

Associated Baptist Press

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July 21, 1998

(98-54)

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Eleanor Terry, educator, editor's wife, dies from injuries

By Laurie Lattimore

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) -- Eleanor Foster Terry, 55, wife of The Alabama Baptist editor Bob Terry, died July 20 at University Hospital in Birmingham, Ala., after returning to the United States July 19 via medical transport from Durban, South Africa.

The couple sustained severe injuries in a car accident July 11 in Durban, where they were attending a meeting of the Baptist World Alliance general council. They were flown to Alabama aboard MedJet International, which departed Durban on July 18 after having been dispatched from Birmingham three days earlier.

Bob Terry, 55, is listed in satisfactory condition with severe facial injuries, including fractures to his nose and face, a shift in his jaw, and injuries to his mouth and teeth.

Both Terrys were alert in a hospital immediately following the accident, and their injuries were not considered life-threatening. Eleanor Terry's condition worsened, however, prompting their children -- Brent Terry of Atlanta and Jean Terry Cullen of Vincent, Ala. -- to fly to South Africa July 14.

Brent Terry reported that his mother had become "agitated and confused" after the accident. Her heart stopped July 13, and she was placed on life support. She slipped into a coma July 15. Doctors at St. Augustine Hospital in Durban said a blood clot caused the complication. Birmingham surgeons have not confirmed the cause.

Bill Holdefer, medical services director for MedJet International, was in constant contact with physicians aboard the medical plane during the 30-hour trip home. It was mistakenly reported that she had died aboard the jet, but Holdefer confirmed July 18 doctors had been able to resuscitate her and bring her home alive.

The accident occurred when an oncoming car ran a red light and struck the Terrys' taxi just three blocks from their hotel, reported Dennis Jones, a Southern Baptist missionary stationed in South Africa. Jones said both Terrys were thrown from the car.

Despite the tragedy, Jean Cullen said her father and the entire Terry family continued to see God's faithfulness through Baptists in Alabama and around the world.

"We have been uplifted by the support and concern expressed by fellow believers," said Cullen, whose husband, Lon, is pastor of First Baptist Church in Vincent. "My mom stood for the best and brightest of what a Christian woman should be, and we hope to continue her legacy in our lives."

Mike McLemore, chairman of the board of directors for The Alabama Baptist and pastor of Lakeside Baptist Church in Birmingham, was saddened to hear the news of Terry's death.

"Eleanor Terry was a gracious lady to all of us at The Alabama Baptist and to our entire Baptist family around the world," McLemore said. "We extend our deepest sympathy to Dr. Bob Terry, their children and all members of the family. We will truly miss her."

Born in Copiah County, Miss., in 1942, Eleanor Ruth Foster graduated in 1960 from Cooper High School in Vicksburg, Miss. She earned her bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees from Mississippi College. She married Bob Terry Aug. 22, 1964. She earned a doctorate in higher-and-adult education administration in 1989 from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

She held numerous academic posts, including her most recent position at Birmingham Southern College, where she served as associate dean of graduate studies and assistant professor of administration and management. She had recently resigned to devote more time to travel with her husband and to spend time with their first grandchild, Drayton Cullen, who was born a few months ago.

The Terrys moved to Alabama from Missouri in 1995 after he was elected editor of The Alabama Baptist.

Prior to their move, he was editor of Word and Way, the Missouri Baptist newspaper, and she was senior associate dean of student affairs at William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., where she also worked as associate dean of students, assistant dean of students, director of the freshman-year experience and adjunct professor.

The funeral is scheduled for 3 p.m. Friday at Dawson Memorial Baptist Church in Birmingham followed by the burial at Southern Heritage Cemetery.

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Three faculty members leaving Southern posts

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) -- Two longtime faculty members at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary have been named to positions at other schools, and a third faculty member is retiring this summer.

Dan Stiver, a professor of Christian philosophy at the Louisville, Ky., seminary for 14 years, will begin a similar position at Hardin-Simmons this fall.

In addition to his teaching duties, Stiver has been chairman of both the faculty committee and faculty association during some of the seminary's recent years of turbulent transition. He also serves as editor of Review and Expositor, an academic journal previously associated with Southern Seminary but now managed by a consortium of Baptist schools.

The Logsdon School of Theology is one of several new divinity schools that have emerged in recent years on the campuses of colleges and universities affiliated with state Baptist conventions. Hardin-Simmons is located in Abilene, Texas.

Also joining the faculty at the Logsdon school is Texas pastor Mark Waters, who will be assistant professor of preaching and pastoral ministry, announced Vernon Davis, the theology school's dean. Waters, a Southern Seminary graduate, is currently pastor of Western Hills Baptist Church in Fort Worth.

In other changes at Southern Seminary, Boyd Jones, professor of organ since 1978, has been named associate professor of music and university organist at Stetson University in Deland, Fla.

Jones, who is returning to his alma mater, has been a frequent performer with the Louisville Orchestra and Louisville Bach Society during his tenure at Southern. He also has given frequent recitals and served as organist and choirmaster for Kentucky churches.

Bill Cubine has retired as senior professor of pastoral ministry. Cubine originally came to Southern as campus pastor under the administration of former President Roy Honeycutt. He came to the seminary from the pastorate of Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah, Ky.

Cubine will remain in the Louisville area, where he plans to be engaged in interim pastorates, supply preaching and other teaching opportunities.

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-- By Mark Wingfield and Bob Allen

Religious persecution bill set for changes in Senate

By Kenny Byrd

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The sponsor of a Senate bill designed to curb religious persecution abroad is ready to make several changes to the measure, according to a Senate source.

The source is "confident" that Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., will schedule a floor vote on the International Religious Freedom Act (S. 1868) before the November elections.

The bill, sponsored by Sen. Don Nickles, R-Okla., and others would establish a State Department office, an advisory committee and a White House adviser to deal with the issue. The State Department office would identify in an annual report countries engaged in religious persecution, and the president would be required to choose from a list of sanctions and other penalties to impose.

The bill and several changes are expected to be considered July 23 by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The source told Associated Baptist Press that "everybody and their dog" is asking for changes in the bill. Among other proposed changes is the addition of a requirement that the president first seek multilateral actions before taking unilateral actions against countries which engage in or condone religious persecution.

The source also said an anti-persecution bill approved by the House earlier this year has no chance of passing in the Senate. The Freedom From Religious Persecution Act (H.R. 2431), sponsored by Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., and Rep. Frank Wolf, R-Va., would put in place an officer who could automatically impose economic and other penalties against countries that endorse persecution.

Religious groups are split over the measures. The Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission supports both the Wolf-Specter bill and the Nickles bill. The Baptist Joint Committee opposes the Wolf-Specter bill and is seeking further changes in the Nickles bill.

The Clinton administration opposes both bills.

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Pastor defends 'seeker' churches

By Mark Wingfield

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (ABP) -- James Emery White finds it ironic that critics accuse seeker-oriented churches of watering down the gospel by catering to the needs of non-Christians.

In his view, it is traditional churches that have sold out -- by meeting the needs only of those who already believe the gospel.

"There's a spirit in today's church that makes the needs and desires of the believer the center of attention," noted White, founding pastor of Mecklenberg Community Church in Charlotte, a Southern Baptist congregation. "That is ironic, given that one critique of seeker-targeted churches is they sell out to the narcissistic mindset of contemporary culture by catering to its needs.

"In reality, that's not where narcissism has taken root. Believers act as if the fattened calf should be reserved for them," White explained in an interview published in the summer issue of *Leadership*, a journal for evangelical ministers.

While wanting to soak up all the feel-good religion they can, believers inside the church prefer bashing non-believers to trying to reach them, White charged.

"There is much animosity in the church toward seekers," he said. "Christians today talk about non-Christians as if they were the enemy: 'Those secular humanist, pro-abortion, anti-family types.' The rhetoric is filled with hate."

Mecklenberg Community Church, started just five years ago, is regarded by church-growth watchers as a next-generation model of the seeker-sensitive church. It is influenced by but distinct from earlier models such as Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago and Saddleback Community Church in California.

White, the author of a new book called "Rethinking the Church," talked candidly with *Leadership* magazine about the future of the church at large and his response to those who criticize newer, innovative models of church life.

White advocates "seeker-targeted" churches, which he distinguishes from those that are "seeker-driven" or "seeker-sensitive." "'Seeker targeted' throws the emphasis on the outreach element, the entry points into church life," he said.

By comparison, "most seeker-sensitive churches are simply contemporary churches with a heart for evangelism. They use some of the same forms as seeker-targeted churches -- drama, media, contemporary music -- but they are still oriented toward the already convinced."

But White says modern Americans with no relationship to a church find the traditional expression of the church to be totally irrelevant.

"Nothing could be more irrelevant to them than a local Christian church," White said. "The average seeker has gone through the 'great divorce,' to steal a line from C.S. Lewis. The great divorce is the separation of spiritual longing from thinking it can be fulfilled through a particular religious faith, much less Christianity. Most people no longer see their spiritual desire and search as involving the discovery of a faith or religion."

What attracts a person to attend a seeker-targeted church the first time is a relationship with a believer, White said.

That's different from what happens in the average church because the friend feels comfortable inviting the seeker to the seeker-targeted church, he explained. "Most Christians intuitively know not to invite their friends to church because they know it's not designed for seekers. Nor will it facilitate the seeking process."

As for criticisms of seeker-targeted churches, White suggested an easy solution: "Many who critique seeker-targeted churches would be well-served to visit one."

For example, the assertion that seeker-targeted or seeker-driven churches water down the gospel is a myth, White said. "In a flourishing seeker-targeted church, you will hear every bit as much, if not more, discussion of sin,

heaven, hell, the cross, repentance, commitment and sacrifice as you will in any other model. When people visit Mecklenberg, one of the most common statements is, "You talk more about sin than we do."

The reason White talks about sin so much is because seekers want to be told the truth with frankness, he said. "Seekers today are not interested in your beating around the bush. The best communicators in seeker-targeted models are blunt, in-your-face and straightforward."

Attempts at creating seeker-targeted churches fail when leaders attempt to emphasize only the feel-good aspects of building better relationships between people, White said. Successful churches combine that with a strong dose of talking about the need for relationship with God through Christ and the need for repentance, he added.

Also, some seeker-targeted churches fail because they do not have leaders with the appropriate "gift mix," White said. "Gifts related to communication and leadership are crucial, and I would throw in evangelism as well."

The ultimate issue for pastors desiring to start seeker-targeted churches is one of calling, he said. "Has God called you? Spiritual gifts are a part of that, but is planting a seeker church the call of your life?"

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African-American men looking to mosques, not churches, for spirituality, author says

By Ken Camp

HOUSTON (ABP) -- While more African-American men are behind bars or on the streets than in churches, it is not because they are uninterested in spiritual matters, a Chicago-based author told pastors at the Texas Black Baptist Fellowship.

The percentage of African-American females in church is roughly equal to the percentage of black American males in mosques, said Jawanza Kunjufu, consultant with African American Images, Inc., and the author of 18 books including, "Adam, Where Are You? Why Most Black Men Don't Go to Church."

Speaking to ministers at the sixth annual Black Baptist Fellowship Conference in Houston recently, Kunjufu outlined reasons why many African-American men turn away from Christianity and to Islam:

-- Hypocrisy. Black women in America outnumber black men three to one, Kunjufu noted, and there are women who may be easily drawn to a well-educated, articulate, respected pastor. Some high-profile ministers have misused the prestige, power and position they hold in the African-American community by preying upon women and entering adulterous relationships, he said. "Some of the brothers know us real well, and they know some of our hang-ups."

-- Image. Many black men see Islam as strong, masculine and in touch with African roots. They see Christianity, on the other hand, as weak, feminine and European-centered, Kunjufu said. "Brothers hate that white, blond, blue-eyed, weak, passive image of Jesus on the cross."

-- Irrelevance. When Kunjufu established a "Community of Men" crime watch group that patrolled an inner-city Chicago neighborhood, local residents assumed they were Black Muslims. They couldn't imagine that a group of Christians would be willing to walk the streets. "What is the church saying about contemporary problems?" Kunjufu asked. "Brothers say, 'I want the church to be on the cutting edge.'"

-- Economics. Black men are suspicious of pastors who ask them to tithe, but who never report income and expenditures to their churches, he said. They also are reluctant to support churches which fail to patronize businesses owned and operated by African-Americans in their own communities, he noted.

Kunjufu recommended that black churches teach men how to become entrepreneurs through practical business classes and teach boys how to become men through "rites of passage" programs emphasizing African heritage, self-reliance and individual accountability.

"Satan knows the best way to destroy a black family is to destroy a black man," he said.

Young black males are looking for African-American men who are "man enough to tell us what to do," he said, and young women reared by their mothers are longing for positive father figures.

"How can a 16-year-old girl choose the right man if she has never seen one?" he asked.

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Survey challenges stereotypes that Christian women are prudes

By Mark Wingfield

PASADENA, Calif. (ABP) -- Christian women are not the sexually inactive prudes much of popular culture portrays them to be, according to new research by three evangelical Christian authors.

A strong majority of the more than 2,000 married Christian women surveyed by the trio said they enjoy an active sex life and are satisfied with their sexual experiences within marriage.

But Christian women do struggle with questions about whether their sexuality is "normal" and with how to balance the desire for sexual expression with the demands of careers and child-rearing.

These findings are reported in a new book published by Word, "Secrets of Eve: Understanding the Mystery of Female Sexuality." The authors are a father-daughter team of Christian psychologists and a Christian woman who is a certified sex therapist.

Archibald Hart, professor of psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., is the author of a previous study of the sexuality of Christian men, published under the title "The Sexual Man." He collaborated on "Secrets of Eve" with his daughter, Catherine Hart Weber, and Weber's colleague, Debra Taylor.

While several attempts have been made to survey and report on the sexual habits of Americans at large, no one before now has examined the beliefs and experiences of Christian women, the authors say. "The study of the sexuality of normal, heterosexual, morally sensitive and responsible women has been neglected."

This omission is significant because such women "represent the mainstream of women in our society today," the researchers contend. "They are the largest of any sociologically defined group and are most likely to have the strongest moral convictions. In other words, if one were to select a group who would most represent the ideal of sexual behavior in our society, this would be the group."

The results of this new survey, when compared with findings of the secular "Sex in America" survey, show that married Christian women not only are satisfied with their sexuality but are happier in their marriages than American women in general.

"We discovered through our study that there is a strong relationship between marital happiness and sexual satisfaction," the authors explain. "Lifelong monogamy is still the best environment in which to mature your sexuality. We believe our research supports this. The evidence from many studies, including our own, indicates that the best and most fulfilling sex is achieved in marriage."

The researchers say the most common question asked by women participating in the national survey was "Am I normal?"

"All women are concerned about what is and isn't 'normal,'" the authors explain. "They have a need to know how they compare with others because they get so many conflicting messages about sexuality from our culture."

But unlike other women, Christians ask "Am I normal?" for a deeper reason than simple curiosity, the authors suggest. "Christian women ... ask it out of concern that their sexual feelings or behaviors may be violating their integrity as a Christian woman."

Although it is difficult to assign a description to what constitutes "normal" sexual behavior, most women responding to the survey have little to fear about being abnormal, the authors say. "Almost every question women asked us could be answered with a resounding, 'Yes, you are normal.'"

The researchers detailed answers to eight specific questions they were asked most frequently. Among those:
-- What is a normal sex drive for women? The authors begin by explaining that women as a group experience a lower sex drive than men. "Most men are driven by a strong need for sex, much stronger than what we see in the majority of women," they explain.

"One of the major goals of our study was to find out just how much desire Christian women experienced. If you believe the secular research, Christians are supposed to be inhibited by their religious beliefs, a stereotype that has been around a long time. ... There is absolutely no evidence to support such a stereotype."

While women report a lower sex drive than men, 70 percent described their desire as either moderate, strong or very strong. Only 4 percent of the women surveyed said they had no sexual desire.

-- How often do other Christian woman (couples) have sex while raising kids? Many women in the survey reported that their sexual desire diminished after childbirth or that caring for children left them without enough energy to enjoy sex with their husbands.

Finding the energy for sex was the difficulty women reported most often in the survey. Although cited by women of all ages and situations, this concern was voiced most strongly by women with children at home.

However, most of the women indicated they are finding ways around the lack of time and energy. A comparison of frequency of sex rates for women with children at home and women without children at home shows little difference, the authors note.

So what is a "normal" frequency for lovemaking?

"According to most studies on sexual functioning, if you are having sex with your partner between three times per week and once or twice per month, you are within the most common range," the researchers say. "At least two out of every three married women report that they fall within this range of frequency."

But matching a statistical average may not be the most important measure, Hart, Weber and Taylor contend. "The real issue is: Are you and your partner satisfied with your frequency? Do you agree that your needs as a couple are being met? Do you share affection that doesn't have to end with sex?"

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EDITOR'S NOTE: More information about the survey on Christian women's sexuality is included in the book "Secrets of Eve: Understanding the Mystery of Female Sexuality" (Word, \$17.99) available at book stores.

Authors urge churches, parents to talk openly about sexuality

By Mark Wingfield

PASADENA, Calif. (ABP) -- What's not said in churches about sex could be doing more harm than what some people fear talking about sex would do, three Christian researchers contend.

Catherine Hart Weber, Debra Taylor and Archibald Hart, authors of the new book "Secrets of Eve," contend that by talking only about negative aspects of sexuality, churches create a distorted image of God's plan for creation.

"Ignorance can cause damage even where good intentions prevail," they write in the opening pages of the book. "Often it is what is not talked about in healthy churches that is destructive, not what is. And it is our silence in matters of sexuality that represents the greatest threat of all to our Christian families."

"Our children are being left to their own devices because by and large we as Christians find sexuality too difficult to deal with openly," the trio contends.

Hart, Weber and Taylor based those conclusions on responses of more than 2,000 evangelical Christian women who participated in a national survey on female sexuality.

When it comes to understanding sexuality, "we found unequivocal evidence that the main source of information available to our children, both boys and girls, comes from outside the family, from the tainted world of secular, non-moral sources," the authors report.

This bears extraordinary significance for girls, the authors say, because development of female sexuality is such a complicated process. Hearing the stories of the women they surveyed impressed the researchers with "how delicate the formation of female sexuality is and how important it is that girls be taught healthy attitudes toward sex."

The starting place is for Christian parents to take responsibility for talking frankly with their sons and daughters about sexuality, the authors assert.

"You are now and always will be the greatest influence on your child's developing sexuality," they explain. "You have at least two reasons to dive in and get going in this area (or if you have already begun, to keep going). First, if you don't teach your children about sex, somebody else will. And that somebody may give them the wrong information in the wrong setting at the wrong time. Second, God has given you the responsibility to train your kids about their sexuality."

Less than half the Christian women participating in the authors' survey said their parents had talked with them about sexuality. And nearly 10 percent of the women said the first time they learned about sexual intercourse was when they first experienced it.

"Clearly, parents are failing to teach their daughters about the basics of sexuality," the authors say.

The book includes an extended section of advice to parents on how to talk to daughters about sexuality. The three major points are to set a good example, present the facts and approach the child in the correct timing.

The correct time comes sooner than most parents think, the researchers explain. According to their estimates, most parents who have good intentions about talking with their daughters do so two to five years later than they should.

How parents and churches approach discussions of sexuality also is important because of the need to avoid speaking only in negative terms, the authors contend.

As evidence, they cite the comment of one woman responding to the survey: "I don't know why I have the problems I have about sex. I was raised in a strongly religious home and made to feel guilty about everything sexual. I know my parents thought they were protecting me from the boys in my life, but they went overboard in labeling everything sexual as 'dirty.' Is this what God intended? How will I be able to undo this damage?"

Although not a prevalent finding in the research, the effects of negative-based "toxic religion" were evident, the authors report.

"Religion can distort sexuality," they explain. "Not all religion, only that which has been distorted. ... It is a result of idiosyncratic, highly selective forms of biblical interpretation. "Sometimes it is not the product of incorrect Bible interpretation but of unhealthy minds."

The full title of the new book, published by Word, is "Secrets of Eve: Understanding the Mystery of Female Sexuality." The authors all hold advanced degrees in psychology, marriage and family therapy. Archibald Hart is professor of psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif. His daughter, Catherine Hart Weber, is a national speaker on marriage and family issues. Debra Taylor is a marriage and family therapist in private practice in Ventura, Calif.

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Authors offer tips for 'energy crisis'

PASADENA, Calif. (ABP) -- "Many marriages fall apart because couples can't figure out a way to resolve a major dilemma: They want to enjoy a rich and fulfilling sex life but do not have the energy to achieve it. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

With that explanation as a preface, the authors of "Secrets of Eve," a new book of female sexuality, offer these tips for restoring energy:

- Reorder your priorities.
- Declutter your schedule.
- Make sleep a high priority.
- Get treatment for physical conditions.
- Exercise.
- Resolve emotional issues.

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Women value sex for different reasons than men, researchers report in book

PASADENA, Calif. (ABP) -- Women value romance during sex more than sex itself, according to more than 2,000 participants in a first-of-its-kind survey of Christian women.

The research by Archibald Hart, Catherine Hart Weber and Debra Taylor is published in a new book called "Secrets of Eve."

The authors invite men to "walk a mile in their partner's shoes" to become more understanding of the sexual needs of their wives.

Men and women are designed by God to be different, they explain, and therefore function differently with regard to sex. This factor is often overlooked, they suggest, because male-oriented sexuality dominates so much of American culture.

When married women were asked what they like most about sex, nearly 80 percent listed physical closeness and more than 70 percent listed emotional closeness.

This finding shouldn't surprise most women, but may be a revelation to men, the researchers admit. Physical and emotional closeness "cuts right to the intimacy issue. ... In women, intimacy is the catalyst for sexual desire."

Women desire intimacy that connects hearts more than bodies, while men look more for the connection of bodies and find it difficult to achieve emotional intimacy, the authors explain.

In addition to closeness, what women told the researchers they really want from their husbands is time together, time for talking, time for romance, to be able to say "not now," to be appreciated for more than sex and to please their husbands.

The book also suggests tips to encourage an unromantic partner:

- Always express your appreciation for the smallest attempt at being romantic.
- Never reject romantic gestures.
- Never criticize your partner for not being romantic or initiating romance.
- Learn what your partner considers romantic, so you are giving what he likes to receive.
- Don't be afraid to ask for romantic gestures.

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