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October 25, 1984

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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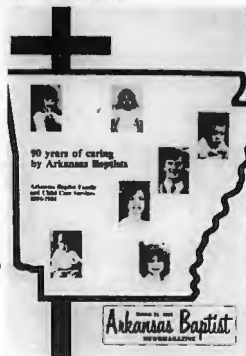
**90 years of caring
by Arkansas Baptists**

**Arkansas Baptist Family
and Child Care Services
1894-1984**



October 25, 1984
Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE

On the cover



From a single orphanage in 1894 to multiple locations the length and breadth of the state, Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services has provided 90 years of dedicated Christian ministry to families and children in need. A special birthday section begins on page 13.

In this issue

8 into all the world

A native Arkansas couple has been appointed to serve as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in Peru.

10 the plot thickens

While the faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary unanimously adopted a resolution affirming "the lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Bible," W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Church, Dallas, made his first public foray into the denominational controversy by calling on Southern President Roy L. Honeycutt to resign for criticizing the fundamentalist SBC takeover attempt.

Fall golf tournament set

The fall church staff golf tournament will be held Monday, Oct. 29, at Long Hills Country Club in Benton, beginning at 10 a.m. There will be two flights of competition. Contact Johnny Jackson, 1717 N. Mississippi, Little Rock, AR 72207.

JUNE							JULY							AUGUST							SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER							DECEMBER			
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M		
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	9	10	11	12
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	16	17	18	19
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31	16	17	18	19				

Next month in Arkansas

November 1, Language Missions Leadership Retreat, Baptist Building, Little Rock. Meeting for pastors of Southern Baptist language congregations, by invitation, will help them develop church programs.

November 4, Prove the Tithe Day. A time of emphasis on the biblical basis of tithing and gifts as support for ministries.

November 4-10, Royal Ambassador Week. Time to promote activities in the local church marking 76 years of this young men's mission program. Will be culminated by state-wide RA Fellowship Luncheon and Happening at Immanuel Church, Little Rock, on Saturday, Nov. 10. Reservations must be in by Nov. 8.

November 6-8, Arkansas Baptist State Convention annual meeting, First Smith Grand Avenue Church. Business, reports, and inspiration in sessions beginning Tuesday evening and closing Wednesday evening. Auxiliary meetings are held Monday and Tuesday.

November 10, Homecoming, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia.

November 16-18, International Student Conference, Ozark Folk Center at Mountain View. International students

attending Arkansas schools will have a chance for sharing in a Christian atmosphere.

November 17, Interfaith Ingathering, Robinson Auditorium Exhibition Hall in Little Rock. Exhibitions, workshops, speakers, a worship time and lunch will emphasize world hunger relief. Admission buttons are being sold by the Interfaith Hunger Taskforce. Arkansas Baptist State Convention is a sponsor.

November 18, Child Care Day. Emphasis on the ministry of Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services as they mark 90 years of helping children and families. The Thanksgiving Offering is a focus for this state convention agency.

November 18-21, Foreign Mission Study. Suggested dates for study in local churches in preparation for the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

November 19-21, Literacy Workshop, Camp Paron. Will provide basic training for anyone interested in teaching the Laubach Literacy Method of literacy missions.

November 26, "M" Night. Suggested date for associations to hold an annual rally for Church Training. Inspiration, interpretation and fellowship are the purposes.

Cooperative Program report: September

Summary for Sept. 1984	January-Sept. gifts		% increase over previous year
	Year	Over (under) 9 mos. budget	
Received	1979	7,485.51	11.38
Budget	1980	179,073.32	11.73
	1981	101,546.47	10.16
	1982	(159,493.11)	9.01
	1983	(111,756.77)	10.61
	1984	(369,742.96)	4.97

September was an excellent month for Cooperative Program receipts. If we could have the same amount for October-December, we would lack only \$12,450 reaching our budget goal. We are almost 5 percent over last year's receipts, but have received only 95 percent of the budget to date.—L.L. Collins

VOTE...

before you leave for the annual meeting at Fort Smith
(You may cast your ballot absentee)
Election day is Nov. 6



Occasionally, we are asked, usually by a non-Baptist, "Where are the Baptist Headquarters?" These people think that an informed Baptist is joking when he answers, "Baptist headquarters are local Baptist churches." Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that we have no headquarters. But all that we do comes from local churches.

There are both doctrinal and practical reasons why neither Little Rock nor Nashville is Baptist Headquarters. Practically, Southern Baptists have steered away from centralization. We believe that it is only when the decisions are made by the people that true commitment can be assured.

More importantly, our polity grows out of the doctrine of the individual priesthood of the believer. One of the primary emphases of Baptists has always been the concept that every person, being individually responsible to God, must interpret the Word of God for himself.

In general, there are four different forms of church government: (1) The Monarchical, in which the ultimate authority is in the hands of one man (an example is the Roman Catholic Church with the Pope as the head); (2) The Episcopal, in which the church is governed by a College of Bishops; (3) The Presbyterian, in which the local church is governed by elders, with higher courts of appeal; and (4) The Democratic, in which each local congregation is self-governing, there being no outside human authority to which the congregation is responsible for its own individual affairs.

Since we, as Baptists, hold that every believer is equal before God and individually responsible to God, each member is given the same voice, one vote. It is true that some members may be more influential than others. A pastor, by virtue of his office and the time he invests in the study of the church's affairs, should be the one who provides leadership for the congregation.

Representation at associational meetings, state conventions and the Southern Baptist convention is, also, an outgrowth of our Baptist polity. Churches elect "messengers" not "delegates." A delegate is sent to a meeting with a prescribed point of view. Messengers are elected with no instructions from their congregation. Each messenger is free to vote as he feels led by the Holy Spirit. This is vital assurance that one entity in Baptist life cannot exercise authority over another. The association, for example, does not exercise authority over local churches, nor does a local church exercise authority over a local association. The same principle applies in every area of Baptist life.

In the selection of committees to function at interim between annual meetings of associations and conventions, both groups

often ask for recommendations to be presented to nominating committees. These recommendations may come from local churches, associations or individuals. It is necessary to remember that these recommendations have no binding effect on a given nominating committee.

Recommendations are helpful to nominating committees, particularly on the state or SBC level. But great care should be taken to avoid the implication that recommendations are binding. When the nominating committee brings the recommendation back to the annual meeting, the messengers will be given opportunity to cast the final vote.

Our polity allows for the wide variety of work carried on by our associations, state conventions and the SBC. Everything that is provided by the various entities is to assist local churches, either directly or indirectly. In general, associations provide a medium for fellowship among churches, training for church leadership, assistance in starting missions and coordination of local evangelistic and benevolent activities. The association, then, is the closest organization to the local churches.

State conventions usually provide specialized help for churches, associations, Christian colleges and state Baptist papers.

The Southern Baptist Convention provides services which are beyond the ability of state conventions to supply. These include home and world-wide missions and literature for the churches. Like the association and state convention, the SBC exists to strengthen local churches.

Our system of administration has emerged to protect both the independence and the interdependence of local churches. It is obvious that every Baptist church needs the association, the state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention as resources to carry out a world-wide thrust. But it is also evident that the doctrine of the individual priesthood of the believer requires every entity in Baptist life to function separately and freely.

In the church "offices" or functions found in the New Testament, the authority always rested with the congregation. Even the apostles Paul, Peter, James and John appealed to the people for the response they desired. They always pointed to Christ as the final authority.

History has validated the method used in our Southern Baptist work. There are no Baptist Headquarters. No one has authority to coerce a church, an association or a convention. The best way of doing God's work is in God's way, as free men, worshipping God according to the dictates of one's conscience. This provides opportunity for each individual to respond as God leads him.

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

Arkansas' third largest publication, meeting the information needs of Arkansas Baptists

VOLUME 83

NUMBER 41

J. Everett Sneed, Ph.D. Editor
Betty Kennedy Managing Editor

Erwin L. McDonald, Litt D. Editor Emeritus

Arkansas Baptist News Magazine Board of Directors: Tommy Robertson, El Dorado, president; Mrs. J. W. L. Adams, Jr., Texarkana; Charles Chesser, Carlisle; Loyne Gilborne, North Little Rock; Leroy French, Fort Smith; Mrs. Jimmie Garner, Truman; Maile Milligan, Harrison; Hon. Eleanore Roy, Little Rock; and Lane Strother, Mountain Home.

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.

Copies by mail 50 cents each.

Deaths of members of Arkansas churches will be reported in brief form when information is received not later than 14 days after the date of death.

Advertising rates on request.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer.

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On the moral scene

John Finn

Here I stand

The Garland County Lawful Wagering amendment and all forms of gambling receive opposition from this writer on moral grounds. Should a challenge be issued, we will consider it a privilege to provide the scriptural basis for our opposition.

Popular statements, believed and practiced by some, frequently are circulated in churches, society and our legislative assemblies. They are, "Morality must be divorced from all political issues;" and "You cannot legislate morals."

A casual study of our laws reveal the fallacies of such statements. Our forefathers debated and passed legislation dealing with murder. This is a moral issue, for the Scripture states, "Thou shalt not kill!"

Another example would be laws relating to stealing. This is a moral issue, for it is written, "Thou shalt not steal." Legislation cannot force people to obey, but if arrested and convicted, the penalties prescribed by law can be enforced. We can't stop some people from stealing and killing. There are few, if any, who would argue for these laws to be removed, or for such acts to be legalized because of the morals involved.

The casino gambling proponents bring forth old arguments. We are told, "It is a political issue and to oppose it on moral grounds violates the principle of church and state." Advocates of this position are uninformed or misinformed. Surely our forefathers did not mean that the church should not venture forth into the political arena and speak when political and moral issues are merged. This writer is not a constitutional or legal expert. In our opinion, however, separation of church and states means that Congress shall not pass any laws concerning the establishment of a religion, giving preference to one above another, or interfering with the free exercise of one's religious beliefs. We will defend to the death, if necessary, this priceless freedom for all citizens, regardless of race, color or creed. We, however, are not violating the church and state principle by speaking out against casino gambling. In our opinion, the church needs to be on the front lines in this battle.

Another worn out and tiresome argument is that "people are going to gamble, therefore, legalize and control it." This is supposed to stop all illegal gambling. Race track

betting at Hot Springs has been legalized. Has that stopped all illegal betting on the horses? The dog races at West Memphis have been legalized. Has the stopped all illegal betting on the dogs? It is difficult to enforce the laws relating to illegal drug traffic. Are we prepared to legalize all drugs, so that such traffic can be regulated? Prostitution is difficult to control. Are we prepared to legalize it, for the purpose of control, and to receive tax money from it?

Some people are going to speed. Are we going to remove speed laws for better enforcement? Some drinkers will drive. Are we prepared to use the same argument to remove all laws relating to drinking and driving?

This writer will oppose until his dying day all efforts to legalize casino gambling in Arkansas. As a member of the church, I am compelled to lift up my voice as a trumpet and cry out against this evil. Our opposition is based upon moral conviction.

"Here I stand, so help me God."

John Finn is executive director of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas.

Anti-gambling rally brings opponents to seat of government



More than 500 Arkansans turned out Saturday, Oct. 13, at the state capitol in Little Rock to hear prayer, music, and remarks by public officials on the harm a proposed state constitution amendment (66) to allow casino gambling would do to the state. Speakers included Hillary Clinton, the wife of the governor and United State Attorney Asa Hutchison. Ouachita Baptist University students helped provide music.

ABN photo / Betsy Kennedy

Don Moore

You'll be glad to know...

...Oh, this is wonderful work! When we come to the end of a church year and begin to realize what God has done through us all, our vocabulary fails and our joy abounds. Besides what our agencies and institutions have helped you do, our Executive Board ministries working out of the Baptist Building have bought seven pieces of property where one day churches will stand. We've made 11 grants and seven loans to small and struggling churches for you. We provided six portable chapels for young congregations. We've helped you start 18 new congregations, including a Chinese, a Korean and a deaf congregation. We've used some of the money you have entrusted to us to provide \$60,000 in pastoral aid for small struggling congregations. Now, you can see why I say this is "wonderful work!" It's God's work.



Moore

The convention, with its offices and personnel, does not exist as something nice for the churches to support. The convention was created to help the churches. The help is basically two-fold. One, we exist to help the churches in their own ministry. Two, we exist to help churches perform ministries they cannot do alone. The more I see of what we help you do, the more convinced I am that you would be pleased if you could only see it, too. Since most of you cannot, you have to trust those of us you have felt led to make responsible. We are doing our best.

I don't think there are any areas of what we are trying to do for you that you want curtailed. A few facts are pertinent to this issue. Our people have not increased the percentage they give to the churches. It has been an average of 2 percent for 50 years. The churches have kept a larger percent of the money given every year since 1967, perhaps even longer. I do not have those figures. Our offices have sent on a larger percentage of the money received for worldwide causes every year for several years. A little perception will enable you to see that a time will come when the ministries we perform for you will have to be curtailed. I hope each of you will make this a matter of prayer. Let's keep every ministry strong and growing.

See you at the convention!

Don Moore is executive secretary of Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



Extending churches: last in a series Hats off to the past!

by Floyd Tidsworth

Church membership increased in Arkansas from 1970 to 1980 by 26 percent. From 1970 to 1982 there were 128 churches added to the state convention. New congregations sprang up in Horseshoe Bend, Cherokee Village, Maumelle, Bella Vista, Fairfield Bay and in many other places. One hundred four (104) of these new churches are active and well.

R.H. Dorris and others planned well and exercised effective mission strategy. Pastors and directors of missions have led churches in growth.

Hats off to the past!

But Southern Baptists of Arkansas are faced with a booming population that all churches combined are not reaching. More than a million in Arkansas (44 percent) are now unchurched.

During the period when 128 new churches were born, Southern Baptist dropped 63. The net gain was only 5.4 churches each

year. The rate at which Southern Baptists are starting new churches may be our weakest link in reaching the people of Arkansas. While the population increased by 19 percent, the new Southern Baptist church starts grew by only 5 percent.

It is a matter of history that a new Southern Baptist church can reach about 20 percent of the unchurched on its field. The average size of Southern Baptist churches in Arkansas is about 340 (resident members).

If we added 30 new congregations per year, we could reach 10,200 more people each year. We can reduce the unchurched population by 12 percent or 120,000 people by A.D. 2000.

Yes, hats off to the past.

But coats off to the future!

Floyd Tidsworth is director of church extension for the Missions Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Letters to the editor

Church membership

I have always thought that as soon as a man joined a church that was a 100 hundred percent member of that church. However some people do not see it that way. I have heard it expressed this way: "When a man joins a church, he joins the church. The church does not join him."

Let's examine that statement. If a man is only one-tenth of a church member, then he should give only one-tenth of his tithe to the church and give the other nine-tenths directly to the Cooperative Program.

If a church is not going to give full membership to new members, then the church should give each new member a statement showing what percentage of church membership a new member has. Also a schedule showing how long a man (or woman) has to be a member before being granted full membership privileges.

An acquaintance of mine has said that if a church does not join the man who joins the church, then that church has failed in its mission. — Ben Fried, Mensa

Compounding the crime

I am puzzled with the seeming contradictions in the article written by Mary Sneed in the October 11th issue of the ABN, printed on page 3. In the beginning of this article it was obvious that the author holds human life in the highest esteem. As I read the article I was proud and excited that another had the courage to speak out in defense of the two million innocent helpless unborn children who were slaughtered in this country

within the past year.

But then came the big let-down. In bold print in the second column are the words, "It is our feeling that the court should have upheld abortion in instances of rape or incest or where the life of the mother is endangered or the fetus deformed." My problem here is, that this line of thinking seems to be inconsistent with the author's previously stated position.

The question comes to mind, if this line of thinking is followed, does it not in fact leave the door open for the continuation of the slaughter of innocent human beings? Are fetuses conceived through violent crimes of rape and incest any less human beings than those fetuses conceived in legal marriage? Is a deformed fetus any less a human being than a perfectly healthy fetus? While the violent crimes involved in rape and incest are to be deplored by society does that justify a second crime of abortion? The trauma rape and incest victims experience is very real and should be treated with professionalism and godly compassion, however, to abort an innocent human life which has no choice in the matter of existence puts the aborter on the same level of the rapist and incestors.

The supreme question is, does (sic) two wrongs make a right? In event that a mother's life is at risk, the choice rightly belongs to her. The alternative to this modern dilemma is adoption. Why not pursue this higher road alternative rather than the lower road of abortion which leads to the same cemetery that the pro-abortionists have led this nation to for the past eleven years? — Bob Richardson, Melbourne

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people

Ken Parmley is serving as pastor of the Hazen First Church. He was serving

as associate pastor of the Woodland Heights Church in Fort Worth, Texas. Parmley is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Howard Payne University, located in Brownwood, Texas.



Parmley

Phillip Dunn joined the staff of Smackover First Church Oct. 17 as minister of music and youth. He was serving on the staff of the Immanuel Church in Nashville. Dunn and his wife, Vickie, have two children, Chris and Kori.

J. D. Shemwell of Little Rock died Oct. 7 at age 84. He had pastored the Mount Pleasant West Church at Pittman and was a member of the Little Rock Immanuel Church. He was also a former educator, teacher and coach in Arkansas schools, in addition to being a Mason and a Shriner. Surviving is his wife, Mrs. Vera Adelaide Short Shemwell.

Mike Widner is serving as pastor of the New Hope Church at Omaha.

loyd Shelton has resigned as pastor of the Valley Church at Searcy to enroll in Mid-America Seminary.

J. W. Koone has resigned as pastor of the Plant Church following more than nine years of service there.

Steve Tucker has joined the staff of Bentonville First Church as minister of education and youth. A native of the Gravette area, he came to Bentonville from First Church, Gravette. He attended John Brown University and graduated from Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Mo.

Ben Dunn is serving on the staff of the Texarkana Faith Church as associate pastor in charge of music.

briefs

Smackover First Church organized a senior adult club Sept. 13. "Just Older Youth" was the name given to the organization by the 19 in attendance.

Cotton Plant First Church held ordination services Sept. 16 to ordain Dennis Smith, pastor of the Higginson Church, and Barry Crain, pastor of the Raynor Grove Church, to the ministry and Roger Laceyfield as a deacon.

Patterson First Church recently installed a new baptistry as part of an ongoing building and ministry enlargement program.

Judsonia First Church has completed a renovation program that included installation of a new ceiling, carpeting and pews.

Pleasant Valley Church at Sidon observed homecoming Oct. 7. W.J. Black was speaker.

Beebe First Church held services Oct. 7 to ordain Chuck Wisdom and Winston Morrison as deacons.

Enon Church in Monticello has begun construction on the expansion of their sanctuary and a new addition which will include a fellowship hall and educational space.

North Pulaski Association will sponsor a single adult retreat Nov. 3-4 at Calvary Church in North Little Rock. Activities will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Nov. 3. John Hicks of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock will be guest performer and singles of the host church will lead the Sunday worship service.

Memorial Church at Waldo recently ordained Ray Williams and Fletcher Gass as deacons.

Temple Church at Crossett held a reception Oct. 14 to honor Charles and Debbie Bowen in recognition of their three years of service to the church in which he serves as minister of music and youth.

Zion Hill celebrates 125 years with building dedication

Zion Hill Church in North Pulaski Association dedicated a new auditorium Oct. 7 to celebrate its 125th year of service. The auditorium is the third addition to the church plant in 15 years.

The building, a 96 by 60 foot block and brick structure with a full basement, seats 515. It features carpeting, cushioned pews, a professional sound system, a new grand piano and an organ. The baptistry is the first in the church's history. The basement will eventually house a kitchen and fellowship hall and Sunday school classrooms.

Construction began three years ago with much of the labor donated by members. Over half of the approximately \$240,000 cost has already been paid.

Jesse Reed of Little Rock, a former Zion Hill interim pastor and former director of evangelism for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, was dedication speaker.

Recognized as special guests were former pastors or their families including Pearl Gwin Wells, W. Dawson King, Grace Keeling, Marvin Faulkner; W. B. Holland and Reed.



Zion Hill Church, North Pulaski Association, celebrated its 125th anniversary with a building dedication Oct. 7. Richard Avey is pastor.

Park Hill, North Little Rock, dedicates two buildings

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, dedicated a new adult educational building and a Christian activity center on Oct. 14. The dedicatory message was delivered by Lloyd Elder, president of the Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn.

The two buildings were constructed at an approximate cost of \$1.9 million. In addition, two former adult departments were reno-

vated into a music rehearsal room, robing room and handbell choir practice facility.

The educational building (above left) has approximately 28,000 square feet and will house up to 800 adults in 12 departments with 52 classrooms. The activity building (above right) has approximately 15,000 square feet, with a 9,300-square-foot gymnasium. When completed in about one

month, it also will provide for basketball, volleyball, tennis, aerobics, skating and a jogging track. Each dressing room will contain a whirlpool.

Pastor Cary Heard said the church is experiencing continual growth. "Our new facilities should enable us to be even more effective in reaching people for Christ and to minister in his name."

Jimmy Allen meets with Pulaski ACTS group

Jimmy Allen, president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, spoke at a breakfast meeting of the Pulaski County Association ACTS Board Oct. 16.

ACTS, the American Christian Television System, will continue to emphasize the work of local churches, Allen explained. "This would seem normal for Baptists," he said, "but nobody else is doing it."

Allen indicated that Little Rock is a crucial market for ACTS, because, along with a few other cities, "it is our showcase." He said the Radio and TV Commission was interested in eventually obtaining a low-power television station in Little Rock.

The ACTS network uses full-power and low-power stations, as well as cable. Currently, ACTS is adding 126,000 families per week,

providing Southern Baptists with immense missions and evangelism opportunities. "The whole thing works only if we have local church programming, however," Allen pointed out.

Allen sees new and exciting opportunities developing every day. Many cable companies are contacting the RTVC in order to obtain the programs, he said. But in all negotiations, "We will require that time be provided for local church programming."

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed

Royal Ambassador Luncheon/Happening

November 10

Reservations in by Nov. 8
Call or come by office

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Immanuel Church, Little Rock
1000 Bishop Street

*Missions carnival
with booths and surprise guest!*

RA Week Nov. 4-10



Jimmy Allen, RTVC president, spoke to a breakfast meeting of the Pulaski Association ACTS Board Oct. 16.

1,150 attend center dedication, Parks warns of 'tough decisions'

RICHMOND, VA. (BP)—Southern Baptists dedicated their new missionary learning center near Richmond Oct. 10 but received a warning that unless missions funding escalates more rapidly, their Foreign Mission Board will face "some very tough decisions" on the number of missionaries it can appoint.

A crowd estimated at 1,150, standing on a grassy hillside under overcast skies, joined denominational and missions leaders in dedicating the new \$15 million orientation facility "for the extension of the Kingdom of God to the ends of the earth."

Board President R. Keith Parks announced that gifts from more than 1,100 individuals, groups and churches had met the entire cost of the center without the use of any Lottie Moon Christmas Offering or Cooperative Program resources.

Cost of the physical plant was \$9.1 million, with \$6 million in endowment set up to help pay operating costs for the 20-building complex, located on a 244-acre site about 25 miles from Richmond.

The warning about funding came from Parks as he presented the 1985 budget—a record \$144,206,000—representing a 5.53 percent increase, the lowest in recent years.

Parks said the increase is above the inflation rate and "is nothing to be ashamed of. It is still an exciting, thrilling and magnificent sum of money," he said, "and there's nothing like it in the Christian world."

But he said the denomination has not yet had bold financing for its Bold Missions program. He pointed out this year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$66 million for foreign missions will require churches to increase their giving by 13.74 percent.

He underscored the "great urgency of these funds being available if we are going to continue in what we are trying to do in world missions."

In recent years, the portion of the budget for missionary support has continued to increase. Parks said he was asked "this week" if Southern Baptists have reached the point where the board cannot continue to send all the qualified missionaries who seek appointment.

"My response has been, because of our philosophy of believing the most important thing we do is send missionaries, we continue to shift budget funds into the missionary support section and take funds away from our operating and capital budget," he said. "I do not know how long we can continue to do this. There are some places in the world where missionaries will tell you we have already crippled their effectiveness."

"More missionaries are coming. I know that. The cost of supporting them is increasing. I know that, and unless funds begin to escalate faster than they have, you will be called upon to make some very tough decisions in the next few years."

The board packed the whole gamut of mis-

sions, from appointment to retirement, into its three-day meeting. It appointed 33 new missionaries and re-appointed two, honored 31 missionaries retiring with 1,006 years' cumulative service in 18 countries, and still found time to dedicate its new missionary orientation center.

The board actually moved its orientation facility from Callaway Gardens, Ga., to the new center earlier this year. The second crop of new missionaries trained at the center, just winding up eight weeks' preparation for overseas service, helped play host to hundreds of visitors from across the nation and the Richmond area.

Baker James Cauthen, who spearheaded Southern Baptist foreign missions for 26 years as the board's executive director, and his wife, Eloise Glass Cauthen, took part in the dedication. The learning center is named for the Cauthens.

A trio of speakers represented the roles of the local church, missions education and the denomination in Southern Baptists' Bold Missions effort to share the gospel with all people of the world by the year 2000.

Charles Carter, pastor of Shades Mountain Church, Birmingham, Ala., and head of the board's human resources committee in the formative stages of the new learning center, said that "if we do what God has called us to do in the local church, missionaries can come here with their hearts burning with compassion to reach our world for Christ."

He urged churches to be vehicles of communication for information about the challenge of missions and vehicles of inspiration. "Very few missionaries will be called out of a fragmented, decimated, broken, fractious membership," he warned.

Carolyn Weatherford, Woman's Missionary Union executive director, pledged

"to the memory of missionaries past, to the commitment of missionaries present, to the promise of missionaries future, our continuing quality missions education in their behalf and for their support."

Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the convention's Executive Committee, said the new center will be a place where missions knowledge from the days of the first Southern Baptist missionaries will be pooled for the benefit of both new and furloughing missionaries. Skills will be imparted, techniques evolved and the whole mission enterprise will be advanced, he said.

Year-round use of the center also will include conferences for missionaries returning on their first furlough, orientation for extended-term volunteers and two separate training sessions for journeymen.

In response to a motion made at the annual SBC in Kansas City, Mo., the board reaffirmed its present policy concerning appointment of couples with teen-age children. The human resources committee reported it had carefully re-studied the question raised at the convention but had determined it would be unwise to change present policy.

This policy says couples with children 12 or older are eligible for consideration as missionaries only if specific conditions are met: the couple must be recommended by a personnel selection staff member after one or more visits with the family in their home; approval must be given by the area director; the parents must be able to complete one full tour of service (four years) before the child would need to return to the U.S. for college and the child must be recommended after a psychological evaluation.

The committee noted changing the policy would ignore a history of difficulty in appointing couples with teen-age children.

Arkansans appointed missionaries to Peru

Gerald and Debbie Johnson were among 33 people named missionaries by the Foreign Mission Board Oct. 10 in Richmond, Va.

The Johnsons will work in Peru, where he will be director of bookstores and she will be a church and home worker. Currently he attends Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Born and reared in Brinkley, Johnson is the son of Mrs. Wyona Johnson of that city and the late C.L. Johnson. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and has served as a Foreign Mission Board Journeyman in Morocco and Kenya.

Born in Arkadelphia, Mrs. Johnson, the former Debbie Wilson, is the daughter of Rev. and Mrs. James M. Wilson of Little Rock. Her father is pastor of Parkway Place Church in Little Rock. Also a graduate of Ouachita, Mrs. Johnson also served as a journeyman in Morocco and Kenya.

The Johnsons have one child, Jill Marie. They will undergo an eight-week orientation in February 1985 before leaving for the field.



Gerald and Debbie Johnson

HMB adopts \$62.7 million budget, names prayer line director

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptist Home Mission Board directors adopted a \$62.7 million budget for 1985, named a new national director of the Intercessory Prayer Line Ministry, elected an associate director of military chaplaincy and appointed eight associate missionaries in their fall meeting.

The 1985 budget is an increase of \$4.7 million or 7.5 percent over the 1984 budget of about \$58 million.

The biggest portion of the 1985 budget will go to support the work of 3,792 home missionaries working in all 50 states of the nation, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and American Samoa.

Although it is the largest budget ever adopted by the board, HMB Planning Vice-President Leonard Irwin pointed out the board had to cut \$1 million in missions, evangelism and church starting projects which had been financed by the board during the previous two years. These were special projects which the board was under no obligation to continue, but almost all were effective and would have been continued had funds been available, said Irwin.

He said a Cooperative Program fund shortfall of \$1.2 million for 1984, plus an increase of only 2.8 percent for 1985 in Cooperative Program income prevented the board from continuing support for the projects.

During his annual report to the directors, Home Mission Board President William G. Tanner said that last year, home missions personnel reported 63,739 professions of faith in Jesus Christ, plus almost 40,000 other commitments and decisions as a result of their ministries.

Tanner gave an overview of the board's work the past year, and called for mutual trust in relationships among board staff,

directors and others in the denomination.

"An agency... can survive problems, pressure or even a direct frontal attack, but a lack of trust is usually fatal," Tanner said.

Such confidence and trust will not happen unless all involved work on it together, he said. "Confidence and trust are built because we are faithful and consistent and honest with each other," Tanner said.

During the opening devotional, HMB Director Omar Pachecano of El Paso, Texas, urged the board to be faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ, rather than following a gospel against liberalism, a gospel for conservatism or a gospel based on statements adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Just as there is a gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, there is a gospel according to you and me... a gospel according to Southern Baptists," said Pachecano, associate director of missions for El Paso Association.

Speaking to the directors on "the struggling gospel among Southern Baptists today," Pachecano said the gospel of Jesus Christ is not really for or against liberalism. "When you get down to essentials, the gospel of Christ is against sin, not liberalism," Pachecano said. "Sin is not merely an ideology or a particular outlook, it is estrangement from God, the isolation of a ruptured relationship with the Creator... Jesus saves us from sin, not liberalism."

He warned that if Southern Baptists as a denomination are in alliance with liberalism or conservatism, "then we will be nothing more than an ideological pawn... a religious coalition of some 14.1 million votes for some political cause."

Phillip Eugene Bruce of Conyers, Ga., was named national director of the Southern

Baptist Home Mission Board's Intercessory Prayer Line Ministry during the meeting.

Bruce will head the prayer line ministry as a Mission Service Corps volunteer. Mission Service Corps allows Southern Baptists to spend one to two years in mission efforts at their own expense or with the support of a sponsoring church or individual(s).

The "prayer line" is a national incoming WATS telephone line which enables Baptists to call the HMB toll-free to learn of home mission needs and requests for prayer, and for missionaries of the board to call to request prayer for their work and concerns. The nation-wide telephone number for the prayer line is 1-800-554-PRAY.

During other business, the directors elected Lew Burnett, Army chaplain at Ft. McPherson near Atlanta, to a newly-created position as associate director of military chaplaincy, effective Jan. 1, 1985.

He will be assigned to assist the director of military chaplaincy, Pat Davis, with the board's process of endorsing military chaplains and in implementing plans and programs to promote chaplaincy ministries.

Directors approved 89 persons to receive field or language pastoral assistance, six persons for administrative positions and seven new church planter apprentices, in addition to appointing eight missionary associates.

Directors voted to request permission from the Southern Baptist Convention and its Executive Committee to change the HMB program statement on chaplaincy ministries to provide for endorsement of pastoral counselors.

The board also voted to ask the SBC Executive Committee for authority to issue investment certificates for sale to the public through the HMB Service Corporation.

Missions, not theology is SBC-unifying force, panel says

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Attempts to enforce a uniform theology on Southern Baptists will lead only to a weakening of Bold Mission Thrust, according to a panel of Baptist educators.

Speaking to a packed Alumni Chapel audience at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, four Southern Seminary professors—Bill Leonard, Ken Chafin, Larry McSwain and President Roy L. Honeycutt—joined Glenn Hillburn, chairman of the department of religion at Baylor University in a forum on the future of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Looking for theological ways to define the SBC is useless, according to church historian Leonard, because Southern Baptists have traditionally united around cooperative mission efforts rather than a theology.

"Historically, Southern Baptists have not had just a diverse theology; they have had contradictory theologies. Calvinism, Arminianism and Landmarkism all reflect contradictory views of the church, free will and

conversion—and all have been held by Southern Baptists," explained Leonard. "So when you look for theological ways to define the SBC, you're doomed already."

McSwain, professor of church and community, believes the current struggle will inevitably weaken the denomination and result in damage to Bold Mission Thrust, the convention's plan to communicate the gospel to every person in the world by the year 2000.

"What really faces us is the fate that every other denomination in America has fought. It isn't liberalism or fundamentalism that destroyed them, but the conflict between the two," McSwain said.

Panel members believe the only way to resolve the crisis within the convention is by a return to a sense of unity in diversity.

Pleading for a return to an open convention, Honeycutt urged all Southern Baptists to be accepting of diverse views within the denomination.

"We are fundamentally a conservative body, and what I'm pleading for is that we

be free to be what we are without external control," Honeycutt said. "Can we not acknowledge that, though we differ in interpretation, we can share a larger unity in Christ?"

Chafin, who came to Southern seminary this fall from South Main Church, Houston, to become Carl Bates Professor of Preaching, echoed Honeycutt's appeal for a return to the convention's historic focus on missions and evangelism.

"This convention was formed to share Jesus Christ with every lost person in the world. That's the only thing that will bring us back together—if we rediscover that," Chafin said.

Expressing optimism about the convention's future, Baylor professor Hillburn thinks "we're going to come out of this experience and be better for it, (but) we're going to have to learn some valuable lessons. It's one thing to talk about autonomy and soul freedom, but we need to go back and understand what they're all about."

Southern Seminary faculty affirms commitment to Bible

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—In a unanimous vote, the faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., has adopted a resolution affirming belief "without reservation, in the inspiration and authority of the Bible and all that the Bible affirms about itself."

The document, "A Resolution of Gratitude and Commitment to Southern Baptists," expresses thanks to Southern Baptists for 125 years of prayer and financial support of theological education through Southern Seminary, and reaffirms the faculty's commitment to "Jesus Christ as Lord and to the centrality of the Bible for all matters of faith and practice."

The resolution commends to all Southern Baptists historic Baptist beliefs concerning soul competency, liberty of conscience and the priesthood of all believers, and specifical-

ly supports the statement on the Bible included in the 1963 "Baptist Faith and Message" statement.

The Southern Seminary faculty called on Southern Baptists to join in reaffirming "the lordship of Jesus Christ, the authority of the Bible, the ethical imperatives of the gospel, the unity of the Southern Baptist Convention with all its diversity, (and) our cooperative partnership as Southern Baptists in education, evangelism, and world missions."

Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt said the resolution should encourage Southern Baptists the faculty "consists of dedicated Christian teachers who are committed to the lordship of Christ and to the inspiration and authority of Scripture."

The resolution was adopted on the 125th anniversary of Southern Seminary. The seminary was founded in 1859 in Greenville,

S.C. In 1877, the seminary was moved to Louisville.

The document reaffirmed the group's commitment "to teach in accordance with and not contrary to the Abstract of Principles, the oldest confessional statement governing a Southern Baptist institution or agency." Since the seminary's founding, each seminary professor has signed the Abstract, agreeing to teach in accord with its 20 theological principles.

Citing 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:20-21, the resolution declares the faculty's belief in "the inspiration of the Biblical writers" and "the inspiration of the Biblical writers." The resolution stated the faculty's "continuing fidelity to the... historic statements which have guided Southern Seminary and the Southern Baptist Convention."

Criswell says seminary president should resign for criticism

by Jim Jones

DALLAS (BP)—W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Church, Dallas, says a Southern Baptist seminary president should resign if he wants to continue criticizing the denomination's fundamentalist wing.

Criswell said he believes Roy L. Honeycutt, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., shouldn't criticize the people who pay his salary.

"I have only one objection to it (the criticism)," Criswell said. "He depends upon (the denomination) to pay his salary."

"If he is going to castigate us, I think he should resign, get him another job, and he can say anything about us he wants to," Criswell said. "But don't depend upon us for his salary."

Criswell made the comment in an interview prior to the Oct. 7 celebration of his 40th year as pastor of the Dallas church.

Honeycutt ranted many fundamentalists in his convocation address last month at the Louisville seminary because he criticized what he called an "independent fundamentalist political party" in the denomination.

One of the major leaders of the Inerrancy movement is Paige Patterson, Criswell's associate pastor and the president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas.

Honeycutt said in a telephone interview his remarks have been misinterpreted as criticizing the existence of "fundamentalism" itself in the denomination.

He said he only attacked the political "party," which he believes is trying to subvert the traditional Baptist diversity of theological beliefs. "I appreciate Dr. Criswell, and he is a part of the diversity of our convention," Honeycutt said.

Honeycutt said the 125-year-old seminary,

the oldest in the denomination, has had a tradition of presidents who addressed denominational issues, and he felt it was his responsibility to comment about what he sees as an attempt by a fundamentalist political machine to dominate the convention. "I'm concerned about freedom," Honeycutt said. "There is room for fundamentalists in the convention. I'm for being inclusive, not exclusive."

Honeycutt disagrees with the position that a person paid by the Southern Baptist Convention should not speak out on issues.

"That simply undercuts the whole prophetic emphasis of the Old Testament and the witness of the New Testament about bearing witness," he said.

Jones is religion editor of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Baylor president raps Baptist 'college of cardinals'

WACO, Texas (BP)—Baylor University President Herbert H. Reynolds has described the leading fundamentalists within the Southern Baptist Convention as a "little Baptist 'college of cardinals'."

His denouncement is printed in the just-released September issue of the *Baylor Line*, the university's alumni magazine, sent to 46,000 alumni in the United States and abroad.

"What has slowly evolved over the last four or five years is a little Baptist 'college of cardinals,' a group of eight or 10 people who come together, make some decisions and set about making authoritative-sounding pronouncements, leading people to believe that they are the spokesmen for our denomination—and they have no right to do that," Reynolds said.

"This is why I have made the statement

on several occasions that we now have a priestly class among us who feels that somehow they are endowed with special wisdom and special authority, when, in fact, they possess neither."

Reynolds has been at the center of an attack by newly-elected SBC first vice-president Zig Ziglar, who questioned the orthodoxy of several members of the Baylor faculty. Ziglar particularly singled out an associate professor of Spanish who is a Mormon, and a religion professor who has contended evolution is not necessarily incompatible with the Genesis account of creation. The controversy made headlines nationwide.

Of the 300-plus letters and 150-200 calls Reynolds has received since the controversy began, only one was negative, he reported to the alumni. One of the most frequently asked questions is whether the fundamen-

talists will make further inroads in gaining control of Baptist seminaries, colleges and institutions, especially Baylor.

Without question, Reynolds said, they will not. "I believe people are becoming keenly aware of what has taken place: of all of the labels and code words that have been used manipulatively in order for this group to gain greater influence and control. Baptists don't want that."

Reynolds said he feels there are a "sufficient number" of discerning people within the denomination seeking "not authority, but a strong witness for Christ through our institutions, our agencies, our churches." These mainstream Baptists are committed to supporting the Cooperative Program and to maintaining the diversity of Southern Baptists' witness—elements that have made the denomination strong, he said.

Churches make commitment for 8.5 by '85 final year

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—“The mission for every New Testament church is the same now as it was in the first century,” Harry Piland, director of the Sunday school department for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board told worshippers at the Bluegrass Church, Hendersonville, Tenn., during an Oct. 7 commitment service.

The church was one of several throughout the Southern Baptist Convention holding a commitment service emphasizing the Reach 5 in '85 Sunday school growth program. Some churches had 24-hour prayer vigils prior to their commitment service. Others discussed Reach 5 in '85 during Sunday school leadership programs.

Piland wrote pastors of the more than 36,000 Southern Baptist churches asking that they designate Oct. 7 for their members to sign commitment cards to enlist at least five persons in Bible study during the final year of the 8.5 by '85 enrollment emphasis.

The goal is to have 8.5 million persons enrolled in Sunday school by Sept. 30, 1985.

Southern Baptist churches must enroll more than 500,000 this year to meet that goal.

More than 150 employees of the Sunday school department participated in a 29-hour prayer vigil ending at 9 a.m. Oct. 7 to support churches throughout the convention participating in commitment day activities.

“The gospel is shared when it is passed on as Paul encouraged Timothy to do. We're here because someone shared the gospel with us,” Piland said in his message.

Inglewood Church, Nashville, had 138 members participating in a 24-hour prayer vigil before their Oct. 7 services.

That prayer vigil led to 82 persons committing to reach at least five persons for Bible study this year, said Willo McCoy, Inglewood minister of education. Although commitment cards are recommended for use as a personal commitment between the individual and God, Inglewood church plans to use them to help establish enrollment goals, McCoy said.

Sevens Valley Church, Elizabethtown, Ky,

plans for persons signing commitment cards to keep the cards and write the names and phone numbers of those they have reached on the back of the cards, said Bill Ray, minister of education. The 203-year-old church has set both an enrollment goal and an attendance goal for the year, hoping to enroll one person in Sunday school for each day of the year.

Texas Baptists have set a goal of 100,000 net gain in Sunday school enrollment as a challenge to support the convention goal of a 500,000 net gain, said Bernard Spooner, Texas state Sunday school director. “We're doing what we believe is our part.”

The highest net gain in Sunday school enrollment in Texas for any year was 74,000 in 1954, Spooner said.

Reach 5 in '85 cards were distributed in the state's 41 regional Sunday school conventions in September. Participants were asked to sign the cards and consider using them for a commitment effort in their churches, he said.

Multi-dimensional preaching needed to help families

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—Southern Baptist preaching must be multi-dimensional if it is to successfully address the numerous issues facing families today, according to Harold Bryson, preaching professor at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

“When you preach the Pallyanna concept of the family, there is a danger in leaving the illusion that only the traditional family exists,” Bryson said. “That's not meeting needs.”

“Sixty percent of the people who need help today go to a minister first,” he said. “The more we address the areas where people are hurting, the more they will come to us so we can share with them the Bible, the church and the gospel.”

“These are the only answers for the families, because the secular city has provided no alternatives except superficial relationships, live-in arrangements and genetic engineering,” Bryson continued. “We need to move away from surface relationships.”

Bryson, speaking at a conference on preaching at First Church, Orlando, said today many Southern Baptist preachers successfully are directing sermons to the needs of people.

“People will listen to what they need, and they are being helped particularly in many small churches where pastors stay for years to help members through the crises of life,” he explained. “Relationships are the key.”

“Pastors in these small churches may not have the statistical success about which they read all the time, but they are taking the time to develop deep, intimate relationships which allow church members to see their humanity,” he added.

“The words are full of pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention who have endeared themselves to people by their will-

ingness to be with them,” he said.

Bryson said the world's success standards of selling more, making more and accomplishing more have oozed into the pastorate. He encouraged pastors to be faithful to sow where they are. He warned it is impossible to force people into professions of faith and baptism.

Some of the major issues which face families include finances, roles, conflict, in-laws, communication and sex, according to Bryson.

“The preacher needs to address all of these issues either directly or indirectly,” he continued. “There is no list in the Bible for resolving husband-wife conflicts, but there are insights in the Bible which deal with conflict.”

When speaking to the needs of married church members, there are several stages of the relationship which should be considered. For instance, there are people who are recently married, and others have just experienced the children leaving home.

Another group to be considered is those persons considering marriage. These persons are single, but would like to be married or are planning marriage. Bryson said the world is addressing marriage and saying it is not in vogue. People need to be married out of commitment, not emotionalism.

There also is a segment of singles which has developed a support group into “the synthetic family.” The preacher needs to address single persons who either choose not to be married or have not found the right mate. Bryson said the single lifestyle is not the norm for society, but according to the Scripture, it is a legitimate lifestyle.

On the question of divorced persons, Bryson encouraged preachers not to attempt

to settle right and wrong, “because the Bible settled that just like any other sin.

“We ought to proclaim forgiveness and go and sin no more,” he said. “Don't preach what is right and wrong with divorce to divorced people, but empathize with their hurts to help them make it through the day and week.”

Needs of widowed persons related to dealing with grief also should be addressed from the pulpit, Bryson said.

“There are a lot of people in nearly every congregation facing some or all of these problems,” he explained. “If we are not careful, we will be one-dimensional.”

“Preaching can affect communities,” Bryson says. “If we bring problems out of the closet and discuss them, it will show you to be a sensitive person with whom people can talk. It creates awareness and identity which lets people deal with problems instead of keeping secrets.”

“The secular world is offering alternatives such as sex before marriage, affairs, sharing apartments and children outside family,” he said. “We can offer the Christian alternative.”

“There are Christian people living in apathy who can be helped by encouragement that their marriages can be better,” he continued. “Some people have good marriages and want them to be better. Other people are living in marriages that are not good enough for marriage but not bad enough for divorce.”

“We often preach to people about their problems rather than challenging them to improve their lives,” he said. “We need to preach a divine discontent encouraging everyone to seek a better Christian experience about what ought to be in their lives.”

Clown minister considers clowning serious business

by Leisa A. Hammett

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (BP)—Clowning is serious business for Carol Phipps, singles/youth minister in First Church, Alexandria, Va.

A native of Maryland, Phipps has been clowning around for almost 14 years, dressing up in costume to entertain people. But it wasn't until she was asked to "clown her testimony" (a humorous dramatization of her testimony) that clowning took on real meaning to her.

Now she considers herself a clown minister.

Phipps had never written or performed a humorous dramatization of her testimony before. At first she was flabbergasted by the assignment. But the experience challenged her to remember becoming a Christian when she was an 11-year-old child.

Phipps did not grow up in a Christian home, but went alone to a large church each Sunday. "I didn't know how to sing hymns, or that you were supposed to read from stanza to stanza and not across two whole pages," she laughed.

Remembering and incorporating her childhood experiences in church added a new dimension to her clowning ministry. Now those experiences seem funny, but as a child they were scary and frustrating, Phipps said.

Being a child of God, figuratively and literally, made her "stumbling blocks into stepping stones," she said.

"If you understand the Scriptures you realize God is very personal. God has a sense of humor; he laughs and wants us to be his children," Phipps explained. "Clowns epitomize (that) tenderness and childlikeness," she said.

"Clowns willingly take the slaps life gives them and then get back up. Like Jesus, they turn the other cheek. Clowns renew their sense of wonder and awe," she added.

To prepare for her clowning, Phipps studies the Bible, the background of the Scriptures, and Hebrew and Greek translations of the Bible. "Then I try to see (God's message) as a child would, using all my senses," Phipps said.

"I've grown so much through clowning," she stated. "It's like being born again, seeing the world as a child. There is a sense of excitement . . . hope, joy and vulnerability."

"A clown is automatically somebody. . . just the makeup and the costume get attention," Phipps said explaining a clown's white makeup signifies death and its red nose signifies resurrection. Other colors signify a clown's individuality.

She explained her clown, Servo Servin, (meaning "I serve serving") exemplifies her approach to ministry—trying to model Jesus Christ who is "the greatest servant." In June 1982, clowning also became her fulltime job.

Phipps and roommate Karen Heath began a free-lance clowning ministry called "E.T.S., Equipping to Serve and Entertaining the

Saints," to provide storytelling, clowning, mime, puppetry for churches, camps, retreats and hospitals.

After a year of travel with E.T.S. Phipps and Heath moved to Williamsport, Pa., to work as Southern Baptist Home Mission Board Mission Service Corp volunteers.

Phipps, a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., was minister of education and youth for First Southern Church in Williamsport.

Seven months later, she moved to First Church, Alexandria.

Although the opportunities for clowning are less in her new responsibilities, Phipps said she finds similar fulfillment in organizing creative worship. "Creative worship," said

Phipps, "helps congregations experience and understand freedom in Christ and joy in the Lord."

Worship involving oral interpretation, monologues, clowning, role playing, storytelling and singing, Phipps said, communicates God's sense of humor, personalness and love for his children.

Now, as a clown minister, she doesn't just entertain children. When she puts on her red nose and white makeup, she is trying to use creative new approaches to tell the story of Christ's love. For her, that's such good news it's worth clowning about.

Leisa A. Hammett is a staff writer with the Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.



Clown minister Carol Phipps uses clowning to tell the story of Christ's love. Clowning, a creative approach to sharing the gospel, communicates God's sense of humor, personalness and love, says Phipps.

From an orphanage to a statewide ministry, 1894-1984

"Happy 90th birthday, Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services!"

Arkansas Baptists became involved in the work at Monticello in 1894 when Miss Hannah Hyatt offered a home and 80 acres of land to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for use as an orphanage. The Children's Home at Monticello has been the center of Arkansas Baptists' child care ministry. The approximately 90 children who live there each year live in cottages where they share a room with one or two roommates, and attend public schools in Monticello.

But just caring for children is not enough. Feeling that it is essential that the agency become involved with families—where the ultimate solutions lie—Family and Child Care Services has steadily expanded its ministry. Area offices have been established in Little Rock, Monticello, Fayetteville, Jonesboro, Harrison and Hope.

These offices allow the workers to counsel with both parents and children, trying to

resolve problems without having to remove the children from home. The staff believes that God intends for children and their families to live together. Even if it becomes necessary for a child to move from his home, workers continue to counsel with the family while the child is receiving care. The goal always is to reunite the family if possible.

Workers in the area offices try to assist local churches in ministering to the unmet needs of the community. They receive referrals from pastors, courts, social agencies and doctors, as well as individuals. Workers also work closely with the foster home program. Area workers seek out Christian couples for children until family hurts are healed and the child can return home. However, sometimes long-term foster care is needed.

In addition, Family and Child Care Services operate the Group Home for Boys at Jonesboro, designed for boys who do not require institutional care but who do need the services provided by the agency.

The Emergency Receiving Homes in Little Rock, Sherwood and Camden also provide immediate care and protection for abused, neglected or abandoned children ages birth through 12 years, until an appropriate plan for the child can be arranged. Home-like care is provided 24 hours daily through dedicated Christian house parents in a Christian atmosphere.

Last year, we ministered to 99 children in Monticello, six at the group home in Jonesboro, 28 in foster homes and 217 were helped through emergency receiving homes.

Our hearts are lifted in gratitude to Arkansas Baptists for their thoughtfulness in sharing throughout the year, which makes our child care ministry possible. Thank you for joining with us in this ministry of love.

Adapted from a Nov. 12, 1981, ABN article by Robert Dilday, then an ABN intern, now an associate editor of Georgia's Christian Index.

Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services are marking 90 years of ministering to children and families in the name of Arkansas Baptists. The following six pages, plus this week's cover, highlight the work of that agency.



STATE OF ARKANSAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
State Capitol
Little Rock 72201

Bill Clinton
Governor

Greetings:

I want to take this opportunity to extend congratulations and best wishes to the directors and employees of the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children in Monticello on the occasion of the Ninetieth Anniversary of the home.

The staff at the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children has done an outstanding job of caring for children who needed a home. I want to thank you for your dedication and for your wonderful contributions to the welfare and health of all these children.

Again, I join with all Arkansans in extending best wishes on the observance of this important event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Bill Clinton".

Bill Clinton

BC:cf



Our congratulations,

Arkansas Baptist Family
and Child Care Services,
on 90 years of service

WORTHEN BANK

WORTHEN WICKS
HARDER

A Division of First Arkansas Banking Corporation



Your Banking Center

**SUPERIOR
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Congratulates

Arkansas Baptist Family
and Child Care Services
on 90 years of caring

*Our best wishes
to their staff*

*Our most sincere
Congratulations
to Arkansas Baptist
Family and Child Care
Services
on 90 years of service*

Best wishes from

**National Bank
of Arkansas**

4000 McCain, North Little Rock

Congratulations

*to Arkansas Baptist Family
and Child Care Services*

*on 90 years
of caring*

*We extend sincere
congratulations*

SAVERS

Savers Federal Savings and Loan
of Arkansas

Best wishes,

Arkansas Baptist Family
and Child Care Services
on 90 years of ministry

*We congratulate
our sister agency*



**Arkansas Baptist
Newsmagazine**

*Serving the information needs
of Arkansas Baptists*



ONE RIVERFRONT PLACE
NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS
Member FDIC

Congratulates

Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services

*on the occasion of their 90th anniversary
as providers of care for families and children*

Feed my sheep... Where?

by John Douglas Davey

"Lord, here I am... been ordained and now I'm ready to fulfill your call... where was it you had in mind for me to preach?"

"Son, feed my sheep!"

"Yes, Lord, I hear you... that's why I went to seminary. I'm homiletically, theologically and even 'spiritually' prepared!"

"Son, feed my sheep!"

"And, Lord, get this, here's my doctor of theology degree—surely some pulpit committee will sit up and take notice!"

"Son, feed my sheep!"

"Lord... surely not without a pulpit... really don't care where that might be Lord, whatever your will determines, but Lord, I need that pulpit... after all what's as bad as a pulpit without a preacher! Right, Lord?"

"What's that Lord; serve you where? A children's home?"

"You have the right person, Lord?... surely you're aware of what some pulpit committees say about information like that on a resume?"

"Surely you're aware of what others will think, Lord... 'house-parenting's' for those who can't quite cut it preaching!"

"Lord, I'm going to really level with you... you called me to preach... what will my friends think now?"

"Furthermore Lord, you promised to go with me!"

"You're right, my son, even to the end of the world!"

"Even on a Buckner childcare campus — out there in dusty West Texas, even there where my sheep are gathered in!"

What a monumental struggle, those early days of decision. Slowly, painfully, yet with inexorable impact, the unbiblical, but humanly devised ecclesiastical dreams of "pulpit prestige" were disintegrating, and in their place one with a completely different hue was forming—a place of service and undeniable ministry in an unusual arena.

Buckner children's campuses are places of urgent mission and ministry... there are so many sheep to be fed, not just on a sunny Sunday morning — seven long days and nights each week!

What limitless cathedrals for love!

How do you spell love?

You spell it with an arm around a lonely, battered youngster. You spell it with a reprimand, couched in kindness, in example framed in understanding and patient and discipline.

How do you spell evangelism? Love, on a children's campus, as you strive daily through example and deed to frame the gospel in terms understood by a child who's never been inside a Baptist church.

How do you spell service? Love... with a houseful of children, each with his or her distinct identity, his or her peculiar need, reaching out to meet that special need.

How do you spell ministry? Love... late at night, when a child sobs uncontrollably, hurting from a hundred different inward bruises, you spill a sympathizing tear!

How do you spell mission? Love, at 5:30 a.m. as you wake to an alien alarm clock, barging its relentless path into your tired senses, encapsulated in those few precious moments of sleep, invaded mercilessly during the early morning pre-dawn hours, by the cries of a little girl, awakened by cruel dreams of fear and apprehension. It's getting up, still with the burden of physical and mental fatigue, ready with God's help to meet another day.

How do you spell partnership? Love... as you and your spouse, partners in vivid reality, team members in mission and ministry, prepare breakfast for a dozen eager-eyed youngsters.

It's the ministry of hygiene! "Are your teeth brushed? Don't forget your hair... yes, your socks are in the laundry room... they're dry; 'Mom' put them in the dryer at midnight!"

It's the ministry of discipline! "Let's not argue, lad, you'll be late for your bus... Bill, I need to meet with you in the parlor after school... had a call from your teacher!"

It's the ministry of orderliness and cleanliness! "Let's really make up those beds this morning, pick up that towel, vacuum your floor, and don't forget your laundry schedule!"

It's the ministry of reconciliation! Not condemnation... that hostile environment out of which so many youngsters come; it's lifting a fallen youngster, it's the gospel of the second chance.

It's the ministry of healing! Healing the painful hurts of broken, fragile lives. Bathing the ugly bruises of yesterday's abuse... binding up the social sores, pouring on the soothing 'Balm of Gilead'.

It's the ministry of education. "You've got tutoring at 5:00 and yes, I'll sign that report card; you're really shown progress this semester."

It's the ministry of witnessing. Houseparents and family, opening God's word and sharing together the good news without benefit of a pulpit!

It's the ministry of music! After a busy day at school, happy, if perchance discordant voices blend incongruously in a cacophonous symphony, "Lord, I'm a Believer!" Then, in spite of a multiplicity of concerns and opportunities for unusual ministry, albeit ministry sans pulpit, you remember the stark contrast, when first some of your new brood came to live in residential care, and you close your eyes and whisper, "Thank you, Lord!"

Yes, thank you, Lord, for ministry—vital, exciting, engulfing, even without benefit of 'the sacred desk'!

Ministry comes in different shapes... and today's Macedonian call may even lead you to service on a children's campus, for God is there, too, and he'll never never leave you!

The risks are unusual... the needs are enormous... the opportunities unprecedented... the promise still divine... "And Lo, I will never leave you, nor forsake you... even unto the end of the age!"

John Douglas Davey is a former pastor in Texas, now serving in child care ministry with his wife, Mary Fullerton Davey, a former youth minister and high school instructor. The Daveys are temporarily serving at the Baptist Home for Children and will become the resident managers of the Seavey Emergency Receiving Home in January.

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DON MOORE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

October 12, 1984

Mr. Johnny G. Biggs, Executive Director
Arkansas Baptist Family & Child Care Services
Little Rock, Arkansas

Dear Johnny,

Congratulations to you and all of your helpers for the magnanimous Christian ministry you have provided and are providing through the Family and Child Care Ministry.

NINETY YEARS OF DOING "UNTO THE LEAST OF THESE" is an enviable record that will redound to the glory of God. Only God and eternity can reveal the significance of this ministry.

May your 90th Anniversary truly be a time of rejoicing and renewal. As you find the needs of families and children multiplying rather than decreasing, may God increase your vision and resources to meet those needs.

Arkansas Baptists are very proud of you all. We pledge our continued love, prayers and support in this ministry of grace.

May those who have preceded you in faithful service be somehow blessed by the success we all are enjoying as a result of their labors.

In Christian Love,


Don Moore

DN/jt

Our family comments on the anniversary

(Clockwise from top, left) I volunteer to blow out the 90 candles.

Ninety years old but still carrying meaning and purpose.

I want to be 90 one day—if I can keep my smile.

A 90th birthday is better even than jelly on a sandwich.

Beauty is not a matter of age—beautiful, too.

Be a winner in spite of youth or yourself!



Center: Ninety? Wow, that's more than I can count on my fingers and toes.

A personal testimony: 'Thank you, Arkansas Baptists'

In the fall of 1974, after a long, hard-fought battle with cancer, my mother became another victim of that awful, dreaded, painful disease. The pain and agony that she suffered left a never-to-be-forgotten memory in my mind. Not only was it hard seeing my mother suffer, but the change of lifestyle was nothing easy. Left behind were my sister, my mother's parents and myself.

I realized I had to start growing up. I was 13, and my sister was 11. What a difficult time it was for her! You women can understand. But the most remarkable thing about the whole situation was God's presence. Even though I was not spiritually-minded at the time, God revealed to me that he was not going to let me down. I suppose the common question came to my mind several times, "Why do bad things happen to good people?"

All of these events had taken place in the town of Anderson, Ind., and the people that loved me most in the whole world lived in Arkansas. Let me backtrack for a moment and fill you in on some information that will help you draw a realistic picture of the situation. When I was seven years old, my parents got a divorce. My sister and I lived with my mother, who was going through court battle after court battle, and we were caught

in the middle. Off and on, the three of us lived with my mother's parents in Arkansas, traveling back and forth from California.

In 1973, my mother came to us with some news. We being in the sixth and fifth grades respectively, we really didn't grasp the situation that Mom was facing some very serious health problems. During her frequent stays at the hospital, mother met a man whom she married some seven or eight months later, and this we found to have been a bad turn. The real details I would prefer not to mention. However, if you can think of worst situation of human abuse, you might catch a picture. As the situation turned out, Mom was left in a nursing home instead of the cancer center in Indianapolis, and the cancer became victor over her body.

Well, it was time for the state to take action, since there was no blood kin the state and it was a matter of time until my sister and I would be placed in a foster home.

My grandparents, being the God-sent angels they were, kept up with the situation minute by minute, checking with the right authorities and with my father, who lives in California, and waiting on the right time to take action. Johnny Biggs was the key person with whom my grandfather counseled to find out who the right people were. The

Red Cross also bent over backwards to help us. God's timing was perfect.

My sister and I had just started the new school year, and after facing the traumatic summer this was something less than desirable.

It had been two weeks since school started, and we were almost settled in a routine. Little did we know, we were about to be put in a foster home. School had ended that day, and I was on the way to football practice. My grandparents showed up and told us to come outside, where some people wanted to talk to us.

I was elated to see my grandparents, as I'm sure my sister was. It ended up that we got in the car, drove to the airport and were on our way to Arkansas to live with my grandparents, with just the clothes on our back.

God had given my sister and I new life through my grandparents, and later this event had helped us to receive new life in Jesus. We could throw away the "old clothes" and put on "new ones."

Thanks, Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services and Johnny Biggs for your support. —Greg Church

Greg Church is a student-to-student worker at Ouachita Baptist University.



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Funding bill maintains non-profit mail rates

WASHINGTON (BP)—Barring possible across-the-board rate changes by the Postal Service's Board of Governors, a large catch-all funding bill passed by Congress will keep non-profit rates at their current levels through Sept. 30, 1985.

The \$801 million appropriation was well over the \$400 million Reagan administration budget request. This is the second consecutive year Congress has fully funded the postal subsidy, maintaining current rates.

However, rates could yet be affected during 1985 should the Postal Service Board of Governors agree to implement changes recommended by the Postal Rate Commission.

Fire destroys Baptist school in Zimbabwe

SANYATI, Zimbabwe (BP)—A late night fire, apparently caused by electrical problems, destroyed the Sanyati Baptist Primary School in Sanyati, Zimbabwe, evicting 563 students and causing \$70,000 in damage.

The students now meet under trees on the Sanyati Baptist mission station, site of the school in north central Zimbabwe.

Despite student rescue attempts, the Sept. 23 blaze destroyed furniture, materials and new textbooks inside the building.

Robber assaults missionary, gets gospel, not money

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)—"I'm a believer. Jesus Christ is my Savior," missionary Bill Moseley repeated over and over as the robber pointed a pistol at his stomach.

Moseley, a Southern Baptist missionary from Florida, had just cashed his monthly mission check at a bank in Rio de Janeiro and was getting into his car when he felt something jabbed into his ribs. A man holding a loaded revolver demanded the briefcase Moseley had already put in the car. When the missionary refused, the robber hit him on the head with the gun butt.

Though stunned, the 6-foot-2 missionary didn't fall. Instead, he proclaimed Christ as his Savior. The robber struck him again, threatened to kill him, pointed the pistol at Moseley's feet and pulled the trigger. The pistol misfired. He fired again but missed.

At that point, said Moseley, "I think he just realized he wasn't going to get the money without killing me, and he just took off." Witnesses said the man jumped on the back of an accomplice's motorcycle and disappeared into afternoon traffic.

The missionary escaped with bumps and bruises and wasn't noticeably shaken by the incident. An avid jogger, he went home and ran nine miles that afternoon. What protected the 46-year-old mission veteran from injury was "the presence of the Lord," he said later. "There's no other explanation."

Subcommittee conducts hearings on illegal video gambling

WASHINGTON (BP)—While citizens in four states prepare to vote on establishment of state-operated lotteries, concern about illegal gambling on video machines surfaced at the national level in Senate oversight hearings conducted by the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

Sen. William Roth (R-Del), subcommittee chairman, began hearings by noting "high technology has moved into still another aspect of American life—illegal gambling." Roth said "evidence will show that the machines are often made with features that could only be used for gambling purposes."

Foremost among the video games with

which the hearing was concerned were video poker machines which have become widespread within the last two years. One witness, Stephen Hochman of the New York State Coin Machine Association estimated perhaps \$15 billion per year pours through illegal coin operated gambling devices in the United States.

Clergy housing resolution put off until next year

WASHINGTON (BP)—Resolution of the two-year controversy surrounding tax treatment of clergy and military housing was passed on to the 99th Congress when the 98th Congress adjourned Oct. 12 without agreeing to a solution.

Congressmen and senators entered the debate after an early 1983 Internal Revenue Service ruling reversed a nearly 30-year policy of allowing clergy to take normal mortgage interest and real estate tax deductions in addition to any tax-exempt housing allowance they received.

As speculation mounted IRS might issue a similar ruling in the case of military personnel who also receive tax-exempt housing allowances, several proposals were introduced on both sides of Capitol Hill to prevent implementation of such rulings for

military personnel and clergy.

In the end, Congress managed to delay until 1986 the implementation of the 1983 ruling for clergy who owned or had a contract to purchase their residences as of Jan. 3, 1983. Also, in the final hours of the just completed session, the Senate approved a non-binding resolution expressing its sense that IRS should issue no similar ruling in the case of military housing. But these actions fell far short of the substantive proposals introduced to provide both groups permanent relief from such IRS rulings.

Earlier this year, Sen. John Warner, R-Va., attached an amendment to the 1985 Department of Defense authorization bill to provide statutory prohibition against IRS rulings on clergy and military housing. In conference, Warner reluctantly agreed to let the

provision be dropped as opponents challenged the germaneness of tax legislation being added to a military authorization measure.

According to an aide, Warner intended to offer his proposal as a rider to a tax measure the Senate considered during the final days of this session. But the aide told Baptist Press that continued opposition from the Treasury Department and House Ways and Means Committee chairman Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., coupled with a filibuster threat in the Senate, persuaded Warner instead to go with a resolution co-sponsored by Sen. William L. Armstrong, R-Colo., expressing the sense of the Senate that IRS should not disallow military personnel normal housing-related deductions "before the 99th Congress statutorily resolves the issue."

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Your state convention at work

Evangelism

Our personal testimony

One of the tools for successful witnessing is your personal testimony. The New Testament writers were very much aware of the power of the testimony.



Shell

John, the apostle, gave his testimony concerning his relationship to Christ. In I John 1:3 concerning Jesus, he stated, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." John was aware that the only way we can have true fellowship with one another is to experience the right relationship with Christ.

In Acts 22, the apostle Paul gives a tremendous testimony concerning his own life. He states how he desperately needed to know Christ. He was a Jew and persecuted the way of Christ unto death. God showed him his need of Christ on the road to Damascus. A great light shined about him and Jesus asked, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He committed his life to Christ, "What shall I do, Lord?" "Arise and go." His life was different in Christ. God chose him to be a witness unto all men.

Our testimony can be very effective for Christ. We relate our life before receiving Christ, express how we came to know we needed Christ and joyfully tell how we received Christ. We share in the full and meaningful life daily. God's Word to us is, "Go and tell what great things Christ hath done for us." — Clarence Shell, director

Christian Life Council

Tribute to apathy

The poor of south Georgia and Alabama comprise a large part of those who journey each year to a large gambling establishment off Interstate 10 in North Florida.

The day after election, citizens of that Florida county called, asking what can we do? The election was lost by a few votes. No, that's not so, it was lost because a few lazy, thoughtless, over-confident Christian voters failed to vote.

The poor of the southeastern United States would comprise a large portion of those who would journey every day to the former natural state should gambling casinos be allowed to come and take over Hot Springs and Arkansas. Public assistance checks would be cashed and the money would be used every day to satisfy the greed of the gambling entrepreneurs. This is already done on a seasonal basis at West Memphis and Hot Springs.

Dare we, as Christian voters, be apathetic

on Nov. 6 or before, since many who go to the State Convention at Fort Smith will need to vote absentee?

Time and again, both Old and New Testament scriptures remind us of the poor and how we are to treat them. Regardless of political party affiliation, Christians in Arkansas and this country absolutely must keep them in mind while approaching the polls. The wrath of God came upon Sodom and Gomorrah because of their mistreatment of the poor as well as for sexual perversion and immorality. (Ez. 16:49) — Bob Purker, director

Missions

Missions first class

The question was put to me "Do you believe in starting missions first class?" My answer was "Yes, if you allow me to explain what I mean by first class."



Tidworth

To me "first class" means starting and developing a mission in the most effective way to make and grow disciples with the people who need a ministry. Not every community needs nor wants a red brick building with four white columns in front. But every congregation needs a meeting place that has adequate space for Bible teaching and worship. The building should be acceptable in appearance to the people who will use the facility.

"First class" would not always mean that a pastor must have a high degree of formal education. But he does need the preparation and experience that would equip him to minister to this group of people. — Floyd Tidworth Jr., church extension director

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Family and Child Care

A brighter tomorrow

"If everyone would light just one little candle, what a bright world this would be." This phrase expresses a great truth; people working together, combining their resources, can accomplish great things.

It is this spirit of cooperation that has enabled our agency to respond to the hurts of children for 90 years. Consider this wonderful heritage: 90 years of Christian caring; 90 years of uninterrupted ministry; 90 years of working together to fulfill a command of Christ.

In this partnership we have been involved in bringing light to children whose lives have been darkened by neglect, abuse, uncaring and despair. We have been guided by the true source of light and have brightened the paths of thousands of children. The prayerful, financial support of Arkansas Baptists has undergirded this ministry and made it strong. It has truly been "A Ministry of Love".

Last year 1,060 of our 1,266 churches gave \$375,289.15 to our child care ministry. Approximately 350 sponsors, churches, WUMUs and individuals continued to enrich the lives of our children through their faithful support of our Sponsorship Program.

"Sharing for a Brighter Tomorrow" is the theme for this year's Thanksgiving Offering. If each of our 1,266 churches takes an offering for our child care ministry, what a bright light we could share with the increasing numbers of troubled children and families in need. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." This year, let's shine for him and them. — Johnny G. Biggs, executive director

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Help for family living

by Dennis Smith, First Church, Camden

Basic passage: Ephesians 5:21-6:4

Focal passages: Ephesians 5:24-28, 6:1-4

Central truth: The Christian family demonstrates to the world God's plan for families.

This passage is the standard for marriage retreats and seminars. Marriages are fragile relationships and Christian marriages are not immune to problems. Many Christian teachers, however, have used this passage to teach the complete submission of wives and the ultimate dominance by the husband. When this is done, the interpreter always leaves off the first verse of this passage.

We must submit to each other out of reverence for Christ. That means the husband must submit, just as the wife submits. Parents must submit just as children submit. We do not hear that concept taught very much. We would not have the problems in homes today if everyone submitted to each other because they loved Jesus.

Wives, do not believe this gets you off the hook. The husband is still the head of the household. He still must be boss. Husbands, too, should not be too complacent. You are commanded to love your wife. She is not commanded to love you! You are responsible for your family. Children are to obey but also deserve respect: not being pushed, but brought up in the Lord.

Family problems begin when these biblical relationships are not in balance. The husband gets bossy or the wife will not let the husband lead. Sometimes the husband does not want to lead. The world is looking at Christian families to see if God's rules for living are relevant to today's families and its problems. Christians are called upon to prove God's Word in their family lives.

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'Herein is love' . . .
(1 John 4:10)
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Life and Work

We minister to needs

by Billy White, Second Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Luke 7:36-50

Focal passage: Luke 7:39-50

Central truth: Religion can blind one to personal needs, hindering redemption.

The most telling line of this entire experience is our Lord's question to Simon, the self-righteous Pharisee. Jesus asked him, "Do you see this woman?" (v. 44). Obviously, he did not. Simon saw many things, but he saw no person. Once again we witness the pathetic irony of that prevalent religious malady. Simon had been blinded by the light. Organized religion and self-righteous moralists can, and oftentimes do, interfere with the Master's plan of redemption. The following are some of the symptoms of religious blindness.

First, sufferers have a propensity to treat people like things. To Simon, the woman was nothing more than a "sinner," a Galilean prostitute to whom he owed and offered no more than a "label." Self-righteous religion always leads to the depersonalization of others. When individuals are robbed of their personhood and seen as "things" (i.e. liberals, divorcees, etc.) rather than as people created in God's image, they are much easier to reject and condemn. Modern Pharisees are just as practiced at labeling others as their first-century fathers.

A second symptom may be the sufferer's inability to see his own need. Simon offered Jesus none of the common courtesies. No water for his feet, no oil for his head, no kiss of salutation. Nor did he acknowledge his need to do so. Perhaps he supposed himself better than his guest. In his hypocrisy Simon even labeled Jesus (v. 39). "If this man were truly from God," he imagined, "he would be more like me!" How peculiar that sufferers of spiritual blindness even measure God by their cold, narrow perceptions. They become the center of their own moral universe, the righteous judges of true godliness. And, alas, the crucifiers of the Redeemer!

This reveals the final symptom of religious blindness. Sufferers misinterpret the Kingdom's nature and message. While Jesus was building bridges to a person in need, Simon reinforced his wall. While Jesus was offering acceptance and forgiveness, Simon issued criticism and rejection. One stood for the religion of a legislated and dispassionate morality. The other for the redemption of persons in need. As followers of Christ, it seems simple who we must pattern our lifestyles and churches after, doesn't it?

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Bible Book

The Messiah's light

by Joe Statton, Central Church, Magnolia

Basic passage: Isaiah 7:1 to 12:6

Focal passage: Isaiah 7:1-2, 10-17, 9:2, 6-7

Central truth: Faith in the God of creation is the only guarantee of hope and security.

Security is an important word in our contemporary vocabulary. Our loan institutions write it above their doors. Investment and insurance firms market their product on the premise that security is essential. Even our politicians and military leaders use the need of security to justify expending enormous amounts of money to "adequately" stockpile military armaments to provide us with proper security. The question is, are we secure?

Isaiah tried to provide Ahaz and the people of Judah with true security. He sought to give them hope. He wanted to give them a future, but they refused to place their faith in the only power strong enough to deal with their threatened destruction. As we read the account of Ahaz's refusal to trust in God, we cannot help but see our present world vividly portrayed in the mirror of the past.

The first image we see is familiar. Man continues to be impatient. We demand instant solutions to every problem. We must "get on with the show." There is no time for God's way; we need a solution now. We, like Ahaz, tremble at the thought of failure or personal discomfort. So, we turn to every promise of the world in total disregard to the source of true power. Isaiah called this source, "Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (9:6).

The second image is closely related to the first. We, like Ahaz, still have not learned that worldly compromises do not bring lasting success. Ahaz used the "if you can't beat them, join them" philosophy. He slandered the very power of God and met with disaster. Worldly compromises can only be defined as "sin" and rebellion. God wants our faith and trust; nothing less is adequate.

We now return to the previous question about security. How and where can it be found? Can the Christian escape pain, hurt and trouble? The questions are not easy ones, but the answer is singular. He was born in Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago. No, we cannot escape trouble, pain and hurt, but we can know true security. We can personally experience the security about which Paul spoke in 2 Timothy 1:2, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep what I have committed to him until that day."

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Students wounded in random sniping

BRISTOL, Va. (BP)—A Virginia Intermont College coed remains hospitalized in a Bristol hospital after having been critically wounded in an apparent random sniping incident.

Tammy Key of Damascus, Va., is in fair condition after having suffered serious kidney, spleen and intestinal wounds while returning to campus around 11 p.m. Sept. 20. Her roommate, Diane Salyer of Nora, Va., received a minor scalp wound.

According to news reports, two Bristol, Tenn., men have been charged in the incident. Police said the two men, who reportedly had been drinking, apparently

also wounded a man on the Tennessee side of Bristol. Police said one man allegedly fired a silencer-equipped .22 caliber pistol while the other drove the car.

Police in both Tennessee and Virginia say the shootings were randomly committed with no apparent motive.

Reba Stophel, of the president's office at Virginia Intermont, said Key has been removed from intensive care, but apparently will remain hospitalized for several more weeks. She added a fund raising effort is planned to help Key, who had no insurance.

Virginia Intermont is affiliated with the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

Webb named editor of Illinois Baptist

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP)—William R. "Bill" Webb has been named to succeed Robert J. Hastings as editor of the *Illinois Baptist* and director of the office of communications of the Illinois Baptist State Association.

Webb, 34, has been a staff writer in the news and information services department of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board since 1981.

A native of Mt. Vernon, Ill., he holds a journalism degree from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and has completed two-and-a-half years of work toward the master of divinity in Christian education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

He and his wife, Susan, are the parents of two sons, Justin, nine, and Mark, seven.

Southern Baptists start 1,151 new Sunday schools

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptists started 1,151 Sunday schools during the 1983-84 church year ending Sept. 30 topping the goal of 1,000 starts for the eighth consecutive year.

More than 300 of the new Sunday schools were in Texas and more than 100 were in Florida. Texas Southern Baptists surpassed a goal of 200 with 310. Florida, with the second highest number of new Sunday schools, fell two short of its goal of 110.

Ten state conventions in addition to Texas met their goals for the year: Arizona (49 new Sunday schools, Nevada (33), Alaska (30), Louisiana (29), Oklahoma (26), Kentucky

(25), Utah/Idaho (21), Kansas/Nebraska (19), Minnesota (12) and New England (12).

Although not meeting a goal of 100, California Southern Baptists started 77 new Sunday schools during the year.

Since the Baptist Sunday School Board began a new emphasis on starting Sunday school programs in 1977, there have been 8,392 new Sunday schools reported throughout the convention, said James Lackey, growth consultant at the Sunday School Board.

Noting an increased interest in ethnic mission, Lackey said perhaps 40 percent of the new Sunday schools have been ethnic.

Taiwan Baptists send first pioneer missionary

TAIPEI, Taiwan (BP)—Taiwan Baptists have commissioned their first pioneer missionary, Shu Wan-li, to work with 3,000 Chinese fishermen in American Samoa.

The Chinese Baptist Convention of Taiwan has sent other foreign missionaries to work with established churches in several coun-

tries, but Shu is the first to be assigned to pioneer work. The Chinese fishermen in the Samoan islands, most Taiwanese, have no Chinese-language church.

Shu, a pastor and author, will spend a year in American Samoa while his wife and children remain in Taiwan.

Mexican students start campus evangelism project

MEXICO CITY (BP)—At one of the world's largest universities, Baptist Student Union members have developed an ambitious plan to share Christ with other students.

Hundreds of thousands of students attend the National Autonomous University of Mexico in Mexico City. Led by Southern Baptist representative Lloyd Mann of Oklahoma, young Baptists on campus have developed a concern for fellow students struggling with Marxism, drugs and other challenges.

Beginning this fall, Baptist churches in Mexico City are helping the Baptist students sponsor campus evangelism, choir concerts, sports events and family life conferences (for married students).

Any student who shows interest in becoming a Christian is contacted by a Baptist who offers friendship, answers questions and invites the student to church. Interested students also are given packets containing Bible correspondence courses.