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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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October 18, 1984

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

Your 501
C(3) Corporations
Dollars - Program
Work

Learning how his
CP money is divided

On the cover



ABN photo / Millie Gill

Ten-year-old Clint Bruce, a member of Royal Ambassadors at Second Church in Little Rock, has been learning how the dollars of Arkansas Baptists through the Cooperative Program are divided. October is a focus for such learning because it is Cooperative Program Month.

The Cooperative Program: grace abounding

by Randy Magar

To me, the Cooperative Program is the grace of God abounding in his people. It is an instrument of God to spread abroad the gospel to a lost world.

Yet it is sad that this particular grace is too often only theoretically understood and not personally experienced. I believe that seeing the Cooperative Program in action and experiencing its grace has impressed upon me its importance far more than any explanation of its theory could. I would like to share what the Cooperative Program means to me as I have experienced its effects abroad and at home.

Although a native of Arkansas, I did not come into direct contact with Southern Baptist work until I was serving my country in Europe with the U.S. Army. At that time, my wife and I discovered a Southern Baptist church at Kitzigen, West Germany. This church is a part of the European Baptist Convention (English-speaking). Out of that experience with the idea of missions and the Cooperative Program, I switched my denominational preference to Baptist. I felt that some only talked about missions while others were doing missions.

During our second tour in Europe while attending the First Church, Giessen, we had the opportunity to work with John Merritt. Brother John is an appointee of the Foreign Mission Board, and he is the executive secretary of the European Baptist Convention which includes over 40 churches in 11 countries. His role is similar to that of our director of missions. He gave our church leadership and guidance in calling a pastor in order that salvation might be brought to our men in uniform. The EBC has several pastors who are appointees of the Foreign Mission Board and last year had a baptismal ratio of 7.7 members to 1 new convert. This experience with the Cooperative Program and the EBC has placed within me a desire to return to Europe to pastor one of their churches, that I might be an "apostle" to our men in uniform.

The experience of grace through the Cooperative Program did not stop there but

is continuing here at home. As I came to Southern Baptist College three years ago, my family joined a local church which is a part of the Black River Association. Since I have been here, I have seen cooperative dollars provide pastoral support, gift liens, a mobile chapel and give assistance and aid to flood victims.

The mobile chapel was given to Cross Roads Church, which has had many struggles. At one time, there were only a few dedicated people to carry out the mission of the church. Through their dedication and the Cooperative Program's provision of a chapel, pastoral support and land purchasing, they have gone from a membership of 5 to 40. In the past church year, they were also in the top five percent in ratio of baptisms in the state of Arkansas. Just recently, our director missions baptized three new converts, and the church called a pastor to the field.

Besides these experiences of grace with the Cooperative Program, I am touched directly and personally, as are my fellow students at SBC and our counterparts at OBU. The attitude of cooperation helps support these institutions so that people like myself can improve their ministerial skills. Not only are the schools supported but financial assistance is given directly to students through the Ministerial Scholarship Fund. This scholarship helps to ease the burden of the cost of education for the ministerial student and his family.

To me, the Cooperative Program allows the redeemed of God to say so, using the resources that our Lord has given us to help fulfill the vision of the Great Commission. This grace of cooperation is for the purpose of seeing the lost come to Jesus. It is not just an explained theology only but an experience of theology. It is the grace of God abounding. So, "as ye abound in everything... see that ye abound in this grace, also" (2 Cor. 8:7).

The Cooperative Program is giving, giving is experiencing and experiencing is performing. Performance is to show proof of our love for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Randy Magar, pastor of First Church, Grubbs, is a junior at Southern Baptist College.

In this issue

7 live via satellite

A Dec. 1 satellite teleconference featuring missionary testimonies and prayer requests broadcast live from the field will launch this year's annual week of prayer for foreign missions.

12 Routh's open letter

Retired Southern Baptist Convention executive Porter Routh has written an open letter to SBC President Charles Stanley, suggesting ways Stanley can help foster the love he recently challenged Baptists to demonstrate for each other

Francis J. Hobbs, wife of Herschel Hobbs, dies

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)—Francis J. Hobbs, wife of Herschel H. Hobbs, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, died at her home in Oklahoma City Sept. 27.

Mrs. Hobbs, an Alabama native, graduated from Howard University (now Samford University). She married Hobbs in 1927. They had one son, Jerry M. Hobbs, now of Houston.

Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City, was president of the SBC 1962-63. He was chairman of the committee which wrote the *Baptist Faith and Message*, adopted by the convention in 1963.

The family has requested memorials be made to the Herschel H. and Frances J. Hobbs Lectureships on Baptist Faith and Heritage at Oklahoma Baptist University.

'Study to show yourself approved. . .'

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



There still persist occasional conflicts between the educated and uneducated ministry. An educated preacher may look down his nose at one who has not had his opportunities, while the one without formal training accuses the other of relying more on books than the Holy Spirit. Both attitudes are wrong. The same God called them both.

In past years, there was a great tide of anti-intellectualism. This philosophy reached such an extent that some preachers actually refused to prepare their messages. One such preacher boasted, "When I enter the pulpit, God fills my mouth." A preacher who worked and prayed over his sermons replied, "Yes, your mouth is filled with hot air, but don't blame that on God."

God requires a preacher to be at his best in the pulpit. This involves prayer, study and openness to the Holy Spirit, both during study and in the delivery of the message.

Those who oppose education emphasize the fact that Peter and John were uneducated. They often quote the portion of a verse of scripture that reads, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled. . . ." Yet they prefer to ignore the rest of the sentence which states, "And they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). It should be obvious that three years with the Master Teacher was the best education a man could have.

The miracle of Christianity is that God uses persons with all types of backgrounds in his work. He used the apostle Paul to give initial impetus to Christianity. Having studied under Gamaliel, Paul was one of the best-trained men in the world. In giving us the Holy Writ, God worked through kings, shepherds, fishermen, philosophers and farmers.

Some misconceptions, obviously, need to be corrected. We should never equate ignorance with spirituality or conservatism. The scripture clearly teaches that a call to ministry is a call for preparation and study. Paul said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

Paul's personal counsel to Timothy applies, in general, to all Christians, but specifically to those who have received the call to public ministry. We are to "study" or commit our energies to the "word of truth," in order to be useful in our service to the Master. The word "approved" describes that which has been tested and purified for service. It was used of gold or silver which had been cleansed by fire, so that all of

the alloy or impurities were removed.

Paul said that this approval was unto God, not men, to enable the called of God to "rightly divide the word of truth." The words, "rightly divide," literally mean to "cut right or straight," as a farmer is able to plow a straight row or a tailor cuts the fabric according to the pattern. To divide the Word of God correctly means we will have no cause for embarrassment when we stand before the Master.

Paul said that proper study will eliminate "profane and vain babbling," which ultimately leads to "ungodliness" (2 Tim. 2:16). The minister must be spiritually and mentally prepared, lest he become ensnared in meaningless squabbles. This preparation is best accomplished by a clear understanding of Christian doctrines as set forth in the scripture.

Sermons which meet the needs of people require prayer, understanding, study and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Every sermon must be biblically-based and applied to the needs of those who are present. First, a sermon must be faithful to the Bible. Any sermon which is unbiblical can only be considered as a religious essay, address or speech. Such messages are, at best, a waste of time, and, at worst, extremely harmful to the cause of Christ.

A sermon should be applied to the needs of the congregation. In the beginning of one's sermon preparation, it is appropriate to ask, "What is the purpose of this message?" A well-prepared sermon that considers the immediate needs of the hearers will impact on the behavior of the congregation.

Because different congregations have varying needs, God calls a variety of personality types. Since God uses people of all educational levels, we should be supportive of one another. God has a place for each one whom he has called in his service, and all are important.

Since the challenges and responsibilities of Christian ministry are immense, everyone in vocational ministries should do everything possible to be effective. Different vocations make different demands. Some require a great deal more education than others, but all must be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

A key factor in the success of Southern Baptists has been our willingness to employ people of various educational backgrounds. If we are to continue to grow, we must never change this concept. With God's help, we must put behind us forever the conflict between preachers of different educational standings.

Arkansas Baptist

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meeting the information needs of Arkansas Baptists

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Woman's viewpoint

Janet Hamm Williams

A pharisaic 'Thank you, Lord'

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are. . .'" (Luke 18:11 KJV).

How does the parable of the Pharisee and publican relate to my lifestyle as a woman in 1984? I believe it leads me to ask myself some poignant questions about everyday living: What are my motives in choosing the place where I live? Why am I sending my children to a particular school? Where do I shop? Why am I attending the church I have chosen? To whom am I willing to be a friend?

If I "pray" as the Pharisee, I am deceiving myself. I am claiming righteousness for what I do not do, rather than taking responsibility

for what I do. I am gaining my identity from external appearances, rather than from internal accountability. I am giving attention to temporary concerns, rather than eternal values.

In "praying" as the Pharisee, I am alienating myself from many meaningful relationships. I am being judgmental of everyone according to my own standards.

And, with the attitude of the Pharisee, I am ignoring a relationship with God. I am simply becoming "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1b).

How do I avoid the "thank you" of the Pharisee in my own life? The parable concludes with the promise, "Everyone that ex-

alteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:14b KJV). I may begin by praying as the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I must recognize the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives. I must remember what Christ has done for all persons.

May our lives be seasoned with enough humility to be at peace with ourselves, with others and with God.

Janet Hamm Williams, a native of Batesville, is a graduate of Baylor University and attended Southwestern Seminary. A mother of three, she is director childhood education at Calvary Church, Little Rock.



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Enjoying another birthday

There was a time at the age of 39 when I gave serious consideration to calling a halt to the time-honored tradition of having annual birthdays. Not very serious consideration, mind you, but I was exposed to enough of the pros and cons of taking those birthdays out of the spotlight that I gave some thought to joining comedian Jack Benny and all of the others who have stonewalled it at the age of 39.

For the record, let me say that, after just a little bit of indecision, I came down strongly on the side of taking each birthday as it comes and not getting into a swivet about the aging process and what others think about it. I am convinced that was a wise decision, particularly since it seems to be rather certain that there is really not a lot one can do to avoid having birthdays.

Within the family (broadly defined) of Ouachita Baptist University, birthdays of

faculty and staff members have become the occasion for much celebration and merriment — the celebration and merriment are primarily by those not having the birthday, but the birthday honoree is drafted as the primary excuse for another social event. The use of wheelchairs, hospital beds complete with "I.V." equipment and even funeral caskets has become commonplace as colleagues get into the spirit of the happy reminders of another birthday.

On the recent occasion of my 61st birthday, several of my loyal and devoted faculty and staff members turned an innocent-looking conference into a birthday celebration, complete with a cake and priceless gifts, such as a can of sauerkraut (in honor of my recent trip to Germany) and a large jar of peanut butter (in honor of one of the important loves of my life). I was told that the cake could not have the appropriate

number of candles because it would violate the fire code for the campus.

All of this was great, but I think I appreciated most of all the card that I received from our saintly Ouachita alumna, Frances Crawford. It began with the beautifully illustrated message, "If you can't stand having another birthday . . ." above an obviously aging person in distress, and concluded on the inside of the card with the wise advice, "celebrate it sitting down! Happy Birthday!"

I plan to celebrate and enjoy all of my birthdays, and I am prepared to celebrate them sitting down, if necessary. I can't improve on the thought that birthdays are a wonderful gift from God.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

missionary notes

Mr. and Mrs. Earl G. Goatcher, missionaries to Thailand, have completed a temporary assignment in India and arrived in Thailand (address: Box 832, Bangkok, Thailand). He is a native of Formosa, Ark. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1962, resigned in 1971 and were reappointed in 1980.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Williams Holloway, missionaries to Japan, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: 3-36 Otana-cho, Chigusa-ku, Nagoya 464, Japan). He considers Arkadelphia his hometown. The former Linda Louton, she grew up in Arkadelphia. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1972, resigned in 1976 and were reappointed in 1978.

Mr. and Mrs. Harrison H. Pike, missionaries since 1956, resigned from missionary service effective Aug. 31. They served in Brazil, Angola and South Africa. He is a native of Texarkana, Texas. The former June Summers, she was born in Fort Smith and lived in Texarkana while growing up. They may be addressed at 5330 N. Virginia Ave., Kansas City, MO 64118.

Don Moore

You'll be glad to know...

... I guess you will! I've just concluded a revival meeting at Cummins Penitentiary. Dr. E.K. Bailey, a National Baptist preacher from Dallas, preached on Thursday and Friday nights. I preached on Saturday morning, Saturday night and Sunday morning to close out the meeting. A fine group from as far away as Oklahoma City had come to assist with personal work. We had a time in the Lord! Chaplain Dewie Williams and his staff had prepared well. The inmates, who are serious about the Lord, had prayed and prepared well. The administration and staff at Cummins were most cooperative. The presence and power of the Lord was obvious. What joy! What praise!

At the close of the last service I was shown a list of 28 who had already accepted Jesus Christ. Four others came and were being dealt with. If they came for salvation that meant 32 had received Christ. Praise the Lord! I've preached a lot of church revivals for longer periods of time and without seeing that many converted. I learned quite well that a man may be confined so far as his body is concerned, yet free so far as his spirit is concerned.

It was such a joy to hear the inmates and other chaplains express appreciation to Arkansas Baptists for the ministry we have provided over the years. Our chaplains at the prisons, training schools, rehabilitation center and Children's Colony have seen 563 people saved this past year. I know you are glad. This is what the Dixie Jackson offering is all about. Did you give? Did you give others a chance to give?

... Why pastors burn out. You'll be glad to know because you can do something about it. A survey of 32 denominations in 38 states reveal the following:

- (1) 85 percent of them spent two or less evenings per week at home;
- (2) 70 percent worked more than 60 hours per week;
- (3) 61 percent spent less than one hour per week talking with other pastors;
- (4) 75 percent spent less than one evening per month purely for social time with other couples.

Evangelical Newsletter, 8/31/84

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



Extending churches: third in a series This we can do

by Floyd Tidsworth

A goal of 30 new congregations per year has been suggested by the Church Extension program. That would accelerate the rate of starting new work 300 percent above what it is now.

Can we start 440 new congregations by A.D. 2000? Let's consider our resources.

Southern Baptists churches have 310,187 resident members. Four hundred and fifty people could man the 30 new works each year without harm to any existing church.

Most Southern Baptist members have been Christians long enough to be mature disciples. They could provide solid leadership to found a new church.

Tithes and offerings given to Southern Baptist churches last year was \$93,253,135. Even one percent of that amount for local missions would be \$932,531, or an average of \$31,084 per mission. That would be more than enough to meet all the needs of a mission.

Several hundred Arkansas churches have incomes of more than \$100,000 each year. Some have tithes and offerings amounting to more than a million dollars.

One half of the cost of church steeples would be enough money to build a church house for every mission in the state — not to mention parlor rooms and chandeliers.

Yes, we have the people, the money, the experience and all that is needed to start 30 missions each year. Present churches will be

blessed and not hurt. Is your church ready to be a sponsor? Our lack of willingness is the only thing that can keep us from starting the new churches needed in Arkansas.

How can a denomination grow weaker while adding members and churches? If you compare Southern Baptist growth in Arkansas with the population growth, we are not keeping up. In 1970 Southern Baptists had one church for every 1,616 people in the state. By 1980 it was one to 1,834. If the present growth rate continues, Southern Baptists will have only one church to every 2,110 people by A.D. 2000.

Southern Baptists will become weaker in comparison with population and perhaps in influence to change things for good. However, it is possible for the growth rate to change for the better.

It is predicted (U.S. News, Sept. 1983) that the Arkansas population will increase 24 percent by A.D. 2000. By starting new churches Southern Baptists could reach about 20 percent of the increased population.

If Southern Baptists would end the century with 1,600 churches we could baptize 5,000 more people each year than we are doing now! We could add about 150,000 to the resident membership. We can grow!

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

Southern Baptist installed at Catholic hospital

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



Kathy Reed, a member of Hot Springs Second Church and a 1983 graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, was installed Oct. 8 as the director of the new department of pastoral care at St. Joseph's Regional Health Center in Hot Springs, a 283-bed hospital owned by the Sisters of Mercy. A Hot Springs native, Reed is the daughter of Frank and Melba Reed, also of Second Church. Reed is pictured above with Sister Mary Werner, of St. Joseph's, and Andrew McDonald, bishop of the Little Rock Roman Catholic diocese.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people

Andy Kerr has resigned as pastor of the Pleasant Hill Church at Bauxite.

John T. Casey Sr. is serving as pastor of the Sulphur Springs Church in Harmony Association, coming there from the First Church of Bakersfield, Mo. He has served as pastor of churches in both Arkansas and Missouri. Casey is married to the former Mary Janice Watkins. They have two children, John and Shauna.

Cliff Jenkins has joined the staff of Springdale First Church as minister of education. He came to Springdale from the First Church of Lancaster, Texas. Jenkins and his wife, Carol, have two children, Joshua Lynn and Melody Kay.

Brad Sheffield is serving as pastor of Prairie Grove First Church, coming there from the First Church of Lake Dallas, Texas. He is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Maria Gracia, have two children, Sarah and Richard.

B.R. Stockton is serving as pastor of the Greenland First Church. He moved to Greenland after serving for more than 11 years as pastor of the Sonora Church at Springdale.

New lesson writer begins with 'Lessons for living'

Joe Statton, minister of education at Central Church, Magnolia, begins this week writing the Bible Book series Sunday school lessons in "Lessons for living."

Statton, a Missouri native, is a graduate of Southwest Baptist College (now University) and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served in music, youth and educational ministries with congregations in Missouri and Marianna, Ark. Statton is a member of the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and serves as a consultant for the ABCS Sunday School and Church Training Departments. He is also a youth minister trainer for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and has been active with the Sunday School, Church Training, B.S.U. ministries at the associational level.

He and his wife, Patti, have two children, Laura and Nathan.



Statton

Fred Oaks has resigned as pastor of the Pleasant Grove Church at Perryville.

Horace Gray began serving Oct. 7 as pastor of the Perryville First Church, coming there from the Lakeside Church in Hot Springs.

Tom Steward has resigned as minister of music and youth at Mulberry First Church.

Walter Knowles has resigned as interim pastor of the Ozone Church to go into full-time retirement.

David Miller has joined the staff of Little Rock Second Church as full-time director of the church's Lake Nixon ministry and as outreach minister.

Ellis Hodkin has joined the staff of Highland Heights Church at Benton as full-time youth and activities director.

Lonnie Busby has resigned as pastor of the Pilgrims Rest Church at Batesville following four years of service.

C.D. Lockard is serving as pastor of the Cushman Church.

Beth Yates has joined the staff of Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock as an intern to direct the work of the Carillon Handbell Choir. She is a graduate student in music at Ouachita Baptist University.

briefly

Beryl Church at Vilonia youth were in Stamps Oct. 10 to present the musical drama "Choices" at Stamps First Church.

Harrison First Church held services Oct. 7 to ordain Mike Geren as a deacon. L.B. Atchison, director of missions for North Arkansas Association was speaker.

Des Arc First Church Woman's Missionary Union has completed a sewing project in response to a request from Leslie Fetters, missionary Journeyman with the Foreign Mission Board in the Philippines.

Central Church in Bald Knob ordained Eddie Meharg to the ministry Oct. 14. Meharg is interim pastor of the West Point Church.

Prescott First Church ordained Jim Powell and Mack Stockton as deacons Oct. 7. Lex Eaker of North Little Rock was speaker.



ABN photos / Millie Gill

Little Rock Second Church began its second century of ministry Oct. 7 with a vespers celebration that included a noteburning and the placement of a time capsule containing minutes of various church committees, celebration activities, commemorative items, and a church roll. (Above left) Pastor Billy White placed the capsule in the west vestibule where a historical marker (foreground) was later fixed in the masonry structure. (Above right) A charred note symbolizes the church's beginning its second century debt-free as a result of a \$300,000 bequest from the Polly Rand Thomas estate.

Teleconference to begin foreign missions focus

The first Foreign Missions teleconference will be telecast live on BTN, Saturday, Dec. 1, from 12:00 to 1:30 p.m. Central Standard Time. Focusing on the centrality of missions and prayer support, the teleconference will kick off the annual week of prayer for foreign Missions. Bill O'Brien, executive vice president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, will serve as host.

Featured missionary testimonies and pray-

er requests will originate live both from the studio and from the countries where they serve. As a special attraction viewers will have opportunity to call toll free and ask questions of Keith Parks, Carolyn Weatherford, and James Smith, executives of the Foreign Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission, respectively.

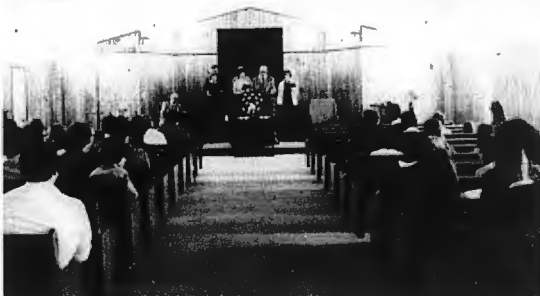
The teleconference is scheduled as an

associational event. Central viewing sites will be available in many associations. However, anyone having satellite receiving equipment may view the teleconference by tuning to Spacenet I satellite, 122.5° West Longitude, Transponder #1. The BTN signal will not be scrambled during this live transmission.

A video recording of the teleconference will be replayed on Tuesday, December 4, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. CST.

buildings

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



The Meadowview Church, near Sheridan, dedicated its new facilities Sept. 30. The new 4,200-square-foot building consists of a 200-seat auditorium, a nursery, four Sunday school rooms, a pastor's study, two bathrooms, a kitchen and fellowship hall. The facility was constructed at a cost of \$46,000 with the use of donated labor. Meadowview was organized May 6, 1979, as a mission of North Main Church of Sheridan. Participating in the dedication service were Carl Overton, director of missions for Central Association; a girl's trio from Rector Heights Church, Hot Springs; Hugh Owens, former director of missions for Central Association; and J. Everett Sneed, editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine. W.E. Yarbrough is pastor.



Ingram Boulevard Church, West Memphis, dedicated a new family life center Oct. 7. The 6,000-square-foot building was erected debt-free at a cost of \$51,000. L.L. Collins, associate executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, preached the dedicatory message. Bob Wiggins is pastor.

Robertson named associate for East Asia at FMB

Judy Robertson, a native of Fayetteville, was named associate director for East Asia by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in September.

The former missionary to Taiwan joined the FMB staff in Richmond, Va., in 1981 as assistant to George Hays, director for East Asia. She will continue to work with Hays in coordinating the efforts of Southern Baptist missionaries in South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao.



Robertson

Southern Baptist College hosts parents, pastors

Southern Baptist College will host the parents and pastors of Southern students on Saturday, Oct. 27, at the annual Parents and Pastors' Day on campus.

The day's agenda includes a program of music and testimony by students, parents and pastors, a noon luncheon, an open house in residence halls, a Baptist Student Union program, intra-squad basketball games and a message by David Miller, director of missions for Little Red River Association.

missionary notes

Annie Hoover, missionary to Japan, has a change of furlough address (717 N. Hughes, Little Rock, AR 72205). A native of North Little Rock, she was appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1949.

Mr. and Mrs. Lee R. Walker Jr., missionaries to Chile, are the parents of Jennifer Rebekah, born Aug. 13 (address: Cassilla 18-D, Viva del Mar, Chile). He was born in Texarkana and considers Little Rock his hometown. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1982.

Human cost of gambling too high, former gambler claims

by Mark Kelly

ASB photo / Mark Kelly

When proponents of Amendment 66 begin spouting their promises that casino gambling will make Arkansas rich and happy, Eddie Harrison doesn't buy it.

When they promise millions of dollars for schools and roads, Harrison thinks of the human cost in ruined lives and broken homes.

He knows first-hand the price tag attached to gambling. A self-described "fourth generation, American-born gypsy," Harrison grew up in a world where alcoholism and gambling ruled virtually every family in his clan.

His father, an alcoholic and compulsive gambler, shot dice, played cards, bet on chicken and dog fights, everything, Harrison recalls. He remembers the family going two and three weeks without money in order to pay off gambling debts.

Gambling was a way of life in the north Pine Bluff trailer park populated by their clan, explains Harrison. And like most of the kids, "my father's problem bled over onto me."

Dropping out of school at age seven, Harrison went to work for his father, a painting contractor. When he married at 18, he had been gambling all of his life, "penny ante stuff, cards and dice," he says.

"Although I didn't drink or run around on my wife, I always had a deck of cards and dice on me," recalls Harrison, 37. "We never played for a lot of money—\$75 to \$100—and you couldn't lose but \$300 or \$400 at most.

"I thought I did it for entertainment, but I was addicted," Harrison recalls. "After a big loss, I would swear off gambling, but it was a lie. As soon as someone wanted to gamble, I was ready."

Harrison, who eventually became a self-employed painting contractor himself, notes that a whole plethora of problems invariably plague the gambler and his family: debt, stress, crime, theft, family abuse.

He emphasizes stress and family abuse in particular, recalling the patterns of his life. He draws a plain picture: a father loses his paycheck in a card game. Coming home angry and frustrated, his wife begins to talk about their bills and the lack of groceries in the house. They begin to argue. A child comes into the room with a problem, and the father takes his anger out by striking the child. Often he then batters his wife as well.

Gambling also results in deception at home, Harrison explains. "I would 'steal' from myself in order to gamble, taking money that was supposed to go for bills or groceries" he recalls.

"I would look for places to hide the money I wanted to use for gambling, too." He found lots of places: behind the horn or in the dome light in his truck, maybe behind the dash or in the ashtray.

No matter where he hid it, his wife always managed to find it, though. When she did,



Eddie Harrison speaks from experience when he relates the havoc gambling can wreak on a human life. A professed "gamble-aholic," Harrison grew up in a family in which compulsive gambling took a daily toll. Today he is a pastor in Pine Bluff.

she took half of it and left the rest. He couldn't complain without admitting he had "stolen" the money to gamble.

The only hiding place she never found was a well-worn tube of chapstick he always carried in his jeans pocket, Harrison admits. He had discovered he could leave a nub of lip balm in the top of the tube and create enough space underneath it to hide five bills.

He claims he always had at least a little money stashed there. Every time she laundered his clothes, she took that tube out of his pocket and laid it out with the rest of his things, never knowing it contained money the family needed for bills and groceries.

"The biggest problem with gambling is what it does to you and your people," Harrison explains. "It leaves you crushed and dying inside, putting up a front to others.

"Gambling is addictive, captivating and habit-forming," he continues. "It captures your desires and vision and fills your imagination every waking hour, but they are selfish ambitions and goals."

He recalls how in 1970 he became obsessed with a desire to gamble in Las Vegas. He struck a bargain with his wife that, if he could pay off their truck and mobile home and put a certain amount in savings that year, he could also take \$500 and spend a week-end in the Las Vegas casinos.

Looking at their income history and judging the goal impossible, his wife agreed, Harrison says. But he "went to work" and pulled down enough extra income to leave for Las Vegas with the \$500 plus "an undisclosed

amount" he had managed to squirrel away.

He returned after three days with two cents in his pocket.

"I wouldn't work that hard for my family's sake, but I would for gambling," he laments.

Two years later, Harrison was converted through the witness of a former gambling buddy and a deepening dissatisfaction with the "hell-hole" he had found himself in. He made a public commitment to Christ at Dollarway Church in Pine Bluff, and another two years later—in 1974—he acknowledged a call to preach.

He has served as pastor of the Dollarway Church since 1981.

"We have all kinds of gambling in Arkansas as it is now, more than we need," Harrison asserts. In light of the human costs of the present level of gambling, "I can't see how casino gambling could possibly help.

"The pro-casino forces claim the revenue would help," he continues. "That's a lie. Look at what you get in return: crime, prostitution, rape and murder.

"Gambling preys on a 'get-rich-quick' mentality. The problems it brings are the same for all: stress, abuse, mental anguish, guilt," he adds. "The only place for most to dump it is at home. It makes homes hell.

"If Christians do their God-given duty to vote and vote their convictions Nov. 6, we'll see (Amendment 66) defeated."

Mark Kelly is a staff writer for the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

Amendment 66 filled with unanswerable questions, Finn says

To educate Baptists about the dangers of gambling and to drum up opposition to the proposed legalization of casino gambling in Hot Springs, a series of rallies have been held in associations around the state of Arkansas.

John Finn, executive director of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas and a board member of Citizens United Against Gambling, a non-sectarian coalition organized to fight Amendment 66, spoke in one such rally at Second Church, Pine Bluff.

Finn detailed the "red flags" he sees in Amendment 66, the "Garland County Lawful Wagering Amendment."

(1) The proposal would "enshrine" casino gambling in the state constitution, making it "impossible" to get out later, Finn warned. "If you don't believe that, just try to get horse and dog racing out of it," he said.

(2) The amendment calls for the five-member control board to be appointed by both the governor and the secretary of state, a departure from the usual gubernatorial appointment procedure. Finn cast suspicion on

the departure.

(3) The regulating board would be paid for out of taxpayer funds appropriated by the General Assembly, adding another tax burden, Finn claimed. He asserted the casino operators ought to pay for regulatory costs.

(4) It places the responsibility for enforcement on the control board, adding another taxpayer burden and creating an undermanned, ineffective policing agency like the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, he said.

(5) The proposal would instruct the regulators to keep records only "as they deem necessary," Finn noted. He claimed this violates the federal Freedom of Information Act and would allow the agency the unique power to withhold information from even the governor.

(6) The amendment would place a 10-year residency requirement on casino licensees, ostensibly to prevent the infiltration of organized crime. Finn derided the implication that organized crime has no ties in the state as old as 10 years.

Finn also attacked the financial promises he attributed to casino proponents. Amendment 66 would allocate five percent of gross casino revenues to the state. Finn said that the \$30 million casino proponents promise the state would require \$600 million be lost at the gaming tables.

He claimed that pro-casino advertising promises counties and cities revenues for schools and roads, but the proposal makes no stipulation about the use of such allocations.

About the pro-casino proposal to pay sales tax on prescription medicine for persons over 65, Finn said, "That's already the law." About their promise to pay the sales tax on all burial supplies, he quipped, "You're going to have to die to collect on that one."

Finn predicted "the casino gambling crowd is going to discover that Arkies are not a bunch of ignorant people running around without any shoes.

"We're even going to beat them in Garland County," he predicted.

Civil rights measure killed by U.S. Senate, 53-45

WASHINGTON (BP)—Unable to break a procedural logjam erected by opponents of the Civil Rights Act of 1984, the U.S. Senate killed the measure designed to clarify the scope of federal laws barring discrimination based on age, sex, handicap or minority status.

By a vote of 53-45, the Senate tabled the measure, which had passed the House of Representatives by a lopsided 375-32 vote and had 63 co-sponsors in the Senate. Sponsors had sought to attach it to the pending Continuing Resolution—a stop-gap funding measure Congress had to pass before adjournment to keep federal agencies and programs running for which regular appropriations bill had not yet cleared.

But opponents of the measure, led by Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, successfully used Senate procedures to prevent an up-or-down vote on the amendment.

The Civil Rights Act of 1984 was designed to overturn the Supreme Court's 1984 ruling in the Grove City College case which held

that only the particular program or activity of an institution receiving federal funds was subject to anti-discrimination statutes.

Proponents insisted they sought only to restore the law to its pre-Grove City interpretations. Their proposal would have substituted the word "recipient" for the phrase "program or activity" in the four federal civil rights statutes which prohibit discrimination based on sex, age, race, national origin or disability by any recipient of federal financial assistance.

Hatch and other opponents, however, insisted the proposal would represent a major expansion of anti-discrimination coverage.

Hatch considered the bill's definition of "recipient" too broad, a concern also expressed in a 1984 Southern Baptist Convention resolution adopted in Kansas City.

Without taking a position on the overall merits of the legislation, the Kansas City resolution asked Congress "to give immediate attention to either redefining the

term 'recipients' in the Act itself or making certain that the legislative history of the Act clearly exempts exclusively religious organizations, religious schools, and institutions from being defined as recipients of Federal financial assistance under the Act."

In a statement forwarding the SBC position to the Education and Labor Committee, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs executive director James M. Dunn declared: "There are constitutionally valid reasons why churches and those organizations integral to their religious mission may find it necessary, as a requirement of sincerely held religious beliefs, to discriminate against people in their hiring practices."

The statement further explained, "A denominational school must have the right to hire teachers in sympathy with the religious beliefs of the religious group which founded and supports the school. A church which for sincere theological reasons cannot ordain women to the priesthood may not be forced to do so by the state."

Baptist Peace Fellowship appoints first director

GRANVILLE, Ohio (BP)—Ken Sehested, director of education for Seeds, a hunger ministry of Oakhurst Church, Decatur, Ga., has been named the first director for Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

Sehested, 33, has worked with Seeds, a world hunger magazine and educational ministry of the Decatur church, for the six years. He was named to the fledgling Fellowship's post during a September meeting of the organization's executive committee.

The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America was created at a Louisville, Ky., meeting of Southern and American Baptists

in March 1984. The Fellowship's national office will be housed at Oakhurst Church.

The organization seeks to be a network and catalyst for peacemaking witness and ministry for Baptists of various traditions in North America, said Sehested. He added the Fellowship will help link together Baptists throughout North America who are concerned with peace and justice issues.

The Fellowship will address concerns of world militarism, said Sehested. He estimated world military expenditures at \$1 million a minute "while the 30 million Baptists worldwide spend less than \$200 a

minute on world missions."

Though the organization will encourage the formation of local peacemaking groups, the Fellowship in no way intends to compete with denominational peace and justice programs, said Sehested.

"The Baptist Peace Fellowship will encourage the support of and use of denominational peace and justice programs and materials," he explained. "Many of our denominational leaders would like to do more programming on peace and justice issues. We can help broaden and strengthen their constituencies."

Your state convention at work

Brotherhood RA luncheon

Saturday, Nov. 10, is the date of the 45th annual State-Wide Royal Ambassador Fellowship Luncheon and Happening. This big event will be held at Immanuel Church in Little Rock from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Guthrie

Royal Ambassador Week is Nov. 4-10. Plan to promote activities in your church marking the 76th anniversary of Royal Ambassadors.

All reservations should be made no later than Thursday, Nov. 8. Please send the reservation card and your check or money order to the Brotherhood Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. The cost for the luncheon is \$3.75 each.

We have an exciting program for the luncheon. A missions carnival will be held with booths set up with fun things to do and learn. Orville Jenkins, missionary to Kenya will be one of our featured speakers.

Please get your reservations in early. We're looking forward to seeing you all! — **Neal Guthrie, director.**

Missions New Work Emblem

Thank you for your great response in helping us choose a New Work or Church Extension emblem for Arkansas. Many people sent in their suggestions.



The emblem represents the purpose of "giving every person in Arkansas the opportunity in his setting and lifestyle,

to be involved in the ministry and fellowship of a New Testament body of believers."

Five samples were suggested. One other space was vacant so people could draw in their own design. The people of Arkansas are very creative. Space six proved to be the most popular.

The above emblem chosen by the Advisory Council pulls together the common elements from the No. 6 sketches. A majority had an outline of the state map, the home base. Another element was the cross pointing outward. The church is prominent, since we are depicting churches reaching out to start new churches. The Word of God is also portrayed, since we believe the Bible is the basis for a church's faith and practice. In new work, a church will be seeking to share the message of the Word with unchurched people.

We hope each time we see this emblem,

we will be inspired to active concern for the more than a million unchurched people in Arkansas. — **Floyd Tidsworth Jr., church extension director**

Christian Life Council Wes's bury it

I like the way Bishop Richard E. Wilke put it concerning the casino gambling issue. He is the brand-new bishop of Arkansas Methodist churches. At a recent meeting of Methodist pastors and laymen, he indicated that a mere defeat is not enough. The issue needs to be buried, which means an overwhelming defeat of casino efforts in Arkansas.



Parker

The citizens of Florida overwhelmingly defeated the casino issue in 1978. There is a possibility that the proponents of casinos will try again next year in Florida. Seven years will have passed since the defeat in '78.

In New Jersey, the first effort by the casino forces was defeated by a relatively narrow margin. That was a signal for them to soon try again. They did, and in 1976 casinos became a reality in their state. We in Arkansas must follow the example of Florida and not New Jersey.

Every vote possible is needed to do this needed interring of the casino issue in Arkansas. Will you make it a point to vote absentee if attending the Arkansas Baptist State Convention? If you will be voting at the polls, plan to take others with you. Amendment 66 must be defeated! Declare a positive No to casinos by your prayerful vote! — **Bob Parker, director**

Annuity/Stewardship A call to commitment

Planned Growth in Giving is a call to commitment. Everything related to the 1985 Planned Growth in Giving emphasis is rooted in calling Baptists to a deeper level of Christian commitment.

First, it is a call to commitment to individual Baptists. Church members will be asked to examine their stewardship and set 15-year vision goals reflecting their commitment.

Churches will be encouraged to express a growing commitment in their support of associational and world missions. Between 1985 and 2000, every church can respond with increased mission gifts.

The state convention faces a call to commitment by continuing to move toward a 50-50 division of Cooperative Program gifts. By A.D. 2000, the suggested goal has 50

percent of the Cooperative Program dollars going to world causes through the SBC.

As Baptists continue to move toward Bold Mission Thrust goals, the Southern Baptist Convention will share 50 percent of the Cooperative Program dollar with the Foreign Mission Board and 25 percent with the Home Mission Board.

Pastors and one lay person from each church should plan to attend one of the Planned Growth in Giving seminars scheduled for 1985.

Planned Growth in Giving, the call to commitment, touches every level of Baptist life. — **James A. Walker, director**

Evangelism Kent returns to seminary

Wes Kent has resigned from the Evangelism Department effective Nov. 2. Wes, Judy, Jodi and Sam will be moving to the Dallas/Fort Worth area in the near future.



Kent

Wes came to the Evangelism Department April 1, 1979, as pre-college associate. He led our youth in one of the strongest witnessing programs in the Southern Baptist Convention. His commitment was to

train a witnessing group for each junior and senior high school campus in Arkansas. In recent years, his responsibilities have been enlarged to include mass evangelism. He was also our TELL specialist and taught Lay Evangelism Schools and CWT seminars.

I want to express my deep appreciation for working with Wes for the past five years. He is a man of commitment, concern and courage. We wish for him the very best as he continues to seek God's will in education and ministry. — **Clarence Shell, director**

Wanted

Bi-vocational (part-time) music director to direct congregational singing and work with youth and adult choirs. Send resume and personal requirements to the Music Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 216, Perryville, AR 72126



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

**Pray for Arkansas'
Brazil partnership**

Family and Child Care
Child abuse, a reality

Child abuse is a shocking reality in our society today. It is hard for us to believe that anyone would harm a child; however, we are reminded daily by requests for help for the desperate needs of many children in our state.

In an adjoining state, a select committee on child abuse and neglect describes the following nine faces of child abuse:

Small babies who have been tortured and killed;

The parent who explodes under stress and "disciplines" a child too severely;

The teenager who flees from abuse in the home;

The young daughter who has become a surrogate wife to her father;

The young child befriended and seduced by the sexual predator;

The child lost for years in the foster care system, neither permitted to return home or be adopted;

The young child returned to a dangerous home situation by an uninformed judge;

The neglected child left alone for hours in a locked house or car, malnourished and eventually starved;

The abused child who becomes the abuser.

Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services is responding to these needs on a daily basis. We want to work to become even more responsive to these tender needs of children.

As Christians, we must reach out and minister; children deserve it, needs dictate it and, most important, Christ commanded it. — **Johnny G. Biggs, executive director**

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GOOD NEWS AMERICA



GOD LOVES YOU.

March 16 - April 6, 1986

Retired executive suggests approach to appointments

by Dan Martin

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—A retired Southern Baptist Convention executive has suggested current SBC President Charles Stanley name state convention presidents and Woman's Missionary Union leaders to the 1985 Committee on Committees.

Porter W. Routh, who retired in 1979 as executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, made the suggestion to Stanley in an open letter, also sent to editors of the 37 state Baptist newspapers.

The power to appoint the 52 members of the Committee on Committees is one of the few real powers possessed by a president of the 14.1 million member Southern Baptist Convention. The appointive power, however, has been at the center of much of the controversy which has rocked the denomination during the past five years.

In his open letter to Stanley, Routh pointed out Stanley had "made a plea for the 'love principle'" to become paramount in the SBC. Routh added Stanley had defined the "love principle" as "the willingness to accept others with whom you might not agree and who might not accept you."

Stanley made the plea during an address to the SBC Executive Committee in its September meeting. The address ended with Stanley calling members of the committee, as well as about 250 other denominational

leaders to their knees in prayer.

Routh said in the letter he had spent a sleepless night after the event: "I kept asking myself what I, as a layman with nearly a half century of experience in Southern Baptist life, could do to help a young president of the Southern Baptist Convention, with limited denominational experience, make this dream of 'the love principle' a reality..."

The open letter, he said, is a response to the concern and desire to help. Routh said appointment of the state convention presidents and WMU state leaders would be a "practical step in the application of the 'love principle'."

He cited seven reasons the state leadership should be named. Included were the rationale they represent a larger constituency than any others in SBC life, that they have been elected in an open election and "do not represent a political agenda" and that they have "demonstrated a dedication to evangelism and missions" and support of the SBC Cooperative Program.

Routh said Stanley's selection of state convention and state WMU presidents for the Committee on Committees "would demonstrate that you are really not the tool of a 'political machine' and that your plea... was not just a clumsy effort to manipulate

a crowd but was a genuine effort to bring about peace and reconciliation."

In the letter, Routh said he had made a similar suggestion to Bailey E. Smith in 1980. Smith, pastor of First Southern Church of Del City, Okla., was SBC president 1979-80. That suggestion, however, was only to appoint state convention presidents.

Routh said Smith agreed to the suggestion initially and did appoint a few state presidents during his two terms, but did not follow Routh's suggestion to include them all.

Asked for a response, Smith said he thought Routh's idea "was good when I first heard it, but after I had checked it out, it didn't seem as good as it was at first."

He added he checked the people out with denominational leaders in the state, and said "some of them would not recommend the state convention presidents as potential members of the Committee on Committees."

According to Fred Powell, associate pastor at First Church, Atlanta, Stanley will have no response to the suggestion "at this time."

Powell said Stanley told Baptist journalists he planned to consult with state convention presidents and executive directors, "and others" prior to making his appointments to the important committee.

Dan Martin is news editor for Baptist Press.

Robison leaves Eules congregation for new satellite ministry

by Toby Druin

EULESS, Texas (BP)—Chafing under what he describes as constant discussion of his ministry by the staff and made to feel "I must sit there and be quiet or I might be misunderstood," evangelist James Robison said he will move his membership from First Church, Eules, Texas, to Lake Country Church, Fort Worth, where he will be involved in a new satellite ministry of the church planned for northeast Tarrant County.

The evangelist, whose ministry has shifted the last two years to an increased emphasis on healing, deliverance from demons and spiritual gifts, told the *Texas Baptist Standard*, he would join the Lake Country Church sometime in October. The new ministry was to begin Oct. 14 in a Hurst school building.

Lake Country Church, also a Southern Baptist congregation, is led by pastor Jim Hylton, with whom Robison is now associated, along with Dudley Hall, in a seminar ministry. Hall also will join the new satellite church, Robison said.

Robison's status in the Eules church has been the subject of much discussion over the past two years as his ministry has taken on characteristics not traditional by Southern Baptist standards. During much of that time his pastor, James T. Draper Jr., was president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Draper told the *Standard* he was not surprised by the news of Robison's plan to leave

the church. He acknowledged he had refused Robison permission to hold one of his seminars in the church and that they had extensive discussions over the last three weeks about the possibility he would move.

"I think it will be a good thing," Draper said, noting some of his members may follow Robison. "Those who want that kind of option (Robison's emphases) will have it. I think it will give people a place to go and those who have been unhappy in the fellowship of our churches will stop being unhappy and go somewhere where they can be happy."

Draper said he didn't expect to lose many members, but added it could be "50 to several hundred." The Eules church has a membership of about 7,000 and averages more than 2,500 in Sunday school.

The Eules pastor said, "I just told James I cannot support him anymore or stand with him, particularly on his approach to the condemnation of local churches and pastors."

During his presidency, Draper advocated a set of bedrock beliefs to determine who is a Southern Baptist. Regarding Robison and his charismatic emphases, the former SBC president said that while the evangelist doctrinally "would not be that different from most of us," his emphases now are "not typically Southern Baptist."

Robison said he resents any attempt to "pull creedalism on me" and resents con-

tentions that Southern Baptists do not believe in miracles today, that spiritual gifts do not apply as they did in New Testament times or that anyone who speaks in tongues has been "satanically deceived."

Robison said Hylton will be pastor of the new Lake Country satellite ministry and Hall will be "pastor/teacher."

"All I want to be is an evangelist and a member of the church, and I'll be free to minister in the church," Robison said.

He said Draper was always kind to him but "I couldn't do anything at First Church, Eules. I guess they didn't know what to do with me."

Robison also denied being against the local church as had been charged. "I am 100 percent behind the local church," he said. "If I'm going to leave one local church and go to another local church and every Sunday work with two or three local churches, how can I be accused of being against the local church?"

Robison said he's never spoken in tongues but added, "I believe I can. I believe any believer can. The Scripture indicates that clearly. It also teaches it is not something you push on somebody. It's the working spirit."

Toby Druin is associate editor of the *Texas Baptist Standard*.

State students gather to fellowship, grow and take care of business

Photo / George Sims



ABN photos / Miffie Gill



The 1984 state Baptist Student Union Convention met Oct. 5-7 at Markham Street Church in Little Rock, and part of their business action was the adoption of a resolution opposing casino gambling in the state and urging the defeat of Amendment 66. In the resolution, they expressed concern for gambling's effects of increasing crime, contributing to the breakdown of family life and being counterproductive to bringing about God's kingdom on earth. Speakers and conference leaders included Bruce and LaWanna McIver of Wilshire Church in Dallas; Don Moore, Arkansas Baptist State Convention executive secretary; and Faye Burgess, musician from Nashville, Tenn. The students also adopted combined goals for summer missions and world hunger relief totaling more than \$50,000 and selected 43 positions for 1985 summer missionaries.

Plan now to help provide scholarships for minister training

Dear Arkansas Baptist Pastor:

Because expenditures for ministerial scholarships are now exceeding the annual amount provided in the Convention budget, the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention will recommend to the Convention in November that churches having ministerial students in Ouachita Baptist University and Southern Baptist College pay the first \$100 toward the \$350 scholarship/loan provided by the Convention each semester. Similarly, the church would be asked to pay the first \$50 toward the \$175 scholarship/loan provided for the wife of a ministerial student. It is recommended to become effective January 1.

Since many churches will have adopted their budget prior to convention time, we are writing this joint letter to alert churches that have or will have ministerial students in these institutions to this new development.

The cost to the churches will be \$200 per year for each student enrolled in one of these institutions in preparation for a preaching ministry, and we hope you will be able to incorporate in your budget this vital program in Christian education for ministerial students.

Yours in Christian Service,

Daniel R. Grant

Daniel R. Grant, President
Ouachita Baptist University



D. Jack Nicholas, President
Southern Baptist College

International

The Holy Spirit's temple

by Dennis Smith, First Church, Camden

Basic passages: I Corinthians 6:12-20; Ephesians 5:15-20

Focal passages: I Corinthians 6:13-15, 19-20; Ephesians 5:15-18

Central truth: The Christian's body must be pure, since it is the home of the Holy Spirit.

These passages have rightly been used over the years to argue against every excess of human life. Men think they are free and able to do anything that pleases. Even Christians, at times, believe that anything they want to do to themselves, as long as they do not hurt anybody else, is acceptable. Jesus will, of course, forgive them. Paul, however, teaches a different truth. Christians are responsible for their bodies because they are the home of the Holy Spirit. The power of the resurrection resides in the body of every Christian.

The implications of this are immense. Whatever is done with our bodies or to our bodies is done to the Holy Spirit. He wants us to keep healthy and to resist the excesses of food, over-sexuality and chemical additives. The days we live in are evil, and we must have and use wisdom. The Lord's will is for the body to be pure, and wisdom is necessary for us to keep ourselves from excess and from sinning against the Spirit.

We have all become more conscious of our health lately, as many of us take to the street to jog, go to the health club to work out or try the latest diet to shed a few unwanted pounds. We need to provide a pure home for the Spirit. Damaging drugs, alcohol and tobacco have no place in the body of a Christian. The Bible is very clear on that. We are to be filled by the Spirit and live as Jesus lived. This will tell the world that we take our Christianity seriously and our health as a matter of our belief.

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Life and Work

We love the lost

by Billy White, Second Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Romans 9-10; Luke 6:17-38
Focal passage: Romans 9:1-3; 10:1; 9-17

Central truth: Earnest concern for the salvation of the unsaved is the Christian motivation for reaching them.

It is a sobering fact to realize that there are at least 250,000 more unredeemed people in the world today than there were yesterday. I've heard it said that if all the unsaved of our world lined up 30 inches apart, single file, the line would circle the globe not merely once or twice, but 30 times! And the line grows by 30 miles a day. How can we reach them for Christ? Our focal passage suggests that earnest concern for their salvation is the place to begin. We must love the lost. Paul demonstrated his love for an unredeemed Israel in three realms.

First, genuine concern is evidenced in the way that Paul cares (9:23). These verses are loaded with the fervor of sincere emotion. Paul cares so much he hurts! He has "great sorrow" and "consuming grief" over Israel's rejection of Christ. The coupling of these two expressions testify to an experience of acute anguish. He is willing even to be accused (anathema), appointed to destruction, if by so doing Israel could be saved. If we truly desire to see our lost friends reached, we must first learn to care about them, to the point of feeling for them.

Second, Paul expresses his love for the lost in the words of his prayer (10:1). If our concern for the unsaved does not move us to pray, it is shallow indeed. Conversely, genuine concern will always find effective expression through earnest prayer. When we truly love the lost, we make their salvation a top priority on the agenda of our praying.

Finally, Paul's concern is seen in the fact that he shares (10:9ff). He is personally involved. Note four items concerning his sharing. 1) The message (vv. 9-10): Justification by grace through profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord! 2) The recipients (vv. 11-13): Whosoever will may come! 3) The need for a messenger (vv. 14-15): How will they know if we don't go? 4) The response of the hearers (vv. 16-17). Though Paul was involved in sharing the good news, he realized the freedom of individuals to refuse the message.

We should remember, it is not our duty to convert the lost but to love them. God will save as we express Kingdom love by the way that we care, by interceding in prayer and by the message we share.

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Bible Book

Isaiah's message

by Joe Statton, Central Church, Magnolia

Basic passage: Isaiah 1:1 to 6:13

Focal passage: Isaiah 1:16-20; 6:1-9, 11

Central truth: Acknowledgement of one's sinfulness, in contrast to God's holiness, provides the foundation for a God-man relationship which can produce fruit and joy.

The world of Isaiah's day is not so much different than ours today. We want to be our own god until health, success and fortune escape our grasp. The sad part is we often do not realize how far we are from our protector until tragedy strikes.

Isaiah was called of God to warn of an approaching judgment to a people whose ears were deafened and eyes blinded by the sin of self-centeredness and human rebellion. The catalogue of sins is all too familiar: turning their backs on God (1:4); oppression and injustice (1:17,23); worship of things made by man (2:8); alcoholism and self-indulgence (5:11-12,22).

To top it all off, the people of God offered perfunctory worship activities which were hollow and ritualistic, in hopes that God would turn his righteous eyes in the other direction.

As you read the account of God's response to such behavior, and his call of Isaiah the prophet, several implications become evident.

1. God will not acknowledge our acts of worship when sin is being harbored. The giving of a yielded life is far more precious to God than lip-service born of religious habit.

2. God's judgment of human rebellion and willful disobedience is most often realized in the withdrawal of his divine protection and care from his children. Then the evil desires of their hearts are the very source of their personal destruction. God will not force man to love and obey him. He always allows man the privilege of self-will and, yes, even personal harm. Thankfully, forgiveness and reconciliation are his ultimate goal.

3. God stands anxious for man to recognize his true holiness, his separateness from evil and his loving nature toward man.

Isaiah saw God in his true holiness and became keenly aware of his sinful nature and utter hopelessness. We can undergo the same kind of transformation. Through the forgiving mercy of God in Jesus Christ, we have been forgiven. We have been redeemed. We have been set apart and sent forth to tell the Good News.

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Crucial role of state papers cited by Elder

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—A recent workshop with Southern Baptist state paper editors strengthened the conviction of the president of the Sunday School Board that state papers play a "dramatically significant" role in denominational life.

BSSB President Lloyd Elder said he convened the two-day workshop to share information about board programs as well as to conduct problem-solving sessions on communications strategies and revitalization of the denomination.

Calling the 25 state editors who attended "a group of tough-minded people," Elder said, "I see the state papers as crucial to the health of the denomination."

Elder said he believes the Southern Baptist Convention "is in a time of maturity when we must face the issues of uniqueness and change. The great crisis facing the denomination is primarily a crisis of change."

He called for a communication strategy to

help Southern Baptists be aware of current changes and help church members toward an increased knowledge of SBC heritage.

"Some things in the Southern Baptist Convention must not change," Elder told the editors. "Other things ought to change. One of the greatest avenues for denominational renewal is communication. A role of communicators is to guide the denomination toward a renewed vitality by sharing information and trust."

W.C. Fields, associate executive secretary for public relations, SBC Executive Committee, said, "Communication does not always create unity, but good communication is essential to finding a basis for unity."

Fields said the role of the Sunday School Board should include continuous efforts to maintain credibility and openness. He urged board officials to seek a conscious partnership with state papers and support of the ministry of state papers.

BJCPA panel praises staff for role in equal access

WASHINGTON (BP)—The executive committee of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has commended its Washington staff for its role in the recent passage of the equal access law and for helping write guidelines for its implementation.

The 14-member executive committee, here for its annual October meeting, also praised the leading roles played by congressional sponsors of the measure guaranteeing secondary school students who wish to meet for religious purposes the same access to school facilities enjoyed by other non-academic, extracurricular student groups. The full BJCPA conducts its annual meeting in March.

Singled out for praise were U.S. Senator Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., and U.S. Represent-

tatives Don Bonker, D-Wash., and the late Carl D. Perkins, D-Ky. Hatfield and Bonker were the original sponsors of the equal access bill, while Perkins, as chairman of the powerful Education and Labor Committee, pushed the measure through the House.

The legislation passed the Senate, 88-11, and the House, 337-77, and was signed into law by President Reagan in August.

The BJCPA statement also commended pastors, editors and other denominational workers who publicized and promoted the bill and called on Baptist conventions and conferences who participate in the work of the Baptist Joint Committee to assist in informing Baptists of the practical consequences of the new law by distributing the guidelines for its implementation.

Jones suggests SBC manifesto on equality

CHATTAHOOGA, Tenn. (BP)—An Atlanta Baptist pastor proposed a Southern Baptist Convention "Manifesto on Equality" to counteract a resolution adopted by the SBC last June which he claimed "denigrated every woman on the planet."

Peter Rhea Jones, pastor of First Church, Decatur, Ga., suggested the manifesto during an address to about 85 Baptists attending a seminar at First Church, Chattanooga, sponsored by an group calling itself "Christians on Pilgrimage," organized following the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Kansas City, Mo., last June.

Jones and three other speakers urged participants to organize effectively and go to the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas prepared to voice their views on the role of women in the church and convention.

Although the group did not draft a proposed resolution, seminar participants gave

Jones' proposal for a "Manifesto on Equality" a standing ovation and discussed the process for presenting their views when the SBC meets next year in Dallas.

Jones said such a "Manifesto on Equality" should be based on the writings of the Apostle Paul, who said in Galatians 3:28 that "there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Jones compared the current debate concerning the role of women in the Southern Baptist Convention to the debate on slavery before and after the Civil War. There were hundreds of Southern Baptist pastors who in those days took specific verses in the Bible out of context and used them to argue that God approves of slavery, Jones said. "If they had turned to Galatians 3:28, things might have been different."