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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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May 12, 1988

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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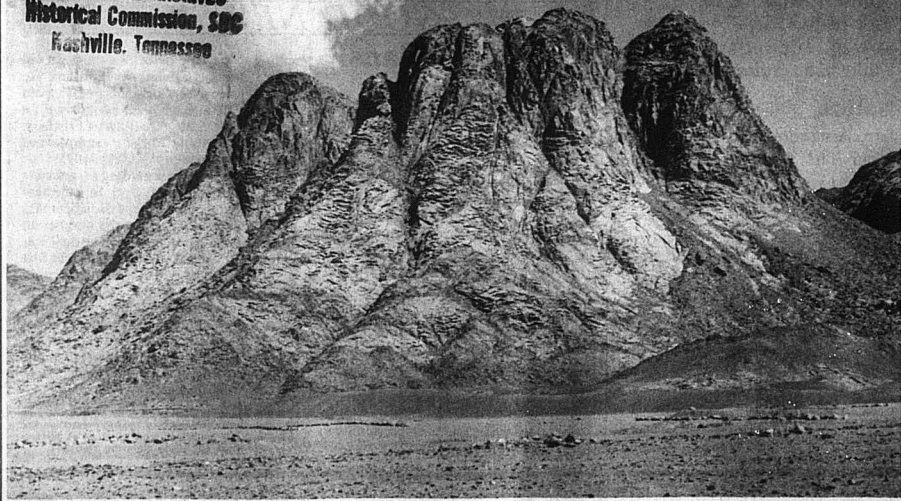
San Antonio Preview

Arkansas Baptist

May 12, 1988

'...As A Grain of Mustard Seed'
Day of Prayer for the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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Cover Story



Photo / Fon Scofield

'... As A Grain of Mustard Seed' 8-9

Arkansas Baptists are called to pray for the removal of a mountain on Sunday, May 15, the Day of Prayer for the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

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Billy Graham Preaches In China

SHANGHAI, China (BP)—Evangelist Billy Graham visited China in April, finally making the journey he had looked forward to "probably more than any other trip I have ever taken."

Graham preached to thousands of worshippers at churches in Shanghai, Beijing and other cities and met with religious and government leaders, including Li Peng, China's new premier.

Graham and Li discussed religious and social issues, and the New China News Agency quoted the Chinese leader as saying, "China can never be prosperous and strong with only material development. It also needs spiritual forces."

The evangelist seized that theme and developed it in his sermons and public statements, expressing hope that China's historic modernization effort would be matched by a "great moral modernization program also."

"Even secular leaders are asking the question, 'Where are we to find the moral renewal we need to be successful in China's modernization program?'" he observed during a meeting with Shanghai church leaders. "Could they turn to us?"

Graham was accompanied by his wife, Ruth Bell Graham, and their elder son, Franklin. Their trip included a scheduled visit to Huaiyin in Jiangsu province, where

Mrs. Graham was born and reared by missionary parents. Her father was Nelson Bell, chief surgeon at a large Presbyterian mission hospital. She left China at age 17 and did not return until a short visit in 1980.

Also on the itinerary were speaking engagements in Guangzhou and in Nanjing, where Graham was invited to address faculty and students at Nanjing University and the national Protestant seminary. In Beijing his listeners included members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Congress and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

During meetings with religious leaders and government officials, Graham pointed out positive contributions of Christian missionaries in the past who built schools and hospitals in China.

Graham described the church in China as healthy and said its recent growth "may go down in history as one of the great Christian revivals of this century." But he noted major limits on religious freedom still exist in the communist nation.

Graham's stay in Beijing included a trip to the Great Wall, where he was entertained by a group of singing schoolchildren. A translator taught the children to sing "Jesus Loves Me."

The evangelist's visit was sponsored by the China Christian Council and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

GOOD NEWS!

When Christians Bear Burdens

Philemon 17-21

Willingness to share one another's burdens is essential to breaking down barriers. Paul advised Philemon that he would accept full responsibility for any debt that Onesimus owed to Philemon. That was a personal commitment to action. Paul said: "Charge it to my account. . . . I will write this with my own hand. . . . I will pay you back" (v. 18-19, TEV).

The good Samaritan assumed responsibility (Lk. 10:30-37). He was a bearer of burdens. The Samaritan bound up the wounds of the injured. He became personally involved. Next, he made a commitment to pay any debt incurred by the injured. Note the parallels between Paul and the Samaritan.

Christians must assume responsibility to bear one another's burdens. We must be

willing to pay the price. We must get involved. Jesus is a bearer of burdens. He paid the price to set Christians free. He paid the debt. "You have been bought with a price" (1 Co. 6:20, NASB). As Christians, we need to follow Christ's example and assume responsibility!

Study the parable regarding forgiveness and the kingdom of God in Matthew 18:23-35. Notice the debt of the sinner was 10,000 talents. To the Jew the number 10 means human completeness. The debt was 10 times 10. So complete was the debt that it could not be paid by the debtor. It could only be forgiven.

Christians must be willing to forgive. Jesus forgive Philemon. Philemon must forgive Onesimus. Jesus forgive Christians. Christians must forgive others. Pay the price; bear one another's burdens.

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We Can Reach Them!

J. EVERETT SNEED

As reported in the May 5 issue of the ABN (p. 12), the receipts for the foreign missions and home missions offering are falling far short of their respective goals. If this needed money is not received, it will negatively impact our missions at home and abroad. Southern Baptists have the resources to carry out our mission mandate at home and to the ends of the earth.

The goal for the 1987 Christmas offering for foreign missions is \$75 million. With less than two months to go, only \$64.8 million has been received.

The 1988 Easter offering goal for home missions is \$37.5 million. Although the 1988 mission offering is only a few weeks old, early reports indicate that only \$2.5 million, or 6.89 percent, of the goal has been attained.

Both the home missions and foreign missions goals have already been reduced by the Southern Baptist WMU, which is responsible for setting the goals. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal initially was set for \$81 million, but the WMU Executive Board voted in April 1986 to lower the goal when it became apparent the 1986 goal of \$75 million would not be met. The actual contributions to the 1986 Christmas Offering totalled only \$69.4 million. The foreign missions offering goal has not been met or surpassed since 1981.

The 1988 home missions offering goal is the same as it was in 1987. Contributions to the 1986 Easter offering totalled \$30.2 million, missing the goal by more than \$7.2 million. The Annie Armstrong Home Missions Offering also has not been met or surpassed since 1981.

Obviously, WMU leadership is concerned because of the lack of support for these offerings. Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the SBC Woman's Missionary Union, sent a letter in late April to every local church WMU director. Of the 37,000 Southern Baptist churches, about 30,000 have WMU organizations.

The question arises, "What has produced the decline in missions giving by Southern Baptists?" There perhaps are many factors that have impacted the decline in missions giving. Some areas of our nation have been hard hit economically. Others believe that the controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention has diverted the attention of Southern Baptists from our main purposes of missions and



evangelism to that of the controversy. Both of these factors may have impacted our giving to some extent. But we believe that these are not the main factors.

We believe that the key to proper missions support is for Southern Baptists to again come to grips with the spiritual and physical needs of individuals around the world and our responsibility as New Testament stewards.

The word "steward" is a derivative of the Greek word *oikonomos*, which is a compound of two words—*oikos*, meaning "house" or "household," and *nomos*, meaning "law." The word then means the lawful or orderly management of a house or household.

The word "steward" so grew in scope that the Bible translators chose it to convey this colorful and important concept.

Arkansas Baptist NEWSMAGAZINE

VOLUME 87 NUMBER 18

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

The secular use, undoubtedly, contributed to this decision, since it conveys the idea of trusteeship or responsibility.

From its background it is easy to determine that stewardship is neither a department of life nor a separate activity, but a concept of life as a whole affecting all attitudes and actions.

The heart of the New Testament is the matter of giving. "God so loved. . . that he gave" (Jn. 3:16). God's love literally embraces man. The Psalmist tells us that the "earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). Thus, as far as physical sustenance is concerned, we are using what belongs to God. In the spiritual arena we must acknowledge that we have merited death, but God, by his grace, has given us life (see Ep. 2:8-10). There are many possible reasons for the giving of one's substance. The motive of love stands above all others. God loved us and provided the free gift of salvation. We in turn are to love others who are lost and give our material substance so that they too may learn of Christ's love for them.

The apostle Paul emphasized this idea as he said, "Not greedily, or of necessity; for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Co. 9:7). The word "cheerful" in the Greek is *hilaros*. The English word "hilarious" is derived from this root. We as Christians are to be exceedingly joyful as we have the opportunity to give so that others will know Christ.

Southern Baptists have the resources to reach the goal of both the home and foreign missions offerings. As we give we should recognize that our gifts will carry the message of salvation to those who have never heard of Christ's redeeming grace.

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

Copies will mail 50 cents each.

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

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Letters to the Editor

DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know

You can be creative! I know, some people have more creative minds than others. The Holy Spirit is the most creative person in the world. Since he dwells within every believer, his creativity can be brought to bear on our lives. This is where freshness, energy, excitement, and anointing comes on our lives. We see, think, plan, and work beyond ourselves when we yield to his working in us. The sickening dull, drab, sameness of our Christian lives is taken over by this new expression of Christ's life in us.

If it comes, it will likely be in response to one of two things or to both. Either it will come in answer to brokenhearted seeking of the face of God; or it will come as we catch step with the Spirit in meeting the needs of people around us. I can't create a hunger for God in anyone, but I might be able to give you some ideas for ministry you have not addressed.

How about the retarded, the aging, the blind, the illiterate, the deaf, the disabled, the just released prisoner, nursing homes, mobile home parks, jails, military personnel, low-income housing areas, various language groups, foreign students, foreign wives, resort areas, multi-family housing, poverty areas, isolated communities, inner city areas, street people, transients, unemployed, divorcees, one parent families, fair and flea market visitors, carnival workers, college or vo-tech students, the terminally ill groups?

With the multiplied needs around us, it seems that every church ought to be doing a lot more than just "holding services." In the distant past that may have been a big goal and significant achievement. Today, the individual or the church that wants to do more than "hold services" faces unlimited and exciting opportunities. With the creativity and concern of the Holy Spirit, many of these can be seized and many souls won to Jesus who would otherwise be untouched by a typical traditional church.

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



Name Calling

I read the comment in the April 21 issue of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, about signing Letters to the Editor. It had no "point to ponder" and was "name calling" of a person. I feel a person who does not have his or her name printed is none of the names he said. (The editor always knows who writes.) I, too, do not have my name printed when I write to the editor on controversial issues, as I believe some things should be read with open minds and hearts and acted upon with the feeling of the individual who reads the article—as per his or her God-given understanding and feeling. I want a person to look at something I feel is important to think about, from an overall point of view, not just my view because "I" wrote it.—**Dorothy Webster, Helena**

Reminder

With regard to John McClanahan's letter in the April 28 *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* recently criticizing Jerry Vines for "running" for the SBC presidency, I remind Dr. McClanahan that the "other" candidate has been "running" for 10 years and has already been defeated three times.

Also concerning Dr. Vines' annual sermon last year—it was the best I've heard in the 40 years I've been going to the convention. He will make an excellent president.—**Johnny Jackson, Little Rock**

Don't Be Vindictive

I regret that you chose to print John McClanahan's letter to the editor in your April 28 issue. McClanahan's letter accused Jerry Vines of turning his convention sermon at St. Louis into a campaign speech for the presidency of our convention. That is an unwarranted, untrue, and unkind judgment on the motives of Jerry Vines. McClanahan's letter violates the policy of the ABN which states that Letters to the Editor "must not defame the character of persons."

We may differ on who should be the next SBC president, but we should not be vindictive in our comments toward the candidates. Richard Jackson has spoken all across our convention this past year, but I have not read in any state paper that he has turned his ministry into a political campaign. Jackson is a great man of God and so is Jerry Vines. Whichever one is elected in San Antonio to be our convention president will receive my love, support, and prayers.—**C.A. Johnson, Jonesboro**

Today's Issues

Marriage Enrichment Report

BOB PARKER



Some of you may be wondering if the recent Marriage Enrichment Retreat for ministers and their mates at Horseshoe Bend did my wife and me any good. To begin with, I hate to admit it but it really did help us both. We have only been married almost 40 years, but it looks now like we'll be better able to go another 40, 30, 20, 10, five or however many more years or months the Lord gives before "death do us part!"

We both agree that had we gone through such an

and a couple involved in full-time or bivocational religious work does well to take advantage of them.

Local churches and associations can provide similar experiences for couples. *The Family Ministry Plan Book 1988-89* (insert in the May issue of *Baptist Program*) provides several recommendations for marriage enrichment. Contact Gerald Jackson, Church Training Department, for additional information about marriage enrichment.

The issue is this: God provides these opportunities through our Southern Baptist ministries

Bob Parker is director of the ABCS Christian Life Council.

Food & Fellowship

Food Safety

VIRGINIA KIRK & JANE PURTLE



Wonderful June days bring summer. It's a time when church socials include cookouts, picnics, and ice cream parties. If you have ever experienced food poisoning, you know to be especially careful in warm weather as you prepare food for events such as these. Food safety, of course, is important in all seasons of year year.

Warm temperatures cause phenomenal growth in the number of bacteria that often contaminate food. Some of the perishable foods that are particularly susceptible are items containing meats, poultry, milk, and eggs. A few of the prepared foods that need extra precautions are potato salad, cream pies, ice cream, poultry, and seafood salads.

One of the important things to remember is to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Don't let food sit out for long periods of time—not more than two hours. Use insulated containers for both hot and cold. Styrofoam containers are available in which casserole dishes fit. These keep food for long periods of time. Styrofoam ice chests can be used for cold salads, desserts, and drinks.

Cleanliness in food preparation is vital. Cutting boards have come into close scrutiny as sources of contamination. It is advisable to use plastic boards rather than wooden. Raw meats such as hamburger and poultry may become the culprit when bacteria lurk in the uneven surface of the wood. If you use wooden surfaces, keep them scrubbed and rinsed off with a chlorine (bleach) solution.

Keep everything clean. This means cabinets, utensils, containers, the food itself, and especially hands. It cannot be emphasized enough to wash hands frequently during food preparation.

We are advised by knowledgeable home economists that "old fashioned" homemade ice cream should be made by cooking the egg and milk mixture. Our recipe is for a custard ice cream. It is a little more trouble than the raw egg methods, but well worth the effort.

Custard ice cream

4 cups whole milk	1/4 teaspoon salt
4 eggs	1-12 oz. can evaporated milk
2 1/2 cups sugar	2 teaspoons vanilla
2 tablespoons flour	milk

Scald the 4 cups milk in a double boiler. Beat the eggs until light, and then mix in sugar, flour, and salt. Add this mixture to the scalded milk and cook while stirring. Continue cooking and stirring until slightly thickened. Add the canned milk and vanilla. Pour into gallon sized ice cream freezer can. Finish filling to the fill line with more whole milk. Freeze.

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



Making A Difference

As the couple walked along the lake's edge at sunset, they noticed a child ahead of them picking up small fish and tossing them back into the water. Finally catching up with the youngster, they asked why he was doing this. The answer was that the stranded fish would surely die if left out of the water. "But the lake goes on for miles and there are hundreds of fish!" countered the couple. "How can your effort make any difference?"

The child looked at the fish in his hand and placed it in the safety of the water. "It makes a difference to this one," he said.

As I thought of this illustration, I couldn't help but think what a difference it would make in the world today if each of us would develop this same attitude when it comes to witnessing for our Lord.

As I think of my own life, God always had someone there to share a word of encouragement or a testimony.

Many individuals look at the countless number of people around them and the task seems endless. Some stop, never taking time to help others learn of life in Christ. These individuals need to learn from the little boy in my illustration. It will make a difference to the one they tell about living a life in Christ.

In our churches perhaps it is time we get back to the basics of teaching God's Word and telling the world that Christ is the answer.

I'm thankful that when I was 18 someone cared enough to help me see the difference Christ could make in my life. Also I rejoice that Southern Baptists cared enough to establish academic training in a Christian environment through Baptist colleges.

Arkansas Baptists should be recognized for the great contributions they are making to the cause of Christ.

Our local churches continue to be the lighthouses which reach a lost and dying world.

Our youth have the distinct advantage of having two outstanding institutions of Christian education to reach, teach, and prepare them to become leaders.

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

A SMILE OR TWO

Substitution

The vice president of a large corporation died suddenly, and a brash junior executive asked the president: "Do you suppose I could take his place?"

"It is fine with me," the president answered, "if you can arrange it with the undertaker."

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

Bill Craig is serving as pastor of West Helena Church where he previously served as both associate pastor and interim pastor. He is a graduate of the University of Miami (Fla.) and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served churches in Florida, Kentucky, and Indiana. Craig and his wife, Sarah, have one daughter, Nancy Anne.

R.G. Merritt began serving May 1 as pastor of First Church, Grady, going there from Shannon Road Church, Pine Bluff, where he had been serving as associate pastor and youth director for more than a year.

R. Dale Wicker Jr. will begin serving May 22 as pastor of First Church, Conway, coming there from First Church, Diana, Texas. A native of Freeport, Texas, he is a graduate of East Texas Baptist University, Marshall, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also has pastored in Texas and served as an evangelist and church growth agent in Oregon. He is married to the former Betty Anne Pope. They are parents of twin sons, Michael and Matthew, age three; and a son, Marshall, age one.

Ronnie Noles began serving April 24 as pastor of Lake Ouachita Church at Mount Ida. He has served other Arkansas churches, including Story Church in Caddo River Association. Noles and his wife, Wanda, have two daughters, Rhonda, a student at Garland County Community College, and Deanna, a high school student.

Tony Bowden has joined the staff of Lavaca First Church as minister of youth and education. He and his wife, Gogi, have a son, Chaz.

Byron Allen Jr. will receive his doctor of ministry degree June 9 from Bethany Theological Seminary, Dothan, Ala., in graduation exercises at Southside Church in Dothan. Allen serves as pastor of East Side Church in Mountain Home.

Jeff Lake has resigned as minister to youth at Second Church, Hot Springs, to continue his education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Chester S. Maynard is serving as interim pastor of North Point Church, Roland.

Bob Dailey has completed two weeks of church planting and revival crusades in the

Philippines as a part of the SBC/Foreign Mission Board partnership program. The Brotherhood of Pickles Gap Church, Conway, where Dailey serves as pastor assisting in sponsoring his mission trip.

Roy A. Fowler completed four years of service May 1 as pastor of First Church, Mountain Home.

Briefly

Park Hill Church in North Little Rock recently held an Acteens Recognition Service, recognizing Elizabeth Jac, Julie Floyd, Angie Thompson, Felicia Murphy, and Missy Jones for completing Queen level. Brandy Jones was recognized for completion of the Queen Regent level of Studia. The church's mission team recently assisted Spadra Church near Clarksville with replacement of its roof.

Jacksonville First Church youth observed "We Love You Church" night April 29 in appreciation of the support received from the congregation. The Praise Singers from Ouachita Baptist University provided special music and B.J. Sams was speaker.

Centerton First Church held a service May 1 to ordain David McClelland, pastor of South Side Church, Fayetteville, to the preaching ministry. The church will honor Curtis Lancaster May 15 in recognition of his 60 years of service as a deacon.

Parkin Church recently purchased a 21-passenger bus for use in its outreach ministries. The church is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and has planned a special observance Oct. 2 at which both former members and pastors will be special guests.

Shepherd Hill Church at Pine Bluff has launched a tape ministry for non-mobile residents at the Davis Nursing Home. Mobile patients are taught Sunday School lessons by Mildred Bledsoe on Tuesday with Pastor Tommy Monk delivering a sermon each Thursday.

Judsonia First Church youth have planned a return mission trip to Alto, Penn., where they will assist Central Church with a Bible school, do other outreach work, and sing in church services June 19-28.

Bald Knob Central Church ordained Keith Keys to the deacon ministry May 1.

Antioch Church at Royal ordained Tim Thompson to the preaching ministry April 24.



The missions action group of Woman's Missionary Union of Midway Church near Mountain Home recently completed 56 handmade comforters and delivered them to the Arkansas Baptist Children's Home in Monticello as a missions action project. The group also has provided handmade gifts for a youth ranch and has made gifts and provided refreshments for local nursing homes.

'Conservatives' Meet in Fort Smith

On April 23 Paige Patterson and Paul Pressler spoke at an "update" on the events transpiring within the Southern Baptist Convention at First Church, Fort Smith. Judge Pressler had conducted other similar discussions in Arkansas earlier this year. According to Joe Atchison, director of missions for Benton County Association, Dr. Patterson and Judge Pressler came at the invitation of the "conservative" leaders in northwest Arkansas.

Atchison estimated that approximately 40 people were in attendance in the Saturday morning meeting. Information was presented on the progress being made by the "conservatives" in the various agencies and institutions of the SBC.

Specifically Atchison said that Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary was discussed at length. He observed that everyone felt "very positive" about the election of Lewis A. Drummond as president of that institution.

"The group also talked about the reports disseminated by Baptist Press and what they perceived as "confusion on the nominees" on the SBC Committee on Nominations, as well as the endorsements received by Richard Jackson from the "Friends of Missions" and Randall Lolley, former president of Southeastern Seminary.

The group also received a report on housing in San Antonio. It was reported that some housing is available that had been blocked off previously. Atchison said that, judging by the reports he had heard, there could be "as many as 50,000" messengers present for the convention.

Other topics included encouraging "conservatives" from Arkansas to attend the convention. Patterson gave what Atchison described as "a classic historical background of controversy in Christianity." This presentation not only included the Southern Baptist controversy but others.

'Salt of the Earth' Appointees

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention President Adrian P. Rogers has announced his appointments to four key committees that will serve during the 1988 annual meeting of the SBC, June 14-16 in the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas.

"These are good, solid Southern Baptists, what I would call 'salt-of-the-earth' Baptists," Rogers said as he named 136 people to the SBC Committee on Committees, Resolutions Committee, Credentials Committee and Tellers Committee.

Members of the four committees are appointed by the president of the SBC to serve only during the three-day run of the annual meeting. They do not require election by messengers.

Five Arkansans were appointed. Bill H. Lewis, director of missions for Harmony Association, and Kirk Thompson, businessman and member of First Church, Springdale, were appointed to the Committee on Committees.

Betty Atchison, a homemaker and member of First Church, Rogers, was appointed to the Resolutions Committee.

Tom Harris, pastor of Park Place Church, Hot Springs, was appointed to the Credentials Committee.

Clayton Spriggs, associate pastor of First Church, Fort Smith, was appointed chairman of the Tellers Committee.

40th Anniversary Celebration

Ben J. Rowell, pastor of First Baptist Church, Rogers, will celebrate his 40th anniversary in the preaching ministry June 6.

Rowell, who has served the Rogers congregation since 1975, preached his first sermon on June 6, 1948. He pastored eight congregations before coming to Rogers, most recently in Paris.

The church membership is planning a reception on Saturday evening, June 4, for the deacons and staff members from Rowell's previous pastorates. Sunday, June 5, a Sunday School high attendance goal has been set at 1,040. Other activities that day will include a picnic and skating party for the bus ministry, morning worship at 10:30 a.m., and dinner on the grounds. The First Church children's choir also will present "All We Like Sheep" at 7 p.m.



BSU Volleyball Tournament

More than 300 students from Arkansas Baptist Student Unions participated in an April 15-16 volleyball tournament at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia.

Placing first among the 22 teams was the BSU from the University of Central Arkansas at Conway. Southern Arkansas University-Tech at Camden placed second.

The program included a Saturday cook-out. Music was provided by students from Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

Passion Play

See the Great Passion Play and stay at Keller's Country Dorm (for groups of 12 or more), Eureka Springs, Ark. Air conditioning, pool, \$8 tickets, lodging and meals, all for \$22 each! Call 501-253-8418 today!

Financial Aid Director

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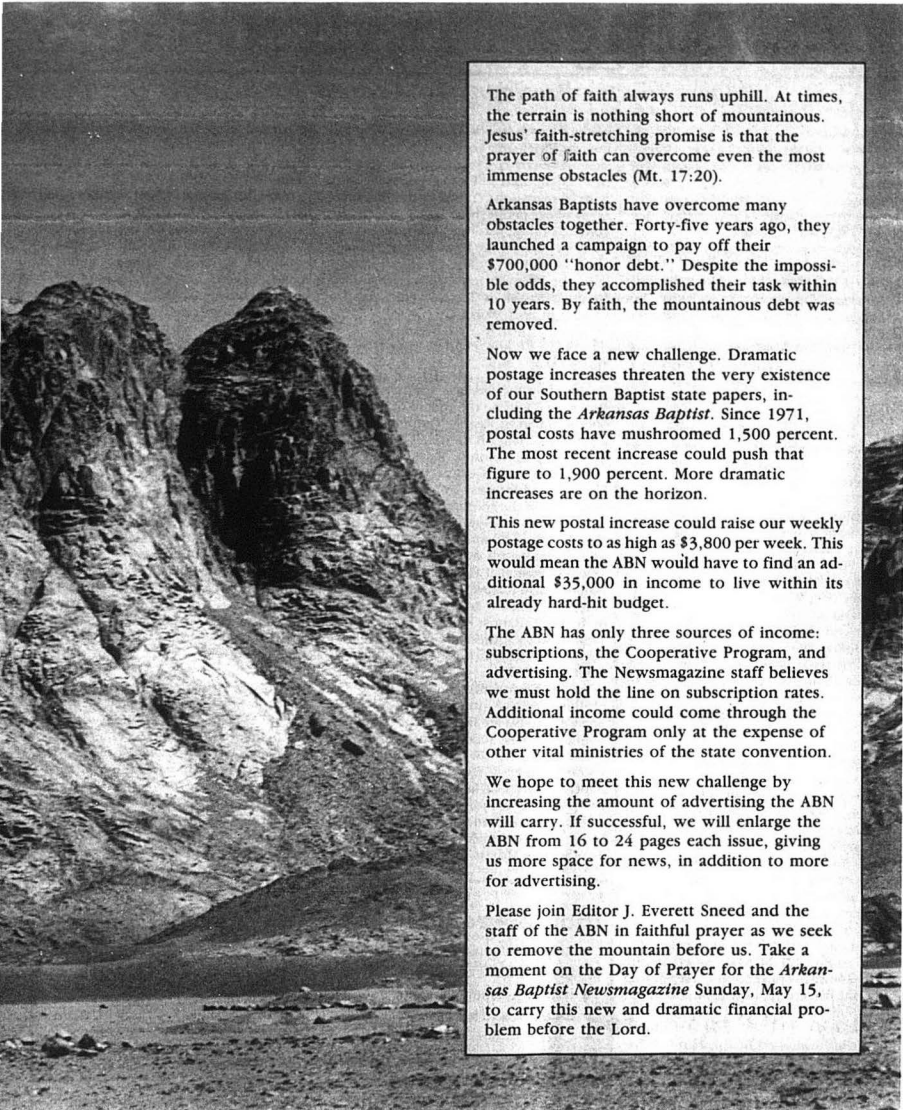
The mountain rose starkly against a pale blue sky. From the plain below, it was an impressive sight.

"What did he say?"

"If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, 'Be thou removed,' and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

"That mountain? Me? But how?"

**Day of Prayer for the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine
Sunday, May 15, 1968**



The path of faith always runs uphill. At times, the terrain is nothing short of mountainous. Jesus' faith-stretching promise is that the prayer of faith can overcome even the most immense obstacles (Mt. 17:20).

Arkansas Baptists have overcome many obstacles together. Forty-five years ago, they launched a campaign to pay off their \$700,000 "honor debt." Despite the impossible odds, they accomplished their task within 10 years. By faith, the mountainous debt was removed.

Now we face a new challenge. Dramatic postage increases threaten the very existence of our Southern Baptist state papers, including the *Arkansas Baptist*. Since 1971, postal costs have mushroomed 1,500 percent. The most recent increase could push that figure to 1,900 percent. More dramatic increases are on the horizon.

This new postal increase could raise our weekly postage costs to as high as \$3,800 per week. This would mean the ABN would have to find an additional \$35,000 in income to live within its already hard-hit budget.

The ABN has only three sources of income: subscriptions, the Cooperative Program, and advertising. The Newsmagazine staff believes we must hold the line on subscription rates. Additional income could come through the Cooperative Program only at the expense of other vital ministries of the state convention.

We hope to meet this new challenge by increasing the amount of advertising the ABN will carry. If successful, we will enlarge the ABN from 16 to 24 pages each issue, giving us more space for news, in addition to more for advertising.

Please join Editor J. Everett Sneed and the staff of the ABN in faithful prayer as we seek to remove the mountain before us. Take a moment on the Day of Prayer for the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* Sunday, May 15, to carry this new and dramatic financial problem before the Lord.

Reagan Invited

Rogers Invites President To Address 1988 SBC

by Dan Martin

Baptist Press

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)—President Ronald Reagan has been invited to address messengers to the 1988 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention June 14-16 in San Antonio, Texas.

The invitation was issued by SBC President Adrian P. Rogers of Memphis, Tenn., and the White House has not yet responded. If Reagan does accept the invitation, he is scheduled to speak at noon Thursday, June 16.

If the president accepts, the June meeting will mark the first time since 1976 that a sitting president of the United States has addressed the SBC. At the 1976 annual meeting in Norfolk, Va., then-President Gerald R. Ford addressed messengers. In 1982, Vice President George Bush addressed the annual meeting of the SBC Pastors' Conference in New Orleans.

Four 20-minute theme interpretations will explore the topic of revival. Speakers each have been assigned a different aspect for their messages.

Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, will speak on "Pour Out Revival in My Heart"; Ruffin Snow, pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla., will speak on "Pour Out Revival in My Home"; O. Damon Shook, pastor of Champion Forest Baptist Church, Houston, will speak on "Pour Out Revival on the Household of Faith"; and Bobby Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church, Daytona Beach, Fla., will speak on "Pour Out Revival on My Homeland."

The committee "wanted men to speak who represent a broad spectrum of Southern Baptist life but who also, by personal experience, can speak with some authority on the issues. We feel these men embody in their lifestyles the subjects they have been assigned." Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Church, Del City, Okla., and chairman of the SBC Order of Business Committee, said.

In keeping with the theme, Elliff said, a prayer room will be maintained in the Henry Gonzales Convention Center during the times the convention is in session. It will be fully staffed and is a cooperative effort between the SBC Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission.

Another highlight of the convention will

be the evening session Wednesday, June 15, during which the Foreign Mission Board will conduct a commissioning service for new missionaries. The service will end with an invitation. "It will be the first time many of our people have seen a missionary commissioning service," Elliff said.

Other items of the three-day meeting include an address by SBC President Rogers and the convention sermon by Joel Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth.

Pastors

"Building the Greatest Churches Since Pentecost" will be the theme of the 1988 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference June 12-13 in the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas.

The Pastors' Conference program features addresses by three former presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention: Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta; Bailey Smith, now an Atlanta-based evangelist; and W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas. It also features a greeting from current SBC President Adrian P. Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn. Also to address the conference will be Paige Patterson, president of Griswell College of Dallas.

Two men frequently mentioned as possible conservative nominees for the SBC presidency also are featured preachers: Ed Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church of Houston, will speak in the Monday night session, and Jerry Vines, co-pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla., will deliver the concluding address.

Other speakers include Freddie Gage, a Hurst, Texas, evangelist; Jay Strack, a Dallas evangelist; Morris Chapman, former

Pastors' Conference president and pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas; Ron Herrod, pastor of First Baptist Church of Fort Smith, Ark.;

Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla.; Gerald Harris, pastor of Colonial Heights Baptist Church of Jackson, Miss.; and Richard Lee, pastor of Rehoboth Baptist Church of Tucker, Ga.

Two newcomers, Coffey said, are Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., who "has a strong emphasis on the Sunday school in building a great church," and Bobby Boyles, pastor of First Baptist Church of Moore, Okla., who had "tremendous success in building a country church" near Burleson, Texas, before recently moving to Oklahoma.

Wives

"Heritage—Ours to Give" will be the theme for the 1988 Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives luncheon in San Antonio, Texas, Tuesday, June 14.

The luncheon, to be held in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, will begin at 12:15 p.m. in the Hilton Palacio del Rio. The hotel is across the street from the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, site of the SBC meeting.

"We want to be remembering our past and exploring the heritage we want to leave to future generations," said Nelle Agee, president of the SBC Conference of Ministers' Wives and wife of Bob Agee, president of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee.

Janette Cliff George, author, Bible teacher and founder and artistic director of A.D. Players of Houston, will be keynote speaker for the luncheon.

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SBC · SAN ANTONIO

1988

Advance tickets can be ordered before June 1 from Diane Bugg, 415 Waverly Drive, Augusta, Ga., 30909. Ticket orders should include \$12 for each ticket, along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Tickets bought at the convention will cost \$14.

WMU

Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union will launch its second century during its annual meeting June 12-13 in San Antonio, Texas.

"A Future to Fulfill" will be the theme of the meeting, which will come on the heels of WMU's Centennial Celebration, celebrated May 13-14 in its founding city, Richmond, Va.

The first session will begin at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 12, in Henry Gonzales Convention Center. The final session will begin at

7 p.m., Monday, June 13.

A 30-minute centennial documentary tracing the roots of WMU will premiere at the Sunday evening session.

Foreign missionary Jewell Waldron, who works in Ethiopia, will be one of several featured speakers. Her husband, Troy Waldron, was killed last August in a helicopter crash in Addis Ababa.

Mildred McWhorter, who is widely known for her Baptist center work in inner city Houston, will bring a presentation.

Southern Baptist Home Mission Board speakers will be Esther Burroughs, national evangelism consultant with women, and Wendell Belew, associate vice president for missions strategy interpretation. Foreign Mission Board speakers will be William O'Brien, executive vice president, and Lewis I. Myers, Cooperative Services International vice president.

Closing the annual meeting will be a commitment service, held on the San An-

tonio Riverwalk.

All other annual meeting events will be held in the theater in the convention center.

Scheduled meal events held during the WMU meeting will include a "prayer box" supper, a Baptist Nursing Fellowship dessert party and a "Hermansphere" ethnic luncheon. These meal functions will be held at the Hilton Palacio Del Rio. For information on how to order meal tickets, contact the WMU at (205) 991-4985.

Musicians

Southern Baptist church musicians will focus on the music of their souls this summer.

"Tune Your Hearts... That All May Hear" will be the theme for the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference at Castle Hills First Baptist Church in San Antonio, Texas, June 11-13.

The San Antonio conference will include 10 lectures, panel discussions or seminars; eight choral performances, four instrumental performances; three sermons; two business sessions; and a choral reading, according to a program released by Hugh McElrath, professor of church music at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

The meeting is not to be focused on special interests within the church music field, McElrath said. For example, it is not "a gathering of teachers, ... a training event under the aegis of our denominational leaders, ... a coming together of specialists, ... a meeting of music missionaries and musical evangelists, ... a musicfest."

"Though not primarily any of these, the conference includes aspects of all these interests in its programs, and therein lies its uniqueness," he explained. The conference does not compete with special-interest meetings but is "all inclusive" for all varieties of church musicians.

Musicians who wish to join the conference should contact Mary June Tabor, the organization's secretary/treasurer, at 1141 N. Robinson, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73103.

Forum

The SBC Forum will convene June 12-13 at Trinity Baptist Church, San Antonio, Texas, prior to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention June 14-16.

The theme for this year's Forum will be "Contending for the Faith," based on a passage from Jude 3. Two sessions are planned: Sunday evening and Monday morning.

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Campus Ministers

Southern Baptist campus ministers will focus on evangelism and renewal during their annual meeting June 12-13 in San Antonio, Texas.

"Revival—Reaching Out/Reaching In" will be the theme of the Association of Southern Baptist Campus Ministers conference, to be held on the campus of Trinity University.

"We hope our theme will tie into the theme of the convention's annual meeting as well as speak to us," said the organization's president, Arliss Dickerson. The SBC theme will be "Pour Out Revival."

The campus ministers' reaching out/reaching in theme has a dual purpose, Dickerson said: "We're trying to help equip student ministers to do a better job of reaching students on their campuses for Christ. We also intend for this to be a time of renewal and recommitment for us as ministers."

A highlight of the meeting will be worship led by Charlie Baker, pastor of Southern Hills Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla., who is noted for his ministry to college students, Dickerson said. "This emphasizes our relationship with churches and our ministry through churches," he explained.

Educators

"Our Vision: Expanded and Renewed" will be the theme for the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association annual meeting and related seminars June 11-13 in San Antonio, Texas.

Four sessions June 12 and 13 in Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center will explore various aspects of the religious educators' professional vision, announced association President Irene Bennett, minister of education and youth at Evans (Ga.) Baptist Church.

Topics for those sessions and the keynote speakers who will interpret each session's theme are "Through Our Calling," Harry Piland, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Sunday school division; "Through Our Relationships With Church Members," Brooks Faulkner, manager of the Sunday School board's vocational guidance section; "Through Our Leadership Skills," Mark Short, executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention; and "Through Our Ministry to One Another," Bob Edd Shotwell, minister of education at Hyde Park Baptist Church in Austin, Texas.

In addition to the thematic emphasis of the four major sessions, participants will choose from 12 workshops that will treat the theme from specific viewpoints or

ministerial situations, she said. Workshop leaders have been asked to include time for participants to brainstorm about how their areas of focus relate to the overall theme as well as their organization.

Participants also will have the chance to attend one of three pre-meeting seminars June 11.

For more information on the meeting or the seminars, contact the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association, P.O. Box 330369, Fort Worth, Texas 76163; phone (817) 292-7371.

DOMs

Associational directors of missions from across the Southern Baptist Convention will focus on excellence in leadership when they convene for their annual meeting June 12-13 in San Antonio, Texas.

"Committed to Excellence" will be the theme for the 27th annual meeting of the SBC Directors of Missions Conference, to be held at La Mansion del Norte Hotel immediately prior to the SBC annual meeting.

Highlights of the conference will include two keynote addresses. "The Association Committed to Excellence," by Robert E. Wiley, director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's associational missions division from Atlanta, and "The Director of Missions—A Model for Excellence in Leadership," by Walter Shurden, a church historian and dean of Mercer University's department of Christianity from Macon, Ga.

The conference also will include two Bible studies by Joel Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

Evangelists

The Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists will convene Wednesday, June 15, during the afternoon break of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

The conference will meet in the theater inside the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center, site of the SBC meeting. Featured speakers will be Jess Hendley of Atlanta, Ga.; Bill Stafford of Chattanooga, Tenn.; and Jay Strack of Dallas, Texas.

Women in Ministry

"Differing Gifts According To Grace" will be the theme of the 1988 Women in Ministry conference June 11-12 in San Antonio, Texas.

Saturday morning and afternoon, June 11, the group will meet at Manor Baptist Church. That evening, a Spanish fiesta will be hosted at the Plaza Nacional La Villita.

Sunday, June 12, a morning session will be held at the Arneson Theater on the River. In case of rain, the meeting will be moved to Musselman Chapel of Baptist Memorial Hospital.

For more information, contact Women in Ministry at 9210 Acorn Dr., Waco, TX 76703.

Notice

The ABN regrets that more information was not available on the Evangelists, Women in Ministry, and Forum programs. As of press time, these organizations had not provided Baptist Press with full information regarding their activities.



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Meet The Candidates

ABN Editor J. Everett Sneed interviews the two men expected to be nominated for SBC president in San Antonio.

Richard Jackson Jerry Vines

In response to the question, "Will you be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention?" Richard Jackson, who was recently a guest of the Immanuel Church, Little Rock, said, "I feel that the decision to make an individual give approval for his nomination has almost forced people to run for the office of president."

Last year Dr. Jackson was nominated for president. Early this year, George Harris, pastor of Castle Hills First Church in San Antonio, announced that he would nominate Jackson. Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix (Ariz.) Church, said, "If he hasn't changed his mind, I assume that I will be nominated."

Jackson believes that almost all Southern Baptists maintain a traditional conservative stance on biblical theology. He says we must maintain this conservative position in a manner that will enhance missions and evangelism. He emphasizes the necessity of stopping the infighting that has hampered our worldwide outreach. He said, "I am convinced that grass root Baptists are taking a long look at and are saying, 'We are the people we have always been.'"

Jackson believes Southern Baptists need a conclusion to the infighting so that each of our agencies and institutions can move forward in carrying out its purpose.

He feels that the solution to the controversy is for Southern Baptists to decide that they are not concerned about who is in control and trust the people to work within the system.

Jackson said, regarding the election of Lewis A. Drummond as president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, that he respects the decision of the trustees. He indicated that he did not know Drummond personally but said that, from what he did know, he believed Drummond would direct Southeastern in a balanced and fair manner theologically and practically.

Jackson also believes Larry Baker is providing quality leadership for the SBC Christian Life Commission. Jackson has known Dr. Baker since they were classmates in seminary. He said, "He is a man of the highest integrity and one who has great commitment to the Word of God and to Christian ethics as a lifestyle. He is not merely someone who teaches ethics. He is one who lives ethically. I would encourage the trustees of the Christian Life Commission to give Dr. Baker opportunity to provide leadership that Southern Baptists will appreciate in the future."

Jackson indicated that he was not in a position to fully evaluate the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. He said that the Baptist Joint Committee had provided us with a presence in Washington which had assisted greatly regarding separation of church and state. He said, "I hope we will not sever our relationship with this agency."

Finally, Jackson gave his qualifications for persons appointed by the president of the SBC. They should be persons who: (1) stand under the lordship of Christ; (2) believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God; (3) are committed to the Baptist way of conducting missions and evangelism in a cooperative spirit; (4) would be willing to pay the price in preparation and study prior to trustee meetings; and (5) would seek God's leadership, vote their consciences and be strong enough not to be intimidated by others.



Jerry Vines, co-pastor of First Church, Jacksonville, Fla., says he will be nominated as president of the Southern Baptist Convention "unless there is some unforeseen intervention of the Lord." He is continuing to pray regarding his nomination as president of the convention. He emphasized he is not seeking the office of president.

Earlier this year, Vines' co-pastor, Homer Lindsey Jr., announced Vines will be a candidate for president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Vines believes that the problems within the Southern Baptist Convention are in the process of being corrected. He said, "I believe that the process of theological renewal is underway. But I believe that the process needs to be properly continued."

Vines believes that the solution to the tension within our convention is for every Southern Baptist, regardless of theological perspective, to conduct himself as a Christian gentleman and avoid personal attacks or attributing wrong motives to others.

He believes that the election of Lewis A. Drummond as president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary is a good selection. He said, "I am grateful that he has been elected and believe that he will do a fine job."

Vines declined to evaluate the SBC Christian Life Commission, indicating he needed more information prior to making an evaluation. He said he had recently received a video tape entitled "Helping Change the World" but hadn't had time to review the presentation because of his heavy load at the church.

Regarding the Baptist Joint Committee, Vines indicated he feels the Joint Committee is in the process of change. He said, "I will be interested in seeing how this change proceeds. I will be able to make a much better evaluation after the process is completed."

Vines encouraged Southern Baptists to continue the things that have made them great: preaching the Word of God and going from door to door to lead people to Christ. He said, "Southern Baptists have been given by God the method and the means to impact our nation evangelistically like no other denomination."

Vines enumerated a number of factors that he believes have made Southern Baptists great. He said that among these factors are: (1) our method of voluntarily cooperating together in matters of mutual interest; (2) our method of growing great Sunday Schools; (3) our commitment to the Bible as the authoritative Word of God; and (4) our approach to missions.

Vines indicated he feels that considerable diversity can exist in Southern Baptist life without creating major problems, so long as the diversity is within the perimeters of the Baptist Faith and Message statement on the Scripture, specifically that the Bible is "truth without any mixture of error."

He feels that so long as people truly believe the Bible to be the Word of God "without any mixture of error" that individuals can differ on interpretation. He specifically cited the matter of eschatology. He said, "When you read the Baptist Faith and Message statement on last things, it appears that those who wrote the statement left room for several different interpretations. In contrast, the writers of the Baptist Faith and Message closely define the statement on the Scripture."

Convention Uniform

Getting Close to God

by Greg Kirksey, Hillside Church, Camden

Basic passage: Hebrews 10:23-25; 32 to 11:3

Focal passage: Hebrews 10:23-25

Central truth: Because of the work of Jesus Christ, man no longer needs a priest to represent him.

We have all known someone who seemed to live close to God. They always appeared to live in the glow of heaven's brilliance and you enjoyed being in their presence. You may have wished you could be like them.

But the stress and adversity of life often strains our faith in God. This was the situation addressed in today's text. Due to persecution and other difficulties many early believers were drifting away from their faith in Jesus Christ. The text exhorts us to have faith in God even in the difficulties of life. We learn how we may draw close to God rather than fall away.

The first step in drawing close to God is to develop a confident heart. In verse 23, we are instructed to "hold fast the confession of our hope." We let go of God too easily and too quickly. Let a little storm hit and we are ready to abandon our faith. The text calls this "wavering." But we are to hold tightly to our hope. Hope is the theme of Hebrews and the word used here does not refer to wishful thinking but rather to confident expectations.

The second step in drawing close to God is to have a caring heart. Verse 24 tells us to "consider others." If you want to be close to God, a caring heart is essential. The word "consider" refers to continuous care and active concern. And when we become concerned about others, two good things result. One, we become more like God as we grow close to him. Second, when we become concerned about others, our own problems, which often become a wedge between us and God, seem smaller.

The text goes on to tell us how to care for others, and two specific matters are mentioned. First, we are to be faithful in our church attendance. It is impossible to help people you are not in touch with. Your attendance will stimulate others as well as benefit you personally. And second, we are to "encourage one another." You are never more like Christ than when you have a heart full of compassion for those facing difficulties.

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Life and Work

Strengthened by the Spirit

by Hilton Lane, Fairfield Bay Church, Fairfield Bay

Basic passage: Romans 8:1-27

Focal passage: Romans 8:9-17, 26-27

Central truth: The Christian is strengthened by the Spirit of God in the new life.

Assurance is the theme of Romans 8. It is the Spirit of God that gives the Christian power and assurance (Ro. 8:1-11). The Christian still lives in an imperfect world of sin, temptation, and persecution. The sin that has infected all of humanity is cured by the Spirit of God and not the law. The Spirit does what the law could not do—redeem mankind from sin.

Two mind sets are contrasted in Romans 8:5-8: (1) life lived under sin, and (2) life lived under the Spirit. The way of flesh has death as its final view, is directly opposed to God, and cannot please God. The way of the spirit has life as its final view and enables Christians to be at peace.

Spirit possessed people still live in perishable bodies. Paul offers Christians the assurance that the same Spirit that indwelt the risen Christ indwells them (Ro. 8:9-11).

Romans 8:12-17 redefines the relationship between the Spirit and sonship. Those who live in the Spirit are no longer debtors to the flesh. Slaves are debtors—not sons. Those led by God's Spirit are God's sons.

Romans 8:18-27 focuses upon the Spirit and redemption. There is a close relationship between glory and suffering. The Christian is not alone in the sufferings of the present. Paul depicts all nature longing for redemption.

There is an "already" and a "not yet" in every Christian's experience. He has "already" been saved, but he is "not yet" all that God has promised. This is a hope that moves beyond wishful thinking to a tangible hope (Ro. 8:24). This hope is basic in salvation. The scriptures are a source of this hope. This is a kind of hope that works from within (1 P. 3:15). It is not controlled by outward circumstances. This hope is personified in Christ.

It is the Holy Spirit that intercedes for us with unutterable groanings. This is non-verbal communication at its best. It is precisely at our weakest point that the Holy Spirit strengthens us. He takes our faltering words and feeble intentions and stands before God in our behalf. We are called to come "Just as I am" in salvation.

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Bible Book

Jesus' Authority

by Rich L. Kincl, Central Church, Magnolia

Basic passage: Matthew 8:1-34

Focal passage: Matthew 8:5-13, 16, 23-27

Central truth: Jesus' miracles prove his authority and merit our trust in all areas of life.

Upon completion of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus was still followed by the multitudes. The common people recognized he spoke with authority (7:29), although he had no credentials like the scribes.

Jesus' miracles proved his divinity and were irrefutable evidence of his messiahship. Matthew's purpose in recording these miracles was to confirm his deity and messiahship.

In our lesson Jesus cleansed a leper, healed a paralytic, cast out demons, and commanded power over the wind and sea. In each case, persons who seemingly had no hope came to Jesus for deliverance.

All people have needs that God can meet. Many times we must reach the point of desperation before he gets our attention. People often turn to God for help only when every other resource has been exhausted.

Jesus will respond to us when we call upon him. In each miracle in this chapter, Jesus answered a direct appeal. However weak it may seem, an element of faith is present in each situation.

The centurion was one who knew both how to receive and give commands. He knew when a command was given by one in authority the result would follow. As he acknowledged Jesus' absolute authority, our Lord marvelled at his faith (v. 11).

Jesus wants us to call upon him in faith. As we acknowledge his ability to meet the needs in our lives and trust him to guide us, he honors our faith. We should approach him reverently (v. 2), humbly (v. 8a), confidently (v. 8b), and boldly (v. 25-26), and regularly (v. 16).

It is easy to make statements of affirmation and faith before we have counted the costs. Jesus had many followers with a shallow and superficial faith. Though fascinated and intrigued by what Jesus said and did, many would not surrender to him as Lord and Savior (vv. 33-34). Some begged Jesus to leave their country, preferring property to people.

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Intolerance Persists

UN Report Focuses On Religious Discrimination

by Kathy Palen
Baptist Joint Commission on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—Incidents of religious intolerance persist throughout the world, according to a recent report presented to the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

The report, prepared by the U.N. special rapporteur on religious intolerance, focuses on examples of religious intolerance in seven countries. The examples represent a "broad geographical distribution" highlighting the "nearly universal nature of the problem" of religious intolerance and discrimination, said Angelo Vidal D'Almeida Ribeiro, a longtime human rights advocate from Portugal who in 1986 was appointed special rapporteur to examine incidents of governmental actions throughout the world inconsistent with the provisions of the U.N. Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

Ribeiro's report explores allegations of specific instances of religious intolerance, including restrictions on various faiths in the Soviet Union; harassment of Christian minorities in Turkey; persecution of Catholics and Protestants in Burundi; total abolition of religion in Albania; repression of ethnic Turks in Bulgaria; torture and execution of Baha'is in Iran; and laws forbidding the Ahmadiyya faith in Pakistan.

The report also discusses general examples of religious intolerance in more

than 40 countries, including the right to have a religion, maintain places of worship, establish charitable institutions, disseminate religious publications, receive voluntary financial contributions, train or choose religious leaders, celebrate holidays, maintain contacts abroad, practice religion without discrimination and raise children according to their parents' chosen religion.

During an April press briefing, representatives from the Department of State, Congressional Human Rights Caucus and Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty voiced support for the report.

Richard Schifter, assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, said although the special rapporteur had no authority to make nations stop their religious liberty violations, his report places the "spotlight of world attention" on the violations.

In addition, the report brings the full weight of the United Nations to bear against those countries, said Rep. Christopher H. Smith, R-N.J.

Smith was joined by Rep. John E. Porter, R-Ill.—a fellow member of the bipartisan Congressional Human Rights Caucus—in praising Ribeiro for presenting an in-depth report.

"By reporting specific instances of religious persecution in seven countries, Mr. Ribeiro provides a base for understanding of the broader issues of religious intolerance which he described in his first report," said Porter, who serves as caucus

co-chairman. "It is necessary to draw attention to worldwide violations of religious intolerance in order to emphasize their importance to the international community."

Former U.S. Ambassador R.T. Davies commended Ribeiro for "naming names and providing detailed descriptions of cases," something few U.N. staff reports do.

Jobs Exchange

Camp Counselors—Counselors needed for youth camp near Siloam Springs. Must be college-age or young teachers. Dates: June 12 - July 16. Base salary \$400, plus room and board. College credit may be earned. Call Katherine Pickle, director, at 918-723-3546, or write Kamp Paddle Trails, Rt. 1 Box 210, Watts, OK 74964. 5/26

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Classifieds

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Friend of China

by **Erich Bridges**
SBC Foreign Mission Board

NANJING, China (BP)—“Why do you love China so much?” someone asks Britt Towery on the long train trip from Yantai to Nanjing.

The tall Texas Baptist closes the portable computer on which he records his thoughts and experiences. He rubs his eyes and gazes for a long moment at the Chinese landscape drifting past the window.

“I don’t really know,” he finally replies in a quiet voice. Tears well up in his eyes. “I’m just thankful for the privilege of being here.”

Towery cannot explain his passion for this place and its people. But like other Americans who have fallen in love with the Chinese since the two cultures met, he knows the passion is there. It was there before he set foot in China six years ago . . . there before he arrived in Taiwan in 1957, when he and his wife, Jody, began a career of Christian work among the Chinese.

Towery, 58, is an intriguing collection of opposites. By turns he is humorous and deadly serious, easygoing and impatient, visionary and practical. He is a thinker and a doer, a fluent Mandarin speaker with a drawl straight from Brownwood, Texas. And when it comes to China, he is an intense advocate—of the people, the country, and the church.

From his home in Hong Kong, Towery has visited China more than 30 times since 1982. He says he felt “right at home” the first time. The Towerys have developed a vast range of relationships with Christians and others in China.

Those relationships helped open the door for the Southern Baptist production of “Winter is Past,” the 1986 film about Chinese Christians (available from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and Baptist Film Centers), and resulted in Towery’s recent book, “The Churches of China” (Long Dragon Publishers, Waco, Texas).

They also helped lay the foundation for Cooperative Services International, the organization formed by Southern Baptists in 1985 to aid Christians and serve society in China and other countries where missionaries do not work.

Towery is now China liaison director for Cooperative Services International. It is a natural assignment for him.

“I like to think we are making friends first of all, making friends with the Chinese Christians and non-Christians, helping Americans understand them better, helping Chinese understand Americans,” he says. Cultivating and expanding his Chinese

(BP) photo by Joanna Pinneo



Protestant leader Qi Tingduo and Towery

contacts, Towery is helping Southern Baptists visit China, understand the country and the churches, and provide assistance requested by the Chinese.

In a growing number of Chinese cities and provinces, Southern Baptists are being invited to live and work for a time, to teach English in universities or provide business and technological skills to help China modernize. Also needed are educators in other fields, health care professionals, agriculturists and experts in a variety of industries.

China is welcoming skilled people, including Christians, from many countries as it engages in a drive for rapid progress in science, technology, education and other areas. Through the Amity Foundation, initiated by church leaders several years ago, Chinese Christians are sponsoring a number of projects in service to their society as they also increase their dialogue and fellowship with Christians from around the world.

“We can help China modernize and move into the 21st century,” Towery says. But he stresses it must be at Chinese invitation. “The Chinese Christians themselves have been very careful in this new opportunity that is theirs since the churches began to reopen in 1979. They have been very careful to see that everything they do relates to all of the Chinese people, not just to the Christians. So I have tried in our relationships to say what we do is for the Chinese people.”

The reaction, he reports, has been exciting.

“China has been so open, so gracious in giving us opportunities to share through the Teachers Project with the Amity Foundation and through other universities all over China giving our teachers an opportunity to teach English and other subjects. They are saying, ‘We welcome you as long as you come with an open mind and are willing to help all of China.’

Perhaps the warm reception comes, in part, from a recognition by the Chinese of one man’s love and respect for their nation.