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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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No 'Temptation'!

Arkansas Baptist

August 11, 1988

NEWSMAGAZINE



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

*'Friends
Forever'*

In This Issue

Cover Story



ABN photo / Mark Kelly

'Friends Forever' 11

Senior high youth at Music Arkansas performed a contemporary musical which deals with relationships, both with others and with Jesus Christ.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

Koreans Have Successful Trip

by Eric Miller
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—A group of 16 Korean Baptists from Texas prepared for a mission trip to a Central American country like they were training for a marathon.

And their preparation paid off. The Koreans led 130 people to faith in Christ during two weeks of preaching, singing and sharing testimonies in prisons, hospitals, churches and at sports activities in Belize.

The team of young adults from Korean First Baptist Church in Dallas met three hours every Sunday afternoon for seven weeks to prepare for the June trip, said Tim Hyun-Mo Lee, education minister at the church.

The Dallas group prepared for their trip by sharing Christian testimonies and examining ways of telling people about Christ, using gospel tracts, following up with new believers and conducting outdoor evangelistic meetings.

A half-hour prayer meeting followed each training session, Lee said. Church

members had gathered on Friday nights for seven weeks, praying about the proposed trip, before the team applied or had personal interviews. A commissioning service and a day of fasting and prayer preceded the trip.

Two hours after their plane landed, the team hit the streets. Surrounded by downtown beer halls, the team sang, introduced each other, did tricks with ropes, gave testimonies, performed a skit and preached. Ten from that audience made professions of faith in Christ, Lee said.

The Koreans happened upon students playing basketball at Belize Technical College and spotted a witnessing opportunity. They lost the game but won several of their opponents to Christ through testimonies and one-on-one witnessing. Two days of basketball and volleyball netted 10 new believers.

Before the team left, about 20 of the 130 new believers enrolled in churches.

Jerry DeOliveira, ethnic relations consultant for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board who worked with the group in making trip arrangements, said he was impressed with their preparation. He believes their success was due to prayer.

GOOD NEWS!

Seizing Life's Supreme Purpose

Philippians 3:12-16

Paul expressed life's supreme purpose as laying "hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus" (v. 12, ASV). Seizing that purpose requires:

A dissatisfaction with the present (v. 12)—Though the tally of Paul's accomplishments grew daily—churches he had established, epistles he had written, cities he had visited, lives he had influenced—he never felt that he had fully "laid hold" of Christ's purpose. Self-dissatisfaction lies at the root of man's noblest achievement. It drives the teacher, the artist, the statesman, and the Christian to ever greater heights of achievement.

A detachment from the past (v. 13)—Some things are surely worth remembering—the sacrifices of our forebears, the value of freedom, the price of salvation, the blessings of love and friendship. But others things should just as surely be forgotten: past accomplishments which stand in the way of future achievements, past differences and disagreements which obstruct progress, past defeats and disappointments which

stifle an adventurous spirit. Christians must detach themselves from a past which limits or destroys.

A dedication to the future (vv. 13-14)—Note the challenge Paul felt at the thought that Christ seized him on the Damascus Road to fulfill a purpose, a dream, a vision. He determined to seize that purpose in return and bring it to fruition. Paul's relationship to God was not unlike that of Israel standing at Jordan across from the Promised Land. The land was legally theirs the moment God uttered the promise, but it became theirs experientially only when they personally possessed it.

Note the concentration of all of Paul's powers on the task before him. He described himself as "stretching forward to the things which are before" (v. 13, ASV). This is a picture of a runner racing hard for the finish line with his eyes on the goal and every fiber of his body straining to maximize its potential.

Note Paul's single-minded commitment—"this one thing I do" (v. 13). If one is to seize the purpose for which Christ seized him, total commitment is necessary.

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Making Choices

J. EVERETT SNEED

In many instances, it is easy for a Christian to make the right decision. The Bible clearly instructs us not to kill, steal or cheat. Yet, there are occasions in which there is no clear instruction in the Scripture. The Christian is always obligated to do that which is in keeping with God's will. But how can one know the right thing to do when there is no direct command in the Scripture? The Bible does lay down certain principles to be applied in the day-by-day decision making process.

First, a Christian should be directly involved in those things which will glorify God. Christians are to reflect God to the world. The daily activities and life-style of Christians will either enhance or detract from the cause of Christ.

Even good things can be misused so that they fail to glorify God. For example, Christians are repeatedly instructed to pray. But even prayer can be used in a way as to exalt self, not God.

Jesus told of two men who went to the Temple to pray. One was a religious man (a Pharisee), and the other was a hated tax collector (a publican). The religious man thanked God that he was better than others, particularly the tax collector. The publican prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Lk. 18:13).

Jesus said the tax collector went away justified while the religious man was condemned. Self-centeredness, self-righteousness and self-exaltation are always wrong for a Christian. When our motives are wrong, our choices are likely to be wrong.

Second, a Christian should not be involved in things which will cause others to stumble. Paul gave us a principle as he said, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend" (1 Co. 8:13).

In Corinth there were numerous Christians who previously had been involved in idol worship. The worship of idols included the use of burnt offerings. The meat left from the offerings, being of the best quality, was sold at the market at a reduced price. There was nothing morally wrong with eating such meat. Yet Paul said that, if his eating of this meat would cause his fellow Christian to sin, he would refrain from eating it. Some things may not be wrong in and of themselves, but for the sake of others, it may be necessary to



refrain from them.

Third, a Christian should not be involved in things which will harm his body or his mind. Paul said, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Co. 3:16).

God created our bodies, and we are responsible to him for proper care of them. This means we are not to take anything into our bodies which will harm them. It also means that we are to obtain proper rest and recreation. One can be so over-involved in doing good things that he sins by overworking his body.

We are responsible for the proper care of our minds. We are to study those things which will build up our minds. Essentially, a person is his native ability plus all the things with which he has contact. If we fill our minds with that which is base or evil,

it will become a part of us.

Finally, a Christian should not be involved in things which will promote evil. Throughout the Scripture, we are instructed to "abhor that which is evil." This, in some instances, is the most difficult of the principles to be used in determining what is right because, often, evil masquerades as righteousness.

In recent days it has come to light that the unsavory activities of TV personalities and base religious sects have received a great deal of money from Christian people under false pretense. The list is long and includes such people as Jim Jones, Jimmy Swaggart, Oral Roberts, Jim Bakker and others. The question arises, "How can Christians protect themselves against religious hucksters?" Certainly Christians should not withdraw their support from God-called pastors, religious leaders, and evangelists. Protection comes by an individual giving his money where there is accountability. When money is given to a local Baptist church, the congregation determines its use. There is always accountability for money spent on the denominational level.

The New Testament carefully lays down guidelines regarding the kinds of individuals to be set apart for leadership in Christian vocational ministry. If a church learns that it has set aside a scoundrel as a Christian worker, the individual should be dealt with.

Life is made up of choices. Even what appears, at the time, to be a small decision may have far reaching effects. It is essential that a Christian utilize practical Biblical principles under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, so that he can make the right decisions.

Arkansas Baptist NEWSMAGAZINE

VOLUME 87 NUMBER 29

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know

Another era is coming to a close. It seems much of the past five and one-half years has been spent in finding persons to replace those retiring. This is where I am with the retirement this month of Robert U. Ferguson.



Eighteen years ago he came to Arkansas to work with us and the three National Baptist Conventions. Though working behind the scenes, a fair evaluation of his ministry would find that God has used him to do a monumental work. Fair and respectful in all of his relationships, Dr. Ferguson has become a most significant force in the life of our conventions. He is appreciated, even revered, by the black Baptist leadership.

I regret that his commitment and work with the black convention and churches has not permitted him to be known by and involved with more people in our ABCS churches. His pleasant disposition and positive spirit have been matched with ability and diligence. The encouragement and assistance Dr. Ferguson has provided cannot be calculated. Scores of pastors in the National Baptist Convention owe their educational and professional growth to the work of Dr. Ferguson. Thousands of children and youth have been blessed by the camps he has helped them conduct each year. Many have become Christians through this ministry at Camp Paron. Those he has been able to help with scholarships to colleges and seminaries would number in the hundreds. Church leaders by the thousands have better serving skills because of training institutes he has inspired. Not the least of his influence has been helping the pastors, church members and denominational leaders of all of our churches come to love and appreciate each other. The area fellowship meetings, State Evangelism Conferences and state-wide joint WMU Prayer Rallies have been beautiful expressions of our spiritual bond in Christ.

Our thanks, Dr. Ferguson and Mrs. Ferguson, for investing so much so effectively in all of us. You have been loyal and effective servants of Jesus Christ and Arkansas Baptists.

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

Letters to the Editor

Our Father's Business

Let me share with you a lesson taught me by a newspaper reporter at the Baptist Youth World Conference in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1963. I was serving as a press representative of the Baptist World Alliance. In accented English, this writer for a French language publication asked, "What is a Baptist?"

I told her that we were a religious people with congregations in 140 nations, and that our distinctives include the practice of believer's baptism, as opposed to infant baptism, and a doctrine of the priesthood of believers with individuals having direct access to God without the intervention of a magistrate, parent, or priest.

"Oh, you do not understand," she interrupted me, "What I want to know is, do you believe that Jesus was the son of God?" I was humbled. Here we were in the Middle East where Islam, Judaism, and Christianity shared the stage—and in my answer I had majored on minors rather than declaring first and foremost that "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Ph. 2:11).

I am convinced that in our debates these last several years, Southern Baptists have

been similarly majoring on minors. We have bickered on degrees of bibliolatry, when to my knowledge no one of us questions that the Bible is the Word of God.

And, tragically, in this decade of distraction, we appear to have largely forgotten the message of song we learned as children, "Let others see Jesus in you." Are we similarly ignoring the Scripture in which Jesus admonishes, "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another (Jn. 13:35)?"

The Bible is unmistakably clear. Jesus commissioned us to "Go... teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Mt. 28:19-20).

It is imperative that we get back to work on our Father's business.—C.E. Bryant, Spartanburg, S.C.

[Editor's note: C.E. Bryant was editor of the Arkansas Baptist from 1943 to 1947.]

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BOB PARKER

Today's Issues

Family Resemblance

Christina, the six-year-old daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, succeeded him on the throne after his death in 1648 during the Thirty Years War in Europe. Many doubted the wisdom of one so young succeeding him. The nation's chancellor called attention to how she looked like her late father. "Look at her nose, her eyes, her chin! I see in the countenance of this child the features of the great Gustavus. She is the child of our king!" Then, from everywhere, there rang the proclamation, "Christina, Queen of Sweden."

The issue and illustration for today is this: As Christians, we are children of the King of Kings. When the world observes our moral and spiritual character, do they see a likeness to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Such resemblance will do much in

dealing with some of the problem areas in Arkansas and the U.S. such as drugs and growing racism. We even need such Christ-like resemblances in dealing with others in our immediate families, in our local churches, and our beloved Southern Baptist Convention.

Centuries ago, the followers of the recently crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ were for the first time called "Christians" at Antioch in Pisidia (Ac. 11:26). The most likely explanation is that they reflected Jesus in their everyday living. Is the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control (Ga. 5:22-23) seen in you and me as children of the living King Jesus?

Robert Parker is director of the Christian Life Council.



Food & Fellowship

Children in the Kitchen

VIRGINIA KIRK & JANE PURTLE



Would you like your children or grandchildren to eat better and accept the food served them more gracefully and happily?

Then invite them into your kitchen and let them participate in planning menus and preparing food. Giving boys and girls an opportunity to work in the kitchen takes a little more time and a lot of patience, but it pays big dividends in their eating habits and in their attitudes toward food.

The youngest children ask, "Can I help?" Don't ever turn down an offer, even from a five year old, and give them something to do besides setting the table. Once a pattern of participation is established, you can ask for help on a regular basis.

Take time to teach kitchen skills and information—how to use a cutting board, how to read a recipe, the tools used in cooking. Teach while actually preparing some food—baking cookies, cutting up carrots, or stirring a cheese sauce.

Don't encourage them to make only desserts and snack foods. Learning to bake a cake and fix a pizza is good; but also ask children to cut vegetables, knead bread, and make meatballs. They will learn a number of skills and may discover some new food that please their palates.

Buy your child a cookbook or two of his own. Children need simple recipes in a book that is well-formatted and illustrated. Using this kind of cookbook, a child can plan a full menu and follow through step-by-step, using the guidelines. Adult cookbooks and recipes don't explain many simple facts and procedures a child needs. Having children work from their own cookbook will save you a lot of explanation time and some frustration. It will also enable the child to feel independent.

Kids we know enjoy helping with breakfast. Reluctant breakfast eaters who join the kitchen crew may be enticed into eating also. Biscuits, pancakes, muffins, scrambled eggs, french toast—all are easy and fun for kids to do. We are including simple instructions for biscuits and french toast. Even young children can make these dishes, assisted by an adult.

Biscuits (about 10)

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Grease a 9-inch round metal pan. Measure into a medium sized bowl:

2 cups flour
3 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon sugar
½ teaspoon salt

Add ½ cup shortening and work it into the flour mixture with the tips of your fingers. This is a little messy but fun! When the mixture looks like fine meal, add ½ cup milk. Stir with a fork until thoroughly mixed. Place dough on a countertop or breadboard on which you have sprinkled about ¼ cup flour. Sprinkle a little more on top. Fold the dough over and smooth it into a ball. Pat or roll it into a circle of 8-10 inches. Using biscuit cutter or the rim of a glass, cut 8 or 9 biscuits. Take the scraps and make another biscuit or two with your fingers. Place biscuits in pan and cook for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown.

French toast

With a hand beater, beat 2 eggs in a medium sized bowl. Add ½ cup milk, 1 teaspoon sugar and ¼ teaspoon salt. Beat again. Cut 6 slices of bread (wheat is good) in half.

Heat a frying pan or griddle on medium high heat. Spread it with one tablespoon oil or margarine. Spear bread on fork and dip each half slice into egg mixture (or do this with your fingers). Be sure both sides are covered. Place on hot griddle. Brown on both sides, turning with pancake turner. Serve hot with syrup or jelly. Or sprinkle with powdered sugar.

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

BEN EARLY

Early Reflections



Something Beautiful

Spring was breaking forth with the newness of life. Beautiful new green growth began covering the brown-looking lawns. Buds burst forth on the barren trees. It was a time to think of re-birth. However, each evening as I walked home from work, my eyes couldn't help but notice an ugly spot on a drainage ditch bank near my home.

The spot was covered with trash and a dead limb hung over the barren area. The entire spot seemed to be untouched by the newness that came with spring.

At first I cleaned up the spot, but it continued to be an eyesore. The dirt looked black and desolate. I resented the ugliness I saw there. This one spot seemed to overshadow all the beauty around it.

Then one day I noticed small patches of green pushing their way through the crusty black sod.

Each day I watched closer as the entire barren spot seemed to begin catching the joy of spring. I watched the plants grow strong, then bud, and finally beautiful yellow daffodils sprang forth with an added burst of beauty.

I recalled my own life when, at 18 years of age, Christ forgave me, taking away the ugliness of sin and changing my life into something beautiful for him.

The Scriptures teach about Jesus having no comeliness of form that we should desire him, and as I look at the cross I want to turn away because of the ugliness I see there. Yet God takes a bloodstained, crudely-made cross and turns it into a beautiful reminder of his love for each of us. As Christ died on the cross, death turned to life eternal.

Perhaps because of the ugliness and emptiness we once knew, we can now better appreciate, enjoy and know the beauty of a newness of life.

This spring I learned a lesson that will never be forgotten as I watched God's handiwork on a barren bank of a drainage ditch. Each day I recall that lesson as I meet individuals in every walk of life, knowing that God also wants to make something beautiful of their lives, as he has done with mine.

Ben Early is director of public relations for Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge.

Clown!

Message Is Both Serious And Entertaining

by Terri Lackey
Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE—Clowns and laughter might seem synonymous, but there also is a serious side to clowning which carries with it a theological base, a longtime clown minister said.

"There is a biblical and theological basis which gives us permission to use clowning in church," Hollice Turnbow, a clown minister and Shepherdstown, W.Va., resident, told a group attending a recent seminar on clowning and ministry sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Turnbow, who is retired from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and a member of Charlestown Church in Shepherdstown, said, "A clown is a servant for Christ. He is not proud; he is a humble being." He noted that this is in line with Christ's command that Christians be humble servants.

Turnbow said he believes even the make-up clowns use carries a theological basis.

"When you cover your normal facial features with the white make-up, you are dying to self. And when you paint your face with new lines, you are bringing back new life.

"When you become a Christian, you die to your old self and come alive anew," Turnbow added.

While clowning in church can be serious business, it can also lighten the mood and "bring a little levity into the worship experience," Turnbow said.

But approaching clowning strictly from a "gimmick point of view" is not using the art to its fullest capacities, he added.

Turnbow said clown ministry has come of age and is now considered "a valid way to worship and serve Christ."

"It is meant to entertain, but it is also meant to motivate and articulate a Christian philosophy," he said.

"In the medieval age, fools or jesters were used for the purpose of reminding a king that he was human after all," he said. "They were also around to lift a burden and make the king think about something different than his problems."

Christian clowns can serve the same purposes in a worship service by reminding those who need it they are human and by lifting the spirits of others, Turnbow said.



Clowning can provoke deep reflection, as well as offer light-hearted entertainment.



IMPACT 88 —WMU Leadership Training

Aug. 29 - Sept. 1: Magnolia, Fordyce, Hot Springs
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Headed For A New Home

ARKADELPHIA—Mark Baber, director of religious activities and the Baptist Student Union at Ouachita Baptist University, took 40 OBU students and sponsors to South Africa on a mission trip last May. But he knew in two weeks he'd return home to Arkadelphia. In November, Baber will take his wife and three sons to South Africa to establish a new home as missionary appointees of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Becoming a missionary was "something in the back of my mind since I was in seminary," Baber said. "Certainly, for the last decade, I've always thought about it."

Baber has served on the staff of OBU for the past four years, and that experience has provided training for his assignment as a student worker in South Africa. His responsibilities will include establishing Baptist Student Unions at three universities, as well as working with local Baptist churches in developing their ministries to students. As far as Baptist student work in South Africa is concerned, Baber commented, "I'm the pioneer."

Baber's wife, Janie, has been given the assignment of church and home, assisting in the student ministry as time allows. Baber commented since the boys will be in school and are old enough to take care of themselves more, Janie plans to become involved in Mark's work, as well as putting her own skills to work. "Each church lacks a news person that is a correspondent with the Foreign Mission Board that will keep information flowing," Baber said. "With a degree in journalism, Janie will have a chance to really use her academic training."

The Babers began the process of applying for missionary appointment in March of 1986. Although they could have been appointed a year ago, they waited for the job they felt called to do. They received



The Baber family

assignment descriptions for positions available. When Baber read about the position as a student worker in South Africa, "I got back with the Foreign Mission Board and said 'This sounds like me.'"

It was a family decision. Hours have been spent praying and planning for the move, not only by Mark and Janie, but also by their three sons, Andy, nine; Barrett, eight; and Stuart, four. "At first my boys said, 'No way, I can't leave my toys,' but now they are very excited about it and have come to realize the importance and seriousness of what we are about to do," Baber said.

The Babers were commissioned as foreign missionaries at the Southern Baptist Convention held recently in San Antonio. "The boys wanted to know when

they were supposed to go up on stage and when I told them they weren't going to be on stage with us, they replied, 'But we're missionaries, too.'" Baber said one positive aspect of moving his family to South Africa is that his children will be able to live at home and attend school in Durban. They will have English-speaking teachers, and as part of their curriculum, they will learn a native African language.

The decision to leave the security of Arkadelphia was not an easy one, Baber admits. "Certainly it was hard to come to grips and say this is something I'm going to quit talking about doing, and do it." But anxieties such as leaving home and family, moving your family, etc., had to be dealt with. "When you consider the fact this is something God is really calling us to, these anxieties are not non-issues, but something I can deal with," Baber said.

Going to South Africa and becoming acquainted with other missionaries and families from the region has helped in making the mental adjustment. "You have to stop and realize people do go to foreign places and make it," Baber said. "You try to rationalize there is a whole host of people who have done it before you and have overcome the obstacles. It helps that I've seen where other missionaries live, and yes, they do have grocery stores where you can go and buy food. They do live normal, happy lives."

The Babers will leave Arkadelphia in August to attend orientation at the Mission Learning Center in Rockville, Va., just outside Richmond, and expect to be on the mission field in November.

Then it will be time to start a new life in a strange new world. But because of the trip in May, it will be a country that Baber will not have just read about and seen pictures of in a book. "When I fly 27 hours with my family to an area of 3 to 5 million people, there will be somebody there to meet me that is a familiar face," Baber said. "And that means a lot."

Attention: Ministers of Music!

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LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

David Hatfield began serving July 24 as pastor of Woodland Heights Church, Conway, moving there from Oklahoma City where he was served for six years as pastor of Southwood Church. He is a graduate of Central State University, Edmond, Okla., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Cheryl, have two children, Laine, 15, and Leigh, seven.



Eula Iva Dresbach of Wilson, the mother of John Dresbach, minister of music and youth at Osceola First Church, died July 23 at age 82. She was a member of First Church, Wilson. Other survivors include a son, J.C. Dresbach Jr. of Flint, Mich.; three daughters, Frances Gray of Blytheville, Faye Rogers of Wilson, and Jane Barnes of Turle; one sister, Effie Barton of Midwest City, Okla.; 14 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Patty Huston was recognized July 24 by Rosedale Church in Little Rock, receiving a certificate for nine years of perfect attendance in Sunday School, Church Training, and morning and evening worship services.

Max Deaton of Little Rock began serving July 31 as pastor of Meadowbrook Church in Irving, Texas.

Sonny Tucker is serving as pastor of Fair Oaks Church, going there from Sparkman, where he had served for six years as pastor of Shady Grove Church.

Russell Puckett resigned July 20 as music director at Shepherd Hill Church, Pine Bluff.

David Oliver has joined the staff of Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock as minister of music, coming there from the Crossgates Church in Brandon, Miss. A native of Kosciusko, Miss., he is a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to the former Renae Mangum. They have two children, Adam Jacob and Ashley Anne.

Rod Goodsell has accepted a call to serve as superintendent of Shiloh Christian School, Springdale. A native of Tulsa, Okla., he is a graduate of Tulsa University. He and his wife, Ginny, have two children, Scott and Missy.

Ira E. Patishall died July 26 in Santa Maria, Calif., at age 93. He was a native of Greene County and a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, having served as pastor of churches in Arkansas, Texas, and California. He also had served as manager of the Baptist Book Store in Little Rock. Survivors include his wife, Marguerite Patishall of Santa Maria; one daughter, Mildred Webster of Ruston; two sisters, Lola Buckles of Mishawawa, Ind., and Mamie Bradsher of Nashville, Ind.; four grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Eric Webb is serving Union Valley Church, Bebe, as minister of music.

Bob Shelton is serving as pastor of First Church, Branch.

Jim Hughes is serving as pastor of First Southern Central Church, Lavaca.

John Smedley has been called to serve as pastor of Powell Street Mission, sponsored by Northeast Church, Springdale.

Harold Leo Reed was ordained to the preaching ministry Aug. 7 by First Church, Lincoln.

James C. Allcock will begin serving Sept. 4 as minister of music and youth at First Church, Hope, coming there from Baltimore, Md., where he served for 20 years as director of church music for the Maryland/Delaware Convention. A native of Paducah, Ky., he is a graduate of Union University, Jackson, Tenn., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Mary, have two daughters.

Howard Head is serving as pastor of Temple Church, Waldron, coming there from Lexington, Ky.

Wesley Hogue is serving as pastor of Long Ridge Church, Booneville, coming there



Retirement—A retirement celebration was held for Robert U. Ferguson, director of Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists at the Mt. Pleasant Church, Little Rock, on July 29. Representatives of four Baptist conventions participated in the activities. The conventions involved included the Consolidated Missionary Baptist Convention, the Regular Missionary Baptist Convention, the General Missionary Baptist Convention and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Gifts of appreciation presented to Dr. and Mrs. Ferguson included an easy chair, a large screen television with remote control, monetary gift and numerous plaques. A reception followed the formal presentations. Pictured left to right are John Watson, pastor of New St. James Church, Pine Bluff and Dr. Robert Ferguson.

from the Hon Church, where he served for more than three years.

Wade L. Carver of Millington, Tenn., was named pastor emeritus of Earle Church following his resignation July 31 as interim pastor. He served there as pastor in the late 60's, early 70's, and in 1987, beginning his service as interim Jan. 1, 1988.

Briefly

Seaside Temple Church will have a mission team in Mont Alto, Penn., in August to do survey work and conduct a weekend revival.

Searcy Trinity Church youth will lead an August backyard Bible club at Taylor's Trailer Park in Searcy.

Cabot First Church mission team of 30 youth and eight sponsors left July 30 for Sparta, Wis., to assist the Gospel Church with backyard Bible clubs.

Hope Calvary Church will hold a Lay Renewal Weekend Aug. 26-28 with Bill and Pat Bledsoe serving as coordinators.

East Side Church in Fort Smith youth and sponsors will return Aug. 18 from Green River, Utah, where they have been assisting a church with outreach activities and a vacation Bible school.

Beech Street First Church in Texarkana 11-member mission team returned Aug. 10 from work in Brazil.

Piggott First Church youth choir has returned from a tour which included performances at Leadhill and Salem Churches.

Gravel Ridge First Church held a vacation Bible school June 27-July 1 that resulted in an enrollment of 188, an average attendance of 160, 11 professions of faith, and an offering of \$80 for the Cooperative Program. Danny Veteto serves as pastor.

McGehee First Church observed Don

Hilton Day Aug. 7 in recognition of his 12th anniversary as minister of music and youth. The choir sponsored a reception in his honor and the church body presented him with a money tree.

Shepherd Hill Church at Pine Bluff will be in revival Aug. 21-27 with J.W. Whitley serving as evangelist and Rose and Alan McKinley leading the music.

Harvey's Chapel Church at Hot Springs will observe its 100th anniversary Aug. 21 with activities which will include worship services beginning at 9:45 a.m., a noon luncheon served at Stephens Park at Blakeley Mountain Dam, and an afternoon service. Speakers will include Pastor Tommy Freeman and former pastors Jesse Reed, Bill Fleming, and Horace Gray.

Augusta First Church mission team of 14 youth and six adults return Aug. 5 from Denver, Colo., where they conducted a vacation Bible school and led Sunday services for Riverside Hispanic Mission.

Crestway Church is a new work at Midway which has been launched with a home Bible study by South Side Church, Paris. Concord Association has purchased land where a double-wide chapel will soon be placed for services.

Kingston First Southern Church observed Pastor Appreciation Day July 17 by presenting Pastor Nick Hartness with a love offering at the close of the morning worship service.

Conway Second Church will host a Walk Thru the Bible New Testament seminar Aug. 20, according to Pastor Larry Pillow. Childcare will be provided for preschool through second grade children.

Little Rock Immanuel Church will host a Successful Single Living seminar Oct. 7-9 led by Clyde Besson, an author and conference leader.

Rock Creek Church near Mansfield dedicated a new addition to its building July 10. Johnnie Darr, director of missions for Buckner Association, delivered the dedication message. Pastor Charles Scantling led the vows of dedication.



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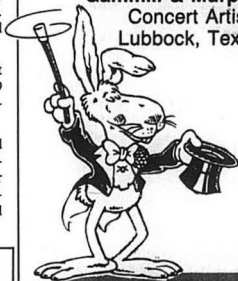
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Challenged '... To Be Like Him'

DALLAS—A challenge "... to be like Him" will be issued to conferees who gather in Missouri for the fall edition of the 1988 Annuitant Conference, sponsored by the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The conference is scheduled for Oct. 3-7 at Windermere Baptist Assembly.

In addition to worship, Bible study, and prayer sessions, the conference will of-

fer small group workshops, special music, an annuitants crafts fair, and a banquet.

Cost for the conference is \$93 per person (double occupancy), which includes lodging, 11 meals, and the banquet.

To make a reservation, send name, address, telephone number, and a \$10 registration fee to Windermere Baptist Assembly, State Road AA, P.O. Box 458, Roach, MO 65787.

No 'Temptation' In Arkansas

Two major theater chains in Arkansas have promised the controversial film, "The Last Temptation of Christ," will not run in any of their outlets.

The Rand Theaters and United Artists Theaters both gave assurances last week to ABN Editor J. Everett Sneed that their movie houses will not show the film, which has stirred up a flurry of public protests from evangelical Christian groups.

W.A. "Tony" Rand, president of Rand Theaters, Inc., told Editor Sneed he has not seen the movie, but from the reports he has heard believes it to be sacrilegious. An active Roman Catholic, Rand said his theaters would not run such a movie.

David Chaffin, district manager for United Artists Theaters, said he had "been assured by our Dallas office that we will not show 'The Last Temptation' at any United Artists theater in Arkansas."

United Artists has nine theaters in the state. The Rand chain holds seven.

The film, produced by Universal Pictures and directed by Martin Scorsese, "presents Jesus as a mentally unstable person who fights being the Son of God, a sinner who doesn't know who will pay for his sins, a person who lashes out at the sick and poor, a traitor to the Jews, one who lusts after

Mary Magdalene, and a bigamist," according to Donald Wildmon of the American Family Association in Tupelo, Miss. The movie also reportedly includes nudity and sexual scenes.

A public relations firm employed by Universal Pictures to enlist support from the evangelical community quit the job in June in protest of the studio's failure to have the movie ready for screening by representatives from the Christian community. When the promised screening did not materialize, Wildmon and others decided to launch a public protest based on a

script of the movie they had been given by Universal.

Reports about the movie provoked a storm of protest from the Christian community. In Arkansas, the Christian Civic Foundation and several individuals circulated petitions prepared by the American Family Association. Both theater managers reported receiving a large volume of telephone calls protesting the movie and asking that it not be shown in the state.

"Nothing is served by making light of any religious faith," said John Finn, executive director of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas. He expressed his belief that the film was sacrilegious and blasphemous.

Springdale FBC Ranks First

First Baptist Church of Springdale has been named the fastest growing church of any denomination in the state, according to a recently released study.

The church, which has Ronnie Floyd as pastor, reported a net gain of 500 attendees in worship in 1986, the most recent year for which figures were available.

The interdenominational study was conducted by John Vaughn of the Ki Dong Kim Chair of Church Growth at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo. The survey was partially funded by the research division of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The Springdale church, which ranked 53rd, barely missed placing in the top 10 percent of the 500 fast growing churches.

A SMILE OR TWO

A hesitant driver, waiting for a traffic jam to clear, came to a stop on an expressway ramp. The traffic thinned, but the timid driver still waited.

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'Friends Forever'

Relationships with others and with Jesus Christ was the theme of a musical presented on the campus of Ouachita Baptist University July 29.

"Friends Forever," an up-beat, contemporary musical published by Word, Inc., was performed by senior high participants in the annual Music Arkansas camp for Arkansas Baptist youth. Meeting simultaneously on the Arkadelphia campus was SummerSing, a first-of-a-kind, week-long music camp for senior adults.

Written by Nan Gurley, Jim Weber, and Billy Sprague, and arranged by Steven V. Taylor, "Friends Forever" deals with the subject of building personal relationships, with friends, with parents, and with Jesus Christ, who is portrayed as ultimately the best friend.

Unlike many youth musicals, "Friends Forever" is not designed as a vehicle to direct others to worship," observed Lester McCullough, director of the church music department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, which sponsored the two music camps. "Instead, the musical directs young people to think about relationships, which is a real need in the local church."

Junior high Music Arkansas campers presented the musical "Positive I.D." Senior adults participating in SummerSing performed two musicals for the youth, "Christmas in the Good Old Days" and "He's My Father."

SummerSing provided a week of music training for senior adults and their leaders. Workshops also were provided for non-musical spouses. In addition to music subjects such as voice and song leading, workshop topics also included such subjects as horticulture and health and fitness. Other activities included a talent show,

recreation, and local tours.

Conference choir director for SummerSing was Martha Clancy of Shreveport, La., and Virginia Queen of Little Rock was pianist. Les Frazer of Lamar was camp pastor, and Carbon Sims of Ouachita Baptist University was music director.

Registration for SummerSing totaled 80 persons. Music Arkansas, which was in its 37th year, registered 128.

The Music Arkansas program this year featured the addition of "track time" workshops on topics which included photography, lifesaving, and dating, in addition to music classes.

Don Wright of Bella Vista directed the senior high choir, and Larry Grayson of Ashdown directed the junior high choir. The Music Arkansas band was directed by Glenn Stewart of Fort Smith. Larry Horne of Charleston was camp pastor.

Cynthia Kelley, a student from Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock, was named Senior High Star Camper for Music Arkansas. Scott Preston of Matthews Memorial Church, Pine Bluff, received the Junior High Star Camper award.

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Skip Notice

The *Arkansas Baptist* will not publish an Aug. 18 issue next week. The addition of this skip issue was made necessary in order to offset continuing losses from the postage increase levied last May against second class non-profit publishers. Sunday School lesson commentaries for both Aug. 14 and 21 are printed in this issue.

SBC Bible Conference

Southern Baptist College will host its annual Bible Conference Sept. 19-21 on its campus in Walnut Ridge.

Featured speakers for the conference will be Carlos McLeod, evangelist director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas; Charles Chaney of the SBC Home Mission Board; Arkansas pastors James Bryant of Fort Smith and Rex Holt of Jonesboro; and David Miller, director of missions

for Little Red River Association, Heber Springs.

There is no registration charge for the conference. Free dormitory housing is available, but couples cannot be accommodated. For more information, contact the school at 886-6741.

Correction

A photograph on p. 5 of the July 28 *Arkansas Baptist* purported to show a building raised at Goshen by volunteers from Washington-Madison Association. The building pictured in fact was one raised by the Arkansas Nailbenders at Conway, which was featured in the Aug. 4 ABN.

Campus Omitted

In the July 21 "On To College" edition of the *Arkansas Baptist*, one campus was omitted from the directory of campuses and directors of Baptist Student Unions.

Scott Willis is director of the Baptist Student Union

at Arkansas Tech University. He may be addressed at 1404 N. Arkansas, Russellville, AR 72801. The BSU telephone number is 967-3217.

Seminary Term Begins Sept. 12

The fall term of the Little Rock Seminary Studies program will open Sept. 12 with three master's level courses being offered.

John Kiwiet of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will teach a course on contemporary theology at 10 a.m. A course on the cultural setting for ministry will be taught by John Howell of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at 2 p.m. John McClanahan, pastor of Pine Bluff First Church, will teach a 6 p.m. class, "Pastoral Care in Crisis."

Persons interested in enrolling should immediately contact Lehman Webb at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 376-4791. Registration deadline is Aug. 29.

Premiums Set To Increase

DALLAS (BP)—Southern Baptist Annual Board trustees learned of gains in the board's assets and a need for higher insurance premiums during their meeting July 25-26 in Little Rock, Ark.

Board President Darold H. Morgan reported total assets had grown to more than \$2.27 billion as of June 30, a 7.02 percent increase over last year.

Rising medical care costs prompted increasingly higher claims in the medical insurance programs and had to result in significant premium increases, Morgan said: "The crisis is nationwide and industrywide. I regret that we must both increase premium charges and take other measures to stop the losses."

The seminary plan will see a 30 percent increase in August, while church and group plan premiums will rise 20 to 25 percent in January, 1989. Outside consultants had twice recommended the premium increases.

Classifieds

Staff Position Open—Minister of Music and Education, First Baptist Church, Clarksville, Ark. Resumes and inquiries may be sent to: Search Committee, P.O. Box 525, Clarksville, AR 72830. 8/11

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Needed—Baptist church needs experienced secretary weekday mornings. Near UALR. 565-5536. 8/25

Kamp Paddle Trails—Youth camp, retreat, and conference center, near Siloam Springs, on Illinois River. Dorm-housing for 25 to 100 campers. For reservations, call 918-723-3546 or write Rt. 1 Box 210, Watts, OK 74964. 9/1

Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABN office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. A check or money order in the proper amount, figured at 85 cents per word, must be included. Multiple insertions of the same ad must be paid for in advance. The ABN reserves the right to reject any ad because of unsuitable subject matter. Classified ads will be inserted on a space-available basis. No endorsement by the ABN is implied.

PAC Voices Support

by Kathy Palen

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—A U.S. Senate measure that would force the District of Columbia government to exempt religious schools and colleges from a D.C. law prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation has won the support of several religious organizations, including the Southern Baptist Public Affairs Committee.

During a July 26 press conference, PAC member Richard Land voiced the committee's support of an amendment sponsored by Sen. William L. Armstrong, R-Colo., and passed by the Senate 58-33—to the D.C. appropriations bill.

A statement expressing the unanimous support of the PAC executive committee for the amendment also was cited by Armstrong during Senate debate on the issue.

The PAC comprises the 18-member Southern Baptist delegation to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, a Washington-based church-state agency representing nine Baptist denominations. In addition, the PAC is empowered to act on SBC motions or resolutions the BJC can or does not support.

The Senate action was aimed at overturning a November 1987 ruling by the D.C. Court of Appeals that applied the law to Georgetown University, a Catholic school. In its decision, the appeals court ordered the Jesuit university to comply with the law's requirement to provide homosexual student groups the same money and facilities given other student organizations.

At the same time, the court held, Georgetown was under no obligation to give official recognition to the groups.

The Armstrong amendment would condition all D.C. government spending upon the District's changing the law so as to exempt any educational institution affiliated with a religious organization.

"The issue is not homosexuality, but separation of church and state," said Land, vice president for academic affairs at Criswell College in Dallas. "The issue is whether a government institution, in this case the District of Columbia, has the right to force a religious institution, in this case Georgetown University, a Roman Catholic Jesuit institution, to subsidize the propagation and promulgation of beliefs diametrically opposed to its religious convictions."

Although critical of the D.C. ordinance's broad application to all religious institutions, BJC General Counsel Oliver S. Thomas—whose organization did not participate in the press conference sponsored by the National Association of Evangelicals—said: "I have very little sympathy for Georgetown or any other religious institution that willingly accepts government funding yet wishes to be exempted from generally applicable government regulation. On the other hand, a religious institution that refuses direct government aid certainly should not be forced to subsidize or even to recognize student groups whose beliefs are repugnant to that institution."



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Convention Uniform

Where Is the Intercessor?

by Randel Everett, First Church, Benton

Basic passage: Numbers 14:10b-20

Focal passage: Numbers 14:10b-20

Central truth: Intercessors stand in the gap between disobedient people and holy God.

"I will destroy this nation and make a greater one from your descendants," the Lord said to Moses. And who could blame him? Even after the plagues of Egypt, deliverance from the Red Sea, daily supply of food, giving of the law at Sinai, and constant guidance day and night, the sons of Israel were still disobedient.

Instead of listening to the positive report of Joshua and Caleb, they heard the negative word of the 10 spies. How could they ever overcome the giants of Canaan? It's time they got rid of Moses and the leaders and returned to Egypt.

God had enough of their faithlessness and lack of gratitude. He would dispossess them and start over with Moses.

One would think Moses would have been elated. After all, they were crying out for him to be stoned to death. Yet he was not. He interceded for the people and asked God for their pardon. The Lord listened to his prayer and forgave them.

Who is interceding for disobedient America today, as Moses did for Israel? Pray that it is not the situation of Ezekiel 22:30, "I searched for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one."

The man or woman who "stands in the gap" must be blameless before God. If Moses had been guilty of the sin of the people, he could not have stood in his presence. A mediator is one who is in fellowship with the Lord. It was Moses who listened to God's message.

Intercessory prayer grows from the heart of one who knows God's Word. Moses reminded the Lord of the word he spoke on Sinai, recorded in Exodus 34:6-7, "God you are slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness. . . pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people. . ."

An intercessor is one who has a preference for others. God promised to destroy Israel and make of Moses a great nation, both at Sinai and at Kadesh-barnea. Both times he rejected personal favor for the good of the people.

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Life and Work

Christians Must Meet Needs

by Tom Harris, Park Place Church, Hot Springs

Basic passage: Nehemiah 2:17,18; 4:6,9,15-20

Focal passage: Nehemiah 2:17,18; 4:6,9,15-20

Central truth: God communicates his needs through a teacher and then God directs his people to work together to fulfill his needs.

Nehemiah takes its name from its primary character and traditional author. Its theme is the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

(1) The need was there. God had initiated the need to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah reminds the Jews that Jerusalem lie in waste and it is a reproach to them. Notice that God will prompt his leaders with needs that must be done.

(2) The attitude was there. People have various attitudes when needs arise. Some people react in a negative mood and some people react in a positive mood. Look at 4:6--". . . for the people had a mind to work." Their mindset was to work together in unity and comradeship.

(3) The prayer was there. 4:9 says, ". . . Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God. . . ." Prayer is a humble confession, "God, I need you very badly, please help."

(4) The problems were there. Problems arise sometimes when projects need to be done. Paul in Ephesians 6 reminds us we will always have an enemy in the devil. With courage and persistence, Nehemiah faced his problems. The Christian's problems ideally should always be with the devil and the outside world. But sometimes there are problems and disagreements in the church. Some might have said, "Nehemiah, building a wall does not sound too spiritual to us. Building walls will take away from missions and evangelism." It will be interesting to note that God's perspective of missions and evangelism will sometime lead him to prompt needs of new parking lots, new educational buildings, renovations, or new athletic buildings. Christians must pray submissively for God's mind on all matters.

The church will have various needs such as evangelism, bus ministry, and building programs. Church members must express an attitude of unity and desire to work together.

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Bible Book

Sinful Hypocrisy

by David McLemore, Second Church, Russellville

Basic passage: Matthew 23:1-39

Focal passage: Matthew 23:1-8, 23-26,37-39

Central truth: The Pharisees had the knowledge of truth without allowing it to change their lives.

My dad, for years, refused to go to the local Baptist church. His refusal came primarily defended by the judgment of the sins of the church members. He was known to say that as long as this sinful hypocrisy is a part of that church, "I'm not going." However, the night that he received Jesus as Savior this changed. While walking down the aisle, he gave no thought of the sins of the church members.

The reason for Dad's change certainly was our Lord. He brought change to him. It was also because Dad was now judging his own sin and not someone else's.

People become most frustrated when they try to change from the outside. Like a child who is attempting to be polite while the preacher is present, he becomes a bundle of nerves trying to contain all that nervous energy.

The Pharisees were infamous for taking a law of Moses and applying the letter of that law. Jesus shows them that they were trying to impose outward influences and keep the law without changing the inside. He called them "white-washed tombs." They had the appearance of righteousness while being dead inside.

Remember, however, that Jesus required our righteousness to exceed that of the Pharisees. We are to be obedient to the law of God, but our motivation is to come from within, not from external sources.

Jesus ends his instruction to the Pharisees with that great plea for Israel to come to him. This plea has a sin-cleansing experience to those who respond. We are to yield to him, receive his forgiveness, and let him change us from within.

The Pharisees were judged by Christ because they had the truth and did not act on it. They refused for change to take place from within their lives. Because of this, Jesus condemned them.

We are guilty of the same things if we say, "I'm not doing all I should do!" We are just as guilty when we are unyielding because of our judgment of someone else in the church.

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Convention Uniform

Temptation of Prosperity

by Randel Everett, First Church, Benton

Basic passage: Deuteronomy 6:10-19

Focal passage: Deuteronomy 6:10-19

Central truth: Don't forget the Lord in times of plenty.

A few years ago I had the privilege of being a part of a partnership crusade in Pusan, Korea. One of the Korean pastors said to me, "We are facing the most difficult test of our faith. By the grace of God, we have survived persecution, alienation, and war, but now we face prosperity. Will we be able to endure success without compromising the integrity of the gospel?"

From my perspective God couldn't see any prosperity. Nor did I consider one-fourth of the population being Christian a comfortable majority. Yet compared to Communist North Korea, they were wealthy and acceptable.

Moses also recognized the challenge that was ahead of Israel. Looming darker than the clouds of war, was the realization of the temptation of complacency. When the sons of Abraham settled into the land promised and secured by the Lord, would they forget him and worship gods less demanding? Would they test the Lord's patience and goodness with their grumbling as they had done at Massah, and frequently throughout the years of wandering?

Prosperity does not have to bring peril to his people. God didn't give them their own land just to tempt them. They were his chosen people and he wanted to bless them. As a parent loves to do good things for his children, God wants to show kindness to his.

The motivation for obedience is love. Moses said, "Love God with everything that is within you. Diligently teach your children to love God and keep his commands. Out of love for him, you'll want to do what he says."

In John Maxwell's commentary on Deuteronomy he tells an interesting story about the motivation of love. He read about 78-year-old Aleida Huissen of Rotterdam, who had been smoking for 50 years. During that time, she had been unsuccessful in trying to give up the habit. Then she met 79-year-old Leo Janzen who proposed marriage to her on the condition that she would give up smoking. Aleida said, "Willpower never was enough to get me off the habit. Love made me do it."

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Life and Work

Study Brings Worship

by Tom Harris, Park Place Church, Hot Springs

Basic passage: Nehemiah 8:5,6,8,13, 14,17,18; 9:3

Focal passage: Nehemiah 8:1,3,4,5, 6,8,9,10; 9:3

Central truth: When people really listen as God's Word is really read and preached, there will come about real worship.

(1) Ezra read the Word of God (v. 3)
For some of these people, it had been 70 years since they had heard the Word of Jehovah. Verse one says they requested to hear it read. A wooden pulpit was built and all the people were listening attentively to the book of the law. Notice they stood up in reverence and respect when the law was read and as the law was being expounded and explained. Verse 3 says they listened from morning till midday or noon. Such a tremendous inspiration these people should be to those who are called Christians today. People must thirst today for the Living Bread, the Water of Life, the Word of God. People must listen with attentive ears as their pastor/teacher reads and explains the Word. There should be no room for sleeping during the sermon, walking the halls during Sunday School, or going home after Sunday School to beat the crowd to the restaurant. Preachers like Ezra must explain the Word, not try to show how high their I.Q. is or how many theological words they know. In I Corinthians 2:1, Paul came not to teach with excellence of speech. The Ethiopian eunuch just needed someone to explain the Word of God.

(2) They worshipped the Lord (8:6; 9:3)
When the Word of God is really read and people really listen, then, as in the days of Ezra, worship takes place among the people. Ezra blessed the Lord. The people said, "Yes! Yes! We agree! Amen!" They lifted their hands; they bowed their faces; they confessed their sins; they worshipped the Lord. Somewhere in each morning service, Christians should experience worship. Instead many use the service to socialize with humans, talk of last night's date or prepare for watching the football game if the preacher would just hurry up and quit. Worship, worship, worship will come about when God's people really listen and God's teachers really teach the eternally alive Word of God.

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Bible Book

Jesus Calls for Endurance

by David McLemore, Second Church, Russellville

Basic passage: Matthew 24:1-51

Focal passage: Matthew 24:3-14,43-47

Central truth: The born again believers are the only ones who will be able to survive the hardships of Christian living.

Baptist have allowed a lot of latitude with the interpretation of the second coming Scriptures. There are many varying ideas about the emphasis that Jesus is giving.

Notice that even his disciples then, like most current disciples, have a real curiosity about future things. Our whole society seeks to know more of the future. Some ask horoscopes, or astrologers, or crystal balls. Still others look to the Scriptures to discover the future events.

When Jesus was asked about the events preceding his coming, he made two very important statements. First, he said (Mt. 24:4), don't be misled, and secondly, endure much as the time is not yet.

His very first caution was to insist on each disciple listening to him. The importance of this statement is emphasized by it being first. Because people have a natural curiosity about the future, he said not to be misled.

The more details a person has on the chronological events is not a criteria for increasing the level of trust. If we are not to be misled, we must check, and double check, all theology with the Bible.

The increase in the number of earthquakes is not proof of the short return of Jesus. In verse 8, Jesus said this was only the beginning.

Secondly, he instructed them to endure to the end. Two important emphases are included in this statement. One is for the understanding that the Christian life will not be easy. We are to remain Christians during wars, earthquakes, etc. His message is clearly stated for us to endure to the end. The second coming theology seems to always emphasize the importance of endurance.

His coming again is our hope that empowers believers to endure much hardship. We are to remain ready for the return of our Lord at all times. In I Thessalonians 5:1-6, the Christians don't need this reminder, because they are aware that Jesus could come at any time.

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DESPITE QUESTIONS

Parrishes Don't Doubt

by Toby Druin
Texas Baptist Standard

DALLAS (BP)—They have worked through some of the "what ifs" and know they probably will still have to deal with some "whys," but James and Martha Parrish don't doubt God called them as Southern Baptist missionaries to Ecuador. And soon they hope to go back and resume their ministry there.

That ministry—he is a general evangelist and church planter working with two congregations, and they both have a variety of outreach ministries in the seaport town of Esmeraldas—was interrupted and the Parrishes' lives altered forever July 4.

A gasoline explosion and fire at a service station killed their 3-year-old son, John Martin, and critically burned his brother, Stephen, 7. Parrish also was burned severely on his face and arms as he struggled to pull the boys from their burning truck. They had stopped for gasoline before enjoying a day at the beach with another missionary couple, the Tom Owensens, who were coming from Santo Domingo.

Parrish and Stephen were first briefly hospitalized in Esmeraldas, then flown to Quito and then to Methodist Medical Center in Dallas July 8. Parrish was released July 19 but is undergoing daily treatment and therapy at the hospital.

Stephen, with 40 percent of his body burned—principally his legs, arms and head—will be hospitalized another two weeks and will undergo daily treatment and therapy thereafter for an undetermined period. He was to have skin grafts to his legs, which were the most severely burned, July 21.

The Parrishes moved into a missionary residence provided for them by Fairview Baptist Church in Grand Prairie, Texas. They expect to be in the house for three or four months before returning to Ecuador. Their address during this time will be 324 N.E. 12th, Grand Prairie, Texas 75050.

In spite of the pain of the burns and the

heat of the fire, Parrish had difficulty at first accepting the reality of what had happened, he said.

"Yet there was a peace that accompanied me through the whole thing and gave me the ability to get my son to the hospital and to see he was cared for and to call my wife," he said. "The Lord was good to be there in the midst of tragedy."

Running through his mind, he said, were the "what ifs."

"What if I hadn't stopped here at all, what if while we saw we couldn't get gas for awhile (because of the pump) we had just pulled out?" he said he reasoned. "But I realized that I couldn't live with 'what ifs.' There are a lot of what ifs, and I guess some of those will still come back to haunt me.

"But God is still God, and it happened, and he gives you the grace to go on."

The Parrishes believe God called them to Ecuador and plan to go back, they said, probably to Esmeraldas, but they are open to service in some other place in the country. Going back to Esmeraldas and its memories—they had celebrated John's third birthday only two days before the accident—will be especially tough.

"We feel like the Lord can use this accident and what has happened as a witness to the people in the area," Parrish said. "A lot of people in the city are aware of what happened. We are hoping the Lord can use it to bring reconciliation to the two churches and that we can see a stronger work coming out of it."

In the meantime, they will help Stephen and find time to grieve over the loss of John.

"At this point," Mrs. Parrish said, "there really hasn't been time yet to grieve for John. Emotionally the numbness is beginning to wear off a little bit, and I am beginning to realize he is gone. But we will probably have to deal with that grief when we go back to Ecuador and back to our home."

"Of course, we miss the comfort of his (John's) presence. He stole everyone's heart."



James Parrish reassures his son Stephen.

A lot of people are missing him besides us."

On Sunday before the accident, John had an earache, she said, and she had stayed home with him, just holding him and comforting him much of the day.

"I realize now his need for me is over," she said. "My need for him isn't. But it is comforting just to know that John is with the Lord and that he is being taken care of."

There will still be some anger to work through, she said: "And we may still have to deal with some 'whys'—why did this happen, why John, why Stephen?"

"I haven't worked through it all. I keep asking myself is John's death and all this somehow tied in with his (God's) reason for putting us in Esmeraldas? I don't know. I can't say and won't say and don't believe that God caused this. But I do believe that he permitted it and he was in control of it and that he is going to use it.

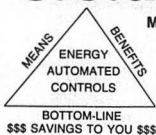
"I am just waiting for the fulfillment of Romans 8:28. He is going to bring good out of it."

Both have been comforted by friends and other Christians around them and verses of Scripture that have come to mind.

The second and third chapters of Philipians have meant much to Parrish, impressing him that there is encouragement in being united with Christ and fellowship in his Spirit, he said: "I can't imagine what people do who don't have Christ and have to go through tragedy. There is nothing to hang your life on. There is support in the body of Christ, the church.

"The Lord has left his footprints all around us; his fingerprints are all over us through other people."

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WORLD

Worried About The Future

Ruschlikon Crisis Concerns Europeans, Americans

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)—Southern Baptists are not the only people concerned about the future of the struggling Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

European Baptist theologians say Baptist life on the continent without the seminary is unthinkable.

More than 50 theologians met at the seminary in late June for a Baptist theological teachers' conference. After hearing a report on the seminary's continuing financial problems, they unanimously adopted a resolution expressing sympathy and alarm at the school's circumstances.

"We strongly affirm the necessity of Ruschlikon's continued existence," they said, calling the seminary "without doubt the contribution which has been most valued" among Southern Baptists' many initiatives in Europe. The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board started the seminary in 1949.

"Theological education at Ruschlikon is not an end in itself, but seeks to equip men and women to mobilize the churches of Europe with a view to winning the lost to Christ," the theologians declared. "Europe is in need of the gospel more than ever."

The seminary will run a budget deficit of about \$200,000 for 1988, needs about

\$1 million in building repairs and is operating with a skeleton staff. The drop in the U.S. dollar's value in Europe accounts for most of the institution's money problems. The Foreign Mission Board funds between 30 percent and 40 percent of the seminary budget, and the dollar's value against the Swiss franc has fallen by 40 percent in the last three years.

The seminary is considering cost-saving options, including selling its highly valuable property and campus near Zurich and moving to a more inexpensive area in Switzerland or elsewhere in Europe. The Foreign Mission Board holds deed to the 10-acre property.

The theologians urged seminary leaders not to move the school, noting its current home is of "great symbolic worth... in the cradle of Anabaptist history." Switzerland's historic neutrality, they pointed out, also enables the seminary to attract Baptists from East and West.

They also appealed for a return to the former trustee system that governed the seminary before 1978. The trustee board consisted of representatives from Baptist seminaries and unions throughout Europe. The current governing body is a smaller five-member executive board of European and Southern Baptist mission board representatives.

MK Birthday Prayer Calendar: August

Missionary Kids Attending College in Arkansas

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 3 | Clay Spann
(Brazil) | Arkansas State University, Box 347
State University, AR 72467 |
| 5 | Lisa Stanton Duffer
(Argentina) | Ouachita Baptist University, Box 3898
Arkadelphia, AR 71923 |
| 8 | Belinda Burnett (OBU)
(Brazil) | 402 S. Hastings
Irving, TX 75060 |
| 10 | Mark Schleich (graduated)
(Zimbabwe) | 911 Glendale
Jonesboro, AR 72401 |
| 12 | Stewart Lee (UALR)
(India) | 383 Upper Palace Orchards
Bangalore 80, INDIA |
| 13 | Karen Ennis (graduated)
(Tanzania) | 3900 Fox Trail Apt. T 212
Fort Worth, TX 76109 |
| 13 | Sharon Sayger (graduated)
(Tanzania) | 3900 Fox Trail Apt. T 212
Fort Worth, TX 76109 |
| 19 | Joy Thomas (OBU)
(Bophuthatswana) | 1908 Augusta Dr.
Landcrest Apt. 7
Lexington, KY 40505 |
| 24 | James Turner (OBU)
(Kenya) | P.O. Box 385
Limuru, KENYA |