered." First of all, the father of John had acceptable credentials. The fact he lived during the days of Herod the Great was providence. However, human freedom was involved in Zechariah's faithfulness to the Lord. The words "there was" in verse 5 have the idea of "coming into notice." One can imagine he had some distinguishable personal and professional features that went beyond the results of the casting of lots for service in the Temple.

Among Zechariah's credentials also was the best possible wife. Elizabeth's name meant "God is my oath." Being a "daughter of Aaron" meant that she was the daughter of a priest. This marital arrangement was commendable for any priest during Zechariah's day. But social acceptance is not enough to be able to be an announcer of Jesus to others. The priest and his wife were both righteous (v. 6).

The second major factor in Zechariah's ministry was the conversion of his public religious duty into a personal spiritual experience. Verse 5 suggests that Zechariah served in the Temple after being selected in a rotation system that involved thousands of priests. But verse 13 reveals that the priest was not being routinely dutiful, for the Bible says, "thy prayer is heard." These words, when combined with the priest's seeing an angel of the Lord (v. 11) and having a fearful experience (v. 12), suggest that Zechariah was caught up in genuine worship.

What a difference would come into modern worship services if casually present people had personal confrontations with the Lord, who is Creator, Judge and Redeemer. More Christians then could announce Jesus Christ to others.

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## Bible Book

### *The suffering servant*

by Tom Smith, First Church, Bentonville  
**Basic passage:** Isaiah 49:1 to 53:12

**Focal passage:** Isaiah 49:5-6; 53:1-9

**Central truth:** We see in Jesus, the suffering servant, how God turns sorrow into joy.

A mother cringes in pain when her child is injured. A father feels a tugging at his heart when his son strikes out in a baseball game. A child cries over a puppy when it hurts its leg.

This type of pain is not imagined. It is real and called "vicarious suffering." The prophet Isaiah's heart ached for Israel. He preached from a broken heart. His message denounced sin but declared a Savior. True gospel preaching always serves as the "scalpel of the soul" for the great physician. And thank God, it always points to the one who is able to deliver.

Isaiah described the coming Messiah as one who would be a light to the Gentiles (49:6) and a bearer of hope to the deprived (49:9-10). He would be sustained by the Almighty (49:5c). Like all true servants of God, his chief purpose would be to glorify the one who sent him (49:3).

Now-a-days the true concept of servanthood has been lost. It has been distorted by the illusion of "glitter and glory." Yet, "who has believed our report?" (53:1). The precious Jesus has been reduced to little more than a cheerleader on the sidelines of life. He has been made into a "spiritual charm" to which one clings in time of crises. We have so sentimentalized his life and suffering that we've almost lost the poignant message of Isaiah.

Jesus knew that the suffering servant would come and be rejected (53:1-3). He knew the stigmatism that went with the cross (Gal. 3:13). He knew the shame and suffering he would endure—both from Isaiah's prophecy (Is. 50:6; 53:3-12) and from personal observation of other crucifixions. Yet, he "steadfastly set his face toward Jerusalem" (Lk. 9:51; Is. 50:7) to deliver us from sin (Is. 52:1-2).

Christ is not a cheerleader on the sidelines. He is not a model for us to emulate or imitate. He is our paraclete who "suffers with us." He became flesh to know what it feels like to be tempted, forsaken and captured by death (Heb. 2:9-18). But, praise God, he arose to give us victory (1 Jn. 5:4), and eternal life (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 6:23b) and to turn our "sorrow into joy" (Is. 51:11; 52:89).

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## Chaplain referral may trigger national response

FRESNO, Calif. (BP)—What began this past summer as an attempt to meet the needs of companies in a local area with an industrial chaplain may have triggered a program which will affect Southern Baptist pastors and churches throughout the United States.

It began in July when Costa-Media Association in Concord, Calif., and Rod Murcay, former pastor of First Southern, Santa Paula, Calif., teamed up to provide a chaplain to two large industrial parks in nearby Concord and Walnut Creek.

Last July, Murcay contacted Chevron USA, one of the largest oil companies in the world. Although he envisioned a chaplaincy referral system for the entire company, much like a pastor would as he counsels with his congregation, Chevron liked the proposal but changed it to only refer to the East Bay area.

Undaunted, Murcay made contact with Toyota's national office in Torrance. The Toyota people were not interested, not in a local referral program, but they were interested in a national network of referrals to include their 12 regional offices in the United States.

A call by Murcay to the SBC Home Mission Board found the HMB has a chaplaincy program which would be available nationwide to handle referral calls.

But while he was still trying to imagine what might happen with Toyota's proposal, Bank of America responded to a Murcay phone call. "Unless you can handle all of our banking operations from our executive offices to the local banks, we're not interested," Murcay was told by bank officials. Bank of America is the largest bank in the United States.

Again, a quick call by Murcay brought a receptive reply. The state convention office in Fresno, through the Christian social ministries department, helped outline a system of referrals covering the whole state of California.

Robert Williams, CSM department director, told Murcay every associational director of missions could receive calls about a company employee's personal problem or crisis, evaluate the need, locate the address and refer the person to a local pastor to handle the need.

"This is ingenious," Murcay said. "Suddenly, Southern Baptist pastors could serve all of industry, nationwide as resources for hurting people."

What can large corporations get from Southern Baptists that they don't have already?

Murcay willingly lists them: availability of persons who could respond within hours of emergency calls (pastors), hospital visitation, funeral services, weddings, interfaith witness, international referrals, language missions, Christian social ministries. Even some churches are in a position to help people "in the

market place," said Murcay.

Murcay's reception with the corporation "executives" has been eye-opening.

Meeting with Bechtel Industries officials, Murcay was told, "If we didn't think this program could help our 30,000 employees, you wouldn't be here today. If we weren't planning to use this program extensively, you certainly wouldn't be coming back to meet with my staff."

Murcay said the meeting with Bechtel officials in the company's San Francisco office was beyond expectations. The words "Baptist" and "pastors" didn't bother the executives at all, he said.

"They were interested in performance, nothing more," he added. In fact, Murcay continued, one of the staff members said "I live on Seminary Drive in Mill Valley. I've become acquainted with some single girls (attending Golden Gate Baptist Seminary) who have since gone to foreign missions. I know, Southern Baptists and we need what you have to offer."

Bechtel then endorsed the program to use with all their employees—nationwide.

Again, in a Sept. 26 meeting Murcay was given approval for a chaplaincy referral program for the American Telephone and Telegraph Company in the western states.

Then came a meeting with Safeway Stores, the nation's largest food retailer with offices in Oakland. Another meeting has been set for Nov. 7, Murcay said, with the company's staff. Safeway has 2,200 stores in the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe.

So far, Murcay has set up programs for AT&T's western states division with 14,000 employees; Bechtel Industries with 30,000 employees and the local Dupont, Inc., division with 350 employees. Negotiations are continuing with firms such as: Safeway, Bank of America, Chevron, Pacific Gas and Electric; Toyota, Nissan and Pacific Bell.

"Southern Baptists stand on the brink of a ministry so big we are overwhelmed," Murcay said. "But they also stand before an opportunity that cannot go unchallenged. Industry is ripe and ready for a spiritual approach to employee assistance. It is clear that they are eager, yet hesitant to go with a chaplaincy program. If, in California, major corporations can be opened up to Christian ministry, then the whole world will come to Southern Baptists for assistance.

"The limitations on this ministry are only in the minds and hearts of those who implement it. If money, or time, or personnel, or whatever stand in our way then the open doors may be shut to us forever. The chaplaincy program to industry, on a national and international basis, links all we do as Southern Baptists and channels our tremendous resources of people towards the goal of reaching people where they live. This is Bold Mission Thrust."