



WESTERN RECORDER

KENTUCKY BAPTIST NEWS JOURNAL

VOL. 152, NO. 49, DECEMBER 13, 1978



January Bible Study can be an important Bible study opportunity for the entire family.

Mark: the gospel for study in January Bible emphasis

January Bible Study, an annual Bible study event in Southern Baptist churches, will include a study of Mark's gospel for adults and 1 and 2 Timothy for youth. Resources also are available for preschool and children's studies.

"January Bible Study provides an opportunity for church members to organize their Bible knowledge through a survey of a whole book of the Bible or major part of a book," said Stuart Arnold, project promotion consultant in the Sunday School Board's Sunday School Department.

Bible Study Week is scheduled for Jan. 8-12 on the Southern Baptist Convention's denominational calendar, though some churches schedule January Bible Study at other times due to weather conditions.

Arnold said that while churches use different formats and time slots for January Bible Study, many are beginning on Sunday night and continuing through Wednesday or Thursday.

Mark: The Savior for Sinners by the late Raymond Bryan Brown is the title of the book which adults will study. Other resources available by the same title include a teaching guide, study guide, teaching resource kit, filmstrip, cassette tape, video cassette and motion picture. All products may be purchased through Baptist Book Stores. The video cassette and motion picture may be purchased or rented through Baptist Film Centers.

Christ: Style for Discipleship by Carolyn Blevins is the youth study book on 1 and 2 Timothy. A teaching resource kit by the same title also is available.

This Is My Bible by Bethann F. Van Ness and William L. Blackwell and **How Can I Please God?** by Lou Mishler Heath are the books for older and younger children, respectively.

Older preschoolers will study **Discovering Sounds** by Mary Llew Browns and younger preschoolers, **Jesus Loves Me**.

Western Recorder raised to meet postal increases

Subscription rates for Western Recorder will be raised 50 cents Jan. 1 to help offset postal increases which more than doubled in the summer of 1978. The paper has absorbed the increases for six months but now feels they must be passed along to the consumer.

Action by the Recorder's board of directors, meeting Dec. 8, will raise single subscriptions to \$4.20 including tax. Foreign rates will be \$4.25. Subscriptions through the church budget plan will be \$3.00.

C. Carman Sharp, pastor of Louisville's Deer Park Baptist Church, was reelected to a one-year term as chairman of the 12-member Western Recorder board.

Harold J. Purdy, pastor of Madisonville's First Baptist Church, was reelected vice chairman. Billy D. Marcum, pastor of Brandenburg's First Church, was reelected the board's secretary.

The group welcomed two new directors—Tom Butler, Paducah layman; and Ronald P. Moore, pastor of First Church, Highland Heights. Both were elected by the Kentucky Baptist Convention in November.

The directors approved staff reports, reviewed the 1977-78 audit and organized into committees of the board for 1979. Directors, staff members, retirees and their spouses were entertained at Western Recorder's annual Christmas banquet following the board's adjournment.



Sharp

Purdy

Baptist agency raps IRS school proposal

A proposal by the Internal Revenue Service to require church-related schools to prove they are racially non-discriminatory or risk the loss of their tax exemption amounts to a "direct affront" to the First Amendment, a Baptist agency in Washington charged.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, which represents eight U. S. Baptist bodies with a combined membership of nearly 27 million persons, joined numerous other religious groups covering virtually the entire religious spectrum in opposing the proposal first announced in August. The Baptist Joint Committee urged the IRS to abandon the plan.

When the proposed revenue procedure announcement was made in the Federal Register, it was accompanied by a note that IRS did not consider the matter sufficiently "significant" to merit a public hearing. After the proposal was made public, however, IRS was inundated by a flood of protest and announced a one-day hearing for Dec. 5.

With objections continuing to pour in, IRS hurriedly expanded the length of the hearings, first to three and finally to four full days, with some 250 witnesses from across the nation scheduled to be heard.

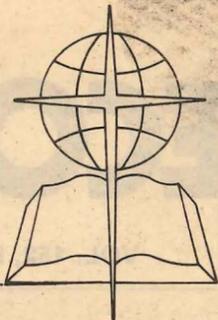
The Baptist Joint Committee testimony, delivered by executive director James E. Wood Jr., declared, "Anything short of exempting church-operated schools from coverage by these and other similar procedures, rulings and regulations will not cure the serious church-state constitutional problems which are inherent in them."

Wood emphasized that while the Baptist Joint Committee "commend(s) efforts on the part of government to eliminate racial discrimination in public-financed education," it nevertheless opposes the proposed procedure on church-state grounds.

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

WESTERN RECORDER

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Published by Western Recorder Inc., Box 43401, Middletown, KY 40243 weekly, except for one week in July and December. Second class postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

Subscriptions: Single \$3.68; foreign, \$3.75; church budget, \$2.50. Payable in advance, except church accounts, which require tax exemption number.

Directors: C. Carman Sharp, Louisville, chairman; Harold J. Purdy, Madisonville, vice chairman; Billy D. Marcum, Brandenburg, secretary; William S. Blakeman, Winchester; Tom Butler, Paducah; Curtis Erwin, Glasgow; Garnett Hulette, Frankfort; William D. Jagers, Cynthiana; Donald J. LaBelle, London; O. G. Lawless, Bowling Green; Ronald P. Moore, Highland Heights; Gilbert Sapp, Russell Springs.



C. R. Daley

Daley Observations

The church newsletter in inflationary times

How much does your church budget for its newsletter?

Would you be willing to save 50%? 60%? 70%? 80% or more?

In a time when inflation is spiraling . . . when Bold Missions is compelling . . . and when plain old common sense, austerity and stewardship are called for, it makes sense to discover methods of extending the value of tithes and offerings to their fullest potential.

At Western Recorder, we've felt the unbelievable pinch of skyrocketing second class postal rates, just as every church affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention has. Our postage bill more than doubled in 1978. Our churches are laboring under similar burdens. Yet, we are still under a conviction that news from the churches, state and Southern Baptist Convention leads to a responsive, caring, giving, sharing constituency.

We think we've found a way to help us all in this cooperative enterprise. Western Recorder is now offering to piggyback local church news on the outside covers of its publication to provide church members with weekly news from many sources in one package.

The job can be done as economically as you wish. If the church secretary prepares copy on her typewriter and furnishes it to us in camera ready form, your only charge is the \$6.00 plate-changing fee our printer passes on to us. If you prefer to have your page typeset rather than typewritten, you negotiate with a typesetter for the best deal you can find, give us your copy and still pay only the \$6.00 fee. No additional costs, except \$1.75 for each photo included. No more.

Some other things you should know: 1) You don't have to add your entire membership to the mailing list to receive this service—only resident members or families. 2) You may run your material every week or sporadically—as you choose. You will be charged the \$6.00 just the weeks you run church news. 3) You may use one-half page or the whole page for your news. If you use the half page, you may specify which half you prefer.

Think of the time the church secretary will save in extensive preparation and mailing of the church newsletter! Think of the paper and printing savings! And think of the postal savings to your church because Western Recorder is absorbing your postal burden for you! If you don't have more to invest in missions and local church programs as a result, something is definitely wrong.

Write or call Western Recorder, Box 43401, Middletown, KY 40243, (502) 245-4101 for additional information. A representative will be happy to work with you so your church may begin saving money soon!

Christmas and a plain brown wrapper

A plain brown wrapper means different things to different people but it has a very special meaning to Southern Baptists and their Foreign Mission Board. For in spite of the fact that the mails frequently bring more than \$1 million to the Foreign Mission Board for world missions, the most valuable mail every received by the board arrived without a check and in a plain brown wrapper.

The package contained the ashes of Lottie Moon who died on Christmas eve 1912 aboard a ship on the way home from China for a long deserved furlough. She died of malnutrition and her ashes appropriately were mailed to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The ashes of Lottie Moon are not a religious relic. Baptists don't believe in such. In fact, 99 out of 100 Baptists don't know she was cremated. Neither is she a saint to Baptists for we leave the bestowal of sainthood to God.

But Lottie Moon was saintly and it's most appropriate to perpetuate her memory by giving her name to the annual Christmas offering for foreign missions. The whole idea of a special offering to supplement mission funds originated with her.

Lottie Moon not only originated this offering but her spirit and ministry exemplified the noblest in missionary commitment. She went to China not as an American merely to tell the Chinese about Jesus but she buried herself as the only white person for miles around to live a Chinese life as a Christian. And her malnutrition was probably a result of sharing food she needed herself with hungry Chinese.

The annual Lottie Moon prayer, study and offering in December is as much a part of Christmas for Southern Baptists as Christmas trees and Santa Claus. For many of us our offering for foreign missions is the most redemptive part of our Christmas observance.

The first special offering for foreign missions in 1888 amounted to \$3,315. The 1978 Lottie Moon goal is \$40 million, an increase of more than \$8.5 million over 1977.

Now that is a bold goal for Bold Mission Thrust! But boldness is the name of the game if we are serious about Bold Mission objectives. How Southern Baptists respond to this Lottie Moon bold goal may indicate how we will respond to other Bold Mission goals.

We have some Lottie Moon bold goals in churches in Kentucky. Would you believe one congregation plans to give \$25,000 through the Lottie Moon offering this year? This is Bowling Green First Baptist.

The 1978 theme "Tell It Out with Gladness" actually means pray it out and give it out with gladness and boldness.

The Jonestown tragedy

The suicide and murder of over 900 members of the People's Temple sect may be the most sensational news story of the 20th century. It will be interpreted and analyzed as long as time lasts. There is no way to completely comprehend the Jonestown tragedy but some useful explanations are being offered. Among these are those included in this issue on pages 4 and 5. They are commended for your study.

Baptist Forum

Acts 13:1-4 original bold missions

In reference to the article "Bold missions to last without him" by Bill Webb in Oct. 25 issue of Western Recorder, quoting SBC president Jimmy Allen on Bold Mission Thrust. I was disappointed to see that Christ was not mentioned in either the initiation or success of the program.

The greatest example of bold missions is in Acts 13:1-4. The church at Antioch was ministering to the Lord and fasting. The Holy Spirit said "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." The Bible says they were sent out by the Holy Spirit. Paul and Barnabas were only vessels through which the Spirit worked. And whole continents received the gospel message by a handful of people.

I believe when our works are tried by fire (1 Cor. 3:11-15) only the works of the Spirit will count, all the rest—wood, hay, stubble—will burn up.

If we would seek to be rightly related to God and each other and listen to his Spirit, just as in Acts 13, then I believe he would initiate the programs and great things could be accomplished for his kingdom.

Dorothy Clark, Calvert City

"This century's worst religious villain"

It is an exceedingly dangerous decision to give any human being one's absolute loyalty and blind obedience. While the case of "Reverend" Jimmie Jones and his 914 disciples is most prominent just now, such tragedies have happened time and again . . . in less dramatic fashion.

I have seen "Christian" people do a lot of silly, childish, stupid things because of a mindless devotion to some human being. There is only ONE to whom we can give ourselves without fear or reservation, and he is Jesus the Christ of God.

I have seen people get all wrapped up in some television personality like Garner Ted Armstrong, whose heinous conduct has now been exposed by his old dad. I have seen Baptists give to glamorous, far-off radio and television stars with a pious accent—those unscrupulous prophets who profiteer off the gullibility of easily emoted people, people looking for a visible messiah.

One of the most popular radio-television money-changers had his hand called by the Securities and Exchange Commission for alleged federal offenses in handling funds in his exceedingly lucrative kingdom—while he was flying around in a church-owned jet. And he's still flying high, financed primarily by infatuated Baptist followers all across this nation. Needless to say, I am not referring to Billy Graham who has an excellent record of accountability.

I have seen people lie, cheat and steal and do other ungodly life-destroying, fellowship-destroying things—because some persuasive, cunning, saintly Jimmie Jones told them to do so.

The other side of that Guyana story is that there may now be some evidence that Jimmie Jones once upon a time was a genuine, caring human being bent on helping heal the hurts of oppressed people. But something went wrong, and he who was very religious and saintly turned into this century's worst religious villain.

Lest this sound all cynical let me remind you that in Christ Jesus there is a wholesome, balanced place where we can mutually trust, love, encourage and edify. Paul's beautiful comradeship with his beloved Philippians is a superb model for that kind of relationship (Phil. 1:3-11). But Paul never reduced them to witness puppets. He was always pointing them to Jesus; and Paul remained productive and useful as he led them to the ONE who came that we might have life and that more abundantly.

Harold A. Shirley, Talladega, Ala.



Mr. and Mrs. Baker



Mr. and Mrs. Hill



Mr. and Mrs. Long



Mr. and Mrs. Bethel

Mountains to the Mississippi

Congregations

Congratulations Kentucky . . . Kentucky Baptist churches have reported over 61,000 persons enrolled in their choirs and music leadership roles. This is the first time enrolment has exceeded 60,000.

Beechwood celebrates anniversary Beechwood Baptist Church, Louisville, celebrated its 25th anniversary during the months of November and December. All former ministers returned to participate in the ceremonies: Nov. 19, James B. Sawyer, associate pastor, Highland Church, Louisville; Nov. 26, C. Welton Gaddy, senior pastor, Broadway Church, Ft. Worth, Tex.; and Dec. 3, Howard Hovde, Center for Counseling, Houston, Tex. A reception was held each evening honoring the former pastors.

Joseph R. Estes is currently pastor at Beechwood. Estes, who went to Beechwood in summer of 1977, had previously pastored in Louisville and served with the Foreign Mission Board.

Burgher travels to Russia Edmon Burgher Jr. of Clay City reports that he will travel to Russia in January.

Burgher is a former missionary to Russia and Czechoslovakia. He requests the prayers of fellow Kentucky Baptists for this mission.

Victory offering retires debt Clark's River Baptist Church, Symsonia, had a special "Victory Sunday" offering in October to pay off its indebtedness.

In 1974 the church borrowed \$150,000 to relocate and build a new auditorium and educational building. As of Oct. 1 the debt had been reduced to \$14,000. The church received \$15,500 through the special victory offering.

On Dec. 10 a special dedication day note burning was held. Former pastor Gary Frizzell of Northside Baptist Church, Mayfield, was guest speaker.

Combined choirs to present cantata. The combined choirs of Coral Hill Baptist Church and Hiseville Baptist Church, Liberty Association, will present John W. Peterson's "Carol of Christmas" cantata Dec. 16 at Hiseville and Dec. 17 at Coral Hill.

Tim Owings, pastor at Hiseville, will be accompanist. James Garner, organist at Coral Hill, will direct the cantata.

Youth participate in lock-in The youth from Guthrie Baptist Church and Calvary Baptist Church, Bethel Association, took part in a "lock-in" held in the activities building of First Baptist Church, Clarksville.

Activities and Bible study were led by John LaNoue, interim pastor at Calvary and Jerry Gray, Guthrie.

Russell County youth to sing Russell County associational youth carol sing will be held Dec. 21 at 6:00 p.m. beginning at Jamestown Baptist Church.

Personnel

Armstrong elected chairman Mrs. Elaine Armstrong, wife of Glen Armstrong, pastor, Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Ohio Association, has been elected chairman of the program committee of the Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Wives Fellowship.

Kelley accepts Illinois pastorate George T. Kelley has resigned as pastor of Deanfield (Ky.) Baptist Church to accept a pastorate in Illinois.

Tucker assumes pastorate R. Tommy Tucker assumed the pastorate of Horse Cave (Ky.) Baptist Church on Dec. 7.

Tucker, a native of Green County, received his MDiv degree from Southern Seminary.

He and his wife, the former Glenda DeSpain, have two sons.

Epley calls Piper Epley Baptist Church, Logan Association, called Don Piper as pastor effective Nov. 19.

Piper has previously pastored churches in Muhlenburg Association.

Clenney accepts Ohio pastorate Ty Clenney, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Danville, has resigned to accept the pastorate of Rolling Hills Baptist Church, Fairfield, Ohio effective Dec. 31.

Clenney, who attended Southern Seminary, has been at Immanuel for five years. He is a 1961 graduate of Campbellsville College.

Yates new pastor at Grove Center George Yates, DeKoven, has been

called as pastor of Grove Center Baptist Church.

Yates, who assumed pastoral duties Nov. 12, had been supply pastor for Grove Center.

Yates succeeds Steven Winebarger, Sturgis, who resigned for health reasons.

Yates, his wife and daughter, will continue to reside in DeKoven where he was pastor of DeKoven Baptist Church.

Ordinations

Frick ordained in Nashville J. Paul Frick, pastor, Clear Run Baptist Church, Ohio Association, was ordained Nov. 26 by Woodmont Baptist Church in Nashville, Tenn.

Elk Lick ordains four Elk Lick Baptist Church, Logan Association, elected Marion Wells, Gaylan Bauch, Gary Kelley and David Coursey to be ordained as deacons during December.

Edwin Douglas is pastor.

Johnson ordained at Monterey V. C. Johnson Jr. was ordained Nov. 26 at Monterey (Ky.) Baptist Church. John Carney, associate pastor of First Baptist Church, Cushing, Okla. gave the message. Kim McCarter of Frankfort provided the special music and Edd Foley, pastor of Monterey, presented the Bible.

A reception followed the ordination.

Johnson is pastor of Greenup Fork Baptist Church in Owen County. He and his wife, Ruth, and daughter, Pam, reside in Frankfort.

Revivals

Cynthiana revival successful Cynthiana (Ky.) Baptist Church recently concluded a successful revival with Bill Penley of North Carolina as evangelist and Lowell Leistner of Florida as song leader.

There were 17 professions of faith, 20 rededications and three by letter.

Bill Jagers is the pastor.

Ridgecrest reports 15 decisions Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Beaver Dam, has just completed a successful revival with Billy Walker from Arkansas as evangelist.

Eleven professions of faith and four transfers of membership were reported.

Jesse Tichenor is pastor.

Successful revival at Sunshine Sunshine Baptist Church, Upper Cumberland Association, reported 16 decisions at a weekend revival. There were three professions of faith and one by letter. Nasby Mills was the evangelist.

Deaths

Charles L. Tipton, Jeffersonville, Ind. has died. He was a native of Louisville, a graduate of Georgetown College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was a retired Army chaplain and a member of Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville. Earlier in his ministry he had been pastor of the Viney Fork Baptist Church near Richmond and the Pigeon Fork Baptist Church, Waddy. He also served as superintendent of missions for Bell County Association and Severns Valley Baptist Association. He is survived by his wife, the former Dorothy Smith, and one son, Stephen Tipton, Charlestown.

Missions

Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Baker were among 31 people named as new missionaries during the November meeting of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va.

They will do theological extension work in Ecuador, where he will be a teacher in theological extension and she will be involved in home and church work. Currently he is pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

Baker was born in Ft. Campbell. He received a bachelor degree from Murray State University and his divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary.

He has been a chaplain and counselor with the Volunteers of America in New Orleans and pastor of Barataria Baptist Church, Lafitte, La.

Mrs. Baker, the former Lou Anne Pool of Hopkinsville, was graduated from University of Kentucky Hopkinsville Community College and from Murray State. She was alumni secretary for public relations at the New Orleans seminary.

They have two children.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Albert Hill will serve as missionary associates in Portugal. He will pastor an English speaking church and she will be involved in home and church work.

Hill, native of Alabama, received the bachelor of theology degree from Southern Seminary, Louisville.

Mrs. Hill, the former Evelyne Campbell of Frankfort, attended Woman's Missionary Training School in Louisville. She has been active in associational and state WMU leadership.

They have three daughters.

Mr. and Mrs. David C. Long will serve in North Brazil, where he will be a religious education promoter and she will work in church and home.

Long received his master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary. He also attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Tex.

Long also served as minister of music and youth at First Baptist Church, Middletown, Ky., and as minister of youth at First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Ala.

Mrs. Long, originally from Texas, taught in the Greater Clark County Schools in Jeffersonville, Ind., and taught private piano lessons in Jacksonville.

They have two children.

Mr. and Mrs. C. W. (Bud) Bethel have been appointed to work in the Leeward Islands, where he will be a school administrator and she will be involved in home and church work. Currently they are attending Southern Seminary, Louisville, and Immanuel Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

Bethel, a native of Hamden, Ohio, was graduated from Campbellsville College and Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green. For 10 years he was associated with Northern Local Schools as a principal, teacher and coach. He also taught school and coached basketball and track for two years in Larue and Hardin counties in Kentucky.

Mrs. Bethel, the former Jackie Edwards of Elizabethtown, was graduated from Campbellsville College and from Western Kentucky University. She also taught school in Larue and Hardin counties.

They have one daughter.



Note burning services were held Oct. 29 at Oak Grove Baptist Church, Little River Association. Total expenditures was \$123,000. Pictured with pastor Harold Lassiter are representatives of the building committee, trustees and deacons.

Jones (Satan) twisted power of love into love of power

by John P. Newport

The history of the People's Temple movement, which culminated in the largest mass murder-suicide in the 20th century, shows the classic pattern of the demonic.

From a biblical perspective it is evident that the "The Rev." Jim Jones and some of his leaders had Satanic characteristics and exhibited manifestations of anti-Christ figures.

Earmarks of the demonic, revealed in the macabre events at Jonestown, Guyana, which destroyed the lives of more than 900 persons include preoccupation with pain and death, distortion and perversion of sex and family life, mind control, use of religion as a vehicle of power with the leader claiming to be God incarnate, such counterfeit gifts of the spirit as healing and use of spiritual phenomena, mind control techniques, deprivation of freedom and progression from something seemingly good to moral degeneracy.

Christians, shocked by this unbelievable tragedy, grapple with how to react to it in light of Jones' claim that his movement was "Christian." That's the problem faced by many, especially the young, in an era in which many cults inveigle persons to convert to their cause.

A theological perspective

Christians may gain insight from sociologists and psychologists who have examined the horror of Jonestown. But, for these Christians, these explanations do not take the place of or exclude a theological explanation based on the central teachings of the Bible.

The Bible's central affirmation is the reality of God as a personal Father of love, righteousness and power. God limited himself in giving freedom, both to personal angelic beings and humans. Satan, as a created spiritual being, rebelled against God. Biblical teaching states that he pursued a pattern of defiance and rebellion against God and his purposes. Other fallen angels followed Satan in his revolt against God.

Satan's plan is to disorganize and disrupt the true knowledge, worship and purposes of God. Satan further seeks to organize his own kingdom and control men and obtain their worship. The apostle Paul warns us that Satan often disguises his followers as "angels of light" or "servants of righteousness."

During the earthly ministry of Jesus Satan worked through political and religious groups. In recent history Satan apparently has reincarnated himself in such men and movements as Hitler and the Nazi party, Charles Manson and the Manson family and Jones and the People's Temple.

The biblical perspective definitely points to Satanic characteristics in Jones and some of his followers.

First, Jones sought to pervert and distort the religious instincts of humble people. Approximately 70 percent of his followers were underprivileged people from urban ghettos. He took advantage of their religious background to pose as a Christian prophet. He faked miraculous faith healings. He used prior investigations to supplement his apparent psychic divination powers which he used to amaze people with details of their lives.

Many of his middle class followers were counter-culture idealists who originally were caught up in the movements protesting against the Vietnam War, nuclear weapons and other problems in American society. Jones used their interest in racial, economic and social justice as a wedge to gain their adherence. He talked of a Christian socialist democracy and a classless and integrated society.

A love for power

But soon his so-called power of love was twisted into the love of power. After using religious and idealistic interests to gain followers, Jones began to seek control of their lives. He demanded all their possessions on the threat of death. He led many into adulterous and homosexual relationships. Then they were forced to sign statements admitting their acts along with admissions of stealing and other wrong doings. They were forced to sign pledges to kill defectors and commit suicide at Jones' command.

Jones' professed devotion to socialist justice turned into fascist tyranny. He manipulated and used his followers to gain power in high political arenas, including the communistic leaders in Guyana.

He used classical techniques of mind control. In Guyana he used sleep and food deprivation, constant propaganda and the breaking down of the family structure. Armed guards patrolled the grounds. People's Temple members had no way to communicate

with the outside world. Defectors were harrassed and threatened. Dark circles under the eyes and loss of weight were signs of loyalty. Deprived of passports and money, living in a dangerous jungle area, his followers were completely at his mercy. He conducted mock mass suicide rituals regularly and brainwashed children with electrode machines, called "Blue Monsters."

Seeking his clue from the famous cult leader, Father Divine, Jones began to claim that he was God incarnate or the incarnation of Christ, Buddha and Lenin. He saw himself in a messianic role. This led him to the belief that he could transcend all biblical ideas of right or wrong.

He was to be called "Father" or "Dad." Confessions were to be made to him. He was reported to have had sexual relations with dozens of women in the group and many men. His professed end justified any means.

These practices are clearly in line with the biblical description of anti-Christ figures. In fact, in his latter days, Jones openly stated that he did not believe in a God outside of himself. He said, "I am God. There is no other God and religion is the opiate of the people." His followers wore amulets or charms, which contained his picture. He demanded absolute loyalty in worship.

Jones developed other techniques of anti-Christ figures. He alone knew the truths on all subjects. Defectors were to be sought out and killed. He felt the end of the world was near, enemies were closing in and spies were everywhere ready to persecute and kill him and his followers.

Without me, all is nought

"Now that I have killed Congressman Ryan, I will be killed," he said. "If I am lost your life will be meaningless. Our cause is right. Mass suicide in the service of me and my cause will further the cause in my memory. It's beautiful to die for me and my cause." The Guyana events indicate the power of Satan is

Priesthood—Baptist safeguard

by Glenn Igleheart

The People's Temple began as a church and ended as a cult.

The church Jim Jones started has been affiliated for the last 20 years with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a respected, full fledged Christian denomination. But press coverage related to the mass deaths of more than 900 people in Jonestown, Guyana, reveals how deviant the People's Temple group became.

But even though shocked by the mass murder-suicide, we should not accept at face value some of the overstatements printed by media representatives who have interviewed everybody in sight.

Those overstatements include quotes which imply that all cult groups are like the People's Temple in that they physically, mentally and morally abuse their members. Some do, but few are as suicidal and sadistic as Jones and his followers.

We also need to guard against overreaction. Parents with children in sect groups should not panic and take extremist measures to separate their children from these groups. They can use Jonestown as a prod to sect leaders to let them see and communicate with their children, but be cautious not to over-respond.

Another form of overreaction includes the call for government investigation of all religious groups in this country. The need for accurate information is imperative, but we need to be careful before we further accelerate political intrusions into religious life.

The events at Jonestown should burn into our awareness the dangers of this kind of cultish thinking. Many groups exist which began with a leader who claimed a heavenly vision with its derived authority, and who gathered a group of committed followers around him.

When he proclaims religious beliefs or practices which deviate from biblical patters his followers either do not recognize them as distortions of biblical teaching or else choose to accept them as a more valid truth. Members will condone questionable practices like faked healings or deceptive fund-raising because of the end it serves of getting new members and new money.

Christians need to be aware of the beliefs and practices of other religious groups in their community. They need to stand for the preservation of free religious expression, but also should be able to evaluate

awesome and seemingly irresistible from a human perspective. We live in a time in which we must face how to deal with the power of the occult. The Christian has the resources.

Confronted with cults Christians may test or "try the spirits" by examining their attitude toward Christ (1 John 4:1-6), the fruits of their efforts, and their moral and spiritual teachings and practices. In the beginning, moral practices, as was the case with Jones' group, may be hard to test since the pattern indicates gradual degeneration from good to evil.

The biblical teachings state that a person cannot resist Satan in his or her own natural strength and human wisdom. The biblical drama further tells of God's love plan which sent his son Jesus Christ to identify with man's predicament. It is the good news of Christianity, that in the life, death, resurrection and ascended power of Jesus Christ, we have resources available to resist Satan and provide for the fulfilling and victorious life in the here and now and in the eternal life hereafter.

One prominent psychiatrist points out that mental illness relates primarily to disorders of the mind. Satan works primarily on bondage of the will. The message of Christianity is that Christ can deliver us from bondage and give us purpose and meaning.

For the Christian the underlying theological meaning of the Guyana events unfolds in the biblical teaching. Because of Satan's tempting power and man's rebellion similar events will undoubtedly continue as history moves towards its climax, the second coming of Jesus Christ.

But Christians do not set dates for the end. Christians rather seek to learn from such tragedies. They seek to test or try the spirits. They renew efforts to incarnate Christianity in terms of personal and social application. They redouble efforts in Christian teaching and evangelism. Theological seminaries intensify their efforts to more adequately train authentic Christian leaders and ministers.

Christians also realize anew that America's hard won and deeply treasured religious freedom requires constant vigilance. Even now less dramatic and extreme groups are using the media, subliminal techniques and ritual incantations to impair or harm children and young people.

New Testament churches must redouble efforts to engender authentic freedom and a discriminating perspective under the lordship of Christ as a model for the community, the nation and the world.

other religious groups and to speak out against deviant beliefs and abuses against persons.

Judging by the Bible

Every Christian should examine religious groups in light of biblical norms. These include acceptance of the ultimate authority of God, the unquestioned lordship of Jesus Christ, the unimpeded right of each believer as a member of the body of Christ to communicate with God and use of the Bible as the norm against which all religious doctrines and practices should be verified.

Public pressure causes groups to change. Public outcry was at least one element which forced changes in Mormon practices of plural marriage and in opening their church's priesthood to blacks.

Churches of Southern Baptists and other Christians are not immune from the kinds of ego-centered leadership and unquestioning membership seen in Jonestown. The potential for disaster lies within any religious group which depends on one person for direction and does not practice a healthy exchange of viewpoints in seeking God's will.

But most Baptists have a safeguard against the horrors of Jonestown happening in their church. It's called the priesthood of all believers, a doctrine held by a number of Christians. When this doctrine is taken seriously it deters exalting the priesthood of one believer above others. God's leadership may come through the pastor but it is to be confirmed by God's spirit in the total membership of the church.

Mutual searching for truth and direction, mutual criticism and correction need to be built into our church and denominational life.

The horror of Jonestown should prompt Baptists and other Christian leaders to renewed self-examination of their own motives, methods and style of leadership. Even legitimate Christian leaders may cause cult-like devotion by manipulating people into following them blindly.

Resources for persons desiring more expertise in understanding other religious groups are available from several sources including materials and conferences sponsored by the Department of Interfaith Witness at the Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta.

It was the children who suffered most

by Bob W. Brown

One of the soldiers who helped collect the bodies at Jonestown said on TV, with a broken voice, "The Children, the Children." His grief and dismay was obvious. More than 180 children were murdered in the commune. Little children don't commit suicide, they are murdered.

Our nation has consistently and correctly maintained a rigid kind of church/state separation. This legal and moral position about religious liberty is the main reason that no one investigates or interferes with the People's Church. And it provides immunity from interference for Baptists, Catholics, Moonies, the Church of Satan and Jehovah Witnesses. But does church/state separation mean that children can be abused, denied their rights or horribly murdered in the name of religion?

We have established that parents have the primary responsibility to feed, shelter and clothe their children. But when parents fail to provide these basic necessities the state has the right and the obligation to usurp the prior rights of parents. The State can and should feed and shelter a needy child.

The compulsory school attendance laws have established that the state has the obligation to educate children. The people, speaking through their legislators and supported by the courts, have said that the State must provide equal educational opportunity for all her children and that children must attend school. Parents educate their children but parents do not have the right to deny their children equal educational opportunity in schools.

Parents have the responsibility and the right to discipline their children. When that discipline fails the state has the right to step in and enforce laws to protect society from juvenile criminals. The state also can step in when a child is emotionally disturbed, a runaway or a truant from school.

The parental right to discipline does not give the parent the right to beat, burn, molest or starve a child. Child abuse is another horror story in our society. It is an ugly, frightening fact of life. We will not allow sick, angry, malicious adults to abuse children with impunity. Child abuse grows in alarming proportions and the state has a responsibility.

I do not believe that society can ignore certain kinds of exploitation of children going on in the name of religion. Religious liberty never means that children can be exploited. Any religious group that involves children must be open to public inspection and public scrutiny. It there is evidence of child abuse then the right of the child preempts the right of the parent or the right of the church.

To be sure, Jonestown is a horrible exception. Kentuckians, however, will remember the story of the Galian Children's Home in Whitley County two decades ago. The state has the right and the responsibility to inspect and regulate church orphanages, church day care centers, church schools, church nurseries and any other public or private organization, institution or commune that involves children.

At Rockford Lane

After three years of praying they believe in prayer power

by C. R. Daley

Pastor Rolfe Dorsey and Rockford Lane Baptists in Louisville want everyone who needs and believes in intercessory prayer to know one telephone number—(502) 447-2592. This is the point of contact of persons having prayer requests and a band of concerned Rockford Lane members who have been maintaining round-the-clock praying for three years.

The dream of Dorsey and his prayer band is about to come to fruition. Around the first of the year they will move their prayer project from its present quarters to a special prayer chapel constructed in the very center of the church property.

The prayer chapel will not be ornate or elaborate. It will contain only one room and the furnishings will be simple—a table, kneelers, chairs and a telephone stand. On the table will be the loose leaf books of prayer requests which are continually revised according to requests and reports of answered prayers.

The simple chapel will include appropriate symbolism. It will have five sides, one for each of the generally recognized channels of prayer: Confession, praise, thanksgiving, petition and intercession. The walls will be bare except for one painting titled "The Crucifixion."

The chapel will face the street symbolizing the concern for the thousands who pass by each day. There will be a skylight at the peak of the roof of the chapel and the form of a dove will be mounted above the skylight. From the inside a shadow of the dove will show against the sky and at night light from inside will illuminate the dove above the place of prayer.

The chapel will have a red door with the inscription, "... we have confidence to enter ... by the blood of Jesus. . . ." (Heb. 10:9). A lighted parking area will insure the safety of those coming to the chapel at all times of day and night.

Program continuous for three years

The 24-hour chain of prayer which has been going on for three years came about in an interesting way. Dorsey had such an idea when he was still in Mississippi but had never implemented it. When he came to Rockford Lane he found a band of members meeting for prayer on Saturday evening. He joined the band and waited for the appropriate time to share his dream. This came when the group grew large enough to provide captains or coordinators for all 14 of the 12-hour periods each week.

Dorsey admits the prayer chain idea and a special building for it were not universally approved by the church members. Concern that securing funds for the project would hurt regular and church building fund

offerings no longer exist, however, since all offerings have increased during the period of the prayer chapel project.

Dorsey is immovable in his conviction that the intercessory prayer project has brought miracles. He is reluctant to relate specific instances because he does not want the reputation of a fanatic or a sensationalist. He says he is not trying to convince anyone but is only offering the intercessory prayer to all who will ask for it. Prayer requests now run from 50 to 75 a week. They are divided into crisis and long range needs. The crisis requests are kept on the list a week and then their disposition depends upon what report is received. A report on every request is sought.

The requests have long since reached beyond the local congregation. Requests have come from as far away as Africa.

Volunteers choose own hours

The prayer periods are not assigned but volunteers choose the hours they desire. Dorsey admits that not every hour of every day and night each week is taken but he cites as an example of faithfulness the experience during last winter's blizzard. With all public and private transportation stopped, not a day or night passed without someone walking to the church to pray.

Dorsey believes one of the greatest benefits from the project is the training of sincere people in how to pray. At first volunteers ask how a whole hour could be filled with prayer and now many say they need more than one hour. By now some of those involved have moved to other places and report back on their continued meaningful prayer experience.

The prayer experience at Rockford Lane has brought one clear revelation, according to Dorsey. This is the presence and power of the demonic. He sees Satan at work personally bringing people and churches to all kinds of crises. No human power can stand up against Satan's strength and the only hope is to retreat to Jesus who has defeated Satan, says Dorsey. True intercessory prayer puts people in touch with the power of Jesus and the result is what appears to be miracles. The problem, confesses Dorsey, is to maintain this relationship with Jesus without leaving it to trust in one's own strength.

Dorsey gives no indication he would like to be the leader of some national or international prayer project. He is not even interested in using the project to draw attention to Rockford Lane church. The one thing he wants to be spread abroad is a telephone number which puts those interested in touch with intercessory prayer. That number is (502) 447-2592.

Bluegrass to Brazil

by Maxie C. Kirk

Jungle Frontier, the study book for older children in this year's Foreign Mission Graded Study Series, had its origins back around 1936!

As a Junior girl I attended the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville. Mrs. Ira J. Porter was our Girl's Auxiliary leader. One fall the Foreign Mission Study book was titled "Mule Stories From Inland Trails," written by L. M. Bratcher, from Kentucky. Imagine our delight when Bratcher himself came to our church and taught the book to us! He was home on furlough that year and, possibly even more important in this case, was the brother-in-law of Ira J. Porter! In any case, the memory of that evening's study remains with me these 40 years later.

Brazil, at that time, was still that great "sleeping giant" of the South American continent, and his enthusiasm for what the country was to become, and his genuine love for the people of Brazil, impressed us all.

In 1947 my husband and I arrived in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil as brand new missionaries. We were met at the airport by another great missionary couple from Kentucky, Dr. and Mrs. W. C. Taylor. Having lived much of their missionary career in north Brazil, they spent the last years in south Brazil.

Dr. Taylor dedicated himself to preaching and to

theological education; Mrs. Taylor to her ministry of love and encouragement, knitting layettes, making visits to the sick, reaching out with words of praise and encouragement to those who needed help. These two became our "Brazilian parents," our friends and counselors. Much of our happy adjustment to Brazil and these 31 years of ministry here we owe to them and to their lasting influence upon our lives.

In 1948 Dr. and Mrs. Bratcher returned from furlough and we had the joy of seeing God use them here. Dr. Bratcher was the strong and capable executive secretary of the Brazilian Baptist Home Mission Board, a missionary statesman whose vision and dreams become reality in Brazil today.

Mrs. L. M. Bratcher, or Dona Artie, as she was called here, was a beloved example for generations of young Baptist women in Brazil, for her gracious hospitality and as a Christian homemaker, wife and mother.

Both of these couples have gone to be with the Lord. The influence of their lives and work lives on. There is reason to affirm that no other missionaries made a more lasting contribution to Brazilian Baptist life following that generation of the very first pioneers who worked in Brazil, than did these two couples from Kentucky.

Dr. Bratcher remains a great missionary statesman

Kentucky Baptists make a contribution

and pioneer who, in the words of Dr. John Soren as he directed his memorial services, "taught Brazilians to love Brazil." Dr. Taylor, through his vigorous preaching, teaching and writing laid what is still the foundation stones for the doctrinal position and church polity of the Brazilian Baptist Convention today.

In the annual meeting of the South Brazil Mission in July of this year Mr. and Mrs. Robert Price and son, business people from Kentucky now in Brazil, were presented. At that time I perceived that I am the only missionary from Kentucky presently serving in South Brazil Mission.

God uses men and women, boys and girls, to do his work. My prayer is that Kentucky Baptists will once again play a meaningful part in the fulfillment of God's plans for Brazil. You have had an unusual participation, through the lives of those who have gone out from Kentucky, in laying the foundations for the stable, missionary-minded people who comprise the Brazilian Baptist Convention today. It is possible that in your church today there is one whom God would have to follow their example in missionary service in Brazil. May the study of the book, Jungle Frontier, speak to this one, as well as serve to stimulate the prayers, gifts and abiding love of Kentucky Baptists for the work God continued to do in this great country to the south, Brazil.

Piland urges greater emphasis on adults in SS

Building strong Sunday schools requires an emphasis on reaching and teaching adults, according to Harry Piland, director of the Sunday School Board's Sunday School Department.

Piland is quick to add his belief that giving attention to adults through the Sunday school will strengthen rather than weaken ministries with other age groups.

He cited the numbers of adults and the fact that they provide the leadership and financial base in churches among his reasons for giving priority to adult Sunday school work.

When adults are reached they bring their preschoolers, children and youth with them. "When adults grow, all areas grow," he said.

He noted that during a three-year period at First Baptist Church, Houston,

Tex. the average attendance of preschoolers grew from 325 to 700. During the same period, attendance of adults doubled—from 1000 to 2000.

Piland served as minister of education at the Houston church for five years prior to assuming leadership of Southern Baptist Sunday school work in 1978.

Numerically, adults comprise 68.1 percent of the population in the United States today. In Sunday school enrollment, Piland said adults make up 50 percent of the congregation in most churches and up to 80 percent of the prospects.

"The sheer weight of the numbers of adults demands our attention," Piland said. "If we neglect this area, we neglect the major segment of the population."

Piland also noted that while "adults give most of the money and pay the bills, they should be reached because they are important as individuals. The time remaining to reach them is less and less with every passing year."

Church ministries with preschoolers, youth and adults could not exist without sufficient numbers of trained adults to work with them, Piland said. "Without teachers, classes would go without adults and the church would lose its ability to penetrate its community with mature, capable and aggressive leadership."

To give adequate attention to Sunday school work, Piland listed six needed actions. First, he said, leaders with

adults must be committed and trained. Second, he urged strong emphasis on weekly workers meetings, which have great potential "for training, fellowship, planning, preparation and prayer."

Piland said churches should provide adequate space and equipment for adult Sunday school classes and departments, plan socials, retreats and conferences for them and provide funds to send some

adult workers to Glorieta and Ridgcrest for training.

Finally, he advocated leading adults to minister to one another. "When class members study and discuss his word, pray together and have fun together, they come to know each other," Piland said. "The potential for loving counsel and real concern in an adult class is unlimited."

'At Home with the Bible' is getting strong viewing

With "At Home with the Bible" airing in all 50 states and the receipt of more than 18,000 requests for the Home Bible Study Guide, Don Fearheiley feels "optimistic and gratified."

Fearheiley, supervisor of the Sunday School Board's Bible correspondence section and executive producer of the program, said that placement of "At Home with the Bible" on cable systems and satellite transmissions has enabled it to be seen nationwide.

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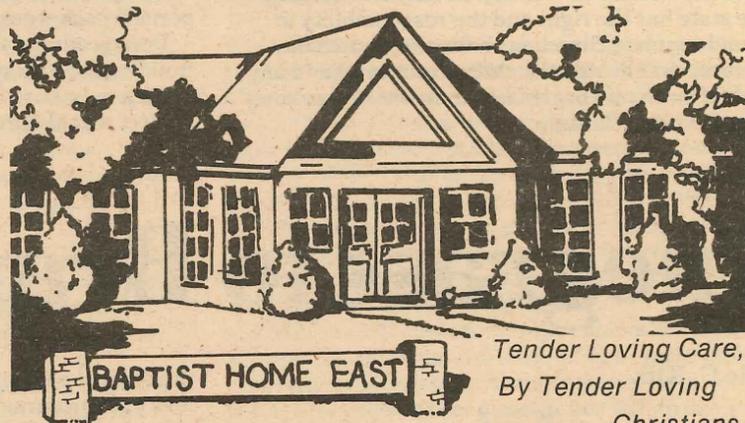
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Missionaries remain in Iran; no general evacuation planned

Southern Baptist missionaries in the strife-torn country of Iran are continuing their ministries, including regular worship services and the morning presentation of a Christmas cantata.

James F. Kirkendall, Southern Baptist missionary field representative for South Asia, reported by phone Dec. 7 that missionaries were going about usual church activities and visitation during the day and staying in their homes at night, when many of the anti-Shah demonstrations occur.

A Southern Baptist volunteer, Hubert

Williams, will return home with employees of an American company. Other missionary personnel will continue as usual.

Kirkendall emphasized that Americans leaving Iran are doing so voluntarily and not under instructions of the American embassy.

Americans were being advised to stay close at home Dec. 10-11 when Kirkendall said the worst violence was expected.

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Sunday School Lessons *H. C. Chiles*

Lessons for Dec. 24, 1978

Life and Work Series

The sovereign God dwells with us

John 1:1-5, 14-18

This remarkable passage of scripture contains some rich and important truths about the eternal and historical aspects of Christ, the Son of God, the Messiah of the Jews and the saviour of sinners, which are not revealed elsewhere.

Christ is the Logos [Word]—John 1:1-3

Logos is the Greek term which has been translated "word." Rev. 19:13 tells us that one of the names of our Lord is "The Word." Therefore, it is not surprising that the gospel according to John opens with the statement, "In the beginning was the Word." Here we are taught that Christ is co-eternal, co-existent and co-equal with God the Father. There was never a time when he did not exist. The statement, "The Word was with God," reveals Christ's distinct and separate personality. "The Word was God" is a very clear declaration of the deity of Christ.

Christ was the agent through whom God created all things. If our Lord Jesus Christ is the creator of all things, then he is God.

International Series

Meeting God in Christ

Matthew 1:18-25

Mary, a devout Jewish maiden, and Joseph, a young carpenter, were betrothed. During the period of betrothal, the angel Gabriel appeared in Mary's presence and informed her that through the grace of God she had been chosen by God as the one to conceive and to become the mother of a child, whose name would be "Jesus."

Seven hundred years before, Isaiah had recorded the statement, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (7:14). This wonderful prophecy was fulfilled when Mary gave birth to Jesus. In Christ God is with us to redeem, to regenerate, to cleanse and to sanctify.

Matthew 4:17

Continuing the use of the same theme that John the Baptist had preached with great effectiveness, Christ urged the people to repent of their sins and their vicious manner of living, and also of their erroneous opinions concerning a temporary kingdom of the Messiah. He also admonished them to relinquish their wrong beliefs concerning justification by works and salvation through the observance of ceremonies. Christ urged the people to accept

Christ is the light—John 1:4-5

He who is the source of all life is also the light. In the incarnation Christ was the light blazing in the darkness, but men would not receive the illumination which he brought. Through all the intervening centuries Christ has kept on shining in the midst of the darkness, ignorance and hostility of the sinful world, but happily the darkness has never been able to extinguish the light.

Christ is the lord—John 1:14-18

When Christ Jesus came into the world which he had created the masses of the people rejected him, but there were individuals who received him and became the children of God.

While Christ dwelt here in the flesh he exemplified and demonstrated grace and truth.

Jesus Christ was both divine and human. While he sojourned on earth, after his incarnation, he was as divine as he had been previously. While here among men, he brought the glory of God within human view, understanding and appreciation, and exhibited the Father in such a way that those who came to know him knew the Father also.

pardon, salvation, peace, righteousness, joy and eternal life as divine gifts, receivable upon their repentance toward God and faith in Christ the saviour. **Matthew 13:44-46**

The vivid parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price certainly confront us with the extraordinary and surpassing value of the kingdom of God.

One interpretation of the first of these parables is that the treasure, which was hidden in the field, symbolizes Israel, whose people were scattered among the nations because of their rejection of Christ, who paid the supreme sacrifice on the cross in order that they might be redeemed, regathered and restored. Another interpretation is that this treasure represents the kingdom of God, for which he paid the price of his shed blood.

The man's abandonment of everything in order to secure the pearl of great price finds its meaning and culmination in Christ's death. Since Christ gave his all to secure for people the privilege of being subjects of the king in his kingdom, then all should avail themselves of the glorious opportunity that is theirs.

Frank Owen

Poor choice

Life doesn't often give us choices between the perfect and imperfect. Oftentimes we have to choose between third and fourth best and do the best we can with what we have. How is it that Kipling writes, "Or see the things you gave your life to, broken, and stoop and build them back with worn out tools."

Bill Gnadt got a brand new saxophone. Man, it was a dandy. Brilliant, shining silver with gold horn. Christmas was coming. I rushed home and got down the Sears Roebuck catalog. They only showed one saxophone, \$97.50. It seemed awfully high but my boyhood financial comprehension was limited. I let my parents know my wishes. They were pleased to note my musical interest and determined to buy me an instrument. They couldn't begin to afford the saxophone.

Christmas came. It was a violin. The cheapest violin in Sears Roebuck catalog (and this was it) was \$22.50. So, I was to devote myself to the stringed instrument rather than the woodwind.

Our town had more than its share of ruffians whose minimal culture didn't include respect for violin lessons. They ran along behind me as I carried the violin case home from school on lesson day. "Frank's got a fiddle. Frank's a sissy." (They liked to thus accuse the preacher's son.)

I had several bouts over that violin. Finally, I had a fight with that violin, which ended my music career.

My few lessons consisted of simple exercises. I learned to play only one short piece. "I don't care if he is a hound, you got to quit kickin' my dog arounds." I just didn't get with the violin.

I was wrong—foolish. You see, I didn't know that the great artists of history have played violins, not saxophones. I allowed uncouth persons to be my judges and to direct my decision. I gave up the good to please those whose voices were not worthy of my response.

Be careful to whom you listen and whom you strive to please. Don't walk in the tracks of people whose footprints aren't worth following. Don't strive to please people who have poor judgment.



Baptist News in Brief

HMB makes appointments

Glenn Sheppard, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Lawrenceville, Ga., was named director of personal evangelism by the Baptist Home Mission Board.

Directors also named Quinn Pugh, a director of the Home Mission Board and pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Bel Air, Md., as director of the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association, and A. Wilson Parker, now mission division director for the Pennsylvania-South Jersey Baptist Convention, as director of the Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship.

Directors named two additional missionaries, Gene and Priscilla Tunnell of Atlanta, Ga., and 11 missionary associates — Mario and Maria Acacia of Ontario, Canada; Mary Archer of Johnson City, Tenn.; Carolyn Clark of New Orleans, La.; Donald Dillard of Louisville; Lynn and Everell Eckerberger of Lubbock, Tex.; Diane Griffin of Louisville; Carolyn McClendon of New Orleans; and Carl and Lou Wilks of Chalmette, La. Donald Dillard, a Dallas, Tex., native, will serve as a student intern in Louisville through the Highland Outreach Program for the Elderly in Louisville while a student in Southern Seminary. Dillard is a graduate of the University of Texas and has served as a summer missionary twice in home missions and as a US-2 missionary in Mobile, Ala.

Diane Griffin, a native of Raleigh, N. C., will serve as a student intern as director of the special education area at Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville while attending Southern Seminary. She is a graduate of St. Johns River Junior College and Florida State University and has served as a US-2 missionary in the Cincinnati Baptist Center in inner-city Cincinnati.

Gibson's blue over inaction

A controversial Texas "blue law" failed to gain review by the U. S. Supreme Court, in spite of claims by opponents that it was written to create an unfair advantage for department stores over discount houses.

The Gibson Distributing Co., which owns and operates discount stores in west Texas, had asked the high court to review a unanimous ruling by the Texas Supreme Court upholding the Sunday closing law. Instead, the high court indicated that it had no jurisdiction in the case.

Gibson attorneys argued that the law had the effect of nullifying the federal anti-trust law which encourages competition. They also maintained that the law violates federal constitutional protection of due process in that it fails to accomplish its stated purpose of promoting the health, recreation and welfare of the people by enforcing a common day of rest.

The real purpose of the law, Gibson argued, was "to appease the downtown merchants of Texas who demanded and received competitive advantage over

their suburban discount brothers." The health, recreation and welfare argument, Gibson attorneys stated, was made as an effort to "camouflage" the statute's true purpose.

WMU facing racey situation

Reservations for Lexington hotels and motels during the WMU annual meeting Apr. 5-7 should be made before Jan. 1, according to WMU officials.

A problem has developed in that horse racing around Lexington begins that same weekend, and many people will make their reservations for that after Jan. 1. Some block reservations are held annually for this event, thus space is already limited.

A limited number of homes will be available for overnight lodging in the Lexington area. Reservations for homes should be made by Mar. 15 through Mrs. Paul Doss, 2056 Fallow Rd., Lexington, KY 40504.

Israel award for W. A. Criswell

W. A. Criswell, pastor of the world's largest Southern Baptist church, has become the only Christian clergyman ever to receive the Israel Humanitarian Award.

"We cherish him as a friend," Uri Lubrani, Israeli ambassador to Iran, said of Criswell at a state of Israel tribute dinner Nov. 28 in Dallas.

Criswell received the award because of his efforts to "increase understanding and acceptance of Israel among the community of nations," according to Michael A. Robinson, representative for the Israel development groups.

WMU editorial director named

Gertrude A. Tharpe, former Southern Baptist missionary to Hong Kong and Hawaii, has been named director of the editorial department of Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention.

She comes to WMU from the University of Alabama School of Medicine, where she has served as associate director of admissions.

Don't overreact, says Carter

President Jimmy Carter said it would have been unconstitutional for the FBI to investigate the People's Temple cult before the recent Jonestown, Guyana mass murder-suicide and warned against an "overreaction" which could result in the denial of religious liberty.

The president made his remarks at a nationally televised news conference in Washington. He called the Jonestown events, which claimed more than 900 lives, a "tragedy" but pointed out they did not occur within the United States. "I obviously don't think the Jonestown cult was typical of America," he said.

