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April 21, 1988

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Bringing Missions Home

Arkansas Baptist

April 21, 1988

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BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONS:

*Missionary
at
Heart*

Cover Story



Missionary At Heart 5

Missions is at the heart of the Baptist association. This year, Associational Emphasis Week is May 16-22.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

No Excuses Accepted

WACO, Texas (BP)—It's no wonder Robert Gilbert won't accept the excuses of people who try to tell him why they can't serve God.

After enduring three decades of enduring crippling psoriatic arthritis, more than 50 hospital stays, open-heart surgery, and the loss of nearly all his sight, Gilbert still is ministering as pastor of Carver Park Baptist Church in Waco, Texas.

"'Can't' is not in my vocabulary. If you're saved, all things are possible through Christ," he said. "There's no excuse for a person saying he can't do something."

"It doesn't matter what the challenge is. As long as I have life and breath, the Lord has fixed a way for me to do it. People say, 'You can't even dress yourself. You can't comb your own hair. You can't get around by yourself.' But the Lord has given me a family. He has given me a wife and children who care for my personal hygiene needs and help me get around. He says, 'I will provide for your every need.'"

Gilbert adopted a "no excuses" philosophy early in life, and in spite of advancing arthritis completed his studies at Baylor University in 1967. When he accepted the pastorate at Carver Park in 1978, the church was averaging 60 people in attendance. Today, about 300 members worship there every week.

Gilbert shares his philosophy in a book, *No Excuses Accepted*, recently published by Broadman Press. The Waco school board voted in January to place copies of

the book in every school library in the district.

Carver preaches a no excuses theology that reaches into every area of Christian discipleship, from evangelism to social justice.

"Some people try to tell me, 'I can't go witness.' I say there is no excuse for not witnessing. I go out in my wheelchair on the streets preaching and visiting. There are about a half dozen senior adults who go with me, and we even go into the bars and taverns to witness.

"When we live in a country that has the wealth ours does, there is no excuse for anyone to be hungry. There is no excuse for people not having adequate housing. There is no excuse for our children not receiving a proper education. There is no excuse for blacks and whites not getting together as brothers and sisters and learning to love one another."

In spite of his positive no excuses attitude, Gilbert admits it is easy for him to surrender to depression. However, he finds inspiration in the example of two biblical figures.

"I identify with Job and Paul very closely," he said. "Job was afflicted physically and was reprimanded by friends who blamed him for his own situation. Still, Job remained faithful. I try to maintain the kind of trust in God that Job had.

"Paul had a thorn in the flesh. He prayed three times for it to be removed, but his prayer was not answered as he would have liked. Still, he found God's grace was sufficient.

"God has encircled me with his love. He has never left me alone."

GOOD NEWS!

Pray For One Another

Philemon 4-7

Paul made it clear to Philemon that their relationship was being strengthened by daily prayer. Paul said, "I always thank God for you, Philemon" (v. 4, Phillips). Paul valued the relationship with his brother and prayed for him repeatedly. Prayer is a barrier breaker.

Build bonds of friendship.—Persons tend to build barriers by saying hurting words and seeking selfish gain. People often become things to be manipulated for profit with little thought of the other person's feelings. Barriers are built higher and higher; but when we follow the example

of Christ and see persons as individuals created in the image of God and of immense worth, we turn criticism about our brother to prayer for our brother. Barriers are then broken, and the bonding of friendship replaces the barriers.

Pray for persons by name.—Paul expressed deep feelings of gratitude for Philemon, "making mention of thee always in my prayers" (v. 4). It is a source of extra strength to know that someone is praying for us by name. It works wonders. Pray for persons by name. It will bring barriers crashing down.

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The Association

J. EVERETT SNEED

No area in Baptist life is more important than the association except the local church. Yet, in spite of the valuable role the association plays, it is often misunderstood. The association, being the closest unit to the local church, performs a unique function in tying together all that Baptists do. Associational Emphasis Week, May 16-22, will afford an excellent opportunity for churches to gain a better understanding of the role the association plays in Baptist life. This also would be an excellent time for churches to emphasize "Church Arkansas."

The work of the association is biblically based. A careful examination of the ministry of Paul will reveal that, in large measure, his work was similar to that of the modern director of missions. Not only did he begin numerous churches and assist them in times of difficulty, but he coordinated their efforts in assisting one another. For instance, he led the churches in the collection of gifts for the needy congregation in Jerusalem (see Ro. 15:25-26).

The two main purposes of an association are to promote fellowship among the churches and to carry out the tasks that require the resources and the strength of several congregations. Every church needs the assistance of the association in order to promote *koinonia*, or fellowship. Every church gains strength from this inner relationship.

One of the areas in which the association can be of vital help is "Church Arkansas." This effort has as its goal starting and developing new congregations. The goal is to establish 370 new congregations by the year 2000.

The immediate goal of "Church Arkansas" is to start 25 new congregations this year. The plan is to be intensified in 1989 with 45 new congregations being started. The effort further calls for an average of 30 congregations to be started from 1990 to 1999. This would bring the total number of churches in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention to approximately 1,550 by the year 2000. If this effort is to be successful, each of our associations must place major emphasis on "Church Arkansas."

The director of missions has many and varied responsibilities. Perhaps his primary ongoing responsibility is administrative. He assists churches in developing and setting goals. Realistic goals can be of great importance in motivating individuals and con-



gregations collectively.

Often the association can provide materials to churches which will make them more effective. Most associational offices have an abundance of helpful printed matter which cover almost every area of church life.

Associational leadership also assists with the edification of churches. Time has proven the importance of religious education, so associations often provide study courses and leadership conferences in the area of Sunday School, Church Training, Music, Brotherhood and a host of others. The director of missions aids churches, particularly small ones, with building programs and other special needs.

The association provides an important link in denominational activities. The association acts as a contact between the

local church, the state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. Thus, by interpreting programs, the Cooperative Program is enhanced. The director of missions also helps people to become aware of the value of the Cooperative Program as well as world mission causes.

Many of our associations provide camps, assemblies, and retreats which assist young and old alike to understand God's will for their lives.

In most associations, it would be difficult for the work to be carried on without the leadership of a director of missions. The director of missions usually carries a heavy responsibility and plays a vital role in the ongoing activities of the association. In addition to other responsibilities, he serves as a counselor both for pastors and laymen. Perhaps his most important function is to see that the priorities set by the association are carried out. During the Associational Emphasis Week, your director of missions should be remembered in prayer.

It is also imperative that an association provide proper remuneration for the missionary and his family. The director of missions, when he is doing his job properly, carries one of the heaviest responsibilities in all of Baptist life. Since this is true, it is imperative that careful attention be given to his salary, expenses and benefits.

We salute the 42 associations which serve the Baptists of Arkansas. We believe that these associations are an indispensable link between the state convention and the churches. The assistance provided to the churches by the associations and the staff members is vital to the ongoing of the Lord's work. Please take time to become better informed and to pray for the entire work of your local association May 16-22.

Arkansas Baptist NEWSMAGAZINE

VOLUME 86 NUMBER 15

J. Everett Sneed, Ph.D. Editor

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

Copies by mail 50 cents each.

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



During the turbulent sixties and seventies, the cry of protest was against "the establishment." It appeared that anything that had existed for any length of time had to be wrong. The structure, the goals, the leadership and the activities of one and all came under condemnation. They were assumed to have biased and inept leadership. They were assumed to have subnormal goals and inefficient or ineffective actions.

Numerous spontaneous movements evolved. Large numbers got on the bandwagon of the new, the novel, the free, the "cutting edge" causes. Twenty years later these have become institutionalized or they have died.

It happens with Christian movements. They are going to avoid the clutter and cost of organizations, staff, and buildings. "We will meet in homes." "We will use volunteer leaders." "We will get back to only the basics." Watch them! They die or within 20 years develop buildings, staff and organizations. All movements that plan to survive begin to look for ways to perpetuate the cause. They end up institutionalizing the movement they started in protest to institutions.

There are two conclusions I draw from this common pattern. Institutionalization is inevitable and necessary. Structure and organization are necessary to the orderly and efficient stewardship of both human and financial resources. Institutionalization gives permanence to worthy causes. They embody and symbolize enduring values. From this vantage point, the institutional church is right and good.

The other conclusion is that permanence, structure, facilities and age tend to bring lethargy, erosion of motives and goals. The mindset of many institutions is maintenance. Their mission, their aim, their purpose for being is to maintain what is instead of driving hard toward what ought to be. Many churches in Arkansas appear to have lost their mission of reaching their community. Today their mission is maintaining the buildings, organization, and staff. These are not goals to which today's young adults will commit their lives.

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

Letters to the Editor

Love Expressed

In December, when our city was hit by a tornado and flood, we saw love expressed in many different ways. People from all over the state and neighboring states helped with clothing, food and money.

Now just two blocks from our church, the Brotherhood Department set up their disaster bus and fed thousands of people. We were so proud of the men who worked tirelessly in this effort.

We also were able to see love expressed through the Home Mission Board and our own Missions Department of Arkansas. I do not have words to express my appreciation to the Missions Department of our convention for their help to the flood victims. It was sure good to be able to share \$300 with each of the flood victims, and the reaction from these people was so great. They could not believe that church people would help them in a moment like this.

When disasters like these hit a community and you're busy distributing food and clothing, it is good to know that you can

look up and see people from your own Baptist headquarters who came to help and share their love.

Without a doubt, people will never forget the love that was expressed to them during their time of need.

To all of you who shared in any way, you have added strength to our community, to our church, and to this pastor. God bless you.—**Henry Applegate, West Memphis**

Sign Letters

Again let me express my appreciation to you for the excellent editorials you have written, especially in recent weeks. I am greatly disappointed, however, in your decision to print the controversial letter to the editor ("Story of the SBC," 3/10/88) written by some spineless subscriber to our state paper.

While I defend his right to think, speak, and write his opinions on any matter of interest to Southern Baptists, it bothers me

(continued on p. 6)

Woman's Viewpoint

A Special Area of Service

ROSE WIDNER

The most rewarding church related teaching experience that I have ever had was serving as Girls' Auxiliary Leader. I served in this capacity 10 years on the local level and two years on the county level. The last two years I served as G. A. director for Mississippi County.

Even though I had taught Sunday School and Training Union, and had been active in W.M.S. and in the choir, serving as Girls' Auxiliary Leader was a very special area of service to me. I served as leader for ages nine to 12 and for ages 13 to 16.

Working with these girls was the busiest and happiest time of my life in Christian service. There were missionary programs from *Tell Magazine*. We



had special meetings to work on forward steps. There were also special programs for observance of home, state and foreign missions. We also had a special mission action project once a month. We visited the hospitals and shut-ins and took cookies and flowers that we had made. Sometimes, we even had our mission program with them, if they were not too ill.

It was not all work and no play. We had mother and daughter teas. We had plays depicting our "Star

Ideals," and skating parties.

During these years, we had several coronation services where the girls donned their formals and received recognition for their achievements. We honored Maidens, Ladies-in-Waiting, Queens, Queens with Sceptre, and one Queen Regent. The Queen Regent was my daughter, Pat.

Each time as I watched the girls march down the aisles singing their G. A. Song, "We've A Story To Tell To The Nations," I could see it as definitely a special area of service in our mission work.

Rose Widner teaches in the Gosnell School System. A member of First Church, Blytheville, she and her husband, J.D. have two grown children.

BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONS:

Missionary at Heart

The Associational Emphasis Week theme, "Baptist Associations: Missionary at Heart," describes the very nature of the Baptist association. As the oldest form of Baptist denominationalism, associations were born and "grew up" in missions, are integrally involved in missions today, and, if Bold Mission Thrust is to be accomplished, will be on mission in the future.

The first Baptist association was born in Philadelphia in 1707. One of the primary reasons those churches chose to organize was to be on mission together. Keenly aware that God's world extended beyond their own doorsteps, they realized they had to work together to

meet those needs that were too big for individual churches.

Today's association remains a dynamic, vital team member in missions advance. More than 1,200 associations of Baptist churches are on mission across America. These associations are located in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Canada. Served by 900 directors of missions, they are as unique and varied as the churches which comprise them.

But these associations do have one thing in common: each association is actively involved in local missions and, thus, in world missions. Missions is the very heartbeat of the Baptist association.

Missionary
at
Heart

In Arkansas, Too!

Like their counterparts across the nation, Arkansas' 42 Baptist associations have missions at heart.

One good example, among the many available, is the Conway-Perry Association.

Conway-Perry is not the largest association in the state. Its churches number only 16. Nor is it the wealthiest. Its 1987 budget totaled \$28,545. But Conway-Perry Association is nonetheless at the forefront of missions advance in Arkansas.

In three years, Conway-Perry Association has begun three new mission congregations: Sweet Home, Center Ridge, and Petit Jean. A fourth—Wise Mountain—is on the drawing boards. A stronger commitment to

missions could not be demonstrated.

Those three new works have been taken to heart by the churches, according to Refus Caldwell, Conway-Perry Association director of missions for 21 years. Volunteers have helped with construction and remodeling. Leaders have been loaned by sponsoring churches. And every church has supported the new works in one way or another.

And Conway-Perry Association is not alone. The stories are literally multiplied across the state as Arkansas' other associations join in the task of winning their state to Christ.

Arkansas' Baptist associations: missionary at heart.

Observe Associational Emphasis Week • May 16-22, 1988

Lakeshore Drive Baptist Church

cordially invites all friends and former members to join us during the 10:50 a.m. service, Sunday, April 24, in the dedication to God of our newly renovated auditorium. Renew the bonds of friendship during a covered dish dinner following the service.

21 Lakeshore Drive Little Rock, Ark.
565-5536

Part-Time

Part-time relief houseparents for Little Rock area Emergency Shelter for Children. Approximately 8 days a month. Salary, benefits (insurance and vacation), and supervision. Contact: David Perry, 376-4791, or Arkansas Baptist Family & Child Care Services P.O. Box 552 Little Rock, AR 72203.

DANIEL R. GRANT

One Layman's Opinion



The Ideal Home

With retirement coming up in less than five months, Betty Jo and I have

been facing a lot of those challenging once-in-a-lifetime questions. One of the more difficult is: As we move out of Ouachita's beautiful and spacious president's home, what kind of home is ideal for our retirement years, and should we buy or build?

Free advice seems to be abundantly available. We have heard from evangelistic advocates of condominiums, retirement villages, resort apartments, big city, small town, and farm dwellings, and crusading spokesmen for buying and building in Little Rock and Arkadelphia.

We finally have settled on very simple requirements for our ideal retirement home. It should be small and economical, requiring very little housework for cleaning and maintenance, and very little expenditure for heating and air conditioning. Yet it should be large enough for our 11 children and grandchildren to come and visit us several times a year, including a large sound proof game room with outside lock, and several guest bedrooms with private bath. The house should be on a very small lot with almost no lawn-mowing and shrubbery-tending requirements, yet ample parking space for our two cars and the cars of our children and grandchildren, plus adequate lawn space for touch football as well as a basketball goal. Most of all, although the ideal retirement home should have the economies of a finished basement and a spacious attic, respect for the old bones and joints of the retirees dictates that there should be absolutely no stairs.

Betty Jo and I are already having just a little trouble working out a few of the details. Sincere marriage counselors have told us that we should go ahead and get the divorce now and then make plans to remarry after the house is completed. My years as president of Ouachita have established my reputation as an irrepressible optimist, and I doubt if retirement is going to change that. I fully expect to build the ideal retirement home and preserve our marriage as well. Of course, I may have to bend a little if Betty Jo does not agree to astro-turf for the yards.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

Letters

(continued from p. 4)

that he is such a coward, and that our editor would permit his views to appear without name identification.

What is he afraid of? Who would harm him? Why should he remain anonymous? I, too, have written a few letters to several editors, but all of them were signed. I would hope that your policy of printing letters from spineless subscribers would be changed. Speaking the truth in love, I remain,—Charles Rosson, Rogers

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

INGATHERING: *Third of a four-part series*

Reasons For Dropping Out

by Bob Holley

ABSC Church Training Department

It is important to understand the reasons why many church members become inactive. It is important, not only in our effort to reclaim inactive members but also to help prevent others from becoming inactive. The best research available on the subject, including the work of Dr. John S. Savage, a leading authority in this field, suggests 10 major reasons for church members becoming dropouts. These include:

(1) personal and family crises—such as death of a family member or close friend, personal or family illness, divorce, separation, family conflict;

(2) life transitions—normal developmental events such as teen years, graduation from high school, entering young adulthood, marriage, birth of a child, children leaving home, retirement;

(3) shift of priorities—sports, recreational activities, hobbies, social activities, work and career responsibilities, involvement in community organizations;

(4) interpersonal conflicts—conflict between individuals or families in the church, either within or outside the church;

(5) burnout—commitment to too many church responsibilities or staying in a particular responsibility

too long;

(6) immoral behavior—not living up to the expectations of God, the church or oneself. The guilt or shame that results may cause one to withdraw from the church fellowship;

(7) problems with church leaders—disappointment and dissatisfaction can arise when their expectations of the pastor and other church staff members and church leaders are not met;

(8) problems with the church—members may feel that the church's beliefs are too narrow or too broad; that its teachings are too strict or too loose; or that the form of worship is too formal or too informal;

(9) church conflicts—this includes persons who are actively involved in conflict and are defeated, those who are tired of being in a congregation torn by conflict, and those blamed for their roles in conflict;

(10) move to another community—nearly three out of 10 Southern Baptist church members have moved to a new community and have never transferred their membership to another church. This problem is not directly addressed by Ingathering.

Ingathering is a project designed to help churches reclaim members who have dropped out for these, and

other reasons. The basic resource for use in the project is the Equipping Center Module, "Ingathering: Reclaiming Inactive Members." The material is designed to equip and involve members who will be assigned to visit and cultivate inactive members assigned to them.

The participants selected for Ingathering should be carefully selected. They should be:

(1) persons who have demonstrated a capacity to care for the hurts of others,

(2) persons who have had some experience in visiting for the church,

(3) persons who do not have to dominate conversations but allow others to talk,

(4) persons who are not rigid in their ideas or highly judgmental of others,

(5) persons who are not easily discouraged,

(6) persons who are teachable,

(7) persons who are willing to commit themselves to consistent attendance at the training sessions.

Ingathering is more than a discipleship course. It is a 13 week project to train active church members to reach inactive members and involve time in a caring fellowship.

The last in this series of articles will present the essential steps in preparation for Ingathering.

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Trusting in Jesus - Jimmy Swaggart

A SMILE OR TWO

A young couple had a loving relationship with their little boy, who especially looked forward to his father's coming home from work each day. The youngster's father took time to play with his son. Their love for each other was obvious.

One day the child's mother approached him with what she considered great news: "You are going to get either a little sister or a brother. Isn't that wonderful?"

The little fellow frowned and put his head down. "Not a sister. A brother," he said. Then he added, "And he'd better bring his own daddy."

Bringing Missions Home

Honduran Girl's Plight Moves Arkansans to Action

by J. Everett Sneed

Editor, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Susanna Diaz is currently recuperating from surgery in the home of the James Martins in Smackover. Susanna who lives in a remote village in the mountains of Honduras, was brought to the United States to have a large lesion removed from her back.

Susanna, age nine, had been unable to go to school or to participate in normal childhood activities because of the lesion which measured four-and-a-half inches in diameter and three-and-a-half inches in height. The lesion, which looked like a large wart, would bleed profusely if it was irritated in any way.

The chain of events that brought Susanna to America started when Mrs. James (Linda) Martin attended a lay renewal in her church, First Church, Smackover. One of the lay leaders in the renewal was Dennis LaRavia, a family practice physician in Ferriday, La. LaRavia coordinates medical trips to Honduras.

LaRavia stayed with the Martins during the lay renewal. He extended an invitation to Mrs. Martin, a registered nurse and member of the state board of nursing examiners, to go to Honduras on a mission trip.

Mrs. Martin worked with a surgical team in Gualcinco while LaRavia headed up a surgical team in Candleria. On the last day of the mission trip LaRavia came to Gualcinco and requested that two nurse go with him to Candleria. Because there were so many people who needed to be seen. Mrs. Martin was one of the nurses that accompanied him to Candleria.

Susanna was one of those who was in a long line of people needing to be seen. Susanna was examined in the late afternoon and it was determined that the lesion could not be removed because of possible complications. There was the possibility that the lesion was produced by blastomycosis. If so it would need treatment prior to removal. The lesion was located in the middle of Susanna's back directly across the spinal column. There also was the possibility that the lesion involved the spinal cord. Extensive testing, which could not be done in Honduras, needed to be done prior to surgery. Susanna and her mother were told that nothing could be done.

It was about 4 p.m. and the medical team was cleaning up the crude operating room. Mrs. Martin was busy getting everything ready for their departure the next day when she felt a tugging on her dress. Turning Mrs. Martin saw Susanna's mother

Through an interpreter Mrs. Martin repeated the information that had been given previously. There was nothing that could be done for Susanna. Mrs. Martin said, "Big tears came in Susanna's mother's eyes and Susanna looked at me as if to say 'my life is hopeless.'"

Back home Mrs. Martin gave a report to First, Smackover. When she showed the slide of Susanna she said, "I just couldn't keep back the tears."

At the end of the service one of the men

sign a statement that she would return Susanna to Honduras after the medical treatment was complete. In addition a \$400 deposit was required.

Upon arrival in Arkansas Mrs. Martin brought Susanna to Dr. William Chaddick, a pediatric neurosurgeon at Children's Hospital, Little Rock. Chaddick determined that the lesion was not produced by blastomycosis nor did it involve the spinal column.

The lesion was removed by surgeons Bill Scurlcock and C. E. Tommey in El Dorado. When the surgeon cut into the lesion it bled profusely. Susanna required four units of blood during the first hour of surgery and at one point her blood pressure dropped to zero.

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



Pictured left to right are Mrs. James (Linda) Martin, Susanna Diaz, and Hilario Rubio, translator. Rhonda Martin (standing), the daughter-in-law of Mrs. Martin, cares for Susanna when Mrs. Martin is not there.

came and said, "God spoke to me. I'll help get the money you need. You find Susanna and we'll bring her here and get the surgery done."

Mrs. Martin contacted Leslie R. Shaw, an independent Baptist missionary supported by a Southern Baptist church in Florida, who lives in Gualcinco. After several months of searching, Shaw found Susanna, who lives about a three hour walk southwest of Gualcinco in a straw house with a dirt floor. When Mrs. Martin returned approximately a year later with the medical team, Shaw had all of the papers ready for Susanna to come to the States.

Mrs. Martin was appointed as legal guardian for Susanna while in the United States. The Honduran government required letters from three medical doctors stating that Susanna's surgery could not be done in Honduras. Mrs. Martin also was required to

Mrs. Martin who was observing the surgery said, "When Susanna's began to bleed profusely I left the operating room to pray. I said to God, 'You've let me bring her this far, please don't let her die!'"

Susanna's recovery has been rapid. The spot where the lesion was removed is now less than the size of a silver dollar. Susanna should be able to return home in late May or early June. Her life will be dramatically changed in that she will now be able to attend school and join other children in children's games.

Mrs. Martin is grateful for the contribution that she and others have been able to make to the life of Susanna. Her prayer is that through the healing of Susanna that the name of Christ will be elevated and that many will come to know that Christian people are interested in both the physical and spiritual well being of others.

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Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

C. Phelan Boone recently began his fourth year of service as pastor of Ebenezer Church in El Dorado.

Bill White marked his fourth anniversary of service as pastor of Second Church, Little Rock, April 1.

D.C. McAttee of Forrest City is serving as interim pastor of First Church, McGehee.

Bryan Hall has resigned as minister of youth at Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro to continue his education at Mid-America Seminary.

Jeff Bruns has accepted the call to join the staff of First Church, Augusta, as minister of youth and education. He and his wife, Jane, will move to Augusta in June from Louisville, Ky.

Roy V. Conatser will begin serving April 17 as pastor of Calvary Church, North Little Rock, coming there from Dallas Avenue Church in Mena. He is married to the former Janice Birdsong of DeQueen. They have three children, Jason, Stephanie, and Nikki.

Robert N. Jackson is serving as pastor of East Mount Zion Church, Clarksville. A native of Humphrey, he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University.

Carter Shortwell began serving as minister of education at Second Church, Hot Springs, April 3. He is a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Seminary. He and his wife, Michelle, have two children, Lindsey and Jared.

Robert Ellis is now serving as music director at Mena First Church. He had been serving in that position on an interim basis.

Dewie Elwin Williams of Pine Bluff died April 9 at age 67. He was a retired chaplain, having served as a chaplain at Cummins Prison for Arkansas Baptist State Convention for 16 years. He also had served as administrator of the chaplaincy service for Arkansas Department of Correction. His funeral services were held April 11 at First Church, Pine Bluff, where he was a member and a deacon. Memorials may be made to Cummins Chapel Fund. Survivors include his wife, Freda Butler Williams; a daughter, Ann Leger of Lafayette, La.; three brothers; a sister; and four grandchildren.

Richard Brown is serving as interim pastor of First Church, Prescott.

Jimmy Holland has resigned as pastor of Post Oak Church, Heber Springs, to serve as pastor of Central Church, Dyess.

Greg Comfort is serving Lowell Church as minister of youth.

Seibert H. Haley of Fayetteville died April 9 at age 74. He was a retired Southern Baptist pastor, and teacher. A graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, he had served churches in Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, including Southside Church of Fayetteville. His memorial services were held April 11 at First Church, Fayetteville, where he was a member. Survivors include his wife, Mary Jane, Angus Haley; two daughters, Jodi Sanford of Ponca City, Okla., and Mary Ann Haley of Great Falls, Mont.; four brothers; a sister; and four grandchildren. Memorials may be sent to First Church, Fayetteville, for the Ouachita Baptist University Ministerial Scholarship Fund.



Billy Kimbrough, pastor of Alma First Church, was among 37 persons who participated in a March training session for Missions Advance 87-89, a statewide effort to promote missions support among the churches of the state. Missions Advance team members will come at their own expense to present to churches the challenge of cooperative world missions.

Orville and Thelma Bennight will be honored April 24 with a reception at First Church, McRae, in recognition of their 45th wedding anniversary. The reception, to be given by family members, will begin at 2:30 p.m. Bennight, a pastor for 35 years, has served as pastor of West Point Church, as well as churches in Oklahoma.

Briefly

Waldron First Church ordained Eddie Harrison, Greg Kingrey, Don Owens, and Jerry McGary as deacons March 6.

First Southern Church, Bryant, is emphasizing the family from May 1-June 19.

Grand Avenue Church, Fort Smith, is promoting a "Love in Action" attendance emphasis April 3-April 24.

Clarksville Second Church was in a revival March 27-April 1 led by evangelist Wes Kent of Arlington, Texas, and musician Clarence Hill of Hot Springs. Pastor Marvin James reported eight professions of faith and eight additions by letter.

Arkadelphia Second Church dedicated a two-story education building March 27 which houses class rooms, a conference room, and a library.

Lone Star Church at Heber Springs ordained Nolan Cannon to the deacon ministry April 3.

Emmanuel Church at Conway will celebrate homecoming May 1 with former Pastor James Haggard as guest speaker.

Mountain Home First Church observed Youth Week April 9-17. Staff leadership positions were filled by Kevin McCollum, pastor; Joel Fowler, minister of education; and Steve Burk, minister of music and youth.

Lowell Church will celebrate its 120th year of service April 23 with a musical program featuring the New Golden Harvest Quartet and local musicians. April 24 activities will include morning and afternoon services and a noon potluck dinner.

White River Association and Mountain Home East Side Church are sponsoring a Shared Ministry seminar for pastors and deacons April 22-23. Ed McDonald, director of chaplaincy for Baptist Medical System in Little Rock, will be leader.



McCullough



The Gibsons and Edwards



Jordan

Music Secretary

M. Lester McCullough has been elected State Music Secretary by the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

McCullough, currently associate director of the church music department of the Florida Baptist Convention, will assume his duties June 1. He succeeds Ervin Keathley, who retired April 15 after 15 years of service.

A Florida native, McCullough, 43, is a graduate of Florida State University, Tallahassee, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He has served churches in Florida, South Carolina, California, and Texas.

McCullough and his wife, Jo Ann, have a daughter, Melody Ann.

Gibson Retirement

The Greene County Association held a retirement party for Carroll and Betty Gibson April 8 at East Side Church, Paragould. Individuals and churches within the association gave the Gibson's a check for a little more than \$3,600.

During Gibson's more than 17 year tenure as director of missions, the association has constructed a missionary office complex, has provided strong leadership in the Cedar Glade Youth Camp, and has enhanced the involvement of the churches

within the association. The budget of the association has increased from approximately \$17,000 to approximately \$100,000.

Picture above are Carroll Gibson, Betty Gibson, and moderator John Edwards, pastor of the Alexander Church, Paragould. Conway Sawyer, director of the Missions Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, was the speaker for the occasion.

Pianist Retires

Ruth Jordan retired as pianist of First Church, Camden, March 20 after 39 years of service, having served under the leadership of four pastors and six ministers of music. Prior to moving to Camden, she served for 14 years as pianist and organist at First Church, Fordyce.

She is a former member of the board of trustees at Ouachita Baptist University and presently is serving as national chairman of the scholarship committee for the National Federation of Music Clubs.

Music Workshop

Volunteer and part-time music leaders, pianists, organists and pastors met at Camp Paron for their 17th annual workshop. Workshops were offered in music reading, worship planning, teaching music fundamentals, organ and piano. Guest leaders included Jere Adams of Nashville,

Tenn., Carl Goodson of Arkadelphia, Becky Moore of Pine Bluff, and Sheila Moore of Little Rock. ABSC staffers Ervin Keathley, Glen Ennes and Peggy Pearson also led workshops

ACTS Awards Telecast Live

For the first time, the American Christian Television System's annual awards ceremony will be telecast live. The program, scheduled for 8 p.m. CDST on Friday, April 22, will be broadcast on the ACTS Network, cable channel 27.

Arkansas ACTS affiliates in Little Rock, Fort Smith, Pine Bluff, Springdale, and Jonesboro have been nominated for awards. In addition, the state ACTS board has been nominated for its coverage of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention last fall in Fort Smith.

Youth Choir

One hundred fifty persons participated in the State Youth Choir at Little Rock Second Church. Guest clinicians were Harry Wooten of Nashville, Tenn., and Bill Green of Richardson, Texas. Host pastor Billy White challenged the youth with devotional recollections about how God worked in his life as a youth. State Ensemble Jubilee winners, "Chara" of Mountain Home First and "Rejoice" of Monticello Second also performed during the event.

Jobs Exchange

Christian Workers Wanted—Flexible part-time hours or career management openings for people seeking work or additional work. Successful company, currently expanding. Phone 847-8246 after 4:30 p.m., M-F, or anytime Saturday. 4/21

Nurse—Nurse aide with therapy experience, will live in 4 1/2 days a week. Good references, reasonable wages. Call weekends. Christine Cox, 734-2575 4/28

Notices of employment sought or available will be posted for three consecutive weeks without charge for members of Arkansas Baptist churches. Church staff positions will not be included. Send name, address, telephone number, and statement of qualifications, experience, and type of employment sought or available to "Jobs Exchange," Arkansas Baptist News Magazine, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. Placement of a notice in the Jobs Exchange does not constitute an endorsement by the ABN.

Classifieds


For Sale—Hammand Organ, Model 147, Leslie Organ Speaker, Model L-112. 501-767-3185. 4/21

Summer Camp Facilities—330 beds. Meals prepared. In the Ozark foothills. Cedar Glade Baptist Camp, Imboden, Ark., 501-869-2255 4/28

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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.



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STATE LOTTERY

'A Stain On Us All'

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

The honor of every citizen is stained when a state stoops to swindling the poor, Austin McGuigan told participants in the annual meeting of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas.

McGuigan, a former chief prosecutor for Connecticut's Organized Crime Task Force, told the assembly that state-run gambling—like the Arkansas lottery proposal currently being circulated—is "built on the pipe dreams of the poor" and the state that delves into it differs not a whit from the "carnival barkers, snake oil salesmen, and every swindler that ever ran a shell game."

In fact, the state that sponsors lottery gambling shows less moral fibre than the mobsters and con men who operate the illegitimate versions, McGuigan said. Illegal numbers games offer better odds, credit, and tax advantages, he observed, while the state's "rip off game" encourages the poor and desperate to lay their last dollars down on a "sucker bet."

McGuigan called it "scandalous" that state governments are taking over the gaming operations for which mobsters like "Lucky" Luciano were imprisoned 50 years ago. And by taking over the "numbers racket," the states are abandoning their benevolent charters and encouraging their citizens to engage in activities known to be harmful to them.

"It cannot be argued," McGuigan asserted. "Compulsive gamblers will gamble away every penny. Children will go hungry while the state takes money from their parents in the lottery."

McGuigan recalled standing in his home state's betting parlors and watching men gamble their money away while their children—dirty and ill-clothed—sat at their feet. He told about "Welfare Wednesday," the day government checks arrive and long lines form at the betting windows.

"State-legalized gambling is a stain on every citizen," McGuigan declared. "If there were billions of dollars in this, it wouldn't make any difference."

"But there isn't any money here. Do you really think that if you clean all the welfare mothers out of their last buck that you'll be rich? The state gives them the money so their kids won't be hungry and cold and then tells them to come in and play the numbers game."

In state after state, experience has proven that state-sponsored gambling strengthens organized crime, multiplies illegal gambling, and still fails to reduce taxes or produce significant revenue, McGuigan

said. And studies show that, while almost everyone will play a new game once or twice, 85 percent of the dollars wagered are placed by 18 percent of the people, and those are largely the poor, the disadvantaged, and the compulsive.

And, despite the claims of proponents, state-sponsored gambling does not "make money," McGuigan observed.

"Gambling is a tax like any other tax," he said. "It doesn't make money. It's just a tax. Only if gambling imports dollars would it make money for a state. Is anyone suggesting Arkansas will be a net importer of dollars if it establishes a lottery?"

McGuigan continued: "If the dollars that will be spent on a lottery in Arkansas are excess dollars, then they are dollars that would be saved or spent on a sensible leisure activity. If those dollars are necessities, however, then the fallout is in increased crime, broken homes, and hurt children.

"What kind of state will take money like that?" he asked. "What kind of people would call that an industry? What kind of nation are we?"

"There's no pie in the sky, no pie for anyone," he concluded. "And no government should ever contemplate encouraging its citizens to engage in this activity. We have lost our sense of the proper role of government, and the time has come for people to speak out."

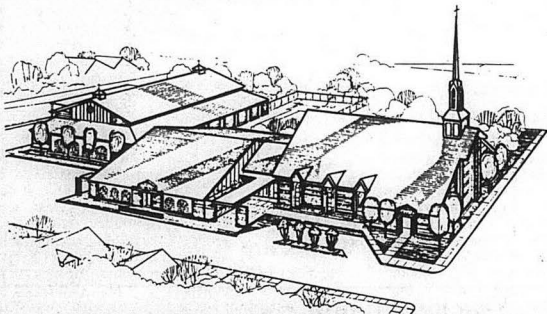
ABN photo / Mark Kelly



Elected officers of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas during its recent annual meeting were (left to right) Norman Carter, president; Beverly Williams, first vice-president; J. Everett Sneed, second vice-president; D.L. Rousey, third vice-president; Don Hook, treasurer; and Linda D. Harris, secretary.

BEGINNING TO END . . .

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Dr. Hobbs's recent discussions on "*The Baptist Faith and Message*" will air on BTN at 10:30 AM (CDT) immediately preceding this teleconference.

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Shocking World Fact

World total of refugees of all kinds in asylum countries fluctuated around 20 million from 1965 to 1987. There are many more refugees who need permanent asylum, and the political unrest around the world will likely bring more to the United States. The issue is not a fad that comes and goes, but a permanent phenomenon of this era in world history.

Youth Convention Draws 2,500

The 1988 State Youth Convention met Friday, April 1, at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock. The theme for this year's convention was "Are You A World Changer?"

Chester Swor, the popular youth speaker from Jackson, Miss., headlined the event, which drew 2,500 participants from across the state. The program also featured Jeri Graham and Jim Woodward, Christian artists from Shawnee, Okla.

Kelley Bonham, chaplain intern at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center, and Diane O'Connell, contract worker at the University of Central Arkansas Baptist Student Union in Conway, shared with the youth their testimonies about how God's power had changed their lives and moved them to be world changers. Bonham is confined to a wheelchair after a diving accident. O'Connell overcame childhood abuse and teenage gang life in the inner city of East St. Louis.

Music for the event was provided by the "Praise Singers" of Ouachita Baptist University and Southern Baptist College's "Southern Singers." Glen Blevins, minister of music at Calvary Church, North Little Rock, directed the congregational singing. Harley Petty of Little Rock presided.

The annual convention also is the occasion for state Bible drill and speakers contests. David Ratliff of Heber Springs First won the Youth Bible Drill. Karen Cowling of Foreman First placed second. Jeff Standridge of Forrest City Beck Spur won the Youth Speakers' Tournament. Jon Self of Hope Calvary placed second.

Vaught Prognosis 'Favorable'

Dr. W.O. Vaught, emeritus pastor of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, was reported to be "recovering nicely" April 14 after surgery nearly a week earlier.

Vaught, who retired in 1983 after 38 years as pastor of Immanuel, is "on the road to recovery" after surgery to remove a malignancy from his thyroid, according to a spokesman for Little Rock's Baptist Medical Center. Vaught's physicians had given him "a favorable prognosis for recovery."

Friends of Vaught have been asked not to send flowers or attempt to visit him for the time being. Instead, cards and prayers are requested.

During his tenure, Vaught, 77, led Immanuel Church to an increase of 800 members. He also established a TV ministry and a worldwide tape ministry and oversaw the construction of a \$1.6 million family life center. A chair of Bible at Ouachita Baptist University was established in his honor by the church.

CIVIL RIGHTS RESTORATION ACT

What Can We Expect?

by Oliver Thomas

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BPA)—They shut down the Senate telephone system.

Thousands of callers who had been told their churches would be forced to hire homosexuals and drug addicts were expressing their concern. The "villain" was the Civil Rights Restoration Act—a law designed to overrule the 1984 Supreme Court decision in Grove City College v. Bell. The court in Grove City had scaled back the reach of federal anti-discrimination laws by limiting their application to the specific programs or activities of an institution receiving federal funds. The decision meant that a college or university could receive millions of dollars in federal aid for scientific research and still deny women, minorities, the elderly, and the handicapped admission to its college of business, for example. Prior to Grove City, three presidential administrations (two Republican and one Democratic) had interpreted anti-discrimination laws as applying to all the programs and activities of an institution that received federal funding.

Proponents of the new law said it merely would restore the pre-Grove City interpretation. Opponents, including the president, called it a "big government power grab" that would result in wholesale regulation of small businesses, farmers, and even churches and synagogues.

Despite an intense lobbying campaign and a presidential veto, Congress passed the bill by substantially more than the required two-thirds majority. With the new law now in effect, what can Baptists expect?

Interestingly, most Baptist churches needn't expect anything to happen, as the act applies only to organizations that receive federal funding. Baptists generally agree that tax dollars should not be used for the support of religion, and they have been unwilling to "secularize" a particular program of the church in order to receive federal funds.

A great deal of misunderstanding exists over what constitutes federal funding so as to trigger these anti-discrimination laws. Pell Grants, Guaranteed Student Loans, the GI Bill and Title XX day care vouchers are considered federal funding. Tax exemption, Social Security checks, food stamps, and farm subsidies are not. The committee report accompanying the new law makes this clear. In addition, the act contains a "small providers" exemption for all businesses employing fewer than 15 persons. Therefore, the "mom and pop"

grocery store will not be required to install ramps, rails, and other facilities for the handicapped.

Even if a religious institution receives federal funding, it will not be forced to hire homosexuals. None of the laws affected by the act has been interpreted to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Nor will any hospital be forced to perform abortions. The Danforth amendment overrules the Title IX regulations that had placed abortion on an equal footing with other medical disabilities. Therefore, no institution will be forced to provide abortion-related services simply because it receives federal funds.

The Southern Baptist Convention's only resolution on the Civil Rights Restoration Act was one adopted last June in St. Louis calling for "vigorous support" of the Danforth amendment. (The Christian Life Commission and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs lobbied successfully for its passage.) The resolution did not indicate opposition to the bill if the Danforth amendment was passed.

A religious organization's right to discriminate on the basis of religion in employment is unaffected by the act even if the organization receives federal funds. If, for example, a church wishes to hire only born-again Christians in its federally funded day care program, it may do so under current law.

The act also maintains the longstanding exemption from sex discrimination laws for any educational institution "controlled by" a religious organization if the application of the act to that institution would violate its religious tenets. Fortunately, this exemption has been interpreted broadly to include even institutions that are indirectly controlled by the churches. Thus, separately incorporated Baptist colleges that have their trustees appointed by a state Baptist convention have received exemptions. In fact, in the 16 years that the religious tenets exemption has been in existence, not a single religious institution

has been denied an exemption.

Despite the favorable interpretation that has been given to this exemption, the BJCPA advocated a broadening of the "controlled by" language. The effort failed, largely because no institution has yet been denied an exemption. If a legitimate request for an exemption is denied in the future, the BJCPA has laid the groundwork for corrective legislation.

Finally, religious organizations retain the right to discriminate on any basis in hiring their ministers and teachers of religion.

Prior to the passage of the new law, religious organizations receiving federal funds already were required to refrain from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, and handicap in their funded programs and activities. In addition, they were barred from discriminating on the basis of sex unless they sought an exemption from coverage. The Civil Rights Restoration Act "re-expands" the scope of coverage to other programs and activities that do not involve the inculcation of religious faith.

Numerous questions have been raised about that portion of the act which bars discrimination against the handicapped in federally funded programs. In court decisions unrelated to the new law, "handicap" has been construed to include alcoholism if the condition does not affect significantly the employee's ability to do his or her job. AIDS victims have received similar protection. The Restoration Act provides some relief to organizations that do not wish to employ AIDS victims by stating that "handicap" does not include "an individual who has a currently contagious disease or infection and who by reason of such disease or infection would constitute a direct threat to the health or safety of others. . . ."

The underlying principle of the act is that accepting government funds invites government scrutiny and regulation. In a sense, it's the government's equivalent of good stewardship.

Baptists, of all people, should understand that.

Oliver Thomas is general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

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WMU Closes Registration

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Registration for the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Centennial Celebration, May 13-14 in Richmond, Va., has closed with a capacity crowd of 11,000.

WMU will not accept new registration applications, and only participants who have registered in advance and receive confirmations will be admitted to the celebration, said Carolyn Weatherford, national WMU executive director. A limited number of applications will be held on a waiting list in case of cancellations.

Questions about registration status should be directed in writing to WMU Centennial Celebration, P.O. Box C-10, Birmingham, Ala., 35283-0010.

More than 650 regional associational WMU organizations are planning local festivities for Saturday, May 14, combined with viewing the live broadcast of the 1:30 p.m. (EST) Saturday session on the ACTS Network or Baptist Telecommunication Network.

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May 23-25, 1988

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CP Hits \$68 Million

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptists' national Cooperative Program unified budget has topped \$68 million at the halfway mark of its 1987-88 fiscal year.

March receipts of \$11,200,144 pushed the budget's six-month total to \$68,062,905. At the halfway point, the Cooperative Program's year-to-date receipts reflect 48.62 percent of the \$140 million annual goal.

The March receipts were 2.8 percent behind receipts for March of 1987; however, year-to-date receipts are 3.73 percent ahead of the first six months of 1986-87.

Court Declines Company Appeal

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court has rejected a mining company's appeal of lower rulings that it violated a worker's religious rights by firing him for refusing work on Sundays.

In a one-line order issued April 4, the high court let stand rulings that Pyro Mining Co. failed to "reasonably accommodate" the religious needs of Danny R. Smith, an independent Baptist whose church discourages Sunday work.

Smith's high court victory means the company must reinstate him with back pay.

Convention Uniform

Enjoy Your Gift

by Greg Kirksey, Hillside Church, Camden

Basic passage: Hebrews 3:12 to 4:2,9-13

Focal passage: Hebrews 4:1-2,11

Central truth: God's promise for abundant life is still good but must be embraced by persistent faith to be realized.

I once read of a widow who struggled to get by. The widow had one son who lived overseas and, therefore, could not see after his aged mother. However, a neighbor wrote to the lady's son and scolded him for not taking better care of his mother. The son was shocked to learn of his mother's plight and assured the neighbor that he had sent a large cashier's check every month for several years to help her with living expenses. Upon an investigation, it was discovered that the lady had indeed been receiving the checks; but, not knowing what they were, she had just stacked them away with her son's letters. Although provisions had been made for a comfortable lifestyle, his mother had been living in virtual poverty.

In this week's lesson we are reminded that God's promise of "rest" is still available. We are urged here to press on and possess what has been provided for us. In fact, we are advised in verse 1 to "fear" the possibility of missing it as Israel did. In other words, it is not automatic and many people actually live in spiritual poverty although a much better life has been provided and is available.

There are two primary enemies which will rob us of the abundant life. The first enemy is disbelief. When Israel reached the border of their inheritance, they did not believe God's promise and, therefore, missed the abundant life of Canaan. We must believe God's Word, for only when it is mixed with faith (v. 2) does it accomplish its purposes.

The second enemy which threatens to rob us is life's distractions. In verse 11 we are urged to be "diligent," that is, persistent and undaunted by circumstances. We often take our eyes off God's promises and focus on our fears instead. We know all the reasons why we are about to fail. If we would only trust that God's promises are true and cling to them tightly, we could receive the gift that Christ has already provided which sits waiting for us to enjoy.

This lesson treatment is based on the International Bible Lesson for Christian Teaching, Uniform Series. Copyright International Council of Education. Used by permission.

Life and Work

Genuine Peace

by Hilton Lane, Fairfield Bay Church, Fairfield Bay

Basic passage: Romans 5

Focal passage: Romans 5:1-11

Central truth: God is the source of true peace.

Romans 5 focuses upon peace, salvation and reconciliation. Peace is the first result of salvation. Forgiveness of sin brings peace with God. It is not a negative peace. We do not sit idly by with our arms folded. It is a positive peace that demands action. The peace God gives enables us to be "peace makers" and not just "peace keepers." This means opposing what God opposes. Peace keeping forces are sometimes engaged in conflict—both in the physical and spiritual realm.

While peace has already been won by Christ, the Christian has to accept it for himself. It is available to "whosoever will."

The "hope" of Romans 5:2 looks beyond the "suffering" of Romans 5:3-5. Hope is not what may happen but what will happen. It expresses certain action in the future. Death does not have the last word.

There are reasons for suffering. We suffer as a result of personal sin; the sin of others' natural disasters; and voluntary acts in behalf of others.

The basic resources for suffering are: (1) peace with God (Ro. 5:1); (2) grace from God (Ro. 5:2); (3) hope of glory (Ro. 5:2); and, (4) the gift of the Holy Spirit's presence (Ro. 5:5).

Suffering is a sign of kinship with Christ. It produces endurance (Ro. 5:3). Endurance produces character (Ro. 5:4). Character ultimately produces hope (Ro. 5:4).

Romans 5:6-8 contrasts Christ's death for us with the highest human deed—self sacrifice. The difference is that God's love was shown to people in rebellion. "Due time" in verse 6 indicates that Christ's death was not some hurried effort because man's sin had caught God off guard. It had always been God's purposeful plan (Re. 13:8).

Romans 5:12-21 describes the two realms of Adam and Christ. Adam represents the realm in which law, sin and death reign. Christ represents the realm in which grace, righteousness and life operate. One man's fall led to sin for all. One man's death led to salvation being made available to all.

Peace with God is a result of God's work and our acceptance.

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Bible Book

True Christian Character

by A. Timothy Hight, First Church, Lepanto

Basic passage: Matthew 5:3-12,16-17, 20,27-28,31-32

Focal passage: Matthew 5:13-16,20

Central truth: Christianity is not a shallow external profession, but divine, inward character expressed in outward conduct.

The Sermon on the Mount is unique in many ways. In it we find a succinct description of genuine Christian character and conduct. The book of Luke tells us that it was delivered immediately after Jesus chose his inner circle of 12 disciples (Lk. 6:13). There has never been a more fitting ordination address for Christians.

The first seven Beatitudes are a declaration of character qualities that should be evident in every child of God. Mentioned first is the quality of being "poor in Spirit." This means that one recognizes his own inability and places complete trust in God. Next, the qualities of mournfulness, meekness, spiritual appetite, mercy, pureness of heart, and peacemaking are mentioned. As Christ lives in us, and we live for him, these qualities will be present and evident in all that we do. For those who exhibit this godly character, the pronouncement of blessedness (supreme joy and contentment) is given by the Father.

When the character of Christ permeates one's life, persecution may follow (vv. 10,11). Those who are persecuted experience that same blessedness in addition to the assurance of a great heavenly reward.

In verses 13-16, Jesus used two common illustrations (salt and light) to demonstrate the conduct of his disciples. Among the qualities of salt are that it purifies and preserves. If Christian conduct does not maintain absolute purity and deter the influence of evil, it has lost all usefulness. As radiant lights, Christians should attract, reveal, dispel, guide, and warn. When others see this Christlike conduct, their eyes are naturally turned heavenward.

Many today are seeking only the external, superficial righteousness of the Pharisees. Jesus emphatically stated that this was insufficient for entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. God calls every Christian to a very high standard of living. Contrary to popular opinion, it is not a high standard socially or economically, but in character and conduct.

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'Staying Off The Streets'

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (BP)—Missionaries stayed close to home April 11 after days of scattered anti-American violence in Honduras' two largest cities.

"We had a quiet weekend," said Southern Baptist missionary Carl Rees in Tegucigalpa. "We're waiting to see if it's normalized or if it's the quiet before the storm."

The Honduran government declared a state of emergency April 8 in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula after an attack on the American embassy and a resulting fire the day before left five people dead. The next day, riot police and demonstrators fought while students and other groups vented their hostility toward the United States in connection with the extradition of a suspected major Honduran drug dealer. Two Americans were stabbed.

Rees, of Springfield, Mo., is chairman of

the 41 Southern Baptist workers assigned to the country. He said no missionaries had been targeted by demonstrators, but Southern Baptists were staying off the streets.

"We've had a lot of phone calls from nationals who've told us to stay in, to be careful where we're at," Rees reported.

In the neighborhood where his church is located, Rees said a blond German was beaten by attackers who thought he was American. "There's some of that going on. We have not experienced it because we've not been out. When we have gone out, we go directly where we need to go, then turn around and come back home."

A loose dusk-to-dawn curfew and a ban on public meetings prevented many evening church services April 10. Other congregations met earlier in the day in order to get home before dark.

Missionaries also canceled the scheduled visit of a Southern Baptist volunteer work team.

Missionary Forced To Leave

by Marty Croll
SBC Foreign Mission Board

JAKARTA, Indonesia (BP)—The first in a string of Southern Baptist missionaries expected to be required to leave Indonesia because of new visa restrictions flew to the Philippines in early April. She will work there for about a month while considering options for future assignment.

Doris Blattner, 54, from St. Louis, left Indonesia after the internal security section of the country's Religion Department would not supply a letter necessary for her to live there.

Because of the government policy, about half of Southern Baptists' force of some 95 missionaries may have to leave the country during the next year. As with other Christian missionaries whose ability to stay hinges on annual approval through the country's Religion Department, Blattner was notified more than a year ago that she would be denied visa approval the next time she applied.

Meanwhile, the government has indicated it will consider visa extensions for four theological educators and their families. These missionaries are in positions that will be taken over in a few years by Indonesian Baptists now studying in the United States.

Many missionaries, told they will be denied visa renewals during the next couple of months, have begun applying to immigration officials in their areas for three-month temporary extensions. The family of Gerald Pinkston, an English-language pastor in Jakarta from Levelland, Texas, received such an extension and was allowed to stay past a Feb. 24 visa expiration until scheduled furlough in May.

For several missionaries, an extra three months would afford time to pack, wind down their work and attend the mission's annual meeting this summer. But local immigration offices can deny such a request if they choose, as they did with Blattner.

Missionaries are dealing with visa denials on an individual basis. For example, the chairman of the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Indonesia has applied through the labor ministry for a new visa as an official representative of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Others have considered becoming citizens of Indonesia.

Indonesian Baptists are midway into a campaign to start 500 new churches by 1990. Missionaries say the well-established Indonesian Baptist convention should be able to maintain existing churches and institutions, but the new policy would hamper outreach and new-church growth.

Arkansas Baptist Men's Congress

May 20-21, 1988
Parkway Place Baptist Church
300 Parkway Place
Little Rock



James H. Smith
President
SBC Brotherhood Commission



Frederick E. Roach
CEO Centennial Homes
Weyerhaeuser Company

Friday, May 20
7:30 -p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Speakers

James H. Smith, President
SBC Brotherhood Commission

Frederick E. Roach, Vice-President
(Past President) Texas Baptist Men

Partnership Mission Testimonies:
Dr. Hoyte Pyle
Dr. Tom Turner

Music

Leslie Mills

Saturday, May 21
8:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Prayer Breakfast (Continental)

Disaster Relief: Ed Lauderdale
China: John Hampton
Construction Groups: Frank Allan
Russell Miller
Lay Renewal: Bill Bledsoe
Church Arkansas: Floyd Tidsworth
Missionary Care: Don Redmon
Arkansas/Nevada Project: John McAllister
Veterans Plus: Wes Keith
Closing Message: Fred Roach
Also Information on: Africa
Cotter Primitive Camp
Partnership Missions

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WORLD

Open Hearts And Wallets

by Bill Bangham
SBC Brotherhood Commission

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptists have opened their hearts and wallets to help send 100,000 Bibles to the Soviet Union.

From piggy-bank pennies and \$5 checks penned in arthritic scrawl to large foundation, individual, church and organizational donations, gifts have arrived by the dozen since last year.

The Bibles for Russia project has captured the imagination of Baptists worldwide, said Archie Goldie of the Baptist World Alliance.

"It's heartwarming," he said. "These are heart-to-heart gifts to our brothers in the Soviet Union."

The recent death of BWA Executive Director Gerhard Claas is the only thing that has marred the project for Goldie. Claas negotiated the agreement with Soviet officials to import the Bibles. They are being accepted as part of the 1,000th anniversary celebration of Christianity in Russia.

The BWA agreed to raise \$250,000 through an international effort as its share of \$500,000 needed to produce and deliver the Bibles. United Bible Societies agreed to supply the other \$250,000.

The challenge to deliver the Russian-language Bibles will be met, said Goldie, director of the division of the BWA Baptist world aid/men's department. Two shipments already have been delivered, and a third left England for the Soviet Union Easter weekend. All will be delivered by the end of April.

BWA has received more than \$207,000 in donations. Bible production is going ahead as scheduled. "We are going on faith that the rest (of the money) will come in," said Goldie.

While donations have arrived from the worldwide Baptist community, Goldie noted most have come from Southern Baptists. He credited the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission for making that possible, saying, "The majority has come through Brotherhood Commission participation in the project."

Commission President James H. Smith made a motion at the 1987 BWA annual meeting in Amman, Jordan, that Baptist men worldwide adopt this effort as a project. The motion was accepted, and the effort was named for the late Owen Cooper, a former BWA General Council member.

"This has been a wonderful thing," said Smith. "I believe this has been the first project by Baptist men across the world."

Smith met with a young Russian last summer who became excited about the possibility of the project. He told Smith every Bible distributed in the Soviet Union

will be read by five to 10 people.

"This is difficult to understand in the West where many households have five or 10 Bibles lying around," said Smith.

The appeal of the project brought pennies from children's Sunday school classes and collections from Baptist Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Union missions organizations. Churches held special offerings.

A Florida foundation sent a \$5,000 contribution. The largest individual gift was \$10,000 from a Virginia man. Both asked not to be identified.

Smith also commented on the appropriateness of naming the Bibles for Russia project for Owen Cooper. The layman and former Southern Baptist Convention president was involved in a Books-for-the-World project at the time of his death.

Birth Comes Amid Conflict

GAZA (BP)—Lydia Eman Hodges will have memorable birthdays.

That's because friends and family will always remember her birth March 29 in Gaza, smack in the middle of the conflict between Palestinians and Israeli occupation forces in which more than 100 people have died. Lydia's parents are Southern Baptist representatives Jack and Shawn Hodges, of Hildebran and Hickory, N.C. Her middle name, "Eman," is Arabic for "faith."

Lydia became the 20th child of Southern Baptists' 19 career workers in Gaza, who are joined by a journeyman and four volunteers. They all stayed indoors during outbreaks of violence sparked by the March 30 observance of Land Day, which commemorates the 1976 deaths of six Arabs in a conflict over land confiscation.

Disturbances lessened during the first week of April, reported Southern Baptist representative Norman Lytle at Baptist Village, a farm and conference center in Petah Tiqva, Israel. "Things are not back to normal but have quieted down," said Lytle. In Gaza, home Bible studies have resumed except when precluded by sporadic curfews.

The Gaza border with Israel has reopened, and several Southern Baptist workers were expected to travel to Baptist Village, a 60-mile drive away, later in the week.

Now workers in Israel and Gaza are bracing for another round of disturbances in connection with Israel's independence day observance, beginning April 21. Violence could come at any time during the period, Southern Baptist workers fear.

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