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November 23, 1989

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Families Safe

Arkansas Baptist

November 23, 1989



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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ANNUAL MEETING
'Stir Thy Church'

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ABN photo / Mark Kelly

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During their annual meeting Nov. 14-15 in Little Rock, Arkansas Baptists were told revival cannot fall until they have repented of the sins in their midst.

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Notice

The next issue of the *Arkansas Baptist* will be published Dec. 7. Sunday School lesson commentaries for Nov. 26 and Dec. 3 are published in this issue.

IT'S UPLIFTING

Jesus Through Film

SEOUL, South Korea—During the first two-thirds of 1989, the evangelistic film ministry supervised by Southern Baptist missionary Charles Wiggs helped lead 481 people to faith in Jesus Christ. The film ministry worked with 156 Korean churches, and 11,714 people viewed presentations. An average of three people at each church made decisions to become Christians. "Every avenue must be used to bring people to a saving knowledge of the Lord. The film ministry is one of these avenues," Wiggs said.

Planning Growth

SUN MOON LAKE, Taiwan—Taiwan Baptists have adopted a 10-year evangelism and church-starting plan. The Baptist convention, which has 152 churches and chapels and 150,000 members, has set a goal to expand to 500 churches and chapels with

750,000 members by the year 2000. If the goal is reached, membership will grow by 500 percent.

Baptist Spared

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras—A Honduran Baptist flight attendant survived the Oct. 21 crash of a commercial airplane carrying 146 people. The plane plowed into a village near the Tegucigalpa, Honduras, airport. The flight attendant, Nizia Umansor, was one of 14 survivors, including the pilot, co-pilot and another flight attendant. She suffered burns and fractures. Fernando Vega, fiscal adviser for the Honduras Baptist Convention, was scheduled to be on the plane but changed his plans. "Nizia's family is very thankful and feels it was only by the grace of God they still have her," said Southern Baptist missionary Carl Rees in Honduras. "And we're thankful that Fernando changed his plans about coming back home."

GOOD NEWS!

The Servant and His Ingenuity

Luke 16:1-9

This story of a shrewd servant who tried to feather his own nest with his master's money has been called "the most puzzling parable Jesus ever spoke." To ferret out the truth of it is to discover one of the real gems of Jesus' teaching.

As Jesus unfurled the story of the unsavory character, the disciples expected Jesus to pronounce the condemnation of God on this man. Imagine their surprise when instead the master commended the servant. Jesus' conclusion in the last half of verse 8 indicated that there are qualities in the sons of this world that he wanted to see in the sons of God.

Fervor—When Jesus said, "The sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light" (v. 8, NASB), he had in mind their fervor.

To succeed in life, the businessman approaches his job with enthusiasm and commitment. There is no challenge too difficult, no sacrifice too great.

So it should be in the kingdom of God. We should be just as fervent in extending the kingdom of God as we are in experiencing the success of the world.

Foresight—The word in verse 8 which is translated "shrewd" (NASB) comes from the root word *phren* which means "the

mind" or "the discerning intellect." The sons of this world show more foresight in pursuing their worldly goals than Christians do in the pursuit of their spiritual goals.

When the servant in the parable faced a crisis, he reacted in an intelligent way. He analyzed his situation, considered his alternatives, determined his best course, and then followed through. Jesus said that we need persons to face the challenges of the spiritual realm with that same kind of imagination.

Finances—In verse 9, we see another characteristic of the "children of this world" that Jesus wanted to see in his followers. A paraphrase of the verse might be, "Use your money to advance the cause of Christ, to gain friends for the kingdom of God so that when you die and go to heaven you will be able to share eternity with them."

Three attitudes toward money are open to us: we can view money as an enemy to avoid; it can be allowed to become our master to worship; or it can be our friend to use. It is this third attitude that Jesus opted for in this parable. As the men of this world use their finances to advance their personal kingdom, we as the children of God are to use it to expand his kingdom.

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'Stir Thy Church'

J. EVERETT SNEED

The 1989 meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at First Baptist Church, Little Rock, may have been the best state convention held in many years. The theme "Stir Thy Church to Global Action, to Moral Courage, to Aggressive Outreach and to Loving Fellowship" was developed in a marvelous way by the speakers. The election of Mike Huckabee, pastor of Beech Street First Church, Texarkana, as president of the state convention assures Arkansas Baptists of conservative leadership which will be fair to everyone in the convention. The messengers honored Dan Grant, former president of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, and H.E. Williams, president emeritus of Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, by electing them as vice-presidents.

The call for repentance and renewal had a dramatic effect on those who were in attendance. Individuals developing this theme included Executive Director Don Moore and Darrell W. Robinson, vice-president of Evangelism for the Home Mission Board. The solemn assembly, which Executive Director Don Moore and retiring President Cary Heard instituted, also gave impetus to the effort. These activities may have stopped the possibility of turbulence in the state convention.

The possibility of confrontation was present in the convention because of the political activities which had preceded it. We believe that Arkansas Baptists should make every effort to put these issues behind. If, however, any political meetings continue, regardless of perspective, we believe it is incumbent on the Newsmagazine to report these to our readers. As George W. Truett said, "If you give Southern Baptists the facts, they will do the right thing." Arkansas Baptists want to be used in carrying out the Great Commission.

Another factor which contributed to the harmony of our state convention was the excellent moderating of convention President Cary Heard. Dr. Heard moderated with fairness, dignity, and freedom.

First Church, Little Rock, deserves the applause of Arkansas Baptists. The pastor, church staff and volunteers who assisted the messengers during the convention were gracious, kind and effective. Volunteer hostesses were posted at the major entrances, and the church staff also was available to meet any need that arose.



Randall O'Brien, pastor of Calvary Church, Little Rock, did a masterful job in the annual sermon. In his message, "Your Devil Is Too Small," O'Brien brought the Devil out of the dark recesses and showed how he effectively functions in today's world. He said, "In Christ, but only in Christ, your Devil is too small to lick even one of God's children. Even one."

Several important items of business were passed during the convention. The passage of the budget by the convention means that all Arkansas Baptists are doing together in our state and around the world will continue in 1990. But special note should be given to the fact that our income is growing at an extremely slow rate. Executive Director Don Moore observed that our receipts at this point are only 0.5 percent above those we received last year. The in-

flation factor is 4 percent or more.

A second recommendation which was unanimously endorsed by the messengers was the 1990 priority emphases and goals. The "Here's Hope-Jesus Cares for You" simultaneous revival are very much needed. The baptismal goal of 175,000 as a result of these revivals is attainable if Arkansas Baptists truly commit themselves to the task of reaching people.

The Guatemala-Arkansas Partnership will have its full year of activities in 1990. Partnership missions has provided the potential to involve hundreds of Arkansas Baptists in mission projects such as evangelism, church program developments, and construction. The partnership with Brazil enhanced the work of the Lord in that country and challenged Arkansas Baptists to a greater commitment to missions.

Another recommendation approved by the convention was "Directions 2000." This sets forth the priority goals and objectives for Arkansas Baptists for the next five years. These are: 1991—Support Missions; 1992—Strengthen Families; 1993—Growing Churches; 1994—Perform Ministries; and 1995—Reach People. Each of these priorities are of extreme importance.

This year's great convention should assist Arkansas Baptists in moving forward in serving the Lord during the coming year. If Arkansas Baptists will follow the admonition to repent and renew their commitments with the Lord, we can experience a complete turnaround in reaching the lost and in our stewardship. The ultimate test of this year's convention will be determined by the willingness of God's people to obey God in placing his priorities above personal desires.

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Repentance And Revival

*Arkansas Baptists Told Revival Will Not Come
Until Amends Are Made with God and Man*

by Mark Kelly
Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Arkansas Baptists who convened in Little Rock for their 136th annual meeting Nov. 14-15 were repeatedly warned that God could not move in power among them until they repented of the worldliness and strife which has broken their fellowship and caused God to remove his hand from their efforts.

Meeting under the theme, "Stir Thy Church," messengers were called to prayer for spiritual awakening and confronted by speakers who insisted that brokenness, humility, and brotherly love are prerequisites for revival.

Tuesday morning

The sanctuary of Little Rock's First Baptist Church was barely half full at 8:30 a.m. when Charles Vance of Texarkana came to the platform to lead the congregation in singing the convention theme song, "Stir Thy Church."

Following the singing, Host Pastor John Wright voiced an eloquent prayer that God would stir his people to spiritual awakening. Messengers continued to straggle in as Darrell Robinson, vice-president for evangelism at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, brought the first of his four theme interpretations.

Focusing on the subject of "Global Action," Robinson took as his text 2 Timothy 1:6, in which Paul challenges his young protege to "stir up the gift of God that is in you."

Although God has been ready for a long time to stir his church, people usually get enthused about the Lord's work because they decide to get enthused, Robinson observed. He told messengers the way to get enthusiastic about bringing people to Christ is by getting involved in the task.

He called on Arkansas Baptists to "agonize with God" over the loss of the world and noted that God has given them everything they need to reach the state for Christ. "But if you are going to spend your resources on quarrelsomeness and disunity, you will fragment and fail" in your missions effort, he warned.

At 9:10 a.m., Arkansas Baptist State Convention President Cary Heard called the annual meeting to order. Messengers seated the 989 persons registered and adopted the order of business presented by Mike Huckabee of Texarkana. After receiving instructions from Tellers Committee Chairman Don Phillips of Camden, messengers also heard a report from Larry Pillow of Conway that the Resolutions Committee had received 11 resolutions by mail. He called for additional resolutions to be submitted immediately to the committee in writing.

Messengers also were notified by Constitution Committee Chairman James Pate of Russellville that they would be voting on a minor wording change to Section 5, Paragraph 4 of the state convention's bylaws.

Following more congregational singing and special music presented by the Arkansas Singing Men, Allen Thrasher of Booneville delivered a final report on Missions Advance 87-89, the state convention's emphasis on increased support for cooperative missions.

Thrasher told messengers that Mission Advance speakers have crisscrossed the state "burying dead mules" such as the notions that the Cooperative Program is not biblically-based, that it is no longer effective, and that it is well-funded and in need of no more gifts. He noted that of 118 churches which heard those speakers in 1987, 73 later increased their contributions to world missions through the Cooperative Program. He also pointed out that Cooperative Program receipts rose slightly in 1988, reversing a serious downward trend from previous years.

After the traditional recognition of representatives from Baptist hospitals, former state convention presidents, retired workers, new Arkansans, and visiting missionaries, messengers received a report from Glendon Grober, coordinator of the new missions partnership between Arkan-

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sas and Guatemala Baptists. Holding up a large bag of Guatemalan coins, Grober issued a call for 10,000 Arkansas Baptists to commit themselves to prayer for the partnership. He told messengers he had brought back 10,000 Guatemalan *centavos* for individuals to carry around as prayer reminders. Before the day was out, all 10,000 of the coins had been handed out.

The Guatemala emphasis continued after another interval of congregational singing and three more selections from the Music Men. Messengers heard a sermon brought by Rosalio Ramirez Rivas, executive secretary of the Baptist Convention of

Tuesday afternoon

The second session of the annual meeting opened with messengers singing the second verse of "Stir Thy Church." Farrell Ard of Goshen voiced the invocation before Darrell Robinson brought another theme interpretation.

Robinson took Acts 4:29-33 as the text for his message on "Moral Courage." The former pastor of Dauphin Way Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala., told messengers that many today substitute other attitudes for moral courage.

Many Baptists seem to be mistaking "attacking, anger, condemnation, intimidat-

ABN photo / Mark Kally



Serving as ABSC officers during 1990 will be (left to right) H.E. Williams, second vice-president; Mike Huckabee, president; Dan Grant, first vice-president.

Guatemala. Rivas preached in place of Convention President Cary Heard, who gave up his spot on the program in deference to Rivas and the upcoming partnership between Guatemala and Arkansas Baptists.

Rivas' message, based on Acts 16:6-16, was translated by Stan Parrish, pastor of Hope First Church, who until recently was a Southern Baptist missionary to Venezuela.

Rivas said that, like the Macedonian in Paul's vision, he wanted to stand with arms outstretched and challenge Arkansas Baptists to "come over and help us."

"In Guatemala if we want to plant something that lasts for a day, we plant a flower," Rivas said. "If we want to plant something that lasts for a lifetime, we plant a tree. But if we want to plant something that lasts for eternity, we plant a church. "Come to Guatemala and help us plant churches for eternity," he said.

Michael Brown of Forrest City delivered the benediction for the morning session.

tion, and even meanness" for moral courage, Robinson observed. He warned messengers that they can nullify the witness of taking a moral stand if they take that stand in a spirit of hostility or anger.

"I have taken part in moral fights — pornography, abortion, sexual immorality and perversion — but Jesus moves my heart to take one step more," Robinson testified. "It may be easy for me to join in a boycott against a convenience store which sells pornography... but I have a sense of uneasiness when nobody goes to the owner of that store and shares with him the fact that Jesus loves him."

"Holy boldness" is not rashness and rudeness, he pointed out, but that "simple, unhindered flow of what God has to say through us, when we are speaking without reservation because of the confidence of the Living Word within us."

The Christian community itself must accept part of the blame for the moral decline of the United States, Robinson insisted.

"We are part of the reason America has gotten like it is," he said. Too many Christian lives are diluted by impurity and materialism and inconsistency, and the result is an absence of God's power, he said, adding that God's power cannot descend on his people before they have confessed their sin and repented.

Following Robinson's sermon, Ben Elrod, president of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, brought his institution's report. Elrod introduced Bill Cook, OBU's new vice-president for development; Bill Steeger, chairman of the OBU department of religion and director of the school's Center for Christian Ministry; and a Chinese student, Yang Su Xin, who is studying in Arkadelphia as a result of former OBU administrator Tom Turner's teaching assignment in a Chinese university.

At 2:25 p.m., President Heard opened the floor for a miscellaneous business session, but received no motions, so the messengers moved on to a report from Bob Parker, director of the ABSC Christian Life Council. Parker presented plaque to Wayne Quick, a member of Little Rock's Geyer Springs Church, whose life was saved during World War II by a Jewish member of his regiment. The presentation recognized the relationship between the men and served as a protest against bigotry and racism.

With no other business at hand, Heard turned the gavel over to First Vice-President Delton Beall of Forrest City.

Harry Trulove, president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, told messengers the Foundation's work is similar to that of a building's foundation, in that it was created not to be seen, but to support. He said the Foundation executed more than 300 legal instruments for churches or institutions last year, saving thousands of dollars in taxes and fees. In addition, Trulove noted that the Foundation brought in \$10 for each \$1 provided by Arkansas Baptists for the agency's expenses.

Joe Fitzpatrick of North Little Rock led in a round of congregational singing before Donna Crenshaw of Little Rock brought special music, an *capella* rendition of "For the Beauty of the Earth" followed by "This is My Father's World."

At 2:48 pm, Harold Elmore of Lake Village brought the Nominating Committee report, which included recommended changes in the locations of the 1991 and 1993 state conventions. The report adopted by messengers calls for those meetings to convene at Little Rock's Geyer Springs First Church and North Little Rock's Park Hill Church, respectively.

Greg Kirksey, president of the ABSC Executive Board, brought the first part of that body's report. Messengers approved four

STATE CONVENTION

proposals:

— A \$13.5 million 1990 budget which allocates \$7.9 million for state programs. That budget, which will send 41.39 percent of receipts on to Southern Baptist worldwide causes, reflects an attempt to draft a budget which would be met by contributions after several years of failure to do that.

— Five 1990 priority emphases and goals: the "Here's Hope" simultaneous revivals, the Guatemala-Arkansas partnership mission, the "Share Hope" Sunday School enlargement emphasis, Directions 2000 objectives for Executive Board programs, and a family ministry emphasis called "Families Touching Families."

— Changing the name of Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge to Williams Baptist College in recognition of the "tenacious, sacrificial service" of SBC founder H.E. Williams.

— Changing the name of Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services to Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries to make the name more descriptive of the agency's work.

At 3:35 pm, *Arkansas Baptist* Editor J. Everett Sneed came to the platform to deliver the magazine's report. He was joined by ABN Board President Lane Strother, an attorney from Mountain Home.

Strother called the ABN an "exception" compared to worldly media which are constantly filled with news of disaster. He praised what he called the "herculean" efforts of the ABN staff to present news faithfully in the midst of the denomination's controversy.

Strother surprised messengers by telling them he had learned of a "backroom network" of men who had organized themselves to elect their candidate as president of the state convention. He contended that the purpose of that coalition was not theological but for control and power and told messengers the group's disapproval of ABN Editor Sneed and ABCS Executive Director Don Moore resulted from the fact that the two would not "lock step" to their marching orders." Strother asked messengers to continue to support the ministry of the *Arkansas Baptist* through prayers for the editor, staff, and board.

Strother's comments referred to a series of letters to the editor which had appeared in the *Arkansas Baptist* since Sept. 28. Those letters dealt with a coalition of individuals who had organized support across the state for the candidacy of Ronnie Floyd as president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Two of those letters were written by individuals who purported to have been members of that coalition and had resigned in dismay at what they called "re-handled political activity."

Strother also referred to a tape which was represented as a recording of one of

that group's planning meetings. The tape had been circulated anonymously to an unknown number of individuals around the state. A letter to the editor from Strother in the Nov. 9 ABN identified Floyd, pastor of Springdale First Church, Mark Brooks, pastor of Springdale Elmdale Church, and Joe Atchison, director of missions for Benton County Association, as participants in the meeting.

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



HMB Vice-President Darrell Robinson

The activities of that coalition had been the subject of articles in the *Arkansas Gazette* during July and again in October. The articles quoted organizers as saying that their activities were intended to prevent the Arkansas Baptist convention from succumbing to the liberalism they believed they saw "invading" other states. Critics of the coalition said they saw no evidence of liberalism in the state to justify that kind of political activity.

Part of that activity was the publication of a circular, called "A Conservative Voice," which was edited by Brooks. Brooks said the group felt such a publication was necessary because the *Arkansas Baptist* "cannot or will not" deal with certain issues and would not "write the news from a Conservative viewpoint."

After Strother's comments, and a few additional remarks from ABN Editor Sneed, messengers broke the stunned silence with a sustained round of applause.

Before moving on to a message from Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, messengers listened to a solo by Tom Bolton, minister of music at Little Rock

First, who sang, "They Could Not."

Land took as his text Revelation 2:1-7, the message to the Ephesian church.

Land praised the Ephesian congregation as one which was zealous for sound doctrine and pure morals, one which "did not just cluck their tongues at immorality." Nevertheless, they had strayed from "their first love," he pointed out.

Those who hate evil and have left their first love are "censorious," observed Land. "If we protect sound doctrine and don't do what we do because of love for Jesus, the harvest will be bitterness," he said.

The threat of God's judgment hangs over those who seek to defend doctrine and oppose immorality for any reason other than the love of Jesus Christ, Land added. Just as the Lord told the Ephesians, "I will remove your candlestick," he will remove his presence and blessing from those who condemn others in a loveless spirit, he said.

Tuesday evening

The sanctuary was barely half full at 6:15 p.m. when Lester McCullough, ABCS Music Department director, took the platform to lead in congregational singing. Billy White, pastor of Little Rock Second Baptist Church, brought the invocation.

Darrell Robinson's third theme interpretation dealt with the subject of "Aggressive Outreach." He told messengers that Jesus' strategy for evangelizing the world was one of total penetration which requires the total participation of every member of every church.

Such "total evangelism" involves placing a high priority on witnessing and requires a congregation to map out a strategy to reach its community. In addition, he said, the task requires each and every believer sharing the gospel with his or her world under the power of the Holy Spirit.

Following Robinson's address, Southern Baptist College President D. Jack Nicholas issued a "special appeal" to Arkansas Baptists to become "conscious, fervent advocates for Baptist higher education."

Nicholas thanked Arkansas Baptists for their generous support of Christian higher education but noted "a general lack of involvement" in counseling young people to consider a Baptist school as they prepare for college.

Government subsidies of public colleges allow those schools to charge students less than the cost of their education, Nicholas observed. The result is that 88 percent of young people attend public colleges today, compared to 50 percent two decades ago. This creates the impression that Baptist schools, which must pass along the cost of education to the student, are unaffordable.

"That's not true," he insisted. Baptist schools like Southern and Ouachita offer

a wide range of scholarships which help reduce the cost of education, but that fact can only be communicated to prospective Baptist students if pastors and laypeople get involved in telling the story of Baptist colleges and what they can contribute to a young person's life, he said.

"You have a great deal of unspent influence with the young people in your church," Nicholas concluded. "And they often will respond to you. You may be the only one who will encourage them to consider a Baptist college."

Following Nicholas' report, the Southern Baptist College choir performed four selections under the direction of Bob Magee.

Much of the evening program was devoted to recognizing congregations which have shown leadership in the state. The first such recognition was of those churches which have taken the lead in missions giving through the Cooperative Program. ABSC Associate Executive Director Jimmie Sheffield presented certificates to six congregations: Immanuel Little Rock, which led the state in total dollar giving; Barcelona Road Church, Hot Springs Village, per capita giving; Crossett First Church, churches with more than 1,000 members; Dardanelle First Church, 300-1,000 members; Tilton Church, 50-300 members; and Fulton Church, fewer than 50 members.

The next recognition was devoted to new work established during the Church Arkansas emphasis. Jack Ramsey, director of the ABSC church extension program, introduced representatives of 41 congregations organized through that campaign.

Ramsey told the audience that Arkansas Baptists had invested \$261,000 in state missions money to help these new chapels get started.

Following the Church Arkansas report, Executive Board President Greg Kirksey introduced the remainder of the Executive Board report, a recommendation outlining the objectives, goals, and priority projects which will be the focus of Arkansas Baptist efforts through 1995. The emphasis, called "Building God's Family," was developed by the Directions 2000 workgroup of the Executive Board.

Messengers adopted the proposal, which detailed 17 projects under five themes: "Support Missions," "Strengthen Families," "Grow Churches," "Perform Ministry," and "Reach People."

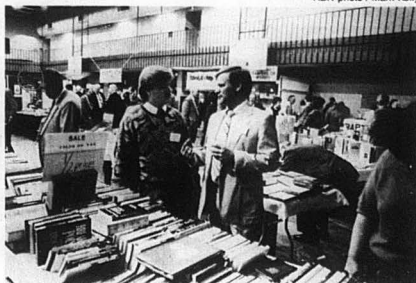
Before moving on to the Executive Director's Message, messengers heard Joe Finfrook of Gentry make an appeal for their congregations to be involved in the 1990 "Here's Hope" simultaneous revivals and recognized the 20 churches which led the state in baptisms during the previous year.

Then, after Lester McCullough led the congregation in singing "Holy, Holy, Holy," and a ladies ensemble from Alma First

Church performed two selections, Executive Director Don Moore rose to deliver his annual sermon.

Moore's move to the pulpit was greeted

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



A discussion in the bookstore

by an immediate, spontaneous standing ovation all across the floor.

Preaching from Joshua 7, Moore talked about "Folly in the Family of God."

Paraphrasing Southern Baptist prayer leader T.W. Hunt, Moore told messengers Arkansas Baptists must soon "make a choice between revival and death."

While Southern Baptists may be able to find some signs of progress which "make us feel good, the fact is we are not doing well," Moore said. He noted that 11 years of Bold Mission Thrust had resulted in an increase of only 1.1 person per church per year and said that in 1991, for the first time, Southern Baptists would show a statistical decline "unless God acts" to reverse current membership and baptism trends.

"Our resources and assets have never been better," he observed, "but we have not been able to translate that into action. We are on the way down and out unless we experience revival."

The price of revival, however, is high and involves turning one's back on worldliness, materialism, and sometimes friends, Moore observed. He told the assembly he was not sure Baptists are ready to pay that price.

He turned to his passage, the biblical story of Achan's sin and the Israelite defeat at Ai, and told messengers there is folly in God's family when: anger replaces anointing in the relationship between God and his people; death and defeat replace

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STATE CONVENTION

deliverance; fright replaces fight in the hearts of God's people; blaming replaces blessing; and God's people become more worried about their image with men than with favor before God.

God's power will abandon a people when presumption, self gain, dishonesty, and deceit are the hallmarks of their lives, Moore declared. And he told messengers they need wonder no longer when God's judgment would fall on Southern Baptists for their distraction from missions and evangelism.

"The judgment of God already has fallen on us," he asserted. "It is signified by the fact we are experiencing his anger rather than his anointing."

The solution to the Baptist dilemma of declining baptisms and apathetic churches is, like the solution to Israel's problem, simple but painful, Moore said. As the Israelites were required to destroy the "accursed thing" which had grieved God, so Southern Baptists must eliminate the things in their lives which displease God.

"Are you willing to ask God to show you what the accursed things in your life are?" Moore asked. He challenged messengers to "be honest" before God and confess the sins — materialism, worldliness, sensuality, immorality, ambition — which have grieved God's Spirit and caused him to remove his hand from Southern Baptists.

"It only takes one person to bring God's people to a place of defeat," Moore warned. "I tremble at the possibility of being the one who would bring folly to the family of God."

"Do we cherish our sin or would we like to see just one time God's glory so present that the lost world would have to say, 'Surely the living God is in those people who call themselves Christians'?"

"All I can do is call upon you to throw yourself on the mercy of God and ask him to deal with the folly in your heart," Moore concluded.

The benediction was pronounced by Dale Wicker of Conway.

Following the evening session, Moore convened a "solemn assembly" called to give messengers an opportunity to practice what he had just preached. Several hundred messengers remained until after 11 p.m. for a period of prayer, testimonies, and confession of sin.

Moore and ABCS President Cary Heard called for the assembly in the week prior to the annual meeting at the behest of six Southern Baptist Convention prayer leaders who challenged all the state conventions to hold such gatherings during their annual meetings. At the outset of the assembly, Moore told those attending that he had not called the meeting just to deal with the disharmony among Arkansas Baptists. He said that, while controversy was part of the

problem among the state's churches, it was not the only one. He called for participants to humble themselves before God and allow him to show them the sins in their lives which hindered his work.

After the assembly, Moore said he believed they had "turned a little bit of a corner." "Something significant took place dur-

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



Billy and Margaret Walker

ing the solemn assembly," he said, referring to several individuals who demonstrated a genuine brokenness and spirit of confession. "This is probably the first of many such assemblies needed across the state. I thought it was very significant that we covenanted to continue praying until God sends awakening to our people."

"This may have been the point at which all of our work and relationships will take a decisively more spiritual approach centered around prayer."

Convention Sermon

A manuscript of Randall O'Brien's Convention Sermon is available through the ABN office. Persons interested in receiving a copy should send a self-addressed envelope with 45 cents postage attached, to Manuscript, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Wednesday morning

Despite the fact that messengers had endured two grueling days of convention and pre-convention activities, the sanctuary of Little Rock's First Church was full from the outset of the fourth session, the one in which the much-talked-about presidential election was scheduled to occur.

At 8:15 a.m., Paul Williams, minister of music at Little Rock's Calvary Baptist Church, opened the session with congregational singing. Convention President Cary Heard delivered the invocation in the absence of the scheduled individual. Then Darrell Robinson brought his final theme interpretation, "Stir Thy Church to Loving Fellowship."

Robinson told his listeners, "It is impossible to be right with Jesus without being right with one another also." He said that strong fellowship is the basis for powerful evangelism and contended that, if Southern Baptists would "bury the hatchet" and start loving one another, the lost would flock to see what was happening.

The church is to be "an island of love in sea of hatred and conflict," Robinson asserted. In fact, he said, conflict in the church is the first indicator that relationships with God are not what they ought to be. If a Christian is disobedient to the Father, his fellowship with other Christians will be marred and broken, he said.

"Scripture tells us to take our grievances to our brother," he said. "A lot of what appears in our Baptist papers would never be there if we followed that instruction. With all of our backbiting and badmouthing, how can God honor our crookedness?"

Robinson also noted that the same Scriptures which challenge Christians to "be holy" also exhort them to "be kind one to another and tenderhearted, forgiving..." "I submit that if we are not kind, we are not holy," he concluded.

By the time the election of officers came up, registration at the annual meeting had risen to 1,602, making the convention the



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largest in Arkansas Baptist history. The sanctuary was overflowing, both on the ground floor and in the balcony. Messengers lined the walls, prompting President Heard to invite some of them to come and sit in the choir loft.

When Heard opened the floor to nominations for the office of president, two names were brought forward. Dennis Swanberg of Hot Springs nominated Ronnie Floyd, pastor of Springdale First Church. Del Medlin of Cabot nominated Mike Huckabee, pastor of Beech Street First Church in Texarkana. Tellers Committee Chairman Don Phillips instructed the messengers in casting their ballots.

Johnny Biggs, executive director of Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services broke some of the tension surrounding the presidential election when he came to deliver his agency's report. Looking around at the capacity crowd, Biggs quipped, "Good morning, I'm glad you came for my report."

He told messengers that many of the 60 million children growing up in the United States will not be properly prepared for adulthood. He said 17 million of them eventually will become alcoholics, 27 million will be placed in mental hospitals or undergo psychiatric care, and 20 million will experience broken marriages.

He thanked Arkansas Baptists for their support of ministries to children and families, and noted that 42 children in their care had made professions of faith during the previous year.

Biggs' report was followed by one from the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas. CCF Executive Director John Finn told messengers that his organization's board of directors would vote in 1990 to expand their agenda to include moral issues such as abortion, euthanasia, and family issues. The Christian Civic Foundation already addresses the problems of alcohol and drug abuse, pornography, and gambling.

After messengers had enjoyed another interval of congregational singing, President Heard rose to announce the results of the presidential balloting.

He told messengers they had elected Mike Huckabee of Texarkana over Springdale pastor Ronnie Floyd by a vote of 808 to 443. Huckabee received 64.6 percent of the 1,251 ballots counted.

Messengers greeted the news with a polite round of applause, and Heard opened the floor for first vice-presidential nominations. Eddie McCord nominated Dan Grant of Arkadelphia, retired president of Ouachita Baptist University, and Sonny Simpson nominated Kerry Powell of McGehee.

Messengers cast their ballots and turned their attention toward the annual Convention Sermon, delivered this year by Randall O'Brien, pastor of Calvary Church in Little Rock. O'Brien's message was preceded by special music from Sheri Swindler of Little Rock Calvary.

O'Brien opened his sermon, "Your Devil Is Too Small," with the biblical story of Adam and Eve cast in a modern-day setting. Renaming the couple Red and Eva Goodson, he told a story of a happy couple which flirted with the material world and wound up losing everything.

"Your devil is too small if you consign him to far away places in far away times," O'Brien declared. He told messengers that Satan was not the popularly-conceived being in a red suit with a pointed tail, but "an attractive being who lowers our standards bit by little bit where they are most important."

"You don't need to find Satan," O'Brien informed his hearers. "He'll find you . . . and when he does he will bring" not pitchforks, but choices . . . between virtue and vice, between power and purity, between compromising your values just a little or being true to your convictions."

He warned the assembly that Satan takes many forms: "a sharp business partner . . . a caring friend . . . a soft shoulder . . .

ABSC Auxiliaries Elect Officers



Holt, Etheridge



O'Brien, White, McCord



Lowe, Bates, Dresbach, Hough

Pastors

Members of the Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference elected officers during their annual meeting Nov. 13 in First Church of Little Rock.

Serving in 1989-90 will be Rex Holt, pastor of Central Church in Jonesboro, president; and Grant Etheridge, pastor of First Church in Lavaca, secretary. Not pictured is Ron Mayes, pastor of First Church in Beebe, who will serve as vice-president.

Wives

The Arkansas Baptist Ministers' Wives Conference held a luncheon and afternoon series of workshops at its annual meeting Nov. 13 at First Church of Little Rock. "Make Me An Instrument" was the theme for the day.

Elected to serve as 1989-90 officers were Kay O'Brien of Little Rock, vice-president; Lisa White of Little Rock, president; and Margie McCord of Batesville, secretary.

Educators

Officers for the Arkansas Baptist Religious Education Association were elected Monday evening, Nov. 13, when the group held its annual meeting at First Church of Little Rock.

Elected as officers for 1989-90 were Angela Lowe of Little Rock, secretary-treasurer; Barry Bates of Camden, second vice-president; John Dresbach of Osceola, first vice-president; and John Hough of Texarkana, president.

STATE CONVENTION

a ministerial wolf in sheep's clothing."

O'Brien also observed that, since Jesus himself was faced by the Devil, all believers need to be warned, "Your devil is too small if you think he leaves Christians alone." And the fact that Jesus relied on the Scripture to resist Satan's temptations should tell them, "Your Devil is too small if you think you can handle him on your own."

The good news, he said, is that "greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world." Through the cross and resurrection, God has delivered Christians from the powers of darkness, he said, and he argued that believers "must never give up what we have gained through the cross."

Recalling Don Moore's sermon from the previous evening, O'Brien questioned whether Baptists have begun to draw away from God because they believe they don't need him anymore.

"In recent years, Satan has tempted us to be more concerned over who's boss and less concerned about who's lost, while Bold Mission Thrust, once a promising spiritual rock for a thirsty world, is smitten time and again, as God in heaven winces and weeps and pleads, 'Won't somebody speak to it?'"

O'Brien continued: "If we are to avoid becoming a denomination known for its crucifixions, if we are to witness a resurrection of missions, evangelism, and brotherly love, if we are to be who we were put here to be, must we not once again hear God say of the fruit of the tree of the serpent, the fruit of pride, of power, and rebellion, 'Of it, thou shalt not eat? Your devil is too small if you think he cannot ruin a great denomination.'"

The resurrected Christ living in each believer means that there is hope of victory, O'Brien said. "Greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world" means "Your Devil is too small for our God."

"In Christ, but only in Christ, your Devil is too small to lick even one of God's children," he concluded.

After the enthusiastic applause for O'Brien's sermon had died down, Convention President Heard announced the results of balloting for first vice-president. He told messengers that Dan Grant had been elected over Kerry Powell. Grant received 652 votes (52.7 percent), compared to 586 votes for Powell. When the floor was opened for second vice-president, Delton Beall nominated Clytce Harness of Hot Springs and Jimmie Garner nominated H.E. Williams, founder and president emeritus of Southern Baptist College.

Messengers cast their ballots, and Paul Williams led them in another period of congregational singing before David Crouch of Searcy brought the report of the convention's Resolutions Committee.

Messengers approved five resolutions

with little debate. One expressed appreciation for the convention's officers and host church, and a second commended and expressed support for the Christian Civic Foundation. Another resolution reaffirmed Arkansas Baptists' "historic opposition" to gambling, substance abuse, sexual immorality, school-based clinics, and racism.

A fourth resolution, entitled "Love and Unity Among Arkansas Baptists," noted that "disharmony" among Arkansas Baptists had been evidenced in recent months and called on them to "unite together in mission endeavors to reach our world for Christ," based on the admonition of Ephesians 4:29-32.

In adopting the resolution, messengers rebuffed an amendment which would have called for "those publishing newsletters for statewide distribution" to stop such activity "for the sake of Christian fellowship."

A final resolution adopted dealt with abortion. The statement affirmed the sanctity of human life, including the unborn, as created in God's image and rejected "quality of life" judgments often used in justifying abortions. It called upon Arkansas Baptists to support "appropriate and responsible legislation" which would decrease the incidence of abortions and encouraged support for abortion alternatives.

A sixth resolution introduced from the floor addressed childcare legislation currently in Congress. It was eventually withdrawn, however, when a disagreement over wording arose between proponents of the resolution.

With the convention drawing to a close, messengers were informed that they had elected H.E. Williams as second vice-president. Williams received 651 votes (59.4 percent), compared to 425 votes for Clytce Harness.

Messengers then quickly adopted the proposed minor change in bylaw wording which had been introduced during the convention's first session, and ABSC Executive Director Don Moore presented a plaque of appreciation to outgoing Convention President Cary Heard.

Heard then called the new officers to the platform and asked President-Elect Huckabee to voice the benediction.

Before he closed the annual meeting, however, Huckabee made a brief statement to the messengers. He told them that, despite the tension surrounding the presidential election, there was no personal tension between himself and Ronnie Floyd. He said that the lordship of Christ is the "common ground" on which all Arkansas Baptists should come together and he declared, "There is a place for everyone" in the state convention.

Huckabee asked messengers to join hands across the aisles as he closed the 136th annual meeting in prayer.

Classifieds

For Sale—1986 Champion Bus. 29 passenger, excellent condition, loaded. First Baptist Church, Brinkley, Ark., 734-2571 or 734-4641. 11/23

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ABSC Board and Committee Members Elected

Executive Board

Terms to expire in 1992

Arkansas River Valley	David McLemore, Russellville
Ashley	Billy Kite, Crossett
Benton	Terry Eaton, Decatur
Benton	Joe Finfrook, Gentry
Benton	Charles Womack, Pea Ridge
Black River	Ron Sanders, Walnut Ridge
Buckner	Joel Faircloth, Mansfield
Caddo River	Jody Gannaway, Glenwood
Caroline	Eddie Simpson, Lonoke
Central	Tim Reddin, Hot Springs Village
Central	Robert McDaniel, Benton
Clear Creek	Billy G. Kimbrough, Alma
Concord	Bruce Tippitt, Fort Smith
Concord	Phil Whitten, Fort Smith
Delta	George Pirtle, Dermott
Faulkner	John Greer, Conway
Greene	Bob Kinnett, Paragould
Harmony	Sonny Simpson, Pine Bluff
Independence	Eddie McCord, Batesville
Liberty	Glenn Morgan, El Dorado
Mississippi	William Piercy, Manila
Mount Zion	Michael L. Trammel, Jonesboro
North Arkansas	Merle Milligan, Harrison
North Central	Larry Loggins, Clinton

Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services

Terms to expire in 1992

Michael Huckabee, Texarkana
Emmett Chapman, Scott
Charlene Wells, Star City
Lee McMillan, Mena
D. Randy Lane, Bentonville
Kathryn Starr, Fairfield Bay

Arkansas Baptist Foundation

Terms to expire in 1992

Roy Lewis, Mabelvale
Sherwin Williams, Arkadelphia
Clifton Bond, Monticello
Lyndell E. Lay, North Little Rock
Larry Kinard, El Dorado

Arkansas Baptist Historical Commission

Terms to expire in 1992

District 5—Richard L. Avey, Cabot
District 7—Charles D. Barnett, Texarkana
Member at Large—Raymond Reed, Warren

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Terms to expire in 1992

District 1—Harold Gateley, Fayetteville
District 2—Don Heuer, Batesville
District 8—C. Phelan Boone, El Dorado

Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Memphis

Terms to expire in 1992

Larry Kendrick, Blytheville
James R. Wallace, North Little Rock
John Barry Dickey, Paragould

Baptist Student Union Advisory Committee

Terms to expire in 1992

District 2—David Johnson, Horseshoe Bend
District 3—Roy Runyan, Jr., Swifton

North Pulaski	Cary Heard, North Little Rock
Ouachita	Dillard Miller, Mena
Pulaski	Gearl Spicer, Little Rock
Tri-County	Shelby Bittle, Wynne
Washington-Madison	Jere Mitchell, Fayetteville
Washington-Madison	Mark Brooks, Springdale
District 1	Virginia Cram, Harrison
District 6	Barbara Hassell, Stuttgart
District 7	Carolyn Pendergraft, Hope

Terms to expire in 1990

Arkansas Valley	Ted Witchen, Helena
Calvary	Harrel G. Cato, Rose Bud
Caroline	Jim Edwards, Austin
Centennial	T. Scott Hinton, DeWitt
Clear Creek	Bob Floyd, Alma
Delta	Bruce Bond, Lake Village
North Pulaski	Otto J. Brown, North Little Rock
Tri-County	Leonard White, Wynne
District 8	Katsy McAlister, El Dorado

Terms to expire in 1991

Central	David Pierce, Jasper
North Arkansas	Don Rose, Benton
North Pulaski	C. Michael Anders, Sherwood

State Joint Committee Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists

Dillard Miller, Mena
Mrs. Joseph Hogan, Harrison
Tommy Cunningham, Little Rock

Constitution and Bylaws Committee

Terms to expire in 1992

Roy Buckelew, Arkadelphia
Raymond Higgins, El Dorado

World Hunger Committee

Terms to expire in 1992

Lehman Fowler, Brinkley
Lawson Hatfield, Malvern

Convention Program Committee

Term to expire in 1992

Jerre Hassell, Stuttgart

1994 Convention

Place: November 15-16, 1994

Place: First Baptist Church, Little Rock

1990 Convention Preacher

Preacher: Paul Sanders, Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock
Alternate: Jim McDaniel, First Baptist Church, Brinkley

1991 Convention

Place: Nov. 19-20, 1991 Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock (Note: The Convention Nominating Committee recommended the change from the Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock, to Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, due to prohibitive cost.)

1993 Convention

Place: Nov. 16-17, 1993, Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock (Note: This is changing places with Geyer Springs First Baptist Church)

District 6—James E. Hill, Jr., Searcy

District 5—Lee Lawson, Conway

District 5—Lonnie Gibbons, North Little Rock

District 8—Mrs. James Shults, Pine Bluff

Terms to expire in 1991

District 6—Gary Ellis, Lonoke

District 8—Pat Baugh, Monticello

Christian Civic Foundation

Terms to expire in 1992

Gary Wise, North Little Rock
Lynn Robertson, Stamps
Charles Brummett, Benton
Leroy Rogers, Mountainburg
David Fried, Mena

Ministry of Crisis Support Advisory Committee

Terms to expire in 1992

James Strait, Jonesboro
Jim Freeman, Glenwood

Ouachita Baptist University

Terms to expire in 1992

Bill Allison, Siloam Springs
Paul Henry, Batesville
Larry E. Kircher, Bald Knob
Joe Bill Meador, Fordyce
Ike Sharp, Benton
Mrs. Albert Yarnell, Searcy
John Hefflin, Little Rock
Lyndell Worthen, Jr., Arkadelphia

Southern Baptist College

Terms to expire in 1992

Wendell Ross, Fort Smith
Stafford Kees, Heber Springs
Randy Maxwell, Batesville
Richard Proctor, Wynne
David Newberry, Ashdown
John B. Wright, Little Rock
Bill H. Lewis, Pine Bluff
Kerry Powell, McGehee

LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

James W. Bryant, who served as pastor of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith for six years, has been named by the church as minister-at-large, effective Nov. 15. In this new ministry, Bryant will be available to the churches to hold Bible conferences, conferences on revival, evangelistic crusades, and act as a consultant to help churches establish prayer ministries and personal evangelism ministries. He may be contacted through the church office.



Ron Selby has accepted a call as permanent part-time minister of music at Otter Creek First Church in Little Rock. Selby is a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Steve Patterson is serving Arkadelphia First Church as interim youth director.

Dennis Tucker is serving as interim pastor of Bismarck First Southern Church.

Steve Stephens has resigned as pastor of East Whelen Church at Whelen Springs.

Alvin Clark has resigned as pastor of Harmony Hill Church, Arkadelphia.

Chris Hicks is serving as pastor of First Church, Beirne.

Don Gates is serving as pastor of Bethlehem Church in Red River Association.

David Crouse recently completed 16 years of service as organist for Central Church in Magnolia.

Troy Ballard has joined the staff of First Church in Fouke as youth director. He is a student at Texarkana College.

Danny Griffin has resigned as pastor of Immanuel Church in Magnolia.

Don Nall has completed 14 years of service as pastor of First Church in Batesville.

Juanita Bonner has completed 26 years of service as preschool worker for Lakeshore Drive Church in Little Rock.

Randy Owens began serving Nov. 5 as pastor of Bayou Meto Church in Jacksonville, coming there from Emmanuel Church in Chicopee, Mass. He has served in pioneer mission churches since he was ordained in 1981. Owens is a graduate of the University of Arkansas and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Debby, have three children, Wendy, Jason, and John.

Eva Bruce, a member of Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock, celebrated her 100th birthday Nov. 18.

John Lawrence was recently ordained to the ministry by Cole Ridge Church near Blytheville where he serves as pastor.

Jewell V. Moore Jr. of Hope died Nov. 9 at age 64. Moore, who had been in Houston, Texas, waiting for a heart transplant, was a member of Hope First Church, where his funeral services were held Nov. 13. Survivors include his wife, Betty Whitlow Moore; two sons, Scott Moore of Plano, Texas, and Alan Moore of Little Rock; two daughters, Beckie Bramlett of Hope and Debbie Moore of Monrovia, Liberia; two brothers; two sisters; and three grandchildren.

Eugene Ryan is serving as pastor of Antioch Church, Beebe, coming there from Formosa Church.

Cecil Wiggins was recently licensed to the preaching ministry by Good Hope Church, McCrory.

Steve Williams has joined the staff of First Church of Farmington as minister of music. He and his wife, Sherry, have two sons.

David Ray is serving as pastor of Grannis Church at Gillham, coming there from Pisgah Church at Fouke.

Ben Finley is serving as interim pastor of First Church in Wickes.

C.H. Moore, age 92, recently observed 65 years of service in the preaching ministry by preaching at Lower Big Fork Church at Mena, where he preached his first sermon.

Bill H. Lewis completed five years of service as director of missions for Harmony Association Nov. 17.

Larry Robertson resigned Nov. 5 as minister of education at First Church in Pochontas.

Robert Shaw, who is serving as pastor of Harmony Church at Pollard, was licensed to the preaching ministry by Emmanuel Church in Piggott Oct. 29.

Roy Lewis was presented with a plaque Nov. 12 by Pleasant Hill Church in the Sardis Community in recognition of five years of service as pastor.



Sonora Church in Springdale marked payment of its indebtedness with a noteburning service Oct. 22. Participating were (left to right) Ben Mayes and Ron Proctor, trustees, Pastor Danny Williams, Larry Langley, Bob Glines and Tom Hodges.

Briefly

Nashville First Church recently licensed Chris Cupples, Kevin Copeland, and John David Blase to the preaching ministry. Cupples and Copeland are students at Ouachita Baptist University and Blase is a May graduate of OBU.

East Point Church at Russellville recently ordained Paul White to the deacon ministry.

Otter Creek First Church in Little Rock will hold a revival meeting Dec. 3-6 led by Bill Bennett of Fort Smith. Services will begin at 7 p.m. Reed Bethel is pastor.

Batesville First Church recently ordained Dan Walden to the deacon ministry.

Crossroads First Southern Church near Foreman will ordain Gary Stewart, interim pastor, to the ministry Nov. 26.

Magnolia Central Church recently ordained Tom Crowder, Wayne Newton and Steve Williams to the deacon ministry. John Draper was recognized as deacon emeritus.

Gamaliel Mission, sponsored by East Side Church in Mountain Home, recently was

assisted in constructing a new building by the Church in A Day building team.

Wynne Church ordained David Campbell and Bill Winkler to the deacon ministry Nov. 12.

Olivet Church in Little Rock ordained Ray Mottwiler, Bert Henderson, and Buddy Skipworth to the deacon ministry Nov. 12.

Arkadelphia Third Street Church recently ordained Julius Adams, Jim Laster and Art Riddle to the deacon ministry.

Caddo Valley Church at Arkadelphia recently broke ground for a nursery and preschool building.

Barton Church will celebrate its 100th annual Church Appreciation Day Dec. 3 with David Crouch of Searcy as speaker. A noon meal will be served, followed by an afternoon musical program featuring Truman Owens and family. This day is set aside each year to commemorate the donation of land at the side of the church by Thomas and Julia Wallace.

Huntsville First Church ordained Tom Hargis, Charles McCloud and Mark Melson to the deacon ministry Nov. 5. Participating in the service were Pastor Leslie Elam, Harold Gateley, director of missions for Washington-Madison Association, Charles Towry, L. B. Atchison, director of missions for North Arkansas Association.

Nashville Dedication

First Church in Nashville dedicated an educational building Nov. 19, using the theme "Dedicated to the Glory of the Lord."

Activities included Sunday School, a 10:45 a.m. worship service featuring the Ouachitones from Ouachita Baptist University, and a noon luncheon former members and staff were special guests.

Ground was broken for the new building in December 1988, and the church moved into the new 17,000 square foot facility Oct. 29, 1989. Valued at \$750,000, it houses 19 classrooms, a kitchen, five offices, four restrooms, a fellowship hall that will seat 300, and a youth fellowship room. Members of the building committee were Chairperson Granville Parnell, Larry Craver, Malloy Freel, Clovy Keaster, Charlotte Hill, Bob Blakley, and Howard Aylet.

Through a "Together We Build" campaign, members pledged \$500,000 to be paid in three years. The remaining costs will be paid off in about two years, with the church planning to be debt-free in five years. Tim Freel served as campaign director.

Garfield Centennial

Garfield First Church, using the theme "A Century of Caring," celebrated its centennial anniversary Nov. 18-19.

Former Pastor Al Hollingsworth was the Sunday morning speaker. Musicians for both Saturday evening and Sunday morning were Bud and Vey McCleskey, former members.

The church was constituted Nov. 23, 1889, as Garfield Mission Church with 57 charter members and a Sunday School enrollment of 35.

O.C. Kidd served as the church's first pastor, receiving an annual salary of \$120 and in its first year of service the church gave \$25 to state missions. These facts were noted in an early record book by Frank Haswell, an active church member who later donated the land where the original stone church sits in Garfield today.

The church, now debt-free, has continued to grow both numerically and financially through the years, reporting 437 resident members and a budget of \$124,751.

R.V. Haygood is full-time pastor and Philip Womack is full-time minister of music and youth.

ABSC photo / Glen Ennes



Volunteer/Part-Time Music Leader Workshops—1989 was a good year of participation by volunteer/part-time music leaders and accompanists; 112 participated in the five training events this year which included two overnight retreats and three area Saturday workshops. Pictured are participants at the last workshop held at Lake View Church, Cave Springs. Eleven directors and accompanists participated in sessions led by Tim Logan, First Church, Rogers (pictured), Peggy Pearson and Glen Ennes, ABSC Church Music Department.

Filled With Potential

by Don Moore
ABSC Executive Director

Angels waited to rush to the shepherds with tidings that the Savior was born. Demons with equal passion were eager to snuff out his life.

Shortly, Herod would map his strategy to accomplish that vile objective. Thus, the spiritual warfare raged and continues to rage. The month we celebrate that historic event is filled with all kinds of potential for blessing his name or defaming his name.

Materialism tightens its grip on the American mind a little more each year. Partying, drunkenness, and other indulgences reach their peak around Christmas and New Year's. Church attendance, tithing, and Christian service tend to take a back seat to everything we think is more important. December is dangerous. Some take freedoms and establish directions from which they never escape.

We have some very exciting opportunities that God could use to greatly enrich your life and the life of your church.

Little Moon/Foreign Missions—You could help your church have the Foreign Missions study and observe a special week of prayer or period of prayer for foreign missions. Before Christmas is passed, let the church family join you in a special offering to help our 3,800 foreign missionaries. They work in 116 countries, many of which are very difficult and some very dangerous. Over 1,000 of our churches will be taking this offering. Shouldn't your church? If you would join the rest of our churches, we could raise \$2,400,000 in Arkansas, all of which would go to foreign missions. Our WMU can help you with study and prayer materials. The suggested date for the Week of Prayer is Dec. 3-10.

Joy Explo—Youth and youth workers from across the state find Joy Explo one of the highlights of the year. Scheduled for Dec. 28-29, this event brings more young people together for spiritual reasons than any other activity in Arkansas. Thousands of youth will descend on the Hot Springs Convention Center for another thrilling time. Both junior high and senior high are included. Rick Ousley, from Phoenix, Ariz., and Alan Daniels, from Marietta, Ga., will be the key-program leaders.

Music—The All-State Youth Choir and

Band will Perform. Contact Glen Ennes from the Church Music Department, or Randy Brantley of the Evangelism Department, if you have questions.

Do it good! Do it big! You will be strengthened in your spiritual life and help other young people to come to Christ.

Student Day at Christmas—Reports and evaluations from the students at our recent BSU Convention lead me to believe that some of the most thrilling spiritual growth is taking place on college and university campuses. Such students, if they are in your church, need to be recognized and encouraged. Your high school students need the inspiration and example of those just older than them leading a Christian life on campus. Why don't you do more than welcome them home. Make a place in the service on Dec. 31 for one or more of them to give a testimony that "Christ is alive and well" on campus. That influence could save some lives in the years ahead.

Evangelism Workshop—On Dec. 7-8, our directors of missions, associational directors of evangelism and consultants will be meeting at Camp Paron. Their avowed purpose is to become equipped to help our churches become adequately prepared for the Here's Hope revivals in the spring of 1990. The most crucial need at this point is prayer. But that is not all that is needed. Jesus prayed, but he did more than pray. Attendance is limited. If you would like to help in this time of spiritual preparation, you should call Clarence Shell at 376-4791 to make arrangements. Bob Hamlin, former director of the department of evangelism, Home Mission Board, will be leading this workshop.

Non-Mission Missions—It isn't a riddle. It is a fact. Southern Baptists are going into countries all over the world which will not allow us to send appointed missionaries. Those who travel overseas with some regularity, or those who have military or employment assignments overseas can become our non-mission missionaries. These represent our only hope in some of the closed countries. If you fit in this category of overseas activities, you need to learn about Cooperative Services International.

Dr. Lewis Meyers, director of CSI, will be in Little Rock on Dec. 9, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., to update us on this ministry. The meeting will be at the Legacy Hotel on Capitol Avenue, near the Baptist Building. The cost will be \$10 per person. This will cover your meal. Please register no later than Dec. 7, so adequate arrangements can be made. Call Debbie Davenport at

376-4791.

Career Assessment—Those who struggle with their ministry role, their ministry gifts, their leadership style, their personal relationships, or their place of service, should consider investing some time in themselves. Marvelous results have come to many people who have experienced frustration and intimidation in the ministry as they have gone through the career assessment process. Your family, your church and your friends stand to benefit from this even as you do. A happier, stronger, better you can come from this. God has used this to liberate many. The dates are Dec. 4-5, at the Medical Plaza Hotel, in front of the Baptist Medical Center.

Tax Seminars—Again this year, the Stewardship-Annuity Department will be bringing tax seminars to three areas of the state. Pastors, staff, treasurers, personnel and finance committee members should try to make these meetings. The seminars go from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. These seminars will be held in Jonesboro, Fort Smith, and Little Rock. Frank Schwall, of Dallas, Texas, will be the speaker. The places of meeting are listed elsewhere.

Stewardship/Annuity Tax Seminars In December

Planning ahead is good stewardship. Tax planning after Jan. 1, 1990, doesn't help 1989 taxes. Three tax seminars are set for early December to assist ministers with their 1989 tax obligations.

Mr. Frank Schwall, senior vice-president of Member Services at the Annuity Board, will lead the tax seminars.

Seminar dates and places include: Dec. 4, Shuffield Auditorium, Baptist Medical Center, Little Rock; Dec. 5, Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith; and Dec. 6, Jonesboro First Baptist Church. All seminars begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at noon.

Pastors, staff members, church treasurers and personnel/finance committee members are invited to attend. Tax preparers who deal with ministers' taxes will also find the seminars helpful.

The tax seminars are provided at no cost to all participants by the Stewardship-Annuity Department.—James A. Walker, director

Brotherhood Three Third Thursdays

At the Baptist Men's Prayer retreat at Paron all the participants agreed to the following: Three Third Thursdays "Sanctify A Fast" (Jl. 2:15).

Fasting is clearly pointed out by Jesus as prayers companion in releasing God's power for great victories. The story told in Mark 9:14-29, in the vast majority of Greek text affirms that spiritual power over evil comes through faith, prayer, and fasting.

Joel 2:15 calls for a fast on the part of all God's people. There was a national need, hence, a national fast. The needs of Arkansas are and should call Arkansas Baptists to a statewide time of fasting.

Biblical examples of those who fasted include: David, Elijah, Esther, Daniel, and Paul; and, according to 2 Corinthians 11:27, "fastings often," and Jesus, who also on several occasions.

Zechariah 7:5 insists that biblical fasting ought to be unto God and to him alone. Fasting is abstaining from food during a certain period of time to focus on the Father. Luke 4:2 seems to indicate that not eating food produced hunger; but, that water was not excluded, since thirst is not an issue.

Many Arkansas Baptists feel that the time has come to "call a fast." The occasion is the Here's Hope Jesus Loves You Simultaneous Revivals. The challenge is to sanctify the first Three Third Thursdays in 1990—Jan. 18, Feb. 15, and March 15. The call is for a daylight fast from food only.

Many of our stomachs are like spoiled children who cry for what they want. Most of us have followed the TV spots and pampered them with all kinds of food. A one-day fast can discipline our bodies and spirits allowing hunger pains to call us to prayer.

The time for lunch on the three third Thursdays could become a special time for prayer. The evening meal time could be a family time to pray for revival and for the salvation of loved ones, friends, and neighbors. An after dark dinner meal, to break the fast, could be preceded by more prayer, thanking and praising God.

Three Third Thursdays sanctified to the Father could release his power in our individual lives and in our state. Does God want you to voluntarily fast and pray in faith on 1990's first Three Third Thursdays?

If you will covenant with us to fast and to pray, send your name to the Brotherhood Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.—Glendon Grober, director

Looking Ahead

December

3-10 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (WWM/FMB)

4-5 Career Assessment, Little Rock Medical Plaza Hotel (CT)

4 Tax Seminar, Little Rock Baptist Medical Center (S/A)

5 Tax Seminar, Fort Smith Grand Avenue Church (S/A)

6 Tax Seminar, Jonesboro First Church (S/A)

7-8 Evangelism Workshop, Camp Paron (Ev)

9 CSI Fellowship, Little Rock Legacy Hotel (Bbd)

28-29 Joy Explo '89, Hot Springs Convention Center (Ev)

28-29 All-State Youth Band and Choir, Hot Springs Convention Center (Mu)

31 Student Day at Christmas (BSU)

January

13 RA Counselor Fellowship, Immanuel Church, Little Rock (Bbd)

14 Soul Winning Commitment Day (Ev)

21 Baptist Men's Teleconference (Bbd)

22-23 Media Library Conference, Central

Church, North Little Rock (CT)

28 Baptist Men's Day (Bbd)

29-30 State Evangelism Conference, Immanuel Church, Little Rock (Ev)

31-Feb. 2 BSU Directors' Workshop, St. John's Seminary, Little Rock (BSU)

February

5 State Vacation Bible School Clinic, Immanuel Church, Little Rock (SS)

5-6 ASSIST Training, Immanuel Church, Little Rock (SS)

9-10 Lay Renewal Fellowship, Levy Church, North Little Rock (Bbd)

11-17 Focus on WMU (WMM)

15 Church and Community Ministries Workshop, Calvary Church, Little Rock (Mn)

18-21 Home Mission Study (WMM)

23-24 Volunteer/Part-time Music Leader Retreat, Camp Paron (M)

23-25 High School Young Men's Rallies, Majestic Hotel and Spa, Hot Springs (Bbd)

28-3/2 Director of Missions Retreat, DeGray Lodge (Mn)

Abbreviations:

Ad - Administration; Bbd - Brotherhood; CLC - Christian Life Council; CT - Church Training; Ev - Evangelism; M - Music; Mn - Missions; SS - Sunday School; S/A - Stewardship/Annuitiy; Stu - Student; WMM - Woman's Missionary Union

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Pressler Joins Drug Council

WASHINGTON (BP)—Paul Pressler, vice chairman of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee, has been named to the President's Drug Advisory Council.

Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge, is among 27 members of the new council, which was announced by President George Bush Nov. 13.

"The council will assist the president and the director of national drug control policy, William Bennett, in the development of our national drug policy," according to a statement released by the White House press secretary's office.

"The council will complement Director Bennett's public-sector efforts by communicating with the American people, encouraging private-sector involvement, establishing a national support group and soliciting the views of the American people," the statement said.

Pressler indicated he would accept a part-time appointment in the Bush administration in mid-October, when he turned down the president's nomination to head the U.S. Office of Government Ethics.

At that time, Pressler cited family considerations and his "obligation to serve out the term (on the Executive Committee) to which I have been elected by Southern

Baptists" as reasons for declining the ethics post. His Executive Committee term expires in June 1991.

When the Drug Advisory Council was announced, Pressler told Baptist Press: "It is a part-time commission but requires FBI clearance for membership. It does not necessitate my moving to Washington or resigning from the court or the Southern Baptist Executive Committee. Although it will be a hard-working commission, I will be able to continue my other activities."

Land Urges ABC Protest

NASHVILLE (BP)—The executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has called upon Southern Baptists to join him in protesting to ABC-TV for "breaking one of the few remaining barriers to decency on prime-time television."

Tuesday, Nov. 7, the ABC prime-time show "thirtysomething" portrayed two male homosexuals in bed.

CLC Executive Director Richard D. Land wrote ABC Chairman Thomas Murphy and sponsors of the program to express outrage at what he termed the intentional and vivid portrayal of homosexuality in the show.

"Southern Baptists have long been con-

cerned about the declining quality of television programming," he said. "We have also been alarmed by the increasingly sympathetic portrayal of homosexual behavior in various forms of the media."

"I am aware that some critics of homosexuality evidence a hysteria that may be accurately called homophobia. But it would be a serious mistake on your part to dismiss many others who compassionately yet firmly regard homosexuality to be a destructive, non-biblical and tragic lifestyle choice. I consider myself and most Southern Baptists to be among those with these compassionate but strong convictions."

"Television should not use its power to model vividly for the families and children of America this debased lifestyle."

ABC spokesman Eddie Centron said that about 200 callers had complained about the program, while "about 500 calls from the gay community have expressed appreciation for portraying homosexuality in a natural and normal manner."

"It would be unthinkable that Christians would allow more calls of support to be registered than expressions of opposition," Land said. "Calls of opposition should be made to ABC at (212) 421-9595 or (212) 456-7777."

Land encouraged Southern Baptists to write Murphy at 77 West 66th St., New York, NY 10023.

TAX SEMINARS

For: Pastors, Staff Members, Treasurers, Finance and Personnel Committee Members



Frank G. Schwall, Jr.
Senior Vice President
Annuity Board, SBC

December 4

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Baptist Medical Center
Shuffield Auditorium, Little Rock

December 5

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Grand Avenue Baptist Church
Fort Smith

December 6

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

First Baptist Church
Jonesboro

Sponsored by Stewardship/Annuity Department
James A. Walker, Director

Labels Need to be Bigger

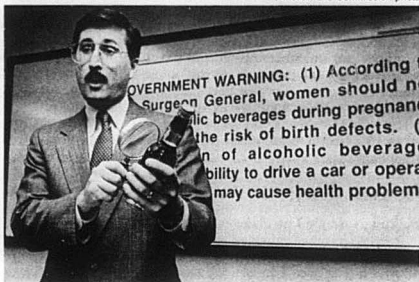
by Marv Knox
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP)—Warning labels on beer and liquor containers will save lives, but they must be larger and more conspicuous, advocates of a healthier America said during a Nov. 14 news conference in Nashville.

The Alcoholic Beverage Labeling Act of 1988, which goes into effect Nov. 18, requires that all alcoholic beverage containers sold in the United States carry warning labels.

The required message states: "Government Warning: (1) According to the surgeon general, women should not drink alcoholic beverages during pregnancy because of the risk of birth defects. (2) Consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs your ability to drive a car or operate machinery and may cause health problems."

"Pro-health advocates have won a hard-fought 20-year battle with the alcoholic beverage industry," said Robert M. Parham, associate director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission in Nashville. "A coalition of diverse groups... has work-



Robert Parham dramatizes the size of alcohol warning labels.

ed for years to secure health and safety warning labels on alcoholic beverage containers....

"Unfortunately, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms has issued regulations which do not ensure that the warnings be located in a conspicuous and prominent place on each container of alcoholic beverage," he said, quoting the new law.

Holding a beer bottle on its side and examining the fine-print label under a magnifying glass, Parham added: "Now, we must battle to get warning labels that are readable without using a magnifying glass.

Everyone should be able to see readily and to read easily the warnings. The alcohol industry and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms ought to stop playing hide-and-seek with a life-and-death matter. They ought to stop playing games with pregnant women and their unborn children. They ought to support legible labels."

The type on the labels must be only 2 millimeters high—about the size of millimeter paper, but squeezed together. Most alcohol distributors will place the labels on the edges of their own logos and labels. One brewer even has permission to print the label on the bottle cap, Parham said.

In a statement read at the news conference, Sen. Albert Gore Jr., D., Tenn., wrote: "Labels are a proven, effective means for consumers to become informed about a product and any unique characteristics associated with the product.... Alcohol beverage manufacturers are among the world's experts on advertising. They know what works and what doesn't work. They know labels are an important part of advertising."

But addressing the inconspicuous nature of the warning labels, Gore added: "I have a warning for the alcohol beverage industry: They can help design warning messages as effective as their advertisements, or they can have advertisements that must, by law, include warnings. The choice is theirs."

Parham praised Gore and Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-Sc., for their efforts on behalf of the labeling law.

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EL SALVADOR

Missionary Families Safe

by Mary E. Speidel
 BSC Foreign Mission Board

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (BP)—Three Southern Baptist missionary families in El Salvador escaped injury during widespread attacks by leftist rebels Nov. 11, although one of the families experienced a close call.

At least 127 people were killed in the fighting, according to Associated Press reports. Rebels attacked about a dozen locations across the country, including Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani's home in San Salvador, the country's capital city.

Southern Baptist missionaries John (Rusty) and Peggy Alums live near the president's home where guerrillas attacked Nov. 11. Attackers opened fire in the street in front of their home about 9 p.m., said Alums. They threw hand grenades and other explosives.

The Alumses and their children—son John Jr., 15, and daughter Kelly, 6—took cover in the stairwell of their two-story town house. "We weren't the target of the aggression," said Alums, "but it was a long night... a time when you really seek to confirm and reaffirm your faith."

In front of their house, a guerrilla was killed and the neighborhood night watchman also was killed by leftist forces.

The rebels left the area about 1 a.m. The Salvadoran military moved in to take control of the neighborhood about an hour

later. The Alumses stayed in the stairwell until about 5:30 a.m., when they felt safe to move into the bedrooms.

The Alums residence sustained some minor damages such as broken glass and dents from bullets. "Our nerves, of course, were a little shaken," said Alums, who is from Mobile, Ala. Mrs. Alums is from Birmingham, Ala.

Alums directs the three Baptist bookstores in El Salvador. The bookstore in San Salvador was closed Nov. 13, but the building sustained no damage.

Baptist churches canceled services during the Nov. 11-12 weekend, reported Southern Baptist missionary Bill Stennett, who was to have baptized several new converts at Nazareth Baptist Church in Santa Tecla, just outside San Salvador. Although communications were limited, "We don't

know of any Baptists who have been hurt," said Stennett, who is from Richmond, Va. His wife, Libby, is from Washington, D.C.

The guerrillas called a transportation stoppage, so public transportation was not running, Stennett said. A curfew was in effect from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. Electricity was off in many areas of the city because of damaged power lines, he said.

The Stennetts, who also live in San Salvador, heard fighting during the night but "we were not in any immediate danger," he said.

The other missionary couple—Sam and Margaret Drummond of Camden, Tenn., and Louisville, Ky., respectively—reportedly were safe in Santa Ana. They are professors at Baptist Theological Institute in that city.

Stennett reported he had heard some fighting still was going on north of San Salvador Nov. 13. "We're hoping that today will be the last day of it," he said.



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LESSONS FOR LIVING

Convention Uniform

No Place Like Home.

by Reed Bethel, Otter Creek First Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Revelation 21:1-22:5

Focal passage: Revelation 21:1-7, 22-27

Central truth: God is preparing a wonderful new eternal home for believers.

The Bible says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Co. 2:9). Called "the new Jerusalem" in Revelation 21, the believer's eternal home is wonderful beyond comprehension. Jesus created the world in six days, but he has been preparing this place for nearly 2,000 years (see Jn. 14:1-3)!

After the present heaven and earth are destroyed by fire (2 Pe. 3:5b-13), God will create a new heaven and earth (1. Is. 65:17-19)! The sea, which has always symbolized the turbulence and separation of this world, will be gone!

The believer's home, the new Jerusalem (v. 2), is so inseparable from its inhabitants that the same symbol (bride) is used for both (see v. 9ff.). This is that for which both Abraham (He. 11:10) and we (He. 13:14) long. This world's not my home! Verse 3 says we will actually live with God in this city!

Verse 4 reveals there will be nothing which causes sorrow or pain in the city. There will be no ambulances or hospitals because there will be no sickness. There'll be no strokes, no heart attacks, no cancer. There'll be no funeral homes, because there'll be no death. No disappointment, no heartache because—praise God!—he's making all things new (v. 5)!

Jesus said "It is finished," when the work of redemption was done. "It is done," will be his cry at the completion of restoration (v. 6)! He is the A and Z, and everything in between; the water of life; and the one who makes us overcomers (1 Jn. 5:4) and heirs (Ro. 8:17). Verses 22-27 tell us what's not in the city. There will be no temple because the Lord is there. There will be no sun or moon because the Lord is his light. There will be no need for policemen because there will be no sin. All sin gone! Praise God, we'll be like Jesus (1 Jn. 3:2)! Only those whose names are written in the book of life can enter.

Is your name there? Make your reservations by trusting Jesus today!

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Life and Work

Overcoming Barriers

by Bert Thomas, Valley Church, Searcy
Basic passage: John 4:1-42

Focal passage: John 4:3-5, 7-9, 16-21, 29-30

Central truth: We must cross barriers to witness to others.

Pellets of sleet beat against the windshield of our car. Undaunted by the icy conditions and the weather forecast, we continued our trip. Our destination was still several miles away. Our purpose was to see the local basketball team play for the district championship title.

Reflecting back on this experience, I discovered that overcoming barriers is often in proportion to the importance I placed on a particular situation. It is the same with witnessing. Many of the barriers we encounter could be overcome if we placed great importance on the eternal destiny of a person. Jesus' experience with the Samaritan woman is an example for us to overcome barriers in witnessing.

Jesus left Judea for Galilee out of respect for John the Baptist. John wrote, "He needed to go through Samaria" (Jn. 4:4). Why? Jesus felt compelled because many Samaritans would believe that he was the Christ, the Savior of the world (Jn. 4:41).

He arrived at Jacob's Well near the city of Sychar. Tired and weary from his journey, he sat down to rest. A Samaritan woman from the city came to draw water. Jesus took the initiative to witness to her. He crossed social and cultural barriers when he spoke to a woman in public and asked a favor from a Samaritan (Jn. 4:9).

We must model Jesus' example. We cannot wait for the lost to ask us about Jesus. We must take the initiative, cross social and cultural barriers, and witness to them.

Crossing barriers will result in a changed life for individuals in need. The Samaritan woman came to Jacob's Well to draw physical water, but left with living water. She was so excited that she rushed back into the city and said to the men, "Come, see a man who told all things that ever I did. Could this be the Christ?" (Jn. 4:29). Her testimony was so convincing that they went out of the city and came to him (Jn. 4:30).

What barriers do you need to cross to tell others about Jesus? You will find many of them easy to overcome if you have a burning desire to become personally involved in missions.

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Bible Book

Salvation Without Works

by W.L. Bruce Jr., Forty-Seventh Street Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: Galatians 2:1-5, 9, 11-14, 20-21

Focal passage: Galatians 2:1-5

Central truth: Salvation is in Christ alone, not Christ plus works.

We are not given all the details, but Paul in Galatians 2 tells us that he and Barnabas, his colleague in the ministry, made a trip to Jerusalem. They took with them a younger man named Titus. Titus was a Greek-speaking gentile Christian.

Paul emphasized that he was divinely sent to Jerusalem. His purpose in going was to convince the church there of the validity of the gospel he preached to the Gentiles. He did not go to seek the approval of the church to continue his ministry among the Gentiles. But Paul realized that there was a conflict that had to be dealt with, or it would adversely affect the success of his ministry.

Galatians 2:3 contains the first mention of circumcision in the letter. Circumcision was at the heart of the conflict. Titus was pressured to be circumcised. False teachers were the cause of the problem. Paul writes that some "false brethren wormed their way in," as one writer expressed it, to spy out the Christian freedom which Paul so solidly defended. "Spy" is a work which carries the idea of hostile intent. They insisted that circumcision, which played a significant role in Judaism, was necessary for a Gentile's salvation.

In verse five, Paul emphatically says, "We did not yield to them for a single moment." The "we" in this verse likely refers to the entire group except the "false brethren." That is, the Jerusalem leaders sided with Paul and Barnabas in holding that circumcision should not be required of a Gentile Christian.

Regarding Paul's position on circumcision, we recognize that Paul did circumcise Timothy (Ac. 16:3), but that was a different kind of situation. Timothy was half-Jew through his mother, and Paul wanted to avoid needless offense to the unconverted Jews. A different principle applied in the case of Titus, namely the Christian liberty of Gentiles.

In this passage we learn something about Paul and the conflict he faced. We see that the gospel of grace is to be defended to the fullest.

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Convention Uniform

Witness to The Light

by Lawson Hatfield, Malvern

Basic passage: John 1:6-8,19-23,29-34

Focal passage: John 1:7,23,29,32-34

Central truth: Pointing to the Light.

This lesson begins a 20-week study in the Gospel of John. The emphasis is on Christ as the life and light of the world. The first unit of four lessons presents who Jesus is, his purpose for coming, and ends with the Christmas lesson.

This week's lesson is Witness to the Light. John the Baptist (Jn. 1:7) came with one purpose, to give witness to that light that all men though him might believe and be saved.

The baptizer was not the Light, but a witness of the Light (Jn. 1:8). The Light was Jesus.

To believe in Jesus is more than mental assent. To believe is to be faith make an allegiance to Jesus as Savior and Lord. Recently a young teenager in Star City came to believe in Jesus during a study of John's Gospel. It was like a new light shining in her new life.

A challenge to the witness. Some unbelieving Jews asked John to tell them who he really was. The baptizer confessed that he was not the Christ, or Elias, or a special prophet. In a simple confession, a quotation from Isaiah 40:3, John identified himself simply as a voice crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord." The city of San Francisco boasts of having the most crooked street in the world. Jesus has the straightest. John knew who he was and kept his witness simple.

Witnessing to the light as the Lamb of God. Only when Jesus was baptized did John fully recognize Jesus as the Lamb of God who forgives sin. This Lamb of God, Jesus, will baptize you with the Holy Ghost. The Lamb reference has roots in the Day of Atonement (Ex. 12:3). Isaiah predicted the Messiah would suffer as a lamb slaughtered (Is. 53:4-7). The Apostle Peter and the Lamb were without blemish or spot (1 P. 1:19). The final victory of Christ is pictured by John in Revelation as the Lamb standing in the midst of the throne of God in heaven sending out seven spirits (Re. 5:8). Jesus is the worthy Lamb of God.

Some questions to think on. Am I a faithful witness of Christ? Do I really know who I am as a believer? Am I filled with the Holy Spirit?

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Life and Work

Wherever God Leads

by Bert Thomas, Valley Church, Searcy

Basic passage: Acts 8:1-8,26-40

Focal passage: Acts 8:1-8,26-40

Central truth: We must follow God's leadership if we are to serve him.

The church is strong today because believers throughout its history have followed God's leadership.

Saul (who was later converted) consented to the stoning of Stephen. After Stephen's death, the church at Jerusalem suffered severe persecution. Saul was like a raging, wild animal that had been turned loose on the church (Ac. 8:1).

Believers were scattered like seed and the outcome was amazing. Philip, one of the seven deacons, followed God's leadership, went to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them (Ac. 8:5). Multitudes responded to his preaching and there was great joy in the city (Ac. 8:6-8). How excited Philip must have been!

It was not the Lord's will for Philip to stay in Samaria. Speaking to him through an angel, the Lord said, "Arise and go toward the south to the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. This is desert" (Act. 8:26).

It's easy to believe we're in God's will when multitudes respond to our ministry. Multitudes are in the city and we have opportunities to preach to great numbers of people. Life in the city is more pleasant than on a lonely, hot, dusty, desert road. God calls men to leave "good positions" and "successful ministries" for the desert road.

Individuals who follow God's will discover there is joy in the desert. The key is obeying our Lord.

On the desert road was a man who was an important official in the Ethiopian government. Following the leadership of the Holy Spirit, Philip approached the man and shared the good news about Jesus with him. On the desert road, a lost man found Jesus and continued his way rejoicing.

This is the season when we emphasize foreign missions. Have you prayed about how you will be involved this year? Many have left home for "desert roads." They deserve our support. We can do this in a number of ways. We can pray for them. We can give a special offering because of the importance of their work. Perhaps some of us need to join them on the "desert road." Will you follow God's leadership?

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Bible Book

Righteousness by Faith

by W.L. Bruce Jr., Forty-Seventh Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: Galatians 3:4-6, 1-14, 24-29; 4:6-9

Focal passage: Galatians 3:4-6, 11-14

Central truth: Righteousness in the sight of God is by faith in Jesus.

The book of Galatians has as its theme "freedom" or "justification by faith." The word "justification" means to be pronounced righteous, or to be declared right before God. This word comes from the law courts; a person is arraigned before a judge and pronounced guilty or unjust. This is true of everyone born in this world. All have sinned and are unjust. Only one thing can make a person just before God. The Bible declares that we are justified by faith. Romans 3:24 tells us that this is possible because of God's grace.

The Jews traced their spiritual heritage back to Abraham, the great patriarch. It was customary for the rabbis to settle their controversies by precedents which they found in the story of the life of Abraham. He was highly respected by all Jews as the founder of their race and was looked upon by them as a righteous man "par excellence." The Apostle Paul states that the great patriarch was justified by faith, not by works of the law. Abraham believed God's promise of a son (see Ge. 15:5-6), and was thus accounted or reckoned as righteous before God. The apostle added that no man is justified by the law "in the sight of God" (3:11a). In the matter of justification, it is the judgment of God that counts.

Martin Luther, called the father of Reformation, was a perfect example of discipline, penance and self-denial to the point of self-torture. Luther tried it all—he let himself be whipped with the flagellum, a cat of nine tails similar to what was used to beat Christ. He climbed many flights of rough stone steps on his bleeding hands and knees. He toiled to take years off his sentence to purgatory. He worked to win merit and justification, but nothing helped. He came to despair and it was then that God stepped in with one verse of Scripture: "The just shall live by faith" (Ha. 2:4; Ro. 1:17; Ga. 3:11; He. 10:38). Martin Luther believed and the walls of legalism came crashing down.

Jesus paid our debt on the cross, and the blessing of Abraham (v. 14), redemption from the curse of the law, is ours.

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Volunteers Leaving Ethiopia

by Craig Bird

SBC Foreign Mission Board

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (BP)—Continued fighting in Ethiopia has forced shifts in the Southern Baptist missionary personnel and property assigned to that country.

Most news reports place fighting between Ethiopian government troops and Tigre People's Liberation Front forces about 100 miles north of Addis Ababa. Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers left their posts and gathered in the capital city Oct. 19 but apparently face no danger there.

However, Southern Baptist work is concentrated in the very areas where the two armies are fighting, and an early opportunity to return and renew the work appears unlikely.

"Basically we are looking for places to transfer volunteers to other areas where they can be productive," said Jim Houser, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board administrator for eastern and southern Africa. "In a few other cases, volunteers who are near completion of their terms are going home a little bit early."

No career missionaries are being transferred, however. Jerry and Rosie Besdole of Foley, Ala., and Splitlog, Mo., respectively, the senior Southern Baptist missionaries in the country, are due back in Addis Ababa in December after a U.S. furlough. Another career couple, Jeff and Margie Pearson of Mora, Minn., returned to Ethiopia recently from Yemen. Mrs. Pearson was in Yemen on maternity leave when the missionaries, including her husband, were evacuated to Addis Ababa. Pearson joined her there for the birth of their second child.

Career missionaries Rob and Patricia Ackerman of Wheaton, Ill., and Albuquerque, N.M., respectively, are in Nairobi, Kenya, awaiting work permits for Ethiopia. They will go on to Addis Ababa as soon as the permits are granted "unless the situation heats up," Houser said. Ackerman will be business manager for the Southern Baptist mission organization of Ethiopia.

Four volunteers will be leaving Ethiopia soon. Nurse Barbara Steer of Santee, Calif., and Baptist guesthouse managers Jewel and Jeanne Franks of Fort Worth, Texas, will return to the United States about one month earlier than planned. Steer was to arrive in Nairobi Nov. 15 enroute home and the Franks were to follow Dec. 1. Charles Edwards of Starkville, Miss., had just arrived in Ethiopia to work as a veterinarian for two months. But he never got to leave the capital because of the fighting. He is transferring to Tanzania to work with mis-

sionary veterinarian John Crews.

Journeyman nurse Sandy Shell of Millbrook, Ala., will transfer to Kenya to work at the Baptist clinic in Mathare Valley if her request for a Kenyan work permit is approved. She arrived in Ethiopia during the summer of 1988 for a planned two-year stay.

Journeyman Burt Rudolph of Davis, Calif., a water development engineer who was only a few months into his two-year assignment, will complete his stint in Malawi. George Tupper, a journeyman from Memphis, Tenn., has completed almost 20 months of his two-year term as an agricultural development worker. His future plans still are undecided.

Missionaries remaining in Ethiopia include Paul and Hannah Gay of Cuthbert, Ga., and Jackson, Miss., respectively; John and Mary Lou Lawrence of Jonesboro, La., and Harrisonville, Mo., respectively; and Howard and Belinda Rhoades of Friona, Texas.

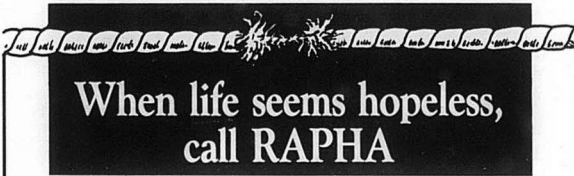
The most valuable single piece of mission property, a helicopter, will be flown

from Addis Ababa to Nairobi when permission is granted from the Kenyan government. Mission officials began seeking government approval to remove the craft the day after Baptist personnel were evacuated from the highlands because of the fighting. The helicopter was used to provide quick access to feeding and development stations in the highlands, where the fighting is most intense.

The fate of other mission property—grain stores, buildings and furnishings at the Baptist relief stations in Alem Ketema, Rabel, Shil Afaf, Gundu Muskel, Mehal Meda and Meragna—is unclear.

Both armies reportedly have seized property in the areas they control. However, both the Tigre People's Liberation Front and the Ethiopian government have requested inventories of property at the stations from the Baptist mission officials—apparently as a basis for restitution.


The TPLF also has invited Baptist mission personnel to return to the areas it controls and resume development work with the assurance that missionaries would be welcome. But missionaries feel the situation at this time is too unstable for them to return.



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SOUTH KOREA

Two More Die from Fire

by Michael Chute
SBC Foreign Mission Board

SEOUL, South Korea (BP)—Two more children have died from injuries suffered in a Baptist kindergarten fire in Seoul, South Korea, bringing to six the number of children killed by the fire that swept through the second floor of Seoul

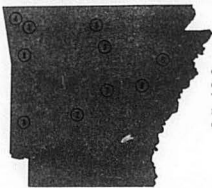
Memorial Baptist Church Oct. 16.

Eight children remain in critical condition in Seoul hospitals. Doctors do not believe their injuries are life-threatening but cannot predict how long the children might be hospitalized. Fifteen other children injured in the fire were treated and released from four area hospitals.

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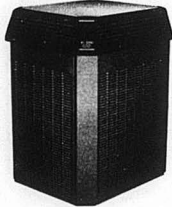


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"There have been arms and legs amputated already," said Southern Baptist missionary Cloyes Starnes of those hospitalized. "There are many badly burned faces and bodies."

Angry parents of fire victims are clamoring for compensation of \$50,000 for each child killed or injured in the fire. If granted, the total compensation figure would exceed \$1.5 million. The church had no insurance.

Demonstrations by parents of victims on the church grounds have forced the congregation to move its services to the playground of a nearby elementary school. On Sundays, the parents gather at the church entrance to prevent members from entering the building.

"It may take a long time for the church to get back in the building," Starnes predicted. The parents have "put up a tent inside the gate with pictures of the dead children and put graffiti around the gate and walls saying the church has murdered children."

Missionary Jack Green said the church is "almost paralyzed and neutralized by this tragedy."

The cause of the fire remains unknown. But in the Oriental tradition of placing blame, school Principal Ohm Hyun Suk is being held in a Seoul prison. Her family members and friends hope her trial will be scheduled within three months, but it could take much longer.

Two other workers at the kindergarten were arrested along with Ohm but were released when she accepted full responsibility for the fire. She is the wife of Han Myung Guk (David Han), pastor of the church and a former president of the Korea Baptist Convention.

Ohm "is one of the most radiant Christians you will find anywhere," said Starnes. "Many people... love her." Green added that "she reveals the presence of God in this challenge."

Ohm is being held in a cell with nine other people. One of the other inmates is a Christian. "She wants to witness to them while she's there," Starnes said. "She just wants people to pray that she might be a witness" through this ordeal.

To compensate the children's families, the church has raised more than \$150,000. Other donors in South Korea have pledged another \$300,000. The Seoul Baptist Association asked its 300 member churches to assist, and the Seoul International Baptist Church already has donated more than \$2,000 from special offerings.

Also, pastor Han has made plans to sell his apartment and move into a room in the church building. He will use proceeds from the sale to help compensate the families of fire victims.

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Still Struggling

by Mary E. Spiedel

SBC Foreign Mission Board

PLYMOUTH, Montserrat (BP)—Two months after Hurricane Hugo devastated much of the Caribbean, residents of some islands still are struggling to recover.

Among islands where Southern Baptist foreign missionaries work, the greatest needs remain on Montserrat and Guadeloupe, said Bill Damon, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's associate area director for Brazil and the Caribbean. Difficulty obtaining building materials on the islands has slowed reconstruction, according to reports from missionaries. The islands' rainy season also is causing soggy living conditions for many people whose houses still are without roofs.

About 70 percent of the damaged homes on Montserrat remain roofless, said Southern Baptist missionary John Hamilton, who lives on the nearby island of Antigua. "It is as if the hurricane hit a week ago," he said.

Besides difficulty in obtaining building materials, another problem is the lack of an adequate dock for receiving supply shipments. The dock at Montserrat was blown away in the storm. With a temporary, makeshift pier, "it's tedious and slow getting things unloaded," said Hamilton, who is from Decatur, Ala.

Islanders have covered their roofless houses with plastic, but that won't keep the dampness out during rainy season, Hamilton explained. After living in the situation for two months, the people are getting depressed, he said: "The needs are still great here. The people have not been able to recover."

Most immediate food needs have been met, but about 80 percent of the residents still don't have electricity, Hamilton said. Candles can no longer be found in the stores.

Members of Calvary Baptist Church, the only Baptist church on Montserrat, are meeting in the church's basement. The church building was demolished by Hugo. All evening services have been canceled because of lack of electricity. The Foreign Mission Board is planning to send a generator to the island, board officials said.

About 30 percent of the homes on Antigua also do not yet have electricity, Hamilton said. Phone service still is out in some areas. Hamilton also works on the islands of Nevis and St. Kitts, which he said have recovered well.

Hurricane relief efforts in the Caribbean have been coordinated by the Foreign Mission Board and the convention's Brother-

hood Commission.

Since Hugo blasted the Caribbean in late September, about \$54,000 for disaster relief and \$5,700 for hunger needs have been sent to the Caribbean, according to board officials.

Forty-nine Southern Baptists have worked on volunteer relief teams on the islands where missionaries work. Volunteers have worked in cleanup and reconstruction on Antigua, Guadeloupe, Saba, St. Martin, St. Kitts and St. Eustatius. Three more groups were scheduled to work in November and December for one or two weeks.

On Guadeloupe in the French West Indies, many people still are staying in public shelters, said Judy Gary, a Southern Baptist missionary on the island. In some of the most heavily damaged areas, people are living in tents on the beach in "deplorable" conditions, she said.

"What you have is the poor people who have become poorer," said Mrs. Gary. "They're the ones who were hit the hardest."

In areas of Guadeloupe severely hurt by Hugo, up to half of the houses damaged still lack roofs, estimated her husband, missionary Al Gary. Getting construction materials is difficult, but that's not the only reason many homes are still unrepaired, he said. Many people are waiting for relief funds from the French government in order to begin reconstruction.

At least 80 percent of the electricity has been restored on the island, Gary said.

Southern Baptist hunger relief funds have paid for food distributed in some of Guadeloupe's hardest-hit areas and on the island of Desirade, a dependency of Guadeloupe. Food and clothing sent by Baptists on the French West Indian island of Martinique also was distributed.

In other relief efforts, the Foreign Mission Board sent an emergency air freight shipment of food and supplies to Antigua.

Food and money still are needed for the Caribbean, Southern Baptist relief officials said. Items requested include rice, beans, canned meat, powdered milk, baby food and cooking oil in cans or plastic containers. The items should be shipped to KMA Enterprises, Napoleon and River Building, J- Cube 9, New Orleans, La. 70175. Donations should be designated for Foreign Mission Board/Brotherhood Disaster Relief for Antigua/Guadeloupe.

Financial contributions should be sent to the Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230. Checks should be designated for the general relief fund for Hurricane Hugo victims, officials said.