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In this issue:

- **Despite conviction, court order, Drake still feeding homeless**
- **Christians commanded to care for latchkey kids, speaker says**
- **Ministry can stress families, say counseling service heads**
- **Long-time missions photojournalist recalls work on 'Black Like Me'**

Despite conviction, court order, Drake still feeding homeless

By David Finnigan

BUENA PARK, Calif. (ABP) -- Despite a court order July 30 to halt his work with the poor, outspoken pastor Wiley Drake was still feeding and sheltering the homeless that evening at his First Southern Baptist Church in Buena Park, Calif.

Court-process servers tried unsuccessfully a day earlier to serve Drake, 53, with a preliminary injunction barring him from allowing poor people to sleep in cots at his church or in cars on church property.

Drake said on the morning of Thursday, July 31, that he was not trying to avoid the court papers, but that all day Tuesday he was being interviewed by, "one radio station after another," and that a limousine came for him late Tuesday afternoon to go to Los Angeles for a CBS News interview.

The process server arrived about the same time Drake was going from his office to the limousine. "I was in a hurry," Drake said. "I never saw a process server."

Drake and his church were found guilty July 28 of four counts each of misdemeanor building code violations in Orange County Superior Court. An appeal is planned, and sentencing is set Aug. 22.

After the injunction was served successfully on Drake Wednesday afternoon, his attorneys gave the process server an appeal to stay the order, which allows Drake to maintain his homeless ministry pending an appeal.

"I'm still doing everything," Drake said.

Increased publicity thanks to Monday's conviction prompted an increase in food and clothing donations to the church. On Thursday, a woman who claimed to be a direct descendant of both Mayflower Pilgrims and a Declaration of Independence signer picketed in front of Buena Park city government offices in support of Drake.

The church is expecting a larger-than-usual worship crowd this Sunday, including reporters and some of the jurors who found Drake guilty this week.

Christians commanded to care for latchkey kids, speaker says

By Ken Camp

WACO, Texas (ABP) -- The Bible commands Christians to care for latchkey children, according to Jana Young, director of church-and-community ministries for Dallas Baptist Association.

"Look at James 1:27," she told participants at a Texas Baptist leadership conference. "We have a scriptural mandate to take responsibility for orphans and widows -- for those who cannot care for themselves."

Not all churches can offer full-scale programs for young children of working parents who must spend part of their day at home alone, Young said. But she offered suggestions for churches of any size:

-- Volunteer. Donate time to a local elementary school or middle school. Read to young children or help a child in a remedial class with his assignments.

-- Befriend a single parent. Include the child of a single parent in family outings to a museum or ball game. "Involve men from the church to provide positive male role models for children in single-parent homes," Young said.

-- Open the church library. Instead of locking up the church library five days of the week, make it available as an after-school study hall for children who may have no other quiet, private place to complete their homework. If a church offers tutoring, do it in the library where there are reference books and tables available.

-- Teach a hobby class. "Some common skills of the past are becoming lost arts," Young said. Senior adults or homemakers could teach crocheting, embroidery, sewing, cooking or woodworking to children whose parents may never teach them those crafts.

-- Help families before school. Make the church available as a drop-off for children whose parents have to report to work early. Offer the children a breakfast snack, a brief devotional, a ride to school and the assurance that caring Christian adults will be praying for them throughout the day.

"There are probably senior adults in your church who are up every morning by five o'clock," Young said. "There are parents who have to be at work before the school day begins who need a place to take their children. There are church vans that could be used to take those children from the church to the school. There's got to be some way to put all those things together."

-30-

Ministry can stress families, say counseling service heads

By Ken Camp

DALLAS (ABP) -- Ministers' marriages suffer when spouses don't communicate. Families feel neglected when ministers spend all their time and energy on church-related duties. And ministers feel pulled apart by conflicting demands.

Those are conclusions drawn from a quarter century of counseling Texas Baptist ministers and their families, say the two men who have coordinated a ministry counseling service for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

"Probably 75 percent of my counseling sessions are spent trying to help ministers have more fulfilling and intimate relationships with their own families," said Glenn Booth, coordinator of the service since 1988.

James Cooper, his predecessor who took the job in 1972, said at least half of his time was spent dealing with problems related to families.

"Usually, the basic problem was a lack of communication," he said. "That's what most counselors would find anywhere."

Closely related to marital problems are the job-related pressures of ministry that come from "being pulled in so many different directions and having to wear so many hats," Cooper said.

Too often, ministers place extremely unrealistic expectations upon themselves, Booth said.

"Sometimes, I feel their expectations even exceed what God himself would demand of a man in the ministry," he said.

Booth said he counsels ministers to "buy back" slots of time to be used for personal, marital and family enrichment.

"If a minister provides both quantity and quality time for his family, it enhances the effectiveness of his ministry," he said.

While issues related to family have remained fairly constant throughout the counseling service's 25 years, another problem, forced termination, has increased significantly. Booth noted that about 300 Texas Baptist church staff members are fired in a given year.

"I try to help them through the pain, hurt, anger and bitterness that sometimes results," Booth said.

The service also offers limited financial assistance during transition and career assessment to help the out-of-work minister discover strengths, develop a ministry profile and set goals for self-fulfillment. All of the work is aimed at helping the individual re-enter the ministry.

"I would say that 99 and 44/100 percent of those who go through the process of career assessment revalidate their calling," Booth said.

In the last six years, Booth has also launched a "restoration" program for ministers whose lives have been shattered by immoral or unethical behavior.

The two-year program begins with personal and family counseling. The minister develops a personal code of ethics and gradually enters volunteer, then professional, ministry.

"The two years offers an opportunity for the fallen minister to learn humility, to better evaluate where he has been, and to determine where he is going," Booth said. "Most have to get a secular job simply to feed their family, and that can be a humbling learning experience. And I really believe their marriage needs that much time to heal."

Eight ministers have completed the restoration program. Only one has not successfully re-entered ministry, Booth said.

Over the long haul, Cooper said the agency's greatest contribution may be in helping ministers, their families and the churches they serve recognize their own common humanity.

"I think there's a greater recognition that they are human beings, and all human beings make mistakes," Cooper said.

"The ministers counseling service has given them permission to admit that and to seek help when necessary."

-30-

Long-time missions photojournalist recalls work on 'Black Like Me'

By Tim Palmer

MIDLOTHIAN, Va. (ABP) -- Growing up in the 1930s and 1940s near Murfreesboro, Tenn., Don Rutledge saw racial segregation almost everywhere he looked. Except when he looked in the mirror.

"There was just something, some way, that it didn't make sense at all that you would distrust somebody or

hate somebody just on the color of their skin," said Rutledge, who is white.

Rutledge lived on a farm and played with the children of tenant farmers --- both white and black -- who worked for his father.

One day he was walking home with some white schoolmates when they started throwing rocks at a group of black students, some of whom lived on the Rutledge farm. Rutledge told them to stop, but they didn't.

"So I ran over to the blacks and started throwing rocks back at the whites," Rutledge said, chuckling at the memory.

Such experiences helped groom Rutledge, a recently retired photojournalist for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, for a future task.

Nearly 40 years ago, Rutledge served as photographer for the book "Black Like Me" by John Howard Griffin. Rutledge, who lives in Midlothian, Va., recently looked back on that brief but unforgettable assignment in December 1959.

Then 29 years old and determined to make a career of photography, Rutledge approached the Black Star photo agency with an idea for an article on black millionaire businessmen in Atlanta.

Sepia magazine, which was similar to Look magazine but aimed at a black readership, liked the idea. "I was told they had assigned a writer, and he would meet me in Atlanta."

The writer was John Howard Griffin. "At that time I had no idea of his background or what he'd been up to," Rutledge said.

What Griffin, who was white, had been up to was traveling the Deep South disguised as a black man. His skin darkened by medication and makeup, he planned to do a series of articles on his experiences for Sepia, followed by a book.

Griffin recalled their first meeting in "Black Like Me." It took place on Dec. 4, 1959.

"The Black Star photographer, Don Rutledge, arrived in his little Renault from Rockvale, Tennessee, around noon. ... I liked him immediately. He is a tall, somewhat skinny young fellow, married and has a child -- a gentleman in every way."

For Rutledge the feeling was mutual. "We connected really quickly and had much the same feelings about the race issue at the time in the South."

After three days on the story project in Atlanta, Griffin was ready to return to New Orleans, the starting point for his journey as a black man. "(Rutledge) was anxious to get back to his wife and child."

Griffin wrote: "I asked him if he knew a first-rate photographer in New Orleans, since I wanted to go back over the terrain again as a Negro and have photos made. The project fascinated him and we arranged to drive to New Orleans together so he could photograph it."

Rutledge recalled: "I called Black Star and said I was going to disappear for a while, but I'd be in touch. I didn't give details. We got in my little car and rode from Atlanta to Alabama to Mississippi and to New Orleans, where we did most of the photography."

The two men found it easy to communicate on religion and other subjects, Rutledge noted. "He'd talk about his beliefs; I'd talk about mine." Griffin told Rutledge some of the abuse he endured as a black man, but Rutledge didn't find the information shocking. "It was very typical. I was not surprised at all, really."

For lodging, sometimes the two men split up, other times Griffin knew places where blacks and whites could stay together. "It was always kind of a tense time of trying to work all these things out."

On Dec. 14 -- 10 days after the two men first met -- Griffin wrote, "Finally the photos were taken, the project concluded, and I resumed for the final time my white identity."

Asked if he had an inkling of the impact their project would have, Rutledge replied: "No, I don't think either one of us did. John was really wanting people to know about it, but I'm almost positive he didn't have any idea of what was going to happen out of it."

Sepia's publication of Griffin's articles with Rutledge's photos beginning in early 1960 -- under the title "Journey Into Shame" -- started a new chapter in the lives of the two men.

Griffin was besieged with interview requests; he went on television with Dave Garroway, Mike Wallace and others.

Black Star began getting calls and telegrams from publications all over the globe. Magazines were bidding against each other for the rights to the photos; figures in the hundreds of thousands of dollars were mentioned.

Realizing there was a lot of money to be made, the publisher of Sepia began to pressure Rutledge for the negatives. "Here I was out there on the farm, and he was just screaming at me on the phone, demanding the pictures, threatening to sue me for all I was worth, which was not very much."

Rutledge was summoned to a meeting in New York, as was Griffin. The photographer decided to give the negatives to the writer. "I said, 'I'll loan the negatives to you for a while until the publisher calms down, then you can give them back.'

"Black Star was pretty upset with me; they wanted to control the release of them. I wasn't on staff, so legally they couldn't do anything to me. I was freelance."

What Rutledge had wanted all along was to be a full-time Black Star photographer, and the flap over the Griffin photos opened the door. "One of the administrators said, 'Don, if you're going to continue, you'll have to be staff, so we can be legally responsible.'" Rutledge answered, "'OK, if that's necessary.' Real casual-like."

The magazines that had been clamoring over the photos lost interest when they heard about the deadlock over the rights to them. Rutledge said he doesn't know how much potential income he missed. "It had to be an enormous amount."

Rutledge left Black Star for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in 1966 and embarked on a career photographing missions. He moved to the Foreign Mission Board in 1980 and worked in 142 countries before his retirement last year.

"I don't know how many times I've been asked if I'm the Don Rutledge who was the photographer in 'Black Like Me,'" he said. Countless people have described the impact the book had in shaping their attitudes about racism.

Rutledge said he appreciates the strides that have been made toward racial equality. "We've got a lot of progress to make yet, but we're a lot further along than we were during that time."

Griffin died in 1980. Rutledge saw him a couple of times in the 20 years after their brief collaboration -- once on a visit to Fort Worth. "Tears started running from his eyes and he grabbed me and started hugging me."

Another time, Baptist Public Relations Association (now Baptist Communicators Association) met in Texas. Rutledge got Griffin to address the group and waive his \$3,000 fee.

"John Howard Griffin was an amazing person, and our work together is an experience I will always remember," Rutledge said. "I was just starting on my career in photojournalism at the time, and I will always be grateful that this was a part of those early days."

Rutledge said he had a long, enjoyable visit with Griffin's widow, Elizabeth, last year in Fort Worth. There, Rutledge learned he was the only person to have seen Griffin both as a white person and as a black person.

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