

# Baptist and Reflector

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News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention

## Irwin tells state youth of Christian walk Moon explorer, others speak to over 34,000 at conference

By Steve Higdon

"It is more important that Jesus Christ walked the earth than that man walked on the moon," Jim Irwin, who explored the moon in 1971, told over 34,000 young people and their counselors gathered for the 1982 State Youth Evangelism Conference.

"Just as Christ walked the earth 2,000 years ago, He wants to walk today," Irwin continued. "He wants to transform lives today."

Irwin, lunar module pilot for the Apollo 15 mission, spoke during the Friday sessions of the event, held March 5-6 at Vanderbilt Memorial Gymnasium in Nashville. He was joined on the program by Florida Pastor Jim Henry; Angelina Johnson, Miss Tennessee 1981; Susan Newman, Miss Carson-Newman 1981; John Lee, a Nashville minister of music; musical groups from the state's three Baptist colleges; and Malcolm McDow, director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's evangelism department, which organizes the annual conference.

"My life will never be the same," Irwin said, before telling of his experience with God on the moon. "He allowed me to go there so that He might reveal Himself to me."

The former astronaut said it was while viewing his home world as though it were "a beautiful jewel in the blackness of space" that "God allowed me to see the earth as He must see it, and allowed me to feel about it in much the same way He must. I prayed, and God was there to answer my prayers."

Upon returning to earth, Irwin rededicated his life. After retiring from the Air Force in 1972, he established the High Flight Foundation, an interdenominational Christian ministry. Since that time, he has given his testimony at public schools, universities, churches, and civic group meetings in over 50 countries.

Irwin told his audience that now, 11 years after Apollo 15, the most important thing in his life is not that he explored the moon and collected rocks from its surface. "Tonight, the most important thing," he explained, "is the rock of God's Word, and that Jesus is the rock of ages, the foundation, and the essential element of life."

"I know that many of you will never have the chance to go to the moon," he concluded. "But let's just praise God that He works everywhere."

Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla., spoke following Irwin during Friday's two identical sessions, and again for the twin sessions on Saturday. The former pastor of Nashville's Two Rivers Baptist Church told the youth how to live successfully for God.

In his Friday sermon, Henry illustrated five keys of successful living with the story of three young men in Daniel 3.

"First," he explained, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego succeeded with God because they had made a commitment to God. They had refused to bow down to another god. If you are going to be successful, you can only have one God in your life."

"You will be a success if you will repent of your sins and trust Christ as Saviour of your life," Henry added. God's success story says "give Me your heart."

"Secondly, they were successful because they had made a prior commitment to God. Commit yourself all the way to Christ and stay with it," Henry encouraged his listeners. "In the worst of times, you will have to draw on your prior commitment, and that commitment will make the difference."

Next, Henry told how the three men had refused the rich foods and wine given to them. "They were willing to be different," he pointed out.

"Has Jesus made a difference in how you live?" he asked the youth, explaining that there should be a difference in how they dress, where they go, how they speak, and what they listen to.

"Fourth, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were successful because they knew who they were. Some of you are having difficulty because you don't know who you are . . . Jesus Christ helps you know who you are. Jesus Christ makes you somebody. You are a child of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

"Finally, they were willing to die for what they believed," Henry said. "If you want to be successful God's way, you've



**PERSPECTIVE** — Jim Irwin holds a marble, illustrating his perspective of earth from the moon.

got to be willing to give Him everything you've got."

Henry continued his emphasis during his Saturday sermon, by offering advice on three choices that Christian young people must make.

"First, choose you today who your master will be. Every person has a master," he said, explaining that some youth choose rebellion, running away, or intellectual pursuits as master.

"Others choose religion," he added. "They have a religion, but not a relationship."

Henry told the teenagers that the second choice involved their dating life. "If you are to be in the will of God, you should only date Christians," he warned.

"Also, date people your parents can approve of. Make sure your parents

know who you are going out with," Henry advised. "And," he cautioned, "behave yourself on a date."

"Third, choose your mission for life," Henry concluded, noting that this can be done by "determining that you want God's will in your life," praying, reading the Bible, noticing natural circumstances, developing talents, and learning spiritual gifts.

Miss Johnson, the reigning Miss Tennessee, addressed the conference on Friday. She told of her lack of confidence as a teenager, and how God had helped her to have the confidence to depend on Him, not herself.

"I tried to live up to the world's standards," she said, "and was failing. Only when I tried to live up to God's standards did I succeed."

Miss Johnson asked the young people to listen to their parents. "Most of you may think your parents have nothing to say — and I may have thought the same thing at one time or another — but my parents stuck with me and stuck by me," she said, adding that she was grateful for their guidance.

A student at Union University in Jackson, the aspiring commercial artist told of the blessings she received from her title and its responsibilities. "The crown I have now means a lot to me, but soon my year as Miss Tennessee will be over, and I will have to give it up. But there is something I don't have to give up. Jesus Christ is reigning in my heart right now, and I don't ever have to give that up."

Miss Newman, Miss Carson-Newman for 1981, told youth at the Saturday ses-

(Continued on page 5)



An estimated 18,000 attended the second of two Friday night sessions during the Youth Evangelism Conference

## Two Nashville-area churches plan to establish Davidson Academy

Two Baptist churches in northern Davidson County — First Baptist Church of Madison and Grace Baptist Church of Nashville — will cooperate in the establishment of Davidson Academy, a private Christian school which eventually will offer kindergarten through grade 12.

The school will be operated by Tennessee Christian Schools Inc., which is composed of members of the two congregations.

## Union trustees modify structure

JACKSON — Union University trustees voted to modify the school's administrative structure, elevating three of the top administrative officers to vice-president positions.

All of the officers affected by the upgrading are members of the school's administrative council, which serves in an advisory capacity to the president.

Being promoted are Larry Stewart, from director of development to vice-president for development; Bob Agee, from director of religious affairs to vice-president for religious affairs; and Magie Nell Brewer, from dean of students to vice-president for student affairs.

Five new positions as deans of the schools of fine arts, humanities, natural and behavioral sciences, professional studies, and nursing, will be created.

The deans will report to Hyran E. Barefoot, who has served as vice-president for academic affairs and academic dean since 1978. His "academic dean" title will be dropped under the restructuring.

Miss Brewer, as vice-president for student affairs, will continue to have jurisdiction over the areas of dean of men and dean of women.

In other business, the trustees approved the promotion of six of the college's faculty members.

Promoted from instructor to assistant professor were June Huffman of the music department, and nursing department faculty members Melanie Matthews and Regina Saffel. Promoted from assistant professor to associate professor were Richard Dehn of the mathematics department and Lytle Givens of the sociology department.

Faculty member Eldon Byrd, a 21-year employee of the college, was promoted from associate professor status to the position of professor.

## Texas check boosts mission receipts

NASHVILLE (BP) — A Texas-size boost from Southern Baptists' largest state convention pushed February Cooperative Program receipts to \$8,933,611, the third highest month in history.

Texas, which surpassed its own Cooperative Program budget in 1981 by \$4.9-million, forwarded to the SBC Executive Committee an advance budget check for worldwide mission causes of \$1,825,603.

That "extra" check helped make undesignated February 1982 receipts 31.4 percent higher than February 1981.

The more critical year-to-date figures show Southern Baptists have contributed \$38,988,450 for missions and education through the national Cooperative Program, a figure 13.2 percent ahead of the same five months last year.

Year-to-date designated receipts total \$36,843,508, an increase of 4.5 percent over the same period of 1981.

Total designated and undesignated

Davidson Academy is an outgrowth of Madison Christian School, which was opened in 1980 in the educational building of Madison's First Baptist Church. Originally, this school offered grades one through four, but a kindergarten and fifth grade have been added. A sixth grade will be added this fall.

The corporation has an option to purchase a 60-acre tract of land on Old Hickory Blvd., just east of Interstate 24. Plans are for construction of a building on the property before the fall of 1983, at which time Davidson Academy will open with a kindergarten and grades one through eight. The high school grades will be added later.

Davidson Academy will be named for the first school established in Davidson County in 1785. The original academy was rechartered in 1806 as Cumberland College, and later was known as the University of Nashville and George Peabody College.

## Belmont lauds Kidd, Bunch

NASHVILLE — Belmont College will induct Gene Kidd and Goebel Bunch into the Lemuel B. Stevens Collegiatus March 18.

The collegiatus annually honors individuals selected by the trustees whose support of higher education has been "of special relevancy and significant continuity" in the life of the college.

Gene Kidd, president emeritus of Baptist Hospital, Nashville, served as the hospital's president from 1970 to Jan. 1, 1982. Before that, he had been administrator of the hospital since 1954. He played a significant role in the establishment of Belmont College's School of Nursing, according to college administrators. A native Virginian, Kidd is a graduate of the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va.

Goebel Bunch, president and general manager of Bunch Cadillac Inc. of Nashville, has been a trustee of Belmont College for 12 years, including serving as chairman or member of several committees. He also has been an active member of Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville, for 33 years. He attended Oakland City College, Oakland City, Ind.; and the University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill. He is a native of Franklin, Ky.

Lemuel B. Stevens, for whom the collegiatus is named, served as chairman of the Belmont College trustees in 1964.

giving was \$31,793,501 in February, an increase of 4.2 percent over February 1981. Year-to-date figures show total gifts of \$75,831,958, an increase of 8.8 percent over the first five months of 1981.

## BYW cancels Pickwick retreat

The Baptist Young Women missions retreat announced for Pickwick Landing State Park, March 12-13, has been cancelled due to insufficient registration, according to Tennessee BYW Director Lucy Hoskins.

A similar retreat, planned for March 19-21 at First Baptist Church in Pigeon Forge, will be held as scheduled. For additional information, contact Miss Hoskins at P.O. Box 347, Brentwood, TN 37027, or (615) 373-2255.



AWARD WINNERS — Radio-TV Commission award winners were (from left) Joe Lusk, Jack Norris, Aldo Ruiz, Jim Rupe, Chuck Ries, and Jimmy Aiken.

## RTVC sweeps Angel awards; wins seven national honors

HOLLYWOOD (BP) — It was Southern Baptist night when seven radio programs produced by the denomination's Radio and Television Commission won top honors in the national Angel awards, sponsored by Religion in Media.

Religion in Media is a worldwide inter-religious, non-profit organization. The Angel awards annually recognize excellence in religious radio, television, film, records, and books.

Seven RTVC programs were nominated for awards. Five of them won Silver Angels, the top award in their category. The other two won certificates of excellence, runner-up awards.

The five top winners were Country Crossroads, MasterControl, Horizontes, Hosanna USA, and the Christmas Living Word radio spots.

Receiving certificates of excellence were Sounds of the Centurymen and On Track.

This is the second time that Country Crossroads and MasterControl have been honored with these national awards. Two years ago, the programs

## La. youth prepare for New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Louisiana Baptist young people will witness door-to-door in six areas of metropolitan New Orleans on the Saturday prior to the Southern Baptist Convention, June 15-17.

Calvin Cantrell, associate evangelism director for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, said a 13-week DiscipleYouth training program currently is underway in preparation for the event.

The program, produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and Home Mission Board, is designed to teach young people to be better witnesses. A mass rally in New Orleans Municipal Auditorium June 11 — featuring concert musician David Meece and Evangelist Arthur Blessitt — will launch the effort.

About 5,000 young people, mostly high school age, are expected to participate. Most will be from Louisiana, Cantrell said, but others will come from adjoining states. Churches in the areas to be covered are being asked to provide housing and adult guides for out-of-towners.

All information gathered from the homes visited will be given to Baptist churches in the areas worked.

"We anticipate the evangelism effort will be a growing spiritual experience for our young people," Cantrell said. "We request prayers that many who are visited will be saved as a result of the effort."

each received an Angel award for excellence in national radio.

The seven awards, the most ever given to one organization by the Angel awards program, led the award presenters to call the Feb. 18 ceremonies "Southern Baptist night."

The awards were presented by David Hofer, president of the National Religious Broadcasters and Demos Shakarian, founder of the International Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship. Actor Dean Jones was master of ceremonies. Other presenters included Steve Allen, Jayne Meadows, Roy Rogers, and Rhonda Fleming.

Country Crossroads features country music with co-host Bill Mack, a Fort Worth disc jockey; Jerry Clower, of the Grand Ole Opry; and a regular guest host. It is on 1,357 stations. MasterControl, heard on 891 stations, is a music interview program.

Horizontes is a half-hour Spanish-language program for young adults. A new program, it is on 52 stations. Hosanna USA was a religious special and the Christmas Living Word spots were 30 and 60 second Scripture readings from the Living Bible. The spots were mailed to all radio stations in the nation.

Sounds of the Centurymen features sacred music from the Centurymen, a men's singing group founded by the RTVC and is on 175 stations. On Track, the agency's newest program, has a format especially designed for Christian stations and features Christian contemporary recording artists. It was first aired in October and is already on 217 radio stations across the country.

## UTK's BSU associate called to Jacksboro

Larry Reeves, until recently Baptist Student Union associate director at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, was called as pastor of First Baptist Church, Jacksboro.

Reeves, who was serving the church as interim pastor, began the ministry in January. He is a former pastor of Little Flat Creek Baptist Church, Coryton, and Gilead Baptist Church, Richmond, Ky.

A native of Waynesville, North Carolina, Reeves is a graduate of Berea College, Berea, Ky., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.



Reeves

## Leaders grapple with ways to reach nation's cities

ATLANTA (BP)— Southern Baptist leaders grappled for two days with ways to plan effective strategies for reaching 46 percent of the United States population who live in the nation's 50 largest cities.

The think tank brought together top pastors and denominational leaders in the effort to focus on megalopolitan missions. The effort was in response to a motion passed at the 1981 Southern Baptist Convention in Los Angeles "to strengthen our witness to the millions of unreached people who live in our vast metropolitan areas."

The meeting was sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board metropolitan missions department, and dealt with strategies to reach the "mega" cities, or those with more than 1-million population. There are 50 cities in the nation classified as "megacities" and which contain 46 percent of the nation's people.

HMB President William G. Tanner, warning "if we lose the cities, we'll lose the country," recommended a "teamship approach" to winning the cities. He praised SBC agencies for creating Center for Urban Church Studies as a resource bank, citing it as "one of the most effective things that the agencies have done together."

The center, housed at the Baptist Sunday School Board, is a cooperative venture between the Foreign Mission Board, HMB, BSSB, Brotherhood Commission, Woman's Missionary Union, and the six SBC-affiliated seminaries.

Tanner also urged support for the HMB's 10-year emphasis on mega focus cities, another "teamship" involving local churches, associations, state conventions, SBC agencies in planning strategy for the 50 most populous cities in the nation.

The focus cities effort will target five cities per year, beginning in 1983 and continuing through 1991.

Don Sharp, associate director of church extension for the Metro Chicago

Baptist Association, suggested a hybridized approach to reaching blacks, which would incorporate Southern Baptist strategy into the black church setting.

Ian Chapman, pastor of Third Baptist Church in St. Louis, sounded the need for a "new breed of pastor" and recommended the establishment of an SBC-wide network of urban pastors.

Tom Wolf, pastor of the Church on Brady in Los Angeles, pointed out Southern Baptists have a need "to challenge young seminarians to give away their lives in the inner city."

## 'Baptist and Reflector' ex-editor, James A. Lester, dies in Georgia

James A. Lester, former editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*, died early March 2 at his home in Stone Mountain, Ga., of a heart attack. He was 53.

Lester was public relations secretary and Baptist Center manager for the Georgia Baptist Convention, Atlanta, at the time of his death.

A native of Georgia, he was a graduate of Norman Junior College, Norman Park, Ga.; Mercer University, Macon, Ga.; and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, La.

After serving for six years on the staff of New Orleans' Times-Picayune, Lester became public relations secretary for the Georgia Baptist Convention in 1957, a position he held until becoming editor of the *Baptist and Reflector* in 1968.

Lester resigned the editorship of the *Baptist and Reflector* in 1973, and in 1974 he returned to the Georgia Baptist Convention office as public relations secretary and Baptist Center manager. In 1981 he was given additional duties as coordinator of arrangements for the annual Georgia Baptist conventions.

A life-long history buff, in 1972 Lester wrote *A History of the Georgia Baptist Convention 1822-1972* to coincide with that convention's 150th anniversary. He

## Language missions leaders examine 'melting pot' myth

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. (BP)— "Many ethnics in America have never 'melted,'" a language missions leader told Southern Baptist leaders, missiologists, and researchers at the 25th annual Language Missions Leadership Conference.

Oscar Romo, director of language missions for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, refuted the myth of America as a "melting pot," and said because many ethnics have not "melted," the "task is to weave the concept of God into the context of their culture."

Romo noted that baptisms, Sunday

School growth, and missions giving are increasing among ethnic churches, but warned, "We will lose these churches in Southern Baptist life if we don't develop contextual language materials."

"Language and culture are conduits for the gospel. The increasing ethnicity of the Southern Baptist Convention calls for accelerating the development of language materials based, not only on the financial return of the investment, but on the spiritual enrichment of ethnic America."

He called for the development of a language materials consortium by the state conventions and SBC agencies to augment production of contextual materials "urgently needed" by SBC congregations ministering to 81 ethnic groups in the U.S.

Noting that "more than 90 percent of the Home Mission Board's ministry is among ethnic Americans" (those who emigrated from other countries and became American citizens), Romo declared that "Southern Baptists' greatest challenge will be to reach the American ethnics who were born here, but who also identify with a language-culture group." At present, he said, "We're only making progress among the American Indian and deaf groups among American ethnics."

Romo praised sponsorship as an effective means of encouraging a fledgling ethnic congregation, but commented that in some cases "the sponsoring church, like an overprotective parent, has smothered the mission's growth." He estimated that an effort by sponsoring churches "to let their ethnic child grow up" could produce 1,000 language-culture churches in one year.

Romo also acknowledged the trend toward formation of separate ethnic Baptist fellowships, particularly in urban areas. "To deny them this privilege is to negate Baptist polity," Romo warned.

Citing HMB forecasts for growing ethnic populations in the south and the cities in the coming decade, Romo outlined a three-fold strategy for producing 3,508 additional ethnic congregations by the year 2000. The plan includes establishing 7,074 new units of work, converting 150 transitional churches into language churches, and organizing 1,000 existing missions into churches.

To reach that goal as part of the SBC emphasis on having 50,000 churches at the turn of the century, "we must change the way we think about expecting every new work to become a church within five years," Romo contended. "Southern Baptists must learn to water ethnic churches as well as to plant them."

## Harrison Chilhowee to host Bible program

SEYMOUR — The opening date for the Harrison Chilhowee Baptist Academy's springtime session of Bible education will be March 26.

Classes in Biblical survey, church administration, personal evangelism, missions history, and Biblical introduction highlight a curriculum of study which is offered to area ministers and to the general membership of area churches.

Instructors for these courses are local residents with backgrounds in pastoral, teaching, and missionary ministries. Two class periods are scheduled for Friday nights and three periods are set for Saturday mornings. Classes will continue for eight weeks.



James A. Lester

was also chairman of the Georgia committee involved in updating the Southern Baptist Encyclopedia.

Lester was a member of the Public Relations Society of America and was listed in Who's Who in America. At the time of his death, he was also Protestant chaplain of the DeKalb County Police Department.

He had served as pastor of Baptist churches in Georgia, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Funeral services were held March 3 at Clarkston Baptist Church, Clarkston, Ga. Burial was in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Mansfield, Ga.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Lynn Owen Lester, formerly of Brentwood; three sons, Earl of Nashville, Edwin of Franklin, and Brian of Stone Mountain, Ga.; one daughter, Jenna of Stone Mountain, Ga.; his mother, Mrs. Paul Lester of Decatur, Ga.; one brother, Paul of Columbus, Ga.; and two sisters, Mrs. Mel Williams of Leesburg, Fla., and Mrs. George Adams of Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

## Annuity Board official enters private business

DALLAS (BP)— Harvey H. Kennedy Jr., senior vice-president and director of operations at the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, has resigned effective Feb. 28, to enter private business as a computer consultant.

Kennedy came to the board in 1969 from the IBM Corporation to direct the electronic data processing system. In 1970, he became vice-president and director of management systems. He has held his present post since 1979.



Baggett

Rolater



Tonks

Deweese

## History workshop to feature variety of seminar leaders

Judge Bernie Cobb of Brownsville will be the featured speaker at the Baptist history workshop, March 27, at Brownsville Baptist Church.

Cobb will speak on the history of Brownsville Baptist Church.

Workshop leaders will be Ron Tonks, assistant executive director of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission; Charles Dewese, director of editorial services for the Historical Commission; Fred Rolater, professor of history at Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro; James Alex Baggett, professor of history at Union University, Jackson; and Wallace Anderson, director of program services for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The workshop, jointly sponsored by the

Tennessee Baptist Historical Society and the Southern Baptist Historical Commission is designed for church clerks, church media library personnel, church historians and history committee members, church staff members, and others interested in Baptist life and history.

The workshop will provide training and materials to help churches collect and preserve historical materials, conduct research, and write the history of a church.

The deadline for registration is March 18. A \$4 registration fee should accompany requests for reservations made to Eleanor Yarborough, Tennessee Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 347, Brentwood, TN 37027.

## EDITORIAL

## Life and death as viewed by James Lester (1928-1982)

A former editor of this publication, James Adams Lester, died last week at the age of 53. He served Tennessee Baptists as editor of the *Baptist and Reflector* from Oct. 1, 1968 until Nov. 1, 1973.

As a recognition of his service and as a tribute to his memory, we are printing on this page excerpts from editorials which he penned as editor of this publication. We have chosen some of his writings which deal with life, death, and the Christian faith.

† † †

We don't act always as if we believed it, but the tremendous power for us in the knowledge of the resurrection is overwhelming. We ought to live lives full, complete, and joyful, secure in the knowledge that we live eternally in Christ.

The editor has believed for a long time that a person is not really prepared to live nor is a person capable of living life to its fullest, until a person is not afraid to die in the physical sense. It is in the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, that one finds the ability to live a full life.

("Easter Meditation," April 3, 1969)

† † †

In our desire to evade the fact that death is death, we are prone to use phrases which almost make it look as if we are trying to rationalize reality into obscurity.

Christians are guilty many times of glossing over the facts of death. It is almost as if we were afraid to die. For the Christian, who looks to the sure and certain hope of life eternal in God through Christ Jesus, physical death ought not to be feared or glossed over.

Let's be honest enough to say that one is dead and that he "was" a great man, keeping references in the past tense. All the present tenses in English grammar aren't going to alter the fact of death.

("Let's Keep Our Tenses Straight," April 10, 1969)

† † †

Despite all the anxiety, grief, turmoil, frustration, loneliness, heartache, and despair in our world today, the great fact of the resurrection provides the antidote. For it was Jesus who said, "I and the Father are one" and "I am come that ye might have life." In Christ then, there is one hope for all mankind — for salvation, life eternal, assurance, strength, hope, comfort, and cheer.

When a person today sits down and enumerates the problems which confront our world, the end result, apart from Christ, can be nothing but absolute despair. We are at war with ourselves and within our world. Economic security eludes us. Personal happiness seems an all too elusive dream without promise of reality. And then the refrain of the old gospel song is remembered, "Where could I go but to the Lord."

In a world filled with vague uncertainties, the certainty of heaven through belief in Christ as Saviour and Lord stands as an unmovable mountain toward which we turn for strength and help.

Again, as one has said, "I don't know what the future holds, but I know Who holds the future." For the Christian, one has said that every day ought to be Easter. Surely this Sunday could be a time when we thank God for this so great a gift, His Son, and perhaps to pledge anew every effort to tell a lost world about Him.

("An Easter Meditation," March 26, 1970)

† † †

The march of Christianity across the pages of world history has been one involving commitment, self-sacrifice, and abandonment of self. A child of God, bent upon serving Him, cannot, I believe, serve effectively apart from a complete dedication which leaves no room for self-aggrandizement. Therefore, if I am as

dedicated as I ought to be and would wish to be, this leaves no room for a great concern about "what's going to happen to me" or "how am I going to get ahead."

Christians walk a perilous path at this point. Occasionally, we become so concerned with preservation of a comfortable status quo that we move across that line which separates kingdom building from empire building. When this occurs, in my judgment, we have lost the major part of our effectiveness. We have ceased to be what we once were and have become that which we ought not to be. Instead of selfless servants, we become ambitious masters.

("Empire Building vs Kingdom Building," Jan. 7, 1971)

† † †

Without hope of eternity in Christ Jesus, man has no hope at all. And, as we approach this particular season of the year, one could wish that a decrease in emphasis upon externals and an increase in emphasis upon spiritual values might be evident. We are not as much concerned about an Easter parade as we are about a change in the hearts and lives of men. In fact, there's no comparison!

At Easter and the year around, the Christian should and must say that Christ is alive; God is on His throne; and because God is on His throne, the immediate and ultimate welfare of those who believe in Him are in His care and keeping. Without this faith and without this hope, man of himself and in himself has nothing to live for.

("Easter Meditation," April 8, 1971)

† † †

The Christian is one who has first been redeemed by the blood of Christ. He has been redeemed because he has confessed his sins, asked for forgiveness, professed his faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and — in that great, unfathomable process — has been regenerated.

That the soul of the redeemed — or the unredeemed — shall never die is basic in Christian theology. That the soul of the Christian is eternally with Christ also is basic in Christian theology. This of itself sets the Christian apart and makes of him a distinct, unique person.

Isn't it strange that so many of us "new creatures" retain the marks of the old man? And isn't it sad that too often all that the world sees of us is the reflected image of the old man and not the positive appearance of the new creation?

("Distinguishing Marks of the Christian," Dec. 16, 1971)

† † †

Despite all the difficulties of life, the long view should serve to remind us that we indeed live in great and challenging times — times in which we have unlimited opportunities for service.

The commitment to the cause of Christ is by its very nature a crisis commitment. Therefore, why should we panic continually and live in fear of what might happen to us? We have Scriptural authority for the promises of life eternal. This same authority provides us with all the security which the Christian can need or want.

("The Land of Beginning Again," Jan. 6, 1972)

† † †

How often Christians seek to go in their own strength believing that simply by saying they are Christians this will carry them through the vicissitudes of life. We know this is not the case. The element in Christian theology which it appears so many overlook is that once we have placed ourselves in God's care and keeping and have turned our lives over to Him, then all we can do is to live day by day in faith and confidence that He will guide and direct us and give us strength each day for that which we face.

As we do this, we must remember that the one day we live may be the only day we have, and therefore, it is incumbent upon us as Christians to witness for Christ to the very best of our ability as if it might be our last chance on this earth.

May God give us strength to translate Biblical theology into experiential knowledge and daily practice. We do not stand alone. God stands with us.

("He Always Does," July 5, 1973)

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## Pastor, please return survey

This week a very important survey is being mailed to approximately one-half of the pastors of Tennessee Baptist churches.

The survey results will become a vital part of the 1982 "Tennessee Pastor/Staff Compensation Study" booklet which is being prepared by the Laymen's Church Staff Compensation Committee. The committee and its work were authorized by the 1981 Tennessee Baptist Convention.

An attractive 40-page booklet was published by a similar committee in 1977 and has proven to be of great assistance to churches as they prepare their budgets each year. However, inflation and economic conditions have made the 1977 booklet obsolete, so the 1981 TBC messengers asked for an updated publication.

The survey is being prepared, mailed to a randomly-selected list, and tabulated by the research services department of the Baptist Sunday School Board at the request of the committee. The surveys are not to be signed, and all information will be kept strictly confidential.

In order to make the survey as reliable and useful as possible, we would strongly urge every pastor who receives one to fill out the survey and return it immediately.

# Youth Evangelism Conference . . .

(Continued from page 1)

sions of her fear that God would not be able to use her after placing as second runner-up in last year's Miss Tennessee pageant.

"I discovered you don't need a title, you don't need to be a quarterback on a football team — all you need is a willing heart to be used by God," she said.

Miss Newman, who studies business home economics at the Jefferson City college she represents, sang "God is Bigger than All My Problems," illustrating the need to trust God in all things. "There are times as a college student that I don't know where the next nickel is coming from," she told her listeners. "But God will provide for you and more, if you will just let Him."

Other music for the conference was

provided by "Something Special" from Carson-Newman College, "Proclamation" from Union University, and "Belmont Reasons" from Belmont College. Each group performed a diversity of music that elicited enthusiastic ovations from the young people. John Lee, minister of music at the Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, led the congregational singing.

Youth leading their peers in prayer during the program were Angela Barker, Piney Flats; Larry Bobbitt, Collierville; DeLynn Dearman, Nashville; Marta Mardis, Drummonds; Craig Smith, Louisville; and Tommy Strickland, Dunlap.

The Saturday sessions alternated with personal witnessing conferences, held in Nashville-area churches.



**SPEAKER** — Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla., was the closing speaker at Friday and Saturday sessions of the Youth Evangelism Conference.



**MISS CARSON-NEWMAN 1981**  
Susan Newman



**MISS TENNESSEE 1981**  
Angelina Johnson



**PROCLAMATION** — Union University, Jackson.



**COMING IN** — As the doors to Vanderbilt's Memorial Gymnasium, Nashville, opened Friday night, thousands of Tennessee youth hurried to claim a good seat.



**SOMETHING SPECIAL** — Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.



**BELMONT REASONS** — Belmont College, Nashville.

# Lynn May profits from rural background

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This is part of a series of feature stories on the executive heads of Southern Baptist agencies, boards, and institutions. Each article has been written by a public relations person within the agency.

By Charles W. Dewese

NASHVILLE (BP)— A family man, sports enthusiast, and committed churchman, Lynn E. May Jr., executive director of the Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, is proud of his rural background.

A product of the rural South, May fondly recalls his Aunt Mary Jane Kennedy, who lived on a farm in northeast Louisiana. "I used to spend several weeks with her each summer as a child and early teenager. She taught me how to milk cows, chop cotton, plow, and do other things on the farm. She worked hard and taught me how to do the same and love it."

May's farming interests continue. A 4-H Club member as a boy, he now manages a 396-acre farm near Winnsboro, La. He administers leasing arrangements and other uses of the property.

May also enjoys trimming his shrubs and lawn and garden work at his Nashville home.

Southern Baptists profit from May's rural background. He makes certain that Historical Commission programs seek to meet the needs of rural Southern Baptists, as well as those of all other Southern Baptists.

May loves his family and arranges to spend a lot of time with them. Since his two daughters, Debbie and Diane, have both graduated from Belmont College, he and his wife Alta, whom he married in 1951, have more time to shop together, cook together, vacation together, and attend conventions together.

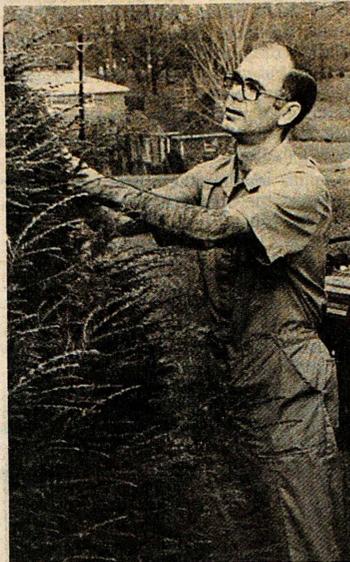
May credits strong emphasis on family life to his parents. "My parents were wonderful Christians who provided great love and a wonderful home for my older brother, sister, and me," he says.

May, his brother, and sister gave their lives to Christ in the same revival meeting in First Baptist Church, Winnsboro; were baptized together (with all three in the pool at the same time); and all later graduated from Louisiana College, as both of their parents had done.

Basketball is May's favorite sport. At 6 feet 2 inches tall, why not?

May and his wife have had season tickets to Vanderbilt University basketball games for 15 years. He grimaces with obvious pain when he realizes that an important meeting has been scheduled on the night of a home game.

"I'm an avid fan, attending Vanderbilt



**GARDENER** — Lynn May enjoys yard-work at his Nashville home.

home games and cheering my team," he says. "I usually come home and watch the delayed TV broadcast of the games as well. I listen to away games on the radio."

May's impassioned conduct at the games shatters his "ice man" reputation. He jabs the air with his fists and cheers or moans wildly following action on the floor.

Above all, May is a churchman. Trained for ministry at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, he has been a member of Crievewood Baptist Church for more than 25 years.

A member of the adult choir the entire time, May sings bass and periodically sings solos and in ensembles. He has been choir president and bass section leader several times.

He has been chairman of several church committees and is currently Sunday School class teacher for adult men. He also advocates and practices a generous approach to financial stewardship.

An employee of the Historical Commission for over 25 years, May has been executive director since April 1971. Only one Southern Baptist Convention agency, the Christian Life Commission, has a chief executive whose tenure exceeds May's.

May is a man captivated by Baptist history but unwilling to live in the past. Whether at work, on his farm, in his home, in Vanderbilt University gymnasium, at Crievewood Baptist Church, or in any other setting, he loves life and lives it fully.

## 'Invitation to Life' passes prime-time test

FORT WORTH, Tex. (BP)— "Invitation to Life," the Radio and Television Commission's pilot for prime-time evangelism, was a successful test of both a new television tool for local church evangelism and a new telephone counseling strategy, according to RTVC President Jimmy R. Allen.

The program for the proposed American Christian Television System (ACTS) was shown in five markets during January, testing both local church use of the program as an evangelism strategy and new methods of counseling viewers who responded by telephone.

"While there are a lot of things that will sharpen the program, we now know that it will work, that there are people who want to see and hear it, and that there are opportunities for the church to use it in evangelism," Allen concluded.

For the pilot, revival services were videotaped in two Southern Baptist churches and edited into four one-hour programs shown during four weeks in January on the stations. The revival preacher was John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church, Houston.

The RTVC aired "Invitation to Life" on television stations in Atlanta; Asheville, N.C.; Bakersfield, Calif.; Midland-Odessa, Tex.; and Orlando, Fla.

A number of churches used the program in their evangelism by organizing viewing groups. East North Street Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C., a 300-member congregation, for example, arranged a pizza party for 122 youths who viewed "Invitation to Life" on a large screen TV. Afterward, 11 of the young people accepted Christ and 18 more made other decisions.

Preliminary Arbitron share figures, which estimate the percentage of households using televisions that are tuned to a specific program, revealed a wide spread between markets for "Invitation to Life." The largest market,

Atlanta, had the highest average share of 13.75 percent. That included the highest single night, when "Invitation" had a 19 percent share on NBC affiliate WSIA-TV against CBS's "Dukes of Hazzard" ABC's "Benson" and "Bosom Buddies."

The lowest average shares were in Orlando and Midland-Odessa. In Orlando, where "Invitation to Life" was aired on independent Christian station WOFL-TV, it had a 5.5 average share. On Midland-Odessa's ABC station KTTX-TV, the figure was 6.5. Allen said the Midland-Odessa share may reflect an oversaturation of religious programs in that market.

The average for all five markets was a 9.95 share, meaning "Invitation" garnered nearly 10 percent of the audience each night. That was good enough to rank third in most markets most

nights. "In most of these markets we not only maintained our initial audience from the first night, but gained audience during the four-week run," Allen observed. "That implies many viewers liked what they saw, came back the next week, and brought others with them."

While he was pleased with the rating figures, Allen cautioned against too much optimism. "I don't think we ought to tie ourselves simply to Arbitron ratings. The fact is the gospel needs to be preached through television whatever the rating of a particular program is.

"Some television ministries are allowing their marketing reports to tailor their message," Allen remarked. "That is the scary part of religious television. We may package our message to get the attention of the secular man, but we will be very careful not to alter the contents of the gospel."

Allen said it is too early to tell if "Invitation to Life" was successful in bringing people into Southern Baptist churches, although there are some reports of that happening. Ben Loring, RTVC vice-president of counseling services who designed the telephone counseling strategy, said 1,553 phone calls have been reported. Half of the callers asked for counseling, Loring said, adding most of those made decisions for Christ or other spiritual decisions.

Loring said a total of 1,204 volunteers were involved in the counseling strategy through local churches and associations in each area. "I think one of the most successful elements of the pilot was the cooperation we received from all these volunteers," Loring added.

Allen said he and his staff encountered no serious problems with the pilot. But they did find many places to improve, he said, since it was the first program of its kind by the RTVC.

All those who participated in the pilot project on a local level will be asked to evaluate the strategy now, Allen explained, providing more input for improvement.

"The purpose is not simply to produce a high quality television program," he explained. "The purpose is to communicate the truth of Christ and the context of the local church experience. Authenticity is what we're after."

Allen said, "Invitation to Life" is one of several styles of preaching and teaching programs planned for the ACTS network. He said evangelism on the network will differ from other television evangelism in that it will avoid appeals for money and be centered in the local church.

"This is direct teaching about the gospel, but indirectly we're telling the viewers a whole lot about the nature of the Christian family — the church."



**TELEPHONE COUNSELING** — Volunteer telephone operators at the Atlanta Baptist Association office receive calls from "Invitation to Life" viewers asking for counseling. Caller information was relayed to trained counselors who returned the calls to offer help with spiritual decisions.

### Citizen's Corner

By Jerry M. Self  
Public affairs and Christian life consultant

The Tennessee General Assembly is currently making decisions on a budget for the state of Tennessee.

At the present time the federal Congress is also holding hearings in an effort to create a first budget resolution for a national budget. The budget is a dollars and cents statement of our state and national priorities;

therefore, it is important for citizens to be informed about the budget process.

A major issue presently before the American people concerns our sense of responsibility for the poor and disadvantaged.



Self

Already the national school lunch program and school breakfast program have suffered considerable cuts with the result that about 3-million children and 1,500 schools have dropped out of the school lunch program due to a 35 percent cut in federal support for school lunches. A cut of about 20 percent in school breakfast programs has eliminated 800 schools and 400,000 children.

A similar program, the special supplemental food program for women, infants, and children (WIC) survived attempts at cutting the program last year but faces the possibility of being lumped

into block grant allocations to the state.

Programs such as these which provide significant nutritional help to children in poor families face the possibility of further cuts in the budget or the possibility of being lost in block grants because there are few people supporting these programs who have much influence with the government.

Now is the critical time to make your opinions heard as to what should or should not be funded.

On another issue important to Tennessee Baptists - the House calendar committee voted not to send the parimutuel bill (HB 1106) to the floor. The vote was nine yes and 15 no.

This victory stems from your contacts with your representative!

### Emerson Wiles begins ministry in Culleoka

Emerson Wiles began Jan. 3 as pastor of Friendship Baptist Church, Culleoka, in response to a call from the church.

A native of Birmingham, Ala., Wiles is a former associate pastor of Bieux Carre Baptist Church, New Orleans, La.

Wiles is a graduate of Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

## Personal witnessing workshops for Youth Evangelism Conference



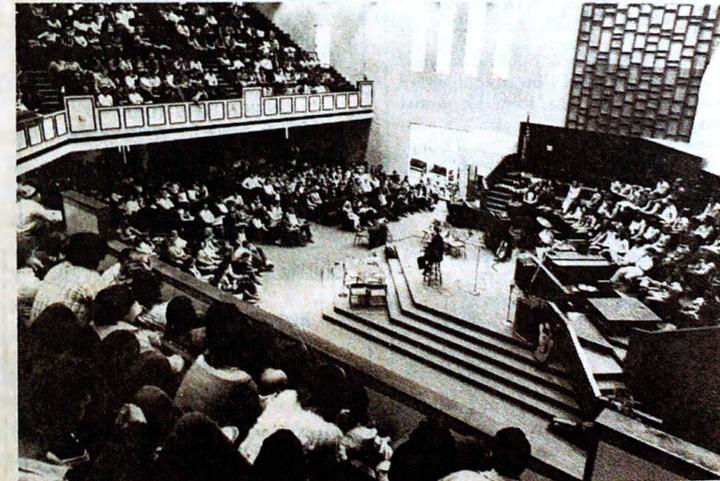
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# Personal perspective

By TOM MADDEN  
TBC executive secretary

There are at least four terms applied to Christians in the New Testament. Acts 11:26 states, "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Beyond being called Christians, the four terms deal with different aspects of the Christian life.

One term applied to the Christian is "believer." Those of us who have trusted Christ as our Saviour have thereby become believers. We are not only believing something about a person but we are believing in Christ. We have willed to take Christ as our Saviour and our Master.



Madden

In the New Testament, Christians are also called "disciples." A disciple is a learner or a pupil. As disciples we agree that we are willing to be taught and trained by the Master. It implies a discipline, the decision to go God's way rather than going our own way.

A "follower" is also a name given to a New Testament Christian. A Christian is not only a believer and a disciple who sits at Christ's feet to learn of Him, but is also a person who loves Jesus with a devotion sufficient to follow Him wherever He may go.

Another term given to a New Testament Christian is "brother." John makes this statement, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1 John 3:14). To be a brother means that we have entered into a family life, for the church is the family of God.

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## Nominations needed by TBC committees

The guidelines adopted by the Tennessee Baptist Convention for the Committee on Boards and the Committee on Committees give all Tennessee Baptists the opportunity to make nominations by filling out a form printed in the Baptist and Reflector.

Some people may not understand how names come before committees. The head of each of the TBC institutions submits at least three names for consideration for each position to be nominated. They receive names from people interested in their particular work and pass these along to the Committee on Boards. The convention guidelines direct them to work with the heads of the institutions.

If a person wants to recommend a person to any of the convention's boards or committees, a letter or this form can be sent to Tom Madden, TBC executive secretary, P. O. Box 347, Brentwood, TN 37027, or to the temporary chairman of the Committee on Boards or the Committee on Committees, or to the head of a TBC institution or agency.

The Committee on Boards will meet April 13. The temporary chairman is Richard Emmert, Manley Baptist Church, Rt. 6, Box 322, Morristown, TN 37814.

The Committee on Committees will meet April 22. The chairman is Harold Smith, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 689, Columbia, TN 38401

### GUIDELINES

- 1. Members of these committees should not nominate themselves to fill any vacancies existing on any convention standing committee or convention board.
- 2. Individuals over the state should be encouraged to send suggestions for nominees to these two committees, including supporting data as to their qualifications and availability.
- 3. A form should be printed in the Baptist state paper by which suggestions could be made to these committees, the form bearing the signature of the person making the suggestion.
- 4. The initial meeting of these committees each year should be announced as an "open" meeting when individuals or heads of institutions or agencies could appear before the committees to offer suggestions of and about possible nominees.
- 5. The head of each institution should be asked to submit the names of three persons for each vacancy to be filled on his board, with supporting data on why these persons would make suitable board members, a practice that is now being followed.
- 6. If the Committee on Boards considers someone else, other than a person suggested by the head of an institution, for any vacancy on a board, the committee should confer with that official concerning the qualifications of the person being considered, it being understood that the final decision on the nomination rests with the committee.
- 7. The Committee on Boards should be aware of any requirements of the accrediting agencies which are related to our hospitals, colleges, academy, or children's homes as these requirements affect the work of the committee.

keeping in mind the requirements of the Tennessee Baptist Convention constitution and bylaws. If and when conflicts develop in this area, the committee shall so advise the convention and the convention shall consider ways of reconciling the conflicts.

8. These two committees should keep in mind the desirability of the following principles in making nominations: a broad representation of geographical areas, differing sizes and types of churches, a variety of professional and educational backgrounds, different age groups, with both lay men/women and ministers included.

9. These committees should not nominate a person to a convention board or standing committee who receives a part or all of his salary from the Tennessee Baptist Convention or one of its subsidiary units.

10. The Committee on Boards should no longer feel that all of its nominations should be confined to the geographical area where an institution or agency is located, but their nominees should be residents of Tennessee and members of churches affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

11. In implementing Bylaw III, Section 2, of the Convention's Bylaws in reference to board members for Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis, the hospital should be required to show to the Committee on Boards that there is a demonstrable need for a board member proposed for service on the hospital board of trustees to serve on that board while also serving on another board as permitted in Bylaw III, Section 2.

12. Trustees must be active in support of their local churches.

## RECOMMENDATION TO 1982 COMMITTEE ON BOARDS AND COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES

For service as a director, trustee, or committee member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention boards or committees:

Believing in this person's moral integrity, spiritual commitment, and other qualifications:

1. I recommend \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

2. Approximate age \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

3. Is person an ordained minister? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Name and address where the above is a member: \_\_\_\_\_

Association \_\_\_\_\_

5. Give a brief statement as to the past and present loyalty of this person to his church and program of Southern Baptists \_\_\_\_\_

6. List service on boards or committees of the Tennessee Baptist Convention: \_\_\_\_\_

7. List training, skill, experience, etc., which would qualify for service recommended: \_\_\_\_\_

8. List the place where you think this person can best serve:  
A. Trustee or director of an institution or agency of the executive board (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

B. Convention committee (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Please understand that this recommendation does not assure nomination. However, your recommendation will be given serious consideration. No contact will be made by Committee on Boards or Committee on Committees until nomination has been approved.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of person making recommendation)

(mailing address) \_\_\_\_\_

(occupation) \_\_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_\_

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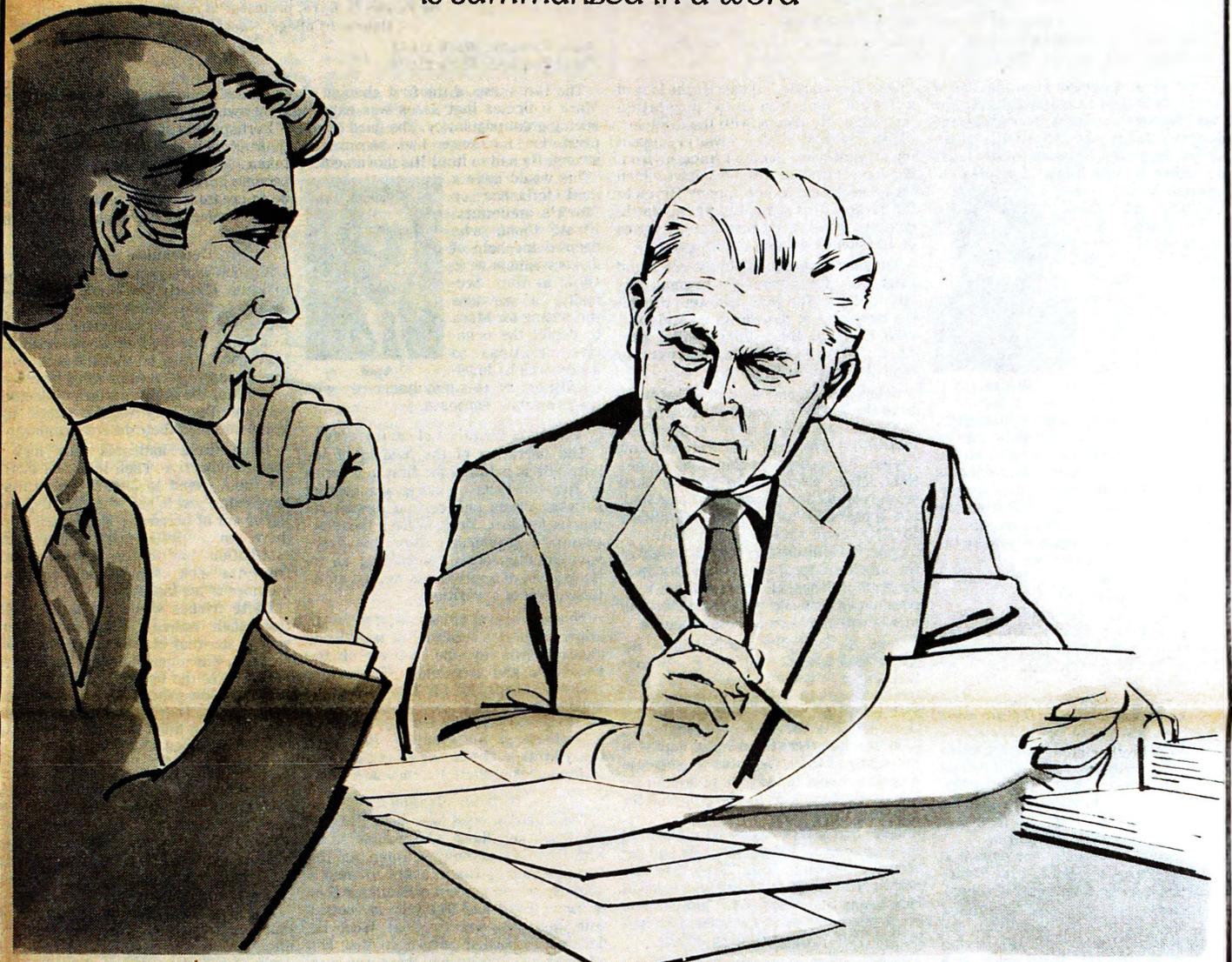
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BIBLE BOOK SERIES  
Lesson for March 14

# The King's agony, arrest

By Jerry Oakley, pastor  
Springfield Baptist Church, Springfield

Basic Passage: Matthew 26:31-56  
Focal Passage: Matthew 26:37-50

Our study this week is a continuation of the drama of the final days of Jesus. The Last Supper has been served to the disciples. Judas has departed to carry out his despicable mission. Jesus leads the eleven remaining disciples to Gethsemane.

Unable to enter into the heart of the events that transpire in the 26th chapter of Matthew, we can only stand as interested observers, looking into the events, grasping as much revelation from them as possible.

In the verses that precede this chapter, we become acutely aware of the limitations and consequent failure of all humanity as represented in Peter. Jesus reveals that the "shepherd" shall be smitten and the "sheep" scattered before the night is over. Peter protests from sincere and very real love, matched only by his complete depth of ignorance.

"Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended... Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." These are the bravado words of a man that feels sufficient to face the storms of life and overcome them.

Let us not condemn Peter too harshly. These feelings are shared to some degree by all men. In the ignorance of our own weakness we all like to stand, as it were, on a mountain top, striking our chests with balled fists, shouting defiance in the face of the challenges of the world. We sincerely feel we have the strength to meet these challenges.

How wrong we are and how patient is our Lord with us as He was with Peter! He understands our false sense of security, foresees our inevitable stumbling failure, and gathers us back from our crushing experiences into His loving arms as He gathered Peter back at a later time. Then we know from whence comes our power and we are ready for service, even as Peter was ready at a later time for humble but superb service.

Jesus went to Gethsemane for prayer. The Scripture says He "began to be sorrowful." The word for sorrowful probably comes from the word meaning

"away from home." It carries the idea of extreme isolation and desolating loneliness. He pleads with the disciples, "Watch with Me." Jesus was crying out for a small bit of human sympathy from His inner circle of three disciples which He had selected to accompany Him into the garden. This sympathy was not forthcoming. Jesus faced His ultimate crises of decision alone with the Father.

The temptation to avoid the cross had been with Jesus from the beginning of His ministry. The devil "showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world... And saith unto Him, all these things will I give thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Matthew 4:9).

Satan was suggesting that Jesus could have the world without the cross. Later, at Caesarea Philippi, Peter opposed the idea of the cross and Jesus rebuked him saying, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offense unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of man" (Matthew 16:23).

Now, in Gethsemane, the full weight of the inevitability of the cross rests upon the soul of Jesus. He cries out, "If it be possible let this cup pass from Me." No man wants to die on a cross at age 33.

Then the complete subjection to the will of God asserts itself and He finishes His prayer, "nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." The decision is made and the die is cast. In prayer Jesus has received His directions, though His answer came from the deepest depths of the agony of God. The cross must be endured to reveal in the face of human sin the completeness of the love of God for mankind.

Jesus had to face His decision alone. In the beginning of His ministry He had the crowds following Him. They had departed. The rulers had been interested in His teachings. They now plotted His death. He had twelve disciples. One had turned traitor, the rest slept.

In life, most important decisions are lonely decisions. You can seek companionship and solicit advice, but ultimately the decision is made alone. But wait, there is One. There is the Father. He is always there. He was with His Son. He guided events by His will. There was ultimate victory.

In our lives, though decisions may be lonely ones, if we share them with the Father and yield our will to His will, victory will ultimately be ours.



Oakley

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES  
Lesson for March 14

# Two miracles for a paralytic

By Robert O. Byrd, professor of religion  
Belmont College, Nashville

Basic Passage: Mark 2:1-12  
Focal Passage: Mark 2:1-12

The last verse of the first chapter of Mark indicates that Jesus was experiencing great popularity. The flood of appreciation for Jesus had become so strong, He had to limit His movement.

This would have a dual influence on Mark's accounts. First, those who desired the help of Jesus would have to come to Him. Secondly, it provides the setting for Mark to depict the negative reactions to Jesus which developed more or less simultaneously with the favorable responses.



Byrd

### Caring in the midst of controversy

The narrative of the healing of the paralytic is actually the first in a series of five incidents of increasing conflict between Jesus and certain Jewish religious leaders. Mark utilizes these accounts to graphically show that Jesus was simultaneously confronting an intense level of approval as well as an intense level of opposition.

This succession of stories stretches to Mark 3:5 where the level of hostility is characterized by the actions of the Pharisees and Herodians. They were ready to cooperate for the purpose of determining "how to destroy Him" (RSV). Jesus would not be deterred. Regardless of the situation, He steadfastly brought His caring power to focus on the needs of those He encountered.

### Difficult situation

The situation must have been difficult for Jesus and those who wanted to be with Him. It is somewhat ironic that the very success of His ministry created a situation which made it difficult for Him to move about and freely be in contact with those who were in need. When He became somewhat settled so that His whereabouts was known, there was such a crush of humanity around Him that it created a barrier for some who needed access to Jesus.

Mark 1:35 and other passages suggest that Jesus appreciated privacy. Yet He rarely had much. The phrase, "after some days, it was reported that He was at home" (2:1) may suggest that Jesus had quietly moved the center of His work to Capernaum and was having at least a few days of more than usual rest.

This makes the difficulty of the people even more apparent. The crowded scene in and around the house is contrasted with the need for some privacy even by the Lord. One cannot help but wonder how many came to see and hear Jesus

but failed because of the large crowd and went away in frustration.

Perhaps this should be a reminder to those of us in the church. Care must be taken so that our activities do not become barriers. Our goal must always be to create the opportunity for all who will to encounter the mighty Lord of the church.

### Determined friends

A group was trying to take their friend to Jesus. Exactly how many there were is not certain. Verse three seems to make a distinction between the "they" who came and the four who carried the paralytic. It may be that the bearers of the ill man were accompanied by others — perhaps the man's parents or another relative. One may wonder where the group obtained their determination.

Verse three indicates they had a specific objective. Their intention was to get their friend to Jesus. Others may have come just to see what was happening or out of boredom. These men were there on a mission. Perhaps their motivation and determination came from the sick man himself or some member of his family.

These friends would not be diverted from their purpose. They made their way to the roof of the house. The roof, perhaps, was made of beams laid across the walls of the house. In between was filled with branches which were packed with mud. They "unroofed" enough space to allow them to lower their friend into the presence of Jesus.

### Words of forgiveness and healing

In verse five, Jesus acknowledged their faith. A great deal of discussion has been concerned with who "they" are. There does not appear to be anything in the text that would make it necessary to exclude the paralytic himself from this expression of trust.

The general pattern of the Gospel of Mark up to this point has given primary attention to the healing activities of Jesus. The announcement of the forgiveness of the man's sins stands out in its uniqueness. Some see this as entirely consistent with Jewish thought which believed that forgiveness had to precede healing. Others claim that Jesus had perceived that the man's illness was the consequence of sin in his life and Jesus' word of forgiveness is seen as the basis for the healing of the paralytic.

The text presents another side of the issue. The word of forgiveness was not claimed as the basis of healing. He remained on his pallet even after his forgiveness was announced. Neither faith nor forgiveness was dependent on the experience of healing. There were no barriers too great for the powerful words and works of the mighty Son of Man.

Some of the scribes were orthodox in their understanding of God but utterly mistaken in their perception of Jesus. No one doubted that God could forgive sins. The scribes failed to see that what was at issue was the authority of God's Son.

Jesus responded with a question to the question He sensed in their hearts. Which is easier...? Announcing the forgiveness of sins was not verifiable. Healing a person could be immediately evaluated. Jesus exercised both care and power out of a deep concern for the total person. The Son of Man has authority both to forgive sins and to say "rise."

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**LIFE AND WORK SERIES**  
Lesson for March 14

# The way of love

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

Basic Passage: 1 Corinthians 12:31b to 13:13  
Focal Passage: 1 Corinthians 12:31b to 13:13

I learned a new game at a party the other night. The only name I know it by is "the dictionary game."

Using the dictionary, someone looks up some obscure word of which no one has ever heard. The word is announced. Each player then writes his own made-up definition in "dictionariese." Player one writes the correct definition. The definitions are all read and the group chooses the one that seems most appropriate. The object, of course, is to try to choose the correct definition. Results are hilarious.



Bledsoe

Some people play word games without making the rules explicit. They use words with meaning that is unique to the author. Technically, the problem is semantics — practically, it creates misunderstandings. Clear communication is difficult at best. One reason is words often mean different things to different people.

"Love" is rarely defined precisely. Its meaning is too often assumed. Love has become a synonym for lust, like, appreciate, desire, approve, smother. It is used to convey feelings, or express action, that is widely diverse.

When the words "I love you" are heard, one cannot always be sure what they mean. If there is a question, ask! Life is too important to make a wrong assumption about love.

When Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 13, he must have been aware of some misunderstandings associated with "love." It needed clarifying and defining. Love (or charity) is too important a quality for Christian living to misunderstand.

Love surpasses faith, preaching, martyrdom, wisdom, and benevolences (13:1-3). Paul says it more eloquently, but the meaning is clear. Without love, ministry is neutralized. One assumes some spiritual value is gained by good works or religious activity. Paul indicates it is "love" and not the religious activity that produces the value.

To avoid being misunderstood, Paul describes "love" in behavioral traits. He and James would agree that love is more than an emotional feeling that gives good things for people (James 2:15-16). Passive love, saying pretty words, and

prayer are no substitutes for loving deeds. It is no better to love without acting than it is to act without loving. Love is and will be active.

I frequently use 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a in wedding ceremonies I conduct. If more couples lived out their love as it is defined here, the result would be fewer divorces. But I am sure Paul had more in mind for this passage than a wedding text. Families need healthy active love, but so do churches, and so do communities. We could probably use more sermons, money, workers, or energy, but our greatest shortage is love. Loving others as God loves us is our goal and our hope (1 John 4:11).

Paul is making a case for love as the greatest gift available to the church — greater than preaching, or speaking in tongues, or knowledge. A time will come when none of these things will be needed any longer, but there will always be a place for love (13:8-13).

Jesus is our best example for the love Paul describes. The portrait Paul paints of the loving spirit breathes in Jesus' life. He is incarnate love. Everything He said, everything He did was a gift of love. By receiving Him, our life becomes the vessel through which Jesus continues to give love to a needy world. We are most like Jesus when we love.

One of the greatest examples of enduring, selfless, Christlike love is Elizabeth Eliot. Her husband, Jim Eliot, was murdered by a tribe of Auca Indians in South America. He and four missionary friends had gone to Ecuador to teach and preach. Instead of harboring bitterness, Elizabeth Eliot went herself to complete the mission her husband started. The results of her loving act were converts among those who were once murderers. Elizabeth Eliot was following the example set by our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:8).

# Two Mormon-produced films removed from BSSB centers

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE (BP) — Citing concern about potential damage to the ministries of Southern Baptist churches, Sunday School Board President Grady Cothen announced Baptist Film Centers will no longer distribute two films produced by Brigham Young University.

The films, *Cipher in the Snow* and *John Baker's Last Race*, have been available through Broadman Films and Baptist Film Centers since 1975 and 1977, respectively. Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, is an institution of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons).

In addition to producing some inspirational films and all films on Baptist doctrine and polity, Broadman Films regularly purchases distribution rights on selected films from many producers.

Cothen said both films are inspirational in nature and neither contains any doctrinal content. They have been rented about 4,000 times through the film centers to churches and individuals.

"A survey of users shows almost unanimous support for the films," he said.

However, the board's distribution of the films has recently been a target of a letter-writing protest campaign. Also, Cothen said, "We have received communications from responsible pastors who believe that any appearance of identification with sects is detrimental to their churches, and their ministries." The films carry closing identification as having been produced by Brigham Young University.

He said some have expressed concern that Baptist distribution of the films appears to constitute endorsement of the theology. "This is definitely not the case," said Cothen. "We believe that the principle expressed in Romans 14 is one which we should follow. We have no desire to do anything by which our brother stumbles. Our task is burden-sharing, not burden-creating."

*John Baker's Last Race* is the true story of a Methodist young adult training for the 1972 Olympics when he learned he had an incurable disease. The film highlights the last months of his life when he coached a group of elementary children, teaching them never to give up.

*Cipher in the Snow* uses the incident of a youth's death to show the universal need for love and compassion.

## Union offers class for senior adults

JACKSON — Union University is offering a special weekday Bible class for senior adults beginning March 11.

The eight-week class, which will meet on Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. to noon through May 8, is tailored for adults 50 years of age and older, but will not be restricted to that age group. Bob Agee, dean of religious affairs, said the class is being offered in response to requests from senior adults for a weekly morning Bible study. No class will meet April 8 because of the college's Easter observance.

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# Former missionary rediscovers missions

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE (BP) — Laotian refugees relocating in Nashville to escape the terrors of warfare in their homelands have become the missionary congregation today Benton Williams was forced to leave more than 12 years ago.

Williams, supervisor of pastoral ministries for the Baptist Sunday School Board, was a Southern Baptist missionary to Thailand from 1959-70, when he returned home because of a health problem.

Williams and his wife, Lib, questioned why it would turn out they must leave after they spent long hours daily for two years just to learn the language and customs of the Thais.

Early in 1980, needs of refugees arriving in Nashville prompted Williams to begin his ministry. It has grown into a congregation with about 125 members, sponsored by Belmont Heights Baptist Church.

On the last Sunday in January, a climactic point in the life of the Laotian congregation was reached when Williams baptized 37 persons after public decisions and several weeks of training in the Christian faith. The day before the bap-

tismal service, Williams tested each of the Laotians' knowledge in areas such as God, prayer, Bible, and the Christian life to be sure they understood the meaning of accepting Christ and baptism.

Williams started weekly services in April 1981, after holding monthly services for several months. He issued no invitation for public decisions until three months after weekly services were started.

During that first invitation, the oldest man in the congregation came forward to talk to Williams about the group. He wondered if Williams was going to stay and teach them about this new Christianity to which they were about to commit themselves, or did he plan to assume other jobs away from the refugees.

When Williams assured the man, who is the unofficial leader of the group, he intended to remain as pastor, members of the congregation started making public professions of faith.

One of the refugees told Williams escaping to the United States was like being set free from slavery. In Laos, one of the men was a captain in the air force and another was a policeman. Most escaped through the jungles, coming to the U.S. after time in refugee camps.

For some, there was terror and heart-break before leaving. One woman escaped with her daughters from Laos after seeing her husband shot and carried away for refusing to disclose to the army the location of his family.

Williams said these Laotian people had absolutely nothing when they arrived in the United States. Of the 25 families here, eight now have jobs and all live in government subsidized housing.

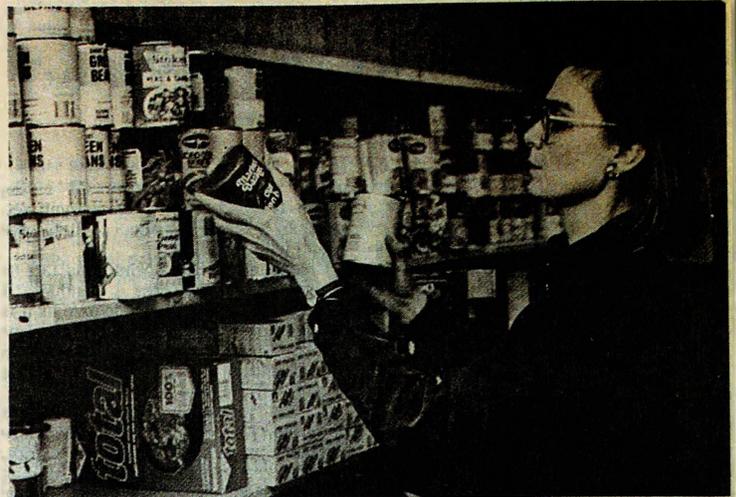
"Now is the time for these people to hear the gospel," Williams said. "I have the language, so they do not have to wait until they can speak English."

The ministry that started as Sunday night English classes and Vacation Bible School for the children developed into an integral part of the refugees' community because Williams believed "they deserve to hear the gospel just like anyone else."

## Hensley accepts call to first pastorate

Calvin Hensley accepted his first pastorate in response to a call from New Hope Baptist Church, Rogersville.

Hensley, a native of Rogersville, began the ministry in January.



CHECKING SUPPLIES — Jane Anderson inspects food which will be used to help feed hungry people in Nashville.

# Mission group project leads woman to help feed hungry

By Raymond E. Higgins II

NASHVILLE — Jane Anderson is helping to feed the hungry in Nashville through her involvement in a mission group at Glendale Baptist Church.

Mrs. Anderson and the other members of the Glendale mission group began packaging beans for Second Harvest Food Bank, a private, non-profit, tax-exempt organization. The group packages extra beans which are given to Second Harvest by a local packaging and processing plant. The food bank includes the beans as a part of a three-day supply of perishable and non-perishable food for the hungry.

When Mrs. Anderson heard that the food bank was having to cut back on paid staff workers because of budget limitations and therefore needed volunteers to assume the responsibilities, she took her mission's involvement from a room in the church to the basement of a former inner city public school.

Mrs. Anderson believes a food distribution program for the hungry is an excellent project for local Southern Baptist churches.

"Many hands," she says, "are needed to sort through donated food, to store it, and to prepare food boxes to be distributed to the hungry. Certain tasks are done well by children. Glendale's experience with packaging beans shows that children from age six to senior adults are able to participate."

She explained that the tasks in "feeding the hungry" are many and varied.

"Some would involve direct contact with hungry individuals while others would deal with more impersonal tasks," she describes. "All are important to seeing the hungry are fed," she continues.

"I started by answering the phone for four hours a week," Mrs. Anderson says. Now, five months later, she is coordinator of volunteer services, which is a non-paid staff position.

"In a week, we will have 19 volunteers," she reports as she studies her folder of names, schedules, and tasks. Coordinating the volunteer workers, who come from many sectors of the community, means that Mrs. Anderson makes the initial contact with the volunteers who call; determines their interests, skills, and time; and then assigns and trains them for their work.

It is all a team effort to get food to the hungry. The volunteers whom she

directs take calls from social workers and from the destitute themselves. They handle referrals; type correspondence, forms, and billings; put together food boxes; and unload trucks.

Mrs. Anderson says she will never forget the call that came during her third week as a volunteer. On the line was "a young mother with two children, no car, and no food. Her husband had just walked out on them." After putting the mother on hold to get the information to help her and to answer other incoming calls, she finally got back to her. "She was gone."

From that experience, Mrs. Anderson saw the need for more volunteer help and for keeping red tape to a minimum. "I don't want to make it a race or obstacle for them to get food," she says.

Needy persons, in many cases, can receive food within a day of their request. Applicants are screened by social workers, who give the name to the food bank. The food bank processes the application and prepares a three-day supply of food for the hungry individual or family. The food box is then sent to a distribution center nearest the applicant, where the applicant picks it up.

Mrs. Anderson confesses that "it costs" to give time to all that needs to be done, but her volunteer work "definitely makes a difference." She is a wife, a mother, and is active in her church. Her husband, Doug, is secretary of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department. They have a 16-month-old son, Clay, and their daughter, Leslie, is seven.

Mrs. Anderson and the other food bank volunteers see the "difference" their work makes each day as food boxes are distributed to the needy. There continues to be a steady increase in the number of food boxes to be distributed, she says. Her records show that excessive utility bills, delays in government assistance, unemployment, and work slowdowns are responsible for the increasing requests for food.

The whole effort is coordinated because of volunteers like Mrs. Anderson. Churches help. Individuals assist. School children give. Businesses contribute.

For Jane Anderson, volunteering to package beans and answer the phone began when she got involved in her church's mission group. It was there that she decided "there is a point when we must get involved."



SCRIPTURE SEARCH — Williams and Phantaly Siri search for a Scripture passage to be read during the worship service.



NO LANGUAGE BARRIER — Benton Williams talks with four of the members of the Laotian congregation he serves as pastor. He learned the language and culture during his earlier days as a foreign missionary.