

BAPTIST VIEWpoll

MAY 1982

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

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BAPTIST VIEWpoll FOR MAY 1982

I. INTRODUCTION

This report is a presentation of the findings from the May, 1982 poll of the Baptist VIEWpoll panel.

There are currently 681 members (302 pastors, 238 ministers of education, and 141 directors of missions) on the Baptist VIEWpoll panel. Of these, 85 percent (256) of the pastors, 85 percent (203) of the ministers of education, and 91 percent (129) of the directors of missions participated in the May poll.

Items on the May poll involved seven areas of interest:

- Home Mission Study, 1982
- Outlook of church leaders and pastors
- Budgets
- Current operation of Baptist Book Stores
- Considerations in shopping at a Baptist Book Store
- Ideal operation of Baptist Book Stores
- Ministry to language culture groups

II. COMMENTS ON THE FINDINGS

- A. Thirty-six percent (56% of the directors of missions, 31% of the ministers of education, and 29% of the pastors) of the panel members indicated they had read/studied the adult mission study book written for the Home Mission Study, 1982.

Of the 210 (36%) who indicated they had read/studied the book, 147 (70%) indicated they could recall the title and/or the subject of the book. However, when these 147 were asked to write in the title and/or subject of the book, 104 (71%) correctly listed the book and 119 (81%) volunteered the subject.

Twenty-seven percent (56) of the 210 who indicated they had read/studied the book could not recall either the title or the subject of the book.

Cross-tabulation data for this item reveals a significant difference between pastors in that 38 percent of those who serve east of the Mississippi River report having read/studied the Mission study book,

while only 13 percent of those who serve west of the River have read/studied the book. Also, 60 percent of the directors of missions who serve in "old"* SBC states have read/studied the book, while only 40 percent of those who serve in "new"* SBC states have read/studied the book.

- B. The majority (51%) of the pastors and the largest portion (44%) of the ministers of education reported that leaders in their congregations were "somewhat optimistic" about the future of their churches. An additional 26 percent of the pastors and 39 percent of the ministers of education reported that their leaders were "extremely optimistic." Sixty-four percent of the directors of missions reported that the pastors in their associations are "somewhat optimistic" about the future of their churches while an additional eight percent reported that the pastors in their associations were "extremely optimistic."

Table 1 depicts the relationships between panel members' responses to this item in May, 1981 and the responses of the same individuals in May, 1982. Obviously, there have been noticeable individual changes, but overall the view from the field remains optimistic.

- C. The largest portion (45%) of the ministers of education reported that their churches' income was "behind budget." Thirty-three percent of the pastors reported their churches' income was "ahead of budget," and 37 percent reporting they were "meeting budget." The largest portion (35%) of the directors of missions reported that their associations' income was "meeting budget."

Table 2 reveals the relationship between panel members responses to this item in May, 1981 and the responses of the same individuals in May, 1982. Note that the majority of churches/associations that were "behind budget" in 1981 remain so in 1982.

- D. When panel members were asked to indicate how they thought the Baptist Book Stores were currently being operated, 80 percent (79% of the pastors, 76% of the ministers of education, and 87% of the directors of missions) indicated that "the Baptist Book Stores carry a variety of materials, most of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists." Eleven percent indicated that "the Baptist Book Stores carry a variety of materials, all of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists."

*See Appendix for "old" and "new" SBC states.

TABLE 1

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

	Pastors					Ministers of Education					Directors of Missions				
	May, 1981					May, 1981					May, 1981				
May, 1982	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Extremely optimistic	51%	18%	5%	(2)	(-)	69%	24%	11%	(2)	(1)	25%	7%	-%	(-)	(-)
Somewhat optimistic	43	62	48	(4)	(2)	30	57	59	(2)	(-)	65	70	47	(4)	(2)
Tentative	6	14	40	(2)	(-)	1	14	19	(1)	(-)	5	20	47	(1)	(-)
Somewhat pessimistic	-	6	7	(2)	(1)	-	4	11	(3)	(1)	5	3	6	(1)	(-)
Definitely pessimistic	-	-	-	(1)	(2)	-	1	-	(2)	(-)	-	-	-	(-)	(-)
Totals	100%	100%	100%			100%	100%	100%			100%	100%	100%		
	(67)	(111)	(42)	(11)	(5)	(70)	(86)	(27)	(10)	(2)	(20)	(74)	(17)	(6)	(2)
			(236)					(195)					(119)		

- 1 - Extremely optimistic
- 2 - Somewhat optimistic
- 3 - Tentative
- 4 - Somewhat pessimistic
- 5 - Definitely pessimistic

NOTE ON READING THE TABLE: Observe that 236 pastors, 195 ministers of education, and 119 directors of missions participated in both polls. Looking only at the 236 pastors involved, observe that for May, 1981, 67 pastors reported that their leaders were "extremely optimistic," 111 reported that their leaders were "somewhat optimistic," 42 reported that their leaders were in a "tentative" stance about the future of their churches, 11 reported that their leaders were "somewhat pessimistic," and 5 reported them to be "definitely pessimistic." Of the 67 pastors who reported "extremely optimistic" in May, 1981, 51 percent reported "extremely optimistic" in May, 1982, 43 percent reported "somewhat optimistic" 6 percent reported "tentative," none reported "somewhat pessimistic," and none reported "definitely pessimistic." The rest of the data can be read in the same way that the pastor data has been presented.

TABLE 2

In terms of income this year, is your church/association ahead of budget, meeting budget, or behind budget?

<u>May, 1982</u>	Pastors			Ministers of Education			Directors of Missions		
	<u>May, 1981</u>			<u>May, 1981</u>			<u>May, 1981</u>		
	<u>Ahead of budget</u>	<u>Meeting budget</u>	<u>Behind budget</u>	<u>Ahead of budget</u>	<u>Meeting budget</u>	<u>Behind budget</u>	<u>Ahead of budget</u>	<u>Meeting budget</u>	<u>Behind budget</u>
Ahead of budget	(46%)	31%	8%	(50%)	22%	11%	(60%)	29%	11%
Meeting budget	31	(47)	32	32	(39)	23	27	(49)	20
Behind budget	<u>23</u>	<u>22</u>	(60)	<u>18</u>	<u>39</u>	(66)	<u>13</u>	<u>22</u>	(69)
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	(96)	(90)	(50)	(50)	(62)	(82)	(37)	(45)	(35)
		(236)			(194)			(117)	

NOTE ON READING THE DATA: Circled percentages depict individuals whose responses were the same in both polls-- May, 1981, and May, 1982 (in other words, no change in their income status). The remaining percentages represent changes in the income status of respondents' churches/associations.

A second item, using basically the same response categories as the first item, posed the question about how the book stores should be operated, and the majority (64%) indicated that "the Baptist Book Stores should carry a variety of materials, and most of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists." Further, 33 percent indicated that "the Baptist Book Stores should carry a variety of materials, and all of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists."

Tables 3, 4, and 5 show the relationships between the two items for each sample group, and it is evident that panel members want the Baptist Book Stores to stay doctrinally close to Southern Baptists in their choice of materials.

- E. Panel members were presented with thirteen considerations involved in choosing to shop at a Baptist Book Store and asked to indicate how important each consideration was to them personally. The majority of the pastors indicated that prices (59%), stock availability (59%), and the attitude of employees (54%) were "very important" to them. The majority of the ministers of education indicated that three considerations were "very important" to them--stock availability (80%), attitude of employees (60%) and a staff that is knowledgeable about SBC programs (52%). The majority of the directors of missions selected four considerations as "very important" to them--attitude of employees (65%), stock availability (65%), a staff that is knowledgeable about SBC programs (59%), and prices (56%). The majority of the panel members, as a whole, selected three considerations as being "very important"--stock availability (68%), attitude of employees (58%), and prices (53%). Forty-nine percent of the panel members indicated that "a staff that is knowledgeable about SBC programs" was "very important" to them.
- In highlighting only the "very important" considerations involved in choosing to shop at a Baptist Book Store we do not mean to treat lightly the "important" considerations. In fact, 12 of the 13 considerations were considered "important," to some degree, to one-half or more of the panel members.

TABLE 3
 HOW PASTORS THINK THE BAPTIST BOOK STORES ARE CURRENTLY BEING OPERATED BY
 HOW THEY THINK THEY SHOULD BE OPERATED

<u>How pastors think the Baptist Book Stores should be operated</u>	<u>How Pastors think the Baptist Book Stores are currently being operated</u>				
	<u>The Baptist Book Stores carry a variety of materials . . .</u>				
	<u>all of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists</u>	<u>most of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists</u>	<u>some of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists</u>	<u>few of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists</u>	<u>N.I.</u>
<u>The Baptist Book Stores should carry a variety of materials, and</u>					
<u>All of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.</u>	39%	38%	52%	-	(4)
<u>Most of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.</u>	61	61	44	-	(3)
<u>Some of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.</u>	-	1	4	-	(2)
<u>A few of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(-)</u>
Totals	100%	100%	100%	-	
	(23)	(201)	(23)		(9)

Of the 256 pastors responding, 132 (52%) think the Baptist Book Stores are currently being operated the way they should be operated with respect to materials.

TABLE 4
 HOW MINISTERS OF EDUCATION THINK THE BAPTIST BOOK STORES ARE CURRENTLY BEING OPERATED BY
 HOW THEY THINK THEY SHOULD BE OPERATED

<u>How Ministers of Education think the Baptist Book Stores should be operated</u>	<u>How Ministers of Education think the Baptist Book Stores are currently being operated</u>					<u>N.I.</u>
	<u>The Baptist Book Stores carry a variety of materials . . .</u>					
<u>The Baptist Book Stores should carry a variety of materials, and</u>	<u>all of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists</u>	<u>most of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists</u>	<u>some of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists</u>	<u>few of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists</u>		
<u>All</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	63%	24%	25% (2)	-	(-)	
<u>Most</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	37	74	50 (4)	-	(3)	
<u>Some</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	-	2	13 (1)	-	-	
A <u>few</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	-	-	12 (1)	-	-	
Not indicated	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(2)</u>	
Totals	100% (35)	100% (155)	100% (8)	-	(5)	

Of the 203 Ministers of Education responding, 137 (67%) think the Baptist Book Stores are currently being operated they way they should be operated with respect to materials.

TABLE 5
 HOW DIRECTORS OF MISSIONS THINK THE BAPTIST BOOK STORES ARE CURRENTLY BEING OPERATED BY
 HOW THEY THINK THEY SHOULD BE OPERATED

<u>How Directors of Missions think the Baptist Book Stores should be operated</u>	<u>How Directors of Missions think the Baptist Book Stores are curenly being operated</u>				
	<u>The Baptist Book Stores carry a variety of materials</u>				
	<u>all</u> of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists	<u>most</u> of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists	<u>some</u> of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists	<u>few</u> of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists	N.I.
<u>The Baptist Book Stores should carry a variety of materials, and</u>					
<u>All</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	(3)	22%	(4)	-	(1)
<u>Most</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	(1)	77	(5)	-	(-)
<u>Some</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	(-)	-	(3)	-	(-)
A <u>few</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	(-)	-	(-)	-	(-)
Not indicated	<u>(-)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>(-)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(-)</u>
Totals	(4)	100% (112)	(12)	-	(1)

Of the 129 Directors of Missions responding, 92 (71%) think the Baptist Book Stores are currently being operated the way they should be operated with respect to materials.

HIGHLIGHT F IS BASED ON RESPONSES FROM ONLY PASTORS AND MINISTERS OF EDUCATION.

F. Pastors and ministers of education were asked to indicate from a list any specific language culture groups to which their churches were ministering, and 68 percent of the pastors and 47 percent of the ministers of education indicated that their churches had no specific language culture ministry. Fifteen percent of the pastors and 19 percent of the ministers of education reported ministries to Hispanics, while 10 percent of the pastors and 24 percent of the ministers of education reported ministries to Asians.

III. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Each year the WMU and Brotherhood promote the Home Mission Study. Did you read/study the adult mission study book written for the Home Mission Study, 1982?

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>	<u>Total</u>
Yes	29%	31%	56%	36%
No.	71	69	42	63
Not indicated	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Totals	100% (256)	100% (203)	100% (129)	100% (588)

If "YES," can you recall the title and/or the subject?

Yes, the title was	67%	79%	65%	70%
Gave correct title	70%	66%	77%	71%
Gave incorrect title	4	8	4	5
Made no attempt at title	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>24</u>
Totals	100% (50)	100% (50)	100% (47)	100% (147)

. . . the subject was				
Gave correct subject	84%	80%	79%	81%
Gave incorrect subject	4	6	-	3
Made no attempt at subject	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>16</u>
Totals	100% (50)	100% (50)	100% (47)	100% (147)

No, I do not recall	32	18	29	27
Not indicated	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>
Totals	100% (75)	100% (63)	100% (72)	100% (210)

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

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>
Extremely optimistic, great things ahead	26%	39%	8%
Somewhat optimistic	51	44	64
Tentative, no clear impression of optimism or pessimism	16	10	21
Somewhat pessimistic	6	5	5
Definitely pessimistic, serious problems are at hand or expected	1	2	-
N.I.	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>
Totals	100% (256)	100% (203)	100% (129)

3. In terms of income this year, is your church/association ahead of budget, meeting budget, or behind budget?

Ahead of budget	33%	25%	33%
Meeting budget	37	30	35
Behind budget	30	45	31
N.I.	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
Totals	100% (256)	100% (203)	100% (129)

4. We are interested in knowing how you think the Baptist Book Stores are currently being operated. Please indicate which description best depicts your current understanding as to how the stores are operated.
 (Please check only one.)

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>	<u>Total</u>
The Baptist Book Stores carry a variety of materials, <u>all</u> of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	9%	17%	3%	11%
The Baptist Book Stores carry a variety of materials, <u>most</u> of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	79	76	87	80
The Baptist Book Stores carry a variety of materials, <u>some</u> of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	9	4	9	7
The Baptist Book Stores carry a variety of materials, <u>few</u> of which are doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	-	-	-	-
N.I.	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%
	(256)	(203)	(129)	(588)

5. Listed below are thirteen considerations involved when one chooses to shop at a Baptist Book Store. Please indicate how important each consideration is to you personally.

	<u>PASTORS</u>				
	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not too important</u>	<u>Not important at all</u>	<u>Not indicated</u>
● Store hours	20%	51	23	4	2
● Prices	59%	34	3	2	2
● Parking	21%	56	17	3	3
● Attitude of employees	54%	41	3	-	2
● Stock availability	59%	37	1	1	2
● The store layout	9%	47	39	4	1
● Store displays	8%	41	43	6	2
● Discounts	36%	41	18	2	3
● Help in making buying decisions . .	14%	33	44	7	2
● A staff that is knowledgeable about SBC programs	42%	46	9	2	1
● Returns for credit	31%	50	16	1	2
● Acceptance of bank credit cards . .	8%	27	43	19	3
● Availability of Baptist Book Store credit cards	19%	45	26	8	2

5. Listed below are thirteen considerations involved when one chooses to shop at a Baptist Book Store. Please indicate how important each consideration is to you personally.

MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not too important</u>	<u>Not impor- tant at all</u>	<u>Not indicated</u>
● Store hours	19%	48	27	4	2
● Prices	44%	46	9	-	1
● Parking	18%	57	21	3	1
● Attitude of employees	60%	33	5	1	1
● Stock availability	80%	18	1	-	1
● The store layout	6%	48	41	3	2
● Store displays	5%	37	51	5	2
● Discounts	31%	47	19	1	2
● Help in making buying decisions	9%	41	43	5	2
● A staff that is knowledgeable about SBC programs	52%	34	10	2	2
● Returns for credit	29%	58	11	-	2
● Acceptance of bank credit cards	7%	22	49	20	2
● Availability of Baptist Book Store credit cards	18%	46	25	8	3

(203)

5. Listed below are thirteen considerations involved when one chooses to shop at a Baptist Book Store. Please indicate how important each consideration is to you personally.

DIRECTORS OF MISSIONS

	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not too important</u>	<u>Not impor- tant at all</u>	<u>Not indicated</u>
● Store hours	26%	47	19	6	2
● Prices	56%	38	5	-	1
● Parking	36%	48	9	4	3
● Attitude of employees	65%	33	-	-	2
● Stock availability	65%	33	1	-	1
● The store layout	10%	51	30	4	5
● Store displays	12%	52	28	3	5
● Discounts	35%	42	17	3	3
● Help in making buying decisions	12%	47	27	9	5
● A staff that is knowlegeable about SBC programs . .	59%	34	4	-	3
● Returns for credit	33%	54	8	1	4
● Acceptance of bank credit cards	10%	34	39	12	5
● Availability of Baptist Book Store credit cards . .	27%	48	16	5	4

(129)

5. Listed below are thirteen considerations involved when one chooses to shop at a Baptist Book Store. Please indicate how important each consideration is to you personally.

	<u>TOTAL</u>				
	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not too important</u>	<u>Not impor- tant at all</u>	<u>Not indicated</u>
● Store hours	21%	49	23	5	2
● Prices	53%	39	6	1	1
● Parking	23%	55	16	3	3
● Attitude of employees	58%	37	3	-	2
● Stock availability	68%	29	1	-	2
● The store layout	8%	49	38	3	2
● Store displays	8%	42	42	5	3
● Discounts	34%	43	18	2	3
● Help in making buying decisions	12%	39	40	7	2
● A staff that is knowlegeable about SBC pro- grams	49%	39	8	2	2
● Returns for credit	31%	53	13	1	2
● Acceptance of bank credit cards	8%	27	44	18	3
● Availability of Baptist Book Store credit cards	20%	46	24	8	2

(588)

6. We are interested in knowing how you think the Baptist Book Stores should be operated. Listed below are four statements which describe in general how the stores could be operated. Please indicate which description best depicts how you think the stores should be operated. (Please check only one.)

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Directors of Missions</u>	<u>Total</u>
The Baptist Book Stores should carry a variety of materials, and <u>all</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	40%	30%	26%	33%
The Baptist Book Stores should carry a variety of materials, and <u>most</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	58	66	71	64
The Baptist Book Stores should carry a variety of materials, and <u>some</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	2	2	2	2
The Baptist Book Stores should carry a variety of materials, and a <u>few</u> of them should be doctrinally acceptable to Southern Baptists.	-	-	-	-
N.I.	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%
	(256)	(203)	(129)	(588)

QUESTION 7 WAS ASKED ONLY OF PASTORS AND MINISTERS OF EDUCATION.

7. Please indicate below any specific language culture groups to which your church ministers.

	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Ministers of Education</u>	<u>Total</u>
None	68%	47%	58%
Hispanic	15	19	17
Asian	10	24	16
European	2	3	3
American Indian	2	2	2
Middle Eastern	2	9	5
Deaf	7	17	11
Other	-	2	1
N.I.	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Totals	*	*	*
	(256)	(203)	(459)

*Percents do not add to 100 due to multiple answers.

APPENDIX

LIST OF "OLD" AND "NEW" SBC STATES

"OLD" SBC STATES

Alabama
Arkansas
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Mississippi
Missouri
North Carolina
Oklahoma
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Virginia

"NEW" SBC STATES

Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
North Dakota
Ohio
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Dakota
Utah
Vermont
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming