

WESTERN RECORDER

January 18, 1978

Kentucky Baptists' Weekly News Journal

Vol. 152, No. 3

Boys and Bold Missions: Getting Together Soon At State RA Congresses

The state Brotherhood Department is predicting in excess of 1000 boys and counselors will attend eight one night Royal Ambassador congresses across Kentucky next month.

Home, foreign and state missions will be highlighted as boys have opportunity to hear and interview Southern Baptist missionaries in each of these areas. Programs begin at each location at 5 p.m. and continue until 8 p.m. Participants will contribute 50 cents toward the cost of a hot dog supper provided by host churches.

Dates, locations and host pastors who will be Bold Missions devotionals are:

Monday, Feb. 13: Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Paducah, Vernon Talley; and Clear Creek Baptist School, Pineville, D.M. Aldridge.

Tuesday, Feb. 14: Calvary Baptist Church, Danville, Ernest Martin; and First Baptist Church, Earlington, Guy Gordon.

Thursday, Feb. 16: Salyersville Baptist Church, Grover Craft; and Park City Baptist Church, Barry Bellue.

Friday, Feb. 17: First Baptist Church, Shelbyville, Jim Highland; and Crittenden Baptist Church, Wendell Adkins.

In addition to representatives from the state Brotherhood office in Middletown, program guests will include Charles Baird, president, Kentucky Baptist Men; Mark Cain, vice president, Kentucky Baptist Men and president, Pioneer Royal Ambassadors; and regional Brotherhood directors.

Write Them, Not Us!

So much interest has been generated in the Home Mission Board correspondence Bible course featured in the Jan. 4 Western Recorder that the paper has been swamped with requests for the proper address. You may write directly to the Home Mission Board, 1350 Spring St. NW, Atlanta, GA 30309 about this free course.

If the Pastor Needs Help, There's a Seminar for Him

Two seminars this spring at the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, offer practical help to pastors in developing leadership skills and getting started in new pastorates.

"Pastoral Leadership for Growing Churches" Mar. 27-31 and "The First 1000 Days" Apr. 24-28 will be conducted in the board's Church Program Training Center. Both are sponsored by the BSSB's Church Administration Department.

The March seminar involved a study

Locally selected chapters will relate their own chapter mission projects, and some boys will share R.A. camp experiences.

Scheduled missionaries to appear include Harold Greenfield, Caldwell-Lyon Association; Dennis Brewer, Red River Association; J. Beryl Boswell, Peru; Kenneth Parks, Chile; Ailton DaMota, Chicago; and Jim Godsoe, Illinois convention.

Attendance certificates will be awarded chapters present as part of a dedication service, according to Calvin Fields, associate in the state Brotherhood Department.

Is Soap Going To the Cleaners?

ABC-TV apparently has decided to scrub the sexually offensive themes in its "Soap" comedy series, a move that a denomination agency sees as further evidence that Southern Baptist and others involved in the protest over "Soap" has won a victory.

According to an article in the Dec. 30-Jan. 2 issue of "TV Guide" ABC has dropped its "parental discretion" advisory which appeared at the beginning of each episode of "Soap." Alfred Schneider, ABC's vice president for programming, told "TV Guide" that the show's content has been changed, and the series will now be a "whodunit program."

"The episodes," says Schneider in the article, "do not deal with the adult themes that concerned us originally."

The Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, which has been one of the primary leaders in the "Soap" protest, claimed victory two months earlier after learning that ABC had notified its affiliates that radical changes were being made in "Soap."

Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the CLC, expressed thanks to "every concerned Southern Baptist who protested to advertisers, local television stations and national network officials about this morally offensive program."

of leadership styles and models and how they affect churches. Walter Bennett is director.

The April seminar, according to John Ishee, director, will focus on orientation procedures, roles clarification, personal planning, support systems and change management.

Registration is limited to 35 persons for each seminar. A \$30 registration fee should be sent to Church Program Training Center, Box 24001, Nashville, TN 37202.



A Little Lady Shall Lead Them

Why would a lady agree to preach the Sunday morning sermon?

"I'm doing it because the pastor thought enough of me to ask and I appreciate that," explained Gwen House Phillips, laywoman and Baptist Young Women president, Deer Park Baptist Church, Louisville.

C. Carman Sharp, pastor, asked Mrs. Phillips to supply preach for him when the invitation to perform a marriage took him to another city on Sunday morning.

The sermon was a first for Mrs. Phillips who preached on How Much is Required? Her text was drawn from Luke, "To whom much is given, much is required."

The BYW members led the call to worship and a litany of praise and sang the special music.

How did the ladies feel about leading the service?

"Some had never had part in the service before and this gave them the opportunity. We were all nervous and excited," said Mrs. Phillips.

Illinois, Indiana Ohio, Others Seek 397 New Churches

Southern Baptist pastors, missionaries and state convention leaders from seven north central states gathered in Kalamazoo, Mich. to proclaim 1978 as "The Year of the New Church" and commit themselves to beginning 397 new congregations before the year is out.

The North Central Missions Thrust is an effort by Southern Baptist to double the number of SBC churches and members in the seven states adjacent to the western Great Lakes (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Ohio) by 1990. Yearly emphases include Sunday school enlargement (1977), church extension (1978) and evangelism (1979). The thrust is part of an overall effort by Southern Baptist to enable every person in the world to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ by the year 2000.

Conference sessions were filled with "how-to" presentations on starting new churches and reaching across ethnic and cultural boundaries with the gospel.

It is estimated that several hundred volunteers, including lay persons, seminary students and summer missionaries, will be involved in extending Southern Baptist ministry around the Great Lakes during the ongoing North Central Missions Thrust.

SBC president Jimmy Allen said he hopes to see Southern Baptist have 1200 volunteers on the field as part of the newly initiated Mission Service Corps by the time the Southern Baptist Convention meets in Atlanta in June. "This idea (volunteerism) has found its day," he said.

YOUR CHURCH CAN MOVE THE WORLD



through the Cooperative Program



A Very Important Meeting

The favorite of all denominational meetings for pastors and a growing number of laymen is the annual state Evangelism Conference meeting this week in Elizabethtown. Neither distance, January blizzards nor any other obstacle will prevent a large attendance again this year.

The popularity of this event is an encouraging reflection upon Kentucky Baptist pastoral and lay leadership. After all, evangelism is what it is all about. We better never lose sight of the original mandate from Jesus to make disciples. Teaching disciples is equally important but we cannot teach converts until they are made.

Our persistent efforts in evangelism is the chief explanation of the continued growth of Southern Baptist while most other mainline denominations in America have experienced loss in recent years. But our growth rate shows signs of gradual decline and without a renewed stress upon wholesome evangelism we will cease to grow.

It is encouraging to note the development of a more balanced evangelistic program for Baptist churches. There is still a place for the traditional revival with protracted services but more and more emphasis is being put on the development of a year round church-centered evangelism.

An added attraction of this year's meeting is the appearance of Jay Brown, the new director of evangelism for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. This is the first conference arranged and directed by Brown.

Churches should not only always encourage but insist on their pastors attending this meeting. A warm, evangelistic congregation begins with a warm, evangelistic pastor. The only thing better than having a pastor at this meeting is to have several laymen on the pew beside him.

The Cooperative Program Is No Sacred Cow

Two recent editorials related to the percentage of the income of churches kept at home and the per-

centage sent on for work beyond the local community have evoked several responses. The most incisive of these comes from W.B. Casey, pastor of Boone's Creek Baptist Church, Lexington. His observations constitute a fitting balance to the original editorial viewpoints and are worth prominent visibility as a guest editorial. The title above is the editor's and not Brother Casey's.

"I was interested to read your editorial Dec. 21, 1977 on the church that 'while not so rich materially is tremendously rich spiritually.'

"I have no criticism of that church, nor of your words of commendation, which I think, are well deserved. I do believe, however, there is a danger in our assessing the spirituality or mission-mindedness of a church largely on its gifts to the Cooperative Program.

"In your editorial you indicate that other churches often have in their budgets large items for such things as debt retirement, staff salaries and radio programs, while not allocating very much to the Cooperative Program. At times I suppose every pastor has heard in a budget committee meeting the expression that 'everything a church does is missions,' and most of us have tried to play down that idea in order to keep the 'missions' section of the budget at a proper figure. But if everything a local church has in its budget is not missions, cannot it be said also that everything that Cooperative Program funds go for is not missions?

"Now, before someone stops reading and accuses me of heresy, let me say that I believe in the Cooperative Program and for over forty years have led churches that I have pastored to give a sizeable amount of the budget each year to it. But the Cooperative Program is just that: a program of cooperation among churches, just as a church budget is a program of cooperation among the members of a local church.

"If the salary of the secretary in our church cannot be considered 'missions,' then what enables us to label the salary of a secretary in the Kentucky Baptist Building as 'missions' just because it is paid out of Cooperative Program funds?

"We have a fine man who sweeps the floors in our church building and cleans the rest rooms, checks the thermostats, etc. His salary is not 'missions' but if he were the custodian at the Baptist Building and his salary were paid out of Cooperative Program funds would that automatically make his work 'missions'?"

"And, while we are talking about the large debts that churches have which often keep their Cooperative Program funds low, what makes that wrong for them while it is all right for three-quarters of a million dollars of Cooperative Program money to be spent on a remodeling of the Kentucky Baptist Building? Is there something about that building which makes it all right to use 'mission' money for it, while it is wrong for the local church to use 'mission' money to build its own sanctuary? Again, let me say I am not opposed to the building of a beautiful and functional Baptist Building at Middletown; I just do not believe we should try to make pastors and churches feel guilty about building beautiful and functional church buildings.

"As for a radio program, since when is it all right for 'mission' money to be used in South America to beam a radio program into the homes of people, but it is wrong for a local church to try to reach the ghetto or the suburbs with one here in the United States?

"Have we indeed developed a new standard for judging the effectiveness of a church? Have we come to a day when a church or pastor is made to feel guilty if, in the effort to be good stewards and do the job the Lord has given them to do in their own local community, they dare allocate more money for other items in their budget and not so much for the Cooperative Program? I have been particularly interested to note that with the controversial issues of 'alien immersion' and the 'ordination of women' we are very careful to fall back on the autonomy of each local congregation, declaring that each church governs itself in these matters and no denominational body has any right to criticize or to interfere. But when it comes to the matter of how much of its budget that church designates for the Cooperative Program it somehow

seems to lose its autonomy and become the target for criticism and subtle pressure.

"How about letting each local church decide for itself what is 'missions' and where its priority belongs at any given time? After all, that is what cooperation is; it is voluntary. Maybe for a few years my church may feel led to devote most of its budget to some pressing local work and not give so much to the Cooperative Program. But just maybe, in a few years, my church might be ready to carry a larger part of the Cooperative Program work while some other church gives needed attention to more local matters. After all, the Cooperative Program was designed as a means by which we could cooperate with each other. Let's quit using it as a club with which we beat one another."

God's Call Fits No Mold

The study of Exodus by Baptists in 1978 will serve to reinforce some insights and also provide new understanding of how God works out his eternal purpose with human instrumentality. The experience of Moses speaks to God's people in every age.

Moses was reluctant to respond to God's call. He offered every excuse he could think of but all his excuses were removed by God. He still resisted and finally bluntly asked God to send anyone but not him. Like many of us since then Moses welcomed the news of God's plan to deliver his people until he learned God's plan required his own life.

This kind of reluctance to respond to God's call is seen in other great Old Testament leaders. The young man Saul responded to the call to be king by pleading his unworthiness and actually hid among the baggage when the time came for him to be crowned. Jeremiah is known as the reluctant prophet because in response to God's call he pled that he did not know how to speak and that he was only a youth.

Other great men of God in the Old Testament, however, showed no reluctance when called and accepted their assignments with enthusiasm. In response to God's call, Isaiah unhesitatingly said, "Here am I, send me." Ezekiel also responded positively and found the word of God he was to proclaim "as sweet as honey" in his mouth.

So not all of those God calls respond alike. Some accept their call enthusiastically while others reluctantly. Both responses are genuine and God uses both.

This explodes a myth among some Baptists that if a man can do anything else he should not preach. In many ordination examinations of candidates for the ministry calls to the ministry are regarded authentic only if they have been long resisted and reluctantly accepted. But who would say that the ministries of Isaiah and Ezekiel were less productive than those of Moses and Jeremiah?

God's call to his servants cannot be forced into any stereo-type. He relates to each person he calls with originality and individuality. We would do well not to lead young people to question the call they feel because it does not fit some preconceived mold.

IF YOU REALLY CARE—



THROUGH THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

Western Recorder

Ernestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints—Jude 3.

Published 50 times per year by the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43401, Middletown, Ky. 40243. Second class postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

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Individual, \$3.68 (tax included), Foreign, \$3.75; Church Budget, \$2.50. All except church accounts payable in advance. Church accounts must have tax exemption number.



A mission pastor baptizes a convert in a nearby river. The mission is an outgrowth of First Baptist Church, Whitesburg.

MISSIONS AND MINISIRIES

Appalachian Missions — 'Boom or Bust'

Early in his pastorate at Whitesburg, Ky. Bill Mackey had to decide whether to try to build a large church or to "reach out and really concentrate on the needs of a local community."

He chose the latter.

There are 25,000 people hidden in the hills of Letcher County. Whitesburg, the county seat, has 1200.

It's a land of stark contrasts — mine-pocketed hillsides and pine-rich valleys, dotted with hovels, house trailers and a few not-so humble abodes.

Aside from the quilting parties, molasses stiroffs, hunting and fishing, about all the people have is each other, Mackey says.

Mackey is using his gifts to develop an evangelistic church in these hills.

The church is developing three missions in the county: Premium, Colson and Eolia — near Scotia Mine.

"I'd say 98 per cent of the people in Letcher County respect God's word, respect the Bible and have a respect for the church.

"The concern is for moving from knowing about the Bible, having reverence for it, to the point where they learn what it says about becoming a Christian and become willing to commit themselves to Jesus Christ."

Mackey has to continually remind these people that God is not responsible for evil. Because miners in the

area depend so totally on nature they have a fatal outlook on life. They say 'It's God's will and you have to accept it.'

It's a constant battle to combat the idea that God will do with an individual what he wills. This makes personal witnessing difficult," Mackey says.

One way he equips people to further the gospel is by taking laypersons witnessing with him. Another way is through the bus ministry of the church and its missions.

When the church operated missions years ago in the mining camps it was easy to draw a crowd: all the children could walk to the local schoolhouse. Under that system the church had 13 mission points.

Now the mining camps are gone. The people build along the highways and hollows. "You have to transport them to a central location, have your study and teaching and then return them to their homes," he says.

About the time Mackey was looking for ways to reach out into the hills the bus evangelism concepts came along.

Now the church and its three missions have three 60-passenger buses, one 48-passenger bus and four vans.

"The more we have ventured out on faith to do additional ministry, the more the finances have come," says Mackey. "We have exceeded our budget every year, some years by as much as 10 or 12 thousand dollars."

Mackey has led the church in its participation in world mission efforts. Twelve per cent of the Whitesburg church's undesignated funds go to the Cooperative Program. More than 36 per cent of the church's total budget goes outside the church to direct missions activities.

Finances have been stable at the church through the ups and downs of the coal business which undergirds life in Letcher County.

"You either boom or bust," Mackey says. "It creates a lot of insecurity."

Mackey attributes the church's financial stability to the fact that few members are directly involved in the coal business and in past years church rolls have grown.

First Baptist is planning outreach programs — a radio broadcast, revivals and an area-wide crusade. Mackey is developing, with the help of Greg Cope, minister of music and education, a youth program at the Whitesburg church. A coffee house called "The Door" has potential for major impact.

Mackey is available for ministry, according to his own wishes, 24 hours a day. Someone said he has no hobbies — only his ministry.

The area hasn't been saturated with Southern Baptist work. Yet, a significant number of people are being changed.

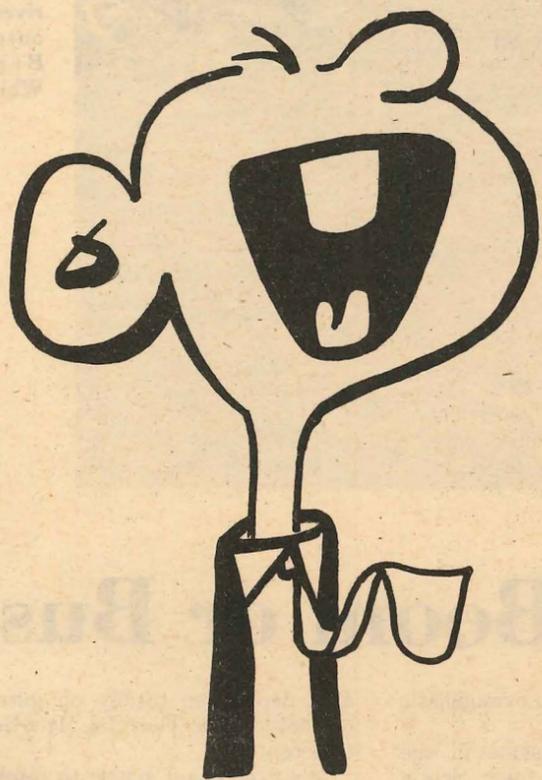
It's still Appalachia. But it's an Appalachia that's not all hunger, not all tattered and not without hope — partly because of Bill Mackey.

Bill Mackey walks with Bob Boggs (1) who became a Christian after many visits.



HEY! WHY

by Lewis Drummond



We do the things we do because we want to. That sounds a bit blunt, but it is true. Behind every action there is some sort of motivation.

Although this principle is applicable in every area of experience, it is particularly pertinent to our spiritual lives. We do the things we do for God because we want to. Motivation is "where it is."

What is the motivation to move us into a commitment to witness and then to consistently carry it out? Motivation is "where it is" in this enterprise of communicating Christ.

The scriptures present three realities that should move us to witness to God's saving grace.

Love Leaves no Choice

First, the lostness languishing of people Christ should motivate mounting reluctance judgment, hell, wrath, are still lost. They still and new life. Therefore those for whom Christ constrained to witness love of Christ constrained 5:14). As C.B. Hogue "Love leaves us no choice

God Commands

Second, witnessing mand. The great command 28:18-20) makes it quite not be the highest of

Come Quick!



Early rising citizens think they are still d... happen to see the p... Baptist Church walk... Lounge some morning a... But he's not there to... on his day's drinking.

"In all my ministry... local taverns to meet... coffee, to make myself... community," D.L. Sc... when I go in a tavern I... Bible and lay it on the

From Criminal to Evangelist

Because Somebody Told Him About Jesus

Richard Coss' rap sheet reads like a police drama script.

In 11 years he was arrested 32 times. Coss started floating checks at age 16. He was charged with the theft of more than 30 cars and assault. Prison authorities said he was an habitual criminal — not to be rehabilitated.

The muscular, red-haired Coss was a tough con artist who had worked his way from reform school in Waukesha, Wis. to the Chihuahua state prison in Juarez, Mexico, to the federal reformatory in El Reno, Okla.

And now he is, Okla.

It was while in prison in El Reno his life pattern was broken. Curiosity led him to a religious meeting held by the Christian Business Men's Committee International.

"I wanted to break the monotony of prison life," admits Coss. When a Southern Baptist deacon in the group, Horace Hilton, took a special interest in Coss the young inmate asked, "Why did you come here to talk to me?"

"He told me, 'I love you.' It was the first time in 24 years that someone said that and I believe it," Coss says.

"You've heard the cliché, you can't con a con. He (Hilton) wasn't plastic; he wasn't phony. I knew that man was

real; he loved me. Behind that was Christ.

Although Coss had never heard the gospel before, he says, "I knew suddenly I had found what I had been searching for." After the encounter with Christ he began reading the Bible earlier what he called a book for "good people" and studying every Bible correspondence course he could get his hands on.

Now he says, "Prison was good for me. It's where I became a Christian."

Four years after he was released from prison, on Dec. 23, 1975, Coss received a "full and unconditional pardon" from Gerald Ford one of three pardons granted that day. The other two were to Jimmy the Greek and Richard Nixon.

Today Coss works out of a small upstairs office in an annex of First Baptist Church, Del City, Okla. His title is minister of special ministries and staff evangelist.

His work includes ministry to inmates; preaching and revivals in prisons and jails; personal and Bible correspondence; parole advisor; book and tape ministry; inmate family counseling; prison news-letter; and tract ministry to prisoners in other countries.

He also reaches confused young people involved in drugs and at the fringe of crime in Oklahoma City.



Coss believes there is a new openness among prison officials to offer prisoners opportunity for change through spiritual conversion. "Some are taking the stand it's time to get back to the Bible," he says.

Comparing the response he receives in prisons to churches, Coss says in a church he can "preach his heart out" and have few persons make a Christian commitment. At prisons however, "you don't need to tell these people they are sinners. They know that." And among prisoners he doesn't find the stigma of admitting to sin "They have no community standing," he says with a grim.

He encourages Christians to become involved in prison ministry. "Start in small city jails," He says. "Find Gideons or some Christian already involved to see how to work."

Coss admits there will be disappointments. The prisoners can be rude and rejecting. "You're going to get burnt — be ready for it."

Yet other prisoners like Coss will be waiting and receptive. He tells of a prisoner who had read material mailed through the prison ministry and who later wrote, pleadingly, "Richard, I am in the same boat you were. I had never heard the gospel. Why doesn't someone come and save me?"

WITNESS?

ness, loneliness and people without Jesus private us. Despite the nce to talk about ath, and so on, people still need forgiveness refore, if we truly love hrist died, we will be tness to them: "the strains us" (II Cor. Hogue expressed it, choice."

Commands It

ing is God's com- mission (Matt. quite clear. This may t of motives — love

comes first. Yet we must all acknowledge our love for the lost does not always burn brightly. When we are down in those valleys of apathy, what do we do? The only thing that will carry us through is the discipline of dedicated decision making: I will do the will of God whether I feel like it or not.

There are those who would depreciate such a motive, yet I find I must witness whether my love for people is what it should be or not. God commands it! Further, I find when I do witness faithfully my love for people begins to grow. So I just do it as a disciplined disciple.

God is Glorified

But there is a higher motive than

obedience — even higher than love. It is expressed in the old Westminster Confession I learned as a boy: The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

That's it! To bring glory and honor to our Lord is life's loftiest aim. And what brings more honor to God than the conversion of an unbeliever? Even the angels rejoice over one sinner who repents (Luke 15:10). God's heart is gladdened over granting grace to the repentant. The thought is really quite sublime: through our word of witness lost people come to Jesus Christ and God is thereby glorified.

Yes, I know we need to understand the gospel message; we need to be

trained in witnessing; we need programs of visitation; we need a multitude of externals.

Where there's a Will There's A Way

Yet when one is deeply motivated he will find ways of witnessing regardless of how skilled and knowledgeable he may or may not be. When we grasp Christ's commission and love burns brightly and we seek to glorify God alone, we will witness.

Therefore, when we are asked to commit ourselves to help others to come to Jesus Christ, may the motivations of the master himself move us to the place of decision.

Our Preacher Just Stumbled Out of the Town Bar!

zens of Chatham may till dreaming if they the pastor of First walk into Lloyd's ning about 6 a.m. ere to get a head start ng.

istry. I've stopped in meet people, to drink myself visible in the. Scott says. "And ern I don't take a big the bar and preach a

sermon to everyone. At Lloyd's Lounge, for example, I drink coffee or eat breakfast maybe twice a week. I go early for then I meet a lot of working men who drop in before work. I quietly jot down names and addresses and often follow up on my contacts."

Scott's church is one of four Illinois churches listed by the Home Mission Board as one of the 425 fastest growing SBC congregations in the nation. He says his members don't criticize his visiting in taverns.

"I've done this in all my churches and

frankly, got some criticism, but not here in Chatham. I told the folks what I was going to do and they understand it," he says.

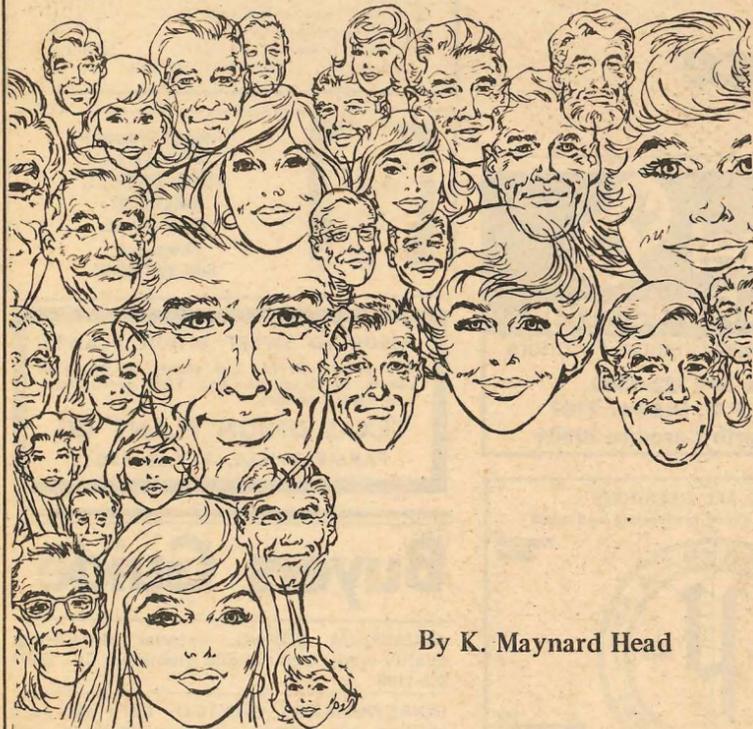
"And when I visit any one, whether in a public place or in homes, I don't argue or try to have the last word, nor pressure or embarrass folks. I'm not afraid to admit I don't have all the answers. I like a low-key approach. That kind of attitude says I'm available and open."

Scott, who describes himself as a 9th

grade drop-out, became a Christian as an adult. He then enrolled in Southwest Baptist College in Missouri where he took GED tests to qualify for his high school diploma. He went on to graduate from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City in 1967.

"I'm not a great preacher," Scott says, "nor a profound Bible scholar. But preaching isn't what wins converts — it's the personal witnessing. Preaching builds up the believers and then the believers do the winning."

How to Grow a Church



By K. Maynard Head

The December 1977 Home Missions magazine contained a listing of the 425 fastest-growing churches in the Southern Baptist Convention. The periodical also told why the churches have grown.

To secure the information Max Burns, a computer expert at the Home Mission Board (HMB), examined data from the Uniform Church Letter, a report made by about 95 per cent of the churches in the Southern Baptist Convention, and came up with some interesting statistics.

Taking the computer print-out, HMB writer Dan Martin logged over 6000 miles interviewing pastors and laymembers of some of the exploding churches. Here are part of the results of that work:

A mobilized laity, according to Martin, is one vital sign of growth. However, the key is the pastor's attitude and concern. When he is interested in "growing" a church it seems that growth occurs.

The church must also be large enough to provide services which meet member's needs. Its membership is drawn most from people who have much in common and evangelism occupies a prominent place in the outreach of the church.

Another vital sign is Bible-based priorities, which for the most part include a congregational commitment to Christ and his work in the world.

Pastors of the top churches were sent

a questionnaire and although not all of them were returned, the data gives some type of yardstick by which church growth can be measured.

A sampling of the questionnaire provides the following information:

1. Most of the growing churches are located in areas where the surrounding neighborhood is expanding.

2. The estimated average age of adults in the congregation is 30-40 years, married with children.

3. The churches have full time secretaries.

4. Most do not provide a recreational facility but when they do it is used for community outreach.

5. The churches experiencing growth are also planning a building program.

6. Most of the pastors have a college bachelor's degree and 52.5 per cent have a seminary degree.

7. Most of the pastors (97.8 per cent) believe that personal visitation is the church's most effective promotion. (A survey going to lay people of the growing churches revealed that 97.8 per cent of them agree congregational word-of-mouth with friends and neighbors is the most effective way to promote a church!)

What can the denomination do to help churches grow? Maintain a low profile. . . quit trying to "program" Jesus. Only the Holy Spirit can give growth.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Pleasant Hill Sends Laymen to Nigerian Churches

For the third year Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Somerset, sent a team of laymen to participate in revivals in Nigerian churches.

Wiley and Geneva Faw and Jim and Marie Johnston will be working with the team.

The team consists of David Aker,

associational missionary, Pulaski County; Milford Doss Jr.; Steve Dunn; Jerry Maybrier; Wiley B. Faw Jr. and his wife, Vicki. They returned Jan. 16.

Two previous trips to Nigeria have produced approximately 1700 professions of faith and 10000 other decisions.

Are You Robbing Your Pastor?

by Byrd Ison

Most of us love our pastor and want the best for him. Sometimes, however, we rob him without even realizing it. What can we do to assure the very best for our pastor?

— Review basic salary provisions. Are we providing annuity benefits? What about health and life insurance?

— Take another look at the parsonage. The church owns it, but the pastor rents it. Is it paid for? Then why does each new pastor keep paying for it?

What about when he retires? Will he get any of his payments back? Why not give him the parsonage? O.K. Then sell it and give him an interest free loan for a down payment on a home of his own. You can put love into action this way.

— Discuss these suggestions with your pastor. The parsonage may be a detriment to him because he can't build on equity from it for a future home. Make other arrangements with him.

Almost every family dreams of owning a home. Your pastor and his family are no different. Let's make this possible for him tomorrow by doing something about it today.

He's giving his life in service for you and Christ. Won't you help him?

BAPTISMAL GROWTH

Frank Owen



The December 1977 issue of Home Missions magazine is devoted to observations from a survey of 1972-76 church letters from the 425 fastest growing congregations in the Southern Baptist Convention. Eight of these churches are in Kentucky. They are numbered as listed:

- 105 — Highview, Louisville
- 106 — Ninth and O, Louisville
- 127 — Spring Bayou, Kevil
- 158 — Shively, Louisville
- 199 — Southern Heights, Lexington
- 321 — Rockford Lane, Louisville
- 322 — Gardenside, Lexington
- 396 — Hillcrest, Hopkinsville

We commend these churches and their ministers on achieving this honored growth list the past four years.

You would expect a very close relationship between baptisms and growth. The first three of our above-named Kentucky churches are in the ten highest baptisms list in our state. Two of the first three stand first and second in baptisms. Four of the above eight

churches are in Louisville and two are in Lexington. One is in the smaller city of Hopkinsville and one in Kevil, Ky. and serving a large rural area.

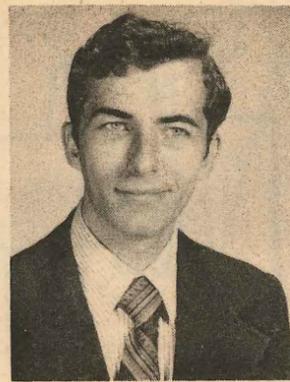
Five of the first 15 Southern Baptist relative growth churches had less than 500 members; five had memberships between 500 and 1000 and five had between 1000 and 2000 members.

The survey shows that the pastor is a heavy factor in church growth, but only as the laity comes to share the vision and yearning. Bible preaching, emphasis on evangelism, and vigorous, personal, witness-type visitation by the people are large factors. Location, populations growth, the right place at the right time in growing suburbia — are influential factors.

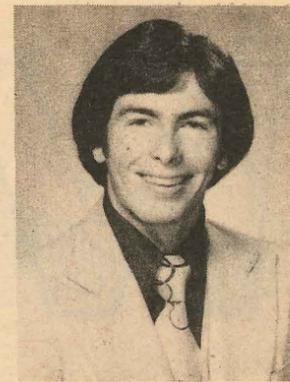
Let me here stress baptismal growth as our principal goal. When we baptize we fulfill a specific command in the Great Commission and hopefully launch lives into kingdom living. The cause of Christ grows on earth, as well as congregations, which is even more important.



Senters



Adamson



Walkers

Personnel Changes

Senters to Pastor Lancer

Lancer Church, Prestonsburg, has called Lloyd Senters as pastor.

The former pastor of Sherman Baptist Church, Dry Ridge, Senters is a graduate of Clear Creek Baptist School, Pineville.

Kiddville Calls Adamson

Kiddville Church, Boone's Creek Association, called Jerry Adamson as pastor.

Adamson, of McMinnville, Tenn., is a graduate of Western Kentucky University and Tennessee Temple Seminary.

He and his wife Judy are natives of Louisville and have two children.

Walker Answers Call to Minister Music and Youth

Joel R. Walker, Chattanooga, Tenn., has been called as minister of music and youth, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Campbellsville. He is a student at

Campbellsville College.

Walker is married to the former Lana Smalling of Tompkinsville.

Lunsford Accepts Call To Lake View Pastorate

Martin Lunsford has resigned as pastor of Adams Chapel Church, Dresden. He will assume the work as pastor of Lake View Church, Benton.

Bray Goes To Hawesville

Lathan Bray accepted the call as pastor of Hawesville Church, Hawesville. Bray is former pastor in Mississippi and Tennessee.

Deaths

Paul Whitler Sr., 76, of Fordsville, died in an Owensboro hospital Jan. 5 after a lengthy illness. The former law officer was buried at Fordsville Jan. 7. He is survived by wife and son. His son is business manager at Western Recorder.

James Lovett, 49, of Walnut Grove Church, Fredonia, died December 20, 1977.

Lovett had been pastor of Walnut Grove over 10 years. He was senior pastor of the Caldwell-Lyon Association. He also served as an evangelist.

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James Rennell thoughtfully mused on the plight of Baptist churches and their physical requirements on a winter day.

"No business in the world would put as much money into a product and use it as little and get as little return on its investment as do Baptist churches," he observes. "We simply aren't being good stewards of the opportunities that are ours in the majority of our concepts about church structures."

He cited multiple use of facilities, multiple worship services and facilities designed for worship experiences which provide for drama and audiovisuals as three alternatives to the problem.

Rennell is associate in the Sunday School Department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Middletown. That department is also assigned responsibilities for promoting church architecture. In this capacity it is liaison with the Church Architecture Department of the Sunday School Board.

An interview with Rennell suggests that what Baptists are doing with their buildings — and not doing which they could be — is a subject he relishes.

Should form follow function or vice versa? we asked.

"In the traditional Baptist church we don't build buildings on the basis of experience but on function," Rennell admonishes. "The idea seems to be how many people we can get into one place at one time. A building can be constructed so we can (1) have the experience and (2) meet needs of churches for functional architecture, low costs and so on."

"I don't have to be in the

Gothic cathedrals of Germany and France to appreciate the feeling that brings," says Rennell. "I can experience that through the use of far less expensive synthetic materials."

Rennell preaches a 'family' concept for today's church architecture and suggests that many of the ills of church design come about by ignoring this theory. He points to the standard Georgian architecture adopted by numerous Baptist churches as 'the biggest offenders.' Those are the buildings immediately recognizable by white columns and red brick facades and long, exceedingly long auditoriums inside.

"We line people up in rows 190 feet from the back to the front and then expect them to 'participate' in worship. No father would put up with the idea that he has a family with each child eating in a different room. Nor is such a philosophy practical for the family of God," he believes.

"The preacher is proclaimer" in these long rectangular auditoriums.

"This was the theology of the 50's and 60's. All we had was sound. Worship was viewed as more sound than sight.

"Today emphasis has shifted," declares Rennell. "We view worship more as drama, audiovisuals, dialog and music. When you get into these the visual takes over. The congregation becomes involved in what is happening. A good choir simply can't sing so it can be thoroughly understood and appreciated 190 feet away."

Rennell has definite convictions about the type of worship center that is best for contemporary Baptist

churches.

"For the future," he suggests, "the circular or theater in the round sanctuary is the ideal answer." Here the action is brought almost within reach of the people, where they can experience and be a part of it.

Before assuming his current position Jan. 1 of last year Rennell, 40, was minister of education at Madisonville's First Baptist Church. A Detroit native, he holds degrees from Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tenn.; Southern Seminary; and Vanderbilt University, in-

cluding the doctor of ministry from the latter.

He served Indiana pastorates and at Allensville and Hopkinsville, Ky. Rennell is married to the former Grace Louice Combs of Perry County and is the father of three daughters.

The state Sunday School Department out of which he works offers several printed helps to Kentucky Baptist churches thinking about space requirements for tomorrow. Free consultation service is also available on request.

"Toffler, in his book Future

Shock, was right," Rennell affirms.

"In traditional Baptist churches we don't build buildings on the basis of the worshiper's experience but for the function of seating and listening.

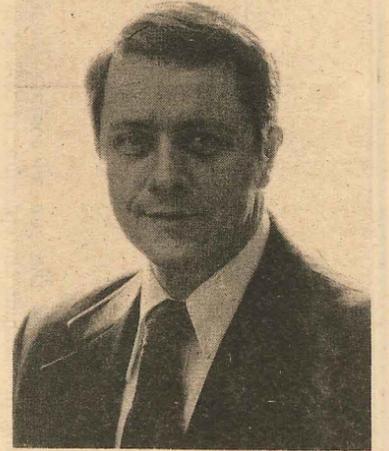
"People simply aren't going to come back again and again to hear someone tell them what they should be doing. Some people want that, but not all. They want to 'participate' in worship. Today they can do it when the building design matches the needs. It's as simple as that."



The typical Baptist church of the 50's and 60's adopted Georgian architecture.

Creative Worship by Design

Jim Cox



James Rennell

Bricks and mortar aren't the only means of bringing people closer to their God, but they do help.

"The preacher is proclaimer" to his people.

Sunday School Lessons

by H. C. Chiles, Murray, Ky.

Praise to the Creator

Psalm 19:1-10

As the Psalmist contemplated the glory of God, which was revealed in the beautiful world around him, he wanted to extol it to the fullest.

God's Glory Revealed in the Heavens — 19:1-6

David recognized nature as a silent and eloquent witness to the unmeasured power and majestic glory of God. While he did not know as much about the heavens as men do today, as he gazed into them he recognized they were the work of God. He recognized all creation as a revelation of God, a testimony to his existence and majesty.

"Heavens" sometimes refers to the atmospheric space just above the surface of the earth; in other cases to the space which is occupied by the clouds. In other cases it refers to the vast expanse in which the sun, moon and stars appear. Sometimes it is the place where God dwells.

The vastness of the heavens, the innumerable stars and the fact they move in orbits according to law combine to create a sense of awe for those who study them. Astronomers still do not know of all the stars, for countless stars cannot be seen even with the strongest telescopes.

While the heavens are not endowed with the power of articulate speech, their message is clear to the observant student of nature. Constantly they declare the greatness of God. Everywhere the heavens bear a strong testimony to the existence of God and His

creative power.

David spoke of the sun as coming forth in the morning proclaiming the splendor, of God as it crossed the sky and returned at night. He pictured the sun as an ardent bridegroom coming out of his room in gorgeous attire, his face beaming with joy, and creating pleasure and delight in all his relatives and friends who see him. It is likened to a strong athlete who is eager to run a race and become winner. From the time the sun rises in the east until it goes down in the west it has beneficent effects upon the earth for "there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

God's Glory Revealed in His Word 19:7-10

These verses tell us six things about God's Word:

1. It is perfect (Psalm 19:7). The law of God reveals to us our duty both to God and to our fellowman.
2. It is sure (Psalm 19:7). We can always depend on what the Bible reveals.
3. It is right (Psalm 19:8). In the Bible man has a perfect standard of righteousness.
4. It is pure (Psalm 19:8). God has never commanded man to do anything that is degrading or wrong.
5. It is true and righteous (Psalm 19:9). It depicts the true course of right conduct.
6. It is desirable (Psalm 19:10). It is worth more than money. The spiritual nourishment and enjoyment gained by a study of the Bible far exceeds the satisfaction gained from eating the finest honey.

Jesus and the Spirit

Jesus and the Spirit
John 14:15-27

During His ministry among His disciples Christ had guided them, but now that He was about to leave He assured them the Holy Spirit was coming to be their guardian. Christ made it clear that the Holy Spirit is a person who knows, feels, and wills. Christ assured His followers when the Holy Spirit dwelt in them He would enable them to cope with the problems of life and live victoriously. Dependence on the Holy Spirit is a necessity for effective witnessing for Christ. He teaches Christians the will of the Lord and guides them in doing that will. We, who are Christians, know that the Holy Spirit strengthens us, guides us in the study of the Scriptures, directs us in the work of the Lord, comforts us in our sorrows, dispenses gifts to us and empowers us for Christian service.

Unless He works through us our Christian activities will be in vain. Obedience to Him is the only way that a Christian can prove that his love for the Lord is genuine.

Christ reminded His disciples that the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance what He had taught them and thereby extend His influence in their lives, even though He would be absent from them.

If there is any word which excites pleasing sensations, it is peace. From time immemorial man has longed for peace. Wonderful as is peace in the personal, family, social, national, and international realms, it is nothing to compare with the peace of mind and heart which comes from being right with God. Into this latter condition we are brought by the Holy Spirit and the Saviour.

Peace is not the result of self-effort, but is something which the Lord gives freely. God the Father decreed this peace, Christ the Son purchased it and the Holy Spirit applies it.

Peace with God is the most desirable, blessing that one can receive. It was the gift which Christ singled out, above all others, to bestow upon His disciples as a parting legacy. This legacy is the most precious of gifts, an inheritance which this world can neither give nor take away.

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