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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

9-7-1989

September 7, 1989

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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The Toughest Choice

Arkansas Baptist

September 7, 1989



**Pray for
Billy Graham's
Arkansas
Crusade**

Sept. 17-24
War Memorial Stadium
Little Rock

In This Issue

Cover Story



Arkansas Crusade 15

In September, world-renowned evangelist Billy Graham will return to Arkansas for his first crusade here in 30 years. Arkansans are praying for thousands to be saved.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

BSSB photo / Charles Willa



How It's Done—Youth from Nettleton Church, Jonesboro, and their leader, David Warren, learned how their Sunday School lessons are published from Richard Barnes (left), youth curriculum design editor, during a recent visit to the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

GOOD NEWS!

The Doxology Comes First

1 Peter 1:3-5

Worship leaders have their idiosyncrasies. One lay music leader insisted on beginning each 11 o'clock Sunday worship with the "Doxology." His reasoning was, "We must begin the service in praise to God."

Peter began his letter with a doxology. Peter praised God as the Father of the incarnate Son. Let us notice some reasons to praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord for entrance into his family—"We have been born anew" (1:3, RSV). God takes the initiative to get new family members. Christians owe God everything for getting into his family.

Peter's life had been changed by the risen Christ. The words "born anew" mean a decisive life transformation. Peter praised God because he was a new man.

The ground for entrance into God's family is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. A living Christ makes new people, and he gives the basis of assurance for life beyond the grave.

Praise the Lord for the family inheritance—Peter used descriptive words for the Christian's inheritance: "imperishable, undefiled, and unfading" (1:4, RSV). Worldly inheritances are subject to destruction, defilement from the outside, or decay from within. The word translated

"inheritance" was the Old Testament metaphor of the Israelites' possession of Canaan. That inheritance was earthly. The Christian inheritance is eternal.

Christians enjoy God's inheritance now and in the future. The indwelling Holy Spirit is the first installment. The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of more to come.

Praise the Lord for family security—God guards his children by his great power. The word Peter used for "guarded" in 1:5 was a military word. It has the picture of God's standing sentinel over all our days. Security of God's people depends on God, not his people.

God secures his salvation—"for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1:5, RSV). Salvation in the New Testament was used to describe a person's initial conversion, to the process of getting to the finished product, or to the consummation of salvation in heaven. The latter meaning was in Peter's mind. God will protect the believer from the initial experience unto the consummation at death or the Lord's return.

Peter gave the doxology first. Before he talked about the sufferings of believers, he praised God for his blessings. Maybe this is a healthy attitude adjustment. Sing the "Doxology" before you sing "Trials Dark on Every Hand."

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Christians in Politics

J. EVERETT SNEED



Most Baptists would readily agree that they believe in the doctrine of "separation of church and state." Today, however, there are a variety of definitions being set forth. Individually separation of church and state means that each person is free to worship, or not worship, God according to the dictates of his own conscience. It also means that the tax money paid by an individual to the government will not be used to propagate or to oppose any religious view.

Institutionally separation of church and state means that the church shall in no way exercise authority over the state or the state over the church. Entanglement of church and state has always produced tragic results. Our Baptist forefathers fought, bled and died to achieve separation of church and state. If we are to maintain our freedom we too must maintain this vigil.

One of the primary reasons individuals originally came to America was to receive religious freedom. Yet, in many of the colonies freedom existed only for those who held to one particular religious perspective. For example, on July, 19, 1651, John Clark, pastor of the Newport Baptist Church, Newport, Mass. along with Obadiah Holmes and John Crandall came to the home of William Whittier in Lynn, Mass. Because they were worshipping in a way that was not prescribed by the colony, they were arrested and brought to public trial on July 31, 1651 in Boston, Mass.

Baptists and others offered to pay the fines of these gentlemen. Obadiah Holmes steadfastly refused to allow his fine to be paid. He was publicly whipped receiving 30 strikes. For several weeks Holmes could only lie on his knees and elbows. This event, however, dramatically impacted the colonies and paved the way for separation of church and state.

One of the forces which tends to undermine separation of church and state is aid to parochial schools. Currently there are many who want tax dollars to support private schools which teach religion. Tax support of parochial schools would mean that Baptists would be paying for the religious training of other denominations. Conversely, it would mean that we would be paying for non-Christian training. A Buddhist, for example, would be entitled to the same government aid for his school as would any Christian group.

Tuition tax credits are merely a disguise

method of supporting sectarian schools. Since 90 percent of all the private primary and secondary schools are church related, the benefits of tuition tax credits are clear.

Tuition tax credits have already been judged unconstitutional, but some are hoping that a way can be found to circumvent the Supreme Court's decision or that the Supreme Court itself will reverse its decision. Such action would drastically undermine separation of church and state.

Tuition tax credits primarily benefit those families who are in the upper income bracket. A few years ago the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) reported that approximately 60 percent of the benefits for tuition tax credits would go to students from families with incomes well above the national median. In other words, it is welfare for the wealthy. It is clear and simple

discrimination.

Some argue that, without tuition tax credits, families which send their children to parochial schools are receiving double taxation. This simply is not true. Every family has the right to send its children to a public school. Certainly, every family should have the privilege of sending its children to a private school if they can afford it. If parents who send their children to parochial schools are double taxed, then parents or single individuals who have no children should not pay educational taxes. The truth is, every citizen has a responsibility to assist in providing an opportunity for every individual to receive a proper education.

Tuition tax credits are not even a good idea for parochial schools. Obviously if federal money is provided to a private sectarian school, there must inevitably be an increase of federal regulations on such schools. Before the credit (money) could be given to the individual for tuition, the federal government would be required to judge whether the student's school was worthy of receiving the credits. Eventually the federal government must set the standards or criteria for qualifying schools.

Recently, Sen. Mark Hatfield, an Oregon Republican and a Baptist, clearly summarized the status that has existed and should continue to exist regarding separation of church and state. He said, "America is not a Christian nation. It was never organized to be a Christian nation. . . we are a pluralistic nation."

Obviously, it is essential for Christians to play a vital role in government. But the role of Christians in politics must be played as individuals rather than as a church or a government structure.

Arkansas Baptist

VOLUME 88 NUMBER 29

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Mark Kelly Managing Editor

Erwin L. McDonald, Litt. D. Editor Emeritus

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Copies by mail 50 cents each.

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

Advertising accepted in writing only. Rates on request.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer.

Member of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

The Arkansas Baptist (ISSN 1040-6506) is published weekly, except Easter, Independence Day, the first week of October, and Christmas, by the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc., 601-A W. Capitol, Little Rock, AR 72201. Subscription rates are \$6.99 per year (individual), \$5.52 per year (Every Resident Family Plan), \$6.12 per year (Group Plan). Foreign address rates on request. Second class postage paid at Little Rock, Ark.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Arkansas Baptist, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. (376-4791)

DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



I have more encouraging messages than space and editions will allow. Let me share several this time, instead of my usual one.

First, I was so blessed to be with Ted Keen of Wilmar recently. After preaching for him, we shared lunch together with the Raymond Taylor family. In getting acquainted, I asked Brother Keen to tell me about his spiritual background. He told me with great enthusiasm that George Sims, BSU director at U of A at Monticello, had taken him to Student Week at Glorieta several years ago. While there he accepted Christ into his life. The following night he surrendered to the call to preach. It seems that he and the Lord must have had a hot line during that 24-hour period.

Second, let me tell you that a national publication recently carried the statement of a Little Rock bank vice-president. It was to the effect that he began developing his management skills as an officer in the BSU.

Let me urge every parent, grandparent, pastor, deacon, Sunday School teacher, or friend of a young person going off to college this fall—use every influence at your disposal to see that he or she becomes involved in Baptist Student Union. This is your best hope that they will find the Lord or go on with the Lord if they are already believers.

Third, let me tell you that more than 250 Southern Baptist churches are involved in some way with the Billy Graham Crusade. God bless you for seizing the opportunity to be engaged in this historic event. I wish we had 500 of our churches involved. Two things are crucial as the time draws near. While more ushers, counselors, and choir members are needed, the greatest need is for prayer and for each of us to be making plans to have lost people at the crusade. How we need revival! Divided churches, declining churches, crime-filled streets, characterless conduct, and a pleasure-crazed society cry out for heaven's mighty intervention. Let's work and pray that we may be a part of the solution—a part of real revival.

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

Woman's Viewpoint

Single Again

ANN EDRINGTON MOORE

Five years ago my life changed completely. My husband of 36 years was killed in the crash of our airplane. He was my companion, my best friend, business partner in our farming operation, and father of our three grown children.

My adjustment to widowhood may have been different to that of many, but perhaps my experience may help others who are facing life without their mate.

First, realizing that God would sustain and guide me through the difficult times gave me strength and courage. This, coupled with tremendous support from my family, with whom I am very close, and dear friends enabled me to continue living normally.

Family and friends can do just so much in assisting the widow in her new life,



however, I found that the best way to avoid self-pity was to involve myself in activities... those at church, with my family and in the community.

Shortly after I became single again I agreed to teach a class for singles; joined the choir; served on a pastoral search committee and became known as "the flower lady" at our church.

Family-wise, I devoted more time to my elderly parents and mother-in-law, babysat with grandchildren and visited relatives.

I enrolled in some courses at the community college, attended a week-

day Bible study group and became more active in the Cancer Society and women's groups that I did not have time for before.

It was very therapeutic for me to write personal notes of thanks. Reading the Bible and books and articles on bereavement was helpful; I highly recommend it. Realizing that others have conquered the pangs of grief is reassuring.

It helped to have people mention my late spouse. It hurt when, thinking to save me pain, they acted as if he never existed.

By leaning heavily on God, keeping as busy as possible for as long as possible and forgetting self, true peace as a "single again" can be found.

Ann Moore, widow of John A. Edrington, is now married to Mitchell Moore, an attorney. She is an active member of First Church in Osceola.

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JERICHO

Firsthand Experience

by Tim Yarbrough
Brotherhood Commission

GLORIETA, N.M.—A few months ago, Rachel and Lydia Farmer of North Little Rock read about Zeda, the daughter of Kenya missionaries. Recently they met Zeda in person at Jericho: A Southern Baptist Missions Fair, at the Glorietta Baptist Conference Center.

"They're really excited about that," said Betty Farmer, their mother, who is a member of Amboy Church where her husband, Lloyd Farmer, is pastor. "They're getting firsthand experience with things we've been talking about and studying about in church."

The variety of topics presented at Jericho made it an excellent resource for people wanting to know more about Southern Baptist missions involvement, Mrs. Farmer said.

"I think they're presenting enough different things that no matter who is here, they can learn something," she said.

June Whitlow, associate executive director of the Woman's Missionary Union and chairman of the Jericho planning committee, said more than 1,400 people attended Jericho, which was the first joint missions education week presented cooperatively by

the Brotherhood Commission, Woman's Missionary Union, Sunday School Board, Foreign Mission Board, and Home Mission Board.

Whitlow said Jericho allowed people to experience many aspects of Southern Baptist missions involvement. One such event, Air Jericho, gave participants a chance to see how other people throughout the world live, she said.

More than 75 home and foreign missionaries were on hand at Jericho to talk with people and relate their experiences, Whitlow said.

A colorful and festive missions fair held July 31 allowed participants to visit and pick up informational materials at booths set up by the Brotherhood Commission, Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, and Woman's Missionary Union, as well as the six Southern Baptist seminaries and other organizations. The fair was highlighted by a special meal prepared and served by Southern Baptist disaster relief units from Oklahoma, Texas, and Missouri.

Jericho also featured dozens of conferences with subjects ranging from "Cults of the World" to "Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts."

Brotherhood Commission photo / Tim Yarbrough



Betty Farmer (right) and her daughters watch one of the activities at Jericho.

A SMILE OR TWO

Things have changed. Taiwan is building cars, and the United States is making trinkets to put in Cracker Jack boxes.

When we give our rights to God, he can manage them a lot better than we can.

—Dr. Michael Claunch

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YOUTH IN CRISIS: Last of a Six-Part Series

The Toughest Choice

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

She had been crying. Her reddened eyes told him that. And once his office door was closed, she broke down again, sobbing uncontrollably. He put a comforting arm around her shoulders and waited until she regained her composure.

It was an all-too-familiar story.

She was just sixteen, pretty and popular with the other kids in the church youth group. It had caused quite a stir when the captain of the football team asked her to go steady. He was a senior, good looking and muscular. He could have his pick of any girl in school, and he had dated all the prettiest ones.

They had dated for several weeks, and he was the perfect gentleman. Kind. Thoughtful. Considerate. Then one night he told her he loved her and he asked her to have sex with him to show that she loved him too. Touched by his sincerity, and moved by her own feelings for him, she agreed.

They began having regular relationships. Sometimes they met at his house before his parents got home from work. At other times they parked his car on a dark country lane. He was always gentle and assured her of his love.

Then he began to act strangely. Sometimes he seemed distant, sometimes angry. They began seeing each other less frequently. When they were together, they often argued, and they made up by cutting classes and going to his house in the middle of the day.

That morning, he had met her on the way to school. He jumped out of his car and ran across the street, stopping her on the sidewalk. "I want my class ring back," he said bluntly. "It's over between us." He wouldn't even look her in the eye, but kept glancing off toward his car, where another girl was waiting for him.

"I just don't understand it," she said. "He said he loved me. Now he doesn't want me anymore. What's wrong with me? What did I do wrong?"

When it comes to putting pressure on a teenager, nothing compares to sexual challenges. Drugs and alcohol can be avoided. Pornography can be refused. Suicide claims only a few by comparison. But every teen has to deal with emerging sexuality, both his own and that of his peers.

When a national magazine asked teens in 1986 to name the biggest problem they faced, sexual pressures outranked drug

abuse, alcoholism, and suicide.

And the statistics bear out their testimony. A 1981 study showed that, by age 20, 81 percent of unmarried males and 60 percent of unmarried females have engaged in sexual intercourse. Of the 1 million teen pregnancies recorded each year in the United States, about half result in abortions. And numbers cannot begin to account for the agony of teens wracked by pain, guilt, and disillusionment from bad pre-marital sexual choices.

"Teenagers used to lie about being involved sexually," observes Arliss Dickerson, director of the Baptist Student Union at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. "They denied being involved because there was a stigma attached to pre-marital sex. They still lie about it, but now they lie about not having sex. Pre-marital sexual activity is so common that the stigma is on virginity."

Shaking his head in amazement, he muses: "When I started out in student ministry 20 years ago, we talked with the young people about dating. Now we are dealing with sexuality."

There has indeed been a revolution in America's sexual attitudes, and not just among the youth. A 1969 Gallup poll found 68 percent of all adults believed pre-marital sex was wrong. By 1985, a Roper study could conclude that 61 percent find it acceptable. Current studies find as many as three out of four teenagers say they would live with someone before or instead of marriage.

That revolution is reflected in — and fed by — American media, says youth communicator Josh McDowell.

McDowell, who is the author of *How to Help Your Child Say 'No' to Sexual Pressure* (Word Books, 1987), says: "The inescapable fact is that both the media and our entire society are saturated with sex." He points to a wide range of influences — television, movies, videos, magazines, advertising — which carry a common

theme: "If it feels good, do it; there are no negative consequences to pre-marital or extra-marital sex." By the time a young person is 21, he has seen 90,000 sexually-oriented scenes, the majority of which favorably portray sex outside of marriage, says McDowell.

In addition to the world's invitation to equate "love" with "sex," McDowell lists other factors which make it difficult for teenagers to refuse opportunities for pre-marital sex:

- Physical and emotional changes. Children enter puberty at a time when they are emotionally immature and ill-prepared to handle the power of "raging hormones," McDowell says. That emotional immaturity

Photo Illustration / Jim Veneman



ty is compounded by the fact young people are increasingly isolated from adult family members.

- Expanding adolescence. While puberty sets in earlier today than in previous generations, marriage is being delayed longer. Thus the gap is increased between the onset of sexual drives and their legitimate outlet in marriage.

- Peer pressure. Teenagers who are not finding affirmation and acceptance at home seek it more eagerly from their peers,

who are caught up in a culture which makes virginity an embarrassment.

And McDowell says the list of reasons teens give for having sex is almost endless: "It feels good."

"I'm getting pressure from my girlfriend, and I don't want to lose her."

"I've done it once already. It doesn't matter if I do it again."

"All my friends have done it. They want to know when I will. I might as well get it over with."

"I did it to get back at my parents."

"I wondered what it would be like."

"I did it to make him love me."

"A lot of good teens just simply make bad choices when they first encounter sexual opportunities," observes Dickerson. "Then suddenly they may be facing a consequence they never expected, a pregnancy or a sexually-transmitted disease."

"On top of that, they may be overwhelmed by guilt because they knew it was wrong to begin with. And then they find that sex has become the focus of their relationship and they have quit communicating and things are falling apart. They may feel trapped in the relationship because of guilt. And a bad teenage sexual experience makes a poor foundation for marriage later on."

"I tell my students all these problems come up because they are settling for bologna instead of waiting for steak."

Dickerson says parents and other concerned adults can take several steps to help young people successfully confront premarital sexual pressures.

"In the first place, we can give teenagers good reasons to wait for sex until marriage," says Dickerson. "Too many times we emphasize fear elements in an effort to keep young people from sexual involvement, but if pre-marital sex is wrong, then there are good reasons why it is wrong. 'Because I say so' just isn't enough."

McDowell's book focuses at great length on such reasons. In one chapter he advises abstaining from pre-marital sex for reasons which are:

— Physical, including the possibility of disease, pregnancy, and sexual addiction.

— Emotional, such as preventing stress, guilt, and negative feelings about sex.

— Relational, when sex dominates and destroys a relationship or when a partner begins to make comparisons with a previous partner.

— Spiritual, protecting the young person from the guilt which breaks fellowship with God, from sinning against themselves, and from damaging a witness to others.

In addition, McDowell offers chapters on modeling a proper context for sex, creating an atmosphere of forgiveness, instilling

Christian values, teaching about sex, and setting dating standards.

Another way Dickerson says concerned adults can help teens cope with sexual pressures is by reinforcing the young person's self-esteem.

"Teenagers need a strong sense of who they are," he says. "Many times they become involved in things because of peer pressure, and the power of peer pressure lies in the young person's need to be accepted. If a teenager feels good about who he is, he doesn't have any need to prove to others that he is OK."

Parents and others also can help teens by encouraging them to think ahead and make decisions about sexual standards, Dickerson says.

"Teens need to be encouraged to think the issue out before they have to face a choice," he says. "They need to know what they believe is right and wrong and what they should do and not do. When they are actually faced with the situation and emotions are running high, it's not a good time to be making decisions about what they are going to do."

Dickerson encourages parents and other adults to take advantage of the negative sexual examples so common in the mass media. He points out that those situations can be used to raise a question about proper sexual behavior and spark a discussion in which both facts and feelings can be shared.

In addition, parents can provide solid material which provides good information about sex. "Curiosity is one of the main reasons young people get involved in sex to begin with," he observes.

But the single most important contribution to a young person's ability to resist sexual pressures must be made by parents, says McDowell.

"The number one contributing factor" in teenage sexual activity is "adolescent alienation brought on by parental inattentiveness," he charges. "Most young people who get involved in pre-marital sex aren't really looking for sex per se," he writes. "They want intimacy — communication, dialogue, to love and give love, to understand and be understood."

Acceptance, appreciation, availability, affection, and accountability between parent and child will strengthen a relationship, McDowell observes. "As parents provide the proper emotional, spiritual, and psychological stability for their child in a loving relationship, closeness will increase and temptation to seek intimacy through sexual involvement will decrease," he says.

"If you want to insulate your child from sexual pressures, develop a close, open relationship of mutual respect and love."

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Teenage Sexual Choices Resources

The following is a partial list of materials and organizations addressing the teenage pre-marital sexual choices issue. The list is not intended to be comprehensive, nor does it constitute an endorsement by the *Arkansas Baptist*.

Ministry with Youth in Crisis

Richard Ross and Judi Hayes, compilers
Convention Press, Nashville, 1988

24-Hour Counselor

Baptist Sunday School Board
Nashville, Tenn.

How to Help Your Child Say 'No' to Sexual Pressure

Josh McDowell
Word Books, Waco, 1987

Next Time I Fall in Love

Chap Clark
Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1987

Bethany Christian Services

501-664-5729
1-800-336-4425 (Ark. only)

A non-profit organization located in the Little Rock area which offers alternative living arrangements for unwed mothers. Adoption services provided, as well as pregnancy and abortion counseling from a Christian perspective

Florence Crittenton Home 501-663-3129

A non-profit residential facility for unwed mothers located in the Little Rock area. Provides comprehensive treatment-oriented services: counseling, pre-natal and nutritional care, adoption counseling, accredited schooling, and classes on self-care and home management.

GAIN Early Intervention Program

Family Service Agency
501-758-1516

Private, non-profit organization offering counseling and educational services to strengthen and enrich family life in Pulaski, Prairie, Lonoke, and Saline counties. GAIN is a family educational series providing drug and alcohol information to lower the risk of abuse. Will lead workshop locally or train instructors at no charge. Available in other counties; call 501-682-6660 for information.

Minirth-Meier-Rice Clinic

501-225-0576

An outpatient clinic providing Christian medical and psychiatric counseling and therapy. Programs for individual and family counseling, group therapy, as well as educational programs and resources.

New Hope Institute 501-663-4673; 1-800-343-6571

A 28-bed inpatient Christian psychiatric program located at Doctor's Hospital in Little Rock. Adolescents treated on an outpatient basis or through other facilities. Evaluation and referral for hospital care and outpatient services.

New Life Counseling Service 501-664-3010

A private mental health group providing outpatient counseling and crisis intervention. Christian program for individual and family counseling and group therapy.

Teen Challenge

501-624-2446

A private, non-profit program for persons with "life-controlling problems." Fourteen-month intensive discipleship process directed toward applying biblical principles to problem areas. "Turning Point" program trains leaders to use principles in congregation.

Turning Point

501-370-1360

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BERYL CENTENNIAL

'Our Future is Bright'

 by J. Everett Sneed
 Editor, Arkansas Baptist

The Beryl Church, Vilonia, held its Centennial Aug. 11-13. Speakers for the occasion included Don Moore, executive director-treasurer of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention; Clifford Rice, evangelist, Campbell, Missouri; Lee Lawson, director of missions for Faulkner Association; and Demon Shook, pastor of the Champion Forrest Church, Houston, Texas. On Sunday morning, Aug. 13, there were 155 in Sunday School and 251 attended the worship service.

In a special service preceding the morning worship, Pastor Gray Pridmore introduced former pastors and their wives. Among those who spoke were A. Pickens Barker who served as pastor from 1964 to 1966, J. A. Measel who served as pastor from 1967 to 1976 and is currently a member of the church, and Mrs. Gene Smith whose husband served as pastor from 1957 to 1961. Mrs. Smith's husband is deceased.

Also recognized was Mrs. Roe Beard. Both she and her husband were baptized at the Beryl Church and Beard was ordained to the ministry by the congregation. They served as missionaries to the Oklahoma Indians for 43 years.

The Sunday morning message by Dr. Shook was taken from Matthew 5:13-16. He emphasized the portrait of Christ, the pur-

pose of Christ and the plan of Christ. He said, "Christians are to make a difference where they live. This can be done by finding some folks who are without Christ and doing all that you can to influence them to accept him as Savior. We are to be obedient to God all day every day."

The Beryl Church was organized on Aug. 25, 1889. The 31 charter members elected J.G. Melton as pastor. The congregation had preaching services on the 4th Saturday and Sunday of each month.

The church was organized in a school building just south of the New Liberty Cemetery. The congregation continued to meet in that building until 1913.

In 1913, a landmark faction split was finalized and 19 members withdrew from the congregation. The original congregation then began to meet at the Jeffries school house, which is located at the Heber Avra's Retirement Home. The congregation continued to meet there until 1918.

In 1918, the Baptist congregation obtained the Cumberland Presbyterian Church building and a plot of land at its present location. In 1925, the building was enlarged. Later additional land was purchased and the church now has four and one half acres. A rock building was constructed in 1947 which contained the original frame building. The congregation erected a parsonage in 1957 and a buff brick educational wing was built in 1970. The present sanc-



Gray Pridmore and Damon Shook tuary was constructed in 1978.

The congregation has had several names. Originally they were called the Liberty Church. In 1921 it was changed to the New Liberty Church and later to the New Liberty Church at Beryl. In 1940, the name was changed to the Beryl Baptist Church.

The church has ordained several ministers. Among these are T. L. Ingram, Maurice Hall, Roe Beard and Orland Beard. The congregation has had at least 32 pastors and several of these have served on more than one occasion. Some have served the congregation as many as three times.

Pastor Pridmore feels that the congregation has an exceedingly bright future. He said, "There is tremendous potential for our congregation because of the rapid growth of our county. We have purchased an additional two and one half acres of land recently. We are currently making plans to erect an educational building which will accommodate up to 250."

Pastor Pridmore attributed much of the success of the Centennial to the excellent work that was done by his members. He said, "I was exceedingly pleased with the success of our Centennial. We had two individuals to move their letter to our church. As this type of enthusiasm and effort continues our future is bright."

IMPACT 89 — For WMU & Age-Level Officers and Leaders Sessions — Day: 10 am - 2 pm; Evening: 6:45 - 9 pm

Sept. 11 am/pm: Texarkana Trinity;
 Sept. 14 am/pm: Pine Bluff Immanuel;
 Sept. 26 pm & 27 am: Jonesboro First.

Sept. 12 pm & 13 am: El Dorado First;
 Sept. 25 am/pm: West Memphis First;

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People

Dennis Cottrell began serving Aug. 27 as pastor of Harvard Avenue Church in Siloam Springs, coming there from DeSoto, Texas, where he has served for five years as pastor of Hampton Road Church. Cottrell also has served on the staff of First Church in Springdale. He and his wife, Sue, are parents of three children, Brett, Tiffany, and Josua.

Brian D. Zinck has joined the staff of First Church in Cabot as minister to youth. He is a graduate of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Brenda, are parents of one son, Brett.

Thomas W. Bolton joined the staff of Little Rock First Church Sept. 3 as minister of music. Bolton is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and University of North Texas, Denton. He has served as professor in the music division at OBU since 1973, and interim minister of music at First Church in El Dorado, since September 1988.

Randy Maxwell was honored Aug. 20 by West Church in Batesville in recognition of 10 years of service as pastor. He was honored with a noon meal and presented with a money tree and gift.

Brian Martin has joined the staff of Lepanto First Church as minister of youth and music. A native of Oklahoma, he is a student at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. He formerly served as minister of music at Moro Church and is an instructor of music at Skyview Baptist Academy in Memphis.

Glen H. Smith retired Aug. 27 as pastor of Douglasville Church in Little Rock following seven years of service. He may be contacted at 308 South Woodrow, Little Rock, AR 72205; telephone 501-664-0319.

Stan Parris began serving Sept. 1 as pastor of First Church in Hope. A native of Hope, he is a graduate of Henderson State University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has pastored in Texas and for more than five years he and his wife, Charlotte, have been serving under appointment by the Foreign Mission Board in



Cottrell



Zinck



Bolton



Maxwell

Maracaibo, Venezuela. They are parents of three children, Kyle, Kelly, and Kenneth.

Daniel Humble joined the staff of First Church in Brinkley Sept. 5 as minister of music. A native of Walnut Ridge, he is a graduate of Southern Baptist College, Ouachita Baptist University, and the University of Houston. Humble and his wife, Larna, have three children.

Pattie Huston, organist at Rosedale Church in Little Rock, was presented with a certificate of recognition July 30 for 10 years perfect attendance in Sunday School, Church Training, and both morning and evening worship services.

Fred Holst began serving Aug. 20 as pastor of Sage Church. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College. Holst and his wife, Shelia, have three sons, Paul, Kyle, and Bradley.

Lee Woodard began serving Aug. 27 as pastor of Centerton First Church, coming there from Shreveport, La. He and his wife, Brenda, have two children, Brian, and Belinda.

James Whitlock is serving as pastor of Cabin Creek Church, Lamar. He attended Southern Baptist College and is a graduate of Southwest Baptist University. Whitlock is married to the former Wenona Ruth Bailey. They have five children.



Steve Mumaw, Arkansas Traveler pitcher, capped off Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock 1989 Vacation Bible School with a grand slam finale as he shared Jesus Christ as the most important thing in his life, giving God the glory for his ability to play baseball and encouraging the 125 VBS students to develop a personal relationship with Christ, to discover their talents and to dedicate them to him.

Don Harper is serving as pastor of Hartman First Church, going there from Uniontown Church.

Julian Rowton has retired as pastor of Ozone Church.

Ted Darling began serving Aug. 20 as pastor of Ozark First Church. He is a graduate of Arkansas State University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Phylis, have two daughters, Holly and Courtney.

Doyle Summerhill has resigned as pastor of Shady Grove Church, Van Buren.

Cliff Jenkins recently was honored by Springdale First Church in recognition of five years of service as minister of education.

Briefly

Riverside Church in North Little Rock will dedicate a new church plant and worship center Sept. 10 at 3:15 p.m. Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be speaker.

Fordyce First Church held a recognition service July 30 for Mary Jo Crowder, pianist, and Becky Vineyard Rogers, organist, in appreciation for their volunteer

services as instrumentalists. They each were presented a bouquet of red roses and an engraved silver tray.

Waldron Temple Church recently began its first chapter of Royal Ambassadors.

Bates Church at Waldron will observe its 75th anniversary Sept. 17. Plans include a reception at 1:30 p.m. and an anniversary celebration at 2:15 p.m. Former pastors and members will be special guests.

South Highland Church in Little Rock celebrated homecoming Aug. 20 with activities that included Sunday School, morning worship, a potluck luncheon, and a 2 p.m. homecoming service. Pastor Mark Tolbert was speaker and Alan Moore, minister of music, coordinated the afternoon music program. A "Back to School Rally" for students in grades 7-12 was held Aug. 27. Van Barrett, assistant professor of physical education and baseball coach at Ouachita Baptist University, was speaker.

Whispering Hills Mobile Home Park Chapel, a mission of Chicot Road Church, Mabelvale, held its first Vacation Bible School July 31-Aug. 5. The school had an enrollment of 58 with an average attendance of 53. Pastor John Hurd, director, reported 16 professions of faith.

Gravel Ridge First Church observed "Share The Future" Aug. 27. Chris Esch, Robbie Sherman, Billy Wood, Larry Johnson, Tim Stockdale, and Scott Walker, members who have made commitments to

full-time Christian vocations, shared testimonies.

Mountain Home First Church licensed Brett Cooper to Christian ministry Aug. 13. The church ordained Lamar Puckett and Steve Tipton and licensed David Hudson to the preaching ministry Aug. 20.

Graves Memorial Church in North Little Rock will celebrate its 55th anniversary Sept. 10 when former members and pastors and friends will be special guests. James Thomason is pastor.

Crossett Temple Church mission team was in Imperatriz, Brazil, Aug. 13-23 to start two new churches and assist with a crusade. The 10-member team was joined by a group from First Church in Covington, Tenn. Pastor Milton Wilson served as coordinator.

Brinkley Chapel Church near Osceola celebrated its 50th anniversary Sept. 3 with activities that included special music and an old-fashioned "Dinner on the Ground." Danny Brown is pastor.

Little Rock Calvary Church mission team, composed of Jim Byrum, Rudy Jolley, Tommy and Bonnie Holmes, Kathryn Eisenkramer, and Cindy Riddle recently left to do evangelistic, medical, and dental work in Guatemala.

Fort Smith East Side Church women will hold a fall prayer retreat Sept. 8-9 with Pat Baker of Bolivar, Mo., as speaker. Vickie James of Fort Smith will present special music. Coordinators are Betty Colley and Alice Dean.

Forty-Seventh Street Church in North Little Rock will celebrate its first annual homecoming Sept. 10. R.D. Harrington, who was serving as pastor when the church was organized in 1948, will be speaker for the 11 a.m. worship service. A noon potluck meal will be served, followed by a musical program and fellowship hour. W.L. Bruce Jr. is pastor.

Markham Street Church in Little Rock will host a Sunday evening fellowship Sept. 10, honoring Dr. and Mrs. Manuel Weeks in recognition of his five years of service as pastor.

Thornton First Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary Sept. 24 with activities that will include Sunday School at 9:30 a.m., a morning worship service at 10:30 a.m., a noon meal, and an afternoon program of music and messages by former pastors. Eddie Elrod is pastor.

Huttig First Church ordained John Mark Little and Clyde Burson to the deacon ministry July 30.

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A Free Lunch

Central Association, Benton, conducted a two-week free lunch pilot project July 24-Aug. 10 that came about as a result of the Hot Springs County Hunger Needs Assessment. The food services director for the Malvern schools had expressed concern for the children's nutritional needs during the summer, especially the large number who receive free lunches during the school year.

A steering committee was formed com-



Younsters enjoy lunch and a puppet show from the Fun Wagon.

Keyboard Clinic

A keyboard clinic featuring John Innes and Bill Fasig, the Billy Graham Crusade accompanists, will be held Sept. 20 from 9 a. m. to 11:30 a. m. at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock.

Innes has served since 1967 as organist for the crusades. Fasig joined the crusades in 1970. He serves a dual role of keyboard musician and electronic engineer.

Registration deadline is Sept. 15. For more information, contact David Oliver at 565-3474.

prised of the following members: Terrell Wallace, pastors of Malvern Trinity Church; Ann Duren, Trinity Church, Malvern; Christine Harrison, Third Church, Malvern; and Diana Lewis, Central Association. Tommy Goode, ABSC Christian social ministries director, provided hunger funds and social ministries project money to finance the undertaking. Pete Petty, ABSC Missions Department, loaned the Fun Wagon trailer for project use.

Trinity Church, Malvern, donated the use of their facilities for the 18 women from Trinity Church and Third Church to

prepare nutritious lunches during the two-week period.

Clowns from First Church, Malvern, puppeteers and singers from Congo Road Church, Benton, and two summer missionaries all helped to provide entertainment for the children. They were also taught Bible verses, told Bible stories, and given Bibles.

The Fun Wagon was parked on the playground of Smith Elementary School, near the targeted areas of two housing projects. Attendance ranged from 20-30 children.

July Cooperative Program Report

Received \$1,121,391.50
Budget \$1,083,333.33
Over \$38,058.17

Year-to-date
Under \$162,321.99

Same time last year
Over \$19,236.49

July Cooperative Program receipts exceeded budget requirements by \$38,058. That's the good news. Receipts for the year (January-July) are under the budget requirements by \$162,321. That's the bad news. However, we still have the opportunity to reach our budget for the year. Our projections indicate that we can do it!—**Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director**

Pastors and Wives Conference

led by Paul and Mary Burleson

Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro
October 8-11, 1987



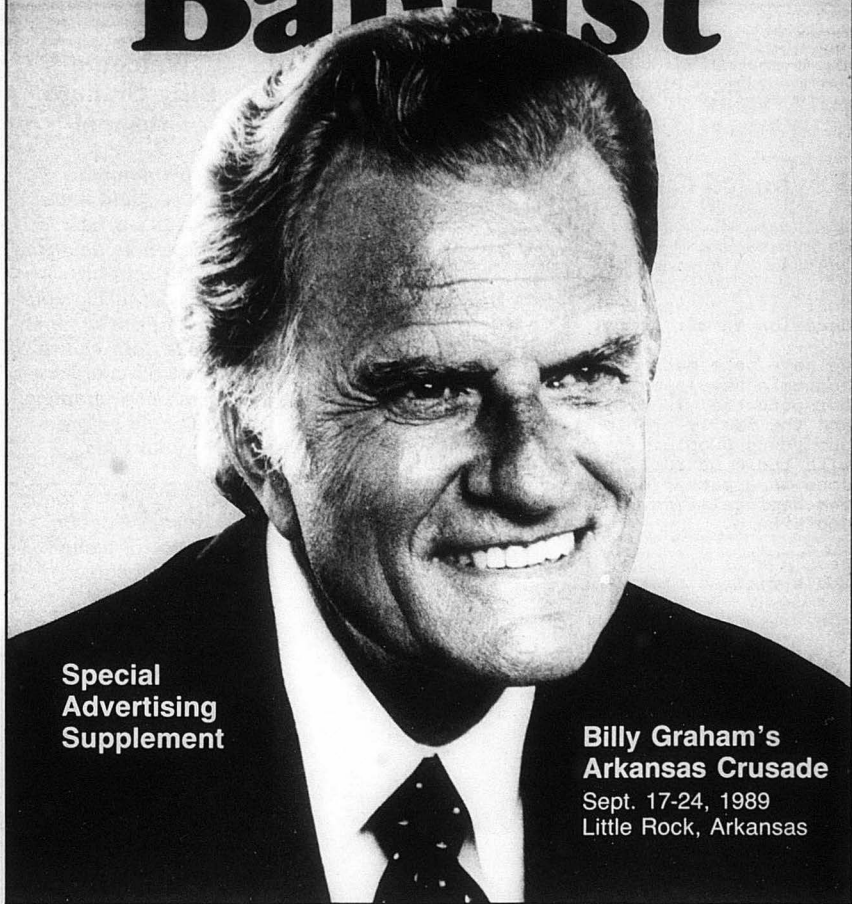
Conference Topics

- How to have a Godly marriage and be a pastor at the same time
- How to develop a positive spirit within a church
- Principles of staff relationships: How to develop a family spirit within a staff
- How to be a pastor's wife and not be bitter
- Raising children, "Those PKs"

↳ Paul Burleson, Conference Leader

To register, write: Rex Holt, Central Baptist Church
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Arkansas Baptist



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Supplement

**Billy Graham's
Arkansas Crusade**

Sept. 17-24, 1989
Little Rock, Arkansas



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August 23, 1989

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Dear Billy:

It will be my personal pleasure to extend an official welcome to you in behalf of the State of Arkansas and to thank you for bringing your crusade to Arkansas.

Your visit comes at an important time of decision in our state.

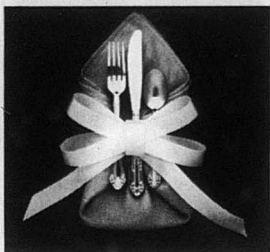
We have made much progress in education and economic development in the last few years, but our potential is limited by the scourge of drugs and the family problems which affect so many of our young people. I am doing what I can to deal with these matters, but much of what has to be done is a matter of the human spirit, beyond the reach of politics. We need your message and God's help.

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Arkansas Crusade

by Brad Lewis
Decision Magazine

In 1722, as Bernard de la Harpe was exploring the Arkansas River in the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains, he saw two interesting rock formations which he named La Grande Roche and LaPetite Roche. Downstream from "the big rock" near the site of "the little rock," La Harpe established his trading post. Early in the next century the site was surveyed, and Little Rock was established as the territorial capital.

This month residents of Arkansas' capital city, as well as people from all over the state, will have opportunity to establish new lives on the Rock—Jesus Christ—during the Arkansas Billy Graham Crusade, Sept. 17-24, at War Memorial Stadium in Little Rock. In addition, the meetings Sept. 18-21 will be broadcast live by satellite to Jonesboro, Fayetteville, Fort Smith and Texarkana, Arkansas.

Christians in Arkansas have been praying for this Crusade for a long time—some for the 30 years since Billy Graham last preached the Gospel there. Crusade Director Daniel Southern says that the grassroots invitation is unprecedented; on file are more than 30,000 signatures and letters from people who have requested Mr. Graham's return.

Preparations for the Crusade began in January. In May Christian Life and Witness Classes were held at 14 locations with

some 6,000 people attending; more than 2,100 persons have been certified to serve as Crusade counselors. Approximately 470 churches, representing about 40 denominations, are involved.

"People are realizing the value of preparation," says Southern. "This is an evangelistic outreach—reaching outside the doors of the church. That involves preparation. We have people working in every segment of secular society."

W.H. "Buddy" Sutton, chairman of the Crusade's executive committee, believes that the motivation is the desire to present the Gospel. "There is a yearning to see people saved," says Sutton, a local lawyer. "Participating in this Crusade is a great opportunity to fulfill that desire."

Just two years before Billy Graham preached in Little Rock in 1959, the city drew widespread attention when National Guardsmen were ordered by then Gov.

Orval E. Faubus to prevent nine black students from entering a local high school. When a federal court order removed the guardsmen, blacks entered the school, but then were removed later by local authorities. Federal troops were sent in to enforce the court's order.

Although desegregation was completed during the following decade, racial polarization has lingered in Little Rock. Local church leaders see the Billy Graham

Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau



Little Rock will welcome Billy Graham Sept. 17-24.

Crusade as an opportunity to extend healing and to bridge the gaps that remain.

"We need an atmosphere of love and understanding to help heal these wounds," says Sutton. "Jesus Christ changes hearts, and that's the beginning of improved relationships. We hope to see people's lives changed, and to see those changes manifested in a better community."

The Rev. Willis Walker, pastor of First Baptist Church of Highland Park and chairman of the Crusade's visitation committee, says "The black community's needs are really no different than the white community's. The Gospel is for anyone who is outside Christ. We're praying that all barriers—racial, denominational, whatever—will be broken down so that Jesus Christ can be glorified."

Southern agrees that the need for the Gospel message is universal. "We are praying that people will not take the Gospel for granted. Our prayer is that people will attend the Crusade meetings, and that God will touch their hearts for Jesus Christ."

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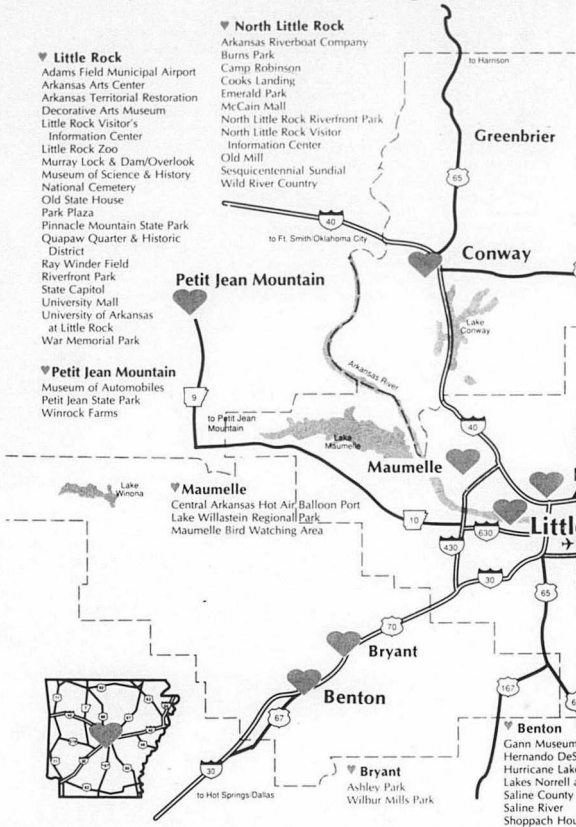
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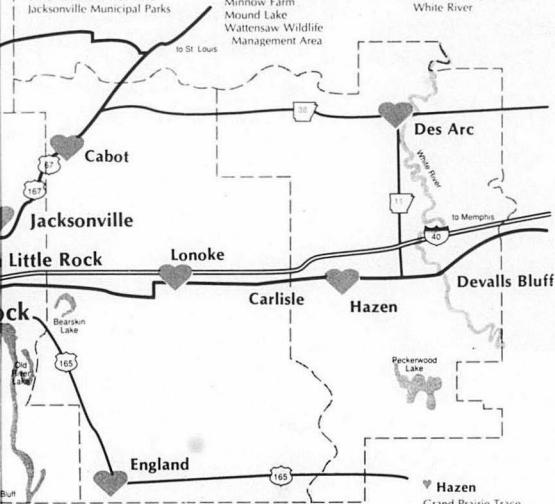
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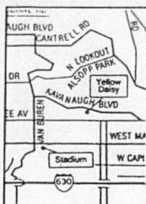
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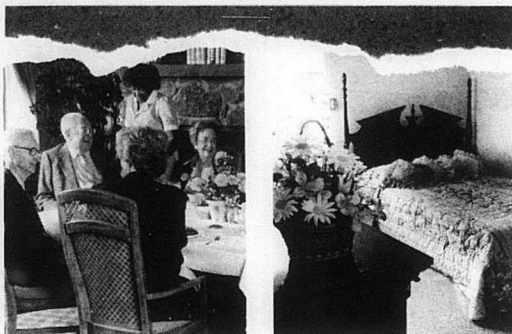
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Love-In-Action

Expressing Christian concern for the whole person—spiritual, physical and mental—is the mission of the Arkansas Billy Graham Crusade, according to Dan Southern, crusade director. That is the reason the gathering of food for distribution to the hungry is now an integral part of Crusades wherever they are held, and specifically at the Arkansas Crusade.

Sept. 17-24.

The effort, called Love-In-Action, encourages those attending the services to bring canned food or other non-perishables. The food will be made available to people in need through the hunger agencies and pantries throughout the state.

Containers (barrels) will be placed at

each entrance of War Memorial Stadium and volunteers will accept the food that is donated. The Salvation Army and Union Rescue Mission will provide trucks and workers to transport the food from the Stadium to the Arkansas Rice Depot, where it will be inventoried and distributed to the 350 agencies.

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ANNUITY BOARD

Powell Declines Post

by Thomas E. Miller Jr.
SBC Annuity Board

DALLAS (BP)—Paul W. Powell has given a final "no" to his July 25 election as president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

Powell, pastor of Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas, told his congregation Sunday morning, Aug. 13, "It's my feeling and my conviction that I shall remain the pastor of Green Acres Baptist

Church."

According to the *Tyler Morning Telegraph*, Powell received a standing ovation from the congregation when he made the statement.

On Monday there were conversations with Martin and search committee Chairman George H. Balentine Jr. of Greenville, S.C.

"Until Tuesday morning we thought Paul still might be available," said Balentine,

"but in mid-morning he called me to give a firm and final 'no.'"

"We deeply regret Paul's decision," said Martin, "but all along we have wanted him to follow what he determined to be God's will as he understands it."

Powell, an Annuity Board trustee five years, was the unanimous choice of a seven-member search committee to become chief executive officer to succeed Darold H. Morgan, who has asked to retire March 1, 1990, after 18 years in the position.

When he was nominated, Powell asked for more time to consider the decision. He earlier had declined the nomination, but agreed to reconsider after trustees voted unanimously to elect him.

Martin said the search committee will be asked to get back to work promptly. "At this point," said Martin, "we have no firm time schedule. Dr. Morgan has requested retirement on March 1, 1990. But he has agreed to serve until his replacement is elected and is ready to assume the office."

"Our time is God's time. We will proceed in an orderly way to discover and elect God's man," said Martin.

Dilday Faces Questions

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The possibility of a called meeting to discuss "political activities" by Russell Dilday was considered by Dilday and trustee officers of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in a mid-August meeting.

News reports in several newspapers—including the Richmond (Va) *Times-Dispatch* and the Nashville *Banner* indicated trustees may be targeting Dilday, president of the 4,800-student school, for "censuring or muzzling" this fall.

Dilday and trustee Chairman Ken Lilly, a physician from Fort Smith, Ark., issued a joint statement Aug. 28, saying the purpose of the Aug. 15 meeting was

to "discuss questions regarding Baptists Committed (to the Southern Baptist Convention), and to seek clarification about an article written by Dr. Dilday for the *May Southwestern News*."

Lilly said the trustee officers discussed the possibility of a called meeting—to be set Aug. 29—but decided not to do so.

The chairman, however, said he anticipates the issue to be raised when the full board meets Oct. 16-17. "I don't see at this point how it can be avoided" at the full board meeting, Lilly said.

"The issue is still hot and it will come up. . . . I don't know the best way to deal with it, but I know the guys (trustees) are going to have their say."

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Tax Credits Included

by **Kathy Palen**

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—Child-care measures in both the Senate and the House of Representatives contain provisions that would assist families in which one parent stays home to care for the children.

Directed by a child-care resolution passed at the 1988 Southern Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has worked with congressional staffs on the inclusion of such a provision in any federal child-care legislation.

The Senate-approved Act for Better Child Care Services includes a package of tax credits that would benefit both parents who purchase child care services and those who care for their children at home.

The Senate ABC bill would supplement the existing earned-income tax credit for low-income families with children younger than age 4. The EITC is available to families whether or not they pay child-care providers.

The EITC expansion would provide a maximum credit of \$500 for families with one child and \$750 for those with two or more.

The Senate measure also would make the existing dependent-care tax credit refundable to families who purchase child care and whose incomes are less than \$28,000. By being refundable, the credit would be available to families who owe no income tax. It also would be available in advance through workers' paychecks.

"For more than a year we have stressed the urgency of tax-credit benefits as a key to any child-care legislation," said Larry Braidfoot, CLC general counsel. "The active support of key Southern members helped secure an unexpected victory in the Senate."

On the House side, a package approved by the Ways and Means Committee also features an expanded EITC that would be both refundable and available in advance.

The Ways and Means plan would increase the current credit from 14 percent to 17 percent for low-income families with one child and would provide larger credits for families with additional children. It also would provide a supplemental "young child" credit for families with children 5 or younger.

Child-care legislation—the Child Development and Education Act—approved by the House Education and Labor Committee is expected to be referred to Ways and Means. Members there say they plan to substitute their package for a section of the child-care bill that would provide grants and contracts to child-care providers.

"It appears very promising that tax credits will be a key part of whatever shape the final House bill takes," Braidfoot said. "This would mean that, in all likelihood, the only major feature the Senate bill and the House bill will have in common is an emphasis on tax credits."

"Obviously, we are more pleased with the House Ways and Means proposal, which would provide \$14.5 billion in tax credits over a period of four years.

Braidfoot said this is a crucial time for interested Southern Baptists to contact their representatives and urge them to support inclusion of tax credits that benefit parents providing home-based child care in the final bill.

BJC Members To Receive Report

WASHINGTON (BPA)—During their annual meeting in October, members of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs are to receive a report on the contributions the agency has received during the past fiscal year.

Questions over those contributions were raised during the Southern Baptist Convention in June and have continued to receive attention since then.

"We will follow the directions of our board and respond fully and cooperatively with the motion passed during our last BJC meeting," said James M. Dunn, BJC executive director. "The board approved a motion that instructed the staff 'to provide the BJCPA a listing of contributors toward the 1988-89 budget insofar as possible.'

"Obviously, that information is incomplete with two months left on the specified time, but we will gladly comply with this request."



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Religious Scams

by **Kathy Palen**

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—More than 15,000 Americans have lost almost \$500 million during the past five years as a result of religiously oriented investment scams, according to a report released Aug. 7.

"Preying on the Faithful: The False Prophets of the Investment World," based on a survey of state securities agency enforcement cases, was released by the North American Securities Administrators Association and the Council of Better Business Bureaus.

The report points to "an alarming increase in the number of investment schemes peddled to religious people." It cites a variety of religiously oriented schemes, including "self-proclaimed 'born again' financial planners, con artists claiming to be endorsed by local and national church officials and givers of 'divinely inspired' investments advice" about coins, precious metals, real estate, stocks, and oil and gas wells.

"Religiously oriented scams are one of today's hottest tickets for investment swindlers," said John C. Baldwin, the association's president and director of the Utah Division of Securities. "The problem here is not religion but the growing number of swindlers who cynically exploit religious faith in order to fleece unsuspecting members of the flock."

The report includes a list of reasons for the rise in religiously oriented investment schemes:

— Many of the scams are based on dire predictions of imminent financial and social chaos.

— The tight-knit structure of many religious groups is a perfect environment

for an investment swindler.

— Specialized media outlets, including religious magazines and radio stations, make targeting members of religious groups easy.

— The schemes frequently involve investments that are claimed to have some connection to a church or religious institution.

— Perpetrators of such scams often equate faith in their schemes with religious faith.

"Con artists are concerned with matters of ethics and religious beliefs only insofar as they can be used to run a scam," said James H. McIlhenny, Council of Better Business Bureaus president. "They will go to any length, including the exploitation of churches and deeply held religious beliefs, if they think it will work. They will take their 30 pieces of silver any way they can get them."

The report also lists tips for avoiding such scams:

— Be wary of investments that seem closely tied to a particular religious belief. "It makes little sense that an investment opportunity would be available only to members of a specific church or faith," the report says.

— Be cautious if the promoter of an investment opportunity tries to capitalize on connections or a leadership position within a religious group.

— Be on guard if a new church member springs up with a "surefire" investment scheme. "Some con artists will waste little or no time in worming their way into a religious circle," the report warns. "Find out who you are dealing with and what their background, if any, is within the church."

— Look closely at investments promoted by fellow church members. "Keep in mind that one of the con artist's most persuasive hooks will be the testimony of your friends and fellow believers," the report advises.

— Ignore claims that religiously based investments are unregulated. According to the report, "Virtually all investment opportunities, including church bonds, come under the scope of state and federal securities or commodities laws."

— Check out any promoter and his investment opportunity. "Don't suspend your doubt about an investment just because the promoter has made some claims about church connections," the report says. "All promoters and investors should be checked out thoroughly before money changes hands."

— Don't give a break to a swindler who hides behind religion.

"Once discovered, investments swindlers promoting schemes to church members sometimes plea for Christian forgiveness," the report concludes. "Others will warn of the danger to the church or the greater faith if the scam is exposed. Don't listen to these self-serving appeals."

"If you suspect that you have been approached or taken by a con artist, report them to your state securities agency."

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Mike Huckabee, Speaker
- 7:45 Age-group conferences
- 9:15 Adjourn

Youth, Children, and Preschool Workers:

- 6:50 Age-group conferences
- 8:25 General Session-Auditorium
Mike Huckabee, Speaker
- 9:15 Adjourn

Saturday, September 30

- 8:30 Age-group conferences
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- 12:30 Adjourn

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Special Session

Florida Baptists Join Highly Charged Abortion Debate

by Greg Warner

Florida Baptist Witness

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)—Florida Baptists will join the highly charged abortion debate next month when they hold a rare special session of their state convention.

The session, set for Sept. 8-9 in Orlando, is intended to influence Florida lawmakers to adopt more restrictive abortion legislation during their own special session one month later—Oct. 10-13.

By an estimated 55 percent majority vote, members of Florida Baptists' State Board of Missions approved the request of state convention president Bill Billingsley of Hollywood to hold the special session. It will be only the third time in the 128-year history of the Florida Baptist State Convention—and the first time in 22 years—that a special session has been called.

"I want our society to know that Southern Baptists are not going to stand by quietly while women are having abortions for convenience and economic reasons," Billingsley said in issuing the call. "Human life is more precious than that."

Both of the convention's vice presidents opposed the unusual meeting, but Billingsley, pastor of Sheridan Hills Baptist Church in Hollywood, said the session is "demanded by political circumstance." The regular annual meeting of the Florida Baptist State Convention is scheduled for Nov. 13-15, which he said would be too late to influence state legislators.

Billingsley called for the special session after he and three other prominent Florida Baptists met with Florida Gov. Bob Martinez July 25, the same day Martinez detailed his proposal for an overhaul of the state's abortion legislation.

The governor's plan would parallel legislation enacted in Missouri and upheld recently by the U.S. Supreme Court in the celebrated Webster decision. It would prohibit abortions performed by state employees or in state facilities except in cases of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother; prohibit abortion of fetuses 20

weeks or older if it is determined they can survive outside the womb and if the pregnancy does not threaten the life of the mother; require doctors to inform women considering abortions about the health and development of the fetus; and require abortion clinics to meet stricter medical standards.

One of those who met with the governor was Daytona Beach pastor Bobby Welch, who arranged the 30-minute meeting and initiated the idea of a special session. "If the governor of the state will call, for political and humanitarian reasons, a special session of the state legislature, it is unthinkable to me that Florida Baptists will not reciprocate for spiritual reasons and the sanctity of life," said Welch, pastor of First Church of Daytona Beach.

Martinez, a strong opponent of abortion, has agreed to speak at the special session, which will be held in Downtown Baptist Church in Orlando.

Billingsley said he will ask messengers at the September convention to adopt a "foundational, generic statement" on abortion, one he said could be supported by almost all Florida Baptists.

Plans also call for the convention to train messengers in ways to influence their legislators and offer suggestions for organizing a "caravan" of Baptists to go to the state capital of Tallahassee during the special legislative session.

Messengers also will be asked to approve formation of a 15-member committee that will plan a strategy for the Florida Baptist Convention and Florida Baptist churches to implement homes for unwed mothers, adoption services, foster care services, crisis pregnancy centers, and education in Christian sexuality.

Such a response is critical even if no changes are made in the state's abortion laws, said John Sullivan, Florida Baptists' executive director treasurer.

"I don't want us to have a special session just to pass another resolution on abortion," Sullivan said. "I want us to define some procedures and strategies for carrying through the decision of the convention."

At Billingsley's request, Sullivan invited Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, to meet with Florida Baptist leaders Aug. 18 to help draft the statement and recommendation to be presented to the special session.

The statement was taken primarily from Land's introduction to the CLC's friend-of-the-court brief submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court during debate of the Webster decision.

The statement acknowledges the reality and right of disagreement among Baptists on abortion, then adds: "Nevertheless, we are far more united in our agreement that

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"We believe human life to be sacred and begins at conception," the statement says. It denounces "casual attitudes about abortion" contained in current laws and insists "the right of human life must be protected by the state."

In order to minimize divisiveness, leaders said, the statement does not deal with which, if any, exceptions to abortion are morally permissible. Nor does it take a specific stand on Gov. Martinez's proposals, adding simply, "We must support legislation that will achieve dramatic saving and nurturing of human life."

Carolyn Anderson of Lakeland, second vice president of the convention, wrote a letter to State Board of Missions members opposing the special session, objecting that a special session would be "divisive" and "political," and that it was not the proper way to deal with the abortion issue.

She was invited to attend the meeting with Land. Afterward she said she could support the outcome. "The issue of having the (special) convention is behind us, therefore we need to work together and be united as much as possible," she said. She described the statement as "palatable" and said it "can have a significant impact on reducing abortions."

"What I'm most excited about are the long-term plans," she added. Through the proposed adoption services and sex education, she said, Florida Baptists can help women keep from "having to make the choice for abortion."

Land, meanwhile, applauded the proactive stance of Florida Baptists in the battle over abortion legislation. He said Florida is a "bellwether" state on the abortion issue not only because Martinez was the first governor to call a special legislative session but because of the state's size, demographic character and ethnic diversity.

He suggested other Baptist state conventions will look for leadership to the role of Florida Baptists play in abortion legislation.

The program for the special session will feature Land and Martinez as keynote speakers Friday night, Sept. 8. Welch and Sullivan will speak Saturday morning, Sept. 9.

The Friday night program also will include a memorial observance for the thousands of unborn babies that have been aborted in America and video testimonies by several physicians explaining why they abstain from performing abortions.

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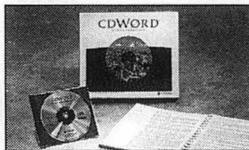
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Convention Uniform

We Are Responsible

by D.C. McAtee, First Church,
Forrest City

Basic passage: Ezekiel 18:2-4,30-31

Focal passage: Ezekiel 18:30

Central truth: We are responsible to God for our sins—not others.

Ezekiel's vision of the glory of God in last week's study provided the setting for his call to a prophetic ministry (Ez. 2-3). Chapters 2-17 tell us of the many ways the Israelites had rebelled against God.

The experiences of today's lesson took place about 592 B.C. near Babylon as the principle of individual accountability is reiterated. The people of Israel used the proverb in verses 2-3 to blame their ancestors for their sufferings. The Lord was displeased with their self-righteous attitude and told them to face up to their own shortcomings and change their ways. It's easy to blame others for our bad circumstances or sins—our parents, peers, boss, spouse, or the devil. No one likes to say "It's my fault," but if we will admit our sins and ask forgiveness, God will answer.

In verse 21, we see God's desire to save all who will come unto him and turn from their wicked ways. He also promised to forgive and remember their sins against them no more forever (v. 22 and He. 8:12). We can imply from this that if our sins are ever mentioned to us again, it is from the Devil and not from the Lord.

God pled with his people to repent in verse 30. He knew how quickly his chosen people would turn from him and go back into their sinful ways, so he warned them again that they were all going to be judged. Therefore, they must repent. How like these people we Christians are today. God is fully aware of our actions, words—even thoughts—and expects us to repent, which means more than the emotional feeling of being sorry. We also are to stop doing the things that we know are displeasing to God and begin living as we know he wants us to live.

Verses 31-32 are a final plea for Israel to get a new heart and a new spirit, for it is not the will of the Father that any should perish but that all might be saved. We today need "a new heart," one that wants to please God and do his will, and "a new spirit," one that is determined to be obedient at all times. People choose their destiny—whether they will be a curse or a blessing to those who live around them.

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Life and Work

Wisdom of Relationships

by David Moore, Immanuel Church,
Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Proverbs 3:27-30; 10:12; 15:18; 17:9; 19:11; 21:21; 27:4; 29:22

Focal passage: Proverbs 3:27-28; 10:12; 15:18; 19:11

Central truth: We should treat others with love and forgiveness.

Inasmuch as it depends on us, we are to live at peace with all people (Ro. 12:18). In this lesson, we are reminded by the various verses of the importance of right relationships.

The "Golden Rule" is a simple principle by which we should live with others. If your neighbor lives beside you in a trusting manner, then you should be trustworthy. He should know that you will always treat him with respect and courtesy.

If, on the other hand, we have a hot temper, then we are certain to raise tensions and hostilities with others. Anger and hatred can stir up a mess in relationships. Arguments erupt when tempers flare.

Then a more serious problem emerges. We want to hold on to a grudge. We have a hard time forgetting and forgiving. So we keep remembering what that person said or did.

Now there is always another response. Even though we fail to see that we are responding to the crisis or situation, we are still choosing a response. That reaction can simply be the attitude that we are going to let it all blow out in a fit of rage or we are going to keep it closed up in a bitter spirit.

The wise man tells us that there is a better response, however. It is the path of love and forgiveness. If you want to have friends and maintain relationships, you must learn the art of forgiveness. When people wrong you, just make your mind up that you are not going to remember their wrong. You have chosen to forgive them.

We should decide before we encounter another person what our attitude will be toward them. Rather than reacting to what they do to us, we can choose to love them no matter what they do.

You are a wise person if you simply ignore the wrongs you suffer. If you are going to remember "it," then the person you will harm will be yourself. Your bitter spirit will destroy you. Love demands that you forgive and ignore the wrongs suffered. Patience brings peace! Try it and see for yourself.

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Bible Book

Israel's Great God

by Robert O. Pruett, University
Church, Fayetteville

Basic passage: Numbers 22:1 to 36:13

Focal passage: Numbers 22:1-6; 23:1-20; 24:1-11; 25:1-5

Central truth: Man's faith commitment to God assures him of a relationship with a God able and willing to protect and bless.

Imagine how the king of Moab, Balak, must have felt when he saw thousands of desert people, the people of Yahweh, headed towards his country. Not only were they powerful in number; their god protected and guided them.

Balak could think of only one way to defeat this horde, and that was to use the occult. The popular way was to use a seer, or prophet, to call out and cause an effect. The problem was that the seer Balak chose was Balaam, who was under the guidance of Yahweh, the God of Israel.

To summarize the events which followed: Balak sent an envoy to convince Balaam to be employed to help defeat this horde of desert invaders. Balaam didn't know these were the people of Yahweh. After asking Yahweh what he should do, he was told not to be involved. Balak would not take no for an answer and ended up convincing Balaam to proceed. A very interesting communication between an angel of the Lord and Balaam goes on, but Balaam still continued on to attempt the curse. After arriving on the scene, Balaam realized he was dealing with the people of Yahweh and that Yahweh would not allow him to harm his people. Balaam ended up confirming the blessings of Yahweh on Israel instead of pronouncing a curse on them. Yahweh was truly a faithful God to his people.

Israel did to themselves what God would not allow the world to do to them. Because of their backsliding into temptation of sexual immorality with the Moabite women and being seduced into the pagan worship of Baal, they were punished by their own god for their own sins. Yahweh ordered all that were involved in the sin of sexual immorality, marrying the pagan women, and offering sacrifice to Baal killed. Twenty-four thousand were publicly killed. Only under their own initiative were the people of Yahweh cursed. Even through this time of purging and cleansing was God once again bringing his people back to him.

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'Abandoned, Corrected'

by Al Shackleford

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP)—Lloyd Elder "felt abandoned" after trustees spent more than an hour discussing whether to fire him from his post as president of the Southern Baptist Sunday Board.

"I have not felt so abandoned since our daughter died in an automobile accident," Elder told SSB employees during an assembly Aug. 11.

During an Aug. 7-9 meeting, trustees spent more than an hour discussing a motion to dismiss the president and declare the post vacant. The motion subsequently was withdrawn.

Elder said he is resolved to do God's will in his life and "to rally with energy and his grace, which is sufficient, to stay and endure with high purpose for the long term in service as president of the Sunday School Board and to depend upon the Lord, upon Southern Baptists and upon you as fellow employees to do that with effectiveness."

Following his practice of reporting to employees about trustee meetings, Elder reviewed reorganization and personnel actions taken by trustees and then discussed their actions concerning him.

The general administration committee had presented recommendations that instructed Elder to refrain from perceived political activity and to seek a balance in denominational viewpoints in speakers, writers and authors. The recommendations also asked that a committee be appointed to draft an instrument to evaluate the performance of the president.

During discussion, the motion to dismiss Elder was presented.

Elder told the assembly audience of about 1,000 employees, retirees and visitors, "This has been a tremendously dif-

icult time for Lloyd and Sue Elder.

"After the motion was withdrawn — which I consider the depth of cowardice on the part of the trustee who withdrew it — I felt as if I had been laid out on a table for surgery and cut wide open, and left there to see if I would live."

It was personally painful for his dismissal to be discussed for an hour and never voted on, he said, and asked, "How do we know how many trustees would have voted for it?"

"The trustee body can deal with the president. It is their will that has to be determined and all the allegations made, whether true or false, are not really the basis," Elder said.

"It is the will of the body that prevails as far as the election or the disposition of the president," he added.

After the motion to dismiss the president was withdrawn, the trustees passed the committee's recommendations, adding an amendment which stated "in this context" support for Elder and pledged their efforts to work for the success of his presidency.

"Eighteen able, fine trustees have the perception that I have engaged in political activity and I must take that very seriously. I will not ignore it," he said, adding that he operates under two principles: "never, never be involved in political activity" and "never, never be quiet when the environment has a direct effect on the well being of the Baptist Sunday School Board."

He continued, "Strong, good representatives of the board of trustees have instructed me to seek balance in our speakers, writers and authors. It is our instruction. There is absolutely no way I can carry that out without your help.

Elder said that in spite of the withdrawn motion and the approved recommendations, he feels support. "The administration made 45 recommendations to the trustees, all of which were passed overwhelmingly," he observed.

He said he also felt corrected. "No one of us is above accountability, and I will not run from it."

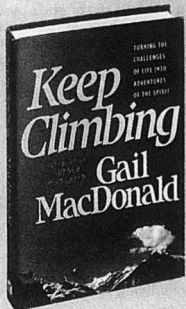
At the conclusion of his address, Elder received a standing ovation and about a dozen large sheets of paper with written support from employees. Sue Elder was presented a bouquet of roses.

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'AVOWED HOMOSEXUAL'

Seminary Dismisses Student

by David Wilkinson

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—An avowed homosexual has been required to withdraw as a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Kevin Kouba, 32, from Florissant, Mo., was forced to withdraw in mid-July after

a fellow student at the Louisville, Ky., school charged that Kouba was involved in homosexual behavior.

Following a hearing involving both students, the dean of the school of Church Music and the vice president for student services, Kouba was instructed to withdraw from school.

Since then, Kouba has appealed the decision before two disciplinary groups composed of students, faculty and administrators. Both times the appeal was denied.

Following the second appeal Aug. 23, Kouba told Louisville television and newspaper reporters he plans to pursue the final step in the seminary's appeals process and take his complaint to seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt.

Kouba has argued that the seminary's policy forbidding homosexual behavior is discriminatory and that his initial hearing was unfair. He claimed he was told in the hearing that he would not be "expelled" if he was truthful, yet after confessing to the allegations he was required to "withdraw."

Students required to withdraw eventually may apply for re-admission if they meet requirements established by the seminary. Expulsion, however, is irrevocable.

Kouba, who had planned to graduate with a degree in church music next May, said he believes he should be allowed to stay at the seminary and pursue a church music career.

He has been supported in his appeal by members of Honesty, a gay-rights group.

Seminary officials have declined to comment on details of the case, citing students' privacy rights. However, a statement issued Aug. 30 by the seminary claimed the disciplinary policy is "thorough and fair."

The statement noted that every student receives a copy of the seminary's disciplinary policy which states that certain actions, including "homosexual behavior and heterosexual misconduct," are "unacceptable" in the seminary community.

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PEOPLE TO DEPEND ON

Teleconference Set for Sept. 17

NASHVILLE—Churches with an intercessory prayer ministry or those who are interested in starting one should tune in to a National Prayer Corps teleconference Sunday, Sept. 17.

The teleconference will be broadcast live on the Baptist Telecommunications Network from 3-5 p.m.

The National Prayer Corps is comprised of about 10,000 people who have pledged to pray 30 minutes each day for Southern Baptist Convention causes.

Call-in questions about the National Prayer Corps, intercessory prayer ministries and mission prayer emphases will be answered by a panel of three. Panelists include T.W. Hunt, Henry Blackaby, and Minette Drumwright.

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WORLD

Islam Could Dominate World

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—Islam could soon become the world's dominant religion, a Southern Baptist interfaith witness leader told state evangelism directors at the Southern Baptist Home Missions Conference at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Gary Leazer, director of the HMB's interfaith witness department, said Muslims could easily become the world's dominant religion by the year 2025. There are now more than 800 million Muslims worldwide, compared with 1.6 billion Christians worldwide.

"If Muslims continue to grow at their present rate, they will number 5.8 million in America by the turn of the century and surpass the number of American Jews," Leazer said. There are currently more than 4 million American Muslims. "This increase is dueo Muslims' evangelistic zeal and the fact that Jews do not proselytize and are having more marriages outside their faith."

Muslims have a strong zeal to gather followers in all nations, particularly in Christian nations where they are allowed to evangelize alongside other faiths, he added. Evangelism efforts by Christians are outlawed in Muslim countries.

Islam stresses surrender to one God, called Allah. Jesus is one of the six major Muslim prophets, but Muhammad is the last and supreme prophet. Muslims adhere to the teachings of the Korean.

Fired Missionary To Teach

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)—Michael Willett, who was dismissed as a Southern Baptist foreign missionary last year, will teach this fall at a Methodist seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

Willett, 33, was dismissed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board July 21, 1988, for "doctrinal ambiguity," particularly regarding the deity, miracles and physical resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Willett was in language study in Costa Rica when another missionary in language school voiced concern about Willett's theology.

A year after his firing, Willett says he still is fighting bitterness over the dismissal. "Bitterness is a poison that can kill someone's spirit," he told Helen Gray, religion editor of the *Kansas City Times*. "I am committed to not allowing bitterness to capture me."

In the interview, Willett added: "There is some anger and I am working through this. But anger can be constructive. When someone has been hurt deeply as I have been, naturally there would be some anger."

Willett will teach New Testament at St. Paul School of Theology as an adjunct professor with a one-year contract beginning this fall. In the spring, he also will teach a class at Central Baptist Theological Seminary, an American Baptist institution in Kansas City, Kan.

He told the *Kansas City* newspaper he has no long term plans because "certain opportunities in Southern Baptist life have been robbed from me. Many administrators and professors are supportive and sympathetic, but because of their constituencies, it would be unlikely that they would hire me. . . ."

Willett, of Liberty, Mo., earned his doctorate at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., in 1985. He has taught at Southern Seminary; William Jewell College, a Missouri Baptist-related school in Liberty, Mo.; and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City.

He was appointed by the FMB in 1987 and was to teach in Venezuela.

Student Killed In Shelling

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)—A Beirut Baptist School student has been killed and several Baptist buildings have been damaged during the latest round of shelling in Beirut.

Danny Melki, 10, died in a Beirut hospital four days after being injured when a shell struck his home three blocks from Beirut Baptist School in West Beirut, where he was a student. Lower grades of the school have been unable to meet for some time.

Melki was the school's first student killed since fighting associated with the Israeli invasion in 1982, said Southern Baptist representative Jim Ragland, who closely monitors the Beirut situation from Cyprus.

Edgar Troubousi, pastor of a new Baptist congregation at Archrifeh, narrowly escaped death when a rocket hit his apartment building in East Beirut, near Arab Baptist Seminary. Troubousi had just gone downstairs moments before a rocket hit the building, exploded and severely damaged two rooms of his apartment.

A 1986 graduate of the Baptist seminary, he has been leading a new congregation at Archrifeh, a city of some 10,000 people in the highlands of East Beirut.