

BAPTIST  
VIEWpoll

DECEMBER, 1978

VIEWpoll is a cooperative effort of the Sunday School Board and Home Mission Board to monitor quarterly the key areas of Southern Baptists' awareness, thought, and action.

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RESEARCH SERVICES DEPARTMENT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD.

## Baptist VIEWpoll for December, 1978

### I. INTRODUCTION

This report is a presentation of the findings from the December, 1978 poll of the Baptist VIEWpoll panel.

There are currently 708 members (282 pastors, 252 ministers of education, and 174 directors of missions) on the Baptist VIEWpoll panel. Of these 708 members, 79.4 percent (224) of the pastors, 79.0 percent (199) of the ministers of education, and 94.8 percent (165) of the directors of missions participated in the December poll.

Items on the December poll involved six areas of interest:

- Bold Mission Thrust
- "At Home with the Bible"
- Growing An Evangelistic Church Strategy
- Ministry to minority groups
- Attitudes toward the Cooperative Program
- Optimism/pessimism of church leaders/pastors about the future of their churches

II. COMMENTS ON THE FINDINGS

A. Sixty percent (60.3%) of the pastors and 57.9 percent of the ministers of education indicated that they are "very familiar" with the Bold Mission Thrust emphasis. An additional 25.9 percent of the pastors and 26.6 percent of the ministers of education are "somewhat familiar" with it. A few respondents (5.4% of the pastors and 7.0% of the ministers of education) are aware of it, but "really don't know much about it." One pastor was not aware of the emphasis.

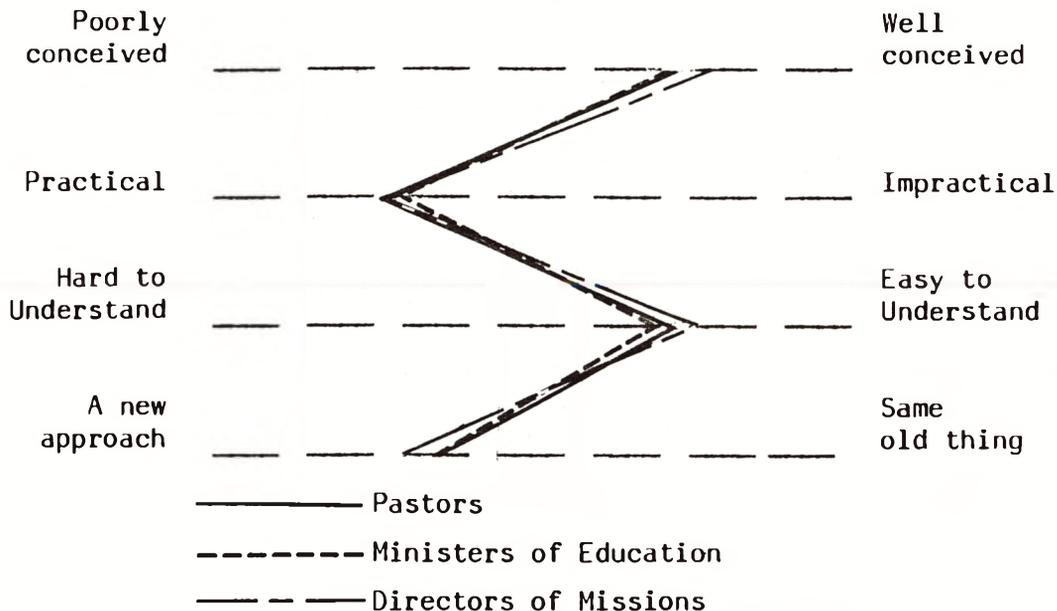
B. Participants were asked to express their feelings about Bold Mission Thrust through the use of four bipolar phrases (well conceived/poorly conceived, practical/impractical, hard to understand/easy to understand, and a new approach/same old thing). Each bipolar phrase was separated by a seven-point scale as follows:

Poorly conceived \_\_\_\_\_ Well conceived

Respondents were asked to indicate their feelings along each continuum.

A mean was obtained on each of the four phrases for each respondent group, and the result is shown in Table 1 below. It would appear that the Southern Baptist leaders represented in the poll have positive feelings about the Bold Mission Thrust emphasis.

TABLE 1  
FEELINGS ABOUT BOLD MISSION THRUST  
(Based on the mean)



- C. Almost three-fourths (74.1%) of the pastors, 89.4 percent of the ministers of education, and 86.7 percent of the directors of missions know about the new television program produced by Southern Baptists called "At Home with the Bible." And, of those (a total of 487) who know about the program, 15.4 percent (75) have personally viewed it; 48.9 percent (238) have not had the opportunity to see it because it is not shown in their viewing area. Of the 75 who have personally seen the program, 64 (85.3%) "like it very much," eight have "mixed feelings" about it, and two are "really not impressed with it."
- D. When respondents were asked if they had heard/read about the Growing An Evangelistic Church Strategy, 83.7 percent of the directors of missions, 61.1 percent of the pastors, and 43.2 percent of the ministers of education answered in the affirmative. Of those (a total of 361) who have heard/read about the strategy, 22.4 percent (81) have attended a Growing An Evangelistic Church Seminar.
- E. Directors of missions were asked how many churches in their association have a ministry to minority groups in the area, and 49.1 percent indicated that five or fewer of their churches have such a ministry. Over one-fourth (28.6%) of the directors of missions report that none of the churches in their associations have a ministry to minority groups in their areas.
- F. When church staff members on the panel (pastors and ministers of education) were asked if their churches had a ministry to minority groups living in the community, 47.2 percent (94) of the ministers of education and 17.9 percent (40) of the pastors indicated such was the case. Of those (a total of 134) who offer a ministry to minority groups living in the community, the majority (80.0% of the pastors and 52.1% of the ministers of education) minister to these groups by including them "in the regular activities of the congregation."

Two-thirds (66.6%) of the church staff respondents (81.7% of the pastors and 49.8% of the ministers of education) indicated their churches did not have a ministry to minority groups living in the community, and for 49.0 percent (138) of these the reason is clear--they do not have minority groups living in the church community. On the other hand, 45.7 percent (129) of the "no ministry group" do have minorities living in the church community, and 17.8 percent (23) plan to begin such a ministry.

- G. The majority of each respondent group (56.3% of the pastors, 61.8% of the ministers of education, and 52.2% of the directors of missions) report that attitudes in their churches/associations toward the Cooperative Program are about the same today as they were this time last year. However, a sizeable group (38.4% of the pastors, 32.7% of the ministers of education and 44.2% of the directors of missions) indicate that attitudes toward the Cooperative Program are more favorable today than they were a year ago. A few (4.0% of the pastors, 4.0% of the ministers of education, and 2.4% of the directors of missions) report that attitudes toward the Cooperative Program are less favorable today than at this time last year.

The reasons volunteered for more favorable attitudes toward the Cooperative Program today than at this time last year are as follows:

- More publicity, promotion, and education of the congregation
- Bold Mission Thrust emphasis
- The annual emphasis to increase Cooperative Program support
- Greater concern for, and involvement in, the urgent needs of the world

The reasons volunteered for less favorable attitudes toward the Cooperative Program centered around funds being spent on large office buildings, large salaries for denominational leaders, and schools out of favor with church members.

- H. Twenty-nine percent of the pastors and 46.8 percent of the ministers of education report that the leaders in their congregations are "extremely optimistic" about the future of their churches. Further, 46.1 percent of the pastors and 38.2 percent of the ministers of education report that leaders are "somewhat optimistic" about the future of their churches. Some pastors (8.4%) and ministers of education (5.5%) did indicate that the leaders in their congregations were somewhat or definitely pessimistic about the future of their churches.

The majority (55.7%) of the directors of missions report that the pastors in their associations are "somewhat optimistic" about the future of their churches. An additional 9.1 percent indicated that the pastors in their associations are "extremely optimistic" about the future of their churches. Some (8.5%) report that the pastors in their associations are "somewhat pessimistic" about the future of their churches.

### III. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

#### \*1. Are you aware of the Bold Mission Thrust?

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Total</u>
Yes, I am very familiar with it . . .	60.3%	57.9%	59.2%
Yes, I am somewhat familiar with it .	25.9	26.6	26.2
Yes, but I really don't know much about it . . . . .	5.4	7.0	6.1
No . . . . .	0.4	-	0.2
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>8.0</u>	<u>8.5</u>	<u>8.3</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(224)	(199)	(423)

IF YES,

Please use the phrases below to express your feelings about the Bold Mission Thrust. The closer you place your answer to one of the phrases, the stronger you are indicating this phrase describes your feelings.

<u>Feelings about Bold Mission Thrust</u>		<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>	<u>Total</u>
Well conceived	1	30.2%	24.7%	33.3%	29.3%
	2	26.3	31.9	37.1	31.4
	3	20.5	23.1	13.9	19.4
	4	12.7	13.7	6.7	11.2
	5	2.9	2.2	4.2	3.1
	6	2.0	1.1	3.0	2.0
Poorly conceived	7	0.5	1.1	-	0.5
Not Indicated		<u>4.9</u>	<u>2.2</u>	<u>1.8</u>	<u>3.1</u>
Totals		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		(205)	(182)	(165)	(552)

\*The awareness part of Question 1 was not asked of directors of missions.

(Question 1 continued)

		<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>	<u>Total</u>
Practical	1	31.2%	20.3%	27.3%	26.5%
	2	25.4	33.5	32.1	30.1
	3	12.7	17.6	16.4	15.4
	4	12.7	10.4	7.9	10.5
	5	7.8	10.4	3.6	7.4
	6	4.4	5.5	7.3	5.6
Impractical	7	1.0	0.6	1.8	1.1
Not Indicated		<u>4.8</u>	<u>1.7</u>	<u>3.6</u>	<u>3.4</u>
Totals		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		(205)	(182)	(165)	(552)
Easy to understand	1	26.8%	18.7%	30.9%	25.4%
	2	25.3	29.1	30.9	28.2
	3	17.6	19.2	16.4	17.8
	4	17.1	18.7	9.7	15.4
	5	4.9	6.6	5.5	5.6
	6	3.4	3.9	3.6	3.6
Hard to understand	7	1.0	1.6	0.6	1.1
Not Indicated		<u>3.9</u>	<u>2.2</u>	<u>2.4</u>	<u>2.9</u>
Totals		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		(205)	(182)	(165)	(552)
A new approach	1	20.0%	9.9%	17.0%	15.8%
	2	13.2	29.7	33.4	24.6
	3	25.8	28.6	19.4	24.8
	4	17.6	12.1	14.5	14.8
	5	10.7	9.9	5.5	8.9
	6	5.4	5.5	4.2	5.1
Same old thing	7	2.4	2.7	3.6	2.9
Not Indicated		<u>4.9</u>	<u>1.6</u>	<u>2.4</u>	<u>3.1</u>
Totals		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		(205)	(182)	(165)	(552)

2. Do you know about the new television program produced by Southern Baptists called "At Home with the Bible?"

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>	<u>Total</u>
Yes . . . . .	74.1%	89.4%	86.7%	82.8%
No . . . . .	24.6	10.6	12.1	16.3
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>1.3</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1.2</u>	<u>0.9</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(224)	(199)	(165)	(588)

IF YES,

Have you personally seen it?

Yes . . . . .	13.3%	13.5%	20.3%	15.4%
No . . . . .	43.3	35.4	26.6	35.5
No, it is not shown in my viewing area . . . . .	42.8	51.1	53.1	48.9
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>0.6</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>0.2</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(166)	(178)	(143)	(487)

IF YES,

What are your feelings about this new television program?

I like it very much	19	20	25	85.3%
I have mixed feelings about it . . . . .	2	3	3	10.7
I am really not im- pressed with it . . .	1	1	-	2.7
Not Indicated . . .	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1.3</u>
Totals	(22)	(24)	(29)	100.0%
				(75)

3. Have you heard/read about the Growing An Evangelistic Church Strategy?

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>	<u>Total</u>
Yes . . . . .	61.1%	43.2%	83.7%	61.4%
No . . . . .	37.1	54.8	13.9	36.6
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>1.8</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>2.4</u>	<u>2.0</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(224)	(199)	(165)	(588)

IF YES,

Have you attended a Growing An Evangelistic Church Seminar?

Yes . . . . .	17.5%	22.1%	27.5%	22.4%
No . . . . .	82.5	77.9	71.8	77.3
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>0.7</u>	<u>0.3</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(137)	(86)	(138)	(361)

\*4. About how many churches in your association have a ministry to minority groups in the area?

<u>Number of Churches</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>
None	28.6
1	7.9%
2	15.8
3	12.7
4	7.9
5	4.8
6-9	9.1
10-14	4.2
15-19	1.8
20 or more	2.4
Not Indicated	<u>4.8</u>
Total	100.0%
	(165)

\*Question 4 was asked only of directors of missions.

\*5. Does your church have a ministry to minority groups living in the community?

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Total</u>
Yes . . . . .	17.9%	47.2%	31.7%
No . . . . .	81.7	49.8	66.6
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>0.4</u>	<u>3.0</u>	<u>1.7</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(224)	(199)	(423)

IF YES,

\*\*a. What is the nature of this ministry? (Check all that apply.)

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>
Include in the regular activities of the congregation . . . . .	80.0%	52.1%	68.1%
One or more missions . . . . .	22.5	17.0	44.5
Back Yard Bible Clubs . . . . .	25.0	24.5	50.0
Special activities at the church . . . . .	35.0	48.9	40.9
Mission Vacation Bible School . . . . .	32.5	24.5	48.2
Other (see Appendix for verbatim comments) . . . . .	-	-	-
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>5.0</u>	<u>13.8</u>	<u>-</u>
Totals	***	***	***
	(40)	(94)	(110)

IF NO TO QUESTION 5,

\*b. Are there any minority groups living in your church's community?

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Total</u>
Yes . . . . .	40.4%	55.5%	45.7%
No . . . . .	54.1	39.4	49.0
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>5.5</u>	<u>5.1</u>	<u>5.3</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(183)	(99)	(282)

\*Asked only of pastors and ministers of education.

\*\*Asked of all three groups. However, the IF YES of the stem was not present on the questionnaire for directors of missions. The base of 110 for the directors of missions is based on the number of respondents who indicated that one or more churches in the association had a ministry to minority groups in the area.

\*\*\*Totals do not add to 100.0 due to multiple answers.

(Question 5 continued)

IF YES TO QUESTION 5b,

\*c. Does your church have plans to begin such a ministry?

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Total</u>
Yes . . . . .	16.2%	20.0%	17.8%
No . . . . .	82.4	76.4	79.9
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>1.4</u>	<u>3.6</u>	<u>2.3</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(74)	(55)	(129)

(See Appendix for verbatim comments to item above)

6. Would you say that attitudes in your church (association) toward the Cooperative Program are more favorable, less favorable, or about the same as they were this time last year?

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>
More favorable . . . . .	38.4%	32.7%	44.2%
Less favorable . . . . .	4.0	4.0	2.4
About the same . . . . .	56.3	61.8	52.2
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>1.3</u>	<u>1.5</u>	<u>1.2</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(224)	(199)	(165)

\*Asked only of pastors and ministers of education.

If more or less favorable, please share why. (voluntary responses)

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>
More publicity, greater emphasis, promotion, education of the congregation, etc. . . . .	52.6%	52.1%	61.0%
Bold Mission Thrust--Involvement in Bold Mission, emphasis upon Bold Mission, etc. . . . .	7.4	16.4	14.3
The annual emphasis to increase Cooperative Program support . . . .	14.7	13.7	3.9
Greater concern for/involvement in the urgent needs of the world . . .	12.6	2.7	2.6
Discouraged with the way some of the money is spent--large office buildings, large salaries for denominational leaders, spent at schools out of favor with church members, etc. . . . .	8.4	13.7	2.6
Other			
● time has changed negative attitude toward senior college	-	-	1.3
● deeper fellowship of leaders	-	-	1.3
● several churches have called pastors that are not really Southern Baptists	-	-	1.3
● take care of home first attitude	1.1	-	-
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>13.7</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>19.5</u>
Totals	*	*	*
	(95)	(73)	(77)

7. In general, are the leaders (pastors) in your congregation (association) optimistic or pessimistic about the future of their church(es)?

Extremely optimistic, great things ahead . . . . .	29.0%	46.8%	9.1%
Somewhat optimistic . . . . .	46.1	38.2	55.7
Tentative, no clear impression of optimism or pessimism . . . . .	16.5	9.0	18.2
Somewhat pessimistic . . . . .	7.1	4.0	8.5
Definitely pessimistic, serious problems are at hand or expected .	1.3	1.5	-
Options 1 and 2 above . . . . .	-	-	6.7
Not Indicated . . . . .	<u>-</u>	<u>0.5</u>	<u>1.8</u>
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	(224)	(199)	(165)

\*Totals do not add to 100.0 due to multiple answers

APPENDIX

Question 5: What is the nature of the ministry to minority groups living in the community? (Other responses--verbatim)

PASTORS

A ministry to Indians

MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

Ministry to inner city people

English classes for internationals

We have a Spanish department of Sunday School and Spanish worship services

Language Bible study

English as a second language, Spanish Bible study

Bus ministry

Mission for minority group

Big "A" club led by acteens

We have a "street people" ministry--prostitutes, homos, vagrants, etc.--an international student ministry with 75-100 people from 45 countries

Sunday School and worship for blind, deaf, mentally handicapped

Have Sunday School class for Koreans--involve them in worship

Migrants each summer

Saturday night ministry at church to military personnel

Have a Korean Baptist church using our facilities

Care and share ministry to poor (black and white)--food, clothing, shelter crisis ministry

Chinese mission in our church twice each month

International program each week plus regular activities in special programs

Special Bible class

Special class for Vietnamese

Seminary extension classes, English classes, international ministry

DIRECTORS OF MISSIONS

Migrant ministry to Spanish and blacks

Associational program of afternoon RE groups, (special ministries to internationals--3)

Provided materials, etc., for Ghetto center work

Twelve or more of our churches help sponsor a program for integrated, retarded adults and senior citizens

Big "A" Clubs

Seaman's ministry (resort ministry--2)

Deaf (3)

Mexicans

Day camp

English reading classes

Largely work with Navajo, Hopi and Apache Indians. One Spanish mission

Our association ministers to Port Everglades Seamen and alcoholics

Question 5c: Does your church have plans to begin a minority ministry? (Verbatim comments)

Hopefully--to groups of internationals at the medical center nearby

There are not that many at present

We have always treated white people who come to our church just like anyone else, but we do not plan to start any special programs for the white minority

• Associational structured program to migrants in the area--financial support

Blacks are majority in our community and have strong Baptist churches--four

Negro churches meeting needs of their community. We have one Negro boy playing in an instrumental ensemble

Blacks all around, but so are three Black churches with strong leadership

Very few and most are being ministered to by another church

We have some Spanish Americans who have been absorbed by several of the churches

They do not live in our section of the city. There are strong Black and Mexican-American churches. We support the Mexican-American church

We have tried to help local colored churches thru pastor--little success

Migrants live in the rural areas but we minister mainly to the city

No plans at present--taking survey now to determine prospects

The church regularly visits Mexican-Americans without thinking of them as a minority group. As a matter of fact, several members are Mexican-Americans

Looking at a future mission

We are too small

No such program seems needed

Church feels they need to go to "their" church

At this time, we are pastorless--no new programs will be instituted until we secure a pastor

Not presently but we are not against such action

There is a church (Southern Baptist) closer to the location of the minority groups with plans to minister to this group