

# Baptist and Reflector

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News Journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention

## State youth music festival to be held in Nashville

James Woodward, dean of the Warren M. Angell School of Music, Oklahoma Baptist University, and Douglas Smith, director of instrumental music, School of Church Music, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, will serve as guest conductors for Tennessee's State Youth Music Festival, April 22-23 in Nashville.

Youth choirs from throughout the state are expected to participate in the two-day event. Friday night's program will be held in three locations. Churches with membership of below 1000 will meet at Belmont

Heights Church, with churches of membership from 1000-2000 meeting at Massey Auditorium on the Belmont College campus. Nashville First Church will host youth choirs from churches with over 2000 members. All choir sessions begin at 7 p.m.

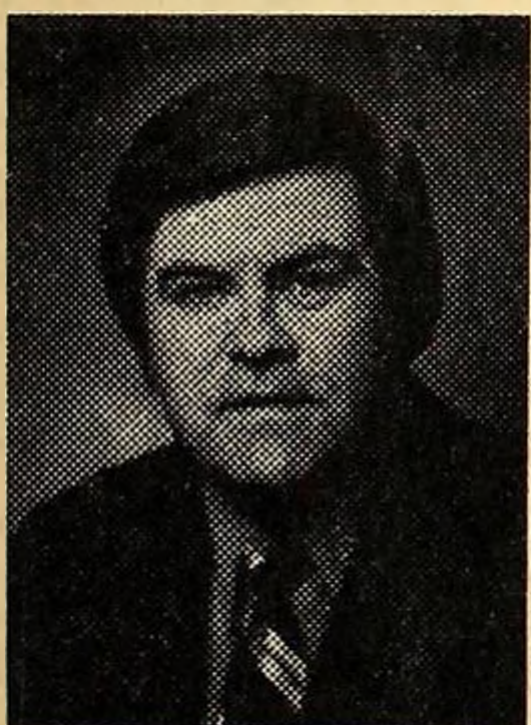


Douglas Smith



James Woodward

## Mississippi pastor accepts call to First, Tullahoma



James M. Porch

First Church, Tullahoma, has called James M. Porch of Clinton, Miss., as pastor. He will begin his new work April 17. Presently he is pastor of Northside Church.

Porch succeeds Tom Madden who resigned after 22 years to become Convention Ministries Division director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Brentwood, in July 1976. The Tullahoma church has approximately 1000 resident members.

A native of Pelahachie, Miss., Porch received the B.A. degree from Mississippi College, Clinton, and the Th.M. and Th.D. degrees from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, La. While attending seminary, he was a graduate fellow in church history, systematic theology, and philosophy of religion.

His pastorates include Concord Church, Yazoo City, Miss., Friendship Church, New Orleans, Calvary Church, Bogie Chitto, Miss., and his present church.

Porch is married to the former Martha Lynn Sullivan, daughter of the James L. Sullivans of Nashville. They have two children, Scott Jackson, age six, and Terri Lynn, age one.

Woodward has appeared numerous times at Ridgecrest and Glorieta Baptist Conference Centers and has been director in several clinics and festivals in Tennessee. He was the organizer and first director of "The Centurymen," SBC Radio and Television Commission men's singing group.

Smith is in his second year at Southern Seminary after serving as director of bands at Dallas Baptist College for several years. He has directed the instrumental program at Camp Carson for the past seven years.

The all-state band, under Smith's direction, will begin rehearsal at 4 p.m. on Friday at Belmont College. Saturday's rehearsal begins at 8:30 a.m. at the War Memorial Auditorium.

Bill Bruster, pastor, Central Church, Bearden, will serve as director of the worship program for the festival. Bruster has been camp pastor of music week previously.

The final concert, featuring all choirs and the band, is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday at the War Memorial Auditorium. C. L. Huling, minister of music at Hendersonville First Church, is program coordinator.

Other members of the youth festival committee are: Derrell Billingsley, Columbia; Mike Hodges, Donelson; Jesse Newcomer, Murfreesboro; Bill Morris, Clarksville; Beryl Vick Jr., Larry Smith, and David Ford, all of Nashville.

The festival is sponsored by the Church Music Dept., Tennessee Baptist Convention.

## Acteens to gather at summit meetings

Tennessee Acteens will meet April 7-9 and April 15-17 for the 1977 State Summit Meetings, according to Louise Sparkman, state Acteens director. The first meeting will be at Pigeon Forge First Church, and the April 15-17 session will convene at Union University in Jackson.

The meetings are sponsored for girls ages 12-17, by the Woman's Missionary Union of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Girls attending the meetings will participate in missions conferences conducted by foreign and home missionaries, personal conferences, testimonies, messages, drama, and fellowship activities.

Foreign missionaries scheduled to appear on the programs include: Myrtice Owens, Tanzania; Ruth Ford, Indonesia; Ernest Pippin, Argentina; Pat and Merrill Moore, Gaza; Orlene and Roy McGlamery, Gaza; Bill and Roberta Damon, Brazil; David Beaty, Rhodesia; Florence and John Griggs, Rhodesia. Also Sarah and Clark Scanlon, Middle America; Margaret and Broadus Hale, South Brazil; and Noreta and Bill Morgan, Brazil.

Larry Jones and Ruth Smith will lead conferences on work in home missions, with opportunities for work in summer missions being discussed by Jo Love, Israel, and David and Mary Lou Cook.

Information on the US-2 and Journeyman program will be shared by Randy Hurst, Ken and Linda Bowie, and Charlene Robinson.

Charles Petty, Council on Christian Life and Public Affairs, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, will be the featured speaker at Pigeon Forge. David Sapp, Christian Life Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, will address the group meeting at Union University. Both men will speak on the subject, "Acteens, We've Got To Talk."

Opening sessions at both summit meetings will begin at 7:20 p.m. with registration beginning at 2 p.m. The Pigeon Forge conference ends Saturday morning following a decision service, and the Jackson meet will close on Sunday morning with a worship service, Sparkman stated.



# NBC-TV film on Jesus shows Him as Savior, Stevens says

**NEW YORK**—"I was brought to tears at least a dozen times by this powerful and graphic film," declared the president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission after he emerged from a six-hour preview showing here of a controversial television film on Christ.

Paul M. Stevens of Fort Worth made that comment in the wake of complaints from across country from people fearing remarks made by the director of "Jesus of Nazareth" indicated that the film would downgrade the divinity of Christ.

The film, which some earlier reports misnamed **The Life of Christ**, will be aired in two parts on NBC in prime time on Palm Sunday, April 3 and Easter Sunday, April 10, from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. each night, EST. Initial samplings by the major networks have indicated **Jesus of Nazareth** may exceed the all-time record viewing audience of **Roots**.

"Although I can't speak for Southern Baptists, I think Christians all over America should pray that **Jesus of Nazareth** will have the greatest viewing audience possible, because of the profound effect it could have in bringing people to a personal knowledge of Jesus as Savior and Lord," Stevens told Baptist Press.

Stevens, one of a number of religious leaders invited to the filming, declared that it was "unthinkable that persons who have been attacking the showing of the film funded by General Motors could take such a firm, vehement position against something about which they did not have all the facts."

(That criticism, in fact, is believed to be the reason General Motors withdrew as a sponsor after investing some \$19 million in the film's development, although GM denies it withdrew for that reason. The network will run the film, despite the absence of GM.)

"It wasn't perfect," Stevens said of the film. "There were some things I would have changed, but they are not consequential to the person of Christ, the Savior and Messiah. Over and over and over again, Christ is presented in the film by His friends and His enemies as Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of the world."

Stevens noted that as a Baptist he would have portrayed Jesus' baptism by immersion. "There are millions of people in the Christian family who do not demand total immersion and the director, G. Franco Zeffirelli, chose to present the baptism by pouring," Stevens cited, among several examples of things he would change.

"This film is not of the life of Christ," he said. "If so it would be obliged to carry

every incident in the four gospels. But it's primary source is the gospel of John. The gospel of John does not present every miracle Jesus performed. Neither does the film.

"But the miracles that it does present are presented with great spirituality and powerful realism," Stevens said. "The film presents Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Savior." "It powerfully, graphically portrays the death, burial and resurrection of Christ."

Earlier, Zeffirelli was quoted by a Bob Jones University publication, **Faith** magazine, as saying, "Of course the public is going to be annoyed that I am destroying their myths . . . yet in view of the constant reinterpretation of Jesus' life and the tone of our contemporary society, I believe the changes which I have made are valid."

A spokesman for Collins World, which is publishing a companion hardback book, **Jesus of Nazareth**, said the quote from Zeffirelli was picked up, out of context, from an interview in **Modern Screen** in which  
(Continued on page 6)

## Stirton Oman Sr., 74, dies

Services for Stirton Oman Sr., chairman of the board of Oman Construction Co., were held March 21 at Immanuel Church, Nashville.

David C. George, pastor of the church, and Gaye L. McGlothlen, former pastor and now retired, officiated. Burial was in Mount Olivet Cemetery.

Oman died March 18 of an apparent heart attack while vacationing in the Bahamas.

A Nashville native, Oman was credited with contracting such famous projects as the widening of the Panama Canal and the Alaskan pipeline. He was active in social, religious and civic organizations.

A deacon of Immanuel Church, he had served on the board of directors of the Southern Baptist Foundation for many years and was a member of the board of trustees at Baptist Hospital.

For the past 30 years Oman had lived at Ashlawn Estate on Franklin Road, built in 1820 by the settlers in the Nashville area. He also raised prized show cattle there.

He is survived by his widow, Frances Allen Oman; three daughters, Mrs. Howard E. Brown, Nashville; Mrs. Ann O. Wailand and Mrs. Rogers Buntin, both of Brentwood; two sons, Stirton Oman Jr., Franklin; and Jack Allen Oman, Brentwood; and one sister, Mrs. Frank B. Leu, Nashville.



**NASHVILLE**—Three Tennesseans are writing lesson materials for the Bible Book Series, a new Bible study curriculum which will be released in October 1978 by the Sunday School department of the Baptist Sunday School Board. From left to right, they are (seated) Fred Wood, pastor, Eudora Church, Memphis, writing for the Oct.-Dec. 1978 quarter; George A. Hern, pastor, Dellwood Church, Memphis, April-June 1979 quarter; and (standing) C. Ferris Jordan, associate pastor, Two Rivers Church, Nashville, Jan.-March 1979 quarter. Wood, Hern and Jordan are shown here with Luther Carden, editor of adult materials for the Bible Book Series.



# Religious archives workshops to be held in Tennessee

Tennessee Baptists will have an opportunity to participate in three religious archives workshops planned for local congregations in the state, May 11, 13 and 20, according to Lynn E. May Jr., Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, and coordinator of the project.

The three one-day workshops, designed for recorders and keepers of local church and congregational records, will provide training in selecting, organizing, preserving, and using historical records and documents. Special attention will be given to writing the story of a local congregation.

To be held in Jackson on May 11, Nashville on May 13, and Knoxville on May 20, the workshop will cover such specific subjects as the rationale for a local religious and utilizing records. Lambuth College, the Baptist Sunday School, and Knoxville Public archives, selecting, organizing, indexing, and preserving materials, recovering the past and writing the story of the local congregation,

Library will host the respective workshops.

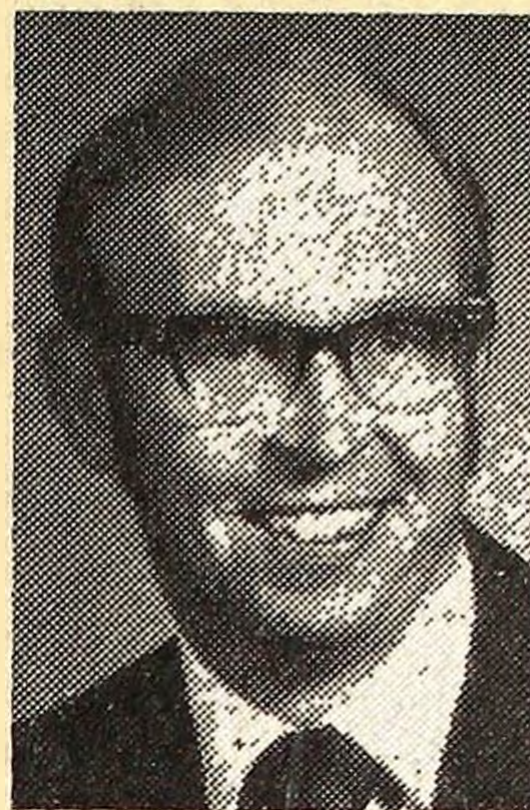
Leadership for the sessions is being provided by the Tennessee State Library and Archives and four national religious archives agencies. These include: the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, The United Methodist Commission on Archives and History, the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, and the Presbyterian Historical Foundation.

May will conduct the session on "Writing the Story" at each of the three gatherings. Charles Deweese, director of editorial services, Historical Commission, SBC, will give information on "Recovering the Past" at the Jackson and Knoxville sessions.

Ministers, clerks, secretaries, librarians, historians, and members of records and history committees of local congregations or religious organizations may pre-register for the workshop by contacting May at the Historical Commission. The program at each workshop will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 3 p.m.

## Don H. Olive writes Uniform Series

Don H. Olive, coordinator of the philosophy department, Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, will write the Uniform Series



Don H. Olive

Sunday School Lessons carried weekly in the **Baptist and Reflector** beginning March 31.

A native of Texas, he is a graduate of East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, where he earned the B.D. degree in 1964 and the

Th.D. degree in 1966. He did additional study in philosophy at the University of Texas at El Paso prior to accepting a faculty appointment at Wayland College, Plainview, Tex.

While a college and seminary student, Olive served several small churches as pastor. He also served as hospital minister for First Church, El Paso, and pastor of Coronado Chapel, El Paso.

After three years at Wayland, he took a leave of absence to enter the Graduate School of Tulane University, New Orleans, La., while teaching part-time at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Olive received the Ph.D. degree in philosophy from Tulane in 1975, as well as a Ph.D. degree in religious studies as a replacement of the Th.D. degree from Southwestern.

He returned to the faculty of Wayland for a year before going to C-N in 1975.

## Belle Aire members vote to build new facilities

Members of Belle Aire Church, Murfreesboro, voted to proceed with construction of a two-story building which will house a 400-seat auditorium and 10 classrooms, according to pastor Joe Elliott.

A house, which was used formerly as a parsonage, has been removed, clearing the way for construction to begin within the next few weeks. Vernon M. Williams and Sons Const. Co., Nashville, will be general contractor for the building.

The congregation plans to move into the new facilities in October 1977.

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# Shelby Association opposes Pari-Mutuels in Tennessee

**MEMPHIS**—The executive board of the Shelby Baptist Association voted unanimously here to oppose the establishment of a race track allowing pari-mutuel betting in Tennessee.

The association, composed of 118 churches with a total membership of 120,974, "requested all levels of political leadership to reject the legalization of a race track in Tennessee and to spend more time and effort in bringing productive sources of revenue into the state. . . ."

John Bedford, chairman of the association's Christian Life Committee and pastor of Beverly Hills Baptist Church, offered the resolution.

Triggering the resolution was a request by supporters of legalized horse track betting for the Tennessee General Assembly to permit urban counties to decide by referendum if they wanted gambling at publicly owned tracks.

Race track supporters in Memphis advocated that the local government establish and operate a race track, possibly on a river-front island, to generate revenue.

In taking their stand, the Baptists reminded that citizens "are concerned with the decline of the moral climate in this community" and that deteriorating family units were causing social problems.

Contending that criminal activity was flourishing despite all efforts of law enforce-

ment activities, the Baptists said it was inconsistent for the government to legalize criminal activities (such as gambling) for itself and, at the same time, to prohibit private enterprise from participating in the identical activity.

"It is immoral for a government to attempt to profit from the weakness of its citizens," the resolution said. "The crime and harm done to the innocent citizens would be more costly than the small amount of funds raised by the establishment of a race track allowing pari-mutuel gambling.

"Gambling has historically been the core of criminal organization that expands into other areas of crime," the resolution continued. "Legalization of pari-mutuel gambling would encourage organized crime." (BP)

## Nelson Ross named to post at C-N

Nelson L. Ross, assistant professor of physical education, golf coach and intramural director at Columbus (Ga.) College, was named director of alumni relations at Carson-Newman College, effective July 1. He succeeds Edward Glover in the post.

A native of Antioch, Tenn., Ross is a 1961 graduate of C-N and earned the M.S. degree in physical education from East Tennessee State University in 1968.



# Baptist business officers oppose IRS defining church's mission

**DALLAS**—About 160 Southern Baptist business officers resolved here to reaffirm opposition to the Internal Revenue Service for defining a church's nature and mission in an income tax amendment.

In a session of the 15th Southern Baptist Business Officers Conference, the group approved unanimously the following resolution: "Be it resolved that we, the members of the Southern Baptist Business Officers Conference meeting . . . reaffirm our opposition to the commissioner of Internal Revenue arrogating the authority to define the nature of the church and the mission of the church through the amendment of income tax regulation section 1.6033-2."

The amendment, defining an "integrated auxiliary of a church," was published in the **Federal Register** on Jan. 4 this year.

The business officers took the action after the organization's resolutions committee said it considers the amendment a violation of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

According to the resolution, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

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## BAPTIST AND REFLECTOR

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The resolution also noted, "If Congress by statute or administration, through quasi-legislative process, seeks to define what institutions and activities are indispensable for an organization to be classified as a church in any context, the state is then defining for the churches the nature and scope of their religious mission."

The conference, hosted by the Southern Baptist Convention Annuity Board, followed a meeting of the Southern Baptist Computer Users Association, which registered about 60 persons.

Mrs. Martha Grove, director of accounting for Tennessee Baptist Convention, was elected membership vice-president for the Computer Users Association.

In the business officers conference, Albert McClellan, director of program planning and associate executive secretary for the SBC Executive Committee, Nashville, emphasized the importance of "inter-agency mutual helpfulness."

McClellan explained that SBC agencies can work together more effectively by knowing where to draw lines of responsibility and by suggesting specific ways to lend assistance.

In the computer users meeting, representatives decided to send a questionnaire to members of the association and to SBC agencies which will plumb interest in the association's pooling its buying power when printing data processing forms and cards. The association believes this would result in a substantial savings in printing costs for all agencies using the forms and cards, particularly in the smaller ones. (BP)

## Baptist and Reflector receives new budgets

Seven Tennessee Baptist churches have placed the **Baptist and Reflector** in their budgets.

The associations, churches and pastors are: Nolachucky Association, Catherine Nennay Memorial Church, Richard M. Long; Big Emory Association, Clymersville Church, Charles W. Kelly; Bradley Association, Council Church, Thomas Franks; Holston Association, Sulphur Springs Church, A. Tom Crawford, interim pastor; Holston Association, Muddy Creek Church, Harold McNabb; Concord Association, Brinkley Road Mission, Johnnie Hall, interim pastor; Hardeman Association, First Church, Whiteville.

## Our People and Our Churches . . .

### People . . .

Fellowship Church, Millington, licensed **Norris Norman** to the gospel ministry recently. **Herschel R. Lindsey** is pastor.

**Clark Brown** was ordained to the gospel ministry at Alamo Church, Beulah Association. **T. C. Thurman** delivered the ordination sermon, and **Robert L. Armour** led the questioning of the candidate. **Andy King** is pastor.

Members of Dalewood Church, Nashville, honored pastor **Mike Dawson** on the occasion of his fifth anniversary as pastor of the church.

**Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Humble** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a renewing of their vows and a reception at Mount Carmel Church, Signal Mountain, recently. All eight of their children were present for the occasion. **James Bond** is pastor.

**Arthur B. Griffin** celebrated his 21st anniversary as pastor of Belmont Heights Church, Knoxville. Members of the church honored him with a supper and gift of a money tree.

McKenzie First Church ordained **Bruce Coleman** to the gospel ministry. He is serving as pastor of Holladay Unity Church in Holladay. A graduate of Union University, he plans to attend Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. **O. M. Dangeau**, Tennessee Baptist Convention, will give the charges to the church and the candidate. Pastor **John Adams** presided over the service.

**Mrs. Pearl Johnson**, 90, the oldest member of Mount Carmel Church, Signal Mountain, died March 1. **James Bond** is pastor of the church.

Central Church, Hixson, licensed **Ken Castleberry** to the gospel ministry. **Billy N. Kennedy** is pastor.

## Mercer University receives grant for restoration work

**MACON, Ga.**—A \$45,000 grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation of Miami has been received for use toward the restoration of Mercer University's historic administration building, according to Rufus C. Harris, president of the Baptist school.

**Louie D. Newton**, who heads the drive for restoration of the Mercer landmark, said, "This is a major step in the recognition of the importance of our administration building which . . . symbolizes the heartbeat of this great university." (BP)



# HMB approves religious survey of Micronesia Pacific islands

**PHOENIX**—A religious survey of Micronesia—a sprawling American territory 5000 miles west of California—has been approved by directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The directors, at their spring meeting here, appropriated funds for the study, to be conducted this summer by Douglas and Ruth Clark, faculty members at Oklahoma Baptist University.

In presenting the matter to directors, the board's executive director-treasurer, William G. Tanner, noted the survey is a joint venture between the Home and Foreign Mission Boards and the Hawaii Baptist Convention.

The survey was undertaken at the request of the Hawaii Convention, according to E. W. Hunke Jr., Home Mission Board regional coordinator who works in the western United States.

"Dr. (Edmond) Walker, (Hawaii Convention executive secretary) told us that 13 years ago the Hawaii Convention asked him to lead in evangelizing the Pacific basin area. Now, with the tremendous growth in Micronesia from tourism, military construction, and other building, the need is even more pressing," Hunke said.

Clark, who teaches sociology and cultural anthropology, said the American trust territory covers "about 3000 miles, but if you put all the land into one area, it would not equal more than about two-thirds the size

of Rhode Island. It is a huge water mass with only a few islands, small and far apart."

While there are some 3140 islands in Micronesia, only about 100 are inhabited. Population is estimated at 300,000.

While the missionaries on Guam are affiliated with the Foreign Mission Board, two home missionaries serve in the South Pacific. In 1976, directors named the Ray Viliamus to American Samoa. The Home Mission Board "relates to American Samoa because it is an American possession."

Relating to Micronesia, Hunke emphasized that no action is planned beyond the survey. "We will deal with any decision after the survey has been taken," he said.

The status of part of Micronesia changed in 1975 when the Mariannas requested commonwealth status—similar to that now held by Puerto Rico—and that its citizens become U.S. citizens.

According to officials of the U.S. Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, some 78 percent of the area's voters approved the status change in a plebiscite June 17, 1975.

The U.S. Congress, on March 24, 1976, approved creation of a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to take effect in 1980 when the trustee agreement lapses.

Government officials say residents of the Carolines and Marshalls are considering requesting commonwealth status, among other options open to them. (BP)

## US Congress approves resolution urging rights for Soviet Jews

**WASHINGTON**—By an overwhelming majority the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution concerning the freedom of movement of Soviet Jews and other minorities. The Senate had passed the measure earlier.

The resolution, which passed by a vote of 400-2 in the House and 91-0 in the Senate, calls on the Soviet government to honor its "pledge to facilitate freer movement of people, expedite the reunification of families, and uphold the general freedom to leave one's country."

Discussion on the House floor pointed to recent abuses in the Soviet Union against Jews.

U.S. Rep. Henry A. Waxman (Cal.) said, "In the past few weeks, the Soviet government has chosen to crack down hard against those who simply wish to practice their religion, and against those who continue to speak out for reform."

"In January, the Soviet government banned the importation of Matzohs, which are essential to the observation of Passover," Waxman continued.

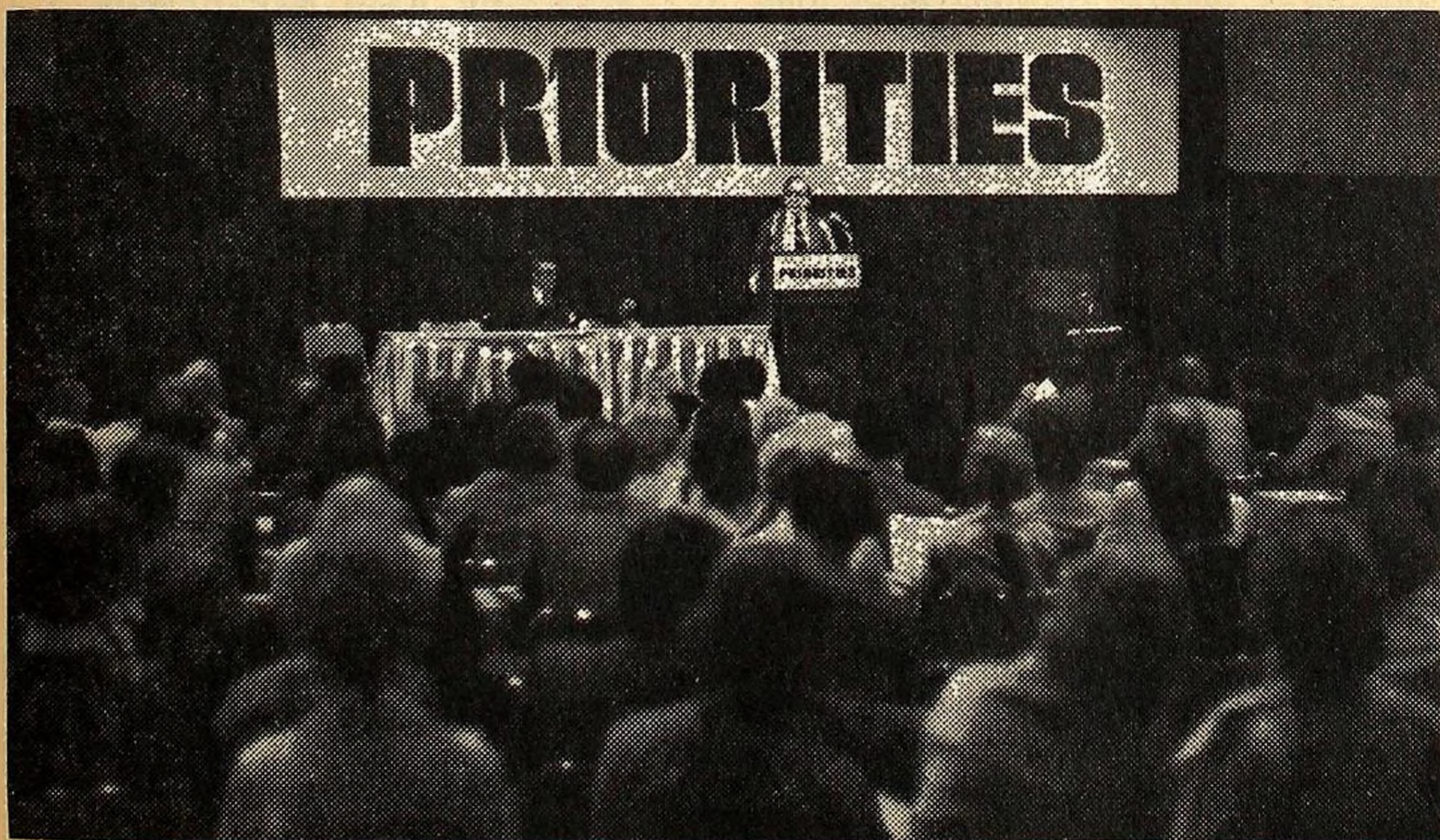
"On March 5, the government accused several leading dissidents, all of them Jews, of working for the Central Intelligence Agency. Ten days later, one Soviet Jew, Anatoly Scharansky, was arrested for espionage," he charged.

Waxman also cited the arrest of other dissidents, who have had no formal charges filed against them and a prime time television program sponsored by the Soviet government, which accused Israel and "Zionist sympathizers of duping Jews into emigrating."

U.S. Rep. Toby Moffett (Conn.), who sponsored a resolution in the House similar to the Senate measure which was voted on, noted that the action of Congress was in line with the foreign policy of President Carter.

"Human rights is not a problem to be solved; it is a cause that has been evolving for 20 centuries . . . such a policy has been taking shape quite rapidly during the still nascent term of President Carter. The President is providing extraordinary leadership in this area and it is fitting and necessary that Congress should seek every opportunity to support him," Moffett told his colleagues.

Last year, in an unprecedented move, Congress passed a resolution calling for the release of dissident Baptist minister Georgi Vins from prison. Vins had been imprisoned for carrying out his pastoral duties of teaching and preaching. (BP)



**PRIORITIES**—More than 500 Baptists from 25 states (including 31 from Tennessee) attended the annual seminar sponsored by the SBC Christian Life Commission last week in Jackson, Miss. The theme for the 1977 seminar was "Priorities."

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# Baptist career women to meet at Pigeon Forge, April 1-3

Baptist women who are employed outside the home will gather at Smoky Shadows Conference Center in Pigeon Forge, April 1-3 for the second annual state meeting of Baptist career women. The meeting is sponsored by the Woman's Missionary Union of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Nan Owens, state Baptist women director, WMU, will preside.

The program for the week-end event will feature Bible studies, missionary messages, a missionary panel, and discussion groups by vocations.

Foreign missionaries scheduled to be present are: Hattie Gardner, retired, Nigeria; Ernest Pippin, Argentina; and Lorene Tilford, retired, Taiwan.

Dr. and Mrs. Jack Fuson, Knoxville, will speak to the group on work they did in Grenada and Guyana under the Volunteer Medical Missions program. Fuson is a dentist in Knoxville and spent eight years in Guyana doing medical missions work.

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A presentation of the work at Mur-Ci Home, Nashville, will be given by Eva Eldridge, former Southern Baptist missionary to Nigeria, Eldridge now serves as director of immediate child care services for the home which provides care for retarded children, youth, and adults. She is a graduate of Union University and received the RN degree from Memphis Baptist Hospital School of Nursing. In addition, she attended New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Freddie Mae Bason, director of weekday ministries, at Atlanta Baptist Center, Atlanta, Ga., will speak to the group on activities performed at the center. She serves as a missionary of the Home Mission Board's Christian Social Ministries Dept. Prior to her present ministry, she was director of Magnolia Street Baptist Center in Atlanta and was in student mission work with the HMB for four summers.

Other program personnel will include Mrs. D. M. Laws, Christian Service Corps, Johnson City; Faye Brandon, minister of music, Crossville First Church; Mrs. Claude Jennings, president, Tennessee WMU; and Beulah Peoples, promotion director, state WMU.

Sessions will begin at 8:30 p.m. Friday and end Sunday at 11:30 a.m.

## Business Women's Federation plans meet April 23-24

The Tennessee Baptist Business Women's Federation will hold its annual meeting April 23-24 at the Airport Hilton Inn, Nashville, according to Betty Pettey, program chairman.

Theme of the Federation will be "... and having done all, to stand" Eph. 6:13. The first session will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday with an executive meeting, and the final session will be on Sunday morning.

The afternoon activities begin with a business meeting at 1:30. Calvin Parker, missionary to Japan, will bring the message on "Standing for Jesus in Japan."

Highlighting the evening session, which begins at 7:30, will be Siegfried Enge, missionary to Argentina, who will bring a similar message on Argentina.

Following the 7:30 Sunday morning breakfast, Clark Scanlon will speak. A missionary for 21 years to Guatemala, Central America, now on furlough, Clark has just returned from a trip with a team of workers from Nashville where they participated in construction of the Damascus Baptist Church which was destroyed by an earthquake last year.

## NBC-TV film shows

(Continued from page 2)

the director referred to the myths "which were propagated and strengthened over the centuries by artists like Michelangelo and Bernini."

"Zeffirelli was speaking in the context of Italian Catholicism about medieval artistic interpretations of Christ which have depicted Christ only as a holy being wearing a halo and overlooked His human qualities," John Horner of Cleveland, a vice president of Collins World, told Baptist Press. "He had no intention of downgrading Christ's unquestionable divinity."

Horner quoted from the March issue of **Cultural Information Service**, an art/media and popular culture review for leaders in education and religion, in which he said Zeffirelli said:

"Christians have always had no problem accepting Christ as Holy, as God. But they always have problems accepting Him also as a human being at the same time. I want to dust off all the sand that has encrusted the character of Christ after too many story book interpretations and parochial films."

Zeffirelli, Horner said, had drawn many Italian Catholic complaints in a European showing, because he had depicted Mary, the mother of Christ, as a human undergoing the agonies of childbirth, rather than as "an immaculate being who could not suffer."

Horner further quoted Anthony Burgess, who wrote the *Jesus of Nazareth* screenplay, as saying: "In our television poem, we want to restore to our culture the strength, the power, the intensity, the gigantic intellect and the passion of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." (BP)

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# The present duty

By Herschel H. Hobbs

*"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."—I Cor. 15:58*

Paul could soar to the heights, but he always kept his feet on the ground. He was never unaware of the Christian's daily duty. This is seen in this verse.

"Therefore" may refer back to I Cor. 15:1-57 But it also may include the entire epistle up to this point. G. Campbell Morgan sees 1:9 and 15:58 as parenthetical marks. In between them Paul treats the various problems in the church in Corinth. So, in effect, he is saying, "God is faithful (trustworthy) . . . Therefore . . . be ye steadfast . . . in the work of the Lord."

No matter what our problems may be, we can trust God to lead us through them. Even as we await the Lord's return we should be steadfastly busy for the Lord. Anything that we do for the Lord is not in vain or empty. We may be confronted with toilsome "labour" and even temporary defeat. But victory is ultimately ours.

"Abounding" means "overflowing." We should be constantly overflowing in the Lord's work—what the Lord is doing—because we bless others out of the overflow from our lives. And we serve the Lord through serving people (Matt. 25:40).

Everything that we do for the Lord is sacred. Because we tend to divide things into the sacred and secular, we get a jar as we move from I Cor. 15:58 to 16:1. "Now concerning the collection." Paul felt no such jar. To him the "collection" for the Lord's work was as sacred as faith in the resurrection. In the original Greek manuscript there was no chapter break. This was added much later. So Paul naturally flows

## Victory celebration ends church project at Erwin

Members of Calvary Church, Erwin, held a victory celebration recently which concluded a five-month drive to retire the educational building fund debt of \$63,540.

Members of the church had been challenged by their pastor, Dearing L. Garner, to pay the indebtedness within the time limit established by the church.

The victory program included a special message and challenge from James E. Harris, director of missions for Holston Association, a mini-concert by Mr. and Mrs. Allen Moody, special music by Mrs. Edward Glover, and the victory sermon by Edward Glover, director of alumni affairs, Carson-Newman College.

from his **crescendo** to the passing of the offering plate. Giving is as much a part of worship as any other act of worship. We should **believe, praise, preach, and pray.** But we should also **give.** For it too is "abounding in the work of the Lord."

## HISTORICALLY

### FROM THE FILES

#### 50 YEARS AGO

Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Louisville, Ky. had been invited to attend commencement at exercises Seminary Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Six Tennessee students were expected to receive degrees. They were W. H. Barton, Nashville; Geo. L. Ridenour, LaFayette; W. R. Pettigrew, Humboldt; Floyd J. Waldrop, Idlewild; James A. McCaleb, Jefferson City; and J. Luther Trent, Edison.

R. R. McCulloch of Louisville, Ky., accepted the call of the church at Ripley.

#### 25 YEARS AGO

Area correspondents for the **BAPTIST AND REFLECTOR** were East Tennessee, Lloyd T. Householder Sr., pastor of Broadway Church, Maryville; Middle Tennessee, Homer A. Cate, pastor, First Church, Shelbyville; and West Tennessee, Edwin E. Deusner, pastor, First Church, Lexington.

Robert Jerry Williams, 86, of Friendship, retired minister died. He and Mrs. Williams had observed their 67 wedding anniversary recently.

#### 10 YEARS AGO

Twelve-year-old Graceland Church, Whitehaven, dedicated its new sanctuary. E. Lowell Adams was pastor.

King Thetford was the new pastor of First Church, Waynesboro. He was pastor of Hillcrest Church, Jackson, for 11 years before going to Waynesboro.

## Witnessing

By Mrs. George Clark

"Ye are my witnesses," Jesus commanded every Christian! Every man, woman, boy, and girl who bears the name "Christian" is a witness, for Jesus or against Him.



Clark

One of the most unforgettable persons was Henry, a Mexican-Indian - American who appeared in the young adult Sunday School Class one Sunday morning at a Baptist Church. He was welcomed into the class with a bit of wonder as there were no

Mexicans around the town. Where did he come from? A Christian man had found him walking down the highway, picked him up in his truck, and had given him a job and a place to live. This man brought Henry to church Sunday after Sunday and witnessed to him. Henry had a difficult time understanding the preaching and teaching of Jesus, but he understood the Christian love and acceptance he found. He could read very little, so a "Good News for Modern Man" was given him. Soon he accepted Christ and was baptized into the church.

A Christian group went on the church bus to see "The Hiding Place" in Jackson. Henry was given a ticket so he could go. He seemed so moved and shed tears of concern. He seemed to want to return to his relatives, even though he was raised in an orphanage. The next week he disappeared, but many prayers went out for him.

Who won Henry to Christ? The man who befriended him and witnessed to him, the pastor, the Sunday School teacher, the friends at church who accepted him, all had a part in winning him to Christ. The Holy Spirit works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform.

Mrs. Clark is W.M.U. director of Madison-Chester Association, Jackson, and a member of Sanford Hill Church, Henderson.

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# The blame belongs to 'them'

Suppose your pastor stands in the pulpit next Sunday and makes such statements as:

**"Someone in this church is a great handicap to our ministry. This person is without question seeking to destroy our fellowship, undermine our witness, and drive the pastor and leaders away. This person's actions literally deny the truth of God."**

Before these words had ceased to echo in the auditorium, most of us could present an extensive list of possible candidates for **"them."**

In our associations and conventions we play a similar game. We view leveling off of growth (even the decline in some statistics) as by-products of the **"thems."**

**How much are we unlike the early disciples!**

Jesus gathered with the twelve disciples in that upper room for His last supper with these followers before the ordeal of the crucifixion. He used the occasion to give some final teachings—both in word and action. He spoke of some significant things as recorded in John 14-16. He washed their feet, demonstrating the role of a servant.

As they ate together, apparently without warning, Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, **one of you shall betray me.**" No doubt they were startled. They did not fully understand that Jesus was to be taken away from them—certainly they did not think that one of this select circle would betray his Lord.

Had WE been at that meaningful meal we would have quickly started to pick out the betrayer.

As we look around the room, we can see the likely candidates for a traitor.

**Peter.** He is the loud-mouth bully. He has lived a rough life as a fisherman and surely has no high values. Such a showoff—hot and cold. When he's encouraged, he is great; when he is wrong, he could easily betray Jesus. Why, didn't Jesus refer to him as "Satan!"

**James or John.** There's an ambitious pair. They have asked to sit beside Jesus in the kingdom—and He refused to grant their wish. Jesus calls that pair "sons of thunder" because of their tempers.

**Andrew.** He finally got tired of being "Number 2." Everybody refers to him as "Simon Peter's brother." Maybe he found a way to make a name for himself by betraying Jesus.

**Philip.** He's so practical. He wants to see everything, like he said, "Show us the Father." He just might prefer the reality of some money to the promises of Jesus. Didn't he bring some Greeks to meet Jesus? Could he be letting those outsiders know who Jesus is?

**Bartholomew.** He's so prejudiced. The first time he met Jesus he wanted to know if anything good could come from Nazareth. Could that prejudice have grown into hate?

**Matthew.** A publican is a likely candidate. He's already proven that he is willing to betray his people for Roman tax money. Never trust a turncoat!

**Thomas.** What a skeptic! Does he accept anything without those doubting questions? If he really doubts that Jesus is the Christ, he could betray Him.

**James the son of Alphaeus.** We call him "James the less" because of his small size. Maybe he feels inferior because of his stature and would become a betrayer just to prove his power.

**Thaddaeus.** He's the quiet one! He never speaks—what's he thinking? Some call him "Lebbaeus"—others, "Judas, the son of James." Who is he, really?

**Simon the Zealot.** Does that super-patriot realize now that Jesus isn't going to liberate Judea from the Romans? These Zealots put the nation above anything or anybody!

**Judas Iscariot.** Old money-bags isn't from Galilee like the rest of us. He's greedy. He's a foreigner. He could be the one.

But wait. The disciples aren't pointing accusing fingers at each other. One by one, each one questions our Lord, **"Is it I?"**

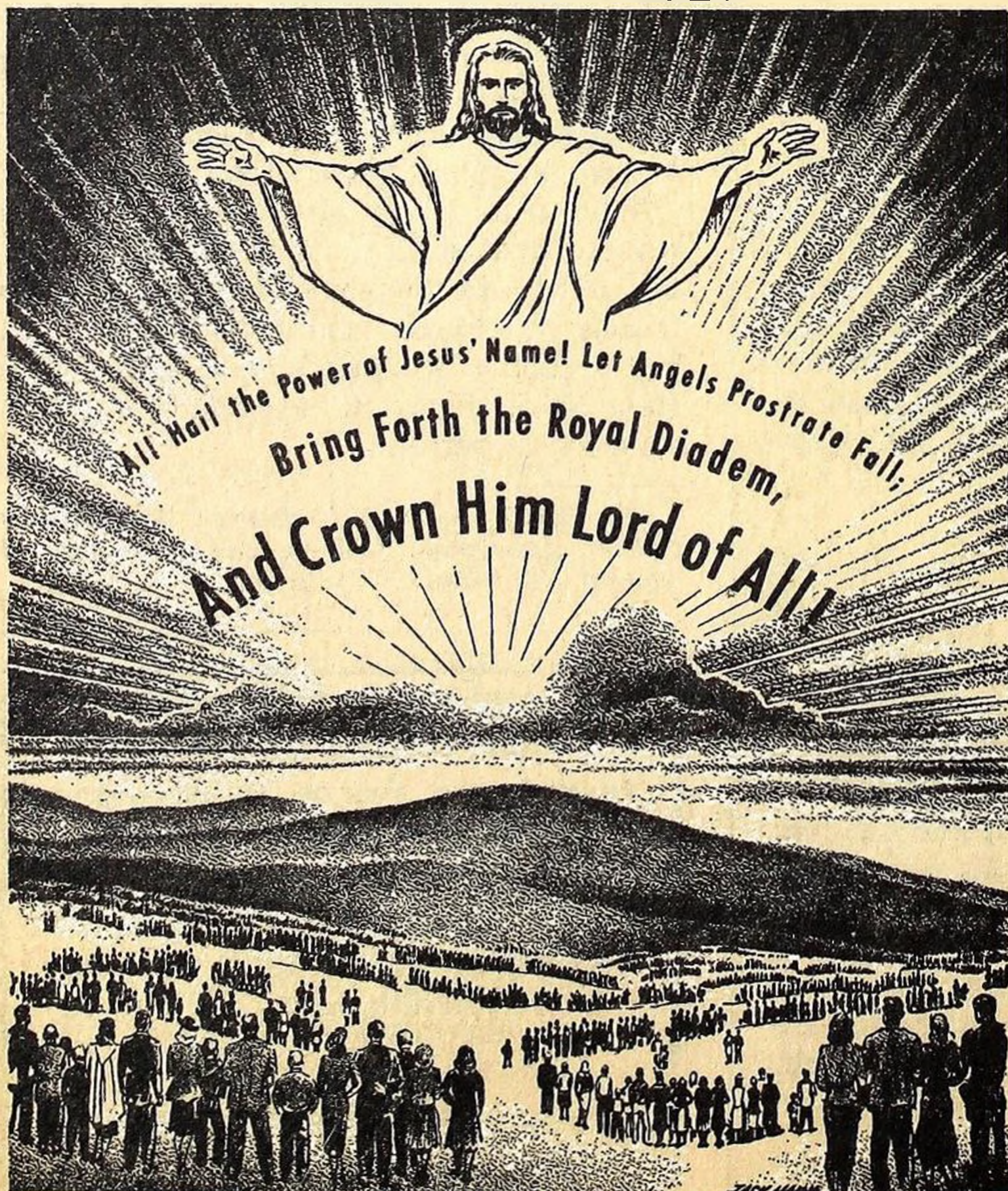
The twelve were so afraid that they might be the one who would betray Jesus—either knowingly or unknowingly. They did not look at the weakness of others, but at themselves.

However, we 20th century descendants of these twelve have a different perspective. In our smug, self-righteous security we have convinced ourselves that our thoughts, our actions, and our motives are above question. From this position we question the thoughts, actions, and motives of **"them"**—to place the blame.

Who's at fault that you, your church, your association, your state convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention are not going into all the world to proclaim the teachings of Christ?

Before we start our lists, may God grant us the humility to go to Him and prayerfully ask, **"Lord is it I?"**

## KING OF ALL AGES





## Cicero's comment



By the editor

Tomorrow is **April Fool's Day**—a dubious special occasion dedicated to the cunning exploits of tricksters.

I wonder what message the greatest trickster of them all—**Satan himself**—might have on April Fool's Day. What would he write if this were his column? (This may surprise some of you who thought Satan had it every week).

Satan's April Fool's Day column would possibly have three points to make.

(1) **There is no hope.** Satan would like you to believe there is no loving God who offers hope for sinful people like you and me. Humanity just happened—we evolved from some prehistoric algae. We will live our lives and die—that's all.

If Satan can't convince us that "there is no God" (Psalm 14:1), he next will try to show that God doesn't care. After all, God is perfect and holy—why should He be concerned about "little old you"—one of four billion people on this planet which is only one of the uncounted stars in the endless expanse of space.

(2) **There is no hell.** That's an "old-fashioned" scare technique to get people to join a church. And even if there were such a thing as hell, would a God of love let anyone go there and suffer? If God loves us, He wants the best for us—right? An eternity in a burning hell doesn't sound like the best for anybody!

So if there is no hell or judgment, you can live your life with "gusto." It really doesn't matter.

(3) **There is no hurry.** If Satan's first two arguments are unsuccessful, he wants you to know there is **plenty of time**. God can save a 90-year-old person the same way He saves a nine-year-old. There is a lot to do before we face eternity.

This third argument is so good that Satan even uses it on Christians! There is no need to be in a hurry to witness to your neighbor. You will have more time to read and study your Bible and to pray when you are older and life settles down. Tithing will be easier when you get some of those bills paid off.

—Satan's April Fool's Day thoughts are lies, of course—but what else would you expect from the "father of lies" (John 8:44)? He even lied to Jesus (Matthew 4); why wouldn't he lie to us!

## Letters to the Editor...

Letters on any religion-related subject are welcomed. Letters of over 300 words will not be used. Other letters may be shortened at the discretion of the editor. No unsigned letters will be printed, but writer's name will be withheld for sufficient reason. Letters must contain complete address.

### Two disturbing things

Dear editor:

I have been a Baptist all my life, and I have been a Christian for 22 years.

Two things in particular disturb me right now.

(1) Our Southern Baptist Convention chooses to straddle the fence on the issue of abortion. I don't understand how there can be any doubt.

(2) Our own **Baptist and Reflector** had a spread on the front page about Charles Trentham, when I have always thought we were Scriptural in not permitting a divorced man as pastor of a church, and here he is pastor of our President's church. We don't even allow our deacons to be divorced.

Are we compromising our beliefs or are we, as some say, becoming very liberal like the rest of the world?

I also wonder if our President knows this about Trentham, since our President, I feel, is very Bible-believing.

L. P. Ford Jr.  
Rt. 1, Hillvale Rd.  
Clinton, TN 37716

**That church called Charles Trentham the same way your church called your pastor—the members voted what they believed to be God's will. In Baptist life ONLY a local church can determine who will be its pastor. The fact that Trentham is divorced certainly has not been hidden from the public nor the President. It has been printed in national news magazines. (editor)**

### Religious persecution

Dear editor:

Congratulations for the letter you printed concerning the lot of Baptists in the Soviet Union. But even if the Russians are allowing the Baptist churches in their country some freedom, they still persecute and regulate other religions.

I would rather convert someone to my faith because they wanted to join, rather than because my church was among the few tolerated in a country.

Many of our forefathers came here because of religious persecution. For that reason, we in this great land cannot approve the persecution of any Christian religion in any nation.

All we have to do is read, listen to and view the media to know that the Russians have not abandoned oppression.

As Christians, we are not allowed by

Yahweh to approve oppression of religion by silence or in any other way. We must be allowed to declare what the apostles and prophets have experienced (read Acts 4:19-20 and 5:29), unhindered by any government. To this end, God will do all things for us that we cannot do for ourselves, if we assert ourselves and ask Him.

Robert S. Dubiel  
439 Parrish Ext.  
Martin, TN 38237

### Critical research

Dear editor:

I have read about all I care to read of letters concerning "Woman's place" (March 3) in the church. At least I've read all I care to read until we all stop voicing our opinions that, for the most part, have nothing but Biblical proof-text and dogma to back them up.

As an alternative, I would suggest that we all do a little critical research on Paul's views, the real significance of the Genesis account, and other related Biblical texts. I might recommend two publications that are readable for the layman: **Review and Expositor**, winter 1975, Vol. LXXII, in which the entire issue deals with "Women and the Church"; and Paul King Jewett's **Man as Male and Female**.

Both of these have been enlightening for me, and my conclusion is that Paul is not the male chauvinist many of us have feared, but he is an advocate of liberty and equality for every person.

I would find it easier to listen to the views of one who was willing at least to honestly examine both sides of an issue. Even if his or her position remains unchanged—at least, it is a fairly examined position.

Janet G. Tharpe  
Southern Baptist Seminary  
Box 1664  
Louisville, KY 40206

### Home for handicaps

Dear editor:

I am a Baptist, the parent of a handicap child.

My reason for writing to the **Baptist and Reflector** readers is to share my hope.

The Baptist people in the State of Tennessee and nationwide support various programs, beautiful large churches, colleges,

Continued on page 10



# More letters

Continued from page 9

children's homes, Baptist board buildings, publishing houses, foreign missions, home missions, an old folks home on the drawing board, and others, but not one home for the handicap, as far as I know.

I believe that in the State of Tennessee alone, there are enough Baptist handicaps to overflow a home many times, where a Christian atmosphere prevails, where Christian, concerned, loving people would be in charge.

I believe that the parents of these children, knowing if such homes existed in Tennessee and nationwide, could go to sleep at night with thankful hearts and minds, knowing that their child would have a Christian home to live in, if they passed before their child.

In many situations there is only one parent. My child has no father. I, the mother, face very serious heart surgery, and I have prayed about my problems. I believe God put these thoughts in my mind to appeal to my fellow Baptist Christians to study on this vital need.

There are brothers and sisters who promise to help, but in today's society their own problems seem overwhelming. Also, as the saying is, "They have their own lives to live," so the handicap might disrupt their lives and home situations, and the handicap might adjust and be happier, if he or she were living with a group of his or her own kind.

Since all these other programs exist, why forget our handicaps any longer? The need is real. Let it become a reality. God's children can't help themselves in many cases.

Name withheld by editor

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# Pulpit To Pew

By Jim Griffith

Evangelist Billy Graham has urged everyone to start a "Praying-for-People" campaign, declaring that he knows of two college students who agreed that whenever they caught themselves criticizing someone they would spend five minutes praying for that person.

If put into practice, the good results from such a plan would be beyond imagination.

Why, for one thing, the prayer life of the people of our nation would increase ten-fold!

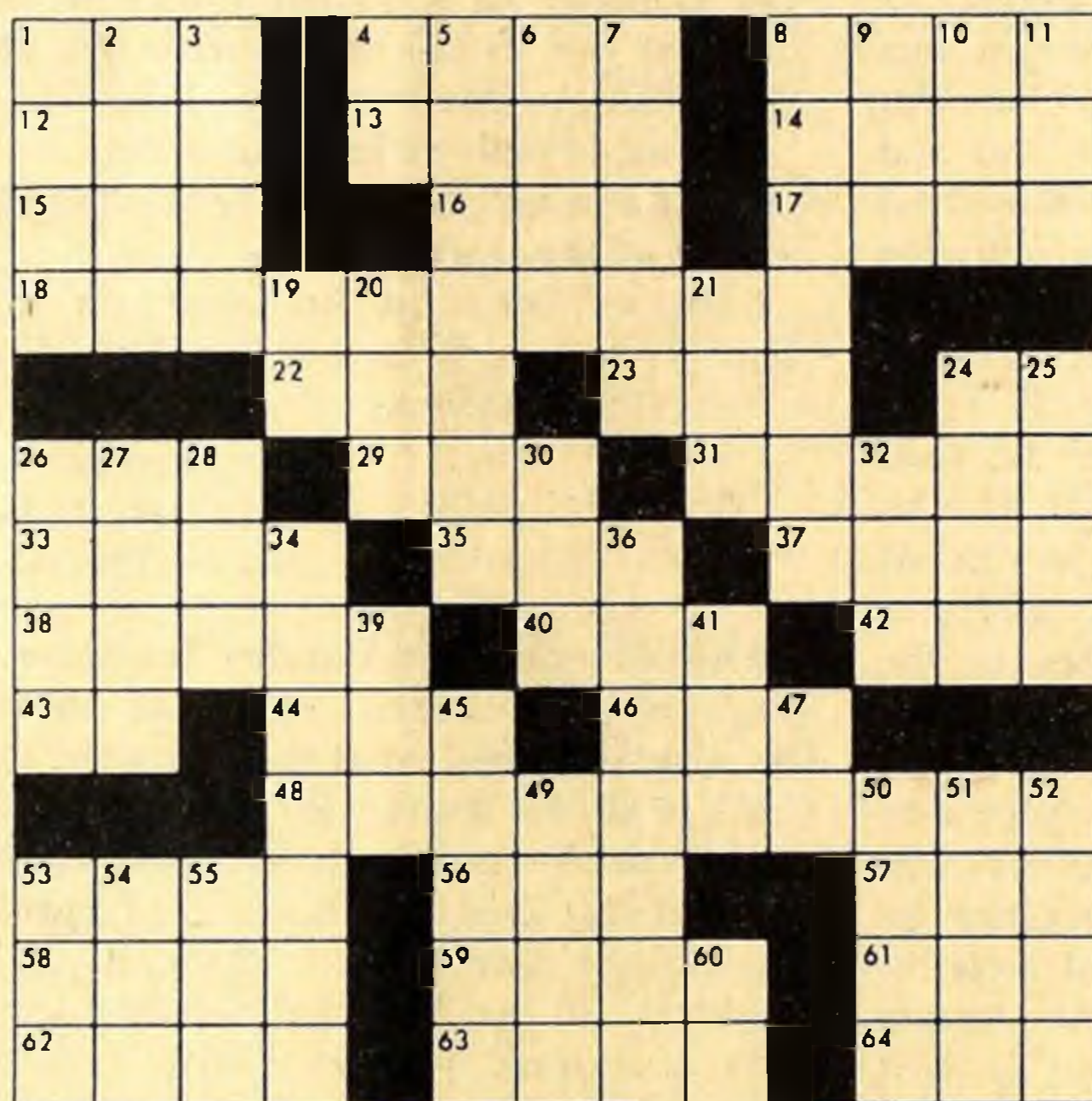
As things are now, many people are quick to criticize and slow to pray. They are like the little boy who, when asked by his Sunday School teacher to recite a verse of Scripture, said: "Go ye into all the world and spread the gossip."

Actually, a great many of us would profit by following the advice seen on a church sign: "Try Our Pray-as-You-Go Plan."

This advice is well taken. If you feel compelled to whisper something about someone—whisper a prayer.

## Bible Puzzle

Answers on Page 14



### DOWN

- 1 Israel (Jer. 49:2)
- 2 Vain
- 3 Bought's partner (Mark 11:15)
- 4 Used after figures
- 5 "is on —" (Mark 9)
- 6 Aflame
- 7 Man in the Bible (Ezra 2:33)
- 8 Rebukes
- 9 Old card game
- 10 "— no man" (Rom. 13)
- 11 People of Burma: pl.
- 19 Eastbound: abbr.
- 20 Extinct bird
- 21 — and away
- 24 At or on
- 25 Printer's word
- 26 "In him was —" (John 1)
- 27 A Simeonite (Num. 26:17)
- 28 Fish
- 30 "never gavest me a —" (Luke 15)
- 32 Gums
- 34 "— your mortal bodies" (Rom. 8)
- 36 City (Matt. 12:41)
- 39 Maintenance, repair and operations: abbr.
- 41 Motorist's need
- 45 Register
- 47 Letter abbr.
- 49 Woman (L.)
- 50 Son of Nathan (2 Sam. 23:36)
- 51 Greek mountains
- 52 God will supply it (Phil. 4:19)
- 53 Speck
- 54 Mature
- 55 Female ruff
- 60 State: abbr.

### ACROSS

- 1 Pronoun
- 4 Man in the Bible (1 Chron. 6:34)
- 8 "— to wrath" (Jas. 1)
- 12 Nigerian people
- 13 Luau entertainment
- 14 State
- 15 "behaved themselves —" (Mic. 3)
- 16 Disabuse
- 17 Negatives
- 18 "for your — draweth nigh" (Luke 21)
- 22 Nile green
- 23 Owed
- 24 Like
- 26 Delay
- 29 Among the flags (Ex. 2:5)
- 31 "— in the Lord" (Prov. 3)
- 33 Asian country
- 35 Metal (Num. 31:22)
- 37 Wild plum
- 38 Appii — (Acts 28:15)
- 40 Poke
- 42 Toward the stern
- 43 Man's Nickname
- 44 Wrath
- 46 Pile
- 48 Made with the mouth (Rom. 10:10)
- 53 — horse
- 56 N.T. book; abbr.
- 57 Letter
- 58 Ornamental molding
- 59 Measure (Ex. 16:16)
- 61 Consumed
- 62 Certain age
- 63 Where the Philistines camped (Judg. 15:9)
- 64 God was with him (Gen. 21:20)

### CRYPTOVERSE

F I I J P S X S I N Y P E H P S N A A B H A H Z I M R I

Today's Cryptoverse clue: P equals T



## Start early to combat cigarette's lure for elementary school girls

The ACS survey, conducted by Yankelovich, Skelley and White, revealed that the pervasive image of the smoker as charismatic, competent and cool heavily outweighs girls' fear of cigarettes' effect on their health.

Some schools' easy-going acceptance of student smoking appeared to be another factor in girls' feeling that smoking is doing what comes naturally. Nearly half reported that their schools provided "smoker rooms" for pupils.

To meet "this urgent public health crisis," the American Cancer Society urges:

## Abolition of models in cigarette ads linking smoking to "health, beauty, physical well-being and sex."

## Broadcasting of more anti-smoking spot announcements on TV.

Greater effort on the part of doctors to discourage girls and women from smoking.

**Total ban on smoking in schools, as well as in all public buildings and transport systems.**

## Establishment of smoking education programs in early elementary school.

The survey indicated that it may not be easy to convince girls that it's not smart to smoke. Findings suggested that current emphasis on the emotional rather than the

rational, the stress on self, and the dependence on peers rather than adult authority,

may make it easier for youngsters to resist anti-smoking campaigns.

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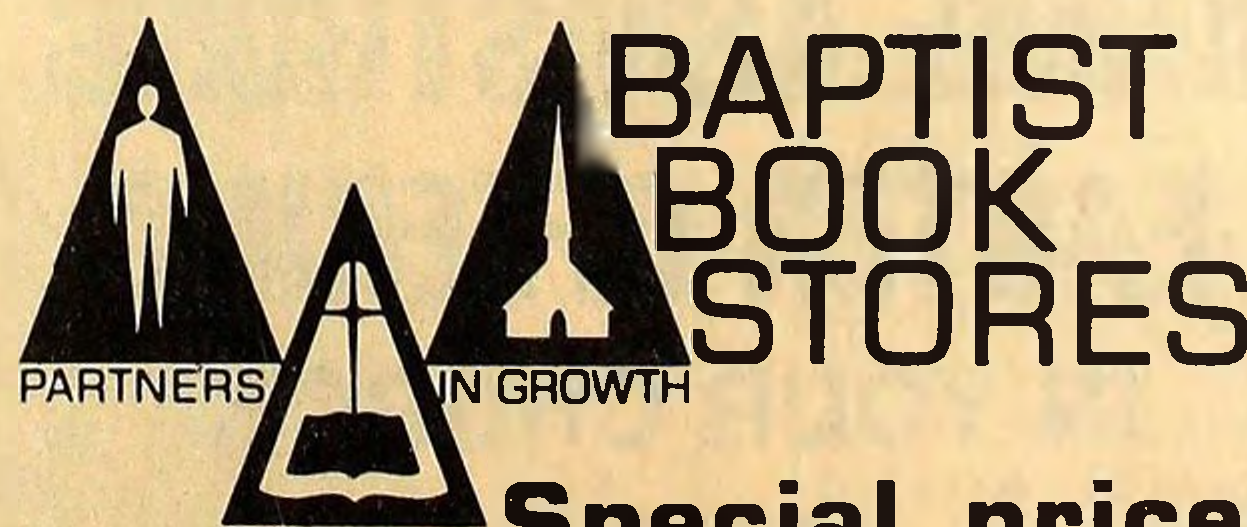
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PAGE 11



# Columbia crusades bring decisions

**RICHMOND**—Some 1200 decisions to accept Christ or rededications were made in evangelistic crusades in five major cities in Colombia.

Rudy Hernandez, an evangelist from Grand Prairie, Tex., led the crusades. He formerly was with the evangelism department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The Rudy Hernandez leadership

campaigns were held in Barranquilla, Cartagena, Medellin, Cali, and Bogota.

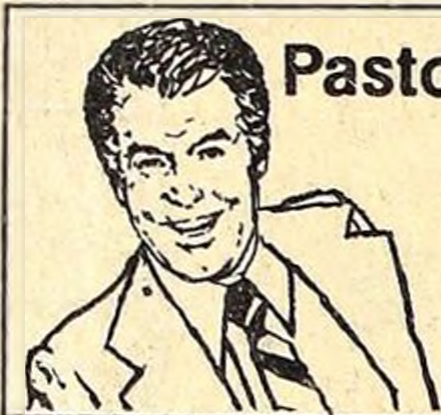
The week-long revivals were held in local Baptist churches. The planning was done through James E. Giles, Southern Baptist missionary who serves as evangelism coordinator of the Colombia Baptist Convention. Southern Baptist missionaries Mr. and Mrs. Donald L. Orr and Bobby S. Magre led in

the music for the revivals. The Orrs were the first Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to a full-time music ministry.

"Students, pastors, and missionaries have experienced revival as a result of this one-month crusade in five of the major cities of Colombia," Giles reported.

J. Bryan Brasington, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's area secretary for western South America, said the reports from the crusades have been good. He said most of those who made professions of faith in Jesus Christ have enrolled in Bible correspondence courses.

Major evangelistic thrusts also are being held in other parts of western South America. They were scheduled for Venezuela throughout March and will be held in the greater Lima, Peru, areas in June. (BP)



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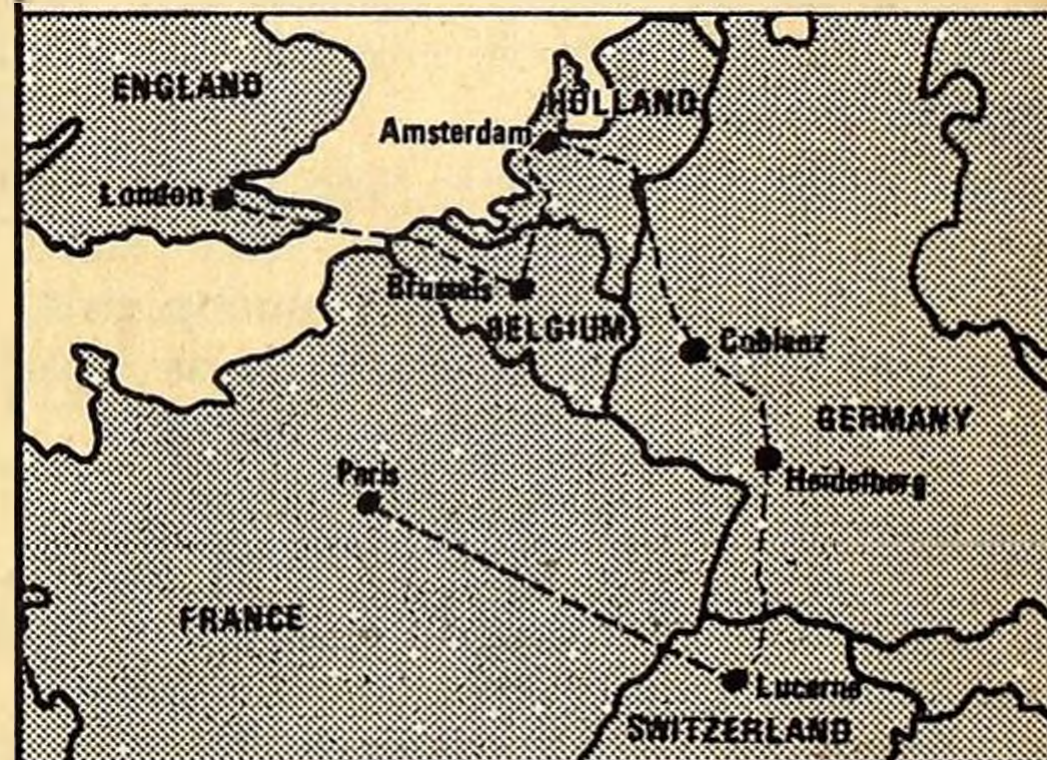
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## Two conferences planned for age group workers

The Sunday School Dept. of the Tennessee Baptist Convention is offering special training sessions for associational Sunday School age group workers in April, according to Wendell Price, state Sunday School director.

Sessions will be held April 23 at Brentwood Church, Brentwood, and April 30, at Brownsville Church, Brownsville. Both begin at 9:30 a.m.

Specialized training will be given for

teachers of adults, youth, children, and preschoolers. Additionally, a session will be offered for all other Sunday School workers, including general officers.

Leaders for the various sessions scheduled are: James Chatham, Jim Walter, Rhea McKinney, Larry Shotwell, all from the Baptist Sunday School Board; Mrs. John Hammatt, a special worker for the Sunday School Dept., TBC; and Ray Evette and Lyn Brasfield, Sunday School Dept., TBC.

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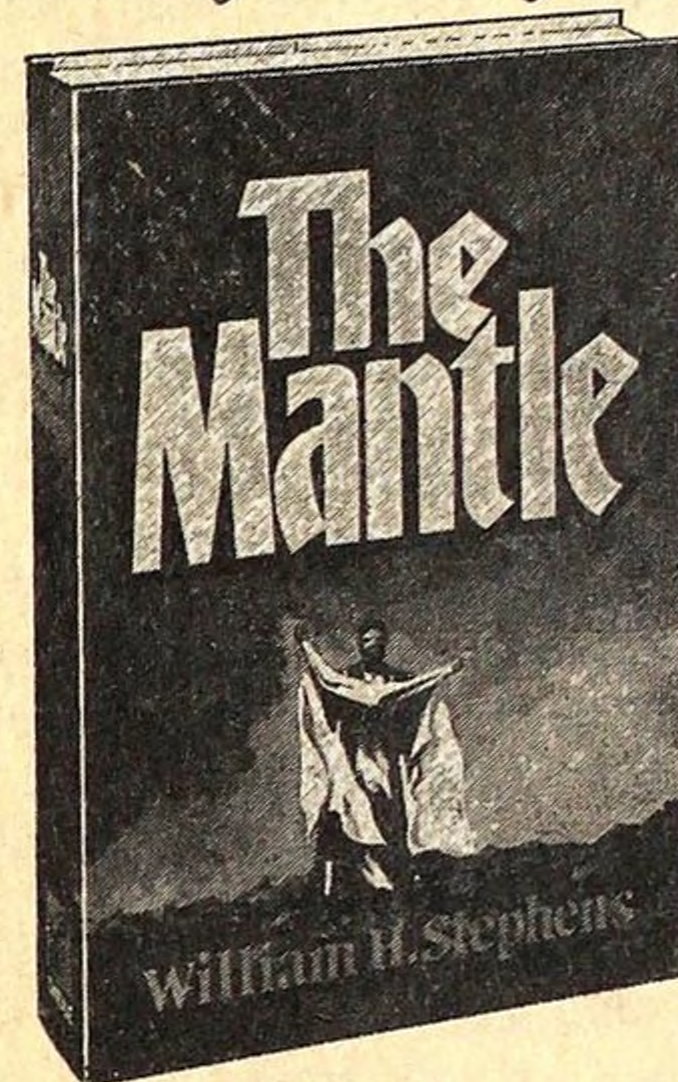
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# Jesus offers Himself

By Don H. Olive  
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Text: Mark 11:7-10; 14:32-36; 15:33-39

The focal passages for this week's lesson direct us to the core of the passion of Jesus Christ. At the altar of His suffering we, who would be His followers, stand transfixed. Somehow we, who are later disciples, are as powerless in the presence of Jesus' self-offering as were the earlier followers. We, too, are commanded to put away the swords, to pray with Him, to watch, to be present with Him in His hour—His, not ours. And that is the point.

Somehow in these moments of His suffering, eternity has split open our times. Worlds collide, and He is caught in the crush between them. In these insane moments there is so much sanity that our small attempts to understand, to explain, get lost in the inexorable rush to conclusion. Here there are three moments, each terrifying and horrible in its own way. Painfully, with a sense of utter helplessness, we are called again to relive them and to reexperience the "fellowship of His suffering."

## Hosanna!

For three years He had tried to teach them of His kingdom. All along they had insisted upon theirs. He called Himself the Son of Man, and they said, "That's not what we want." Even the Twelve only understood in fits and spurts. Sometimes they seemed to see Jesus' kingdom, a kingdom of spirit and faith and love. Sometimes this kingdom of hope came alive in them. But as often as not, even they were blinded by the old dream, "Freedom from Rome!"

They spread their garments on the road. Leafy branches from the fields paved the street. In front and behind the followers of the procession cried, "Hosanna!" This ancient, psalmic cry expressed their final insistence, "Save, now!"

"Enough of this foolishness about faith, hope, and love. It's time to get on with our business of liberation from the oppressor." And so, Jesus' self-offering began. We just did not understand.

His teaching, His mercy, His love, all washed away in man's impatience. Every hope was trampled. All He had loved for had fallen to the ground. He could protest and say again what He had lived. But even the stones would be made to cry out by man's demand for His own kingdom. Flesh and stone would have it no other way. And so Jesus quietly passes through the midst of man's refusal to understand. A life's work crumbles, and no one cares. They are

too busy doing it their way. One moment of Jesus' agony of self-offering is done.

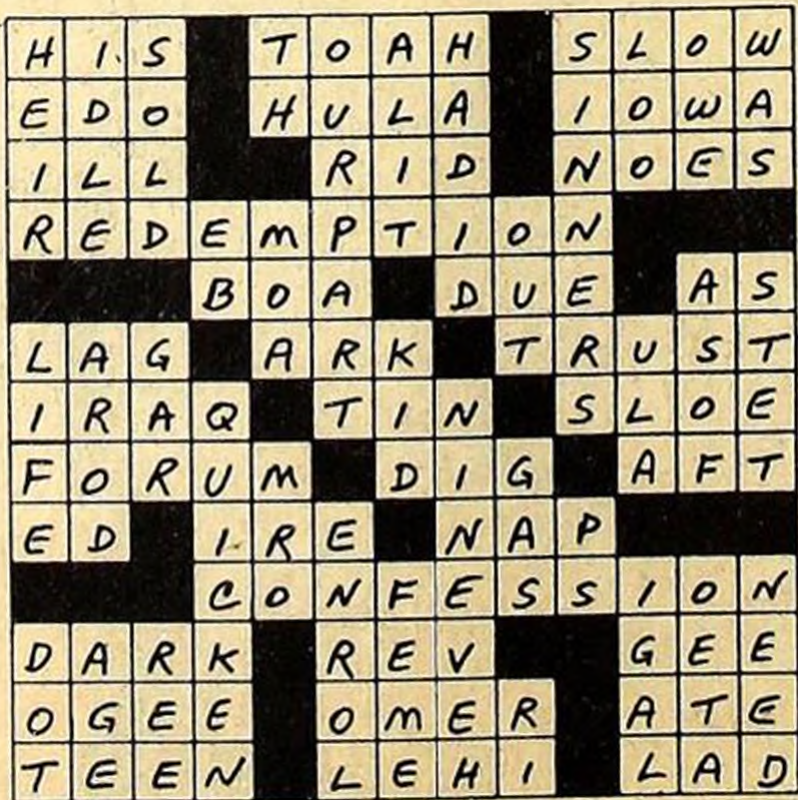
## Gethsemane

The story of His self-offering continues to be played out. The place is now a garden. His companions are Peter, James and John. This inner circle of followers must surely know the agony. But they sleep. Jesus alone is left to sorrow over the realities of God's will. The agony of knowing that some other way is possible is upon him—some other way besides rejection, misunderstanding, mockery, pain, and death. Jesus must have seen the bodies of the crucified hanging outside the city gates. And with God some other way **must** be possible. It just **must** be.

How difficult to offer one's own will. But that is the force of Jesus' "yet not what I will." As difficult as it may be, one can reconcile oneself to the inevitable. But there is little of that in Gethsemane when Jesus prayed. It did not have to be "this cup!" Why could it not be the crowd's way—"Hosanna?" Or, any other way! Yet, Jesus offered himself to God's way, when other ways were possible. Another moment of self-offering runs its course.

## The Ninth Hour

For three hours it had been dark—a strange darkness—to be rent by a cry of abandonment at mid-afternoon: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" Sometimes God's will is bitter; but, at least, being God's will, God **must** accompany it. After all, would God send Him someplace where He could not go? But this seems to be the ultimate in suffering, and our understanding will not stretch



"Keep thy heart with all diligence"  
(Prov. 4:23).

large enough to take it in—misunderstanding, submission, and forsakenness. Christ's self-offering is too full to understand.

Still, it is proclaimed that in that darkness of suffering, the rift between God and man is closed. The temple curtain, cloth woven some nine inches thick of purple and blue and gold, is torn. In the death of Jesus the Christ, God breaks out upon man. No longer will He be isolated from man in the sanctity of the Holy of Holies. No longer will man be safe in the security of separation from this presence of God. He steps forth to inhabit our world. In the death of His son, it is not that now we can come to God. Man always **could**, he just **would** not. Now God comes to man, raking aside all curtains, moving into our world. Pretense of understanding is swept away. We confess. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself!"

How tempted we are to moralize and sermonize. There is so much we need to do; there is so much we need to know. We could be spoken to profitably about misunderstanding, callousness, cruelty, willfulness, rejection, thoughtlessness, and more. But somehow all this seems out of place here. The biblical writers told it simply. At least, at this point may we hear it simply. At other times and places we will learn and do. But at the self-offering of Jesus we merely bow in acknowledgement of Him by whom God makes whole.

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# The penitent thief

By David C. George, Pastor  
Immanuel Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee

Basic Passage: Luke 23:32-46

Focal Passage: Luke 23:32-46

The death of Jesus was like no other death that ever happened, and yet it was a death for all other men. In Jesus, God, who was not man, became man, so that man, who was not God, might share in the eternal life of God. The fact that two criminals were crucified with Him, one believing and the other scoffing, puts in sharp relief the truth that all of us are included in what happened at the cross. On the other hand, it shows that only a response of faith on our part will result in our sharing the life that comes through His death.

## Crucified With Criminals (Luke 23:32-38)

Jesus was not the only one who died that day. Two criminals, Matthew and Luke call them robbers, were also crucified. It was the common method of capital punishment, having the advantage of publicly displaying the victim in a state of maximum shame and agony for a considerable length of time as an example and a warning. It was considered to be a deterrent to crime. However, for some reason it had not deterred the two robbers. It was fitting that Jesus should suffer death in the company of others. He came to identify Himself fully with human sin and need. Except for periodic times of prayer and retreat, He was always found in a crowd. These people, especially the outcasts and sinners, were the ones He came to save.

This brief passage in Luke records three of the seven last sayings of Jesus. The first, "Father, forgive them," was very characteristic of Jesus. It was not what the people around the cross expected to hear from One who was being tortured to death for no good reason. They thought it a great joke that the One called "King of the Jews" should be so obviously helpless and degraded. They failed to recognize that Jesus' authority was always most clearly demonstrated by His power to forgive sins. "I forgive you," is a kingly pronouncement.

What a contrast between the total self-giving of Jesus and the crass self-seeking of the soldiers who cast lots for His garments at the foot of the cross. Couldn't they see that this ugly scene was the inevitable outcome of human greed and selfishness? And couldn't they see that the only way out of the vicious circle of evil was for someone with authority to declare an absolute halt and give His life rather than let evil go one more step?

The rulers and the soldiers together mocked Him. In a world in which power and self-preservation are primary values, it is ridiculous for a man to do what Jesus did. The backward-thinking world is so sure how power ought to be used that it can mock God for doing the very things that make Him God—loving with total abandon and respecting man's freedom to love or not love in return.

## Responses To The Crucified (Luke 23:39-43)

One of His fellow-sufferers even joined in the jibes, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" It is doubtful that he had any serious thought that this was possible. More than likely he spoke out of bitterness and anger.

His companion, however, was more perceptive. He expressed a sense of reverence for God and penitence for his and his companion's guilt. He recognized that Jesus Himself was innocent. This, viewed in the light of his observation of Jesus on the way to the cross, caused him to give some degree of acceptance to the authority of Jesus. We need not suppose that he saw in a flash what the disciples themselves saw only after three years of teaching and the later experience of the resurrection. However little he understood about Jesus, he trusted what he knew and took the leap of faith. After all, it is not knowledge, or even faith that saves us, it is Jesus Himself.

The penitent thief reasoned correctly that, if Jesus was the Christ, He would come in kingly power. He asked to be remembered

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at that future time. What he did not see was the new element Jesus gave to the traditional Jewish view of the messianic kingdom. The future blessedness has become the present experience of those who are in Christ. The kingdom of Jesus will have its fulfilment in this world, but His kingdom is not of this world. It exists already in heaven and in the lives of those who accept His kingship now.

## The Divine Dimensions Of The Cross (Luke 23:44-46)

Luke gives fewer details than do the other writers concerning the last three hours on the cross. Three things impressed him about this period: the darkness, the report of the torn curtain in the temple, and the committal to the Father.

This is a moment of deep mystery in the Gospels. It is best described in poetry. The incarnate agent of creation is being put to death by the creatures. The light of the sun, His creation, flickers and fails. The sky turns dark. The whole universe turns its back and mourns. The crushing weight of the world's sin bears down on Jesus, and for a moment it seems to separate Him from God. (Mark and Matthew remember His saying "Why hast thou forsaken Me.").

Luke quickly indicates that any separation from God is momentary and fleeting. He notes, with Matthew and Mark, that the curtain in the temple was torn, the veil that separated men from the sacred presence is gone. And he reports a saying not found in Matthew and Mark, "Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit!" Beyond the suffering and the darkness and the dying, the Father is still the Father; and the Son, along with those who share His Sonship, can trust the Father.

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# BWA seeks \$200,000 for earthquake aid

**BUCHAREST, Romania**—The Baptist World Alliance (BWA), along with the European Baptist Federation, is seeking a minimum of \$200,000 for Romania reconstruction, following the devastating earthquake of March 4, Chester J. Jump, Jr., chairman of the BWA relief and development committee, has announced.

The quake, measuring 7.2 on the modified Richter scale, killed 1541 people and injured 11,275. Eight members of the Baptist community (which numbers around 160,000 church members and perhaps an equal number of others under pastoral care) were killed. Injuries within the Baptist community have not been tabulated.

One of the two buildings of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Bucharest—a gift of Southern Baptists in 1924—has been severely damaged and is no longer in use.

Nine Baptist churches of Romania have been damaged to the extent that they may have to be demolished and replaced, according to officials of the Baptist Union of Romania.

The governmental authorities will have to decide whether they are in dangerous enough condition to require demolition, but the Baptists believe it is unsafe to continue to use them, and that they are beyond repair.

The BWA program of reconstruction in Romania was worked out with Baptist Union officials by a delegation consisting of Carl Tiller, BWA staff executive for relief and development; Gerhard Claas, executive of the European Baptist Federation; Denton Lotz, fraternal representative of American Baptist Churches (USA) for eastern Europe; and John David Hopper, fraternal representative of the Southern Baptist Convention (USA) for eastern Europe.

The BWA program, with three aspects, was proposed by Claas and approved as follows:

First, Baptist participation in rehabilitation or reconstruction of a public hospital. In Bucharest nine hospitals were damaged; in the provinces, others.

Second, replacement of one of the damaged Baptist churches.

Third, replacement of the damaged seminary building.

In conversation with the Baptist Union officers, the visiting delegation expressed the hope that the BWA can help rebuild or restore all nine of the damaged Baptist churches, though the initial program covers just the church at Brasov.

The total cost of the work on the churches and the seminary could run as high as \$670,000. Although most Ro-

manian Baptists are working class people, whose average monthly salary per worker is less than \$85, it is hoped that they will raise a large part of the overall cost of the program, officials said.

Southern Baptists have agreed to make \$25,000 available immediately, according to Hopper. He added: "Southern Baptists will want to take part in the overall program, but the rebuilding of the seminary will be a special interest of ours. I hope that the Foreign Mission Board and our people will give substantially more than the initial promise."

American Baptists, according to Lotz, will contribute at least \$25,000 through their division of international ministries, and are likely to give additional amounts through their world relief committee.

Baptists in West Germany will give generously, according to Claas, hopefully as much as \$20,000.

Many of the nine churches had been damaged in an earthquake in 1940. Some were further weakened by bombardment during World War II. The 1977 earthquake put the finishing blow to their further usefulness.

The BWA will receive gifts for the Romania program from its member bodies and from individuals. Donations may be made payable to the BWA and sent to its offices in Washington. Under the agreement, all grants will ultimately be channeled through the BWA-EBF office in Hamburg. It is not advisable for others to attempt to send money directly to Romania, according to Tiller. (BP)

## Mo. court removes ban on church use

**ST. LOUIS**—A court here has ruled that a Missouri city's attempt to exclude church from a subdivision is "unreasonable, arbitrary, discriminatory, illegal, unconstitutional, and void"—but the church's legal problems aren't over.

The ruling came as the result of a suit filed by the First Baptist Church, Ellisville, Mo., in St. Louis County. The city of Ellisville had denied the church a special use permit which would have allowed it to use a house adjoining the church property for educational space. The church also planned to pave the back yard of the home and extend the church parking lot.

But, following the decision of St. Louis County Court Judge Herbert Lasky that the Ellisville ordinance violates the First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution, residents of Clarkson Manor Subdivision, where the house is located, filed suit against the church. That suit is still pending.

The residents contend that deed restrictions prevent the church from using the house for anything other than a single family residence.

Lasky, in ruling the city's action interfered with the church's freedom of religion, based his decision on a Missouri Supreme Court ruling in 1959 which held that cities had no power to zone churches. (BP)

## Ex-Tennessean approved as director of HMB's division of chaplaincy

**PHOENIX**—Alfred Carl Hart has been elected director of the division of chaplaincy of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here, succeeding William L. Clark, who retired Dec. 31, 1976.

Hart has been associate director of the division of chaplaincy since 1970. He came to the board after being director of chaplaincy for the Tennessee Department of Corrections.

Previously, he was chaplain of the Brushy Mountain Prison in Petros, Tenn., and of the Shelby County Penal Farm in Memphis, Tenn. He also served as pastor of churches in Tennessee and North Carolina.

Hart, a native of Collierville, Tenn., is

president of the American Protestant Correctional Association and has served the APCA as first and second vice-president, director, and chairman of the editorial committee. He is a graduate of Bethel College and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

As director of chaplaincy, Hart will be responsible to "promote and give direction to the program of chaplaincy ministries of the Southern Baptist Convention." As such, he will oversee work of the Chaplain's Commission, which procures and screens Southern Baptist candidates for the chaplaincy and recommends endorsements where appropriate. (BP)

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