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News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention

Sorrels, FMB reconcile; foundation fund begun

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Bob Sorrels, paralyzed former Mission Service Corps volunteer, and four members of Washington's Capitol Hill Metropolitan Baptist Church traveled to Richmond to tell Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks that "the hurt is gone" and to express "a strong desire for reconciliation."

"We felt we did not act as God would have us act, but out of our own frustration," Sorrels said of a conflict which followed an FMB decision not to provide long-term support for Sorrels.

He was paralyzed from the shoulders down in an automobile accident in April 1980, less than a week after he arrived in Nigeria to serve for a year as an accountant. The accident killed veteran Missionary Bill Bender and Nigerian Baptist Seminary Professor Titus Oluqafemi.

A group called "Friends of Bob Sorrels," including Bill Vickers and Barbara Cobb, who attended the meeting in Parks' office, sent letters to a number of Southern Baptist leaders criticizing the board's "inadequate" disability program for volunteers and urging Baptists to persuade the board to take remedial action for Sorrels.

The letters created widespread news coverage which quoted Sorrels as saying he felt "abandoned" by the board and its leaders.

"That resulted in a lot of misunderstanding, with people taking sides; none of us want that," Sorrels told Parks at the Jan. 5 meeting. "It doesn't bring glory to God for Christians to have bitterness and conflict over a difference of opinion. This is not a case of the good guys against the bad guys."

Walt Tomme, associate pastor of the Capitol Hill Metropolitan Church, and Vinton Koons, finance chairman, told Parks they felt Sorrels' needs could be best met by setting up a fund to raise support for his continued rehabilitation.

Koons and the District of Columbia Baptist Convention Foundation, 1100 Seventeenth St. N.W., Suite 412, Washington, D.C. 20036, will administer the fund and receive contributions from those who wish to help Sorrels. Koons is president of the foundation's Board of Trustees.

Daughter of pastor perishes in fire

Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Battles and their daughter Christy perished during a Jan. 13 fire that ravaged their Section, Ala., home.

Mrs. Battles was the oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. J. "Buddy" Strickland. Strickland was recently called as pastor of Ewtonville Baptist church, Dunlap, from the pastorate of South Whitwell Baptist Church, Whitwell.

Funeral services for the Battles family were held Jan. 15 at the Rainsville Funeral Home, Rainsville, Ala.

"The fund is a good way to solve the problem," said Sorrels, who now lives in Norman, Okla., and has long-term needs for support, special equipment, and rehabilitation. Besides \$5,000 already spent on his support in Nigeria, Capitol Hill Metropolitan Church has voted \$10,000 to buy him a special van, which the State of Oklahoma will equip.

Parks, who accepted an invitation to preach at the Washington church on March 7, called the reconciliation and the news of the fund "an answer to prayer by many of us that this situation would be resolved and Bob's needs would be met."

He and John Mills, the board's director for west Africa, told the group that many missionaries, staff members, and board members have said they would make personal contributions if such a fund is established.

Parks said the board would gladly endorse such an effort; although, under Southern Baptist Convention guidelines, it cannot directly initiate, administer, or promote such a fund.

Parks told the group the board has initiated discussions with the SBC Annuity Board to find a way to develop a disability package for other Southern Baptist volunteers — a task which he said will be difficult because the volunteers do not have an employed, salaried relationship

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FCC 'license by lot' threatens to curtail SBC TV network

FORT WORTH, Tex. (BP) — Southern Baptists may find out in February how they will fare in the distribution of low-power television channels when the Federal Communications Commission announces its rules and procedures for the new broadcast service.

Congress has given the FCC until Feb. 1 to develop a plan to handle the more than 6,000 applications filed for the new channels. The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission is one of the largest applicants, with 106 stations proposed as part of its American Christian Television System (ACTS).

The FCC stopped accepting low-power applications April 9, 1981, when it became apparent a streamlined licensing procedure would be needed to handle the unexpected number of applications.

One of the most controversial aspects of the licensing process is the FCC's plan for deciding between two applicants for the same channel in the same city. The FCC is expected to propose a system of random selection by lottery for awarding these "mutually exclusive" applications.

While the FCC traditionally has used lengthy, expensive legal hearings to com-

pare competing applications, last August Congress authorized the lotteries to allow the FCC to speed up licenses.

Evidenced by response to the proposed lottery, the broadcast industry is against it. The National Association of Broadcasters says a change to random selection would cause the FCC more administrative problems than it would solve.

The Radio and Television Commission, in a comment filed with the FCC Dec. 28, also argued against the lottery, but for a different reason. The commission reminded the FCC that low-power was designed to increase the involvement of minorities and noncommercial broadcasters in television. The lottery, as planned by the FCC, would not give preference to such applicants.

The Baptist agency suggested that a lottery be used only as a last resort, and only after the competing applications for a particular channel are narrowed down to those representing minorities and those planning noncommercial service.

This would have a definite effect on the Radio and Television Commission's applications, since they are all for noncommercial stations and since the ACTS five-member board of directors includes

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EVANGELISTS' OFFICERS — Wade Clemons (left), outgoing president of the Tennessee Conference of Baptist Evangelists, passes on the "tool of the evangelist," a Bible, to the new president, Jim Lindsay. Other new officers are Edsel Bone (right), music director, and Jack Cluster, vice-president.

'Excited' evangelism urged at pre-conference session

By Steve Higdon

"The most contagious things in all the world are enthusiasm and excitement," Laverne Butler told the Tennessee Conference of SBC evangelists Jan. 18. "We have let the world steal them from us."

Butler, pastor of Ninth and O Baptist Church, in Louisville, Ky., was speaking to the evangelists gathered in the chapel of Belmont Heights Baptist Church, Nashville, prior to the opening of the 1982 State Evangelism Conference at the church.

"We need to expect things in our services," Butler said. "God is at work and we need to be excited about it. You don't fool around with dynamite and matches without expecting something."

Butler then urged the evangelists, pastors, and their guests to "go to work" and share the excitement. "I do not want to hear that you don't have time to do this or that God never told you to do anything that He didn't give you the time to do."

The church and its ministers will be held accountable for advancing the gospel, Butler warned. "Judgment must begin in the House of God. God said 'I am not going to judge the world until I judge the church, which has the responsibility of preaching the gospel.'"

"I believe the mess you see in America today can be laid at the feet of the preacher. Preachers today care more about what the chairman of the deacons thinks and what the WMU director thinks than what God thinks," the pastor concluded.

Butler also addressed similar church problems during a Jan. 16 dinner for the evangelists.

"There's nothing that is frustrating the church more than evangelists who are not God's men, or do not say they are God's men," Butler said. "If you are God's man and know you are God's man, then say you are God's man and preach God's message."

"God gave you to the church," Butler declared. "Evangelists should be church-oriented, yet too many are trying to side-step the church."

Butler cautioned his listeners to be doctrinally sound, morally clean, Christ-centered, and financially straight. "Pastors do not have time to clean up a mess after you are gone," he said.

"I expect an evangelist to be a soul-winner. All of us have our personalities, but every pastor has the right to believe the evangelist is a personal soul-winner."

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Evangelism, survival noted at Baptist-Jewish dialogue

FORT WORTH, Tex. (BP)— A national Baptist-Jewish dialogue grappled with Baptist concerns for evangelism and missions and Jewish concerns for survival, ending three days of candid discussions with a call for improved Baptist-Jewish relationships.

"During the dialogue, we discovered areas where our self identities came into conflict, especially on Southern Baptists' understanding of the centrality of missions," said Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, national co-director of inter-religious affairs for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Eckstein observed the Baptist view of missions clashes with the very backbone of Jewish identity and the central issue of Jewish survival.

Jews, according to Eckstein, view the survival of Israel very closely with the survival of the Jewish people, and since the Holocaust, Jews have become "obsessed" with survival.

Almost all of the Baptist speakers dealt with Baptist concepts of missions and evangelism.

Baptists cannot give up the emphasis on evangelism for "it is the very soul of our faith," insisted Leon McBeth, church history professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "We do not regard our efforts to win other people, including Jews, to faith in Christ as anti-semitic and for sure in our hearts we do not intend it as such," McBeth said.

Both Bruce Corley, an assistant professor of New Testament at Southwestern seminary, and Glenn Igleheart, director of the inter-faith witness department for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, pointed out that Baptists do

not single out Jews as special, evangelism target groups, but neither do Baptists avoid evangelism efforts among Jews.

Igleheart and Eckstein, the program leaders for the two organizations sponsoring the dialogue, offered the most comprehensive suggestion for steps to improve relations.

Igleheart suggested publication of papers from the dialogue in a joint Baptist-Jewish publication; emphasis by both Baptists and Jews on human rights; joint study programs for Baptist and Jewish seminaries; and an increased emphasis on communications, understanding, curriculum, and service. Igleheart also suggested an expansion of Baptist-Jewish dialogue to a tri-logue involving Baptists, Jews, and Moslems.

Eckstein proposed a national dialogue or conference every two or three years for Baptists and Jews, each in a different part of the country and focusing on a different topic.

He said future dialogues should seek to involve more lay people and those Baptists and Jews who are most apprehensive about dialogue, the Orthodox and Hassidic Jews and fundamentalist/conservative Southern Baptists, neither of which was widely represented in the dialogue.

Rabbi Ronald Sobel of Temple Emmanuel-El in New York City said the acceleration of Baptist-Jewish dialogue is a direct result of Jewish outrage and Baptist apology for remarks by SBC President Smith that "God Almighty does not hear the prayers of a Jew," which Smith made at a national political-religious conference in Dallas in 1980.



NEW BOOKS — William Troutt, Belmont College executive vice-president, and Mrs. Alice Lowry, director of the Belmont Plaza library, look through one of the newly-purchased books for use by Belmont Plaza residents.

Belmont College aids senior adults

Belmont College, in cooperation with the Colonial Penn Group Inc., of Philadelphia, Penn., has begun a project entitled "Belmont College's Program of Library Services to Senior Adults" at the Belmont Plaza Retirement Center, adjacent to the Belmont College campus.

Made possible through a \$1,000 grant from the Philadelphia life insurance company, the project has allowed Belmont Plaza residents to purchase a new set of encyclopedias and a collection of other books.

The project is coordinated by Ernest

Heard, director of library services for Belmont College, and Mrs. Alice Lowry, director of the library at Belmont Plaza.

"The library books have been a great asset to a growing collection of the library at Belmont Plaza," said Mrs. Lowry. "The major success of this project was allowing the residents to specify their own needs and actually be involved in the selection of their own books."

William E. Troutt, executive vice-president of Belmont College, said, "In planning for the future, Belmont is committed to providing additional programs and services for senior adults. The success of our library services to senior adults reinforces a strong belief that Belmont can plan an important role in meeting the needs of senior adults. We are most grateful to the Colonial Penn Group Inc. for their support. We hope to continue to join with corporations and foundations in providing a variety of programs and services to senior adults."

European Baptist head takes food to Poland

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (BP)— Knud Wumpelmann, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, was scheduled to lead a team from Danish Church Aid to transport food and medical supplies to Warsaw, Poland, Jan. 7.

Wumpelmann is the free church (non-state) representative to the Danish Church Aid Board. It will be his first visit to Poland since the declaration of martial law there Dec. 13.

The general secretary said drivers of trucks carrying church-originated relief supplies have encountered only expected delays at control points while proceeding to church distribution centers in Poland. "Baptists in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) have another 100,000 deutsche mark (about \$44,000) ready for the next shipment," Wumpelmann said. This is in addition to the \$265,000 sent from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and the equivalent of \$25,324 sent from Great Britain, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, and Denmark.

Eight trucks of supplies from Baptists have made it across the border. John R. Cheyne, the Foreign Mission Board's relief ministries consultant, is scheduled to meet with Wumpelmann and others in Frankfurt, West Germany, Jan. 30, to discuss other urgent needs in Poland and to plan for the next three to six months.

Dunn says fundamentalists use Israel as 'pawn of prophecy'

FORT WORTH, Tex. (BP)— A Baptist expert on church-state separation warns against "a marriage of convenience between ardent Israelis and Christian fundamentalists," saying such Jews are in danger of becoming "pawns of prophecy or prospects for proselytizing."

Speaking at the Baptist-Jewish dialogue, James M. Dunn said such a marriage "looks like a marriage between sadists and masochists."

"A good many Christians who bear the label 'Baptists' see Jews in the nation of Israel as little more than pawns of prophecy, less than persons to be loved and valued for themselves," said Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Many Zionists do not understand that such Christians believe Jews are predestined by God to be converted at the end of the world and that Jews are prospects to be checked off when converted to Christianity, Dunn said.

"The inerrancy interpreters of the Bible who take the geographic predictions literally and see the establishment of Israel as a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy are the same literalists who expect the conversion of all Jews to Christianity and a literal return of the Messiah to Jerusalem," Dunn said.

He decried growing materialism, installment buying, militarism that relies on weapons for national defense, and uncritical nationalism. Baptists sometimes border "on idolatrous worship of state" which the new religious right has emphasized, he said.

"The fact that the television militants have recruited a good many of their foot

soldiers from Baptist ranks is humiliating, embarrassing, and an evidence of superficiality of our teaching and preaching," Dunn said. Such efforts reduce God to "no more than a national mascot," he charged.

Wayne Allen to speak to mid-state pastors

Wayne Allen, president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, will speak to the Jan. 28 meeting of the Middle Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference.

Allen, who was elected TBC president in November, is pastor of East Park Baptist Church, Memphis.

The conference will meet at 11:30 a.m. in the student center at Belmont College. Lunch will be provided by the college.

Paul Durham, pastor of Nashville's Radnor Baptist Church, is the newly-elected president of the Middle Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference.

Women meet to pray for Philippine crusade

MANILA, Philippines — More than 600 Baptist women met recently in Manila, Philippines, to pray for the partnership crusade planned for Feb. 21-28.

The women, who represented most of the churches participating in the evangelistic crusade, hope to launch a united prayer effort among themselves in preparation for the crusade.

The February effort is being planned jointly by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and the Baptist churches of Manila.

Americans United loses court appeal

WASHINGTON (BP)— A divided Supreme Court ruled that Americans United for Separation of Church and State did not have legal standing to sue the federal government for donating land and buildings to an Assemblies of God college in Pennsylvania.

In a 5-4 opinion, the high court held that the Silver Spring, Md.-based group failed to prove, either as taxpayers or as citizens, that it was injured by the transfer of a 77-acre plot of ground valued at \$1.3-million to Valley Forge Christian College.

Americans United argued that the gift of the land and buildings violated the no establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment and said it represented the right of all 90,000 of its members not to be taxed for the support of a religious organization.

Writing for the slim majority, Justice William H. Rehnquist ruled that the federal government has the right under Article IV of the Constitution to dispose of land which it owns. That right has been spelled out further in subsequent laws to include such transfers to private groups, he said.

In a biting dissent, Justice William J. Brennan Jr. accused the majority of using the question of standing "to slam the courthouse door against plaintiffs who are entitled to full consideration of their claims on the merits."

The court's decision, he said, is a "stark example" of an "unfortunate trend" to resolve cases on technical grounds "while obscuring the nature of the underlying rights and interests at stake." That trend, he added, tends "merely to obfuscate, rather than inform, our understanding of the meaning of rights under the law."



IRE AND ICE — Louisville firefighters battled sub-zero temperatures but they could not save the sanctuary of St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville. Two young men have been charged with arson in the Jan. 10 fire.

Arson claimed, two arrested for St. Matthews' church fire

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)— Louisville police charged two young men with arson and burglary in connection with the Jan. 10 fire that destroyed the St. Matthews Baptist Church sanctuary.

Warren R. Emrich, 20, and a 17-year-old friend, were arrested Jan. 13 by seven officers at Emrich's home, one block from the church building that suffered more than \$3-million damage.

Police were led to Emrich's home through wiretaps in the telephone of a neighbor who for four years had endured harassment in the quiet, professional St. Matthews neighborhood.

Richard Seadler and his family

Sorrels, FMB...

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with an organization as most disability insurance requires.

"Although it's difficult to set up, we're working on it," Parks said. "Your situation has caused us to do something."

"We found what I expected to find when we came to this meeting — compassionate men who have Bob Sorrels' best interest at heart," said Tomme, who has handled pastoral duties at the church since its former pastor accepted a governmental position.

Sorrels explained that after the accident he did not have the guidance to figure out how to handle his life and explore the options. In his battle just to stay alive and begin recovery, he said, he could think of only one option — "the Foreign Mission Board will take care of everything."

But, at its October meeting, the Board voted to continue providing a \$603.50 monthly stipend only through October 1982, when government disability benefits would normally take effect. In all, the board earmarked more than \$28,000 to help pay Sorrels' expenses resulting from the accident. That includes the monthly stipend it picked up from the sponsoring Capitol Hill Metropolitan Baptist Church.

The board said it declined long-term responsibility because Sorrels went out as an MSC volunteer, not as an employee. MSC was set up by the SBC to supplement career home and foreign missionaries under ground rules that the volunteers or their sponsors pay for their support and medical care. All volunteers sign a waiver absolving the board of medical responsibility.

reportedly endured death threats, attempts to run them down with an automobile, cut telephone lines, non-existent fires being reported at their address, bedroom windows shot out, and obscene telephone calls.

Finally, after several unexplained fires in the neighborhood in October, arson investigators asked the Seadlers' help by letting their phone be tapped. They obliged, according to information in the Louisville Courier-Journal, happy that their numerous complaints were being taken seriously.

The taps led to a telephone in Emrich's home, where after a 3-hour wait outside until Emrich's father arrived, he was found hiding under a bed. The 17-year-old had burrowed beneath a pile of clothes in the hall. A stereo missing from the church was found in Emrich's room.

"It's a sad thing," said Ruben Swint, associate pastor at the church. "There's some relief that we know the cause — the answer — but it's a sad answer."

Emrich, who is being held in lieu of a \$50,000 cash bond, was also charged in a Thanksgiving Day burglary at the church. The 17-year-old, who is known to have attended St. Matthews on occasion, is in the juvenile detention center.

FCC licenses...

(Continued from page 1)

three minority representatives. Of the commissions 106 applications, approximately 75 appear to have no competing applications at this time.

Another issue at stake in the FCC's rule-making is the total number of low-power stations that can be owned by one applicant. The FCC has indicated it may place a 15-station limit on all applicants. But the commission has asked the FCC to apply such a limit to commercial applicants only, since the commission's plan is designated as a public service.

Radio and Television President Jimmy R. Allen has said plans for the American Christian Television System will not be scrapped if the network is allowed only a small number of stations. Other Southern Baptist entities will be able to apply for stations and carry the ACTS network programming, he said.

No one is predicting how long it will take the Federal Communications Commission to process all 6,000 applicants once the rules and procedures are in place. It has said it will award the unopposed channels first, however.

Smith, Valentine urge study of drinking driver problem

By Tim Fields

NASHVILLE (BP)— Two Southern Baptist leaders have urged President Ronald Reagan to establish a presidential commission to deal with the problem of drinking drivers and to support legislation requiring a warning label on alcoholic beverages.

Southern Baptist Convention President Bailey E. Smith and Foy Valentine, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, sent the joint letter.

"Few decisions that you make could be as constructive and well received by the American people as a decision to establish a presidential commission to recommend firm actions to deal with the problem of drinking drivers," the two leaders wrote.

"In 1982 it is expected that drinking drivers will be responsible for 25,000 deaths, 750,000 personal injuries, and \$5-to \$8-billion in economic losses. In the last decade almost 250,000 people have been killed because of drunken driving. Action now can save hundreds of thousands of lives and billions of dollars in the next 10 years," they wrote.

The two leaders told the president that a presidential commission on drinking drivers is an idea whose time has come, adding, "at least 55 senators and 248 representatives think so. Many responsible civic and state leaders think so. Legislators and voters in numerous states think so."

"We urge you not to delay on this vitally needed act of moral leadership. Few actions you could take would save more lives and money. Immediate action on your part would signal to all Americans that this grave problem of the drinking driver will no longer be ignored."

The Southern Baptist leaders also called on Reagan to actively support Senate Bill 1643 and House Bill 2251 which would require a health warning label on all containers of beverage alcohol. Both bills appear stalemated in committees.

One proposal originating in the House calls for the label to read, "Warning, us-

ing this product too fast may cause sickness or death, may impair driving ability, may create dependence or addiction, and during pregnancy may harm the unborn. Legal age required for purchase."

Smith and Valentine told the president: "The medical discoveries related to fetal alcohol syndrome, and the presence in the United States of America of approximately 12-million alcoholics are sufficient indication that beverage alcohol is an addictive drug which should at the very least be adequately labeled."

The leaders told the president that while no one individual or group is ever authorized to speak in behalf of all other members of the Southern Baptist Convention, their views are generally shared by their fellow Southern Baptists.

"The Southern Baptist Convention has adopted many resolutions in recent years dealing with the various forms of alcohol abuse, with the drinking driver being one continuing, but as yet unresolved, concern," they said.

Evangelists...

(Continued from page 1)

"I also expect him to be spirit-filled ... and to preach with fervor. You should deliver the gospel with urgency and intensity — preach like you may never preach again, or that someone may never hear again."

"Finally," Butler said, "I expect every evangelist to plead with compassion. I do not want you in my church without an urgency, a compassion, and a burden for the gospel."

Another speaker at the Jan. 18 service, Memphis Evangelist Phil Glisson, called for Christians to move on from the point at which they were saved.

"Too many Christians are lazy and do not know it," Glisson said. "They have just settled down in their Christian life and always talk about what they are going to do in the future for God."

"Others," Glisson continued, "just talk about what they did for God in the past. If you try to get them to do something now, you just hear about what they have once done. God doesn't want us to retire. He wants us to re-fire."

Edsel Bone, also of Memphis, illustrated his message at the Monday session with the account in Mark 10 of the rich young ruler who questioned Jesus about his salvation.

"Just like that ruler, people come with a vision of a complete life put together the way they want it," Bone said. "The gospel begins with Christ, not with man's need. We should take the time to show the people who God is and what He stands for."

Bone added that the Biblical message is being watered down, and that "we must tread softly and sensitively to avoid compromising the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Wade Clemons, outgoing president of the conference, introduced the group's new officers during the two meetings. Jim Lindsay, of Elizabethton, was named president; Jack Custer, from Westmoreland, was named vice-president; and Bone was selected as music director. Clemons also allowed each evangelist to share his testimony and tell of his ministry at the Belmont Heights meeting.

Music for the sessions was provided by Julian Suggs, director of the Tennessee Baptist church music department, and Mr. and Mrs. Perry Scott of Morristown.

E. Tennessee pastors to meet in Seymour

The quarterly meeting of the East Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference will be held at Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour, Jan. 28.

Stewardship will be the topic of the conference. The program will begin at 9:59 a.m. with a welcome by President Hershel Chavallier.

O. M. Dangeau, the Tennessee Baptist Convention's director of Cooperative Program and stewardship development, will speak on "What We Have to Help."

A. R. Fagan, executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission, will discuss "Biblical Basis for Stewardship."

Otey's mother dies

Mrs. A. W. Otey, the mother of Trevis Otey, died Jan. 15 in a Little Rock, Ark., hospital. She was 83.

Her son is pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson. She is also survived by a daughter, Mrs. Glen Mashburn of Jacksonville, Ark., and several grandchildren.

Mrs. Otey was a life-long resident of Jacksonville, Ark.

Funeral services were held Jan. 18 in Little Rock.

EDITORIAL

A parable of falling, melting snow

The snow fell — silently spreading its blanket of pure whiteness.

As it came, the world gradually took on the beauty of cleanliness. Even the garbage dump, the junk yard, and the slums began to be revealed in an aura of peaceful beauty.

The whole world seemed spotless. It was as if nature had devised a wonderful way to transform the ugliness that mankind had created into something of serene loveliness.

To the eye, it appeared that the world had been changed. Its depraved elements had suddenly become amazingly attractive. The pure whiteness was so radiant that our eyes could scarcely look at it when the sun was shining.

But as the days came, so did the dirt and soot to pollute and deface even the whiteness of the snow.

Now, the sun has melted the snow.

The hideous features of our world remain — except that now they are even more unsightly because of the

layer of grime and filth left by the melting snow.

Perhaps there is a parable here for those of us who attempt to cover the ugliness and sin of our lives with a "snow-white" blanket of good deeds. The moral activities we spread before the world allow us to convince others — and ourselves — of our goodness, rather than our hypocrisy.

But in the bright sunlight of God's righteousness, our self-righteousness melts away, leaving the same ugliness of our sin — plus the additional sin of pride and self-sufficiency.

All the beauty of a snowfall cannot long hide the depravity of our world and its eyesores.

All the good deeds of self-righteousness cannot long hide the depravity of the human soul.

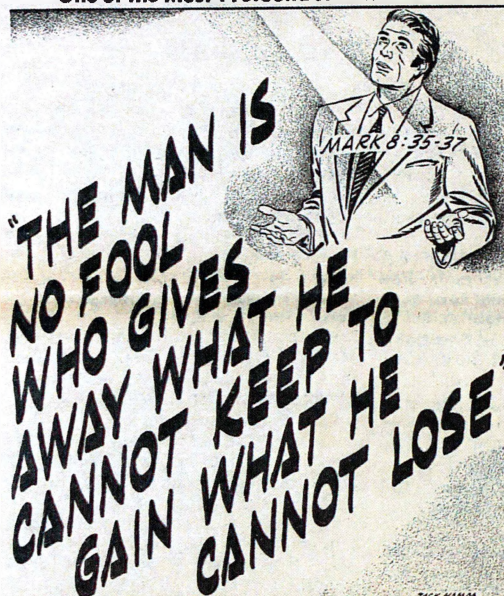
But there is a way that you can be as pure as the driven snow. It is possible for the wickedness of your life to be as spotless and serene as a pile of fresh snow.

What you cannot do for yourself, God can and will do for you. Here is His promise:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).

As you look at the world and its depravity, consider your own life. Obviously, all of us would like our lives and our souls to be as pure and white as the snow — and they can be! Our hope lies not in our activated efforts to make ourselves "good" in the sight of God, but in asking His righteousness to forgive our sin-stained souls, and justify us to be as white as snow.

One of the Most Profound of Statements



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Cicero's comment



By the editor

"Cicero, we made this appointment to ask your help in publicizing a new movement among Southern Baptists," explained my two prompt visitors who identified themselves as Mel Function and Cal N. Deere.

"What new movement is coming within our denomination?" I asked.

The two looked at each other — and at me — in disbelief at my ignorance. "Surely you are aware that many Southern Baptists are concerned about the increasing number of meetings being held and the large number of organizations we have," Mel mouthed. "These are taking a large amount of our time, energy, and money that could be used for other things."

Cicero nodded — unable to think of anything else to do or say.

"So, we are launching a new organization called Baptists Opposed to Organizations and Meetings — BOOM, for short. We are going to blast away all organizations and meetings from Baptist life," Cal calculated.

"Maybe some organizations do malfunction and some calendars are too full, but what do you plan to do about it?" I inquired.

"First, we've got to get BOOM organized. Soon we will name a steering committee who will meet to plan a series of national meetings to get our organization organized. Out of this will come 34 co-chairpersons — one from each state convention," noted Mel. "We would establish a headquarters, select a slogan, elect members to 17 committees and 63 subcommittees, and enlist a paid staff."

Mel Function and Cal N. Deere added that these national leaders would direct 12 regional organizational meetings around the nation to help Baptists to organize at least one state BOOM meeting in each state — which would elect officers, committees, and subcommittees — which would correspond to the national officers, committees, and subcommittees — which in turn would help organize a BOOM organization in every association.

"Of course, there would be similar officers, committees, and subcommittees in each association," Cal continued. "These associational officers, committees, and subcommittees would enlist members and money."

"Money?" Cicero interrupted.

"Certainly," Mel muttered. "You don't expect us to have a national organization, regional organizations, state organizations, and associational organizations without funds to finance our organization and pay for all those meetings we must have to tell people about our opposition to Baptist organizations and meetings!"

I asked if the organization and meetings ended with the associations.

"No," Cal communicated. "We will THEN be ready to go to work. There would be a BOOM committee in each church, which would, of course, hold meetings to encourage BOOM age-group organizations within each church committee, Sunday School Class, church training group, mission organization..."

GUEST EDITORIAL

The interim pastorate

By J. Marse Grant, editor
"Biblical Recorder," Raleigh, N.C.

In the last 25 years, a specialized ministry has come into its own among Southern Baptists. It is the interim pastorate. This is a welcomed development and a close study reveals that many churches have benefitted in a marvelous way as a result of this trend.

It is also a two-way street: many retired pastors, as well as those who are younger, are able to serve pastorless churches, thus supplementing their income and giving them meaningful involvement in the field they love. It is a beautiful coming together for mutual benefit.

Depending on the circumstances and/or problems, an interim pastor frequently musters all his talents and experience ministering to a church where the former pastor left under unfortunate circumstances and the need for healing is a top priority. Sometimes a church faces uncertainty as to location or its future, and this challenges the most mature interim pastors. On other occasions the church is split and conflicts abound.

Writing in *The Presbyterian Outlook*, Roy Oswald of Alban Institute in Washington, D.C., reminds us that these interims are not easy:

Interim ministries normally demand a lot from the clergy. Most require large chunks of open, warm, loving care. Many of these congregations have experienced traumatic events, which leave them depressed and demoralized. They will be better able to face the change ahead of them, if they sense that someone strong and capable is loving and supporting them all the way through it.

Southern Baptists are fortunate in having good reservoirs of interim pastor talent. In addition to the large number of retired pastors who are still in excellent health — and are willing and able to serve — there are the faculty members at our colleges and staff members at other Baptist state and national agencies.

A church that does not call an interim pastor is taking a chance on getting Sunday-to-Sunday supplies, an antiquated plan not designed to foster growth.

We salute those "interim specialists" and commend them to churches which do not have a pastor.

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.

Catholics in heaven

Dear editor:

Arnold Webb (Jan. 6 letter) may be both surprised and shocked when he arrives over there and finds his Catholic friends waiting to welcome him back home.

Ed Bobbitt
118 7th Avenue North
Nashville, TN 37203

'How shall they hear?'

Dear editor:

With the beat of the tom-tom and the rhythmic clap of the national Christian, numerous personnel requests continue to echo in my mind following a recent personnel survey trip to eight nations of Western Africa.

As I stood on the car top carrier with Agricultural-evangelist Ray Eitelman in Upper Volta, looking over the field of ripened millet, the words of Christ flashed through my mind: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest."

In visiting with missionaries and nationals, I wished many times that I could promise missionaries who are overextended and longing for help that help was on the way.

I wondered, "Is the Lord of the harvest not calling; or, are Southern Baptists not praying?" Neither, I hope.

Is there not one surgeon for the Baptist hospital in Nalerigu, Ghana? Where is the student worker to minister to the 100 Nigerian students at the University of Jos? Is there a business man who could serve as business manager for Upper Volta where the missionary is facing retirement in two and one-half years?

A volunteer is pastoring the English-language church in Dakar, Senegal, while the fellowship waits for more permanent leadership. General evangelists are desperately needed in all eight countries.

Often, living conditions are not ideal;

but missionaries labor faithfully as persons respond to the claims of the gospel. Warm handclaspings, friendly smiles, and laughing children continue to accent the question, "How shall they hear without a preacher?"

Don Reavis
P.O. Box 6767
Richmond, VA 23230

Don Reavis is a candidate consultant in the personnel section of the SBC Foreign Mission Board. (editor)

Understanding Catholics

Dear editor:

The letter from Arnold Webb (Jan. 6) demonstrates how much need he has to understand Catholics. He probably has not had the opportunity to study and understand the Catholic church or church history.

I would encourage him to do so, because he will find that Catholics are Bible-believing Christians.

He will find they are dedicated to the Lord Jesus.

He will find that the Catholic church preserved the Bible for all of us — from the time it was first written until the invention of the printing press 1,400 years later.

Moreover, he will find that Catholics are encouraged by their church to read the Bible daily.

I am a weekly reader of the Baptist and Reflector and the pastor of a Catholic church. I rejoice in the unity that Baptists and Catholics are finding in the Lord Jesus today. The dark days of hostility, misunderstanding, and competition are mostly behind us. I believe that Jesus' prayer is being fulfilled, "That they all may be one... that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me" (John 17:21).

Frank Ruff
731 N. Main St.
Shelbyville, TN 37160

Supreme Court to rule on state law banning bars placed near churches

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court will decide if the State of Massachusetts may forbid drinking establishments within a 500-foot radius of churches.

At issue is a Massachusetts law banning liquor licenses to bars if churches, schools, or hospitals within the prescribed distance object.

When local officials in Cambridge, Mass., denied a license to Grendel's Den at the prompting of an Armenian Catholic parish, the bar's owners

challenged the law, claiming the Massachusetts Legislature had in effect established religion in violation of the First Amendment.

A federal district court agreed, striking down the law. Although the First Circuit Court of Appeals initially reversed the lower court, it later reconsidered and reversed itself. That maze of rulings led to the state's appeal for Supreme Court review.

In other church-state actions, the high court:

—Denied a hearing to a Boca Raton, Fla., independent Baptist church which argued that it should not be required to obtain a "separate use" zoning permit to operate a Christian school. Two lower federal courts ruled against the church, holding that the First Amendment does not forbid such zoning requirements.

—Rejected the appeal of four members of the Church of God of Prophecy, in Collinsville, Va., who claimed that their free exercise of religion was abridged when their congregation expelled them and refused to allow them to attend worship services. Expulsion resulted from a dispute over speaking in tongues.

Reagan asks anti-bias law aimed at private schools

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)—Reacting to a firestorm of criticism from civil rights leaders, President Ronald Reagan will ask Congress to pass legislation denying tax exemption to private schools that practice race discrimination.

Reagan evidently was caught by surprise at the intense protests to a Jan. 7 announcement that the Internal Revenue Service will no longer deny tax exemption to any private school — sectarian or non-sectarian — which discriminates in its admissions policy.

That announcement, approved in advance by top administration officials, was made public in a memorandum to the Supreme Court. The document asked the court to declare moot the issue of admissions bias in a pair of highly publicized cases currently awaiting oral argument.

The cases were initiated by Bob Jones University and Goldsboro Christian Schools after the IRS revoked the tax exemption of the fundamentalist Greenville, S.C., university and denied exempt status to the Goldsboro, N.C., schools.

Reagan's request for legislation does not reverse the memorandum to the Supreme Court as some are interpreting. The memorandum still illustrates the administration's desire to stop the IRS's 12-year policy through which, in effect, it assumed legislative authority it did not have.

By asking for legislation that would deny tax exemption to schools that discriminate, Reagan is asking for the same effect but through appropriate legislative channels.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, a Washington agency that monitors legislation for nine Baptist bodies, agrees only in part with Reagan's memorandum to the Supreme Court. Joint Committee Executive Director James M. Dunn and General Counsel John W. Baker say it goes too far because it will allow tax exemption for all private schools which may discriminate, not just religious schools.

Dunn and Baker wanted the Supreme Court to hear the Bob Jones and Goldsboro cases and issue a ruling based on religious liberty questions alone.

Public debate over the cases and the IRS decision to restore tax exemption has centered on racism. But two religious groups, the United Presbyterian Church and the American Baptist Churches, have argued that Bob Jones University was entitled to tax exemption on First Amendment grounds.

In their friend-of-the-court brief, written by Baker, they asked the court to rule that the IRS policy of requiring proof of nondiscrimination not apply to religious schools whose admissions policies are based on religious convictions.

Of Reagan's memorandum to the Supreme Court removing the IRS tax ex-

empting policy for discrimination, Dunn declared, "it represents an acknowledgement that the Internal Revenue Service cannot arbitrarily and arrogantly establish and enforce national policy at the expense of religious liberty guarantees."

Personal perspective

By TOM MADDEN
TBC executive secretary

The suppression and experiences that the people of Poland are experiencing have made me come to appreciate religious freedom even more than ever.

You and I believe that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" and "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." In the name of Christ, we believe in freedom for, freedom from, freedom through, freedom in, and freedom of religion.



Madden

Baptists have always believed in freedom for religion. By this we mean not only freedom to worship, but freedom to teach and preach, to win others, to change one's faith, to print and publish our convictions, and to own property and build churches in which to worship and serve our Lord. We do not wish this just for ourselves, but we believe in freedom for all religions with special privileges for none.

In the same spirit, we believe in freedom from religion. That is, as much as we would love people to accept our Lord, we respect the right of the individual to reject the claims of Christ and, of course, to take the consequences. There can never be any coercion or compulsion by the state concerning religion. You and I believe that no person should be compelled to support any religious institution through public taxation or to suffer on account of his religious beliefs.

Baptists also believe in freedom through religion. You and I have experienced the joy of freedom in Jesus Christ, for He has freed us from the bondage of sin, fear, and death. It is a natural desire for us to want everybody in the world to know the blessings of the faith and freedom that is ours in Christ.

We believe in freedom in religion. We have the right to express in our own personal way our experiences in Christ. Baptists have always had diversities and varieties, but we are united in "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."

We believe in freedom of religion. Every person has a right and responsibility to make his own choice. We can pray for a person, love him in Christ, and ask the spirit of God to tug and woo him; but each individual has a right to make his own personal choice as he feels led of the Holy Spirit. There is no proxy faith.

It awes me when I realize that freedom can be lost. I fear that it is being lost in some lands in our own generation. Freedoms are being restricted. Eternal vigilance is still the price of liberty. Let us pledge our prayers that our entire world might be free to accept Christ as personal Saviour. Then, let us do our best to present the message of our Lord to every person in the world.

Cochran ordained, called as pastor

Larry Cochran, recently ordained to the gospel ministry, assumed the pastorate of Maple Valley Baptist Church, Only, Nov. 8.

Cochran was ordained by Wrigley Baptist Church, Wrigley, during a Nov. 29 service. Reece Cochran, brother of the Maple Valley pastor, presented the charge, and Wrigley Pastor Joe Christopher delivered the ordination sermon.

A native of Bon Aqua, Cochran is enrolled in seminary extension courses.

Perry Webb Sr. dies

SAN ANTONIO, Tex. (BP)—Perry F. Webb Sr., pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, died in a hospital Jan. 10 after several weeks of poor health. He was 84.

Webb retired in 1961 after 24 years in San Antonio, during which First Baptist Church was the third largest church in the Southern Baptist Convention with 7,984 members.

Webb was active in all levels of convention life and was a member of the SBC Executive Committee.

Baptists hold services in Miami refugee camp

MIAMI (BP) — In the wake of recent disturbances among Haitian refugees held at Miami's Khrome Avenue detention facility, a Sunday evening worship service led by Southern Baptist Pastor Jacques Dumeroy yielded 200 professions of faith.

Dumeroy, pastor of the Haitian mission of First Baptist Church, Pompano Beach, Fla., and members of his congregation have held regular services for the more than 500 refugees at the Immigration and Naturalization Service camp.

During a recent service, Dumeroy distributed French and Creole Bibles from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and led 400 men and women in a prayer of commitment to Jesus Christ. Peter Golinski, board consultant on Haitian work, reported, "When he asked how many had committed their lives to Christ, half responded."

The "Haitian problem," as it is called in Miami, has escalated in recent months. Haitian refugees, entering the country illegally in small boats, have begun protesting their internment in detention camps with hunger strikes and demonstrations. In December, 200 protesters from the Haitian community stormed Camp Khrome fences and set Everglade grasses ablaze, enabling 101 refugees inside the camp to escape.

Golinski said part of the Haitians' frustrations are caused by not being able

to communicate with camp guards. "They don't speak English, and the guards don't speak French or Creole," he explained.

The U.S. government's position on Haitian refugees has been criticized by leaders such as Jesse Jackson and Jerard Jean-Juste, head of Miami's Haitian refugee center. Because Haitians are recognized as economic rather than political refugees, few are eligible for asylum in America.

"Generally, these people are here for economic reasons, and they are not in any way entitled to refugee or asylum status," Art Brill, spokesman for U.S. Justice Department, has charged. "They are illegal aliens."

Refugees who enter the country without proper documents are detained until their case for political asylum can be heard. Scarce lawyers and crowded courts keep some refugees in camps for more than seven months.

A group of Miami citizens, including Golinski, met with Immigration and Na-

tionalization Service officials in Washington in January to discuss the Haitian situation. Assistant Attorney General Rudolph Giuliani and acting INS Commissioner Alan Nelson presented five propositions, Golinski reported.

INS offered to reduce the camp population at Khrome to 325; add recreational facilities; enlist 100 more lawyers for examining the Haitians' eligibility for refugee status; and appoint a committee of INS officials and Haitian advocates to examine problems regularly. In addition, Giuliani pledged to make more frequent visits to Khrome to assess refugees' needs.

The INS would not agree to allow those already in the U.S. to remain, as Golinski had hoped. "They will be sending home all those who don't merit political refugee status so they can apply for legal permits to come back," he explained. The U.S. quota for emigration from Haiti is 20,000 people a year, but only 5,100 met requirements for legal entry in 1981. To im-

migrate legally, Haitians must show proof of relatives living in the U.S. or a guaranteed job offer.

Problems do not end, however, once a Haitian is admitted to the U.S. "Most of them are illiterate and uneducated," Golinski said. "A Haitian will never tell you 'I don't understand,' so he becomes his own worst enemy." There is some resentment now among the Haitian community toward the refugees, he added. "They've been hurt by these newcomers who'll take jobs at lower pay. There's a lot of ill will."

Among Miami's seven Haitian Baptist churches, however, members are struggling to meet refugees' needs. "The people at Pompano Beach mission take an offering for refugees at Khrome each week and carry packages with them to the camp," Golinski said. "All the Haitian churches are helping the refugees find jobs, and food."

The Southern Baptist refugee center in Miami, run by Haitian Pastor Renaud Balzora, is helping many Haitians already settled in the area who need food, clothes and English lessons. "The center has been searching for sponsors, but they've had little response from Baptist churches," Golinski said. "Our people just aren't responding well to these needs."

As for follow-up of those who made commitments to Christ at the camp service, Golinski said it would be difficult, but he hoped to be able to distribute literature and Bibles in the camp. "The distribution of Scripture among them is the key," he noted. "Their overwhelming response to the gospel is evidence that God is moving among them at Camp Khrome."

Foundation

God owns property?

By Jonas L. Stewart

The California Supreme Court ruled that God cannot own property. The decision resulted from the challenge of a will in which the testator willed his money to God. The ruling stated that a valid will must have a human agent to carry out the terms of the will.

John Jeter Hurt, a former president of Union University, once said, "Let a man run his surveyor's chain around as much real estate as he can afford. Let him record its tracings in the court house record. Let him sit back and draw dividends from investments in stocks and bonds. Let him watch his mounting accumulations in savings grow until he feels the security of earthly possessions. He will then be inclined to say for all the world to hear, 'Mine, Mine, Mine.' But the God who is not bound by human laws and is unmoved by human customs sadly looks upon that man and says, 'Thou fool.'"

As Christians, we say that all we have is a trust from God. Many prove it to be true until they die. They seem to forget that God had anything to do with it.

Does it not seem reasonable that God should have claim upon our possessions when we no longer need them? God cannot hold legal title to property under Tennessee law, but there is a way to make money, stocks, bonds, real estate, and other property available for His use. Make a Christian will. Include the Lord's work in your will.

Write your Tennessee Baptist Foundation for information about a Christian will. Pray about it. Let the Lord guide you in this important matter of disposing of your property at death. Write the Tennessee Baptist Foundation, P. O. Box 347, Brentwood, TN 37027.

Food, mail, money shortage hinders missionaries' task

By Mary Jane Welch

MALABO, Equatorial Guinea (BP) — Even if someone had told them six years ago that mission work would be like this, Jess and Peggy Thompson would have found it hard to believe.

Neither mail nor money has arrived since the Thompsons landed in Equatorial Guinea Dec. 17 to begin Southern Baptist mission work there. But even if they had money, they might have to travel to a neighboring country to spend it.

Although it has been more than two

years since former president Nguema Biyoto Masie was deposed, ending a regime which disabled the nation, Equatorial Guinea is still struggling toward rehabilitation. Food and many supplies are still scarce.

The Thompsons, who will work as agricultural evangelists, hope to help this situation.

They were able to get rooms in the Impala Hotel, best of the few hotels in the capital city, but will have to move out soon. And even though it is the best, the hotel serves no meals. Canned food the Thompsons brought with them and meals at the home of a friend have kept them going.

The couple has found a house to rent, but like other homes there, it needs repairs to make it livable. To get food and repair supplies, they are planning a trip to nearby Cameroon — when they get money.

International flights to Malabo are regular, but the Thompsons have received no mail and no money. When other methods failed, the Foreign Mission Board tried to telegraph them money, following careful instructions from Jess. The telegram was returned marked undeliverable. A second telegram arrived, but it was made out to "Jeff" Thompson. The bank refused to honor it. John Mills, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's director for west Africa, has spent more than an hour on the phone trying to get the name mix-up straightened out. He hopes the money gets through this time.

The Thompsons' plight, he says, is typical of the missionary life in a small west African nation with poor communication. The Thompsons are not the only missionaries in west Africa who fail to receive some mail or who travel across borders to buy supplies.

Mills is confident the Thompsons will be able to work patiently through the problems. "They have the kind of tenacity and good spirit you appreciate," says Mills. "And that's what it takes to work in west Africa."

The next mission couple to arrive in Equatorial Guinea, he says, will already have their way smoothed by the Thompsons and will wonder why the Thompsons have been there so long and gotten so little mission work done.

Citizen's Corner

By Jerry M. Self
Public affairs and Christian life consultant

The time is right to stop drunk drivers. National attention has been focused on the problem by organizations such as MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers).

Tennesseans may consider supporting a strong drunk drivers bill introduced by Senator Curtis Person of Memphis. His SB 1475 would establish mandatory fines and sentences. A first-offense conviction for drunk driving would result in a fine ranging from \$250 up to \$1,000. A jail sentence would be imposed under one year with a minimum of 48 hours. There would be a one year driver's license suspension.

Second-offense fines would range from \$500 to \$2,500, and the minimum jail sentence would be 45 days. The driver's license would be suspended for two years. Third-offense fine limits would be \$1,000 to \$5,000. Minimum jail sentence would be 120 days and the driver's license suspension would be set somewhere between three to ten years.

A restricted driver's license may be issued on a first-offense conviction only. Public service penalties could be added to the mandatory sentences. Those sentenced would be on probation following whatever minimum sentences were assessed until the maximum time limit expires.

Another important feature of the bill requires that previous convictions on drunk driving be a part of any charges brought against someone facing a second or subsequent trial on drunk driving.

Representative Brad Martin, Memphis, has agreed to sponsor the house version of this bill.



Self

Girl 'sees' Jesus with her fingers

An eight-year-old blind girl can now read God's Word, thanks to a pastor, his wife, and a group of youth from Kensington Baptist Church, Memphis.

Chrissy Mitchel of Grand Rapids, Mich., was presented a braille New Testament during a recent Sunday at the Immanuel Baptist Church of Grand Rapids. Area Missionary Loren Ames presented the braille Bible to the Mitchel family on behalf of the Kensington church.

The Kensington youth group traveled to Michigan this past summer to lead backyard Bible clubs in Ludington. Chrissy attended everyday, and wanted to hear everything she could about Jesus, according to the youth.

The youth asked Chrissy what they could do to help her learn more about Jesus after they were gone. Chrissy responded, "Help me see Jesus through my fingers."

The Memphis youth set to work to make sure Chrissy, who has been blind from birth, would see Jesus and come to know Jesus through her fingers.

Chrissy and her sister Tammy are now a part of the Immanuel Baptist Church. With the help of the Kensington church, Chrissy not only hears about Jesus, she is able to read about Him. Ames also presented printed copies of the Good News Bible to Mr. and Mrs. Mitchel so they can read along with their daughter.

The light of the world is now being seen by one in darkness.



NIGERIA BOUND — Midwestern seminary student Sandra Achenbach (left) teaches her roommate, Selma Talbert, to play the Nigerian game, "Ayo." Miss Achenbach was sent by the Mennonites to teach at the Baptist High School in Jos, Nigeria, for six years and hopes to return to that country as a Southern Baptist missionary upon completion of her education.

Southern Baptist 'stranger' prepares for mission work

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)— Sandra Achenbach had never met a Southern Baptist until she graduated from college. Her mental image of one grew from Mark Twain.

So she is a bit surprised to find herself a student and Southern Baptist foreign mission candidate at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

When Miss Achenbach, from Elizabethtown, Pa., graduated from college, she said, "I have had a good life and God has been very good to me. I want to do something for someone else."

Not willing to make a lifetime commitment, she discounted the small mission program of the Church of God, the faith in which she was reared, and chose instead the short-term Mennonite mission program that recruited Christians to teach in foreign schools.

The Mennonites originally sent her to a Catholic school in Nigeria, but when she arrived, she was placed in the Baptist High School Jos. That is how a Church of God woman, sent by the Mennonites, began teaching in a Baptist school.

Miss Achenbach returned to the states after four years. "When I got home, I did not like it. People were so unhappy here with so much. Working for money did not seem to make one happy."

The vice-principal at Jos asked Miss

Hammock takes post with congressman

NASHVILLE (BP)— H. Rex Hammock, director of communications for the Southern Baptist Education Commission and editor of its magazine, *The Educator*, has resigned to become press aide for Fifth District Congressman Bill Boner.

He will join Boner's Washington staff Jan. 25.

Hammock joined the commission in June 1979 after graduation from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Samford University. While in Louisville he was director of news and information and edited the school's alumni publication. He also worked for the *Louisville Courier-Journal*.

Achenbach to return to the Nigerian school and suggested she join the Baptist church. She accepted the two-year assignment, but ignored the suggestion.

"As soon as I got there, I knew God wanted me to make this a lifetime commitment," she says.

However, she was still reluctant to join the Baptist church. "I felt like God was asking me to cast aside everything I grew up with. Finally, I knew there was just no other way to find any peace."

After talking to Foreign Mission Board Area Director John Mills, Miss Achenbach was content in her decision to change denominations. At his suggestion, she enrolled at Midwestern, preparing for a lifetime commitment in foreign missions.

"I have even reached the point that if something happens and I cannot go back to Nigeria, I know I am doing what God wants."



LEADERS MEET — Chinese Bishop K. H. Ting and American Harold C. Bennett met and exchanged views during a late 1981 visit by Bennett to mainland China. Ting is chairman of the Three-Self Protestant Movement and chairman of the Chinese Christian Council. Bennett is executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

Chinese people impress Southern Baptist leader

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE (BP)— The people — that is what most impressed Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention, on a recent trip to mainland China.

"The strongest impression I have is people," he said. "They were just wall to wall ... people everywhere. They were most impressive. They were very friendly and very anxious to talk to us. Wherever we stopped, they would crowd around. Maybe two or three in a crowd could speak English and that would attract more."

Bennett was one of 10 evangelical church leaders from the United States who made a two-week trip to China in late 1981, visiting Shanghai, Nanking, and Peking.

Although meeting the people was the highlight of Bennett's trip, the purpose was to visit Bishop K. H. Ting, chairman of the Three-Self Protestant Movement — the officially recognized Protestant Christian church in China — and chairman of the newly-organized Chinese Christian Council.

Bennett and the other evangelicals spent three hours with Ting in Nanking.

"The main purpose of our trip was to visit with Bishop Ting and to share with him the concern of groups of Christians in the United States," Bennett said. "We wanted him to know of our prayer support for China and our interest in what he and the Christian church are doing there."

The trip was made under the sponsorship of the National Association of Evangelicals, an interchurch agency of evangelical denominations and churches. Bennett was the only non-NAE member of the group since the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest evangelical denomination, is not a member of NAE.

Bennett said the Chinese leader expressed concern that the Christian church in China be an expression of Chinese culture and "not just a transplant of Western Christianity."

Protestant Christianity in the communist country has a nationalistic tinge, reflected in its official name: "Three-Self Protestant Movement," and Bennett

explained: "The Three-Self Protestant Movement could be called a political movement. That is part of what the Chinese are all about today. They want to be self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating. That is the official Chinese position and the Three-Self Movement is part of those ideas."

"Bishop Ting thinks there are probably one-million Christians in China today. There may be more, but he uses the conservative estimate of a million," Bennett said. "At the time the missionaries left China in 1949, there were 700,000. Now, there are a million."

While a portion of the Christians meet in regular churches, most of them meet in 20,000 "house churches" around the nation.

"Bishop Ting told us he feels the greatest problem facing them today is that there is such an increase in the number of Christians that they are not able to help them in Christian growth and Christian nurture. That is why the Chinese Christian Council was formed. It aims to help give better pastoral care to the many church leaders," Bennett said.

He indicated that while the churches are served by trained pastors, many of the house congregations "are served by people who are completely untrained. They are more enthusiastic, more energetic, more dynamic, but untrained," Bennett said. "Some of them do not teach the Bible the way they ought to, so they need training in that area."

The hunger for training is so great, Bennett said, that when a booklet on how to study the Bible was published, leaders had to turn it into a correspondence course, in which 30,000 persons are now enrolled.

While on the trip, Bennett and the other evangelicals also visited the Nanking Theological Seminary, which was reopened in March of 1981, after being closed 13 years.

When it opened, Bennett said he was told, 308 prospective students took the examination; 47 were selected as students. Now, the seminary has an enrollment of 51.

"Through the seminary, Bishop Ting hopes to prepare a new generation of leaders who will do pioneer work in developing Chinese forms of Christian witness," Bennett added.

The group of evangelicals also visited services in Peking, which Bennett characterized "as services very similar to what we are familiar with." He added the opening hymn was "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee."

"The missionary movement of years ago — Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and others — is certainly there and evident. But they are trying to evolve their Chinese interpretation of Christianity. They are trying to set themselves out as being the 'Chinese Christian Church,'" Bennett said.

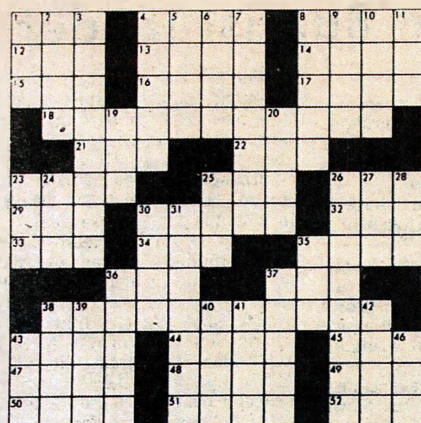
Bennett adds he does not expect China to admit missionaries "in the immediate future," but adds: "I do believe God has ways of helping us in ministering with the Chinese that are not apparent now."

In addition to visiting the worship services, the bishop, the seminary, and worship services in Peking, the evangelicals also "did the tourist things" of seeing the Great Wall, visiting communes, shopping centers, cultural centers, a zoo, and historical places.

"I was very impressed by China," Bennett said. "I would like to go back someday."

Bible Puzzle

Answers on page 10



ACROSS

- 1 "— not the poor" (Prov. 22:22)
 4 His word is right (Psa. 33:4)
 8 "to them that — you" (Matt. 5:44)
 12 Hurricane center
 13 Man's nickname
 14 Hypothetical force
 15 — Moines
 16 Judge's bench
 17 "God made them — and female" (Mark 10)
 18 Place of sojourn (Acts 7:6; 2 words)
 21 Confess —
 22 "for — from him" (John 7:29)
 23 Number of enemies (Psa. 25:19)
 25 Possessive pronoun
 26 By Ibleam (2 Ki. 9:27)
 29 Heard at the bullring
 30 Cruel
 32 Mountain: comb. form
 33 Household need
 34 "— of me" (Mark 6:22)
 35 "— nor free" (Col. 3:11)
 36 Gypsy horse
 37 California fort
 38 "setter forth of —" (Acts 17)
 43 Age
 44 Poetic contraction
 45 Babylonian god: poss.
 47 Levantine ketch

CRYPTOVERSE

Z R K R X R F L K W H P V K W J K W J K W
 C F R J K W Y F J H U R K W R Z I F M

- 48 Author Gardner
 49 Self
 50 Wine vessel
 51 Beams
 52 State: abbr.

DOWN

- 1 Wine color (Isa. 27)
 2 Court cry
 3 "that such should —" (John 8)
 4 Jacob's uncle (Gen. 29:10)
 5 Japanese coin
 6 Finger ornament
 7 "prophesy —" (Isa. 30:10)
 8 Singer (1 Chron. 6:33)
 9 Hunting hound
 10 Related
 11 Nigerian city
 19 Railway: abbr.
 20 Whip
 23 Unruly crowd
 24 English rural festival
 25 Irritate
 26 "be examined of the —" (Acts 4)
 27 Footed vase
 28 Aaron's buddy (Heb. 9)
 30 Place (1 Chron. 5:26)
 31 The woman (Luke 7:37; 2 words)
 35 Christian form of address: abbr.
 36 Sufficient (2 Cor. 12:9)
 37 Fairy tale characters
 38 Ratify
 39 Stumble
 40 Man (Judg. 3:15)
 41 Like a moray
 42 Herb
 43 Japanese national park
 46 Roman sun god

Interpretation

Law and grace

By Herschel H. Hobbs

"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

God dealt with man first through law; then, through grace. Law demands; grace gives. The basic meaning of "grace" charis is to make a gift, to forgive a debt, to forgive a wrong, and finally, to forgive sin. Basically, grace means a gift. When man would not live up to God's law, He offered to save him by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8).

The word for "grace" appears only four times in John's Gospel (1:14, 16, 17). The word for "truth" is used 25 times. In 1:17 the two are mentioned together; the last time "grace" is used in John. Therefore, it is possible to see grace in the use of truth.

But the emphasis in this verse is upon

law and grace. Literally, "The law through (dia) Moses was given; the grace and truth through (dia) Jesus Christ became" or "came into being." Dia expresses intermediate agency.

When God gave His law, He did so through a man — Moses. When He expressed His grace, He became a man — Jesus Christ. Moses was God's servant; Jesus Christ was/is God's Son. "Became" means that God became what He had not been before, a flesh and blood man. It is true that Jesus Christ is God. But a more glorious truth is that God became a man — Jesus of Nazareth — for us!

Devotional

The error of judging

By Jean Sorrell

In Matthew 7:1, Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." How easy this verse is to read; yet, how hard to practice! As human beings, we seem addicted to passing judgment on others. The habit is universal and reciprocal.

A young boy was caught taking \$5 from his mother's purse. When she scolded him for it, he replied, "Hold on! I heard Dad telling you how he gypped the government out of \$1,500 as slick as a whistle."

Why do we judge others? Paul Tourner, the Swiss psychiatrist, suggests that to judge another is to put oneself above that one. To criticize is to imply that one is better able to manage than is the one criticized.

William Barclay suggests three reasons why no man can judge another: we never know the whole facts or the whole person, it is almost impossible for any man to be strictly impartial in his judgment, and no man is good enough to judge any other man.

What is the remedy? An anonymous philosopher suggests:

*Pray don't find fault with the man who limps
 Or stumbles along the road,
 Unless you have worn the shoes he wears
 Or struggled beneath his load.
 There may be tacks in his shoes that hurt,
 Though hidden away from view,
 Or the burden he bears, placed on your back,
 Might cause you to stumble, too.
 Don't sneer at the man who is down today,
 Unless you have felt the blow
 That caused his fall, or felt the shame
 That only the fallen know.
 You may be strong, but still the blows
 That were his, if dealt to you
 In the self-same way at the self-same time,
 Might cause you to stagger, too.
 Don't be too harsh with the man who sins,
 Or pelt him with words or stones,
 Unless you are sure, yea, doubly sure,
 That you have not sins of your own.
 For you know, perhaps, if the tempter's voice
 Should whisper as soft to you
 As it did to him when he went astray
 'Twould cause you to falter, too.*

—Mrs. Sorrell is the wife of H. K. Sorrell, pastor of Brownsville Baptist Church, Brownsville.

Carson-Newman to host World's Fair festival

JEFFERSON CITY — The 1982 World's Fair Baptist High School Choral Festival will be hosted by Carson-Newman College, July 8-10.

The Festival is being sponsored by the Carson-Newman College music department, the department of church music of the Baptist Sunday School Board, and the Baptist Ministries for the 1982 World's Fair, Inc.

Eligible for competition are high school choirs of Southern Baptist churches. Application deadline is Feb. 15. Notification of acceptance will be Feb. 26.

The 1982 World's Fair Baptist High School choral performance will take place at the Tennessee Performing Arts Auditorium on the fairgrounds July 10. Rehearsals for this mass choir will take place throughout the three-day festival on the Carson-Newman campus.

The adjudication of individual choirs participating in the festival will also take place during these dates. The first-place winning high school choir will be featured at the mass choir concert.

Floods fail to halt constituting church

CALI, Colombia — A 17-hour tropical rain flooded thousands of homes and left entire sections of Cali, Colombia, underwater. Still, determined Baptists made their way to the organization of Philadelphia Baptist Church.

The church became the 11th mission of Cali First Baptist Church to organize into a church. Many of the more than 200 people who squeezed into the two-story house where the congregation meets had to wade almost impassable streets to get there.

A loudspeaker hung in a front window broadcast the service to Baptists standing outside and to neighbors.

Antonio Cuellar, who described himself as a "street urchin" as a child, was installed as pastor of the new church. He is a second-year student at the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali.

Belmont announces Hankins scholarship

J. Clarence Hankins has established a scholarship fund at Belmont College to assist Southern Baptist students who are preparing for a career in full-time Christian service.

In selecting the recipient of the J. Clarence and Ruby Kadel Hankins Scholarship Fund, the college will consider evidence of a strong commitment to full-time Christian service, a recommendation from the student's local church, and evidence of good Christian character.

Mr. and Mrs. Hankins have both been consistent supporters of Belmont College, according to college officials. Mrs. Hankins was a longtime member of Belmont Aid until her death two years ago.

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Our People and Our Churches ...

CHURCHES...

Good Hope Baptist Church, Adamsville, held a note-burning service Dec. 20 symbolizing the completion of payments on the church pastorium. Victor Ward is the pastor of the church.

First Baptist Church, Alexandria, burned a recently cancelled note during a Jan. 10 service, signifying payment of the church's debt. James Glisson is pastor of the church.

PEOPLE...

First Baptist Church, Clarksville, recently ordained Mark Briggs and Mike Stinnett as deacons. John David Laida is the pastor of the church.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Harvey McPherson celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary during a Jan. 10 reception at Park Avenue Baptist Church, Nashville. The McPhersons are members of Park Avenue, where Bob Mowrey is pastor.

First Baptist Church, Woodland Mills, ordained its minister of evangelism, Rob Ray, into the gospel ministry Dec. 13. The church's pastor is Robert Ford.

Mike Watkins was licensed to the gospel ministry by Saulsbury Baptist Church, Saulsbury. Louis Minner is the church's pastor.

Sam H. Patton was ordained as a deacon Jan. 3 by Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Chattanooga. The moderator for the ordination service was Ron Humphrey, and the charge to the deacon was brought by Jerry Gross. Pastor Jack Lee delivered the ordination sermon.

Dec. 20 marked the 50th wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Jessie Lee Damron. The Damrons are members of New Bethel Baptist Church, Shelbyville.

North Carolina pastor called to Trenton St.

North Carolina Pastor Jerry King accepted a call to the pastorate of Trenton Street Baptist Church, Harriman, a position he began Jan. 3.

King was previously pastor of Westview Baptist Church, Shelby, N.C.; Hillcrest Baptist Church, Raleigh, N.C.; and Bethel Baptist Church, Parrottsville.

A native of Sevier County, King is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

West Trinity Lane calls Mayfield

West Trinity Lane Baptist Church, Nashville, called Joe W. Mayfield as its pastor, a ministry he began Nov. 8.

Mayfield was previously pastor of Eastwood, Hermitage Hills, and Valley View Baptist churches, all of Nashville. He is also a former chairman of the Nashville Baptist Association's new church committee.

A native of Franklin, Mayfield is a graduate of Baptist Bible Institute, Graceville, Fla.

Calvary Baptist Church, Knoxville, ordained its minister of music, Darrell Hodge, into the gospel music ministry Jan. 3. The pastor of the church is Bob Burch.

Mr. and Mrs. Burton McCowan celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Dec. 25. The couple are members of First Baptist Church, Monterey, where Gerald Bland is the pastor.

East Park Baptist Church, Memphis, ordained Dick Arsnauld into its deacon ministry Jan. 20. W. Wayne Allen is the pastor of the church.

Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Brown were honored Jan. 10 on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. The Browns are members of West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson, where John Lee Taylor is pastor.

Pat Fowle was ordained into the gospel ministry Nov. 22 by First Baptist Church, Clarksville. John David Laida is the church's pastor.

LEADERSHIP...

True Faith Baptist Church, Union City, recently called and ordained Robert Gorton as youth pastor. Henry Callison is pastor of the church.

Fairview Baptist Church, Obion, accepted the recent resignation of its pastor, Harvey Evans.

Gary Miller was called as minister of activities and youth by South Seminole Baptist Church, Chattanooga. Miller came to the church from a similar position at Fellowship Baptist Church, Chickamauga, Ga. Bill Delaney is the pastor at South Seminole.

Tony Carroll recently became minister of music at First Baptist Church, Alcoa. Carroll was previously minister of music and youth at Lookout Valley Baptist Church, Chattanooga. Doug Sager is the pastor of the Alcoa church.

Duane Evans has resigned as pastor of Cedar Creek Baptist Church, Russellville, to accept the pastorate of a Zephyrhills, Fla., church. Evans is a former president of the Nolachucky Baptist Association.

tist Association Pastors' Conference. Bobby Kitts was called as interim pastor of Cedar Creek.

Billy Joe Kennedy has returned as minister of music and youth at Hopewell Baptist Church, Savannah. Kennedy came to Hopewell his second time from West Heights Baptist Church, Pontotoc, Miss. The pastor of the Savannah church is Randy Isbell.

Calvary Baptist Church, Lenoir City, recently called Thomas W. King as minister of education and youth and children's worship pastor. King, a native of Knoxville, is a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. The church's pastor is Milton Hicks.

Jackie Smothers, a student at Jackson's Union University, is now serving as minister of youth at Oakwood Baptist Church, Milan. David Phillips is the pastor of the church.

Andy Roby accepted a call as minister of music and youth at First Baptist Church, Dyer, as of Jan. 10. The pastor of the church is Paul H. Barkley.

Buddy Burgess began Jan. 10 as minister to the deaf at First Baptist Church, Memphis. Earl C. Davis is the church's pastor.

Bill Choate accepted a call from First Baptist Church, Kingston, to come as its minister of music. Choate will begin the ministry Jan. 31. Gary Marsh is the pastor of the church.

First Baptist Church, Bolivar, recently called Ken Cox as full-time minister of activities and youth. The pastor of the church is George C. Johnson Jr.

Dean Armour, a senior at Jackson's Union University, is now minister of music at First Baptist Church, Middleton. Armour was previously minister of music at Poplar Corner Baptist Church, Bells. Gary Frye is the pastor at the Middleton church.

David Whitehouse accepted a recent call from Macedonia Baptist Church, Cleveland, to come as its minister of music. Reed Wright is the church's pastor.

Candies Creek Baptist Church, Charleston, called Steve McAmis as minister of youth. Edward R. Futrell is the pastor of the church.

David Schanuel is now serving as minister of youth and music at Bethel Baptist Church, Humboldt. Schanuel is a student at Union University, Jackson. Nathan Bishop is the church's pastor.

Oak Grove Baptist Church, Springfield, called Debbie Pate as interim minister of music. Miss Pate, a student at Nashville's Belmont College, began the position Jan. 3. Evin E. Hall is the pastor of the church.

Hopewell Baptist Church, Springfield, issued a call to Nick Holman to come as its minister of music. Holman began the position Dec. 13. The pastor of the church is Carl Freudenthal.

William R. Hancock resigned the pastorate of Pine Orchard Baptist Church, Oakdale, because of health reasons. Hancock and his wife have moved to Centerville.

Steve Starkey, resigned the pastorate of Rutledge's Sunrise Baptist Church, effective Dec. 6, to return to Florida.

Philadelphia Baptist Church, Chattanooga, accepted the recent resignation of its pastor, Doug Miller. Miller is a former moderator of Hamilton County Baptist Association, and a former president of its pastors' conference.

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Coalfield, has called Tim McGee as minister of youth. McGee came to the church from Beech Park Baptist Church, Oliver Springs, of which he is a native. Billy J. Edmonds is the pastor of Pleasant Grove.

Henry Hollar recently resigned as pastor of Henard's Chapel Baptist Church, Rogersville, to accept the pastorate of Gainsville Baptist Church, Lincolnton, N.C. Hollar was serving as moderator of Holston Valley Baptist Association.

James L. Woodward dies in Memphis

James L. Woodward, a retired Tennessee pastor, died Dec. 7 at the age of 92.

Woodward, of Memphis, was pastor of Galloway Baptist Church, Galloway; Bethpage Baptist Church, Kenton; and other churches in the state. At the time of his death, he was a member of First Baptist Church, Fisherville.

Woodward is survived by his widow, Gladys; two daughters, Ruth Barrentine and Thelma Pfeiffer; a son, James L. Woodward Jr.; a brother, H. B. Woodward, also a Tennessee pastor; and a sister, Opal Dorman.

John Yarbrough begins East Lake pastorate

John O. Yarbrough, in response to a call from Chattanooga's East Lake Baptist Church, began duties as pastor of the church Nov. 15.

Yarbrough came to East Lake from the pastorate of Tatanall Square Baptist Church, Macon, Ga. He is also a former pastor of First Baptist Church, Buena Vista, Ga., and a former president of the Macon (Ga.) Pastors' Conference.

A native of Atlanta, Ga., Yarbrough is a graduate of Mercer University, also of Macon, Ga.; and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.



King



DEPARTING TO MINISTER — Six volunteers for Tennessee Baptists' Upper Volta Hunger and Relief Project prepare to leave Nashville for the African nation. From left are Bill Knott, Willie Bell and Pat Ferris, Steve Newton, Kenny Rains, and Thomas Strong. The group, which left Jan. 1, is the first of three groups to leave this month.

BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for Jan. 24

Personal values

By Jerry Oakley, pastor
Springfield Baptist Church, Springfield

Basic Passage: Matthew 19:1-30

Focal Passages: Matthew 19:8-12, 23-26, 28-30

It is always easier to discuss abstract "spiritual" teachings than to deal with straightforward practical problems of living. In this week's study, Jesus addresses some practical problems of life.

In Matthew 19:3-9, Jesus discusses the problem of divorce. This problem is addressed against the background of a debate among the rabbis over a passage in the book of Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 24:1 reads, "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house."

This verse was originally given as a protection for the women. Without the divorce certificate, another man could be charged with stealing or violating the property rights of the first husband should he take the woman as wife or servant. This passage accepts divorce as reality and attempts to control it.

The debate that grew around this Deuteronic passage was carried on by two schools of thought. The school of Shammai stressed that "uncleanness" meant "nakedness" and interpreted the passage to be referring to adultery. They held that this was the only grounds for divorce. The school of Hillel interpreted "some uncleanness" as "some thing" and thus found a proof text for making anything serve as the grounds for a divorce. According to this school of thought, the wife burning the dinner or the husband seeing another woman who pleased him better constituted grounds for divorce. Sad as it is, Hillel was the popular school of thought in the days of Jesus and remains the popular school of thought in our day (judging by the number of divorces and the reasons given for them).

Jesus went behind the book of Deuteronomy when He said, "from the beginning." The original intent of God for marriage was a "one flesh" relationship achieved by a personal, physical, and

spiritual union. It was to be indissoluble except by death.

One man has paraphrased Jesus' statement as saying, "True, Moses permitted divorce; but that was a concession in view of a lost ideal. The ideal marriage is to be found in the unbreakable, perfect union of Adam and Eve. This is what God meant marriage to be."

We can oppose divorce without taking a judgmental, condemnatory attitude toward divorced persons. In most instances, at least one person involved in a divorce wishes it had not been necessary. In all instances, the people involved are persons experiencing a wreckage in their life of gigantic proportion. They need God's message of love and forgiveness. As Christians, we must be the bearers of that message. Jesus offers a second chance in marriage and comfort in time of divorce, on the basis of His mercy and love.

Jesus addresses three types of celibacy in verses 10-12. Jesus does not elevate celibacy as morally higher than marriage, as has been the practice of some portions of the Christian church in the past. Each is an honorable choice to be made by the individual.

In verses 23-30, Jesus confronts the problem of wealth. We must remember two things as we deal with this passage. First, this passage is closely tied to the account of Jesus' exchange with the rich young man. Secondly, Jesus is teaching His disciples.

In this passage, we are confronted with the fact that wealth brings power. Remember Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." It is very difficult for a wealthy man to be poor in spirit — not impossible but difficult.

When the disciples asked, "Who then can be saved?" they were being painfully honest. The disciples were admitting that they would accept wealth if they could achieve it. If a desire for wealth keeps us from salvation, who can be saved? Jesus answers, "With men it is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

All men are saved by lifting their eyes to God in faith. It may be more difficult for some than others, but salvation is available to all men.

In light of the young man choosing his riches, Peter asked in essence, "We have left all for you; what is in it for us?" Jesus' answer broadly interpreted was, "If you have forsaken all for My sake, you will receive a just reward. A man cannot outgive God. If you have forsaken all for a reward, you will receive little."

Some that appear to be number one, will come in last. Others that appear to be last are in reality going to be first. God's judgment is much more discerning than the eyes of man.



Oakley



Shurden

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for Jan. 24

Jesus declares His ministry

By Robert M. Shurden, associate professor of religion
Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City

Basic Passages: Luke 3:15-22; 4:14-44; 7:19-23

Focal Passages: Luke 3:15-22; 7:19-23

John Fenton's book, *What Was Jesus' Message?*, contains a provocative chapter entitled, "The Offense of Jesus." The author noted that Jesus offended first-century people who possessed a certain preconceived notion concerning the identity and behavior of the expected messiah.

Obviously, Jesus' crucifixion represented the ultimate expression of Jewish dissatisfaction. But, from the beginning of His public ministry to its conclusion, His disciples, as well as His opponents, found His style of ministry "hard to swallow." It is no surprise to find some rejecting Him and others mystified by Him in light of the difference between the contemporary image of the messiah and the distinctive way Jesus worked at His mission.

Jesus said, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me" (Matthew 11:6; Luke 7:23). What made such a statement necessary? Why did some misunderstand, others resist, and still others take His life?

In our Scripture passage, Jesus, by action and word, teaches about the nature of His ministry. They all portray Him as being extravagantly merciful toward the needy rather than excessively judgmental upon Jewish oppressors. The latter proved to be a basis for offense and misunderstanding.

The distinctive nature of Jesus' ministry became evident, at the very beginning, in the context of His submission to the baptism of John. John was not the Christ (Luke 3:15-16). As the prophetic forerunner, he preached a baptism of repentance as preparation for the Christ. As a Jew, he placed major emphasis upon the messiah's work of judgment (Luke 3:17), probably assuming that the Romans would be chief recipients of the wrath. However, rather than the oppressors being purged, the forerunner was imprisoned (Luke 3:20).

Why Jesus submitted to baptism by John has been debated. Even John, according to Matthew 3:14, thought it unnecessary. To be sure, Jesus was no repentant sinner. And, while Jesus may have been endorsing John's work, He probably submitted in order to identify with and stand beside needy sinners who acknowledged their sins in repentance.

At the Jordan, Jesus could only stand on the bank with the self-righteous or enter the water with sinners. He chose to do the latter; and that kind of action, even though it jeopardized His messianic status, was a dramatic prediction of the shape of His future work. The voice from heaven exclaimed, "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). However, what pleased God about Jesus proved intolerable to many who only thought they understood deity.

Later, Jesus stated directly His intention of spiritual deliverance of the needy rather than political destruction of the oppressor. In His home synagogue in

Nazareth, He interpreted His mission as the fulfillment of prophetic prediction. Citing Isaiah 61:1-2a, Jesus claimed divine anointment (Messiah) and described His purpose in terms of good news for the poor, release to captives, sight for the blind, and liberty for the oppressed (Luke 4:18). His exposition which follows (Luke 4:24-27) amplifies the theme of grace to the undeserving.

A prominent scholar has observed that Jesus omitted any reference to Isaiah's expectation of vengeance. Jesus' quotation of Isaiah stops in mid-sentence, thereby omitting the phrase "and the day of vengeance of our God" (Isaiah 61:2b). Such omission may well be part of the offense, for Luke 4:22 may be translated, "All witnessed against Him and were shocked at the words of grace."

Jesus, obviously, brought salvation and judgment; but His offer of salvation was universal in its grace in that it was intended for Jew and Roman on the basis of faith. Likewise, judgment was based on the non-faith of every person, not the ethnic or religious identity of a few.

Finally, Jesus confirmed this nature of His ministry in response to an inquiry from the one who had baptized Him (Luke 7:19-23). Confined in prison by Herod, a Roman-approved ruler, John dispatched two of his disciples to Jesus with the question, "Art Thou He that should come? or look we for another?" (Luke 7:19). The question probably stemmed from John's own notions about the type of work the messiah should accomplish. His own detention and serious circumstances, coupled with Jesus' failure to restore the kingdom to Israel, precipitated the honest inquiry.

Jesus' answer was not a direct claim of messiahship but another reference to Isaianic prophecy (Isaiah 42:6; 61:1) and to His own deeds. The blind were seeing, the lame walking, lepers were being cleansed, the deaf were hearing, the dead were being raised, and the poor were being "good newsed" (Luke 7:22).

Again, He minimized the element of vengeance upon the offender and magnified the factor of grace for the victim. Jesus did not redeem by destroying a person's enemies. He did not deliver from the outside in, but from the inside out. This meant salvation for all, Jew or Greek, who repented and believed. It meant judgment for all who resisted such decision.

He was grace, and that offended Jews who believed that Gentiles were excluded. Therefore, Jesus' words to John represent a major challenge to us also: "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Luke 7:23).

BIBLE PUZZLE ANSWERS

R	O	B	L	O	R	D	H	A	T	E
E	Y	E	A	B	I	C	E	L	O	D
D	E	S	B	A	N	C	M	A	L	E
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"Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord" (Psa. 150:6).

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LIFE AND WORK SERIES

Lesson for Jan. 24

The Christian and sexuality

By Ben W. Bledsoe, chaplain
Memphis Correctional Center, Memphis

Basic Passage: 1 Corinthians 5-6

Focal Passage: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

The world's attitude toward sex and the attitude taught by the Bible could hardly be further apart. Agreement is rare.

Young people and weak Christians are especially vulnerable to stress created by the conflicts. The church faces one of its most serious challenges in helping its members develop healthy Christian attitudes toward sex. As is often the case with many issues confronting the church, we take extreme stands on sexuality that are hard to support.

One extreme position is to avoid the subject of sex altogether. Talking about sex can be uncomfortable and embarrassing. When problems arise, avoiders naively hope they will just go away; but problems do not go away without being solved.



Bledsoe

Another extreme position toward sexuality is to exaggerate its importance — to make mountains out of molehills; to suspect immoral behavior everywhere; and to dwell with relish on every unfortunate indiscretion. Gossip mongers love to get hold of all the latest rumors with sexual overtones.

How does the church counteract the tempting lures from the world toward promiscuous sexual behavior without losing the aspect of beauty in God-approved sex? How do we confront the world and (in some cases) church members with God's truth about purity, faithfulness, and decency without seeming overly judgmental or losing perspective toward other issues? How do we preach forgiveness and grace without appearing easy on sin?

I believe some clues to the answers to these questions are found in our lesson passage, which includes a Biblical understanding of the nature of our bodies, the nature of sexual intercourse, and the nature of redemption.

The nature of our bodies

God entrusted each of us with a body. Our body is a gift from God (vv. 19-20). It is to be used for God (vv. 13b, 20) and not for fornication. Fornication is a sin against one's own body (v. 18) and another's body.

Particularly for the Christian, the body is the instrument by which we serve God. It is the object of God's salvation (v. 13b). God dwells within our bodies like His Temple (v. 19). One day our bodies will be raised just as Christ was raised (v. 14).

An understanding of the nature of the body should lead us to care for it by good health habits. Our responsibility to our Lord suggests a stewardship of the body. We should do certain things with it and we should avoid others. Sexual intercourse restricted to marriage is best because it honors God through one's body.

The nature of sexual intercourse

If one accepts his body as a gift from

God to be used for God, one can easily accept the place of coitus in the plan of God.

The sex act is described as the essence of marriage (v. 16). By having sexual intercourse with a harlot, a man is technically treating her as a wife. The uniting of bodies (becoming one) is the symbolic and actual experience in which a man and woman commit themselves to each other in mutual love, respect, care, and companionship.

Sexual intercourse is the act by which children are conceived. The presence of children in the home further increases the responsibility of faithfulness between husband and wife.

God's plan for marriage, the home, and intimacy cannot be improved upon. Deviation is dangerous.

The nature of redemption

Few healthy humans, Christian or not, can claim absolute innocence in sexual morality. As we become more aware of God's love, the depth of His grace, and the magnitude of the redemptive price (v. 20), the more we become aware of sin. Whether in thought or act, we all stand guilty of rejecting God's way in favor of our own.

Sin and redemption make equals of us all. God's forgiveness reaches out to adulterer and gossip alike. Church members have a responsibility to keep the grace of God active in their lives by confession and prayer. We also have a ministry of restoration (see Galatians 6:1) to others who have stumbled.

Sexuality is an important aspect of individual identity. Our sexual nature includes our relationship with the opposite sex. God has given us some guidelines to control this powerful force. With healthier attitudes toward sexuality, we could avoid a great deal of marital failure and personal pathology.

The church and the world will always be at odds with each other. One of the issues will always be sexuality. If the world's way is followed, the end is deterioration and decay. If God's way is followed, there is life and peace.

Johnson to coordinate seminary satellites

NASHVILLE (BP) — Michael D. Johnson, administrative assistant in the office of the provost at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been elected as the first full-time director of the new seminary satellite department of the Seminary External Education Division.

Johnson will assume the post June 1. He was elected by the division's governing board, composed of the presidents of the six Southern Baptist seminaries.

In his position at Southern seminary, Johnson worked closely with Provost Roy L. Honeycutt in administering off-campus seminary studies programs in Baltimore, Md.; Detroit, Mich.; and Jackson, Tenn. His new duties will include processing applications for new satellites to be jointly sponsored by all six seminaries through the new department. Once approved and activated, the satellites will receive assistance from Johnson in curriculum planning and the maintenance of permanent student records.

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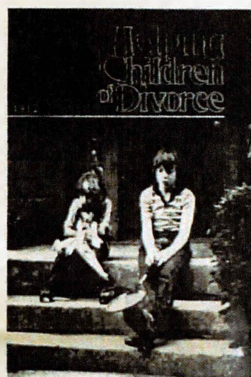


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Church busing declines in SBC churches

NASHVILLE (BP)— When a big church bus rolled into Southern Baptists' neighborhoods 15 years ago, it seemed like everybody in town got on.

Lured by the glittering example of huge and independent First Baptist Church, Hammond, Ind., Southern Baptist churches by the droves tried busing as a quick and easy way to build a church.

Today, the Hammond church still brings 8,000 people to six Sunday Schools on 160 leased buses, but the 7,200 Southern Baptist churches that were in busing at its peak in 1975 has dropped to about 5,000. The estimated 250,000 persons they had brought in has dropped correspondingly.

"In the first three or four years of busing, everybody in it got all excited," says Wally Bebe, once bus director in Hammond. "They thought, 'Oh boy, this is go-

ing to really increase my church.' Then they found out it's a lot of stinking work. Those that didn't want ethnics, who didn't want to increase classrooms and train leaders, backed out."

Bebe now operates his own bus outreach clinics and compiles annual statistics on bus ministries for a national bus newsletter. His 1977 statistics indicated 21 of the top 35 busing churches decreased the number of riders they brought the previous year. In 1978, 18 of the top 35 showed decreases, and in 1979 and 1980 only 11 of the top 35 decreased. To Bebe, that signals bus ministries are stabilizing.

The 5,000 estimate for the number of SBC churches still busing comes from an informal survey among associational mission directors conducted by D. Lewis White, the first man named by the Bap-

tist Sunday School Board to coordinate its bus outreach program.

In 1973, the SBC meeting in Portland assigned busing to the Sunday School Board, although Bill Powell, then with the Home Mission Board, was the prime mover in SBC bus outreach. By his estimate, Powell, now editor of the non-affiliated *Southern Baptist Journal*, led 300 bus conferences between 1971-74. The Sunday School Board still conducts several each year.

Broadway Baptist Church in Memphis is the only Southern Baptist church that appears in Bebe's top 35, although at least two others — Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla., and Dauphin Way Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala. — would if they were included in his research.

Broadway is 11th in the 1980 listing. Bus Director Larry Hipps hopes to push the 1,100 they bring now on their 22 buses to 1,300.

As frequently occurs in cities with busing churches, buses from other Tulsa churches cross paths with one of Eastwood's 26 buses. "We're not competition," Bus Director Barry Edwards says. "We're out there doing what the Lord told us to do, and trust they are doing what the Lord told them to do. The main thing is getting the kids in here to hear about Jesus and teach them God's Word."

To get the children to church, some churches employed questionable tactics such as offering local trips and prizes to kids who bring the most guests, and taping money to the underside of seats. Those tactics cost credibility in the eyes of many.

"Some obscene things were done to children to enroll them," says Dale Cross, director of metropolitan evangelism at the Home Mission Board. "They caused the children to see the church as an institution that is out to buy their involvement and participation through various tricks, rather than as people who genuinely care about their lives and needs."

"Our outreach now isn't so they can come help us feel good about our out-

reach, but so we can help them in their lives."

Cross is positive about church bus outreach "if done with integrity and if it doesn't prostitute all the energies a church has on an altar of trying to pack out a church on Sunday morning."

Buses were sapping the energy of Jim Wright, pastor of Highland Avenue Baptist Church in Queens, N.Y. One day he realized his church had been busing every week for 10 years and there were only three teenagers still in the church who had come up through the bus ministry.

Highland Avenue Church, with a membership of 1,000, large for a Southern Baptist church in the area, brought in 50 to 60 percent of its Sunday School on buses when they decided to stop. "It just devastated our Sunday School," Wright says. "Enrollment just about fell off the board."

But the decision gave Wright a new perspective on building a church. "God builds a church," he discovered. "The Lord Jesus builds a church."

Bernard Spooner, director of the Sunday School division for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, feels the busing boom of the 1970s was an experiment for Southern Baptists, who then were not aggressive in evangelism and starting new churches.

"Busing served a very valuable purpose to show people can be reached, if we're aggressive enough," he says. "But it is not a way to grow a church. It is a way to reach certain pockets of people."

Many churches that got into busing thinking it would pay for itself and grow a church are out. Others, despite a predicted \$4 per gallon gasoline and possible rationing, move firmly ahead.

"The people in it now are those that feel this is a vital ministry to their church and their community and will stay in it," says Hipps, at Broadway. "They know what it's about and feel it's important to keep it going."

Eastwood's Edwards declares inflation does not affect God's economy: "The Bible says go into the highways and byways and pick up the maimed and the lame. He is going to supply the resources to do it. He's the source of our supply. We never thought eight years ago that gas would get to \$1.20 a gallon but it did, and we still take the buses out on Saturday (to enlist riders)."

People have told Bobby Smith, bus director of Dauphin Way, they will give the church their gas ration coupons to keep the buses going if it comes to that. With such dedication by some, Southern Baptists will be riding buses a long time.

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New uses found for church buses

NASHVILLE (BP)— Though Southern Baptists' fervor to bus people to church has cooled, many churches have put the rumbling hulks to innovative use.

When J. D. Wynn was pastor of Dinsmore Baptist Church near Jacksonville, Fla., he converted an old bus to a do-it-all mobile you-name-it chapel and took it to nearby trailer parks.

With several hundred feet of electrical wire, a pocketful of outlets, and some sewing machines, the bus became a sewing classroom; lined with books it was a library; and filled with teenagers and a preacher, it was a chapel.

Wynn's aptitude for mechanized ministries led him to work with handicapped to the extent he now has \$5.5-million in proposals before the federal government to build elderly and handicapped housing.

The Brotherhood at Columbia Drive Baptist Church, Decatur, Ga., takes 15 to 30 women from a predominantly black public high rise each Saturday to a grocery store. Men pick them up, take them to the store, and wait while they shop. Buying done, the men mark the bags by apartment number and carry them to the bus, then deliver groceries to their door.

James Pierce, pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky., anticipates relieving his church's parking problem with a suburban park and ride service.

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