



WESTERN RECORDER

June 20, 2000
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WHAT HAPPENED AT THE SBC

■ **Resolutions** Messengers adopted 10 resolutions during the annual meeting, including one opposing "New Age globalism" and the first in the convention's history supporting capital punishment. *Page 2.*



■ **Elections** The first baby-boomer president of the SBC said his top priorities will be to involve younger pastors in convention leadership and to encourage every Southern Baptist to be involved in an overseas mission project. *Page 2.*

■ **Kentuckians** Singer Larnelle Harris brought the audience to its feet during a tribute to the Cooperative Program. Also, a Murray teen got a behind-the-scenes look at the SBC as a page. *Page 3.*

■ **Editorial** Approval of the revised Baptist Faith and Message statement is a pivotal moment in Southern Baptist history. *Page 5.*

■ **Gay protesters** While demonstrators were being arrested outside, ex-gay ministries were thanking Southern Baptists for defining homosexual activity as a sin. *Page 6.*

■ **Motions** A proposal aimed at healing fissures between conservatives and moderates is defeated. *Page 8.*

■ **Reports** International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin asks messengers if they will obey God's command to take the Christian message to the world. *Page 9.*

■ **WMU** After being installed as the organization's new executive director, Wanda Lee tells members, "We must seek new and different ways to challenge the church to make missions once again a high priority." *Page 12.*



■ **Events** Youth from Rose Hill Baptist Church in Ashland were among those participating in a True Love Waits rally during the convention. *Page 15.*

Faith and Message revisions adopted

By Mark Wingfield
Texas Baptist Standard

ORLANDO, Fla. (ABP)— After months of speculation about proposed changes to the Southern Baptist Convention's historic Baptist Faith and Message statement, convention messengers overwhelmingly approved recommendations of a 15-member study committee appointed by SBC President Paige Patterson.

Restoring affirmation of soul competency and the priesthood of believers, the 2000 version of the faith statement stops short of describing Jesus Christ as "the criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted." A committee-initiated addition to the report also notes that the principles of soul competency and priesthood should be tempered by "our accountability to each other under the Word of God."

An hour-long debate on the convention floor June 14 focused primarily on the nuanced question of whether Baptists' ultimate authority is Jesus or the Bible. Messengers soundly defeated three proposed amendments to the committee proposal.

Leading Baptist moderates and conservatives alike agreed afterward that the debate reflected partisan tensions that have divided the nation's largest Protestant denomination over the past 20 years.

From a conservative perspective, Southern Baptists have cemented their conviction that the Bible is the written Word of God. For moderates, the SBC has elevated the Bible to an object of worship, rather than an inspired document that points believers to Christ.



COMMITTEE LEADERS Adrian Rogers (left), chairman of the committee that proposed revisions to the Southern Baptist Convention's Baptist Faith and Message statement, speaks at a press conference after SBC messengers voted to accept the revisions. With Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., are three committee members (from left): Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; and Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. (BP photo by Gibbs Frazier)

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is what it all comes down to," study committee member Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said from the platform at one point during the debate. "The issue is whether the Bible is the Word of God or merely a record of God's word."

He was opposing a motion from the floor by Anthony Sizemore of Floydada, Texas, who attempted to restore language from the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message section on Scripture instead of revisions proposed by the study committee.

"The Bible is not merely a record," Mohler said, prompting a standing ovation from convention messengers. "It is the revelation of God. It is always a triumphant moment when this con-

vention states clearly its belief that the Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God. ... Pray tell, what do we know of Jesus apart from Scriptures?"

"The written Word honors the living Word," study committee chairman Adrian Rogers said in a news conference after the vote. "The living Word affirms the written Word."

Sizemore and others, however, argued that the changes elevate the Bible above Jesus.

"I believe the Bible is God's Word, and I strive to obey the standards it prescribes," Sizemore said. "The Bible is a book we can trust. ... That being said, the Bible is still just a book. Christians are supposed to have a relationship with Jesus Christ, not a book."

□ See *Faith & Message ...*, page 7

**PARTNERS
IN THE HARVEST
WORLDWIDE
SBC 2000**

Road troubles can't keep Kentuckians from Crossover Orlando

ORLANDO, Fla.—Four flat tires couldn't keep a Louisville church team from traveling to Orlando to participate in the evangelistic outreach that precedes the annual Southern Baptist Convention.

"We had a trip and a half getting here," said Arthur Sauer, minister of music and evangelism for Lakewood Baptist Church.

Sauer and his church's band of teenagers drove 37 often-stressed hours to

play music for an hour during a block party as part of Crossover Orlando.

"We were convinced that the devil didn't want us to make it here," said Sauer's wife, Shannon.

Coordinated by the SBC North American Mission Board, Crossover is an evangelistic blitz, featuring block parties, door-to-door visitation and other projects. It is held annually on the Saturday before the Southern Baptist Convention meeting.

This year, 1,921 people made professions of faith in Jesus as their personal Savior as a result of Crossover Orlando.

But the band members from Lakewood hadn't been on the road very long before it looked like they might not be a part of it. Driving a borrowed camper, they were less than an hour outside Louisville when a tire blew. After fixing it and getting back on the road, a second tire burst.

The owner of the camper was contacted, and he authorized a whole set of new tires, Sauer said.

But the team was back on the road for less than a half-hour when a third

tire popped.

That's when the group met trucker Tom Esker, a chaplain for the Christian Trucking Association, who helped them. Sauer said Esker, who goes by the CB radio handle "Road Angel Tom," was helping change the third flat of the trip when another of the new tires blew out a valve stem.

Esker helped the team get the flats fixed and the team decided to leave its sound equipment trailer at a church in Bowling Green. Later, the band found the party site had all the sound equipment they needed, Sauer added.

Esker also prayed with the group and encouraged them to continue in their journey, Sauer said. "It became very apparent that God was working. It was no doubt that He got us here."

He said God taught them humility throughout the experience. "We're not doing this for ourselves. We're doing this for God, and He made that clear."

When the band got to the party site at Lake Eola in downtown Orlando, they were the last group to perform.

□ See *Crossover Orlando ...*, page 3

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, June 21



PRAISE BAND Members of the Lakewood Baptist Church band from Louisville perform during a party as part of Crossover Orlando, the evangelistic blitz held each year in the host city for the Southern Baptist Convention.

Merritt unopposed for SBC presidency

By Bob Allen
Associated Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (ABP)—Southern Baptists elected their first baby boomer president as their first leader in the 21st century June 13 in Orlando, Fla.

James Merritt, 47, pastor of the 12,000-member First Baptist Church of Snellville, Ga., ran unopposed as president of the 15.8 million-member Southern Baptist Convention.

Merritt told reporters his top priorities will be to involve younger pastors in convention leadership and to encourage every Southern Baptist to be personally involved in an overseas mission project.

Merritt also pledged loyalty to the belief that the Bible is "inerrant," and

praised his predecessor, Paige Patterson, who engineered a movement to return the denomination to its conservative "roots."

"I probably would not be sitting up here if it were not for Dr. Paige Patterson and the effort he started 20 years ago," Merritt said in a post-election news conference.

In response to a reporter's question about perceptions that Southern Baptists are narrow-minded in their views toward homosexuals and women, Merritt said he wouldn't feel his doctor was narrow-minded if he told him he needed to be treated for cancer. "I am as broad-minded as the Bible."

Merritt said Southern Baptists are being criticized for standing on truths revealed in Scripture. "The most perfect person who ever lived was crucified for telling the truth," he noted.

Fueling negative perceptions about Southern Baptists, Merritt said, is the fact that "when you take a stand for truth, you automatically take a stand against error."

For example, he said: "We do stand against homosexuality. At the same time, what we're really for is the family."

On another topic, Merritt said the Bible is clear in its teaching that the role of pastor is reserved for men. "The issue is not competency," he said. "The issue is the truth of the Word of God

and the issue is calling."

Merritt, who earned two degrees at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said during seven years of study there he knew women who believed they were called to preach. Based on his understanding of the Bible, he said women cannot be called as pastors "because God would not go against His Word."

Merritt affirmed the Baptist principles of soul competency and priesthood of the believer. Despite personal equality before God, however, Merritt said the Bible also affirms a hierarchy in worship and in the home. God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man and "man is the head of woman," Merritt said. "I didn't make that up. That's what God said."

Merritt said he does not fear a split in the denomination. "I think the overwhelming majority of Baptists are extremely happy" with the convention's leadership he said, evidenced by record giving to the Cooperative Program.

Asked how the SBC would relate to state conventions that allow moderate churches options to support the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship or other non-SBC cautions, Merritt said he recognizes the autonomy of churches and state conventions, but "it grieves my heart to see any state convention take any action that could hurt the Cooperative Program."

With additional reporting by Stella Prather

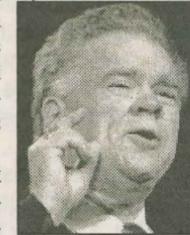
SBC OFFICERS Newly elected Southern Baptist Convention officers are (from left): John Yeats, editor of the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger, recording secretary; Tommy French, pastor of Jefferson Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, La., second vice president; James Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Snellville, Ga., president; Ted Traylor, pastor of Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola, Fla., first vice president; and Lee Porter, a retired pastor and denominational employee from Georgia, registration secretary.



Patterson urges Baptists to be ambassadors

By Marv Knox
Texas Baptist Standard

ORLANDO, Fla. (ABP)—Southern Baptists must remain true to their God-given assignment to be ambassadors for Christ, Paige Patterson insisted June 13, during his presidential address to the Southern Baptist Convention.



Patterson

"Above all else, we are ambassadors for Christ," Patterson proclaimed, citing the Apostle Paul's advice to Christians in 2 Corinthians.

Patterson concluded his second one-year term as SBC president during the two-day meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., said he has been influenced by the notion of Christian ambassadorship since he was 9 years old. Royal Ambassadors, the convention's missions program for boys, "stamped my life forever," he recalled, eventually leading to "my appointment as a heavenly ambassador to an alien world."

Christian ambassadors should be challenged by "three distinct motivations," he said. They are:

■ **Inevitable accountability.** Every Christian eventually will stand before the judgment seat of God to give an account for that person's life and actions, he said.

Religious liberty supports the SBC's right to evangelize non-Christians, even people who adhere to other world religions, he pointed out. Specifically, he cited criticism the Convention's International Mission Board has received for "targeting" members of other faith groups for evangelism.

"We need never apologize for such accountability to our missionary assignment," he stressed.

■ **Incomparable affection.** Christians are compelled to their task by the love of Christ, Patterson noted. "Love constrains us as nothing else."

Through the sacrifice of Christ and the forgiveness of human sin, Christians have been compelled to love and serve God, he said.

■ **Incredible assignment.** "It is as though God is pleading with the world through us, 'Be reconciled to God,'" he noted.

"For that reason, I stand before you today ... and admonish all of us together to devote ourselves as never before to getting the saving gospel of Jesus Christ to all 6 billion people on the face of this globe. This is the missionary task to which we now must devote ourselves with renewed vigor. ... This missionary task is what the Bible is all about."

Resolutions address capital punishment, 'New Age globalism'

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

ORLANDO, Fla.—Adopting a pro-capital punishment statement for the first time in Southern Baptist Convention history, messengers approved a resolution describing the practice as "a legitimate form of punishment for those guilty of murder or treasonous acts that result in death."

Messengers adopted a total of 10 resolutions June 14. The statements addressed such diverse issues as the threat of "New Age globalism," religious persecution in Sudan and China and sex trafficking.

The resolution on the death penalty declares that God "established capital punishment as a just and appropriate means by which the civil magistrate may punish those guilty of capital crimes."

David Crosby of New Orleans encouraged messengers to defeat the resolution, invoking the name of Karla Faye Tucker, a murderer who reportedly repented of her crime and became a Christian before she was executed.

Noting that Jesus was executed "under an unjust system," Crosby said, "I wonder why the church of Jesus Christ wants to stand up and favor capital punishment. ... There are better ways we can witness to the testimony of Christ than this."

Resolutions Committee chairman Hayes Wicker responded: "It was with tremendous struggle and agony of thought and prayer that we dealt with this resolution."

Emphasizing, however, "God's Word has spoken clearly on the issue of capital punishment," Wicker told messengers, "We believe it is time to speak since the world is saying so much about it."

A resolution decrying "the threat of New Age globalism" expresses concern about promotion of "a one-world government, a one-world religion and a one-world economy." It warns that the success of such a movement "would mean the destruction of the sovereignty of nations."

The statement urges Congress and other national leaders to guard U.S. national sovereignty, prevent the placement of American troops under foreign military command and reverse the trend toward globalism.

The resolution opposing religious persecution in Sudan and the People's Republic of China cites the month's report of the Commission on International Religious Freedom. The report calls Sudan "the world's most violent abuser" of religious freedom, with more than 2 million people killed in a 17-year genocidal war.

The resolution notes that the Chinese government's suppression of religious freedom violates both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It calls on Congress "to use every appropriate means to compel the governments in Sudan and the People's Republic of China to stop the various atrocities and ongoing violations of religious freedom."

Wicker told reporters the committee opted to "use a rifle approach rather than a shotgun" by focusing specifically on Sudan and China. He described the two countries as the "most visible, most well-known and perhaps worst offenders" of religious freedom.

Condemning "the trafficking of women

and children for sexual purposes," a resolution on that subject reports that "as many as 1 million women and 2 million children are trafficked internationally into sexual slavery annually," including more than 50,000 women and children in the United States.

The resolution urges prayer "for the victims of this horrendous crime." It also calls on Congress to pass legislation increasing criminal penalties, providing assistance for victims and urging worldwide action "to eliminate this particularly vile form of human trafficking."

Declaring opposition to trafficking of human fetal tissue, messengers adopted a resolution describing elective abortion as "an act of violence against unborn human beings." It adds that, "The sale of their tissues is an assault on the biblical truth that all human beings are created in the image of God."

Other resolutions adopted without debate include:

■ **Judicial oppression** of the Boy Scouts of America by a recent New Jersey Supreme Court ruling upholding a homosexual's right to serve as a Scout leader.

■ **Retaining the traditional calendar designations of B.C. and A.D.** The statement opposes the designations of B.C.E. (before common era) and C.E. (common era) as examples of "secularization, anti-supernaturalism, religious pluralism and political correctness pervasive in our society."

■ **Religious freedom and evangelism in a pluralistic society.**

■ **The Cooperative Program's 75th anniversary.**

Murray teen helps behind the scenes at annual meeting

ORLANDO, Fla.—Among the unsung heroes helping with the work of the Southern Baptist Convention this year was a WMU Acteen from Murray.

"It's been really busy," Amy Travis said toward the end of the convention. She was one of the 25 teenage pages who helped with the behind-the-scenes work associated with the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting.

Travis was selected for the work by being one of six national Acteen panelists. Before the convention, she also helped with the national WMU annual meeting.

During the SBC, pages' days started early and ended late. During the meetings, many of them were on the floor of the convention, running proposed motions or resolutions from messengers at microphones to the podium. At other times, pages were responsible for helping in the convention's news room, distributing scores of press releases to more than 150 reporters and editors.

The teenagers also held Bible studies and met with convention officials. Officials with the SBC North American Mission Board also treated them to lunch to unveil a new missions magazine targeted to teens.

"We went through the whole magazine and picked it apart, telling what things we liked and what things needed improvement," said Travis, who graduated from high school this year and will attend Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., in the fall.

Travis also was a messenger from her church, First Baptist Church of Murray. She said speakers on the Baptist Faith and Message debate forced her to think about her own beliefs.

She noted that often speakers with differing opinions used Scripture to support their views. "That's when I had to look at what I believe."

Among the things that most impressed her, she said, were "all the opportunities WMU provides for women to be involved in missions, to be involved in leadership in the church."



KENTUCKY PAGE Amy Travis reviews the microphone signals during the SBC annual meeting in Orlando. An Acteen from First Baptist Church of Murray, Travis worked at both the SBC and WMU annual meetings.

Crossover Orlando results in nearly 2,000 decisions

Continued from page 1

While many people had left the party, band members dedicated their work to God, Sauer said. After they played, several band members got to talk to people about why they were there.

"If it planted one seed, it was worth it to us, and the kids knew it," Mrs. Sauer said.

The band, which has been together 18 months, is scheduled to perform later this summer in the Carolinas, and Sauer already has signed up for next year's Crossover, slated for New Orleans.

From poolside to parties to parched tourists, Crossover allows Southern Baptists to give away their faith.

The block party, like the one where Lakewood members played, has become a venerable institution in Baptist evangelism, and it is especially popular at Crossover.

Downtown Baptist Church member Robert Harness said advance work by volunteers paid off in a strong turnout. Teams did door-to-door surveying and handed out party flyers on three consecutive Saturdays leading up to the event.

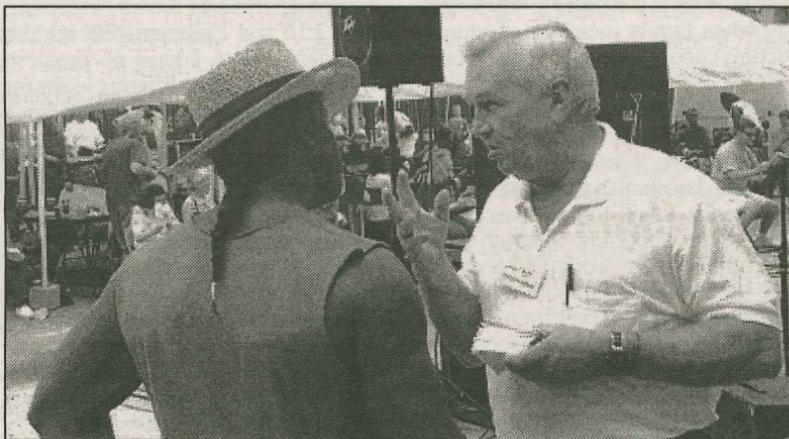
"We took on 6,000 homes," Harness noted, "and we hit the bulk of them."

NAMB president Bob Reccord was among those enjoying the festivities. He predicted block parties will continue to be a key tool in evangelism. "Especially in the cities, people are so desperate to find points of celebration—things they can take kids to and not have to worry."

Reccord said the relaxed atmosphere of block parties is conducive to sharing the gospel. "A lot of defenses go down because of that."

Jim and Judy Leigh, members of First Baptist Church of Sikeston, Mo., were among those witnessing at the downtown block party. Mrs. Leigh said she led a woman to the Lord.

The woman told her she had come because the flyer said she could have all the food she wanted, Mrs. Leigh recounted. Then servers gave her a



CROSSOVER ORLANDO Jim Leigh of Missouri (right), shares his faith with a man attending a block party in Orlando. This event was one of many ministry and evangelism projects making up Crossover 2000. Crossover is held each year before the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting. (BP photo by Bob Carey)

single hot dog. Mrs. Leigh told her, "Karen, God brought you here for spiritual food, and you accepted it. And it'll do you better than any hot dog."

Also that Saturday morning, Matt Dougay of Lake Charles, La., and Ashley Arias of Florence, Ky., splashed in the swimming pool of the Comfort Inn in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., with a group of young children in "Kids Club." The three-day-a-week outreach of games, Bible stories and crafts continues into August in Orlando area hotels.

Dougay said many of the children in Kids Club have had no exposure to Christianity, including many visitors from England. "A lot of them get to hear about Jesus for the first time. That's the exciting part for me."

Dozens of Crossover volunteers handed out free bottles of water with an evangelistic message at trolley stops along Orlando's busy International Drive. At Pointe Orlando shopping center, Nathan Gillis of Brewton, Ala., and Richard Denson of Geneva, Fla., found lots of takers on a hot day.

Five ethnic groups worked together to put on the largest single event of Crossover Orlando—the International Festival at the Central Florida Fair-

grounds. They expected to reach the projected attendance of 4,000 people.

Visitors could choose from Brazilian, Vietnamese, Hispanic, Korean and Haitian food—all free.

Festival organizers awarded dozens of door prizes; winning numbers were read in the different languages of those present. The grand prize was a car—a 1993 Toyota Camry.

John Chung, pastor of On Nu Ree Baptist Church in Orlando, chaired the task force that organized the festival. He flashed a big smile when asked about the event. "I have a sense of oneness, and that is wonderful."

James Fortinberry, director of missions for Greater Orlando Baptist Association, said he was elated by the turnout and good spirit of the international festival. "Whatever superlative you can use, use it. Maybe grateful to God is a better way to say it."

Volunteers circulated through the crowd to give out tracts and Bibles in the various languages. Tim O'Mara of Atlanta commented, "Seeing everybody from all nationalities—and all being Christians—is pretty overwhelming."

He compared the experience to being on a mission trip. "You see how much bigger the world is."



CP CELEBRATION Kentuckian and gospel music great Larnelle Harris sings during a special 75th anniversary celebration of the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program. (BP photo by Van Payne)

Kentuckian brings messengers to their feet for CP celebration

ORLANDO, Fla.—Kentuckian and Grammy-winning musical artist Larnelle Harris and syndicated variety show host Dennis Swanberg headlined a celebration of the 75th anniversary of Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program.

Hosted by Swanberg, the celebration was part of the opening session of the June 13-14 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Harris, a deacon at Maple Grove Baptist Church in Louisville, brought more than 11,000 messengers to their feet with several musical selections.

Harris began his musical career at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green. Since recording his first solo album in 1975, he has collected five Grammy Awards and 11 Dove awards.

The Cooperative Program is the channel by which Southern Baptists finance missions and ministry endeavors of Baptist state conventions and national and international outreach efforts of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, received the inaugural M.E. Dodd award for lifetime achievement in CP support. Dodd, former pastor of First Baptist Church of Shreveport, La., chaired the 1925 committee that recommended creation of the national Cooperative Program.

Since 1925, more than \$1.6 billion has been given through the Cooperative Program. Nearly 6.2 million international baptisms have been recorded and more than 13,000 missionaries have been sent around the world. On the home front, the Cooperative Program has supported 6,683 missionaries.

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

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Hostile arguments

It would seem that reports of the new Baptist Faith and Message statement have stirred up the liberal hornets. It strikes me that the hostile arguments of women as pastors are all extra-biblical, much in the same way as those who attempt to prove that homosexuality is not sin.

Alice Marshall says she believes the position on women is "culturally driven" with a desire for power, authority and control. In view of the worldly vogue called feminism, I think the "culturally driven" shoe fits much more snugly on her own foot. It does, however, have to do with authority, and going where God proclaims, not the world.

Julie Pennington-Russell states her amazement with: "It would come as a surprise to Jesus that the office of pastor should be limited to men."

It is no surprise to Jesus. He is the Word. Also, I'm confident that Jesus had many good and godly women around Him. So why were all of His apostles men? It has to do with election and proper authority.

And lastly we have various charges of inaccurate interpretation such as Bill Shoulta's view that "this is an inaccurate interpretation of isolated Scriptures stating that women should not 'teach or have authority over men.'" OK, Bill, then what is your interpretation of the above scripture? Seems plain enough to me.

Perhaps the problem is in a little too much interpretation. The more you interpret, the further you get from the author's intent. The same can be seen with what has been done with the Constitution.

Chuck Estridge
Williamstown

Love vs. vengeance

The answer to the question, "Would the parents and relatives of a murder victim favor the death penalty?" is yes, in most cases. In fact, most people in America, even ones who will never have a loved one murdered, favor the death penalty. But majority support for it does not mean capital punishment is morally and spiritually correct.

The important question is: What would Jesus do? I believe Jesus would favor abolishing the death penalty. It is an act of vengeance that brings no peace to the vengeful. If vengeance is required, Creator God, Father of us all, is the one to administer it. Life in prison without the possibility of parole should be the maximum punishment humankind should mete out to fellow brothers and sisters who commit capital crimes.

Bud Welch of Oklahoma City lost his daughter in the horrific bombing of the federal building there. It is a rarity for a murder victim's parents, but he is opposed to the death penalty for Timothy McVeigh. Mr. Welch's heart and mind are filled with the transforming love of Jesus. It is especially heartwarming when family members of murder victims choose love over vengeance.

One of the best spokespersons opposing the death penalty is Sister Helen Prejean, author of "Dead Man Walking." She says, "I have no doubt that we will one day abolish the death penalty in America. It will come sooner if people like me who know the truth about executions do our work well and educate the public. It will come slowly if we do not. ... The secrecy surrounding executions makes it possible for executions to continue."

"Dead Man Walking" is must reading for all compassionate conservatives and liberals who desire healing and a reduction of violence in our land.

Paul Whiteley Sr.
Louisville

Jesus is enough

Some years ago, I took part in a class at Emory University. Someone in the class told a joke about Baptists. There was a convention where housing was in short supply for participants. But it would not be a serious problem because Baptists were so narrow they could sleep five to a bed!

Now Baptists are the joke in some circles. We've faced worse. We're tough and we could take it if it served any heavenly or even earthly purpose. Instead, denominations that once accepted their pastors' training from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary don't anymore. It is more difficult to witness to Jews, Mormons, Catholics and non-Christians, not because of what we say, but how we say it.

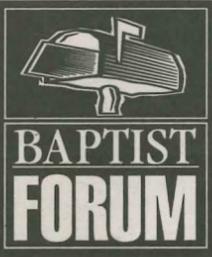
Please note I did not classify Catholics as non-Christians. Catholics and Baptists have more we can agree on than we disagree on. We could do more to reach a doubting world than expose people to denominations fighting among themselves and with each other.

What do we gain by quarreling about premillennialism as opposed to postmillennialism and many other points about which reliable Bible scholars have opposing views? That isn't what saves us. Accepting Jesus and saving souls. John 3:16 and Ephesians 2:8 are the important points. I have no problem with those who have differing views on most other points, as long as they don't try to force me to their viewpoints or doubt my Christianity.

Billy Graham, who perhaps has won more people to Christ than any other Baptist, has decried the methods and attitudes of some Baptists' witnessing efforts. He says he presents the plan of salvation and lets his listeners make their own decisions as led by the Lord.

Would that all could accept the words of the hymn, "My faith has found a resting place, not in device or creed. ... It is enough that Jesus died and that He died for me."

Jon Whitfield
Brandenburg



STEWARDSHIP

Does being a Christian affect financial views?

By Don Spencer

The answer is really quite simple. Being a Christian should

change the way you do everything, including handling finances. Now, let me be more specific.



Financial planning is "the predetermined use of financial resources in order to accomplish certain goals and objectives." As Christians, we can use the same definition with a slight modification: "A prayerful, Spirit-led, predetermined use of financial resources in order to accomplish certain goals and objectives as part of one's Christian commitment."

Each week in this column, various financial planning issues are addressed. As Christians, we need to be reminded from time to time of the different perspective we should have in dealing with these issues. I briefly offer five perspectives regarding money that we should reflect as Christians. Note that I say "reflect." It's one thing to say we believe them. It's another thing to put them in practice in such a way that it becomes a testimony of our relationship with God. Remember the old adage, "Actions speak louder than words."

■ *Our possessions are temporal.* We all agree that "you can't take it with you." Do people see in us an attitude toward our possessions that reflects that belief? (2 Peter 3:10; Luke 12:15b).

■ *Our possessions are not a source for pride or conceit.* This is the world's attitude toward money and possessions. We are to be different (1 Timothy 6:17).

■ *God owns it all.* We are stewards. We should own our possessions as managers of something that belongs to someone else, not as owners (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 12:16-21).

■ *Concern for family financial support is scriptural.* 1 Timothy 5:8 states, "If anyone does not provide for his family, especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." To plan adequately in today's world requires a healthy concern about money. As Jonathan Swift put it, "Every man ought to have money on his mind. No man ought to have money on his heart."

■ *Our stewardship is an outward, visible indicator of an inner spiritual condition.* Show me how someone handles his or her money and it tells me volumes about that person's relationship with God.

Don Spencer is a certified financial planner and directs the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annuity department

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Vacation Bible school impacts lives

Vacation Bible school has become the most effective outreach and evangelism tool of Southern Baptists. This summer we anticipate more than 90,000 folks (workers and students) will be involved in the creative learning experiences provided through vacation Bible schools in Kentucky. LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention has selected a captivating theme with creative materials.

The LifeWay theme this summer is "Ocean Odyssey." I was captured by the daily themes: Dive into ... God's Promises; God's Provisions; God's Power; God's Plan; and God's Presence.

The teaching guide contains excellent materials on understanding children and leading children to Christ. The ABCs of becoming a Christian provide an excellent process for children who attend VBS:

■ Admit to God you are a sinner.

Repent and turn away from your sin (Romans 3:23, 6:23; 1 John 1:9).

■ Believe that Jesus is God's Son and that God sent Jesus to save people from their sin (Romans 5:8; John 3:16; 1 Peter 3:18).



Bill Mackey

■ Commit your life to Jesus. Trust Him to be your Savior and Lord (Romans 10:9-10, 10:13; Matthew 16:24).

Because VBS is an intense learning experience, many boys and girls will have an opportunity to discover and respond to God's plan for their lives. It can be a time of spiritual renewal for parents as their children share new discoveries from the Bible. Most children will remember these activity-based learning experiences. I can remember the school-teacher who taught us and the quoting of Bible verses assigned for homework.

Everyone can have a part by praying for workers, students and their families. Pray for follow-up with those

who accept Jesus Christ as Savior and with those who are potential believers. This is a significant time when God is at work in families.

Assist by offering to bring neighborhood children to VBS and Sunday school. During my years as a pastor in Eastern Kentucky, it was a privilege to bring children to church every Sunday. Recently a young man told me that as a young boy he could not believe that we would come up the mountain to bring him to church. Keith is active in his church today.

Consider conducting a mission VBS in your area. Are there boys and girls who need to know that God can "still the storm" and "calm the sea"? Is there a multi-housing community where children need to know that God has a plan for their lives?

Follow up the mission VBS with a mission Sunday school and see what God does with the people. If God is in the work, all you need is literature and a few committed workers.

May God bless all who are extending His kingdom through vacation Bible school.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

Christian caregiver provides benefits for recipient, family

Q: My sister and I disagree over whether or not our mother's in-home caregiver needs to be a Christian. Our mother is a strong Christian and I think her caregiver needs to be a Christian. Do you agree?

If all other considerations regarding your mother's care are equal, it would seem to me that a Christian care provider is appropriate.

I cannot tell from your question what your sister's reservations about a Christian caregiver are all about. Why not a Christian? Despite your sister's concerns, those who do research on care giving find the "faith factor" does enhance the care giving function.

A 1998 study by Chang, Noonan and Tennstedt affirms the value of incorporating aspects of the "faith factor" in care giving, especially as these issues relate to the quality of the relationship between care recipients and care providers. It appears that the religious and spiritual beliefs of caregivers are important factors in understanding a client's needs and the level of relationship quality. The study also found that the religious component of care giving impacts the ability of the caregiver to relate to the family or support group around the recipient.

While it might not be feasible to encourage caregivers to become more religious or spiritual, "faith factor" intervention training could help them connect their belief systems to the care giving experience and to the relationship that is at the center of the care situation. Conducting caregiver training in collaboration with religious leaders and organizations might facilitate this process. It does not appear that much attention is given to this area of need in current training programs.

Overall, it seems that matching faith and spiritual similarities between the care provider and your mother should contribute to a positive experience for your mother.—*Jon Rainbow*

Q: My ex-husband and I divorced a year ago, but our 10-year-old daughter seems to be hanging onto the hope that we will reunite. She even tried to find ways to bring us together. We don't want her to have false hopes that will make her even more disappointed when it doesn't happen. How can we help her?

Accepting the finality of divorce does seem to be an important step in a child's adjustment to a new family situation. If she is having difficulty doing so, the following suggestions might help.

Explain to your daughter that you and her father are divorced and that the situation is permanent. Saying this to her directly might be all she needs to understand and believe it is true. Make sure she understands that whatever happened was between you and her father and did not have anything to do with her. Understanding that she did not cause the problem might help her realize she can't fix it.

Carefully evaluate your own and your ex-husband's words and actions. Are you giving her any mixed messages about the possibility of your family being together again? Are you and your ex-husband affectionate with each other? Do you say things that would indicate to her a desire to reunite? Do you speak longingly of times when you were all together?

While it is important that you two work together peacefully, you need to do so in such a way that she doesn't misunderstand your relationship and what the future holds for your family.—*Susan Howell*

Family Forum writers are David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville; James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; Susan Howell, assistant professor of psychology at Campbellsville University; Jon Rainbow, a clinical gerontologist and professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Wade Rowatt, director of the St. Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center in Louisville. Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail us at wesrec@ntr.net.



Priesthood is 'what it all comes down to'

"Ladies and gentlemen," Al Mohler proclaimed with dramatic flair about biblical authority, "this is what it all comes down to." And he was exactly right.

What Southern Baptist Convention messengers chose to do last week about the Baptist Faith and Message study committee report was a pivotal moment in denominational history. A cherished Baptist document that dates back to 1925, the faith statement had experienced only one major revision—until last week.

Pre-convention critiques of the new document focused on the omission of soul competency before God and the priesthood of the believer—two historic Baptist principles featured in the 1963 version's preamble.

To their credit, members of the 2000 committee heard those concerns and opted to amend their proposal before presenting it to convention messengers. As a result, the new statement acknowledges Southern Baptists' commitment to "the principles of soul competency and the priesthood of believers, affirming together both our liberty in Christ and our accountability to each other under the Word of God."

Unfortunately, Mohler was quick to offer a personal interpretation of the addition—after the vote.

Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, was among the most outspoken participants on the 15-member study committee. During a news conference after the revised statement was adopted, Mohler said he rejects the idea that "every man or woman stands absolutely on his own."

"Baptists believe in the priesthood of believers, but it is dangerous to say the priesthood of the believer," he remarked. Seeking to delineate the subtle difference, he added, "It is not just that we stand alone; it is that we stand together—and we stand together under the authority of God's Word."

Dangerous? Not for this Baptist. While I am content to stand before God under the authority of Scripture, I can do so whether I'm alone or in a crowd of all 15.8 million Southern Baptists.

While I appreciate the committee's efforts to at least partially restore a pair of key Baptist doctrines, I am confident it is not dangerous to be a lone priest/believer in the presence of Almighty God through the power of His Holy Spirit.

Other issues raised during debate on the document didn't fare as well. Messengers rejected an attempt to restore wording from the 1963 edition that emphasized Southern Baptist faith statements "have never been regarded as ... official creeds." They also voted down 1963 wording identifying Jesus Christ as "the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists" and "the criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted."

"Pray tell, what do we know of Jesus apart from Scriptures?" Mohler asked.

"There is no Christ of our knowledge other than through the pages of Scripture," chimed in fellow committee member Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Is that really what's being taught in our Southern Baptist seminaries these days? As vital as the Scriptures are in testifying about

Jesus, even more important is the witness of God's Spirit. "It is the Spirit that bears witness, because the Spirit is the truth," declares I John 5, adding that "the one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself." That is the essence of personal priesthood.

Countless people on mission fields around the world have come to know Jesus Christ without ever reading a single word of Scripture. While the Bible is essential in knowing the historic Christ, I am grateful every believer can know the Living Word personally through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

In the days ahead, Baptists on the individual, congregational and state levels likely will decide whether to embrace the new Baptist Faith and Message statement as their own. The starting point is to address the question: "What will you do with Christ?" Man-made faith statements aside, that really is what it all comes down to.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Effective evangelism must be personal

By Dan Garland

And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

And as He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

And they immediately left the nets and followed Him. (Mark 1:14-18)

The call of Jesus to the first disciples was to be "fishers of men." In chapter 2 of the Gospel of Mark we see what that means.

In verses 1-12 we read about a man who was carried on a stretcher to Jesus by four friends. These four encountered many obstacles in getting their friend to Jesus. There was the man himself. He was paralyzed and had to be carried. We never come to Christ alone; we always have help. There

was the crowd that filled the house so that there was no conventional way to get the man to Jesus.

The obstacles provided an opportunity to see what it means to be "fishers of men." The four tore off a portion of the roof and lowered their friend to Jesus, thus beginning the first "through the roof" church.

What does it mean to be "fishers of men" in the 21st century? The four men in the story serve as our models.

First of all, it takes people who believe Jesus is a person's only hope of salvation. These men did not bring their friend to Jesus because it was convenient or because of some great program or worship service. They brought him to Jesus because they had no other place to go.

Second, personal evangelism in the 21st century must be just that—personal. It took four people to bring this man to Christ. It will take all of us using whatever gifts, skills and passions God has given us if we are to be "fishers of men." One of the most rapid and popular "styles" of evangelism

in the 21st century is servant evangelism. This simply is meeting needs in order to share Christ. Many folks can and are getting involved in this creative expression of evangelism.

Third, to be "fishers of men" means to be creative, to be innovative, to find ways to bring our friends, co-workers, neighbors and family members to Christ. For the first time in history there are seven generations of people living side by side. Yet many of our churches are still trying to do a one-size-fits-all ministry. These four men were willing to color outside the lines.

What are you willing to do to bring your friends to Christ? It may mean putting aside a worship style that you like but that will not reach your unchurched neighbors or your grandchildren. It may mean having a Bible study at a different time, day or place in order to reach your friend or loved one. It might involve _____. You fill in the blank because to be "fishers of men" means to use our minds and our imaginations to do whatever we can so others will hear the words of Jesus, "Your sins are forgiven."



Dan Garland is leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention evangelism growth team

Mel White: Vote is spiritual life-or-death issue for Southern Baptists

By David Winfrey
News Director

ORLANDO, Fla. (ABP)—Twenty-four hours before he was arrested for protesting Southern Baptists' condemnation of homosexuality, demonstration coordinator Mel White already considered his effort a success.

"Gandhi and King said that when you do justice it's for your own spiritual renewal," White said in an interview, "and, by the way, for the transformation of society."

White leads Soulforce, a group that urges religious bodies to accept homosexuality as a legitimate lifestyle.

By demonstrating against Southern Baptists, White said, protesters already were successful in their personal renewal.

Soulforce's Web site had more than 26,000 visits since announcing plans to demonstrate in Orlando. "We're a huge success. The Internet has already made us that."

While many mainline denominations have debated acceptance of homosexuality and ordination of gay clergy, most Southern Baptists from both camps of moderates and conservatives agree that homosexual behavior is sinful.

Yet White insists the issue is far from settled among many Southern Baptists. "When we put the word out that we were coming, ... my e-mail went into overload from Southern Baptists all over the country saying, 'Thank you,'" he said.

Far from being a liberal universalist in matters of faith, White calls himself an "evangelical ecumaniac."

"I'm so evangelical, you would be bored to tears by my testimony, you would have heard it so many times. ... I believe in winning people to Christ," he said.

A former ghostwriter for Pat Robertson, Billy Graham and Jerry Falwell, White revealed to the general public in 1993 that he was homosexual. In 1994 he published "Stranger at the Gate," a book about his struggle with being gay.

White said he underwent 35 years of "psychosexual trauma" in an attempt to overcome his homosexual orientation. After fasting, exorcism and electric-shock therapy were unsuccessful, he said, he attempted suicide. Finally, he said, he accepted being gay, and ended his marriage of 23 years with the blessing of his wife.

For 16 years he has been in a "committed relationship" with a homosexual partner. Together they lead Soulforce.

Last month, 191 Soulforce activists were arrested in Cleveland outside the national conference of the United Methodist Church. Later this year they will protest outside national meetings of Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Catholics. Ironically, White said he doesn't see himself as a "gay activist."

"We're simply here to say, 'Please look at the science. Please look at the history. Please look at your own pastoral experiences with gay people. Please look at the gay and lesbian people you know. Please look at the facts and quit taking these six little passages out of context,'" he said.

White claims his evangelical critics are both sincere and wrong. He said Southern Baptists are being selective literalists in regard to the Old Testament's Levitical passages that condemn homosexual activity.

"The Levitical passage says that if a child sasses his parents, he's an abomination and should be killed," he said. "If the Southern Baptists are serious about Old Testament teachings, they better be serious about it all."

White also said the first chapter of Romans, often interpreted to condemn homosexuality, is taken out of context. "Romans itself is a clear sequence when you read it ... Because they had deserted God and taken on these vile practices, God had to walk away and abandon them. Have I abandoned God?... Has God abandoned me?" he asked.

White characterized Southern Baptists' vote regarding homosexuality as a spiritual life-or-death issue. "The Bible is clear that the Spirit of Christ cannot remain where all God's children are not welcome, that the Spirit is with the outcast," he said. "As soon as they kick us out, I believe with all my heart that the Spirit goes with it and that the Southern Baptist church now is fighting for its own soul's sake."

Gay protesters arrested outside meeting

By David Winfrey
News Director

ORLANDO, Fla.—Twenty-seven people were arrested June 14 outside the meeting hall for the Southern Baptist Convention protesting Southern Baptists for their characterization of homosexual activity as a sin.

This was the second demonstration this year by Soulforce outside a denomination's national meeting. A month earlier, 191 Soulforce demonstrators were arrested in Cleveland at the United Methodist Church's general conference.

In an event as peaceful as it was choreographed, about the only unexpected action was when four members of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals were arrested for failure to leave the area during the protest.

Soulforce organizer Mel White said the demonstration was seeking acceptance for gay and lesbian Christians by Southern Baptist churches.

"We're looking simply for the Southern Baptists—and for the other churches—to say, 'Hey, you're welcome here, too. We're all sinners here at the foot of the cross,'" said White, a former evangelical film producer and ghostwriter for Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell.

"They say, 'We're sinners but we're saved. You're sinners and you won't get saved until you get your sexual orientation changed,'" White said.

Outgoing SBC President Paige Patterson said regarding homosexuality that no Christian is immune from sin, but "I do not think that a genuinely born-again Christian would call wrong 'right' and right 'wrong.'"

"We have no choice but to say whatever the Bible says, what God says," Patterson added. "If that's offensive, we're sorry, but their argument is not with us, it's with God."

At about the same time as the arrests, Southern Baptists were approving changes to the Baptist Faith and Message doctrinal statement, which included adding homosexuality to a list of sins Christians should oppose.

Before that morning's business session, members of some gay rehabilitation organizations handed out statements of thanks to Southern Baptists for their stand. "Southern Baptists are giving increased attention to a redemptive message concerning homosexuality," said a printed statement from Bertie Barber, director of Eleutheros, Inc., in Winter Park, Fla.

In an event coordinated with the Orange County Sheriff's Office, more than 50 members of Soulforce held a silent vigil June 14 across the street from the Orange County Convention Center. At 9:25 a.m., about half the group marched into an open plaza singing and humming hymns, where they were ordered to disband by a member of the county sheriff's office. The group replied by singing "We Shall Overcome."

White said the group originally had 200 volunteers to demonstrate, but a fear of high fines and a possible jail sentence of 60 days caused them to plan for only 25 arrests.

When the group didn't disband, sheriff's deputies moved in, taking



SOULFORCE Protesters for gay rights in churches were arrested June 14 outside the meeting hall for the Southern Baptist Convention. ■ Left: Demonstrators march to the convention center. ■ Right: Ed Harris, a retired pastor from Salem, Va., (right) sits in a paddy wagon with others who were arrested for unlawful assembly. (BP & RNS photos)

away demonstrators, placing plastic tie-wrap handcuffs on them and putting them in a van. At one point, White asked a sheriff's officer, "Are you ready for more?"

"Yeah, when we get to 10, we'll (temporarily) stop," the officer replied.

As the demonstrators were being arrested, a sheriff's office sergeant motioned for officers also to arrest four demonstrators for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. The group had been demonstrating at the site throughout the convention. PETA leader Bruce Friedrich said his group, complete with one man in a chicken suit and another dressed as a "vegetarian Jesus" had permission to be there.

Sgt. Tim Cannon with the sheriff's office countered that they were warned three times to leave before they were arrested.

Demonstrators were taken to a preliminary booking site set up at the convention center. Bond was set at \$500, according to Jim Sullivan, a spokesman for the Orange County Sheriff's Office.

By that afternoon, at least five demonstrators already were bonded out of jail, while some of the others had said they would wait in jail for an initial appearance before a judge at 2 p.m. the next day, according to Alan Moore, spokesman for the Orange County Corrections Department.

Later in the day after the demonstrations and arrests, representatives of four "ex-gay ministries" held a press conference at the convention to praise Southern Baptists for calling homosexuality sinful.

"Our desire is not to engender hatred of homosexuals," said Tim Wilkins, executive director of Cross Ministry Inc. in Raleigh, N.C. "We love homosexuals precisely because many of us were homosexual. Somewhere a gay would say to me, 'Tim, if you really loved me, you would accept me as I am.' And I would respond that my understanding of Christian love, the highest form of love, does not withhold the truth."

The groups sought to counter White's message that when Baptists and others call homosexuality sin they contribute to physical persecution of

gays and lesbians. "At the heart of almost all of the violence against us is the spiritual violence of saying God doesn't love us as we are," White said.

SBC President Patterson said later, "Any genuine born-again believer who loves Jesus will never perpetrate an act of violence against somebody else just because they think they are wrong."

Patterson said SBC officials were frustrated that law officers threatened to arrest Southern Baptists who earlier had planned to take water to the Soulforce protesters and "wanted to give them an expression of the love of God."

Wilkins, a former homosexual who now is married and has a baby daughter, said while he recognizes that homosexuals struggle with their desires, that does not change God's command or the hope of change. He compared it to the thousands of people each year who go on diets.

"Some of them lose weight. Some of them gain it back. We have to ask the question, did the diet fail? Does the weight-loss program fail or is it the failure of the client to do what it takes? I think it's the latter," Wilkins said.

White has repaid that therapy, he believed God wanted him to accept his homosexuality as a gift from God.

Wilkins countered: "The Bible never makes the claim that we are exempt from temptation in this life."

"I'm sorry that he has decided after 30 years to accept his homosexuality. The man who is tempted to break his marriage vows may be tempted, more than likely, for the rest of his life to do it," he said. "I am not saying that healing is a quick fix. It is not. It's living day by day. It's a relentless reliance on Jesus Christ."

Before his arrest, White noted that whether he's right or wrong, he trusts his salvation ultimately to Christ.

"If we're wrong, ... if we should have stayed in therapy for the rest of our lives, when the final judgment comes it's what Christ does for us that redeems us. It's not what we do," he said. "We're trusting, just like the Southern Baptists are trusting, that His grace will cover our sins too."

With additional reporting by Tim Palmer of the Missouri Word & Way

Faith & Message debate focuses on role of the Bible

Continued from page 1

Sizemore described the rewording as "a major doctrinal change," emphasizing that "we must be careful not to elevate the written word above the one to whom it points."

David Currie, executive director of Texas Baptists Committed, supported Sizemore's argument.

Currie said he became a Christian as a child because the Holy Spirit convicted him of his sin, even though he knew little of what the Bible said.

"In Galatians, Paul said, 'I want you to know, brothers, this gospel I preach was not something I made up, ... rather I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ,'" Currie said. "I'm glad this committee was not around when Paul received his revelation from Jesus Christ."

Currie's comment drew a sharp retort from study committee member Richard Land, president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

"The Apostle Paul was an apostle," Land said. "The illumination we get from the Holy Spirit must be guided by Scripture, because you and I are not apostles, sir."

Messengers soundly rejected Sizemore's amendment, just as they had to an earlier amendment proposed by Charles Wade, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Wade suggested restoring two paragraphs from the preamble to the 1963 statement that affirm Jesus Christ as "the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists" and that Southern Baptist doctrinal statements are not "official creeds."

Wade said his amendment was "crucial" to affirming the supremacy of Christ. "We are indeed people of the book, but we are also people who bow only before Jesus Christ our Savior."

Members of the SBC study com-



VOTING TIME Robert Ward, pastor of Pleasant Valley Baptist Church in Uno, Ky., votes on an amendment during debate on the Baptist Faith & Message.

mittee strongly urged messengers to reject Wade's amendment.

"All of us believe in the lordship of Jesus Christ," Land explained. "But we believe the only Jesus Christ we can know is the Jesus Christ revealed in Scripture."

"I fully believe that a demonic spirit could come and sit on the foot of my bed tonight and say, 'Richard, I am Jesus. I want to tell you everybody is going to heaven and you don't have to worry about it any more.' But that would be wrong. ... Why? Because Scripture stands in judgment of my experience, not my experience in judgment of Scripture."

Wade's amendment was supported by Bruce Prescott, director of Mainstream Oklahoma Baptists.

"There is a difference in the way we understand soul competency in the old Baptist Faith and Message and the new version that is being proposed," he said. "Soul competency as defined by E.Y. Mullins and Herschel Hobbs was soul competency under God. That means we are responsible to Jesus Christ. Soul competency as defined by this committee ... is soul competency under the church. That means we are accountable to each other's interpretations of the Word of God."

"We really need to leave us free to be accountable to Jesus Christ," Pres-

cott said. "He is the criterion by which the Bible is interpreted. He is the only infallible and inerrant interpreter of Scripture."

Messengers also rejected a third amendment, offered by Jim Goodroe of First Baptist Church of Sumter, S.C., to amend a statement that he said endorsed "closed communion."

In interviews afterward, both Wade and study committee members characterized the floor debate as illustrative of the differences between SBC moderates and conservatives.

Wade said he agreed with Mohler's statement that "this is what it all comes down to."

The question, he said, is: "Can you have a high view of the Bible but have a higher view of Jesus?"

If Jesus is not the guiding principle for biblical interpretation, Wade asked, "then who or what is?"

That question was put to four members of the study committee during a news conference minutes later. Mohler spoke for the committee to explain there were "dangers" in the language identifying Jesus as the criterion for biblical interpretation.

"We do believe in a christological hermeneutic" or framework for biblical interpretation, he said. However, "the danger is when Christ is set against Scripture," he added.

Making Jesus the criterion by which the Bible is interpreted allows anyone to assert anything and claim Jesus told them that was truth, he said.

Others opposed to the committee's recommendations refuted that notion. The Bible is not a "flat" document, Wayne Ward, emeritus professor of theology at Southern Seminary, argued during a speech on the convention floor.

"You could follow Moses and stone adulterers," he said. "It would clear out Congress and empty some pulpits," but it would not be true to words of Jesus in the New Testament.

"The Bible is Scripture, God's written word, yes, but it does not say anywhere believe on the Bible and thou shalt be saved," Ward said. "We have to decide whether we're going to stop in the Old Testament with Moses or whether we're going to go on and interpret Moses by Jesus."

Study committee member Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, said in the news conference that this debate formed a "magnificent textbook illustration of why we had a denominational struggle."

"If anyone had any doubt about whether a new stream of theology began entering our denomination in the '60s," listening to the floor debate about the relative merits of Jesus versus the Bible should have dispelled those doubts, he said.

Also during the news conference, committee members addressed the role of women in ministry and denominational employment for people who disagree with the 2000 statement.

Rogers noted that "the convention has spoken clearly its conviction that ... the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture."

Southern Baptist churches that call women as pastors "are not walking in lockstep with us," Rogers said. He added, however, that "they may do what they wish. We're not trying to force our beliefs on someone else."

While churches may accept or reject the revised document, SBC entities have long expected their employees to affirm the Baptist Faith and Message, committee members said.

"To accept employment is to accept the terms of employment," Mohler said. At Southern Seminary, he added, that means affirmation of the faith statement "in whatever form currently adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention."

With additional reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson and Baptist Press

Committee adds soul competency to SBC report

Responding to concerns about omitting references to the Baptist principles of soul competency and the priesthood of the believer, the Baptist Faith and Message study committee amended its report last week before presenting it to Southern Baptist Convention messengers.

Committee member Richard Land, president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said, "It became clear to us that there were significant numbers of Southern Baptists ... who were concerned that we further emphasize and underscore" those historic doctrines.

In response, the committee added the following wording: "Baptists cherish and defend religious liberty, and deny the right of any secular or religious authority to impose a confession of faith upon a church or body of churches. We honor the principles of soul competency and the priesthood of believers, affirming together both our liberty in Christ and our accountability to each other under the Word of God."

Even with the addition, committee member Al Mohler drew a careful distinction between the 1963 statement's reference to "the priesthood of the believer" and the 2000 affirmation of "the priesthood of believers."

"Baptists believe in the priesthood of believers, but it is dangerous to say the priesthood of the believer," Mohler said in a news conference following the vote.

"It is not just that we stand alone," said Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. "It is that we stand together—and we stand together under the authority of God's Word."

Messengers approve Annuity Board's new personal investment program

By Herb Hollinger
Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—A new personal investment program for Southern Baptist ministers and denominational employees was approved last week by Southern Baptist Convention messengers. They also approved an SBC Executive Committee recommendation not to establish a special hunger offering during the annual meeting.

The investment program was authorized in an amendment to the Annuity Board's ministry statement. The board currently provides retirement programs for Southern Baptist ministers and denominational workers.

In the proposal adopted by messengers, the Annuity Board also will now assist churches and denominational entities by making available institutional investment services through cooperative agreements with state Baptist foundations.

A motion was introduced last year to collect an offering during the SBC annual meeting to assist the homeless and needy of the host city. Messengers in Orlando affirmed the Execu-

tive Committee's decision not to recommend another offering, "preferring rather to continue to honor the policy of not collecting special offerings at annual meeting."

In other matters, messengers approved a 2000-2001 SBC Cooperative Program allocation budget of \$167,996,385. The new budget reflects the same percentage distribution as the 1999-2000 budget, including 50 percent of all gifts channeled to the International Mission Board and 22.79 percent to the North American Mission Board.

Messengers also approved amending SBC Bylaw 33 by noting "charters of all subsidiaries of any entity of the convention shall provide that they may not be further amended without the prior consent of the convention or its Executive Committee."

In other referrals from the 1999 meeting, the Executive Committee reported that it:

- Recommended to SBC entities that they be encouraged to "maintain the historic position of Southern Baptists as they cooperate with various other groups in appropriate evangelistic enterprises or moral advocacy

initiatives." The proposal also calls for entities to "avoid committing Southern Baptist resources, personnel or ministries to relationships which would compromise the historic distinctives or the unique witness of Southern Baptists to the world."

- Declined to recommend changing the SBC Constitution "to qualify messengers only according to the local church's percentage contribution to the Cooperative Program," rather than either total church membership or CP contributions.

- Will study, "in consultation with leadership in the state conventions," ways to make the missions focus of the CP clearer.

- Declined to recommend additional term limits for the officers of the convention, "affirming the wisdom and sufficiency of the historic provisions of Article V of the SBC Constitution."

- Declined to conduct a study of the effects and influence of "unbiblical worship practices."

- Agreed to support a motion to "maximize the use of appropriate technology to continue to efficiently serve Southern Baptists through the

administrative process of the Executive Committee."

- Declined to recommend appointing a committee to study ways to make the Annuity Board more effective.

- Declined to print a list of pastors and churches by state and town in the SBC Annual because a list of SBC church addresses arranged by state and town already is printed biannually in the Directory of Southern Baptist Churches published by LifeWay Christian Resources.

- Declined to take action requesting SBC agencies to restrict meetings during the SBC Crossover evangelistic emphases.

- Will continue to evaluate seating arrangements for handicapped people at the annual meeting.

- Will print the SBC president's sermon and the convention sermon in the SBC Annual.

- Will display both the Christian and American flags in a prominent place on the platform during the SBC annual meetings.

- Declined to revisit the question of changing meeting dates for the annual meeting.

CONVENTION NOTES

■ **Kentuckian heads nominating committee.** John Michael, a member of Trinity Baptist Church in Louisville, was elected chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention's 2000 Committee on Nominations. Also serving from Kentucky is Mark Howell, pastor of Shively Baptist Church in Louisville and assistant professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The 70-member committee will nominate people to serve on SBC boards, commissions and committees in 2001. Kentucky who served on this year's Committee on Committees that recommended the Committee on Nominations are John Mackey, a member of Shively Baptist Church, and Ruth Ann Williams, a member of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville.

■ **Kentuckians elected trustees.** New Southern Baptist trustees elected last week include Steve Colyer, a member of Shively Baptist Church in Louisville, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Steven Hill, pastor of Valley Creek Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, International Mission Board. Kentuckians elected to a second term of service are Preston Bailey, a member of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, SBC Executive Committee; Roy Faulkner, director of missions for Laurel River Baptist Association, IMB; Ronald Fellemede, pastor of Gardenside Baptist Church in Lexington, Southern Seminary; and Charles Barnes, a member of Hurstbourne Baptist Church in Louisville, Southern Seminary.

■ **Kentucky ranks eighth in messengers.** An estimated 588 messengers from Kentucky attended the Southern Baptist Convention. Florida, which had the most messengers, had approximately 2,000 messengers. Total registration for the meeting was 11,989, which was slightly more than last year's attendance.

■ **Study finds few women preachers.** Women who serve as senior pastors with a preaching role are rare in the Southern Baptist Convention, according to a study released at the annual meeting. According to the study by Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, women lead less than one-tenth of 1 percent of the 41,099 SBC churches. The study found only eight states have women as senior pastor of Southern Baptist churches—most of them in North Carolina and Virginia where about a dozen serve in each state.

■ **Internet prayer room launched.** The Southern Baptist Convention is recruiting prayer via the Internet. Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, emphasized the importance of personal prayer and repentance. "You say no room is large enough for all Southern Baptists to meet for prayer," Chapman said. "You're right, so I've developed an upper room on the Internet." Southern Baptists will be asked to sign up for 30-minute time slots on the new Web site, www.sbcprayer.net, developed by the SBC Executive Committee. Those who sign up will pledge "to God" to pray for 30 minutes each week at the same time for a year.

■ **Jim Henry recognized for CP support.** Florida Baptist pastor Jim Henry received the inaugural M.E. Dodd Award for Cooperative Program support. The lifetime achievement award was announced during the SBC's Cooperative Program 75th anniversary celebration. Henry, a former SBC president, is the longtime pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, a perennial leader in national CP giving. Henry accepted the award on behalf of missionaries, seminaries, churches and "the boys and girls who every Sunday put their pennies and nickels into the offering plate, knowing some of it will touch the world."

■ **Family council launched.** The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention will launch a Save-A-Family Council to build awareness of families' needs. The council will be led by Tom Elliff, a former SBC president and pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla. Elliff will spearhead the council's initiatives to heighten awareness of the needs of families throughout the SBC, according to Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee. The council will work with other SBC agencies to provide resources and materials for local churches.

Call for SBC reconciliation study rejected

ORLANDO, Fla. (ABP)—Southern Baptists declined to establish a committee aimed at healing fissures between conservatives and moderates in Baptist state conventions.

Messengers to the June 13-14 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting voted down a motion from the floor to form a committee to work toward "reconciliation and restoration" among various factions in the denomination.

The motion, proposed by Paddy O'Connor, pastor of First Baptist Church of Brooksville, Fla., asked the SBC president, in consultation with state leaders, to appoint a committee aimed at bringing together various "subgroups" in Baptist life.

Issues including the inerrancy of Scripture that divided the SBC in the 1980s now have trickled down in some cases to state conventions. Several state conventions have competing moderate and conservative political organizations vying for control. Conservatives have formed separate conventions in two moderate strongholds, Virginia and Texas.

O'Connor argued that such division does not honor God. Messengers overwhelmingly voted the motion down, however, after SBC leaders argued against such a committee.

Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, said a committee is not needed, because fellowship issues such as doctrinal views were addressed by the SBC Peace Committee 10 years ago.

"I believe this is not the time to stop and dig a trench, but rather it is a time for Southern Baptists to move like a mighty army upon this world," Chapman said. "The greatest reconciliation will come when Southern Baptists walk shoulder to shoulder" in pointing the world to Jesus Christ.

T.C. Pinckney, leader of a conservative state group in Virginia, said denominational leaders should not negotiate with others who don't share their theology.

"The Southern Baptist tent should be just as broad as God's Word—no broader, no narrower," Pinckney said. "Scripture, not cooperation is primary. Let every Southern Baptist accept God's Word, and cooperation will follow as day follows night."

Messengers approved the only other motion that reached the convention floor for a vote. It instructed the SBC president to write a letter to radio personality Dr. Laura Schlessinger commending her "courageous stand" against homosexuality.

Several other motions at the convention were referred to various convention entities for consideration.

Three motions referred to more than one agency asked that:

■ Southern Baptist institutions and seminaries not require employees to sign the Baptist Faith and Message as a condition of employment, referred to all agencies.

■ The two mission boards change their missionary appointment policies regarding divorce and remarriage to include those who have been divorced for biblical reasons, referred to the North American Mission Board and International Mission Board.

■ FAITH Sunday school evangelism program grants be available to pastors of small churches, referred to LifeWay Christian Resources and NAMB.

Other motions referred to NAMB requested that:

■ The SBC endorse ministries to the homosexual community.

■ A media advisory task force develop media strategies to present Southern Baptists in a positive way.

■ NAMB's "Powerline" radio broadcast not use secular music.

■ NAMB hold an evangelistic crusade on the Saturday prior to the SBC annual meeting in June 2001.

Motions referred to the SBC Executive Committee requested that:

■ SBC entities' solicitation of non-Cooperative Program funds from local churches be restricted.

■ A study be conducted concerning the use of Cooperative Program funds in joint efforts with any group whose beliefs conflict with the witness of Southern Baptists.

■ 60 percent of all elected and appointed boards, committees and trustees be made up of members from churches of 300 members or fewer.

■ A study be commissioned to consider the viability of establishing satellite centers to telecast nationwide the SBC annual meeting.

■ The day of Pentecost be placed on the denominational calendar.

■ Ascension Day be placed on the denominational calendar.

■ The Convention Arrangements Committee consider choosing Cleveland, Ohio, as the city to host the 2005 SBC annual meeting.

One motion—asking for a study of the effects of the SBC boycott of Disney—was referred to the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

A motion referred to LifeWay asked that the entity re-evaluate what it deems as "appropriate products" for sale through LifeWay Christian Stores.

Among motions ruled out of order was a request for the SBC president to write a letter to President Clinton, asking that he resign his membership from his local Southern Baptist church because of his pro-homosexual views.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

SUPER SATURDAY 2000

August 12

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Madisonville • First Baptist Church

August 19

Elizabethtown • Severns Valley Baptist Church

August 26

Lexington • Immanuel Baptist Church

September 9

Paducah • Lone Oak First Baptist Church
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Baptists urged to obey God, bridge the gap worldwide

By Mark Kelly
SBC International Mission Board

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—The gap that separates 1.7 billion people from the good news of God's love and salvation in Jesus Christ must be filled, Southern Baptist missionaries told messengers to the annual Southern Baptist Convention.

Missionaries and SBC International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin said Jesus commands, "As the Father sent Me, so send I you."

"The question is," missionary Lynn Kennedy asked, "Will you obey?"

Amid a parade of majestic banners and colorful national flags swirling to a stirring medley portraying God as a mighty warrior, the message was seen and heard in the IMB's presentation.

Straggling behind the parade came a somber procession of gray flags, carried askew and dragged along by young people in distorted masks. They represented the people groups of the world with little or no access to the Christian message of hope.

A montage of sketches, video segments and personal testimonies combined to challenge Southern Baptists to become "Partners in the Harvest" and take the gospel to those who face an eternity separated from God because they have never heard.

Leaders of key Southern Baptist agencies voiced affirmations of their roles as "Partners in the Harvest," the theme adopted for the 75th anniversary of the Cooperative Program. The South-

ern Baptist unified giving program allows more than 40,000 churches to accomplish together a broad range of missions initiatives.

Sketches emphasized the difficulties faced by the too few people working to "fill the gap" between God and the masses who suffer in spiritual darkness. A lone worker struggled to bridge the gap with a heavy cross she inched across the stage. Though a succession of indifferent onlookers discouraged her, she persisted in her task.

Laypeople testified to the ways missions had changed their lives.

Stan Gillcash, a pastor from Watertown, N.Y., told messengers how his congregation's involvement in missions projects had stirred them to new heights of passion and excitement.

A student with cerebral palsy, Claire Roberson, explained how a volunteer project in Mexico convinced her she had put too many limitations on herself and that God was calling her to career missions overseas.

Paige Patterson, outgoing president of the Southern Baptist Convention, spoke through a video segment taped during Carnival, an annual street party in Brazil. He worked with missionaries, Brazilian Baptists and volunteers from the United States to proclaim the gospel in the chaos of the festival. Patterson challenged congregations to pray that God would raise up families from their churches to serve as missionaries and that the churches would then join them in their overseas work.

Four missionaries, their voices filled

with emotion, told messengers about the people to whom they minister.

Connie Robbins talked about a Christian teacher in Eastern Europe who finds ways to share God's love with her students, even though outright evangelism is illegal.

Fred Shultz told of a woman in North Africa whom Jesus saved from suicide and who now shares her joy and hope in Christ with other young women in her Muslim village.

Keith Jefferson explained the spiritual bondage afflicting villages in eastern South America and how God is beginning to bring people to Christ.

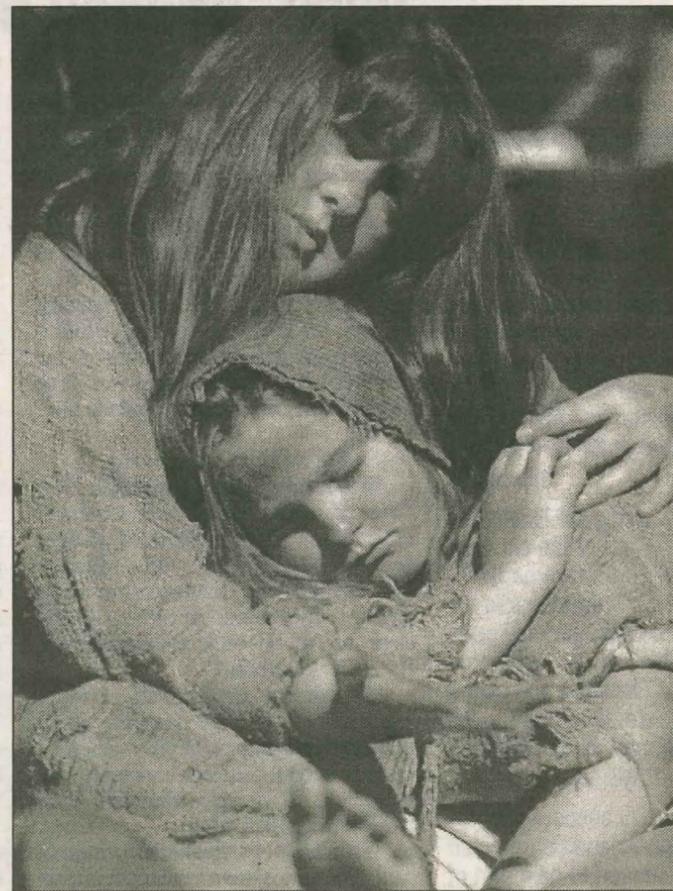
Lynn Kennedy asked messengers to listen to the voice of a West African, who told her: "God could have sent you anywhere, but He sent you to us. He must love us."

Rankin challenged the assembly to imagine a massive harvest of people from every people group as they gathered around God's throne in heaven to sing His praises and glorify His name.

"If we will bridge the gap, we must join as partners in a worldwide harvest," he said.

Counselors registered 42 commitments at the end of the evening, adding to the swelling tide of Southern Baptists willing to take the message of salvation in Jesus to the ends of the earth.

More than 900 new missionaries joined Southern Baptists' overseas team in 1999, the largest annual number ever appointed and the seventh record year in a row. About 4,900 missionaries serve in more than 150 countries.



"UNREACHED PEOPLE" Two members of "The Company," a drama team from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, are part of a dramatic presentation during the June 13 annual report of the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board. (BP photo by Kent Harville)

Adventure-theme NAMB presentation highlights spiritual rescues

By James Dotson
SBC North American Mission Board

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—A visit from Olympic gymnast Mary Lou Retton and a foursome of missionaries rappelling from the ceiling highlighted the North American Mission Board's report to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Retton, a gold medal gymnast in 1984, was featured two years ago in a NAMB commercial portraying Jesus Christ as "the only perfect 10." The popular spot has been used since as part of the Celebrate Jesus 2000 evangelistic campaign.

"My Christianity was something I really kept inside," Retton said during the report. "I didn't realize until doing that (Celebrate) Jesus 2000 commercial with you all that I was not only called to be a Christian, but I was called to share it with everybody now."

Retton is starring in the agency's forthcoming FamilyNet television program "Mary Lou's Flip-Flop Shop," designed to teach preschoolers the joys of physical activity, singing and learning biblical values. "I want parents to feel comfortable knowing they can leave their children watching Mary Lou," she said.

Retton's appearance was part of a segment on "air support" in an adventure-themed presentation highlighting "spiritual rescues" of individuals caught in what Reccord termed "the deep crevices that always accompany the highest peaks."

The presentation included a brief clip from a recent segment on the tele-



NAMB REPORT Bob Reccord, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board, introduces Olympic gold medalist Mary Lou Retton during the agency's annual report to Southern Baptists. Retton is starring in a NAMB-produced show. (BP photo by Van Payne)

vision newsmagazine "20/20." Reccord and Jewish evangelism missionary Jim Sibley were interviewed sharing the evangelical position that Jesus is the only path to eternal life.

At the close of the segment, show host Barbara Walters refers to Southern Baptists' "tough dilemma" of subscribing to a high view of Scripture in an age when such views are increasingly unpopular.

"The implication is that if we are going to get along with other religious groups, and not be labeled as narrow-minded or intolerant in today's culture, that we must stop insisting that Jesus is the only way to God," Reccord said.

"A tough dilemma? The North American mission field may be tough, but there is no dilemma," he said. "We must obey the Great Commission of our Lord, and we must share the gospel message with the more than 200 million people in the United States and Canada who do not yet have a personal relationship with the true and living God."

The "rescuers" during the presentation included four missionaries who rappelled from the high conference center ceiling in front of the stage. With lights flashing and sirens blaring, they joined Reccord on stage to discuss how God is working through their ministries.

Debbie Wohler, a resort missionary in Tahoe City, Calif., talked about the training two girls received who later found themselves alone in a truck camper shell after their father had gotten lost trying to get help. But while they waited, they repeated the verses they had learned, and the songs they had sung.

"The incredible thing is that Kristin (one of the girls) told us that one night when she was sitting in that camper shell, she asked Jesus to come into her heart," Wohler said. "She was baptized late last summer. Aren't you glad that you sent us out to the field?"

Reccord also spoke about the "base camps" in Southern Baptists' rescue efforts—new congregations "sometimes on the edge of our comfort zones."

"If we're going to reach the fallen climbers of North America, we have to go beyond the notion that they will all find their ways into our existing churches," he said.

Ken Weathersby, a Nehemiah Project church-planting professor at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, said he has seen 200 students participate in the short-term internship program at the New Orleans seminary, and 80 students have been deployed in long-term internships as church planters.

The presentation closed with a time of prayer for all college and seminary students, as well as the teenage pages assisting in the SBC proceedings.

"Would you as adults," Reccord urged, "reach out to those kids, the next generation, preparing them for the mission of rescue?"

"Aren't you glad that you sent us out to the field?"

NAMB resort missionary
Debbie Wohler

LifeWay exists to help change lives, agency president says

Annuity Board president urges pastors to prepare for retirement

ORLANDO, Fla.—In his report to the Southern Baptist Convention, Annuity Board President O.S. Hawkins gave thanks for the past year and challenged every minister and staff person to prepare well for their retirement.

Using the illustration of the ant from Proverbs 6:6-7, Hawkins told the messengers to "go to the ant and remember its ways and how it stores up food in the summer so in the winter it will have a supply."

"I encourage every minister and church staff person to be a part of our retirement plan," Hawkins said. "It is wise and biblical to prepare for your future just as the ant prepares for winter, and the Annuity Board offers you an excellent way."

Hawkins also challenged every layperson to "return to your church and pay your pastor and church staff a salary worthy of their calling and make sure they are enrolled in our retirement plan. Every church should be participating."

He said he has a vision to see thousands of ministers able to retire at age 65 "with 10 to 20 years of active service available to them to serve our Lord on the mission field."

Ministering to ministers and widows in need is a goal of the Annuity Board's Adopt an Annuitant ministry. Hawkins reported the Annuity Board currently assists 2,600 individuals and couples, but almost "9,000 of our annuitants still live on \$200 or less in monthly benefits from their retirement income."

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—It's not enough simply to provide resources that people say they like, according to Jimmy Draper, president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"We have to learn the needs of individuals and churches alike, and meet them," he said during the agency's annual report to the SBC annual meeting.

"It is the goal of everything we do at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention to lift up Christ as the way, the truth and the life," he said.

Examples he cited included:

■ **Sunday school material.** New "Sunday School for a New Century" curriculum will be introduced with the fall quarter, Draper said. "Sunday School for a New Century is providing guidance for Bible study on Sunday and every day of the week, with curriculum for each age group."

■ **Upward Basketball.** Draper said 432 churches are using the sports ministry to tap into children's natural interest in sports. Children are taught basketball skills while learning about the Bible and about Christ.

With Upward Basketball, Draper said, "Winning wasn't the most important thing. Changing lives is."

■ **FAITH Sunday school evangelism.** Since its national launch in 1998, nearly 4,100 churches and more than 120,000 people have been involved, Draper said.

■ **Internet service.** LifeWay is providing filtered Internet service for families, Draper noted. Corporately, Ted Warren, LifeWay executive vice president and chief operating officer, noted that LifeWay's Web site has more than 1,700 pages and receives more than 10 million visits each month.

Through LifeWay's international ministry, people in 60 countries can now purchase LifeWay resources in their own currency, Warren said.

■ **Experiencing God.** Draper introduced "Experiencing God ... The Musical," a new musical based on the best-selling Bible study by Henry Blackaby.

Draper concluded with information about the newly released biography of Payne Stewart, the 1999 U.S. Open golf champion killed last fall in a plane accident. The book is published by LifeWay's Broadman & Holman division. The book already has made the "top 10 on the New York Times bestseller list and is in the top five on amazon.com," Draper said. The book was written by Stewart's wife, Tracey, and Ken Abraham.

"Whether it is through a story like the Payne Stewart biography, through family-oriented Bible study with Sunday School for a New Century or by reaching unbelievers with programs like Upward Basketball and FAITH, we are seeing God spiritually transform lives," Draper said. "This is the goal of everything we do at LifeWay."

For time and eternity

If you believe the Christ-centered message of hope will provide new beginnings to young people, and especially to those who have experienced failure in their lives, read on. If you are interested in making a difference in the lives of young people on a daily basis and in the name of Jesus Christ, read on. If you knew there was a special place with financial stability and competent leadership effectively providing such a Christ-centered ministry, you would be interested in experiencing the joy that comes from supporting such a ministry for time and eternity, would you not? I know I would, and I do.

That special place is Oneida Baptist Institute in Oneida, Ky. It's a one-of-a-kind place. Students from all over the world attend this fully accredited Christian boarding school for grades 6-12. Most of the students who attend are not Christians when they enroll, but many of them make professions of faith while at Oneida. The school's leader is President Bud Underwood. He and his wife, Kay, along with the other faculty and staff, are extending on a daily basis your hands and feet and the hands and feet of your church to change in the name of Jesus the

lives of the young people entrusted to their care.

Oneida's mission includes education for time and eternity. At Oneida there is an environment of new beginnings, a place for young people "to grow in wisdom, in stature and in favor with God and man." Students are given opportunities to make fresh starts academically, emotionally, socially and spiritually. Smaller class sizes facilitate more individual attention for those who struggle with academics. The love and acceptance of the faculty and staff nurture a sense of well being and trust for youth who need a stable and structured environment. Students learn respect for the rights of others, self-discipline, sharing work responsibilities and accepting cultural differences. The good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ is shared in a variety of ways on a daily basis.

Please call Laurie Valentine or me toll-free to discover how you can be supportive of this special ministry for time and eternity.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, 10605 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40223; (888) 254-5701

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen



CHAMPIONS FOR THE FAITH Richard Land, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, presents Southern Baptists from across America whom he called "champions for the faith." During his agency's report to the Southern Baptist Convention, Land cited these people as examples of how Christians can deal with such major issues facing society today as racism, abandoned children and pornography. (BP photo by Bill Bangham)

ELRC honors 'Champions for the Faith'

ORLANDO, Fla.—The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty commission recognized "Champions for the Faith" during its presentation to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

Richard Land, ERLC president, introduced eight Southern Baptists who he said exemplify what it means to "take a stand on their faith convictions, speak the truth with Christ as their witness and make a difference for good and for God."

Land said that in a day when families are being "assaulted" by moral decay of modern society, the "Champions

for the Faith" are "inspired and obedient men and women" who stand boldly for Christ.

Those highlighted included:

■ A couple who adopted 10 abandoned children.

■ A woman who helped turn a former abortion clinic into a crisis pregnancy center.

■ An opponent of unfiltered Internet service available at public libraries.

■ A grandmother who ministers to women who work at X-rated adult clubs along the city's Orange Blossom Trail. "They are taking a stand. Won't you stand with them?" Land asked.

Minister of Education Needed

Lexington Avenue Baptist Church in Danville, Ky., is seeking a minister of education. He or she will be responsible for planning religious education programs for all age groups and for training and coordinating volunteers for the programs. The preferred candidate will have ministerial experience and a seminary degree. Lexington Avenue is a moderate church dually aligned with CBF/SBC. Send resumé to: Minister of Education Search Committee, Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, 339 W Lexington Aven, Danville, KY 40422. For more information on our church, see our Web site at www.lexingtonavenue.org or www.danvilleky.com/BoyleCounty/.

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Don't waste saints' sacrifice, Smith pleads

By Todd Starnes
Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—“America needs a moral bath and only living water will get us clean.”

That's the message evangelist Bailey Smith had for Southern Baptist Convention messengers as he delivered an impassioned plea on wasted sacrifices June 14 at the SBC annual meeting.

Smith, a former SBC president, warned messengers that the spiritual heritage of their forefathers is in grave danger of being invalidated by a decadent society.

“I'm telling you, it breaks my heart that it is absolutely possible that our weak discipleship and anemic faith and cowardly commitment to the Word of God could invalidate the heroes of the faith,” Smith said.

“Why the sacrifice of untold millions of martyrs that reddened the lions' mouths with blood across the coliseums of earth?” he asked. “Why all of that if it's followed by nothing but generations of church members who are more faithful to cocktail parties than prayer meetings, women who call themselves Christians but for undetected sexual dirtiness will kill their unborn babies, teenagers who go to church and profane movies in the same week or spineless clergymen who would rather be politically correct than a voice crying in the wilderness?”

Taking his text from Hebrews 11:40, Smith challenged Southern Baptists to follow the examples of faithfulness set by biblical leaders such as Abraham,

Daniel, Joseph and Amos.

“Southern Baptists, I want (the Scripture) to dig deep in your heart,” he stressed. “I want you to memorize it. All of those who paid a sacrifice for what we have, ... their lives will be incomplete without us.”

Noting that Christians are in this world together, Smith urged believers to break down the walls of racism.

“I see churches (take) pride for their big Lottie Moon offering but have not one black member, and many even today have policies against it,” Smith said. “Less than 1 percent of white, active church members have ever made an evangelistic visit to an African-American household.”

“If you write a big check for foreign missions, but you won't walk into a black family's house and invite them to your church, just keep your money,” Smith said. “You are a hypocrite.”

In response to recent criticism of Southern Baptists sharing their faith with adherents of other religions, Smith replied, “The world is upset at Southern Baptists because we're witnessing to them. Get used to it.”

“Jesus Christ didn't come to die for Christians. He came to die for the world,” he declared. “Louis Farrakhan needs Jesus. Muhammad Ali needs Jesus. Every rabbi in every synagogue in this world needs Jesus.”

“Oh, Southern Baptists, we have a gospel to preach, not a society to please. We have a Christ to follow, not a challenge to avoid,” he said. “And we have a torch lighted by the fiery testimonies of believers before us that must never

be extinguished by the darkness of our compromise.”

Smith also had a message for pastors. “Preacher, if you can't preach Jesus Christ, only begotten of the Father, only way of salvation, only road to heaven, then move over for someone who will,” he said.

“You cannot turn your face toward God and your back on Jesus, because they stand as one. For so-called religious leaders to meet on theological matters and avoid this truth is ludicrous,” he said. “To leave Jesus out is to leave God out.”

Smith also lashed out at President Clinton and politicians in general.

“With a Southern Baptist president with the morals of an alley cat and a Congress with the backbone of Jello, we have a difficult but necessary task before us,” he said.

Clinton's behavior with Monica Lewinsky was not “inappropriate,” as Clinton described it, but sin, Smith insisted. “Yes, we have a Baptist president—I'm ready for a Christian myself.”

Smith also emphasized homosexuality is wrong. “If you believe it is natural and acceptable for two men to marry each other and two women to marry each other, you are not a liberal,” Smith said. “You are a nutball.”

To ensure the lives of Christianity's spiritual forefathers are not wasted sacrifices, Smith offered four solutions: preach the message they preached, hate the evil they hated, love the people they loved and show the courage they showed.

Baptists challenged to be God's partners in worldwide harvest

ORLANDO, Fla.—Highlighting the convention theme, “Partners in the Harvest Worldwide,” five speakers shared theme interpretations about being partners with God through His Word, His call, His church, His power and His people.

Mark Howell, assistant professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said Southern Baptists “have been given a mandate to be partners in the harvest.”

Howell, who also is pastor of Shively Baptist Church, urged Baptists to be united in prayer, passion and purpose. “We are not called to competition but cooperation,” he said.

Southern Baptists have a united mission, universal motivation and unique message, he added. “The battle for the Bible has been won and we rejoice in the victory, but the battle for the souls of men and women, boys and girls has just begun.”

Keith Eitel, professor of Christian missions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., said Christians are called to cross the “threshold of faith,” to reach the unreached people groups of the world.

Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga., said Jesus has opened the door for evangelization, emphasizing that “there is no greater influence than a church where members are actively involved in missions.”

Bruce Schmidt, strategic cities strategy consultant for the North American Mission Board, said Christians need to be freed up, fired up and fortified. Sharing how God protected and provided while he served as an international missionary in Africa, Schmidt said the bottom line is the victory of Jesus who triumphs over darkness.

Jay Sekulow, chief counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice, a Christian legal defense organization, said he knows God can use anyone to affect His kingdom. “If we're embarrassed to share our faith,” he warned, “then we don't have a faith to share.”

In honor of a great teacher

By Robert Dunston

Each year Cumberland College's faculty, staff and students have the opportunity to recommend a professor to receive the Excellence in Teaching Award. Charles Huffman received the award for the year 2000.

Huffman joined the Cumberland College faculty in 1995. He received the bachelor of arts degree from Buena Vista College, the master of arts degree from Emporia State University and the doctorate of philosophy degree from the University of Southern Mississippi. When Marty Brooks retired, Huffman became head of Cumberland's psychology department.

During Huffman's career at Cumberland, he has provided excellent leadership in the integration of technology in teaching. In 1998 his expertise and involvement earned him the first Cutting Edge Award for Technology in Teaching ever presented by the Appalachian College Association.

Huffman helped put together a technology project in teaching psychology that links faculty and students of four Appalachian colleges, including Cumberland College. The project allows students access

to the expertise of a variety of professors and provides an interesting learning environment.

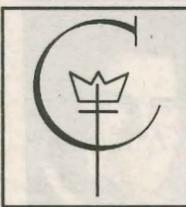
At Cumberland College Huffman helped begin an ad hoc committee of faculty interested in employing technology in teaching courses. He has provided countless hours of instruction and encouragement to Cumberland faculty as they strive to become more effective teachers.

Students praise Huffman not just for his knowledge and teaching expertise but also for his genuine concern for students as learners and individuals. He makes himself accessible to students to help them address academic and personal problems. He and his family attend almost every sporting and social event at Cumberland College, mingling with students and supporting them in their endeavors outside the classroom.

Huffman demonstrates the best in Christian education—academic excellence in a context of Christian faith and care. We are proud to have him on our faculty.

Robert Dunston is chairman of the religion department at Cumberland College, 6000 College Station Dr., Williamsburg, KY 40769

**CUMBERLAND
COLLEGE**



Defining moments

Most people have an experience in their lives known as a defining moment. This experience is produced by our response to an extraordinary event that reshapes our future.

A devout Jew named Saul had a defining moment en route to Damascus when a blinding light from the Lord led to his personal conversion experience that transformed him into the Apostle Paul.

Thomas, the skeptic, had a defining moment when he encountered the risen Savior and fell to his knees in awe after having inspected the nail-scarred hands of Jesus. This defining moment propelled his evangelistic journeys as far as India.

Churches have their defining moments when confronted with growth, decline, outreach strategies or inner strife.

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children currently is experiencing a defining moment of our own as we respond to events we did not anticipate. Nowhere in the long-range planning process did KBHC expect to be facing the American Civil Liberties Union in court because of our hiring practices.

Our response in this moment will determine our future and the

future of thousands of Kentucky children and families. If we compromise standards established for the good of the children and teens in our care, then we walk in the path of destruction—not only the destruction of this ministry, but the destruction of precious lives influenced through our care.

The world is watching to see if another Christian light will be extinguished through compromise. Our Lord demands faithfulness because the world desperately needs His light to show the way to truth and life. The children and families served through KBHC need us to be faithful to our mission. Will you join us in prayer and support as we strive to stand tall in this, our defining moment? If you want ideas on how you can help, give us a call. If you've never been a supporter, please find out more about Kentucky Baptists' enduring ministry to children and families.

Tom Townsend is vice president for development and communications of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Road, Middletown, KY 40243. Call (800) 456-1386. KBHC's Internet address is: <http://www.iglou.com/kbhc/>

**HOMES FOR
CHILDREN**



Tom Townsend

WMU installs new executive director & president

ORLANDO, Fla. (ABP) — Woman's Missionary Union started a new page in its long history June 11 by installing Wanda Lee as the seventh executive director of the auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention.

The service took place in the opening session of the 112th WMU annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Lee, a registered nurse and former Southern Baptist missionary to the Caribbean, has served as national WMU president since 1996.

In remarks after her installation, Lee dated her call to missions from nursing school 30 years ago. During her time as a missionary, she recalled: "I experienced what I had been learning in WMU. As many of you prayed faithfully when my name was on the prayer calendar and as you gave to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, it was translated into our overseas home and into my assignment as a nurse and my husband's role as a church planter.

"God has kept His promise to use my gifts and abilities in many different ways throughout these past years," Lee said. "My greatest desire has always been to know His heart and His will and have the courage to be obedient."

Lee called her new role the most challenging missions assignment of her life.

Calling the position a sacred trust, Lee said, "It is a trust I do not take lightly, but accept only with the confident assurance that as God has led and been faithful in my life before today, He has committed to do the same for me and WMU in all the days before us.

"Together, may all we do for the cause of missions bring honor and



NEW WMU OFFICERS NEW WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee (left), stands with Janet Hoffman (center), newly elected WMU president, and Yolanda Calderon, newly elected WMU recording secretary. (BP photo by Gibbs Frazer)

Hoffman of Farmerville, La., as president and Yolanda Calderon of Modesto, Calif., as recording secretary.

Hoffman, national recording secretary since 1996, succeeds Lee, who became WMU executive director March 1. Calderon, California WMU president from 1994 to 1998, replaced Hoffman as recording secretary. Calderon is the first ethnic leader elected as a national WMU officer.

Both officers will be eligible for annual re-election for up to five years.

'Dispelling the Darkness'

ORLANDO, Fla.—"Dispelling the Darkness," was the theme for WMU's 2000 annual meeting. Speakers included:

■ Southern Baptist missionary to Orlando **Lynn Latham**, who presented nine graduates of Restoration House of Orlando, a ministry connected with the WMU's Christian Women's Job Corps program, which helps needy women learn to live a productive Christian life on their own.

■ **Emmanuel McCall**, pastor of Christian Fellowship Church in College Park, Ga. He said for years he had a love affair with WMU because in 1957, it produced the first book on racial reconciliation. The former black church extension director for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board declared, "If one is to grow a strong, healthy, mission-minded church, it must have a WMU."

■ **Julie Smith**, Miss Alabama of 1999, praised WMU for its role in her life from childhood. "Through WMU training, I came to realize my responsibility to God was to use my talents and gifts for God," Smith said. "As Miss Alabama and as a Christian, I have learned that even though people are always watching me, I can represent the Kingdom of God as I use these to make a difference in the lives of others."

■ SBC International Mission Board President **Jerry Rankin**. "Thank you, WMU, for what you do to promote the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and for discovering a long time ago that missions education, prayer and personal involvement was needed to dispel the darkness in our world," he said.

Field placement helping students reach goals

By Denise Spencer and Tamara Cochran

Oneida always has stressed the value of work. In addition to our student work program, for the past two years we have participated in the Kentucky Department of Education's "School to Work" program, also called "field placement." Seniors in field placement can earn course credits in a job during the school day, and must work 200 supervised hours to complete the program.

Oneida Baptist Institute's field placement is supervised by Connie Smith, the head of our vocational department. She started field placement in the fall of 1998. This past school year, 16 students completed the program.

One benefit Oneida students have over those in public schools is the fact that all field placement jobs are on our campus. This year, seniors have worked in a variety of areas, including maintenance, auto mechanics, construction, elementary education, day care, agriculture, journalism and library science. "I have them treat this as if it's a real job and to be accountable for their time,"

Smith explained. She visits each student at least twice per quarter on the job and follows up with formal evaluations.

Field placement exposes students to potential careers. It also provides real work experience, which can give them a valuable edge when hunting for a job after graduation.

A student named Ricky worked in auto mechanics because "I like to work with cars. I like to work with my hands." Field placement gave Ricky job skills plus self-confidence. "I didn't know I could work on cars," he confessed. "I thought I'd mess something up."

John hopes to work for a newspaper some day, so he chose journalism as his area for field placement. He was editor of the student newspaper, a member of the yearbook staff and a publications assistant. "I'm interested in journalism," John said. "I figure, why not go on and learn a little bit about it?"

Students involved in field placement typically earn standard diplomas. Elisa was the first OBI student to do field placement and graduate with an advanced diploma. She worked in our agriculture program, supervising an average of 12 girls per day. Elisa assigned jobs to her peers, made sure the tasks were done correctly and pitched in with the work herself. "If it doesn't get done, it reflects on me," she noted.

Elisa's school back home didn't offer an advanced diploma, and at first she was fearful of trying to earn one here. "I thought it would be too hard," she said. But on the advice of Guidance Counselor Myrtle Cooke, Elisa decided to try. Algebra II and English IV were her most challenging classes. Elisa was also vice president of our Future Farmers of

America chapter, a position that required much of her time. Still, she stayed on the honor roll all year. "It was difficult to get everything done, but I managed to do it," she recalled.

Elisa plans to study agriculture business at Lindsey-Wilson College. After earning an associate's degree, she wants to go on to higher education in agriculture. Field placement has given Elisa valuable experience that will help her achieve her goals.

Denise Spencer and Tamara Cochran work on the publications at Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972. www.oneidaschool.org

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Staying by the stuff

Donnie Fox first came to Clear Creek as a three-year-old in 1962 when his father, Claude, became the school's first full-time director of public relations.

Donnie recalls the bond he developed with students and times shared with his father. "I played softball with many of the students. Soon after I turned 16, I was driving the car for Dad on a trip where he represented Clear Creek. We were on a mountain road out from Hazard and the lights on the car went out. Dad climbed under the hood, fixed the problem and we were soon on our way."

Growing up on campus and later as a student at Clear Creek, Donnie thought God had something in store for him at the school, but didn't think it would come so soon.

Last year he became director of college relations, a role that expands the assignment of his father.

"Every day when I drive to campus I feel encouraged by my parents and the heritage they gave me," Donnie said. On Dec. 19, 1987, his father preached a chapel message titled, "Staying by the Stuff." Claude Fox was on campus with plans to return again as part of the staff. He died on Christmas Eve.

"When I get discouraged or load down, I listen to that message and my calling is renewed," Donnie stated. Donnie's mother loved the school and always wanted to help. Her last years were in Spottsville, in a church that still supports Clear Creek.

The Foxes Den, location for the campus post office and small student lounge, is named for Claude and Gladys Fox. Donnie's brother, Richard, graduated in 1972 and his nephew Jeff is a 1988 graduate. Another brother, Jack, serves on the board of trustees.

Donnie was pastor of Shawanee Baptist Church near Harrogate, Tenn. In December he received the master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary and recently became bivocational pastor of Mill Creek Church in Bell County.

Donnie oversees publication of The Mountain Voice, and the school radio program, Clear Creek Chimes, which his father started. "It is a pleasure and honor to serve God in this great place," Donnie stated.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Pastors' conference urges participation in spiritual harvest

ORLANDO, Fla.—Pastors were encouraged during the annual SBC Pastors' Conference to sow and reap a spiritual harvest in their personal lives, homes, churches and world.

Jim Henry said personal holiness requires Christians to walk closely with God so that they are morally alert and others can see Christ through them.

"Our holy God calls for us, a holy people, to engage our society so that they might see the difference between night and day," said Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando.

God requires holiness of His followers, Henry noted. "Being a child of God, we must bear the family resemblance."

He encouraged pastors to trust God to take care of them. "If God has called you to a place, God will provide your needs."

Pastors face two major challenges to their personal holiness, Henry said: materialism and lust. He noted a poll in Leadership magazine that stated more than 25 percent of pastors admitted to inappropriate sexual conduct.

He said he was impressed by Billy Graham's prayer asking God to kill him rather than allow him to be unfaithful to his wife. Henry said that when he told his wife he had prayed the same thing, "She said, 'Don't worry, I'll kill you first.'"

Speakers addressed a variety of topics related to the four spiritual harvests being emphasized. Among them:

■ The Holy Spirit is a vital participant in the work of evangelism, but Christians also have a responsibility, **Jerry Vines** said. "God has given us an assignment—we're to go," said Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla. "We have a wonderful Savior to present to a lost world."

■ Every father should be a hero to

his children, said **James Merritt**, pastor of First Baptist Church, Snellville, Ga.

"You cannot teach what you do not live," said Merritt, who later in the week was elected SBC president. "You can take your children to church every Sunday, but if you don't live it on Monday your influence will mean nothing."

He said that from the beginning, God intended for the home to be the university of life, with fathers as the professors and the Bible as the curriculum.

"We have people alarmed because they won't let them hang the Ten Commandments on the walls at

school, but how many hang them on the walls of their homes?" Merritt asked. "Parents are up in arms because students can't pray in schools, but they don't teach them to pray in the home."

■ When Christians see what Jesus sees, they'll feel what He feels, evangelist **Ken Freeman** of San Antonio, Texas, told the audience.

"I'm convinced we are not looking through the eyes of Jesus," Freeman said. "I'm convinced we are losing the battle because we have lost the passion, and we don't see what He sees."

Freeman said he wished Southern Baptists were as passionate about reaching people for Jesus as they are about the authority of the Bible and worship styles. "When we are arguing over the Bible and worship, our world is dying."

■ A serious breakdown in communication between children and their parents results in confusion and frustration, said speaker and author **Rodney Gage**.

"I am totally convinced that the secret of reaching the next generation is in the hands of their parents," said

Gage of Fort Worth, Texas. He suggested parents should seek to provide their children stability, attention, fairness, forgiveness, intimacy and love.

■ In a fast-paced world, it's easy to drift from God's values, said **Charles Lowery**, pastor of Hoffmantown Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N.M.

He said the key to a good relationship in marriage is to listen, show appreciation, share intimacy and value the relationship. "Tell yourself every day what's really important: faith, family and friends," he said. "Nothing else really matters."

■ God is in control—even amid overwhelming pain and sorrow, said **Al Meredith**, pastor of Wedgwood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, where a lone gunman killed seven people and wounded seven others last year.

"We're never going to get over this," Meredith acknowledged, "but by God's grace we're going to get through it."

The pastor explained, "What the enemy meant to destroy us at our church, God has used to strengthen us. Never has there been more of an opportunity to witness for the Lord."

■ Christians should focus on God's vision for their lives, according to Orlando evangelist **Jay Strack**. "No idea that you or I could conceive could outshine the personal vision God has for you."

Strack said a biblical vision will change how a Christian sees God, how a Christian sees himself or herself and how a Christian sees others.

"We need a fresh vision of the Holy One of Israel, of ourselves and of other people. How do we see other people?"

■ **Adrian Rogers**, pastor of Belle-



vue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn., reminded the pastors of their job description as biblical leaders, wearing the hats of elder, shepherd and bishop.

Effective leadership will only "come from being under God," Rogers declared. "I can't oversee those I pastor until I'm under God."

Pastors' Conference officers elected for the coming year are:

■ President **Jerry Spencer**, pastor of Ridgecrest Baptist Church in Dothan, Ala. Spencer, who was elected by acclamation, was nominated by former SBC president **Adrian Rogers**.

■ Vice President **Darrell Ormon**, pastor of First Baptist Church of Stuart, Fla., who also was elected by acclamation. He was nominated by **Jerry Falwell**, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., who described Ormon as "one of my preacher boys" who graduated from Falwell's Liberty University.

■ Secretary-Treasurer **Bob Parker** of Lake Mary, Fla., was nominated by Kentuckian **Mike Routt**, pastor of Rose Hill Baptist Church in Ashland.

Compiled from reports by News Director David Winfrey, Editor Trennis Henderson and Charlie Warren and Stella Prather of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine



Henry



Strack



Freeman

Directors of missions: SBC controversy being brought into associations

By **Don Hinkle**
Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla.—Pressure is building for associational directors of missions to choose sides in the rift between churches loyal to the Southern Baptist Convention and organizations supportive of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

The issue surfaced briefly at the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions' annual meeting June 11-12 in Orlando prior to the SBC annual meeting.

"I was deluged with requests for a panel discussion addressing the controversy," said outgoing president **Ed Copeland** of the Metro-Columbus Baptist Association in Ohio. "I had many DOMs—particularly the young ones—say they are being torn apart by pastors and laypeople in their associations who want them to take sides. They (DOMs) simply want to do

ministry and not get involved in politics."

With approximately 1,100 Southern Baptist associations, directors of missions serve diverse churches, some of which are dually aligned with the SBC and CBF.

Copeland announced a panel discussion on the topic will be held next year during the group's pre-SBC annual meeting in New Orleans.

"My heart is broken over our convention," Copeland said. "I want us to covenant to make our associations, state conventions and SBC bring honor and glory to Christ and stop this fussing and tearing each other apart. We're all in this together, and we're not going to shove this under the rug."

Incoming President **Don Beall** of Puget Sound Baptist Association in Washington said he expects to deal with the issue over the next year but is determined to keep the DOMs focused on ministry.

"My heart's desire is whatever it takes

to build the kingdom of God," he said. "For me it's winning the lost and discipling the saved."

Several speakers addressed the organization.

WMU Executive Director **Wanda Lee** called directors of missions WMU's "best friends" and exhorted them to stay focused on the mission field.

John Maxwell, author and president of Injoy Ministries, told participants that success adds value to oneself, but significance adds value to other people. He defined success as knowing one's purpose in life, growing to maximum potential and "sowing seeds" to benefit others.

Henry Blackaby, author of the "Experiencing God" Bible study, encouraged directors of missions to pray for the churches in their associations and teach their pastors the Scriptures.

"You must have the churches take the gospel to all the nations, not just to people

in your association's area. Each church should be a world mission strategy center and you are the ones to teach them," Blackaby said.

In their business session, DOMs unanimously voted for the entity to become a 501c3 nonprofit organization.

In other business, the organization:

■ Voted unanimously to appoint **Charles Nunn** of Richmond, Va., as the association's liaison to all SBC agencies.

■ Elected officers recommended by the nominating committee. **Beall** is the organization's new president. **Gary Hearon** of Dallas Baptist Association was elected first vice president. **Don Reed** of the Kansas City (Kansas) Baptist Association was elected second vice president. **Ernest Sadler** of Jackson Baptist Association in Pascagoula, Miss., was re-elected secretary, and **T.O. Spicer Jr.**, of Spring River Baptist Association in Joplin, Mo., was re-elected newsletter editor.

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for these people and projects, which are part of Kentucky Baptists' partnership with Baptists in Poland, Tanzania and New England:

■ Summer missionaries serving in Poland: Jennifer Ferguson, Hannah Johnson, Jenny Johnson, Sarah Gibson, Becky Platts, Jennifer Curd, Allison Istre and John Wilson.

■ Rick Schultz, who will arrive in Poland in mid-July to serve as an International Service Corps missionary.

■ Women in the sewing class taught by missionary Pauline Eardensohn in Tanzania. Several are not Christians.

■ The town of Gairo, Tanzania, where two young national pastors are starting a new church.

■ Ken Lyle as he retires June 30 as executive director of the Baptist Convention of New England.

■ Members of the search committee for an executive director for the Baptist Convention of New England.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **BEDFORD**—Brad Wright resigned as youth minister of Bedford Church, effective June 4.

■ **CRESTWOOD**—Sam Newman recently resigned as associate pastor of Crestwood Church.

■ **EAST BERNSTADT**—Laurel Chapel Church called Ronnie Eversole as pastor.

Red Hill Church called Bill Hammond as pastor.

■ **ERLANGER**—Erlanger Church ordained Matt Dye, Andrew Graham, Jim Koogler, Kirk Lee, Rick Sears, Guy Tieker and Doug White as deacons June 4. William Crosby is pastor.

■ **GRAND RIVERS**—Iuka Church recently called Bill Summers as pastor.

■ **HENDERSON**—Airline Church called Scott Mullens as minister of music and youth. Ray Werline is pastor.

Bethel Church called Joel Bridenbaugh as pastor.

Poole Church called Bud Breamer as interim pastor.

Zion Church called Eddie Davis of Danville, Va., as pastor, beginning June 4.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—Ovesen Heights church called Tim Meador of Adolphus as music minister beginning June 25. Paul Hines of Magnolia was called as youth minister beginning July 2. Richard Carver is pastor.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—Ben Bolinger and John Richards will serve as sum-

mer youth leaders at Casky Church. Bob Morgan is pastor.

■ **KEITH**—Bill Stillwell celebrated nine years as minister of education at First Church on June 1.

■ **LONDON**—Hawk Creek called Scot Keen as pastor. Keen was serving as interim pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Beechland Church will dedicate its new family life center June 25 at 10:45 a.m.

Clifton Church called Eugene Enlow as interim pastor.

South Jeffers Church will host revival services June 25-28 at 7 p.m. Larry Draper will be the evangelist. Tracy Sims is pastor.

■ **MAYFIELD**—Bell City Church constituted New Vision Mission as a church June 4. William Dodson is pastor of Bell City. Mark Burnett is pastor of New Vision.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Grace Bristow of Buena Vista Church celebrated 30

years as church secretary June 8. Michael Rust is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—West Union Association called James Dixon, pastor of First Church, Sierra Vista, Ariz., as director of missions, beginning in mid-July.

■ **PARIS**—Spears Mill Church called Donald Rupard as youth minister. Donald Muntz will retire June 25 as music director after 26 years of service. J.T. Rafferty is pastor.

■ **STANTON**—Powell's Valley Church called Joey Rogers as pastor. Rogers previously served as associate pastor. Marion Brewer was called as outreach minister to the elderly.

■ **WESTPORT**—Covington Church called Tony Shouse as pastor, beginning May 21.

■ **WILLIAMSBURG**—Harold Mauney, retiring pastor of First Church, and his wife, Donna, will be honored with a potluck fellowship dinner June 25 at 12:30 p.m. at the church.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo available for large rental, Sanibel Island, Fla. Large pool, tennis courts, bikes, canoe, kayak, screened porch, lovely secluded beach. Weekly rates May through mid-December: \$650. Call Pat Owen, (502) 895-8752.

FOR SALE: Beautiful console piano. Take on low monthly payments; no money down. (800) 371-1220.

FOR SALE: 1991 Dodge 15-passenger van. 105k miles. Asking \$4,500. Please contact Jerry Gifford at (270) 842-5554.

FOR SALE: 1970 47-passenger coach bus, fair condition, needs work. \$12,000. Leave message: (812) 941-7799 key 806.

FOR SALE: Excellent 1976 GMC model 4108 motor coach; like-new inside and out, Detroit diesel, Allison automatic, 39-passenger and restroom. This beautiful coach is ready to drive anywhere. For photos or more information, call (606) 278-7224.

FOR SALE: New 1999 Dodge easy-access vans: 15-passenger, raised-roof, lowered stepwell, center aisle, ducted rear heat and a/c, plus many more options. Retail: \$35,739; net cost after rebates and discounts: \$29,990. Call (800) 582-7118.

SEEKING: Part-time administrative assistant (20 hours per week) for Ovesen Heights Baptist Church, Hodgenville. Please apply to: Richard Carver, Ovesen Heights Baptist Church, 116 E Forest Ave., Hodgenville, KY 42748, or call the church office: (270) 358-8041.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for First Baptist, Oak Grove, Ky. We are located between Hopkinsville, Ky., and Clarksville, Tenn. Send resumé to: Search Committee, PO Box 27, Oak Grove, KY 42262.

SEEKING: Wilmington Baptist Church, located approximately 20 miles south of Covington, Ky., on Ky. 17, is searching for a full-time pastor to replace our current pastor of more than 15 years who has announced his retirement effective September. We are a small rural community with tremendous growth potential. If you feel God may be calling you to this need, please submit your resumé to Gilbert Mann, 3695 Gardnersville Road, Crittenden, KY 41030, or call (859) 428-3179.

SEEKING: Elementary school teachers and high school teachers (chemistry/physics and math). Call Highview Baptist School, Louisville, Ky., (502) 239-2509, or e-mail brose@highviewbaptistschool.org or jmarcy@highviewbaptistschool.org.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth. Lyndon Baptist Church. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, 8025 New LaGrange Road, Louisville, KY 40222. E-mail: south01@win.net.

SEEKING: Calvary Baptist Church, Corbin, Ky. (Knox Association of Baptists), is seeking a full-time pastor. Average Sunday school attendance is 100; average church attendance is 175-200. Church has two morning worship services. Annual church budget is \$138,000. Send resumé to: Gary Jackson, 55 Meadowbrook Drive, Corbin, KY 40701.

SEEKING: Growing church is in search of a full-time staff member to work with music/youth/children. Dry Ridge Baptist is in a growing area and has great potential in all three of these areas. A church parsonage is available if desired, and salary will be determined by experience, qualifications and need. If you are interested, please inquire by phone: (606) 824-5501 or 824-9229, or send your resumé to: Dry Ridge Baptist Church, 19 Broadway, PO#14, Dry Ridge, KY 41035.

SEEKING: Church secretary. Full-time position with complete responsibility for operation of church office. Experience with MS Word is preferred. Call (502) 368-5806 or send resumé to: Beechmont Baptist Church, 4574 South Third St., Louisville, KY 40214. Fax: 368-5807.

SEEKING: Stanford Baptist Church invites applications for the position of senior pastor. We're a rural-town church in a fast-growing area of beautiful central Kentucky. We have an outstanding music ministry, youth ministry and Christian Life Center program. Please send inquiries or resúmes to: Pulpit Committee, Stanford Baptist Church, 204 Church St., Stanford, KY 40484, or call (606) 365-2178.

SEEKING: South Elkhorn Baptist Church, Lexington, is prayerfully seeking a full-time associate pastor of music and youth. Send resumé to SEBC, 4867 Versailles Road, Lexington, KY 40510, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Second Baptist Church of Greenville, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Please send resumé to: Mr. John Mark Pendley, Search Committee, PO Box 253, Greenville, KY 42345.

SEEKING: Union Baptist Church (Northern Kentucky) has an opening for a part-time minister of music. The position will require approximately 13 hours per week. Send resumé to: PO Box 194, Union, KY 41091, or call (859) 384-3855 for additional information.

SEEKING: Gethsemane Baptist Church, 10400 Blue Lick Road, Louisville, KY 40229 (Okolona), is currently seeking someone to fill the position of minister of music. This is a part-time position. Responsibilities will include leading worship services in traditional and contemporary music, leading the adult choir and working with a youth choir. We are a mission-minded, ministry-minded fellowship of believers seeking someone who is inspirational and led of the Lord to lead in dynamic worship. Resúmes should be sent to the church address in care of the Personnel Committee. You may contact the church at (502) 969-3191 if you have any questions.

SEEKING: Full-time youth/music minister for First Baptist Church of Ludlow, Ky. Please send resumé to: Jack McMillen, Personnel Committee chairman, c/o First Baptist Church, 400 Linden St., Ludlow, KY 41016. For more information, call the church at (859) 581-4795 or 581-4790.

SEEKING: Senior minister for First Baptist Church, Fayetteville, N.C. Our church is a mission-minded and community-oriented congregation affiliated with the SBC and CBF. We affirm autonomy of the local church, corporate worship and stewardship. Send resumé to: Senior Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 53476, Fayetteville, NC 28305.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Pioneer Baptist Church, 264 Sparrow Lane, Harrodsburg, KY 40330.

SEEKING: East Cadiz Baptist Church of Cadiz is seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Send resumé to: M/Y Search Committee, East Cadiz Baptist Church, 407 Third St., Cadiz, KY 42211.

SEEKING: Caneyville Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a full-time, experienced, energetic pastor. Prefer college and/or seminary training. Send resumé to: Eddie A. Majors, 164 Clay Way, Leitchfield, KY 42754.

SEEKING: Experienced full-time youth/children's minister for a 1-1/2 year old contemporary style, growing church (225+) in a small town in central Kentucky. Must be self-motivated, creative, a team player and able to work in a portable church situation. Send resumé to: River of Life Community Church, PO Box 192, Springfield, KY 40069.

SEEKING: Rapidly growing church in Paducah, Ky., is seeking a full-time minister of education. Send resumé to: Mt. Zion Baptist Church, c/o Anthony Gilbert, 78 Owen Drive, Kevil, KY 42053.

SEEKING: Full-time youth/music minister for Hyattsville Baptist Church, Lancaster, Ky. Please send resumé with salary requirements to: Mike Bolin, Personnel Committee chairman, c/o Hyattsville Baptist Church, 1365 Richmond Road, Lancaster, KY 40444. (606) 792-4851 or 792-6610.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for a loving church in Bowling Green. Must be experienced and ambitious. Send resumé to: Forest Park Baptist Church, 520 Old Morgantown Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time children's minister for Farmway Baptist Church, 5610 U.S. Highway 127 South, Frankfort, Ky. If you feel God is calling you to this area to work with children, send resumé to: Ms. Bryan, 530 Alfa Drive, Frankfort, KY 40601.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and youth. Please send resumé to: First Baptist Church, PO Box 506, Hindman, KY 41822, Attn: Search Committee.

SERVICES: Home care for the elderly. Meal preparation, housekeeping, personal hygiene. Bonded, insured, eight years experience. Kinnett Care, (502) 499-7777.

TOUR: 10-Day China tour. Beijing, Xian, Shanghai, Great Wall, terra cotta soldiers, Yangtze River. Nov. 7-16, \$2,085. From our area. For info., call Judy Studie, (270) 475-2197.

True Love Waits collects more student commitments

By Hilary Palmer and Bill Seaver
Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla.—Six years and a million teens later, True Love Waits returned to Orlando's Orange County Convention Center to stake a claim for purity.

One hundred and forty hammer-wielding students arrived early June 13, for a 7 a.m. rally and the posting of 450 True Love Waits yard signs on the lawn in front of the convention center.

True Love Waits is a program sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention that challenges teenagers and college students around the world to remain sexually pure until marriage. As a statement of their commitment, youth sign covenant cards.

LifeWay launched the sexual abstinence program in 1993. The first public display occurred in 1994 at the Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando. Since that time, True Love Waits cards have covered the National Mall in Washington, D.C. (1994), been stacked to the roof of the Georgia Dome in Atlanta (1996), and carried across the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco (1999).

"Being here is a public sign of my commitment to Christ," said Lindsay



TRUE LOVE WAITS Youth from Rose Hill Baptist Church in Ashland help post 450 True Love Waits yard signs June 13 at Orlando's Orange County Convention Center during the Southern Baptist Convention. (From left) Rachel Routt, 18; Jennifer Harris, 15; Phillip Harris, 19; Holly Routt, 16; and Heather Harris, 6, post a sign sent in from a youth group at First Baptist Church of San Angelo, Texas. The True Love Waits program promotes sexual abstinence until marriage. (BP photo by Kent Harville)

Stavish, 17, a member of First Baptist Church of Orlando.

During the rally, Richard Ross, True Love Waits co-coordinator from LifeWay, called the beginning of the program in Orlando six years ago the starting point for a world-changing event.

"In '94 we had a surgeon general (Joycelyn Elders) who was a confused lady," Ross said. "She said teenagers couldn't control themselves sexually. She was dumping condoms on high schools.

"Prior to True Love Waits, teenagers committed to purity were feeling

very isolated. We needed to give these teens a way to find each other and to discover how many hundreds of thousands shared their values," Ross said. "We needed to make an impact on secular culture by showing them that abstinence is a viable message for teenagers that will be recognized by significant numbers of teenagers."

Randy Devinney, youth minister from Oakdale Baptist Church in Rockhill, S.C., has seen the effect of True Love Waits since its beginning. "When (youth) can see college students who have been through the program it makes a big difference," he noted.

After the rally, the youth displayed True Love Waits yard signs on the convention center lawn where they remained until 4 p.m. Each sign represented one church and from 10 to 200 signatures.

Jessica Woodyard, 17, of Orlando, said she was at the rally "to show people the commitment I made to God."

Future plans for True Love Waits include an Internet strategy. On Feb. 14, 2001, True Love Waits will expand moral purity to the World Wide Web with a "Seize the Net" campaign, which will allow students to sign and mail True Love Waits cards on the Internet at www.truelovewaits.com. A counter will show current totals.

Biblical evangelism stressed during Founders breakfast

ORLANDO, Fla.—About 130 people heard Jim Elliff call for a return to biblical evangelism and Fred Malone address "Preaching Christ in the New Millennium" June 13 during the annual Southern Baptist Founders Ministries breakfast.

The fellowship was hosted by Founders Ministries, an organization of Southern Baptists who affirm the doctrines of grace, often called Calvinism.

Elliff is president of Christian Communicators Worldwide and consultant for the Center for Biblical Revival at Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. Malone is pastor of First Baptist Church in Clinton, La., and a member of the Founders Conference board.

Necessary to understanding biblical evangelism is knowing what a biblical convert is, Elliff said.

The apostle Paul "does not say that a convert is a person who prays the prayer and walks the aisle," he said, referencing Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians. "As long as that is a requirement, you're going to have a different kind of convert than the Apostle Paul.

"They were really followers of God, so much that they became examples," Elliff explained. "They themselves were the testimony to everything that happened."

Noting that two-thirds of church members don't even attend Sunday services, Elliff told participants, "You are pastoring an unregenerate church, and this is an unregenerate denomination.

"We are often maligned because we insist on having serious converts," he

added.

Elliff said, "Biblical evangelism is the kind of evangelism that depends upon the Word and the Spirit, in that order.

"We have begun to focus less on the Word and the Spirit, and more on cleverness and technique," he lamented. "When we accommodate sinners, we often compromise our message."

Finally, a key to biblical evangelism is a purity of motive, purity of message and purity of method in the lives of believers that cause people to listen to the message of Christ, Elliff said.

Malone said conditions during the new millennium are not much different than those faced by the earliest Christians at the beginning of a different millennium. The focus must remain the same—Jesus Christ.

"I don't mean taking the text of Scripture and mentioning the name of Jesus every once in a while," Malone said. "I mean preaching Christ Himself in all of Scripture."

The gospel of Christ is the person and work of Christ, he explained. That includes acknowledging that He came to earth, was born of a virgin, died for the sins of mankind, was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven and will come again.

"The Old Testament is Christ-centered," he said. "And we must preach Christ in the New Testament and keep Him at the center of our message. We must keep Christ at the center of all we teach and preach.

"You don't have to beg people to come to church when they realize He is the God who humbled Himself to save them," Malone said.

Ministers' wives event theme: 'Women of Influence'

By Shannon Baker
Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla.—Intimacy with God will make someone a person of influence, Vonette Bright told nearly 1,200 Southern Baptist ministers' wives during a luncheon at the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Experiencing God's presence is the greatest privilege of the believer. It comes from time spent in His Word and in daily prayer," said Bright, cofounder with her husband, Bill, of Campus Crusade for Christ.

Bright was the speaker for the 45th annual Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives Conference, addressing the theme, "Women of Influence."

An internationally known speaker and author, Bright currently directs Women Today, a radio and resource ministry that encourages women to influence their world.

"I've learned from experience that God's presence can be lost by a lack of prayer and lack of spending time with Him," Bright said. "Many people in leadership, even pastors and pastors' wives, are trying to live in their own strength, trying to maintain this Christian life without really giving priority to the Lord and priority to prayer.

"When I let the pressure of work rob me of time with God, I am revealing my lack of dependence on Him," she said. "Defeat and failure are due to the loss of God's presence," Bright cautioned. "Ask God to reveal if there is sin in your life preventing that presence; then confess it and return to your first love. Joy in the Holy Spirit is preserved only by our daily fellowship with God.

"When we have fellowship with Jesus Christ, we receive heavenly grace every day," she continued. "We receive inspiration, energy,

motivation, strength, endurance, confidence, peace and joy in being God's instrument. There isn't anything that can stop you from what God wants you to do.

"I am not trying to overwork you or send you on a guilt trip, but to inspire you and encourage you that you can make a difference," Bright said.

"You, by your calling, have tremendous influence," she said. "You don't need great talent or personality. You just need to walk with God—trust Him, love Him and obey Him."

The ticket price for this year's luncheon and future luncheons was significantly reduced due to the Ministers' Wives Endowment Fund, coordinated by Nancy Sullivan, wife of John Sullivan, executive director of the Florida Baptist Convention.

The event's outgoing president, Joyce Rogers, wife of Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., introduced the 2000-2001 ministers' wives officers:

■ President Teresa Brown, wife of Joe Brown, senior pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C.

■ Vice President Elizabeth Luter, wife of Fred Luter Jr., pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans

■ Recording Secretary/Treasurer Kay Moore, wife of Louis Moore, special assistant to the president of the International Mission Board.

■ Corresponding Secretary Karyn Wilton, wife of Donald Wilton, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Spartanburg, S.C.

Next year's ministers' wives luncheon in New Orleans will feature Kay Arthur of Precept Ministries in Chattanooga, Tenn. The luncheon is open to all wives of ministers—pastors, staff members, chaplains, missionaries and denominational workers.



Bright

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With scholarship funds, you, the donor, may set the criteria for selecting the students who will be eligible for the scholarship.

Joe and Sarah

Joe and Sarah were particularly grateful for the high level of specialized care Joe received during his critical illness at the Baptist hospital. To show their appreciation, they decided to set up an endowment fund which would provide a means for the hospital to purchase much needed equipment.

Through their Wills, they will make a gift to the Kentucky Baptist Foundation to establish the fund that will generate income for the hospital on a regular basis.

Jennifer

Jennifer wanted to honor her grandparents, both of whom were school teachers, by establishing a scholarship fund in their memory at their Kentucky Baptist college alma mater. She contacted the Kentucky Baptist Foundation and established the fund with an initial gift of \$5,000. The endowment agreement provides that the net income will be paid to the Baptist college to provide scholarships for students working towards a teaching degree. Jennifer continues to add money to the fund, increasing the principal and increasing the money generated for scholarships.

Just like Joe, Sarah and Jennifer, you too can

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