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FOR THE RECORD

Probation criticized
Presidents of two other SBC seminaries have criticized the probation status placed on Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary by one of its accrediting agencies. See page 2.

Henry in Kentucky
Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry returned to Kentucky last week to help install a church's new pastor. See page 3.

Family Forum
I've been single for 10 years. The children are gone and nothing is exciting. Where is that joyful single life? See page 4.

Editorial
Welfare reform could create child-care challenges for churches. See page 5.

Where's hope?
Rather than asking what we believe about Jesus, consider what Jesus believes about us. See page 8.

Who gives?
A new study questions the notion that the poor give more to charity than the rich. See page 11.

Calvinist outreach
An association of Southern Baptist Calvinists has mailed copies of its *Founders Journal* nationwide with an appeal for Southern Baptists to return to their theological roots. See page 13.

Missionaries face challenges in Mexico

By Mary Speidel
SBC Foreign Mission Board

LAS MARGARITAS, Mexico (BP)—Charles Collins drums his hand on the steering wheel, keeping time to music on a Christian praise tape.

"I will trust in you and will not be afraid," the lyrics say.

This morning Collins and his wife, Jan, have good reason to fear.

Just a few weeks earlier, Mexico's Zapatista rebels set up barricades along roads in this region. They searched vehicles at gunpoint, boarded buses and demanded money from passengers.

But today, all seems calm along the route from San Cristobal de Las Casas to Las Margaritas in Chiapas, Mexico's poorest and southernmost state. The only roadblocks: several checkpoints manned by the Mexican military.

Collins stops his truck at one just outside San Cristobal. After he shows a Red Cross identification card, a soldier waves him through.

"Have a good day," Collins responds in Spanish.

Collins volunteers as a paramedic with the Mexican Red Cross. But that's not what brought him to Chiapas. He and his wife, from Jackson and Yuma, Tenn., respectively, are the only Southern Baptist missionaries in the state. They came to help plant and develop Baptist churches.

Earlier, they planted churches among indigenous people in Guatemala. There, while translating for Arkansas Baptist medical volunteers, both felt God leading them to get medical training. During the couple's next furlough and a leave of absence in Jonesboro, Ark., Collins, a former pastor, trained to become a paramedic. Mrs. Collins, a former teacher, studied to become a licensed practical nurse.

"We wanted to increase our scope of ministry when we returned to Guatemala," Mrs. Collins explains.

But when it came time to go back, God instead directed them to Chiapas, which borders Guatemala.

"They arrived at just the right



MAKING FRIENDS Charles Collins, Southern Baptist missionary in Mexico's Chiapas state, talks with a girl living in a refugee camp inside a sports stadium in Las Margaritas. Last year, Collins and his wife, Jan, helped coordinate Baptist feeding kitchens for refugees in the area. The indigenous refugees fled their homes when Zapatista rebels took over their towns. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

time with just the right skills," observes missionary Larry Gay, who directs the work of Southern Baptist missionaries in Mexico.

The Collinses moved to the state capital of Tuxtla Gutierrez just a few months before Indian rebels took up

the missionaries were new to Chiapas, "still trying to get a handle on living in Mexico," Collins recalls.

They stayed put in Tuxtla, several hours' drive from the conflict. "We were minding our own business, doing what we could here," Mrs. Collins says.

On Jan. 15 their phone rang. It was Gay, asking them to see how Baptists might minister in the wake of the uprising.

A few weeks later the Collinses were cooking beans for war refugees. Collins' Red Cross connections helped them get government permission to operate three feeding kitchens in shelters near the combat zone. Doors also opened because of Baptists' good reputation for relief work during Mexico's 1985 earthquake.

Two other Foreign Mission Board missionaries, Phil and Peggy Templin, who live in a nearby state, moved temporarily to Chiapas to

arms on New Year's Day 1994. The Zapatista National Liberation Army—demanding social justice for the region's indigenous people—seized several towns in Chiapas. About 150 people died in the two-week conflict with government troops.

Such tensions were nothing new to the Collinses, who lived near guerrilla warfare in Guatemala. But



Warm news for a cold winter: Last year's VBS was good

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

Even though much of the state still has snow on the ground, it's time to start thinking about summer sunshine and vacation Bible school, according to Jewell Nelson, associate in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Sunday school department.

Nelson said newly released figures show Kentucky Baptists had a good year in VBS in 1994. Advance planning will ensure an even better year in 1995, she said.

Kentucky Baptist churches held 1,410 vacation Bible schools last

year. That's down from the previous year, but Nelson said she is glad to note an increase in backyard Bible clubs held in Kentucky last year.

A total of 213 backyard Bible clubs were reported for 1994, up from 128 the year before. Backyard Bible clubs are similar to VBS but usually are conducted as an outreach tool away from the church property.

Kentucky Baptist churches enrolled 131,641 people in VBS, backyard Bible clubs and mission VBS programs last year. From those students, churches discovered 30,586 prospects.

Although the total number of stu-

dents enrolled declined, Nelson said the increase in total number of prospects discovered is a good sign.

"We reach more prospects through VBS than through any other program we have," she explained. "And this time we brought more of those prospects into Sunday school."

The key is for churches to follow-up on the prospects they discover, she said. Even in the cold months of winter it's not too late to call on those prospects, she advised.

Another significant trend in this year's VBS statistics is the continuing movement toward night VBS.

Only 25 percent of Kentucky

Couples now seek unity in spiritual relationships

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

NASHVILLE (RNS)—Jim Tidwell describes himself as a gruff guy who focused more on his mortgage business than matters of the heart. He attended church, sang in the choir and left Bible study to his wife, Linda.

But after attending an "Experiencing God Weekend for Couples" in January, his life and his love for his wife have reached a new spiritual plane.

"I recommitted myself personally, not only to the Lord but to my wife," said Tidwell, a Southern Baptist from Nashville.

He's committed to reading the Bible daily with his wife, and she's spending less time at her home computer and more time with him.

"We're on a spiritual high," gushed Linda Tidwell. "I have never been so excited."

Spiritual renewal—for two—is in. These folks aren't talking about what flowers or brand of candy they're going to buy their spouses on Valentine's Day. They're going beneath the surface of superficial love into a spiritual realm that deepens their understanding of each other.

More than 25 years after Marriage Encounter weekends first used lingo like "God's plan" for couples, there's been an increase in retreat attendance, book buying and now even video viewing on how to enhance the spiritual aspect of couples' lives.

Spouses are going away for the weekend and leaving their kids behind, shutting themselves in a room with a Bible study guide or joining other couples in weekly classes to learn how they can relate to God together.

For about 15 years, the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board has sponsored "Festivals of Marriage," get-away weekends that address relationship issues such as finance, ro-

□ See Couples seek ..., page 11

BAPTISTS

Mohler & Patterson question probation

Southwestern's probation "appears to be rooted in a context of retribution, rather than in a redemptive and constructive intention."

Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP)—The two-year probation assessed Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary by a major accrediting agency has renewed criticism that the agency discriminates against conservative schools.

Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., said the Association of Theological Schools discriminates against seminaries that require professors to sign confessions of faith. He charged ATS with disregard "for the freedom of a confessional people to be self-determining and faithful to their most cherished belief."

Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, issued a statement charging the ATS decision "appears to be rooted in a context of retribution, rather than in a redemptive and constructive intention."

However, in the Jan. 27 letter to Southwestern announcing probation, the agency's associate director said the seminary's confessional nature had nothing to do with probation.

The probation was mandated, ATS said, because Southwestern's trustees violated their own governing documents when they fired President Russell Dilday in March 1994. ATS further charged trustees have impeded academic freedom at the school.

A copy of the ATS letter outlining factors in Southwestern's probation was obtained last week by Associated Baptist Press. Earlier, Southwestern administrators had released only selected portions of the letter.

Dilday's firing by trustees empowered by the Southern Baptist Convention's conservative movement generated a firestorm of protest from

seminary alumni, donors, faculty and students. Both Mohler and Patterson are prominent apologists for the SBC's conservative movement.

Privately, some Southern Baptist educators say the action against Southwestern has prompted renewed interest in forming a new accrediting agency for conservative schools.

Mohler downplayed that possibility, but did not rule it out.

In early January, Mohler delivered a one-hour speech to the Fellowship of Evangelical Seminary Presidents and accused ATS of being insensitive to conservative schools that demand their professors adhere to doctrinal requirements.

Mohler said his remarks to the presidents' group focused on a "major divide among theological institutions" between schools that are "confessional and those that are non-confessional."

ATS has not allowed confessional institutions enough latitude in their particular understanding of academic freedom, Mohler said.

Mohler said he believes the accrediting agency's "explicit standards" for academic freedom "are met and exceeded by all six of the Southern Baptist seminaries," but that a problem lies with "interpretation and implementation."

ATS Associate Director Dan Aleshire, in his letter to Southwestern, explained that most seminaries accredited by ATS are "confessional." Aleshire said ATS standards "support the confessional nature of these theological schools."

"The confessional nature of Southwestern Seminary and the board's authority to terminate the president are not the reasons for the ATS ac-

tion," Aleshire wrote.

He said the central concern of ATS is that Southwestern's trustee board "appears to be either unaware of or unresponsive to ATS understandings of appropriate governance of a theological school."

Over a period of "several years," trustees failed to implement their own procedures for presidential evaluation, Aleshire wrote, and decisions regarding faculty "created the persistent perception that published criteria and the formally adopted confessional statement have not always been carefully followed."

Despite rumors of plans to form a new accrediting agency, Mohler stopped short of calling for such an action last week.

In 1990, a motion was made at the SBC annual meeting to study the feasibility of establishing a denominational accrediting agency. The motion was referred to the SBC Education Commission, which recommended against forming any accrediting body that would "interfere with or attempt to substitute for the existing good relations with the regional accrediting associations."

Meanwhile, the SBC Executive Committee appointed its own task force to study accreditation of the convention's seminaries. Working with a similar group on the Education Commission, the task force recommended that trustees be better trained to understand accreditation issues and presented a resolution asking accrediting agencies to "strive for greater consistency" in evaluation of schools and to take care to avoid "the appearance of pressure designed to affect the theological posture of educational institutions."

Alternative pastors' event set for Atlanta

TAMPA, Fla. (ABP)—A Florida pastor is organizing a "middle-of-the-road" conference for June 18-19 in Atlanta as an alternative to the SBC Pastors' Conference.

The two-day "preaching and worship conference" will feature messages from Richard Jackson, Jess Moody and Frank Pollard—all longtime Baptist pastors and former candidates for SBC president—among others.

The meeting will begin Sunday night, June 18, and continue with three sessions on Monday, all held at Wieuca Road Baptist Church in Atlanta.

The Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, which annually draws 15,000-20,000 people, will be held simultaneously in Atlanta's Georgia Dome. The Southern Baptist Convention opens Tuesday, June 20, also in the Georgia Dome.

"My goal is not to compete with the Pastors' Conference but to say 'This is a contrast,'" said Don Letzring, pastor of Wellwood Baptist Church in Tampa, Fla., and organizer of the meeting.

Letzring said the Pastors' Conference is "more limited in who it invites" and is skewed to the right theologically.

The Pastors' Conference, which precedes the SBC annual meeting each year, has been used by conservatives to promote their candidates for SBC president in a successful 15-year campaign to gain control of the SBC.

In 1984, moderates formed the rival SBC Forum to compete with the Pastors' Conference. Now defunct, the Forum was a precursor to other moderate organizations like the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Since 1990, when conservatives solidified their hold on the SBC and the Fellowship was formed, most moderates have quit going to the SBC and its related meetings.

Letzring said there is nothing political about this year's alternative preaching conference and that he is not promoting a presidential candidate to oppose incumbent Jim Henry of Orlando, Fla.

Scheduled preachers for the alternative conference include Dan Francis, pastor of First Baptist Church of Nashville; Brian Harbour, pastor of First Baptist Church of Richardson, Texas; Jackson, former pastor of North Phoenix (Ariz.) Baptist Church and now an evangelist and conference leader in Brownwood, Texas; Phil Lineberger, pastor of First Baptist Church of Tyler, Texas; Moody, pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Church in Porter Ranch, Calif.; and Pollard, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jackson, Miss.

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Campbell chosen.** The William H. Whitsitt Baptist Heritage Society will present its Baptist Courage Award to author and civil-rights activist Will Campbell, the society's president announced. Campbell will be honored at the society's 1995 annual meeting scheduled July 20 in Fort Worth, Texas.

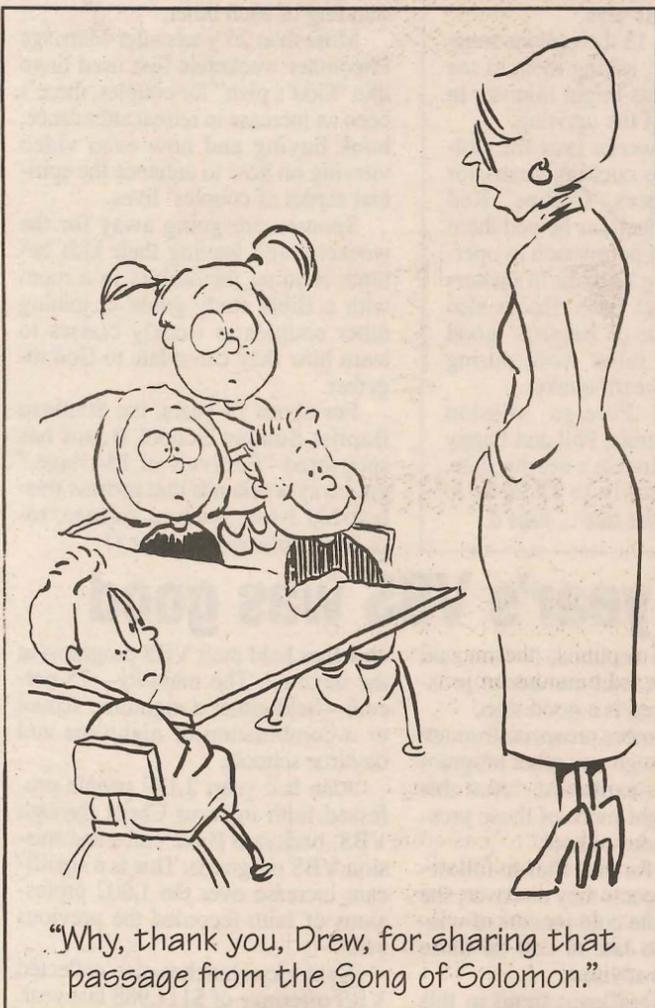
■ **Sojourner deadline nears.** March 10 is the deadline for applications to be a Sojourner or student summer missionary with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. The Sojourner program is for high school students who have completed their junior or senior year. Sojourners work as volunteers six to 10 weeks in full-time home missions service. The student summer missions program is for college students who serve 10 weeks in full-time summer missions work. For information, call (800) HMB-VOLS.

■ **WMU gets toll-free number.** Woman's Missionary Union customers now may call a toll-free number to place an order, check on an existing order, inquire about an invoice or just ask a question. The new number is (800) 968-7301.

■ **Swanberg appointed.** Dennis Swanberg has been named special assistant to the president for seminary relations at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He comes to his new position after four years as pastor of First Baptist Church of West Monroe, La. Swanberg will work closely with President Ken Hemphill and the seminary's office of student services, particularly in recruitment.

■ **Southern names Anderson.** Brad Anderson has been named director of annual giving at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Anderson previously worked for Cargill Associates, a Fort Worth, Texas, based consulting firm, and for the University of Texas at Arlington's College of Business.

■ **Quicke to visit Southern.** Michael Quicke, principal of Spurgeon's College in London, England, will be keynote speaker for the National Conference on Biblical Preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary March 6-10. Quicke also will deliver the seminary's annual Mullins lectures. For information, call (502) 897-4315.



"Why, thank you, Drew, for sharing that passage from the Song of Solomon."

SBC president speaks at Glasgow pastor's installation

By Marv Knox
Editor

GLASGOW—Churches and their pastors must bond together if they are going to accomplish God's work in the world, Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry told a Kentucky crowd Feb. 5.

Henry, a graduate of Georgetown College, returned to Kentucky to preach the commissioning sermon for Scott Mackey, new pastor of Glasgow Baptist Church.

Mackey, who formerly was minister to youth at Glasgow Baptist, grew up in the congregation where Henry is pastor, First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla.

Several Glasgow-area churches canceled evening services in order to hear Henry, whose wife, Jeanette, grew up in Cave City.

Churches and pastors have responsibilities to each other, Henry stressed. He began by identifying responsibilities a church has to its pastor. "Pray for him at all times. Encourage him. Love him.

"Be patient with him," he added.

"He's not perfect, but you're not either. ... Let him be your leader. God has appointed him as your spiritual leader. He's not a dictator, but one to articulate God's vision. So, the church owes him trust.

"And support him. Pay him well for the service he renders to your souls. When you're hurting, this man will be there as your soul friend to encourage you, and you owe it to him to support him."

Acknowledging the purpose of the service was to commission a pastor, Henry turned his attention to a pastor's duties. Citing the Apostle Paul's two letters to his young protege, the pastor Timothy, he described six things God expects of a pastor:

■ "Guard your teaching," he admonished. "We live in a world of heresies. ... Be sure you teach your people so they learn how to discern heresy."

■ "Guard your example," Henry added. "Every man obviously is tempted, but people entrust pastors to be godly men."

As an antidote to temptation, he said pastors must "keep faith in Christ

Jesus."

The pastor should be an upstanding figure in the community, he stressed: "Pay your bills. Don't go begging for discounts. Be professional in the best sense of the word. In the denomination, don't aspire to office, but be patient. In counseling, watch your hands, your words, your time."

■ "Guard your devotional life," Henry counseled. "Grow strong in the grace of Christ Jesus through your devotional life. Love him. Praise him. Develop a fellowship relationship with him."

He compared a minister's life to a sponge that absorbs what it touches. "The time will come when it will be squeezed out—and it should be squeezed out if you're living a life of ministry for people. But Christ will come through you, and Christ will fill you up again."

■ "Guard the Scriptures," he advised. "This word God has given us is so very special."

■ "Guard your preaching," Henry said. "How? With simplicity. ... People have got to understand it. If you follow the preaching of Jesus, you

know his preaching was profound yet amazingly simple."

■ "Guard your witnessing," he exhorted. "Do the work of an evangelist.

"Your people expect your heart to be afire for souls. Only as you witness will the church be a church that witnesses, evangelizes and reaches people for Jesus. And if it doesn't do that, it will die."

Pastors should see their influence as greater than in just one congregation, Henry added.

"There's a small window of opportunity open in America today," he said. "This nation is hemorrhaging. You can't reach it through the government, but you can through the churches. And through the churches you can reach the homes, the schools, the businesses.

"The work of the church is to get the good news of the gospel outside the walls of the church. And one day, all of us who are pastors will stand before Christ, and he will ask: 'Did you guard my church, for which I gave my blood? Did you? Did you? Did you?'"

BUILDING PLANNED Georgetown College has announced plans to construct a \$12 million learning resource center to replace the outdated campus library. Georgetown trustees recently voted to proceed with plans for the building, shown in an architect's projection below. The three-story facility will have 53,000 square feet of space, including a 125-seat auditorium, a 100-seat distance learning center, a replica of the Yale Law Library study room, a gourmet coffee shop; a book store; study areas and the main library. To date, \$5.9 million in donations has been committed to the project. A groundbreaking date has not been set.

Warren Association opposes potential sale of Cedarmore

BOWLING GREEN—The executive board of Warren Baptist Association passed two motions Feb. 6 concerning the potential sale of Cedarmore Baptist Assembly.

Last December, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Executive Board voted to terminate KBC ownership and operation of the assembly, located near Shelbyville.

The KBC Executive Board appointed a transition committee to recommend how to facilitate KBC camping programs and what to do with Cedarmore. That committee met for the first time Feb. 9.

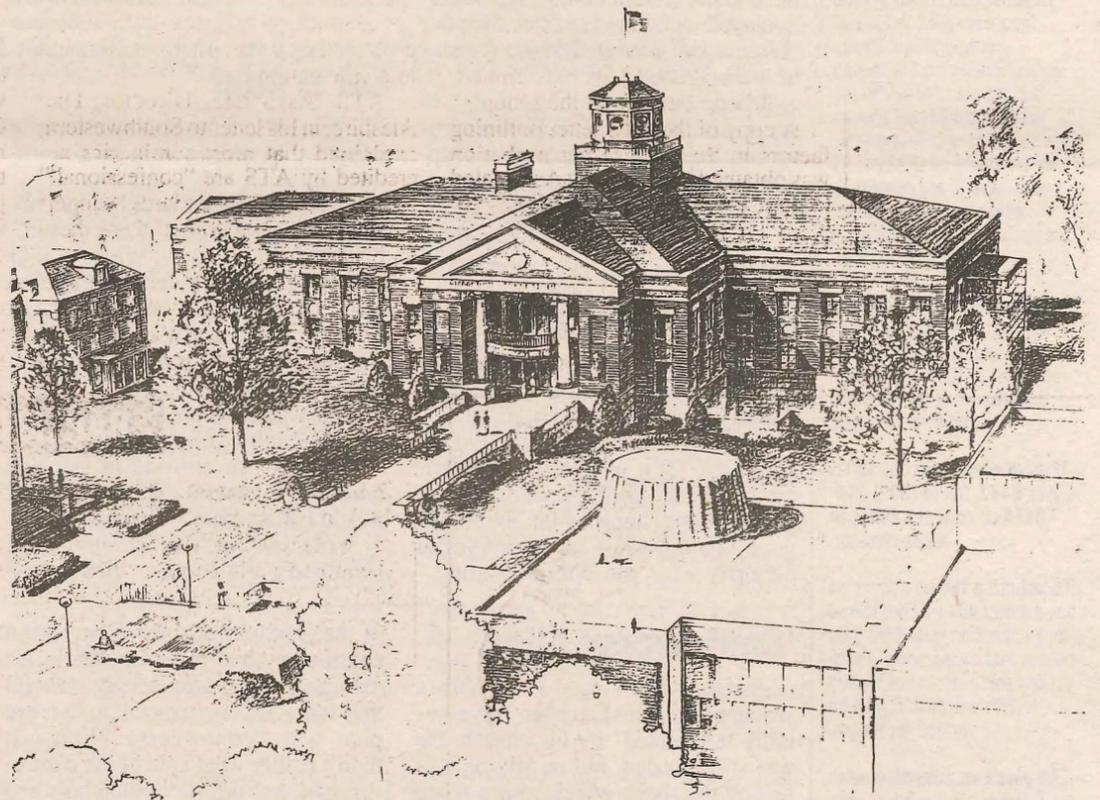
The motions from Warren Association ask the Executive Board not to sell Cedarmore and instead to establish a camps committee of the Executive Board to supervise both Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek assemblies. This committee should be part of the Executive Board's church growth and administration division, the Warren motions suggest. Currently, the camps are managed through the Ex-

ecutive Board's business division.

The associational leadership said they believe neither Cedarmore nor Jonathan Creek has reached its full potential. "We believe that if maintenance was done in a timely and ongoing manner, if a marketing program was developed, if revenue generated by camp property was used for maintenance and operation of the camps and all monies allocated for maintenance of the camps be returned to this fund, they could reach their potential," one of the motions said.

The Warren Association action further calls on the KBC Executive Board to bring the matter of Cedarmore's future to a vote of the full convention next November.

The Executive Board has not technically voted to sell Cedarmore yet. But one likely outcome of the transition committee's work—which is to be reported next December—will be a recommendation to sell all or part of the assembly.



Friends of Brotherhood formed to support men's ministry

By Joyce Sweeney Martin
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—Kentucky Baptist Brotherhood has announced the formation of a non-profit corporation to help better communicate with its constituency across the state.

Called Friends of Brotherhood, the enterprise will operate independently of Kentucky Brotherhood, with its own articles of incorporation and board of trustees, officials said.

Although Friends of Brotherhood will be a separate entity, its purpose will be to undergird and support the work of Kentucky Brotherhood.

"Brotherhood leaders across the

state have had a dream to make accessible to the person in the pew the many mission opportunities now available through Brotherhood-led projects," said Richard Easterling, state Brotherhood president and chairman of the Friends trustees.

To that end, Friends of Brotherhood has two goals, according to Bob Simpkins, Kentucky Brotherhood director: to publish a communications piece called "Untitled," which will inform people interested in Kentucky Brotherhood about opportunities for missions involvement; and to create a mechanism whereby funds can be received for missions projects.

"We envision Friends as a conduit

for missions information and as a means of funding Kentucky Brotherhood missions projects," Easterling said.

"This is a faith venture which we hope will make a significant difference in helping us walk through all the doors God is opening to us now," Simpkins added.

Two issues of "Untitled" have been published. Plans call for four issues with 10,000 copies each to be published per year. Expected cost is \$3,000 per issue.

"Untitled" features reports of individual, church and associational missions projects; upcoming Brotherhood events; notes from Kentucky

Brotherhood staff and information to assist local church Brotherhood groups in their work.

Money donated beyond that needed to publish the magazine will undergird missions projects.

Money received by Friends of Brotherhood will be distributed based upon recommendations of the Kentucky Brotherhood steering committee.

In addition to Easterling, Ralph McDonald of Hopkinsville and James Morgan of Liberty are trustees.

For more information, contact Friends of Brotherhood, Richard Easterling, P.O. Box 58, Liberty, Ky. 42539.

OPINION

WESTERN RECORDER

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

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Repent of sexism

I read with great interest "Resolution on racism headed for SBC" (WR, Jan. 24).

However, I find it disturbing that there are some Baptists who have trouble admitting that, as a previous resolution noted, "Southern Baptists have not always clearly stood for racial justice and equality." Or that they have difficulty "repenting, apologizing, and asking for forgiveness for condoning and perpetuating individual and systemic racism for which we may have been responsible."

While the Baptists who perpetuated the sins of racism may have felt that they were following biblical teachings, the teachings of love and equality espoused by Jesus finally won out. And we need to ask forgiveness.

While hopefully racism is now past, we need to look within our hearts to see if we haven't fallen into the same trap concerning women in ministry. The Bible teaches us we are one in the spirit: no slave, no master, no male, no female.

Unless Baptists begin to speak out for sexual justice and equality within the body of Christ; unless Baptists repudiate the systemic sexism, then our children will have to address the sins of their parents.

I hope that I live long enough to see a similar resolution passed concerning the lack of support by Baptists for justice and equality for women, especially in the ministry.

Michael Jupin
Louisville

Deficit concerns

The Western Recorder (Jan. 24) presented positions on the federal deficit that should concern us all.

On the editorial page, we find the comment, "If it will reduce the deficit, break the gridlock and give my grandchildren hope for the future, I'll get by on a modest cut in my Social Security—for the common good."

"Controversy blind"

Some months ago, I sat with a young pastor who had been "involuntarily terminated" by his church. He was still puzzled, but mostly he was feeling the shock which comes when one is suddenly without a job and has a family to feed.

He had already visited with Guy Futral and had been assured that the Kentucky Baptist Convention could and would provide some financial assistance for three months, and would later offer him and his wife an opportunity to "walk through" this experience in a retreat with other couples similarly affected.

We talked at length about his potential future in Kentucky, and I sensed there was a strong determination to "try again." I was glad about that and not really surprised to learn some months later he was back in another pastorate.

I had known that his involvement

This is a view many Christians would share, not just with Social Security, but with other governmental benefits, especially if they had assurance this sacrifice would benefit those who really need it.

A different idea is described by Religious News Service, "Nearly all mainline Protestant groups surveyed have made defeat of the proposed balanced budget amendment a top priority, contending that it would harm the poor."

Do these "mainline Protestant groups" mean deficit spending, which is not only stealing from future generations but compelling them to pay interest on the theft, is in line with Christian morality, but living within our income contradicts Christian principles?

We are being told we have more people working, more growth in our economy, a higher standard of living and more governmental revenue than ever. If we cannot reduce our outgo to comply with our income now, when will we? If we don't, what kind of future will our grandchildren face?

The basic choice our society must make is not between Democrat or Republican, but between responsibility and irresponsibility.

John V. Barnett
Bagdad

Let it stop

This letter is in response to your editorial regarding cuts in government spending (WR, Jan. 24).

Most want it to happen, but nobody is willing to say, "Let it be me." I am. I'll tell you why: We have four wonderful children and seven grand ones. I have an idea what comes out of their checks to pay our soon-to-be Social Security, and chances are, they'll never get any of it.

Our young people should not have to bear that tax yoke.

There is an attitude in our age bracket: "I want no cut. I worked for it, and I want what's coming to me."

True, we've worked hard, but somebody has to say, "Let it stop

in the Southern Baptist Convention controversy had played a role in his dismissal, but I was deeply grateful that the KBC emergency assistance plan was "controversy blind." It didn't matter what side of the controversy he was on. He needed help and help was available.

I have since thought how miserable it would be if in my work I would have to ask the question, "Are you a moderate conservative or a fundamental conservative?" and then have to make decisions to help folks based on their answer to that question.

Try to imagine the direct missions department, when asked to assist in funding a pastor for a new church, having first to ask, "Is the sponsoring church moderate conservative or fundamental conservative?" and then providing the funding based on their answer to that question.

Or when a tornado rips apart a Kentucky Baptist church, the Brotherhood's disaster relief unit leader

here." It should start at the top—Washington, Frankfort on down.

Ann Neikirk
Somerset

Boyce vs. Mullins

Associated Baptist Press reported I affirmed (Southern Seminary) President Al Mohler's interpretation but denounced his application of the Abstract of Principles (WR, Jan. 17). In fact, we agree only that J.P. Boyce mandated a strict adherence to the Abstract. I find President Mohler's "Brief Affirmation and Interpretation" of the Abstract biased and misleading.

He is inexcusably inconsistent in charging that a professor's "private interpretation" of the Abstract indicates "a lack of integrity (that) is breathtaking," after he had issued his own private interpretation!

His most serious maneuvering concerns "Article V, Election." His ruling is that the Abstract is to be adhered to as the founders intended and Boyce mandated. As he interprets Article V, he cites nothing from Boyce, substituting his skewed version of (President E. Y.) Mullins, who was not a founder. Mohler himself violates Boyce's intention.

Comparison of Boyce's "Abstract of Systematic Theology" (1887) and Mullins' "The Christian Religion in its Doctrinal Expression" (1917) shows them to hold mutually exclusive positions on "election," Boyce a Calvinist and Mullins neither Calvinist nor Arminian. ...

In his preface to "The Christian Religion in its Doctrinal Expression," Mullins exposed the weaknesses of both Calvinism and Arminianism and concluded: "We are learning to discard both names and to adhere more closely than either to the Scriptures while retaining the truth in both systems." With this stance I resonate. Mohler does an injustice to Mullins by representing him as supporting the intention of Manly and Boyce in "Article V, Election."

Frank Stagg
Diamondhead, Miss.

would be required, before helping, to get the desired answer to "the" question before providing assistance.

Or having to determine a church is on one side or the other before extending annuity assistance to Kentucky Baptist church employees.

I am grateful that Kentucky Baptists are bigger than that sort of thing; that Kentucky Baptists seem to know where the lines are over which one does not step.

I am grateful that Kentucky Baptists who team up to go to Russia come from churches which represent all of our political differences—no questions asked.

I am grateful that Cooperative Program funds, restricted Cooperative Program funds and designated gifts flow together from Kentucky Baptists of all political persuasions and that, thereby, our mission together goes on.

Kentucky Baptists have accepted diversity for a long, long time. Maybe that's why we keep hanging in there together.

William W. Marshall is executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.



FAMILY FORUM: S I N G L E S

Comfort zone? Yuk!

By Harry Rowland

Q I've been single for 10 years, the children are gone and nothing is exciting. Where is that joyful single life?

A Joy isn't dependent on a certain lifestyle but on your trust in God's ability to keep his promise of a future and a hope. One problem is that we can become so accustomed to living in a comfort zone that we miss his daily work in our lives. The comfort zone is that station in life where you are just playing a game—everyone is involved, but there is no real progress. Life is like a taxi ride—whether you're moving or not, the meter keeps running.

Other characteristics of the comfort zone are: It is not focused (business as usual); mistakes aren't costly (no risk); and no victories are won (complacency has set in). As you have experienced, it is in the comfort zone where most people lose interest.

One reason why people live in the comfort zone is because it is comfortable even though it isn't fulfilling. I have found that joy doesn't come to the brilliant, pretty or lucky, but to those who want it—those who have a passion for life.

We lose this passion when we are unwilling to sacrifice the immediate for the important; lack confidence in pursuing dreams; still struggle with unresolved personal issues; spend too much time on trivia; try to live off yesterday; are unwilling to change; and are exhausted physically, emotionally or spiritually.

To climb out of the comfort zone, you must set definite goals; plan for reaching those goals; be willing to take risks; value time; concentrate on your strengths; live life based on character, not feelings; make necessary changes; and take time to celebrate the successes. With God, everyone has the opportunity to celebrate life. Joy is an issue of trust in God's ability to continually perfect us.

The Apostle Paul said it well: "For I am confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will continue to perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6).

Harry Rowland is pastor of Fort Mitchell Baptist Church.

Send your questions about children, teens, marriage, singles or aging to "Family Forum," Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253.

Welfare reform will produce child-care challenge

Churches will face a unique opportunity if Washington succeeds in its quest to "end welfare as we know it."

Welfare "as we know it" is a legacy of the '60s, a key battle strategy in the war on poverty. Unfortunately, it shares at least three traits with the other '60s legacy, the Vietnam War. It's been awesomely expensive. It's created a dependent population. And we can't seem to win.

Almost everyone agrees welfare must be reformed. Conservatives decry the crippling expense, bureaucratic waste and burden on middle-class taxpayers. Liberals acknowledge welfare has created a class of citizens who, with limited exceptions, depend on public assistance to perpetuate an impoverished life cycle.

The primary goal of welfare reform—to pull able-bodied non-working adults off the public dole and place them in the workforce—makes sense. If that goal were achieved, we could reduce the expense and size of government, turn dependent recipients into productive workers and strengthen the nation's sagging self-esteem. The goal follows logical moral reasoning. We believe society is strongest when people are given the opportunity and accept the responsibility to work for their daily bread.

Welfare reform presents many challenges. Among them: How to wean people off government assistance. How to create jobs. How to train new workers. But another challenge—and this is where churches come in—is what to do with at least 3.2 million preschool children when their parents, many of them single mothers, return to the workforce.

A glib answer comes to mind, "Working parents can pay for child care." However, reality isn't that simple:

■ Families earning less than \$15,000 per year—the range for new

unskilled workers—must spend 23 percent of their income on child-care costs, a study by the National Child Care Action Campaign revealed.

■ Among job-training participants, a disproportionate share of mothers who could not get good care for their children dropped out before their training was done, according to a University of California survey.

■ Twenty percent of families who were waiting for child care assistance so parents could work went back on welfare before the assistance started, a study by the Minnesota Department of Human Services showed. The drop-out parents couldn't make enough money to pay for child care and other necessities.

■ Child-care problems kept 42 percent of welfare recipients from working full time and kept 39 percent from looking for as much work as desired, according to an Illinois Department of Public Aid survey.

■ Two-thirds of welfare mothers in Washington state cited difficulty with child-care responsibilities as the main reason they couldn't find and keep their jobs.

Most welfare-reform packages call for putting people back on the job, but they don't address the needs of children. This gives churches and associations a tremendous opportunity—and responsibility. If we see child care as a ministry to families, we can team up to provide nurturing, affordable care for children whose families are struggling to pull themselves up from poverty and into productivity. We can make a lasting difference in young lives. We can support "traditional family values." And we can demonstrate Christian concern for people Jesus called "the least of these."

Marv Knox

If welfare reform puts American adults back to work, churches will receive a unique opportunity to minister to families by caring for their children.

Sexual misconduct destroying American clergy's credibility

In 1973, White House counsel John Dean warned Richard Nixon that the Watergate cover-up was a "cancer" destroying the president's credibility. And Dean was right.

Today, a different cancer is eating away at the credibility of yet another power center: The disease is sexual misconduct, and the destruction is happening inside the ranks of American clergy.

The recent revelation that Massachusetts Episcopal Bishop David Johnson, who had just committed suicide, was involved in extramarital affairs is only the latest in a devastating series.

To its credit, the Episcopal Church publicly revealed Johnson's wrongdoing soon after the bishop's suicide. The church correctly affirmed that "the only way we can go forward in the healing process is if the truth is

known. ..."

And as America commemorated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, Georgia Powers, a former Kentucky state senator, announced she had carried on a sexual affair with the martyred civil rights leader.

Her claim was denounced by a former King associate, but the denial did little to halt the widespread belief that one of America's most famous religious leaders was guilty of affairs.

And, of course, the Roman Catholic Church has been rocked by reports of priests sexually abusing children and of sexual involvement between clergy and parishioners. Bishops have moved to provide counseling for clergy as well as inaugurate the difficult but necessary process of disciplining priests who go astray. It promises to be painful for everyone concerned.

Nor is the American rabbinate exempt from charges of sexual misconduct. While the Jewish community does not view rabbis as ethereal beings devoid of sensual passions, it does expect its rabbis to be role models of sexual probity and integrity.

Some clergy have argued that such expectations are unfair and place an unnatural burden upon clergy. But fair or not, most church and synagogue members believe that when the messengers of religion are flawed in character, it makes their messages flawed as well.

The problem is not limited to sexual failings of clergy. Disturbing reports abound of dysfunctional marriages filled with angry spouses and alienated children, "preachers' kids" who are the victims of abusive fathers. While clergy preach the importance of positive family values, some of them fail to heed their own teachings.

At the heart of the problem of clergy misbehavior is trust. Because priests, ministers and rabbis are accorded a special place in society, they sometimes fail to recognize that such high status is a sacred trust given on loan by lay people. A social contract is made in which lay people grant certain moral teaching powers to the clergy.

But when trust in the morality of the clergy is undermined by sexual and psychological abuse, the contract rapidly becomes null and void.

Each time I hear about clergy misconduct, I remember the wise counsel a rabbinical school teacher gave to my all-male class: "The single most important thing at all times is to keep your pants zipped, both literally and figuratively." Good advice back then; even better advice today.

James Rudin
Religion News Service
New York

GUEST EDITORIAL

Unfathomable mysteries of 2nd-grade science travel at the speed of sound

We've been studying sound in second-grade science.

Several chapters in Molly's textbook describe how sound works. Charts and pictures explain everything: How sound travels in waves. How the outer ear on the side of your head acts like a funnel to channel sound waves down to your ear drum. How your ear drum vibrates and moves tiny bones that stimulate nerves that tell your brain you just heard something.

We've done our homework, passed the test (OK, Molly passed the test; the good thing about being a daddy is you don't have to take tests anymore.) and know all about sound and hearing.

Well, not exactly.

We know all the theories and scientific

mumbo-jumbo. But her textbook didn't explain the real mysteries of sound. You know what I mean—the everyday logical inconsistencies and signals that tell a sane person that sound really operates beyond the realm of normal comprehension.

For example, I can't understand how come a kid cannot hear a parent-type person standing two feet away say something simple and direct. Like, "It's time to brush your teeth and get ready for bed" or, "I'm not going to tell you again; go clean up your

room."

Maybe this is like the old riddle about whether or not a tree that falls in an empty forest makes a sound. Does a parent who gives instructions to a room full of children make a sound? Maybe we only think we hear ourselves say, "It's time to turn off the TV and wash your hands for dinner." Maybe sound waves grab hold of our molars and refuse to leave our mouths.

That leads to another mystery. What about super-potent sounds? You know. The ones adults think are faint but must be tremendous, since kids

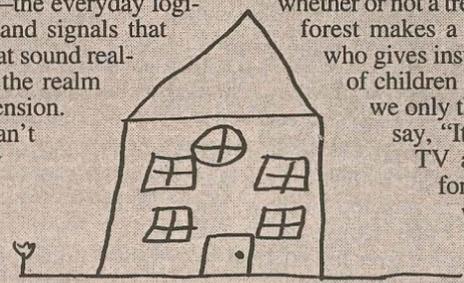
hear them from enormous distances. Like the clunk-hiss of a soda-pop can opening, or the sssstritch of a candy wrapper tearing.

The same children who couldn't hear a drill sergeant tell them to get upstairs and take their baths can be riding their bicycles halfway down the block and still recognize the sound of a potato chip crunching inside my mouth.

And yet these children, who can hear marshmallows roasting, need their tape players cranked up to 50,000 decibels. I just don't get it.

So, maybe sound is best left to the realm of mystery. Maybe we're not supposed to understand how it works. Or maybe I just need some peace and quiet.

Marv Knox



down home

New religious liberty law slowly helps evangelicals

Hispanics embracing faith of evangelicals worldwide

By Will Swaim
Religion News Service

LONG BEACH, Calif. (RNS)—Ever since Columbus planted a crucifix on the shores of Hispaniola in 1492, Latin America has provided Roman Catholicism with its largest and arguably most devoted constituency.

That enduring legacy is wavering.

Throughout the Americas, as many as 70 million Hispanics now call evangelical churches their spiritual homes. The trend is even stronger north of the U.S.-Mexico border where, according to polls and U.S. Census data, one-fourth of all Hispanics claim membership in Protestant churches.

Take Jose Cintron who, as a boy of 14, left the Catholic Church for alcohol and cigarettes. "I had a mouth like a latrine," he says. And when he married he was "a typical womanizer."

At 25, he fled his problems and his home in Puerto Rico. Trouble followed and five months later caught him in Orlando, Fla.

The drinking worsened and his marriage collapsed. Cintron entered an Orlando church, went down on his knees and found God.

Back at his house, he threw out the booze and the cigarettes.

"I couldn't even curse if I wanted to," he says. "And my eyes stopped wandering; I couldn't look at women in the same way."

It sounds like a conventional religious conversion—except that Cintron, now a handsome Christian missionary in his 40s, is Hispanic. And the church that led him to God was one of the mushrooming number of Protestant evangelical churches run by and for Hispanic Americans.

In North America alone, Hispanic Catholics abandon their church at the rate of 60,000 a year, according to Andrew Greeley, a Catholic priest, sociologist and novelist.

Some remain unchurched. But many have found a place in the pews of evangelical congregations. Twenty-five years ago, fewer than 100,000 Hispanic Protestants could be found in North America. Today, there are more than 5 million.

Hispanics account for almost all recent growth in evangelical churches, even black and Anglo congregations, according to Jesse Miranda, theology professor at Azusa Pacific College near Los Angeles.

But the changing trends of Hispanic religious affiliation have not come without difficulty. The dominant Hispanic Catholic culture still oppresses evangelical converts, evangelical leaders say.

Alma Arias says Catholic prejudice is a fact of life for Hispanic evangelicals. Born and raised in Guadalajara, Mexico, Arias was 14 when her father led the family out of the Roman Catholic church into a newly established evangelical congregation.

Relatives and friends were not pleased.

"It was very hard at the beginning," she remembers. "It was very strange. All my friends stopped talking to me."

Some former friends called her family "hermanos separados"—separated brothers.

Others used less genteel descriptions. Some told her she had been brainwashed.

Other evangelicals say tension between Hispanic evangelicals and Catholics has more to do with events in Latin America where, they say, a dominant Catholic majority, backed by the power of national governments, is working to eradicate the evangelical movement.

"We have to resolve the tension in Latin America before we can work together in the United States," says Andreas Panasiuk, a Hispanic evangelical born in Argentina but now living in Chicago.

MEXICO CITY (BP)—A new religious liberty law in Mexico has opened the door for greater acceptance of evangelical Christians, but the paperwork has been overwhelming.

Attorney Jorge Lee Galindo works full time for the National Baptist Convention of Mexico, mainly helping Mexican Baptists learn what the law means for them. He travels across the country meeting with Baptist leaders to explain practical implications of the law, passed by the Mexican legislature in July 1992.

The law grants churches official legal status in Mexico for the first time. "Before, churches couldn't own any property. They couldn't have their own bank accounts," Lee explained.

But to gain the new status under

the new law, churches must register with the government. That hasn't been an easy task for Baptists. Lee helps cut through the red tape.

Most religious groups file under the name of a single organization. But Baptist polity presented some problems for a government far more familiar with the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church.

"It's hard for (government officials) to understand Baptists' practice of the autonomy of the local church,"

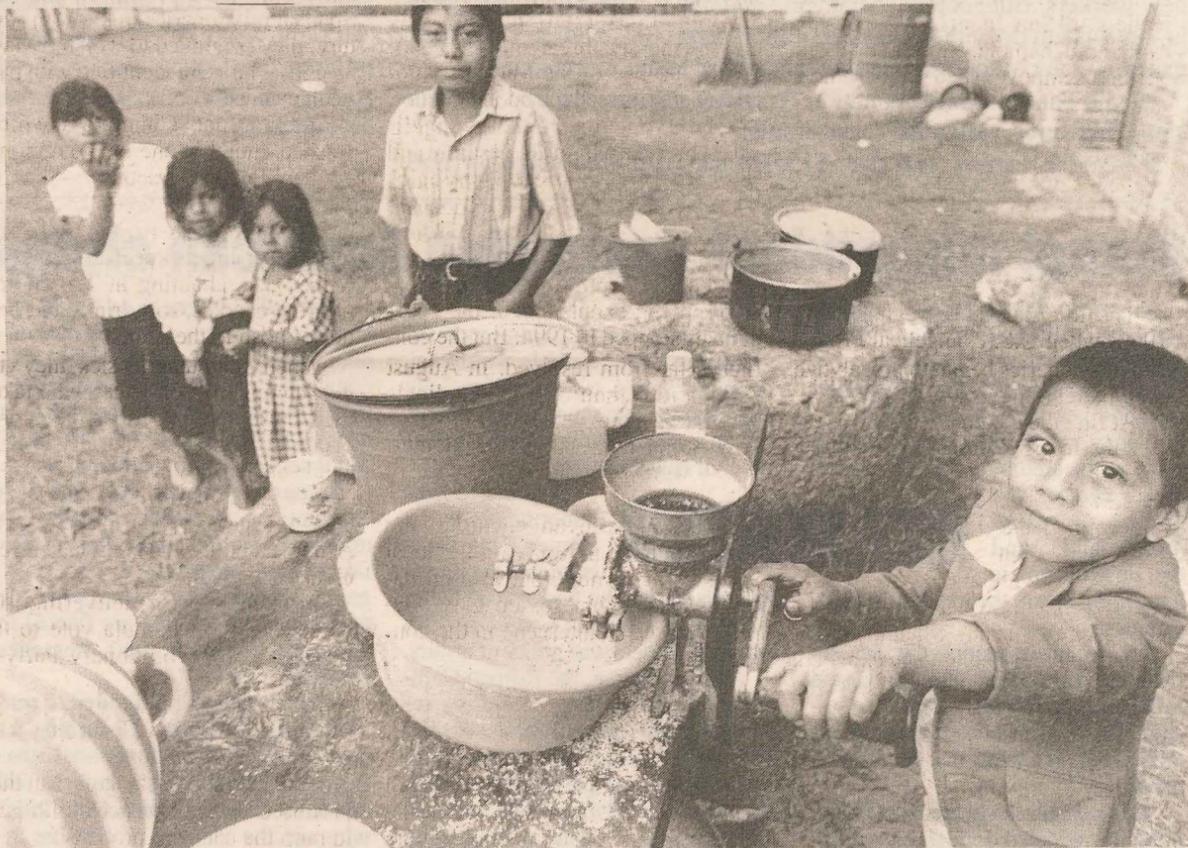
Lee said.

To gain legal status, each of the Baptist convention's nearly 1,200 churches must be registered individually. That's been a big job for Lee and his colleagues. They're still working on it.

The convention itself registered first. The country's 38 regional Bap-



Galindo



KITCHEN DUTY A refugee child grinds corn on the property of a Baptist mission in Mexico's Chiapas state. He and his playmates come from evangelical families who fled their homes in nearby San Juan Chamula, where Roman Catholic townspeople have persecuted evangelicals for several decades. Late last year, three evangelicals were murdered for their faith. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

Missionaries face challenges in Mexico

Continued from page 1
help the Collinses.

Their days started before dawn and ended late at night.

"Sometimes I said, 'God, I'm tired. If you want to do something here, you're going to have to do it because I can't,'" Collins admits. "I saw God move in that."

The project drew more than 150 Baptist volunteers from across Mexico to staff the kitchens. They fed up to 1,600 refugees twice a day before turning over the kitchens to the government last May.

The first refugee fed was Patricia Mendez, 13. Today she greets the Collinses after worship at a new Baptist mission church in Las Margaritas, which resulted in part from the feeding project. The missionaries give her

family a ride home.

When Zapatista rebels seized their town, they gave local men 24 hours to join their forces. Anyone who declined would be killed, they warned.

Rather than take up arms, the Mendez family left their home and farm. "Although it was a poor house, it was our house. We were crying. We thought we would never be able to return," she says.

The family found shelter in another town. But a few weeks later local officials made them move on. Townspeople feared refugees brought disease.

When refugees arrived at the shelter in La Independencia, "they were shell-shocked," Collins recalls.

It took time to gain their trust. When Baptists invited the refugees to

worship services in nearby Las Margaritas, "a rumor arose that Baptists were part of the Zapatistas and this might be a way of winning us over," says Mrs. Mendez.

But she and her family went anyway. "We saw that God was with (Baptists). And we realized we needed to accept Christ," she explains.

Today they and several other refugee families have become Christians and attend the mission church in Las Margaritas. The congregation recently purchased property for a church building. For now they meet in the home of Lindoro Fonseca, a Baptist layman who for years prayed God would provide a Baptist church in his town.

"We see God's hand in the things that have happened here," he says.

Evangelical-Catholic clash in Chiapas also economic

By Joel Simon
Religion News Service

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (RNS)—Domingo Lopez Angel, an evangelical minister in the Church of God, smiles as he recalls kidnapping the Mayan-Catholic mayor of San Juan Chamula.

On July 6, 1994, a day after the evangelicals captured Mayor Domingo Lopez Ruiz, 100 of the mayor's supporters tried to rescue him.

"We got the better of them," Lopez Angel says of the ensuing street battle. "We killed two and only suffered a few minor injuries."

It was one of the evangelicals' few victories in a bitter feud that goes back two decades. But it won them the right to return to the town from which they had been forcibly expelled over the last 20 years.

Since 1973, the Mayan-Catholic leaders of San Juan Chamula—the capital of Chamula, a municipality in Mexico's impoverished southernmost region of Chiapas—have forcibly expelled more than 15,000 evangelical converts from their homes.

The Tzotzil-speaking Chamulas are Mayan Indians who live as corn farmers and shepherds in villages scattered about the pine-covered highlands.

The internal strife began in the 1960s when U.S. evangelical Protestant missionaries began to proselytize the Chamula Indians.

At first the Chamula leaders tolerated the foreigners. But in 1973 they banned all foreign ministers, claiming the new wave of Chamula converts undermined the traditional Mayan-Catholic religion.

But even without the foreign ministers, evangelical Christianity continued to spread. That's when the evangelical converts began to be expelled.

Much of the conflict is rooted in the ancient cultural traditions of the Chamulas. For centuries, the Chamulas, descendants of the ancient Mayans, have practiced a traditional folk religion that combines elements of Roman Catholicism with Mayan beliefs that individual gods control various natural functions such as the rain and wind.

The evangelical converts refused to participate in the ceremonies, which often involve the consumption of large quantities of a home-brewed liquor called "posh."

The Mayan-Catholics charge that the evangelical converts threaten their cultural survival. But the evangelicals have a different interpretation: They say they're merely threatening the economic survival of the Mayan-Catholic leaders who sell the bootleg liquor.

The expulsion of the evangelicals—most of whom are destitute and forced to live in squatter colonies without basic sanitation—has contributed to the social and political deterioration of the state of Chiapas.

Under pressure from the Mexican government, expulsions of the evangelicals stopped in 1994. But the conflict is far from resolved. In August 1994, more than 500 evangelicals who had been expelled and beaten a year earlier returned to their homes. Three were murdered by an angry mob in September.

Most of the evangelicals blame their expulsion not only on the local leaders in Chamula, but also on national leaders in Mexico City who have refused to intervene in the conflict.

Finding a solution has taken on new urgency with the rise of an armed rebellion in Chiapas a year ago.

On Jan. 1, 1994, rebels from the largely indigenous Zapatista Army of National Liberation took over towns throughout Chiapas, demanding land reform, democracy and the resignation of the Mexican president.

Many evangelicals now support the rebels, and a few have joined their armed fight.

If the feud has a strongly political dimension, its roots are firmly planted in the idiosyncrasies of the Mayan-Catholic folk religion.

While the Chamulas were nominally converted to Christianity by Spanish missionaries in the 16th century, they continued to worship Mayan gods who were identified with particular saints.

In San Juan Chamula's white-washed church—one of the region's greatest tourist attractions—Spanish saints, dressed in Indian silks and garlanded with dead flowers, line the walls. Worshipers kneel amidst an incense haze, chanting in Tzotzil and offering candles, soft drinks and bottles of posh to the saints.

When Chamulas get sick, they visit a "curandero," or healer, who takes their pulse and prescribes the appropriate offering—generally posh, chickens and cola.

All the trappings of this cultural-religious mix are controlled by powerful local political bosses, called "caciques."

In exchange for delivering 100 percent of the Chamula vote to the Institutional Revolutionary Party—

which has ruled Mexico virtually unopposed since 1929—government officials let the caciques hold sway in Chamula, critics charge.

Not only that, critics say that because the caciques control the sale and distribution of the candles, home-brewed liquor, incense and soft drinks used in Mayan-Catholic religious ceremonies and fiestas, every convert to evangelical Protestantism represents a loss of income for the Mayan-Catholic power base.

The caciques have justified the machete-driven expulsions of evangelicals by claiming the evangelicals undermined the town's Mayan religious traditions.

"We don't want foreign ministers," says Juan "Gallo" Gonzalez Hernandez, who directs the Cultural Center in San Juan Chamula. "They come and take advantage of the ignorance of our people. They tell the people they can't talk with the saints and that the healers can't cure people. It's a violation of our indigenous traditions."

But exiled Chamulas and human rights groups in the region disagree.

"Underneath religion and tradition there's a very clear political and economic motive to the expulsions," says anthropologist Christine Kouvic, who has documented abuses for the Catholic Church's Human Rights office in San Cristobal.

Despite the repression, Chamulas have continued to convert to Protestantism and to practice their new religion in secret.

"The truth is, I converted because the healers couldn't cure my sick children," explains Hernandez Heredia. "I had four children die because when I brought them to the healer, he gave them posh, which only made them worse. Now, as an evangelical, I don't drink alcohol."

"I converted because the healers couldn't cure my sick children. I had four children die because when I brought them to the healer, he gave them posh, which only made them worse. Now, as an evangelical, I don't drink alcohol."

Hernandez Heredia



Baptists survive violent attacks to minister in Chiapas

By Mary Speidel
SBC Foreign Mission Board

ALTACOMULCO, Mexico (BP)—Feliciano Gonzalez Lopez gazes across a valley toward the Mexican town of San Nicolas de Guadalupe.

It's been months since he's traveled there. He wants to go back. But the village is now off-limits to Gonzalez, a Mexican Baptist physician.

San Nicolas holds painful memories for Gonzalez. He remembers every time he looks in the mirror; a crooked scar circles the bridge of his nose.

Gonzalez speaks matter-of-factly about the day when Roman Catholics stoned and clubbed Baptists outside a house where they were meeting in San Nicolas, a few hours' drive from Mexico City.

"I saw a rock coming toward me. When I turned, it hit me. My nose was hanging off my face," recounted Gonzalez, who lives in nearby San Miguel.

Gonzalez held his nose in place while he tried to help fellow Baptists find refuge in the house. They locked themselves in several rooms, trying to

protect themselves. Outside, a mob of nearly 200 townspeople, including local officials, pelted the house with stones.

"You're not going to leave here alive!" the attackers yelled.

"We were praying," Gonzalez said. "We asked God that he might let us live, but we prayed, 'If it's your will that we die, we will die.'"

The mob began throwing rocks at the Baptists' cars. About 130 Baptists—mostly from other towns—were attending an associational gathering outside a home where Gonzalez helped start a mission congregation.

"They broke the windows on my car and turned it over," Gonzalez said. Later they demolished about a dozen other cars.

The attackers picked up a Bible, trying to ignite it in order to set a car on fire. "But the Bible wouldn't burn," Gonzalez said.

Inside the house, Baptists photographed the violence. Some wanted to fight back. "But in a case like this, the only thing you can do is give it to the Lord," the physician said.

In the bedlam, two of the Baptists fled the house and ran to a nearby town to get police. When the police

arrived, the mob backed off. But they promised they'd "be back with gas" to burn the cars and property.

Fearing for their lives, Baptists fled the town. The ones who lived in San Nicolas—about 45 people—sought shelter in a Baptist church in San Miguel. Afraid to go home, they stayed there more than a month.

In order to go back to San Nicolas, the Baptists—who are Mazahua Indians—were forced to sign an agreement prohibiting other evangelicals from entering the town.

The document, technically illegal, was drafted more than a year after constitutional reforms resulting in a new religious liberty law were passed in Mexico. The country has witnessed some of Latin America's worst anti-evangelical persecution in recent years.

The Baptists signed the agreement because they felt there was no other way to return. Since then, they've hired a lawyer to appeal the action, with help from the National Baptist Convention of Mexico. And through missionary Jim Wagoner in nearby Altacomulco, they've also received emergency food—paid for by hunger relief funds from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.



tist Foreign Mission Board.

That help made a big difference to Horacio Sanchez Severino, who owns the home the Catholic mob attacked. After Baptists fled the scene, the attackers stole or destroyed all his crops and seeds. They ransacked his home, taking "everything I had of value," including his birth certificate.

The Baptists still worship in Sanchez' home. They've named themselves the "God is My Strength and Protection Baptist Mission."

SURVIVORS Overlooking the Mexican town of San Nicolas de Guadalupe, Mexican Baptists Feliciano Gonzalez Lopez (left) and Horacio Sanchez Severino recall being attacked there. The men are looking at photographs of a mob of Roman Catholic townspeople who stoned and clubbed Baptists. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

Here's Hope TODAY



WHERE'S HOPE?

What does Jesus believe about you?

From its very beginnings, Christianity has focused its attention and energy on the issue of confronting humankind with the reality of the claims of eternal God.

For the most part, the message of Christianity has been centered on what it is that humankind needs to believe about God, revealed in Jesus, in order to participate in a meaningful life that flows into eternity. We have channeled vast amounts of energy toward the issue of what we need to believe about Christ in order to participate in abundant living.

Sometimes it can be helpful to turn questions around, thereby gaining new insight into the situation.

Little attention has been paid to the issue of what Jesus believes about us as humans. Viewing this issue from the perspective of the anthropology of Jesus provides new insight into our relationship with God through Christ.

The Gospel of Mark provides the setting. Jesus had come into the community of the Gerasenes, where he encountered a man reported to be possessed with a legion of demons. The townspeople had related to this person as an outcast, chained to the tombstones in the local graveyard at the outskirts

of the town.

This person, marginalized and excluded from society, asked a penetrating question of Jesus: "Jesus, what do you want with me?"

This man sensed something different about Jesus and in essence asked Jesus what his view of him was. This is not the first incident in the ministry of Jesus where marginalized people displayed unusual insight into the existential question regarding the relationship of humans with Jesus Christ.

Using the entire ministry of Jesus as recorded in the gospels as a background, consider these summary points that comprise sort of a Bill of Rights of humankind from the perspective of what Jesus believed about us.

Jesus believed that:

■ All humans have a right to a personal relationship with God.

■ All humans have a right to experience forgiveness.

■ All humans have a right to wholeness.

■ All humans have a right to be free.

■ All humans have the right of free choice.

■ All humans have the right to be responsible for their lives.

■ All humans have the right to restored relationships that are safe and nurturing.

■ All humans have the right for hope that carries into eternity.

There are numerous experiences from the ministry of Jesus as recorded in the gospels to document this Bill of Rights. Understanding the deep and affirming belief that Jesus held about humankind helps greatly in our being able to figure out what we believe about him.

Balancing our belief system with both sides of this question is essential in a healthy understanding of just what God was all about in the person of Jesus Christ.

This Bill of Rights is beautifully summarized by the writer of John's gospel in the third chapter. God was about loving us so much that God's only Son was given so that we might enjoy abundant life that goes beyond this earthly experience and carries us into all eternity.

Truly, this is love so amazing, so divine.

— Bill Amos, pastoral counselor and former president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children

■ For more information about how to become a Christian, or for spiritual assistance, please contact a Baptist church in your community or call the Western Recorder collect at (502) 244-6470.

He teased her, but she told him of Jesus' love

GRAEFENBURG—After suffering years of teasing and questions that she struggles to answer, Western Hills High School student Cheryl Kincaid prays the gospel soon will bring a muscular football player to his knees.

Since they first attended school together in sixth grade, the athlete has taunted Kincaid and another member of the youth group at Graefenburg Baptist Church.

"Who wrote the Bible?" he would ask. "What's it like to be a Christian?"

"I would get upset and not know what to do," Kincaid said of the riddles the boy often posed. Though she invited him to church several times, he shrugged it off by saying he didn't want to come since he didn't know anyone there.

But she found help last month at a "Here's Hope" training session led by youth pastor Tim Shockley. Reviewing how to give a testimony and answer questions that arise when witnessing made her feel more at ease, she said.

Still, it took more than that to convince her she needed to try again.

"The Lord had been impressing on my heart for a long time that I needed to witness to him," she recalled, "but I couldn't find the courage."

Not long after the witness training, the athlete walked up before class and again started asking about Kincaid's faith.

This time she handed him a "Here's Hope" gospel tract.

After reading it, he quietly returned to his seat.

Kincaid believes God spoke to the young man, because he stopped taunting her. Twice since then he asked her about coming to church. She hopes he will attend some youth events at Graefenburg Baptist Church.

"My friend, Jeremy Scott, commented on how different he's acting now," Kincaid said. "He used to do the same thing to Jeremy. I pray for him every night and that God will give me another chance to witness to him."

Kincaid, a 15-year-old freshman, said about half the members of the church youth group have been witnessing regularly in school.

She tries to plant seeds with others too, asking, "What would Jesus do?" if someone suggests a sinful activity.

"My friends are kind of nervous about witnessing, but they know they need to do it," Kincaid said. "A lot of their friends don't know Jesus. It gets easier after you do it the first time."

"The Lord had been impressing on my heart for a long time that I needed to witness to him," she recalled, "but I couldn't find the courage."

"HERE'S HOPE TODAY" is a joint effort of the Western Recorder and the Kentucky Baptist Convention evangelism office. This supplement will appear in the Recorder through the end of March to support the "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" campaign. The supplement is produced by the Recorder staff and State Correspondent Ken Walker. If you have a "Here's Hope" success story to share, please tell us about it by calling (502) 244-6470.

Three-fourths of mission's members sharing

RICHMOND—When a potential buyer didn't have enough money to purchase a used car, salesman Frank Mims handed him a gospel tract. "Here," he told the frustrated customer. "This won't cost you anything."

Mims is just one of many from the White Hall Mission of Richmond's First Baptist Church who are taking "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" seriously.

Ham radio operator Ron Salyer puts "Here's Hope. Jesus Cares for You" lapel stickers on documents verifying his contacts and mails them around the world. Medical reception-

ist Patty Martin affixes the stickers to patients' appointment cards, while truck driver Dan Brown has secured permission to place "Here's Hope" bumper stickers on his company's fleet.

They are among the 70 of about 100 active members at White Hall Mission who committed to witness for the 60 days of "Here's Hope."

The mission, located five miles north of the city, hasn't registered any baptisms yet. But Pastor Lamar Lyon believes the congregation soon will see the fruit of its labors.

"I'm asking a little different thing from my people," Lyon said. "We

talk about sharing their faith more than witnessing. We stress to be open to the moments God provides each day, watch for them and trust God with them."

He also asks participants to keep a daily journal of those contacts. Each Sunday morning members of the 5-year-old congregation share events of the past week during "Moments of Hope." The activity has sparked renewal in the church, Lyon said.

Members have placed 114 names of friends and relatives in the mission's prayer box, with visits underway to many of them.

Basketball star found Jesus in gentle witness

ATLANTA (BP)—An informal dinner conversation with a teammate helped Craig Ehlo begin a new relationship with God, the basketball star said.

The Houston Rockets released Ehlo in 1986, leaving him to wonder if he had a future in basketball. After 10 weeks in limbo, he got a call from the Cleveland Cavaliers. Mark Price was hurt and the team needed a replacement for the season.

"When I got to Cleveland, I thought he (Price) wouldn't like me," Ehlo recounted. "I mean, he was in the hospital injured, and they brought me in to take his place. In a sense, we were competing for that spot on the team. But with Mark it wasn't that way at all."

"I must admit, even though I had

a church background, I was a little nervous being around Mark at first. He had a reputation in the league for being real serious about his faith. I felt he might try to preach to me or push his faith on me, but he didn't. As a matter of fact, he didn't say anything about spiritual matters for a long time. We just became friends."

Both won spots on the Cavaliers the next year. And both families lived in the same apartment complex.

The two families ate together one evening after training camp, and for Ehlo it became a spiritual milestone.

"We were just enjoying the conversation with them," Ehlo said, "and then in a real natural way Mark said to us: 'I really like you and care about you and wonder where you are with the Lord.'"

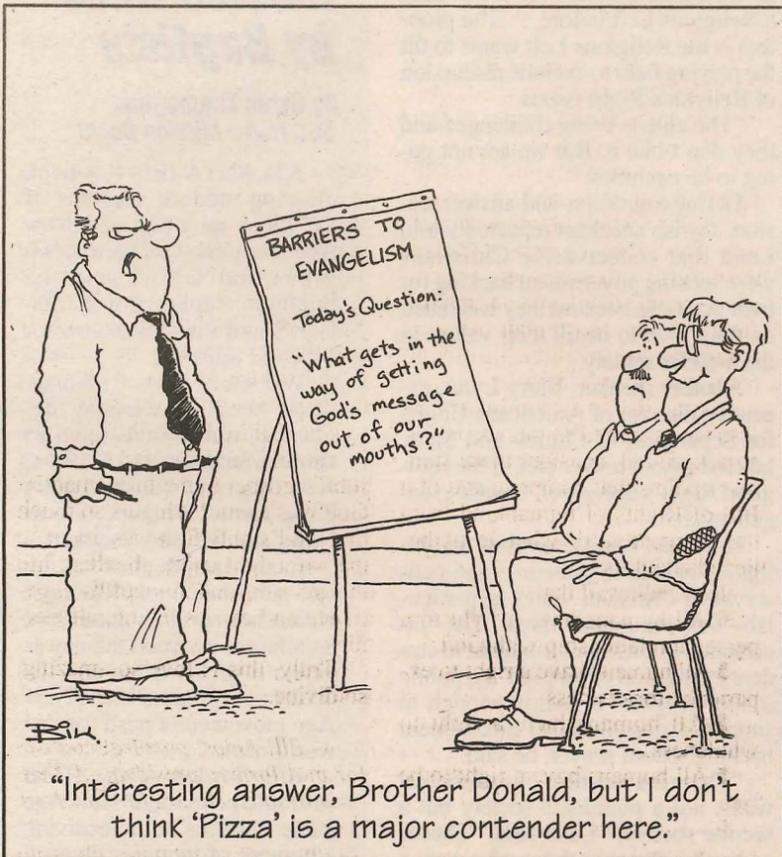
"During that evening, we heard how to get to heaven through faith in Christ," Ehlo said. "Mark asked: 'Craig, if you died before you got home tonight, would you go to heaven?' I told him, 'Well, according to what you shared with me, no.'"

"So we all prayed together and I invited Christ to come into my life."

Ehlo spent seven seasons with the Cavaliers. He now plays for the Atlanta Hawks and attends Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga.

"It's been seven years since I accepted Christ and I'm still growing and learning in team chapel meetings, in church through worship and with Christian friends," Ehlo said. "I still feel like a baby Christian, but my understanding of growing in Christ is greater today."

Here's Hope TODAY



'Here's Hope' touches BSU at University of Kentucky

LEXINGTON—"Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" has reached beyond the local church to encourage Baptist college students to share their faith more boldly on campus.

"One thing I think 'Here's Hope' did is remind us as Christians we need to be sharing the gospel each and every day, as we go through our day," said H.K. Kingkade, Baptist campus minister at the University of Kentucky.

One new student at UK already has professed faith in Jesus Christ as an indirect result of "Here's Hope," Kingkade said.

Ironically, the woman first learned about the Baptist Student Union at an open house Jan. 9, the kickoff of 60 days of witnessing for "Here's Hope." She subsequently attended the BSU winter retreat the weekend of Jan. 27.

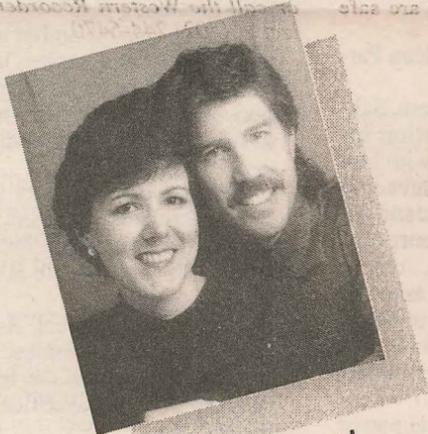
After hearing about the basis of Christian beliefs and the plan of salvation at the retreat, she attended a Sunday night "Experiencing God" class in a dormitory. One of several

BSU Bible studies on campus, it is led by Stephanie Mashburn and Dave Henson.

Henson talked further with the inquiring student before leading her in a prayer of salvation.

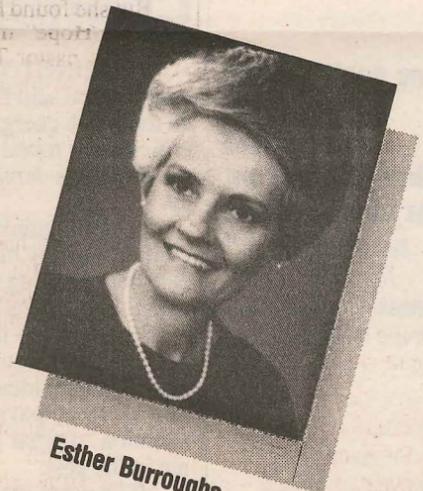
Kingkade said "Here's Hope" played a key role by increasing student awareness about the need to witness. The "Mission 95" student missions conference in Louisville last December was another significant influence, he added. "Those were the two key issues that Baptist students have been involved in that have made them aware of sharing Christ on campus. 'Here's Hope' is tremendous. It caused an awareness to share and be a missionary wherever you are. It gives them a focus and reason to do it."

BSU teams are going out each week on the UK campus, witnessing and distributing literature, Kingkade said. Next week the BSU will show the "Jesus" film and "The Judas Project" on alternate evenings.



Ken & Lois Holland

A Special Event for Women



Esther Burroughs

During the Kentucky Evangelism Conference
Tuesday, February 28, 1995
Hurstbourne Conference Center
9700 Bluegrass Parkway, Louisville

Seminars

Faith Shaping the Home	Debbie Lloyd
Coping with Grief	Joyce Marcy
Dealing with Your Feelings	Jo Vaughn
Making the Most of Your Time	Carolyn Crumpler
Lifestyle Evangelism	Mary Anne Poe
Prayer: The Untapped Resource	Nell Bruce
Conflict Management Skills	Dee Gilliland
Nurturing Creative Aloneness	Jane Kendrick-Lites in the Midst of Loneliness

11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Luncheon (\$10) with
Esther Burroughs and
Ken & Lois Holland

1:15 - 2:15 p.m.
Seminars

2:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Seminars

NOTE: No nursery provided

Register

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____
STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

This form may be duplicated. Luncheon cost: \$10, transferrable but not refundable. Make checks payable to Kentucky Baptist Convention. Deadline for reservations is Friday, Feb. 17. Tickets, motel information and map mailed upon request. Questions? Call KBC evangelism office at (502) 245-4101. Mail registration form to KBC Evangelism Office, Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433.

Land warns Religious Right won't stop

"The problem is the Religious Left wants to tilt the playing field to exclude discussion of Religious Right issues. The elite is being challenged and they don't like it. But we are not going to be excluded."

Richard Land

WASHINGTON (RNS)—It wasn't what Richard Land said that drew notice last week, it was who he said it to.

For the first time, Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission, spoke to a public gathering of liberal Jewish leaders, and his message was one with which they generally disagree—strongly.

Land told them Feb. 8 that conservative Christians will continue to speak out on such issues as school prayer. Opposition from the "Religious Left," Land said, will not deter the Religious Right.

"Separation of church and state does not mean the separation of religious convictions from public policy issues," Land told several hundred delegates to the annual convention of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, the umbrella agency for 13 national and 117 local Jewish groups.

NJCRC's positions on church-state issues generally reflect the mainstream Jewish community's liberal leanings, and Land's remarks stood in sharp contrast.

Earlier, for example, NJCRC approved a resolution reaffirming its opposition to all forms of organized prayer in public schools, including a

moment of silence. The resolution said church-state separation has "preserved the right of the Jewish community, as a minority community, to participate in American life. This principle has no greater salience than in the public school."

Land said he is opposed to any "state-composed" school prayer, but that he supports a constitutional amendment that endorses student-initiated, student-led prayers.

At times, the exchange between Land and the Jewish leaders became pointed. Sitting next to Land, Bernice Balter, executive director of the Women's League for Conservative Judaism, said she was "taken aback by the paranoia" of some conservative Christians.

Despite the sharp division in viewpoints, Land was politely received by NJCRC delegates. Afterward, he said he had expected to encounter stronger opposition.

Land sought to defend the Religious Right's participation in the political process by comparing it with the religious roots of what he called the "Religious Left." He mentioned the anti-slavery abolitionist movement and Martin Luther King Jr. as examples.

The difference today, he said, is that "there is a Religious Right active

in Washington where there was only a Religious Left before. ... The problem is the Religious Left wants to tilt the playing field to exclude discussion of Religious Right issues.

"The elite is being challenged and they don't like it. But we are not going to be excluded."

During a question-and-answer session, Jewish speakers repeatedly told Land that conservative Christians were seeking government backing for their positions because they had failed on their own to instill their values in the broader society.

Another speaker, Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, labeled school prayer part of the Religious Right's agenda of "stealth evangelization."

However, Land countered that religious beliefs in general—and conservative Christian views in particular—face the greater threat. The "increasingly hostile environment to student expression of religion" on public school property is reason enough to support a constitutional amendment backing school prayer, he said.

"There is a segment of society that wants not a pluralistic society but a secular society," Land said. "That is as much a threat as those who want a fully religious society."

Clinton says critics have damaged him

"They don't believe you can be a committed Christian and not want to criminalize all abortions."

President Clinton, speaking of his critics from the Religious Right

WASHINGTON (RNS)—President Clinton said Feb. 2 he has wasted too much energy trying to answer critics of his moral character and that the effort has damaged his presidency.

"Let them think what they want," Clinton said of his critics during a half-hour meeting with religion journalists in the Oval Office.

"I wasted too much time when I got here, and it caused me to be a less effective president ... either being hurt by or by paying a great deal of attention to what people said about me in the past.

"If I have to spend all my time trying to answer charges about what

people said I did years ago ... I just can't do it. ... I have increasingly less control over my reputation but still have full control over my character. That's between me and God."

Clinton also lashed out at the Christian Coalition, a conservative political action organization founded by evangelist Pat Robertson. The Virginia-based group has taken the president to task over his views on abortion, school-based sex education and other issues.

"No one seriously believes that every position they (the Christian Coalition) take is rooted in their reading of the Scripture," Clinton said. "Everybody knows that they basic-

ly are an arm of the Republican Party."

Clinton, an active Southern Baptist, said some critics question his faith because they disagree with him politically. "They don't believe you can be a committed Christian and not want to criminalize all abortions. They just don't believe you ... can be a committed Christian and take the position I did on gays in the military.

"I consider myself a sinner, but because I believe, I consider myself forgiven," he said.

"I consider that I need the power of God. It is an important part of my life ... and the same thing is true of Hillary."

Worldwide Church of God continues transition

PASADENA, Calif. (RNS)—The Worldwide Church of God—the sect founded by the late Herbert W. Armstrong and known for its Old Testament practices and unorthodox theology—has slashed staff and programs to cope with a massive loss in revenue and membership stemming from a wholesale revision of doctrine.

Even the 56-acre site in Pasadena, Calif., that serves as headquarters of the 92,000-member sect is up for sale.

However, church spokesman Tom Lapacka said in an interview that despite the loss of one-third of its revenue—primarily attributed to an end to mandatory tithing—and 10 percent of its membership, the church is not heading for bankruptcy.

"We're not anywhere near that," said Lapacka, manager of church relations. "Over the long haul, we'll

see a leaner organization."

So far, about 15 percent of the 708 jobs at church headquarters have been eliminated, the 1995-96 concert schedule at the church-operated and highly regarded Ambassador Auditorium has been canceled, and the church magazine "The Plain Truth" has seen its 1.3-million monthly free circulation cut by nearly a third and four foreign language editions dropped.

The church, active in 100 nations, has undergone a radical theological shift since Armstrong's death in 1986, moving it ever closer to mainstream New Testament Christianity.

"The church was heavily criticized by evangelicals and others as being a cult," said Gordon Melton, who heads the Center for the Study of American Religions in Santa Barbara, Calif. "Church leaders responded to that and seem to want mainstream Christian acceptance now."

Lapacka said the revisions were a result of "the church's constant search of the Scriptures to gain a clearer vision of God's will for us. In reviewing our doctrinal positions in the light of Scripture, we've determined that we were in error."

Over the years, church leaders have rejected such key Armstrong teachings as observation of the Sabbath on Saturday, prohibition of medical treatment, prohibition of celebrating birthdays or national holidays and prohibition of using cosmetics.

Church officials, led by Armstrong successor Joseph Tkach Sr., have accepted the doctrine of the Trinity and dropped adherence to the dietary restrictions listed in the Book of Leviticus.

They also jettisoned the belief that modern Anglo-Saxon people are descendants of the ancient lost tribes of Israel.

Book's claims labeled false by Baptists

*By Sarah Zimmerman
SBC Home Mission Board*

ATLANTA (BP)—A book alleging modern versions of the Bible are a part of a New Age conspiracy is "both outrageous and false," said the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's associate director of world religions.

Written by G.A. Riplinger, "New Age Bible Versions" denounces translations such as the New International Version, New American Standard, New King James, Phillips, Good News and Revised Standard.

In the introduction of the self-published book, Riplinger claims her research uncovered an alliance between the newer versions of the Bible and the "chief conspirators in the New Age movement's push for one world order."

Bill Gordon of the HMB staff said he studied "New Age Bible Versions" after receiving a number of inquiries about it and noticing a discussion of the book on SBCNet, the Southern Baptist on-line computer service.

Gordon said the author uses faulty logic and research as well as "character assassination of godly Christian men who are well-known conservative scholars."

One example of faulty logic, Gordon said, is the author's warning to "watch out for the letter 'S'" because it is the "hiss of serpent."

The author lists sin, Satan and Sodom as examples, but she did not explain the letter 'S' in salvation or sacrifice, he pointed out.

The book also claims the five points of Calvinism form a satanic pentagram, Gordon reported.

The book includes a letter from Frank Logsdon, identified as a co-founder of the New American Standard version.

Logsdon, who died several years ago, is quoted as writing, "I must under God renounce every attachment to the New American Standard Version. I'm afraid I'm in trouble with the Lord ... The product is grievous to my heart."

However, the New American Standard version is produced by the California-based Lockman Foundation, and a letter from the foundation noted Logsdon was acquainted with its late president, but Logsdon never was a member of the board of directors or a foundation employee and could in no way be considered 'co-founder' of that Bible translation.

Study disputes idea the poor give more than the rich

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The popular notion that the poor give more generously to charity than the middle-class and well-to-do may not be true, recent research indicates.

A scholarly paper soon to be published by two Boston College sociologists challenges the notion of a noble lower class and stingy upper class.

Traditionally, Americans lean too much toward bashing the wealthy, said Paul Schervish, sociologist and director of Boston College's Social Welfare Institute. Schervish's findings will appear in the spring issue of the *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*.

The giving levels of the poor, middle class and wealthy matters to the non-profit organizations because they'd like everyone at every income level to give more.

"Off the record," said one non-profit lobbyist, "we wouldn't mind shaming the rich."

That Americans at the low end of the income scale might give more also

matters to observers like Northwestern University sociologist Christopher Jencks, author of "The Homeless," because it affects how society views the poor. "Some might think the poor are profligate, flinging money into the collection plate on Sunday," he noted.

The title of Schervish's study—"Do the Poor Pay More; Is the U-Shaped Curve Correct?"—refers to an idea long-held by observers of charitable behavior. This theory holds that the people on the low end of a giving graph give a high percentage of their income, with the line dipping low for those in the middle-income category, and then swooping back up again to show that the very, very rich give a lot.

Schervish and co-author John Havens said that the hitch is that when past studies looked at people with incomes under \$10,000, they focused only on contributing households. Those households gave 3.6 percent of their income—making the poor

seem more generous than the people with incomes of \$100,000, who gave 2.5 percent to charity, and those with incomes between \$60,000 and \$99,999, who contributed less than 2.2 percent.

But when Schervish and Haven factor in all the zeroes, all those low-income households that give nothing, they conclude that the poor are as Scrooge-like as other Americans. As they figure it, all U.S. income groups give roughly the same percentage—about 2.5 percent—with middle-income households giving slightly less.

Virginia Hodgkinson of the non-profit umbrella group Independent Sector, readily acknowledges Schervish is correct. But she stresses the question isn't that simple.

"He looks at total populations, in which case he's right," she said. But when focusing on the people who contribute, "there's no doubt the

poor are sacrificing more in the sense that they're giving a bigger proportion of their income to charity."

If anything, Hodgkinson said, "the poor are underestimating their giving. A middle- or high-income person taking a charitable deduction is keeping records."

By Schervish and Havens' measure, the poor may not be saints, but by other measures, the rich aren't either. A much-quoted 1989 study, "The Variability of the Charitable Giving of the Wealthy," by Gerald Auten and Gabriel Rudney, found that among people with incomes of \$1 million or more, one-fourth of individuals account for 90 percent of the charitable dollars. Auten and Rudney demonstrate that there are many shirkers up there in the wealthy latitudes—"large proportions of high-income individuals give less than 1 percent of their income."

"He looks at total populations, in which case he's right." But "there's no doubt the poor are sacrificing more in the sense that they're giving a bigger proportion of their income to charity."

Virginia Hodgkinson of Independent Sector

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Mason is looking for a full-time minister of music and education and a part-time youth minister. Resumes may be sent to: First Baptist Church of Mason, 735 Reading Rd., Mason, OH 45040, Attn: Dr. Robert Whitworth.

SEEKING: Church custodian: 40 hours/week, \$6 per hour with benefits. Experienced required. Call Highland Baptist Church, (502) 451-3736.

SEEKING: Pastor's secretary: Secretarial and administrative skills required; salary with benefits. Call Highland Baptist Church, (502) 451-3736.

SEEKING: Central Baptist Church, Maysville, promoting Sunday school growth and missions, is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, 437 Central Ave., Maysville, KY 41056. For additional information call (606) 564-5939 evenings.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for Sundays only. Please send resume to First Baptist Church, 2910 Howard Dr., Jasper, IN.

SEEKING: Camp director for 1995 GA/Acteens summer camp at Cedar Crest, Bagdad, Ky. Send resume to Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, P.O. Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433.

SEEKING: The West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists is seeking an executive director for our state convention. Resumes should be sent to: Rev. Donald R. Yeager, Fairlawn Baptist Church, Rt. 3, Box 389B, Parkersburg, WV 26101

SEEKING: Minister of youth and children. Send resume to Latonia Baptist Church, Box 15103, Covington, KY 41015.

FOR SALE: 20 white, padded pews, 13-1/2 feet each. Contact First Baptist, Princeton, Ky., (502) 365-5591.

SEEKING: First Baptist Hopkinsville accepting resumes for full-time minister of music. Mail to FBC, 1400 S. Main St., Hopkinsville, KY

42240, Attn. Minister of Music Search Committee.

TOUR: Baptist heritage tour, Britain; July 26-Aug. 8. Cost: \$1,800. Contact Bill Leonard, Samford University, Birmingham, AL 35229. Phone (205) 870-2839.

WANTED: Part-time minister of music, Sunday morning and evening worship and choir leadership. Send resume to: Personnel Committee, Midlane Park Baptist Church, 6500 Six Mile Lane, Louisville, KY 40218.

TRIP: For single adults, June 15-27. France, Switzerland and Spain. \$1,995 double occupancy. For more information, contact single adult ministry, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington, (606) 254-3491.

NEEDED: organist. Part-time position available. Wicks pipe organ. Send resume to: Organist Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 246 N. Main St., Madisonville, KY 42431. Resumes accepted through March 1, 1995.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and education; First Baptist Church, Pineville, Ky. Interested? Send resume to P.O. Box 710, 40977.

WANTED: Full-time minister of music and education. Send resume to Bullitt Lick Baptist Church, c/o minister of music/education search committee. P.O. Box 924, Shepherdsville, Ky. 40165.

SEEKING: Youth director, part-time position. Send resume to Caneyville Baptist Church, P.O. Box 446, Caneyville, KY 40271.

NEEDED: Youth groups in Atlanta, Orlando, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Buffalo for 1995 summer mission projects. We provide lodging, assignment. For more information, costs, call Dr. Harry Fowler, Youth on Mission, Box 2095, Rocky Mount, N.C. 27802. (919) 985-4499.

RETREATS: Bud's Lake, I-65, exit 81, Sonora, Ky. (502) 324-3036. Dormitories, kitchen, gym, swimming and campground. Year-round Christian fun.

Continued from page 1

mance, sexuality and communication from a Christian perspective.

But participants said the "spiritual oneness" workshop included in these marriage enrichment events was not enough. So, for the first time, three weekends in January focused specifically on the spiritual development of couples.

Organizer Phil Waugh predicted about 500 people would attend each of the "Experiencing God" weekends. But the events drew far more, from 750 to 1,220 people. In one case, 50 couples had to be turned away.

"It's meeting a need that has been out there, but there's not been anything to really address it in the area of their spiritual growth together," Waugh said.

But for some couples, a weekend away isn't possible. Books and Bible-study guides have become their alternative.

The Couples' Devotional Bible ranked eighth on the January 1995 list of best-selling Bibles in Bookstore Journal, the trade publication of the Christian Booksellers Association. The Bible text, in the New International Version, is laced with "Marriage Builders," questions that help a couple contemplate how certain verses relate to their lives.

Bill Anderson, president of the Christian Booksellers Association, said he sees a renewed interest among couples in devotional books that mix Scripture with additional food for thought.

Pastors, prompted by discussions with couples in premarital and marital counseling, are requesting that Christian stores carry books that can help couples spend time together with a scriptural focus.

Books also are providing a starting point for couples' heart-to-heart talks about religion.

Norman Wright, author of "Quiet Times for Couples," said the devotional book provides structure for couples who want to do some Bible study together on a daily basis. He recommends reading the Bible together rather than separately, as an incentive to practice what the Scrip-

tures preach.

"There's more of a commitment to implement this, like an unspoken sense of accountability," said Wright, founder and director of Christian Marriage Enrichment, a Tustin, Calif., organization that offers marriage seminars.

Other books have become the focus of discussions among groups of couples.

The HomeBuilders Couples Series is being used as a curriculum in home study groups. Using Bible verses as reference points, the practical mini-workbooks guide spouses on topics such as building teamwork, expressing love and resolving conflict in marriage.

Ted and Jill LeVin have 10 couples over every Thursday night to their Eagan, Minn., home to discuss the HomeBuilders series. Special weekends away are fine, Jill LeVin said, but her group helps couples handle day-to-day issues such as dealing with conflict and building self-esteem.

More new books that focus on spirituality and marriage are on the way. And some are cropping up on the shelves of secular book stores.

In "I Will Never Leave You: How Couples Can Achieve the Power of Lasting Love," authors Hugh and Gayle Prather put a different spin on the spiritual aspects of love. They and other authors are beginning to view marriage as a spiritual path.

The Prathers say it's all right if one person in a couple is more actively religious than another. But when the two find a spiritual meeting ground, perhaps praying together after a stressful work day, it can make a huge difference in their relationship, they said.

Prather said in a recent interview that he and his wife know from personal experience that some couples who achieve a sense of oneness also have a sense of God uniting them.

"When we finally made the commitment to each other that we would not leave each other, that we would keep our family intact," he said, "that's when we began experiencing God's presence."

Spouses are going away for the weekend and leaving their kids behind, shutting themselves in a room with a Bible study guide or joining other couples in weekly classes to learn how they can relate to God together.

Upkeep of historic cathedrals drains English church

LONDON (RNS)—It's a nightmare of historic proportions.

Clergy of the Church of England are finding themselves reduced to the role of custodians of the country's huge repository of historic churches, responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of thousands of priceless buildings and monuments.

Of the church's 16,364 ecclesiastical buildings, 13,000 are officially listed as having special architectural or historic significance. Most date from before the Reformation.

In 1992, the last year for which figures are available, the Church of England spent an estimated \$175 million on maintaining these treasures.

Such duties are increasingly frus-

trating to Anglican clerics, who believe they should be tending to their spiritual flocks rather than the buildings that shelter them.

"We cannot be a church for the sake of its buildings," Bishop Gavin Reid of Maidstone told a group of Anglican evangelicals recently. While England has some of Europe's most beautiful and historic churches—important reminders that the Christian faith has stood the test of time—the cost of maintaining them "is strangling the life of some of our village congregations," Reid said.

Just as serious, Reid added, is that the burden of building upkeep distorts the message of Christianity. "All too often the symbol of the cross is re-

placed by the symbol of the fund-raising thermometer," he said.

The question becomes most acute with England's medieval cathedrals—vast structures that need a correspondingly vast amount of money to restore stonework and artifacts eroded by time and acid rain.

Yet, as dramatic as the sums involved may be—Winchester, for example, has raised nearly \$11 million for capital projects—the real difficulty can lie in covering day-to-day operating costs.

"If we had a crack in the dome tomorrow we'd be able to raise (\$8 million) in a week," said Canon Christopher Hill of St. Paul's, the Wren masterpiece that is London's cathedral.

"But you can't raise (\$8 million) to pay the vergers and all the other staff you need."

The Dean of Winchester, Trevor Beeson, reckons that about half the country's cathedrals run at a deficit. His cathedral finds itself in the red each year to the tune of \$157,000. Keeping the building open from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. every day of the year eats up \$1.3 million annually.

Two of England's Anglican cathedrals have imposed an admission charge, which does not apply to worshipers attending services or wishing to pray. But cathedrals can hardly disentangle their role as tourist attractions from their role as places of pilgrimage.

PRAYER WALK Southern Baptists Frank Achenbach (left) and Bradley Bean (center) pray for missionaries Tony and Laura Gray at the University of Panama in Panama City, where the missionaries work. Achenbach and Bean were among 17 Southern Baptists who participated in a recent prayer pilgrimage to Central America. Achenbach is a layman from Arkansas, and Bean is a pastor in Missouri. The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board sponsors the prayer pilgrimages, in which participants visit key places of ministry and spend extensive time praying for the advance of God's work. (BP photo by Keith Morris)

U.S. Muslims fear international smear due to militants

LOS ANGELES (RNS)—Farzin Toussi is a Muslim. Never mind his politically liberal and secular outlook, expensive haircut and Italian-model good looks.

A businessman based in Southern California, Toussi was born in Iran 26 years ago, moved to the United States as a child and considers himself a cultural, though not mosque-going, Muslim.

Though he never has been on the business end of a vicious anti-Muslim insult, Toussi is increasingly sensitive to what he sees as a campaign in U.S. media and political circles to link America's 3 million to 5 million Muslims to a global terrorist network.

"Sometimes," Toussi says, "it seems like anything that goes wrong in the world is blamed on Muslims."

Other American Muslims agree—so many, in fact, that representatives of seven national and regional Muslim organizations, including the American Muslim Council and the Islamic Society of North America, gathered in Los Angeles in January to call attention to what they said is "a civil rights crisis."

"In the past, anti-Islamic rhetoric has been typically associated with isolated articles or remarks," said Salam Al-Marayati, director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council in Los Angeles. "Now, spearheaded by several

organizations in the United States, this rhetoric has been translated into formidable political action."

Al-Marayati and other Muslim leaders said they are especially concerned about recent resolutions passed by mainstream Jewish-American organizations. One measure, approved in December by the American Jewish Committee, calls on federal officials to step up investigations of U.S. "fundraisers and propagandists" for "militant Islamic extremist groups" like Hamas and Hezbollah.

Muslim leaders at the conference denied their groups have anything to do with terrorism. In resolutions and speeches, they declared that Islam

unequivocally condemns violence against innocents.

Al-Marayati responded to the American Jewish Committee's resolution in a sharply worded letter. "After dealing with the AJC for so long, I thought that we had developed a better understanding so as to avoid issuing counter-productive statements and launching ill-advised lobbying campaigns," he said.

But Gary Bretton-Granatoor, director of interreligious affairs for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, countered that the Jewish group's resolution "condemned all international terrorism," including Jewish terrorism.



Abuse statistics staggering

Within the last few weeks, some really staggering numbers about what is happening to our children were reported. The statistics didn't receive a whole lot of air play and they didn't make the front page of the newspapers. But as Christians, they are numbers that we cannot ignore.

The first report was of the increasing number of confirmed cases of abuse in our state. According to the Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources, the number of abused and neglected victims increased about 3 percent during the state's last fiscal year from 24,121 to 24,877. Total abuse reports neared 40,000 with many of these involving more than one child. It breaks my heart to tell you that 29 children actually died in Kentucky from abuse or neglect during the reporting period.

The second report, issued by the privately-funded National Center for Children in Poverty, revealed that the number of American children living in poverty has reached a record high of 6 million. The number had increased by 1 million between 1987 and 1992, the year on which the study was based. It represents approximately

26 percent of all American children.

I don't usually use this column to spout figures because big numbers often cause us to lose track of the individuals. The fact of the matter, however, is that each one of the numbers represents a child—probably even a child with the same name as your child or that of a child in your church.

These children are why it is so very important that we as Kentucky Baptists keep reaching out to help them and their families. They are why we keep coming to you and your church asking for your prayers and support. They are why we urge Christian families to consider opening their homes to foster children.

They are why we seek to expand existing programs and to begin new kinds of services to meet different kinds of needs.

Please pray today for the children of our state, nation and world. They need it more than ever.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

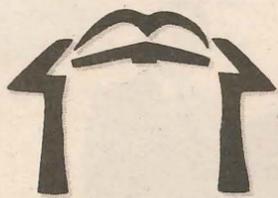
Curtis Mooney is president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Rd., Middletown, Ky. 40243.

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Kevin Cosby
*Translating a Dream
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Pastoring? What would I drop
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Members:

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Things I need to get on the
Church's Agenda*

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Calvinists urge return to SBC's roots

CAPE CORAL, Fla. (BP)—Southern Baptists should return to their Calvinistic roots, according to writers in a publication being mailed to most Southern Baptist pastors, seminary professors and missionaries.

"Call it what you will—Calvinism, Reformed theology, the doctrines of grace—these truths are nothing less than historic Southern Baptist orthodoxy," wrote Thomas Ascol, editor of *Founders Journal* and pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Cape Coral, Fla.

The journal, which has begun appearing unsolicited in the mailboxes of Southern Baptist pastors nationwide, is published by the Southern Baptist Founders Conference, a loose-knit network of people who adhere to a theological system commonly known as Calvinism.

The theology of "five-point" Calvinists often is described in theological shorthand to include the total depravity of humans before a holy God, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the saints.

Calvinists frequently draw criticism from non-Calvinists for two points of their theology: limited atonement and irresistible grace. Together, these two tenets hold that God chose some people for salvation and others for damnation before creation and that all those chosen for salvation ultimately will be drawn to salvation.

Abandonment of these doctrines has led to several problems for Southern Baptists, according to writers in the current issue of *Founders Journal*, which was published to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the SBC's founding. The problems could be solved by theological renewal, they assert.

Numerical growth alone in the SBC does not prove spiritual health, Ascol said. "Spiritual life and vitality cannot be measured simply by large numbers and growing organizations," Ascol wrote.

One reason for the SBC's apparent growth is a high percentage of non-resident and inactive members, he said. "Only half of our 15 million members ... contributed financially or attended at least one service last year."

The reason churches have so many inactive and non-resident members is because many church members are not really Christians, Ascol said.

He traces the influx of non-Christians to "modern evangelistic technique ... geared toward getting a sinner to agree with some facts and recite a prayer. Once this occurs, it is assumed he is saved. Those who go through these steps are commonly judged ready for baptism and church membership."

But Ascol believes the first-century church saw the issue more clearly. "These dropouts were categorized on the basis of what they demonstrated themselves to be—false converts," Ascol wrote. "The Apostle John explains, 'They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.'"

Since so many church members are not really Christians, Ascol said, churches have become infected with moral relativism. "When unregenerate people find refuge in church membership, they inevitably dilute the body's corporate commitment to holiness," Ascol wrote.

Much of the journal is devoted to a historical study of early Southern

Baptist leaders who were Calvinists.

Contributors in addition to Ascol include Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Tom Nettles, a former professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary who currently teaches at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School; and Timothy George, dean of the Beeson Divinity School at Samford University.

Nettles traces the decline of Calvinism in the SBC to the influence of E.Y. Mullins, president of Southern Seminary from 1899 to 1928. Mullins was a widely influential speaker and writer whom Nettles said opposed theological creeds as "barriers to the free development of personality in religion."

Mohler, one of Mullins' successors at the helm of Southern Seminary, writes that the seminary's doctrinal statement provides a clear framework for the theology Southern Baptists ought to embrace once again. Mohler has interpreted that document, the *Abstract of Principles*, to advocate a Calvinist perspective.

"Sincere and earnest Southern Baptists who wish to understand the true substance of our theological heritage need look no further than the *Abstract of Principles* for a clear outline of the doctrines once most certainly held among us," Mohler wrote. "Let there be no doubt that in the years to come Southern Seminary will be unashamedly and unhesitatingly committed to these same doctrinal convictions as set forth in this incomparable document."

Other writers in the current issue of *Founders Journal* defend Calvinists against the common accusation that their theology hurts missions and evangelism.

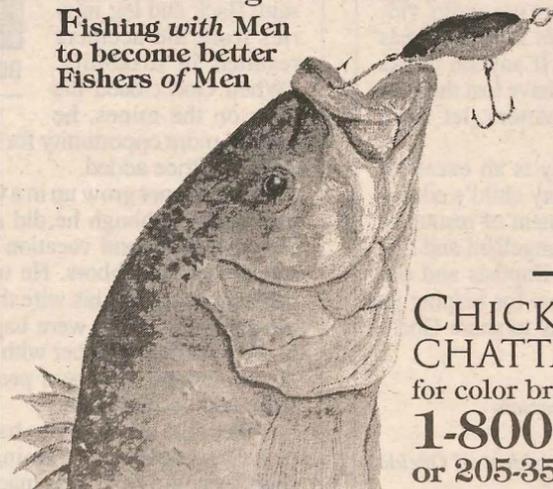
"Call it what you will—Calvinism, Reformed theology, the doctrines of grace—these truths are nothing less than historic Southern Baptist orthodoxy."

Thomas Ascol, editor of Founders Journal

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PEOPLE

KENTUCKY KERNELS

Modern teenagers favor the concept of "personal peace" over world peace, by a margin of 92 percent to 60 percent. They also believe education has more importance than community work, by a margin of 91 percent to 66 percent.

Source: Gallup Youth Survey's "Youthviews" newsletter

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **BEDFORD**—Jay Austin resigned as youth minister at Bedford Church to become associate in the evangelism department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

■ **CADIZ**—Maple Grove Church called Irvin Darnall as pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Raikes Hill Mission called Daniel Hunt Jr. as pastor. He began his new ministry Jan. 23.

■ **CLAY CITY**—Powells Valley Church honored Marion Brewer on his 28th anniversary as pastor Jan. 8.

■ **DAWSON SPRINGS**—James Lynn, 86, active member of Charleston Church for 64 years, and deacon 50 years, died Jan. 13. Lynn is survived by his wife of 65 years, Agnes, seven children, 17 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. Longtime friend Archie Oliver and pastor Eric Nelson conducted the service.

■ **HENDERSON**—Immanuel Temple ordained Hugh Cheaney, Don Porter, Rudy Walker and Glen Woodard as deacons Feb. 5.

■ **LAGRANGE**—Jack Johnson resigned as pastor of Eighteen Mile Church to become pastor at Salem Church in Cave City.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Eighteenth Street Church called Greg Sexton as minister of youth.

■ **PADUCAH**—Willis Henson recently celebrated his 23rd anniversary as pastor at Lone Oak First Church.

■ **RICHMOND**—Rosedale Church

called Interim Pastor Malcolm Lunceford as pastor. He will begin his new ministry March 1.

Eastside Bethel Church ordained Nick Osborn to the gospel ministry Jan. 22. He is associate pastor of youth and education.

■ **WINCHESTER**—First Church ordained James Barnett, Paul Columbia, Joe Ann Dove, Terry Estes, Mary Martin, Bob Steele, Brian Stephens and Ava Tyler as deacons.

MISSIONARY UPDATE

■ **Ron and Frieda Adams**, missionaries to Baptist Spanish Publishing House, are on the field. Mailing address is P.O. Box 4255, El Paso, Texas 79914. He considers Cunningham his hometown.

■ **Betty Larimer**, missionary to Nigeria, is in the States at 153 Henry Sledd Rd., Gilbertsville, Ky. 42044.

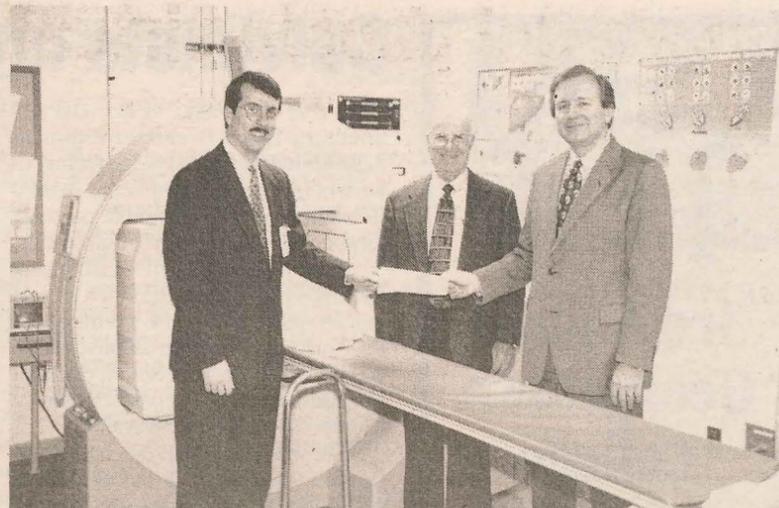
■ **Lawrence and Gail Osbrink**, missionaries to Senegal, are in the States at 8605 Tannen Dr., Louisville, Ky. 40242.

The Power of Prayer

by Dr. Glenn Mollette

A message for today's Christian

Send \$6.95 to Helpers in Ministries, Box 478, Newburgh, IN 47629



NEW IMAGING SYSTEM Tri-County Baptist Hospital has received a new Premier Spect Whole Body and Planar Imaging System, thanks to a \$500,000 grant from the Gheens Foundation. The new equipment will enhance the hospital's effectiveness in orthopedic studies, bone scans, anatomical and metabolic analysis and studies of the brain, liver and kidney. Shown here with the equipment are David Gray (left), hospital administrator; James Hannah, chairman of the hospital's trustee board; and Charles Cox of Baptist Healthcare Foundation.

Foreign volunteers needed urgently

The Kentucky Baptist Convention Brotherhood department has issued two urgent appeals for volunteers to help with vital foreign mission projects.

Volunteers are needed to lead vacation Bible school for missionary children in Brakenhurst, Kenya, March 17-April 2. The cost, including airfare and meals, is \$2,090.

Volunteers also are needed for a water project in Kenieba, Mali. Specifically, mission leaders are seeking anyone capable of operating a D-6D Caterpillar bulldozer with powershift transmission. The cost for this trip is \$1,660.

For more information about either opportunity, call John Lott, associate department director, immediately at (502) 245-4101.

New Campus Ministry Center: Centered on Christ

What kind of school says its most important purpose is not education? Though we strive for excellence in academics and in all areas, we are proud to say Oneida's most important purpose is evangelism and missions. We now have a wonderful new facility to help us in the important work of ministry on the OBI campus.

The Martha Bain Rice Campus Ministry Center is located in the Rev. and Mrs. Dennis Rush building. The entire second floor is dedicated to the work of evangelism and ministry to our 600-plus students and staff. As far as we know, we are the only Christian boarding school in America with a campus ministry center.

Martha Bain Rice began Baptist Student Union at Oneida in the 1950s, and BSU is currently the largest single student organization on the OBI campus. Approximately 100 students participate during the year, with nearly 50 on any given Sunday evening. Though our students come from many different churches, our united goal is to present Christ to every lost person in our school.

BSU uses the Campus Ministry Center for large meetings and fellowships open to all students. We have nearly 20 upperclassmen who are designated BSU small group leaders. The CMC is also an area where these leaders can worship, pray, prepare for their small group sessions and spend time with the campus ministry staff. Friday evenings are special worship and prayer times for BSU leaders. These meetings prepare them for their responsibilities during the week. Our BSU students lead worship, participate in drama, lead prayer times and share their testimonies in our chapel and worship services.

On Wednesday evenings the CMC has a min-

istry time for all students. Contemporary Christian music, videos, group singing, devotions and prayer time are attended by a large group of students. On other weekday evenings, the entire facility is open for ping pong, video games, movies, music, table games, refreshments and conversation. The full house each evening has demonstrated that our students appreciate a place to spend some fun time with friends.

The Campus Ministry Center is also equipped with office space for the three full-time staff

members who work with campus ministry. Michael and Denise Spencer came in 1992, and work in counseling and general campus ministry. Pamela Sexton came to Oneida in 1994 to work in the area of student activities.

Counseling on personal and spiritual issues requires resources and space. The CMC is equipped with counseling rooms and a nice library area where students can use audio, video and print resources in many areas of Christian growth. If anyone thinks that today's students have lost their interest in spiritual matters, let them

spend a few days with us!

This kind of ministry facility is an excellent reason to consider Oneida for any child's education. It demonstrates a commitment of resources to our most important work: evangelism and discipleship. We thank Kentucky Baptists and our many friends and prayer partners for helping us provide a new and effective way to share God's love with others.

Written by Michael Spencer, chaplain

W.F. "Bud" Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky. 40972

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Disabled miner finds God is able

Senior Jimmie Price has a different life perspective than many of our students because of a 1988 near-death experience. As a coal company mechanic in Virginia, Price and two other miners worked on an external gas well. A derrick boom touched high current wires. Price jumped from the truck as "the derrick jacks lit up like welding rods."

He later heard three men had died 10 years earlier in that same area in a similar type of accident.

"A supervisor told me I was lucky. I told him it was a miracle, and took the opportunity to witness," Price said. Back and leg injuries from the accident resulted in disability. "When God closed the door on the mines, he opened more opportunity for me to preach," Price added.

Price did not grow up in a Christian home, although he did attend Sunday school and vacation Bible school with neighbors. He trusted the Lord at age 28; his wife the following week. They were baptized in the river in December with snow on the ground. She was pregnant with their second child.

After high school, Price had two years of vocational training. He soon became a first-class machinist

with the coal company and a certified tool and die maker.

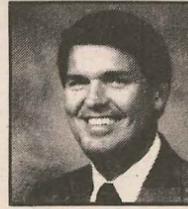
His call to ministry came in the summer of 1987 during a Freewill Baptist revival meeting. "Seven men surrendered to the call during that meeting, and all of us are still preaching, either with Primitive, Freewill or Southern Baptists," Price said. "I came to Clear Creek without any founding in the Bible.

I did not accept Southern Baptist teaching on eternal security. An older student and I would often talk about it and share our distress about the teaching. One day out on the walking trail, we decided to just ignore it and get the best we could out of the rest. I began to pray and study about it, and God impressed me with the truth of Scripture. My salvation didn't depend on me holding on but God holding on to me. Clear Creek has helped me adjust my thinking in other ways. I have high praise for the school and great respect for the faculty. We get an all-around education here."

During his time at Clear Creek, Price has lived in Kelly Hall. He is pastor of Rivermont Baptist in Scott County, Va.

Bill Whittaker is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, Ky. 40977

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

China's Hui people virtually untouched by gospel

By Don Martin
SBC Foreign Mission Board

XIAN, China (BP)—With only minutes to spare, two backpacking tourists pushed through a crowded station in Xian, China, to catch a train leaving for Beijing.

They rushed onto the station platform and ran toward their assigned car. Their sprint ended abruptly with only yards to go.

A crowd of China's Hui (pronounced "Whey") minority blocked their way as they pressed toward a small, robed man wearing a glittering green-and-gold turban.

Frantically, the backpackers tried to squeeze through the crowd, but failed as the mob tightened ranks around the robed man and soon hoisted him into the door of the backpackers' assigned car.

The man, an Islamic imam (spiritual leader) for the Hui, had led hundreds of his people to the train station to bless seven men beginning the "hajj," the pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia every Muslim is commanded to make at least once.

As the imam spoke and stretched out his arms as a sign of blessing, his followers pushed even closer to him, squeezing the top-heavy tourists against the train. Some enthusiasts broke into chants. Others waved brightly colored flags. Small scuffles broke out as people jockeyed for position. Police shouted for calm; train officials gave up on their schedule and waited.

After more speeches, chants and blessings, the imam finished. His assistants lowered him to the platform and the backpackers seized the

chance to scurry onto the train.

As they settled into their seats, they probably remembered only a mob that nearly caused them to miss their train—without realizing they had actually witnessed the growing force of Islam in China.

They wouldn't be the first to overlook Muslim groups in China, a country associated in Western minds with Confucianism, Buddhism and now atheistic communism. Christians historically have focused their attention on the Han Chinese, who account for more than 90 percent of China's 1.2 billion people.

Since Han culture dominates the nation, Christians have reasoned—incorrectly—that outreach methods geared to the Han also would apply to minority groups, explained John, a Christian researcher who has focused on the Hui. Because of sensitivities in his work, he asked that his real name not be used.

China's 1982 census estimated about 7 million Hui live in the nation. But many researchers now place the total at 9 million—and some as high as 20 million. That makes the Hui the largest Muslim group in China.

The Hui trace their origins to the Tang imperial dynasty (A.D. 618-907), when Arab and Persian traders settled in China and married Han women. After generations of intermarriage, physical and linguistic distinctions between the two groups all but disappeared.

"Many scholars said these (Chinese) Muslims were just absorbed into the greater Chinese society," John said. "But that's a limited view, because inside that Chinese fabric is Islam, and this world view is quite



strong. Even today when most people consider China, they see a nation of one race—the Han Chinese."

But the focus is changing.

"Many have begun to recognize that China's Islamic nationalities are Muslim first and Chinese second," he said. "When you listen to many of the Hui, you realize their hearts are in the Middle East ... I don't mean that the majority of the Hui are devoted Muslims. The average Hui on the street may well have a marginal understanding of the Islamic faith, but the Hui's social network and its attachment to the mosque's leadership is critical."

Such insight is key to reaching the Hui for Christ, John concluded.

"I saw the same thing in the Mid-

dle East," he said. "When I lived there, I realized respect for Islam and its teachings is essential for opening a dialogue. Only then can a person share the gospel. Any discussion, with an average Muslim or an imam, must start with a spirit of love and mutual respect."

In fact, the Hui's Muslim identity has been a unifying thread that has held this diverse nationality together. For centuries the Hui have struggled for existence in a society dominated by the Han Chinese.

Today, the Hui share a land with the Han, but not a path. Just like the backpackers and pilgrims who rolled out of Xian on the same train, one group looks toward Beijing—and the other toward Mecca.

STOPPED IN HIS TRACKS

A backpacking tourist in Xian, China, struggles to board a train while hundreds of Hui Chinese pack the train station to see and hear one of their Islamic leaders. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

Hui people illustrate Islam's growing influence in China

XIAN, China (BP)—"Nothing compares to going to Mecca," exclaims Ma Lin, a retired taxi driver in his late 60s and member of China's Hui people.

"The day I was married, the birth of my children—these things are nothing compared to going to Mecca" on a "hajj," said Ma of the pilgrimage to Islam's holy city every adult Muslim who is able must attempt at least once.

Ma (not his real name) learned officials in Beijing, China's capital, had tapped him to make the journey less than 48 hours before his scheduled departure. Chinese Muslims often wait five, 10, even 20 years before receiving government approval for their trip. When clearance comes, whole families break into a whirlwind of celebrations, shopping and special meals.

The day before his departure, Ma's home had the electric feel of an American kitchen on Thanksgiving day.

One grand meal after another kept the house filled with the pungent smells of rich spices. Every room in the two-story house, built around an open-air courtyard, had trays of fruit, steamed breads and sweets.

Almost oblivious to the festivities, Ma moved about with the air of a monarch and the enthusiasm of an

excited child. When friends dropped by to congratulate him and wish him a safe journey, he held court, patiently reciting details of his preparations and what he planned to do in Mecca.

The next day, Ma joined the other six departing pilgrims for prayer at Xian's Great Mosque, built in A.D. 742. The service was led by the Hui (pronounced "Whey") imam, a leader of the mosque. The mosque was expanded to its current size during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), making it one of the oldest and largest in China.

Although Ma carried a round-trip ticket that brings him back to his family in Xian, in many ways his trip to the Middle East is a return home. The Chinese character for Hui can mean 'return,' explains another imam in Xian.

"People used to refer to us as the 'Hui Hui,' which can mean double return," the imam adds. "China is a temporary place, and one day we will return to the Middle East."

This is not an isolated opinion. Most Hui never have been to the Middle East, but they and other Chinese Muslims share their forefathers' beliefs that Arabia is their true homeland.

"They yearn not merely to migrate to a land of safety but to return to Arabia as the only way to physical and

spiritual redemption," writes one scholar.

In 1979 China allowed 19 people to travel to Mecca as part of a state-sponsored trip. This year more than 6,000 Chinese Muslims, most paying their own way, will go on the hajj. The pilgrimage can take 30 to 40 days and costs upward of \$4,000, a sum equal to several years' wages in China.

Between 4 percent and 5 percent of China's people are Muslims, which means China's Islamic population outnumbers traditional Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia, Libya and Iraq.

The largest of these Muslim groups in China is the Hui, and they wield considerable political clout. China has placed some restrictions on Islamic freedom in its outer regions. But it is "keenly aware of the importance foreign Islamic governments place on China's treatment of its Muslim minorities as an issue influencing lucrative trade and military agreements," notes Dru Gladney, associate professor of Asian studies at the University of Hawaii.

China's commerce with its Middle Eastern trading partners has grown more important following the rise in tensions with many of its Western trading partners in the wake of the 1989 Tiananmen Square uprising,

Gladney explains.

The Chinese government also hears the new Muslim voices emerging from across its northern borders in central Asia. The newly independent states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan all share a religious heritage with China's Muslims, who are concentrated mainly in the north and northwest.

Since the late 1970s, the Chinese government has watched Islamic conservatism rise among the Hui in China's northwest Muslim communities, Gladney reports in his book, "Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic."

"This rising radical, even fundamentalist, emphasis upon Islamic purity in Hui communities has caused concern" among government officials, he writes.

Christian researchers are quick to point out that Hui communities are far from being considered hotbeds of Islamic revolutionaries. But the Hui nevertheless are increasingly bowing to Mecca, not Beijing.

In recent years the desire among Muslim youths to learn Arabic has grown steadily throughout China.

"When you know Arabic, you can read the Koran, and one day you will need to know Arabic to go to Mecca," explains an imam.

Volunteers needed

HONG KONG (BP)—The door to China's isolated countryside is open to Southern Baptist medical teams, but none has entered.

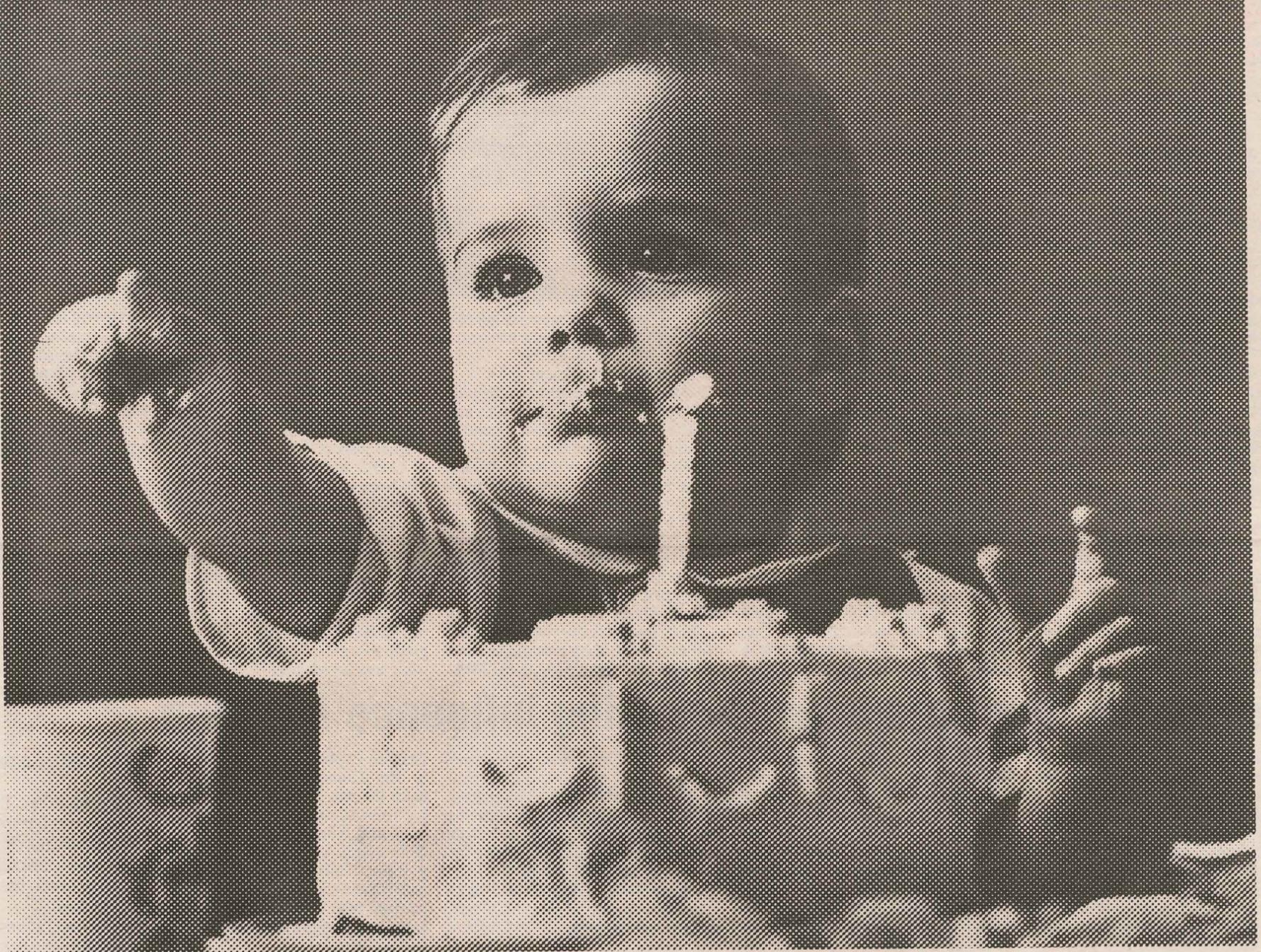
It's now common for foreigners to live in major cities of China, but still rare for them to live and work in rural areas.

Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist aid organization, has opportunities to place five medical teams in such areas.

CSI workers are excited about opportunities for the rural work because of contact with one of China's Muslim minority groups, the Hui.

For more information about the CSI medical teams, call Alvinia Michalec at (800) 999-3113.

Here's One Big Reason Why You Should Be In Church Next Week.

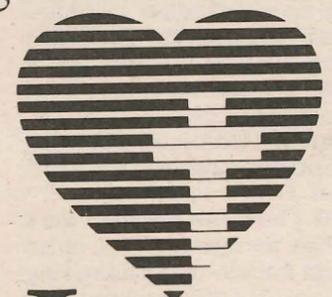


Your children. Whatever their ages, there's so much they can learn in church. Principles that will serve them well throughout life. And help them to be better human beings. Because our church is a place where positive life values find expression. Where the enduring love of God is taught. Where the nature of life and the meaning of happiness are conveyed through simple yet profound Bible stories.

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