

Baptist and Reflector

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News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention



RETIREMENT GIFT — Jonas Stewart (right) receives a gift from the employees of the Baptist building at a retirement luncheon last week. Making the presentation to Stewart, who will retire April 30 as executive secretary of the Baptist Foundation, is Tom Madden, TBC executive secretary.

Credentials Committee named

PITTSBURGH (BP)— The Credentials Committee for the 1983 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 14-16, has been named by President James T. Draper Jr.

The committee will be chaired by Jere Mitchell, pastor of First Baptist Church of Fayetteville, Ark., who was named by Draper in September.

The committee is charged under SBC Bylaw 8 with assisting "the registration secretary in problems regarding registration and seating of messengers," a process which has been tightened up by convention action in the past few years.

According to Registration Secretary Lee Porter, the committee "deals with people who come to the convention with improper credentials or no credentials. People who come with their registration

cards properly filled out do not have to spend time with this committee. Last year in New Orleans, 11 percent of the messengers had to go before the committee."

The 21-member committee also deals with "any contention arising on the floor concerning seating of messengers." In past years, the seating of some messengers or recognition of messengers from

some churches has been challenged.

To register, a messenger must have a properly filled out registration card or a letter from the church which has accredited him or her. In the absence of such credentials, the messenger is requested to secure a telegram from the church, Porter said.

The 1983 committee features three
(Continued on page 2)

Social Security taxes for ministers to rise

WASHINGTON (BP)— Social Security taxes for ministers will rise significantly under the compromise reform package passed by Congress to aide the financially-troubled retirement system, but not as sharply as they could have.

In resolving differences between House and Senate versions of the bipartisan plan to inject an additional \$165.3-billion into the Social Security system, Congress agreed to continue to exclude from Social Security taxation most employer contributions to certain non-profit pension plans such as those administered by the Southern Baptist Convention's Annuity Board.

But in a move which will significantly raise Social Security taxes for ministers and other self-employed persons, Congress voted to raise self-employment taxes from 75 percent of the combined employer-employee rate to the full combined rate. The final Social Security package, passed by the House 243-102 and the Senate 58-14, also omitted a Senate amendment which would have given ministers and churches the option

of treating a minister's service to a church as employment for Social Security purposes. Under current law ministers participate in Social Security as self-employed persons.

The House version of the Social Security bail-out plan would have taxed all employer contributions to non-profit plans such as those issued by the Annuity Board. The Senate bill would have continued to exempt employer payments to these plans, except for contributions made under a salary reduction agreement between the employer and employee.

House and Senate conferees generally agreed to the Senate amendment on these pension plans but the conference report also included language which defined individually negotiated retirement plans as salary reduction agreements.

Depending on how the Internal Revenue Service interprets this change in the tax law, a number of non-ministerial Baptist employees who have individually negotiated retirement plans with the Annuity Board may be affected, according to the agency's general counsel, Gary Nash.

"The best way to cope with this legislation," Nash said, "is to make sure the employer formally adopts a written retirement plan for its employees."

In an effort to offset the one-third hike in Social Security rates for self-employed persons, Congress provided in the final bill tax credits of 2.7 percent of self-employment income in 1984, 2.3 percent in 1985, and 2.0 percent in 1986-89. The tax credit percentages represent a compromise between lower credits called for in the House bill and higher ones provided in the Senate version.

For 1990 and beyond, the bill as passed would replace the tax credits with a system designed to achieve parity between employees and self-employed participants. The two-part plan calls for the self-employment tax base to be lowered and for a tax deduction of 50 percent of Social Security taxes paid.

Meanwhile, an aide to Sen. Walter D. Huddleston, who sponsored the Senate amendment giving ministers and churches a joint option of treating a
(Continued on page 2)

Tennessee House subcommittee endorses pari-mutuel gambling

A bill which would legalize pari-mutuel gambling on horse and dog races in Tennessee received the endorsement of a General Assembly subcommittee last Thursday in Nashville.

A subcommittee of the House of Representatives' state and local government committee voted 3-1 to send the bill to the full committee for debate and vote — perhaps this week.

The bill is similar to one passed last year by the House of Representatives but failed to pass the Senate by a 16-17 vote, according to Jim McKinney of Nashville, co-sponsor of the gambling bill. McKinney heads the subcommittee which gave its approval to the bill.

Voting with McKinney in endorsing the bill in the subcommittee were Joe Kent of Memphis and Joe Bell of Lebanon. The negative vote came from Nathan Ford of Newport. The fifth member of the subcommittee, Charlie Pruitt of Nashville, was not present March 24 to vote, but he has been a strong supporter

of legalized gambling in the past.

The proposed law would allow a referendum to be held for gambling on dog racing in Davidson County, on horse racing in Williamson County, and either horse or dog racing in Knox County.

Last year's attempt which was narrowly defeated by the 1982 General Assembly would have also included horse racing in Shelby County.

Lobbying efforts for pari-mutuel gambling are intense this year, according to the Nashville Banner. "At the head of the pack is the Cumberland Recreation Enterprises, an organization formed by the owners of the Mobile, Ala., Greyhound park, who are anxious to establish a race track in Nashville," the newspaper reported.

Former Tenn. pastor, Harold Sorrells, dies

Former Tennessee pastor Harold Sorrells and his wife Joanne were killed in an automobile accident near Spartanburg, S.C., March 26.

Sorrells, who was 49, was pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Sumter, S.C. He was a former pastor of Lockeland Baptist Church in Nashville, and was ordained by Hannah's Gap Baptist Church in Petersburg.

Sorrells had served as a trustee for Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville. He was a graduate of Carson-Newman and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Funeral services for the Sorrells were to have been held March 29 in Sumter, S.C., before burial in Petersburg.

Annuity Board requests delay

DALLAS (BP)— Southern Baptist Annuity Board President Darold H. Morgan is requesting the Internal Revenue Service to delay the effective date of a recent ruling which will prohibit the double tax benefit of ministers purchasing their own houses to allow clergy time to adjust to the additional tax burdens the ruling will place upon them.

Acting as chairman of the steering committee of the Church Alliance, a group of churches from over 27 religious denominations concerned with church pension plans, Morgan said he thought the new ruling was "sound in law and analysis," but that many ministers will suffer financial hardships under the sudden perspective application of the ruling which is effective June 30, 1983. He is requesting that IRS delay this date until Jan. 1, 1983.

Revenue ruling 83-3 revokes a 1982 ruling which allowed ministers to deduct interest and taxes paid on personal residence, even though the minister received a tax-exempt housing allowance.

Morgan told IRS Commissioner Roscoe L. Egger Jr. that many ministers have entered into long-term financial obligations relying on the tax-exempt housing allowance and the 50-year IRS position that mortgage interest and real estate taxes on their personal residence which would be deductible for income tax purposes.

"Ministers need more time to adjust to the significant additional tax burden we are asking the IRS to move the effective date of the ruling to January 1983."

Morgan said the 1983 effective date would also alleviate some IRS administrative problems that would be caused by ministers who are prepaying all of their mortgage interest and real estate taxes before the June 30 deadline.



James Rose



Lela Hendrix



Jean Adkinson

Adkinson, Hendrix, Rose to speak at media library workers' retreat

Jean Adkinson, Lela Hendrix, and James Rose will be the featured speakers at a church media library workers' retreat, April 15-16, at Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville.

Miss Adkinson and Rose are consultants in the church media library department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville. Mrs. Hendrix, special project coordinator for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, is a

noted author and conference leader.

The retreat will emphasize TACMO, The Associational Church Media Library Organization, and the value of local associations in encouraging and assisting church media libraries, according to Eleanor Yarborough, church media library consultant for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The retreat will begin with dinner at 6 p.m. Friday and will conclude at 3 p.m. Saturday.

The program will feature recognitions and awards to associations for their participation in the retreat, TACMO, and church media library study courses.

Committee . . .

(Continued from page 1)

state convention presidents and one former convention president. Presidents are Mark Caldwell, pastor of University Baptist Church in College Park, Md., and president of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention; Harrell R. Cushing, pastor of First Baptist Church of Gadsden, Ala., and president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention; and Lewis McDonald, pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church in Bel Air, Md., and president of the Baptist Convention of Maryland.

Emmett C. Stroop, a layman and member of Westside Baptist Church of Harrisonburg, Va., is a former president of the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

Porter said the churches represented by the committee members gave an average of 17 percent last year through the Cooperative Program, and average more than \$90,000 in CP gifts per church.

In addition to Mitchell, Caldwell, Cushing, McDonald, and Stroop, committee members are:

Charles Walton, pastor of First Baptist Church, Bridge City, Tex., secretary; Marion D. Aldridge, pastor of First Baptist Church, Batesburg, S.C.; Robert E. Blackburn, director of missions in Martinez, Ga.; C. Gary Bonner, pastor of First Baptist Church, Huntsville, Tex.;

Earl Craig, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jackson, Miss.; Bill Curl, associate pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla.; Billy T. Hargrove, director of the stewardship department, Missouri Baptist Convention, Jefferson City; Max D. Hester, a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.;

Charles Kemble, associate director of development for the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor in Belton, Tex., but stationed in San Antonio; Thomas M. Knotts, director of missions in North Augusta, S.C.; Bill Norris, a layman from First Baptist Church of Greensboro, N.C.; Joe Ratliff, pastor of Brentwood Baptist Church, Houston;

Rod Smith, pastor of Meridian Baptist Church, El Cajon, Calif.; C. Glen Sullivan, pastor of Concord Baptist Church, Knoxville; Grover Talbert Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church in Frankston, Tex.; and Glen Turner, pastor of Lane Avenue Baptist Church, Columbus, Ohio.

CLC seminar explores authentic discipleship

By Craig Bird

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)— Authentic Christian discipleship — which links the roots and fruits of Christian living — was discussed by 13 speakers at the annual Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission seminar.

More than 900 registrants from 23 states participated in discussions on the basic style and thrust of discipleship, including concern for the plight of the unemployed in America, hungry people around the world, and the threat of nuclear war.

Don Harbuck, pastor of First Baptist Church in El Dorado, Ark., defined Christian living in the modern world as "getting back to the basics" of servanthood. "Servanthood and submission belong to a whole circle of ideas in the New Testament ethic," Harbuck said.

"Jesus, who lived among us as one who serves . . . summons us to do the same. His nail-scarred hands still hold the basin and the towel . . ."

Donald Shriver, a Presbyterian theologian and president of Union Theological Seminary in New York said, "You don't have to be a theologian to realize that Christian ethics and the ethics of Christians are often far apart," he said. "Imagine what the American 'earth' could be if all the church members in the United States were really the 'salt of the earth.'"

While admitting, "salty" Christians can easily "fall into the habit of rubbing against each other's grains," Shriver reminded his audience Christians are called to defend the poor and the disenfranchised "because politicians don't pay much attention to people without power." Followers of Jesus are called to love everyone — "even the Russians" — and, while being careful "to make a distinction between God's will and our principles" Christians should "be the first to request legislation for special interest groups — those who will die if we don't act."

Jim Wallis, founding pastor of the Sojourners community, called for Christians to realize that U.S. warheads would destroy, "not just God-less communists but would also fall on women and children and on thousands of Russian Christians with whom we share a common faith and a common Lord."

He noted parallels between the current situation and the bombing of Nagasaki, when the target for Roman Catholic Christians on the bombing crew was the spire of the Roman Catholic cathedral in the center of town.

"How have we come this far?" he asked. "We have come this far by 'not' looking into the faces of the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and at the people we now call our enemies."

He said a Bible with every reference to protecting the poor and every verse commanding God's people to be peacemakers cut out, "would be a Bible literally in tatters, a Bible full of holes, a Bible which would not hold together."

Robert H. Schuller, television personality and senior pastor of the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, Calif., declared his "theology of self-esteem" can "become a solid base" to confront social problems. "The failure of the church to redeem society after it has redeemed lost souls is more a judgement on a non-integrated, unsystematic theology than on the sinfulness and stubbornness and insecurity of its converts."

Christians must accept the vital link that God intends, Schuller said, between

a "salvation from hell to heaven theology" and an authentic "war-is-wrong" or "racism-is-a-sin" theology.

Charles Swindoll, pastor of First Free Evangelical Free Church in Fullerton, Calif. and author of the bestselling books, *Improving Your Serve* and *Strengthening Your Grip*, argued there is no place in Christianity for a "star system."

"Jesus didn't attempt to change the Gentile system but He told His disciples, 'Among you it is not so . . . The first shall be last and the greatest shall be your servant.' It is okay for the NBA to have Magic Johnson and Kareem Abdul Jabbar. There is nothing in the Bible to forbid superstars in athletics or entertainment or any part of the secular world," he stressed "But the Bible makes it very clear there is no place for such a hierarchy among Christians."

"The church is the perfect place to play politics for you can do it all in the name of Jesus," he continued. "I challenge you to stop it!" Even though Christians tend to see Paul as a superstar, Scripture doesn't support that either, he said.

Gordon Kingsley, president of William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., urged Christians to "swallow the whole Gospel," keeping the personal half that changes individuals while also swallowing the social half that changes society.

Baptist pioneers swallowed the whole thing, he said, which is why they had such impact on their communities and culture. Southern Baptists today need to work for social solutions to grave moral problems alongside our unfaltering commitment to personal evangelism, he said.

Art Simon, executive director of Bread for the World, one of the major private anti-hunger organizations in the world, provided a specific example: "We know what to do when one person is hungry, but what do we do when hundreds of millions of people are hungry? We cannot lick the problem of hunger through private efforts alone. We must seek essential government interventions because of the magnitude of the problem and the nature of the problem."

He viewed the call to discipleship as a call to Christian citizenship. "If there is a political will, we can put an end to world hunger within a generation," he said. "What hungry people need more than charity is justice."

Eleanor Nutt shared her personal religious journey since her husband Grady died in an airplane crash last year: "When Grady died, both of us were in the painful yet growing process of learning to set limits for ourselves and finding a balance between giving and taking."

Gladys S. Lewis, a former missionary nurse and a trustee of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, spoke on moral development in the family; Richard Foster, a professor at Friends University in Wichita, Kan., discussed "Fasting — Twentieth Century Style," and Bill Leonard, professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, spoke on the treasure of discipleship Christians hold in "earthen vessels."

A special performance of "Cotton Patch Gospel," a musical drama featuring actor Tom Key and music by the late Harry Chapin, was presented to a capacity crowd of seminar participants. The drama, based on Clarence Jordan's Cotton Patch version of the gospels, was given a sustained standing ovation.

BSU at Belmont to dedicate 'barn'

NASHVILLE — The Baptist Student Union at Belmont College will dedicate its newly-renovated BSU center, named in honor of Sara Butler Grigsby (1898-1981), on April 10 at 3:30 p.m.

Mrs. Grigsby was a Sunday School teacher at Immanuel Baptist Church and active in Christian service for many years. Her Sunday School class financed the prayer room in the BSU center, which includes two stained-glass windows with a burning lamp for knowledge and an open Bible depicting truth.

The BSU building, referred to as "the barn" for many years, was originally used as a stable for students' horses when Ward-Belmont, an elite finishing school for young ladies, occupied the grounds. It was partially renovated as a student center and snack bar when Belmont College was established, and thereafter became the center for BSU functions.

Other facilities in the renovated Sara B. Grigsby BSU Center include a multipurpose room for meetings of 75-100 people, a kitchen and dining room, a council room, and a 300-square-foot hayloft.

Participating in the dedication ceremony will be William E. Troutt, president of Belmont College; Carl Duck, director of missions for the Nashville Baptist Association; and Glenn Yarborough, director of student work, Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Social Security . . .

(Continued from page 1)

minister as an employee for Social Security purposes, indicated the Kentucky Democrat may continue to pursue his amendment through other legislative channels.

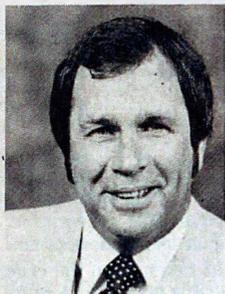
In another change affecting some church organizations, the final Social Security package follows both the House and Senate versions in extending mandatory coverage to all employees of non-profit organizations beginning in 1984. This change does not affect the exemptions granted under the IRS code to ministers.



Wendell Newman



Charles Smith



Fred Steelman

Fall Creek Falls to host church recreation retreat

The Tennessee Baptist Recreation Association retreat, April 18-20 at Fall Creek Falls State Park, will feature eight speakers from across Tennessee.

Program personalities include Roger Hill, Christian High Adventure coordinator and instructor at Hiwassee College, Madisonville; Linda Lambert, recreation associate, West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson; David Lewis, minister of recreation, First Baptist Church, Nashville; Wendell Newman, field services coordinator, church recreation department, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville; Tom Rives, president of the Tennessee Baptist Recreation Association and minister of recreation at Red Bank Baptist Church, Chattanooga; Scotty Shows, minister of recreation, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis;

Charles Smith, author, conference leader, counselor, Nashville; and Fred Steelman, president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and pastor of Red Bank Baptist Church, Chattanooga.

Retreat topics include staff relationships, the highs and lows of being in the ministry, job pressures, balancing one's professional and personal life, trends in video games, and policies and procedures in managing recreation.

The retreat is designed for church staff members involved in or interested in church recreation. The schedule begins with supper at 6:30 p.m. Monday and ends at 11 a.m. Wednesday.

Eleanor Yarborough, church recreation consultant for Tennessee Baptists, is coordinator for the retreat and also will lead seminars during the program.

'Compromise' abortion amendment clears Senate Judiciary panel

WASHINGTON (BP) — A Senate Judiciary panel has opted for a less restrictive Constitutional amendment on abortion than the version proposed by its chairman Sen. Orin G. Hatch of Utah.

In a move designed to boost chances of passing the anti-abortion amendment, Hatch joined fellow senators Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and Charles E. Grassley of Iowa in agreeing to send the full Judiciary Committee a streamlined version of S.J. Res. 3.

Backers say the one-sentence amendment would simply overturn the con-

troversial 1973 Supreme Court ruling in Roe v. Wade (that the Constitution protects a woman's rights to privacy in making abortion decisions) by declaring the "right to abortion is not secured by this Constitution."

Scuttled in the move were provisions in the Hatch bill which would have allowed state legislatures and Congress to restrict abortion, providing the most restrictive of competing state and federal laws would apply.

The shortened version had been urged at an earlier hearing by Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton of Missouri, who contended an amendment simply reversing Roe v. Wade stood a better chance of passage.

It remains uncertain, however, whether the Hatch-Eagleton compromise will satisfy either side in the long-running, highly-emotional abortion debate.

Groups favoring a legislated or Constitutional ban on abortion will likely be concerned that the amendment would allow states to pass permissive as well as restrictive abortion laws. Pro-choice groups have already attacked the committee action, with one organization, the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, charging the amendment would substitute "the political judgment of state legislators for the conscientious decision of a woman and her family."

The amendment now goes to the full Judiciary Committee which last year approved the more restrictive Hatch amendment on a 10-7 vote. Senate consideration of the amendment, however, was delayed when the Hatch agreed to withdraw his proposal in exchange for a commitment from majority leader Howard H. Baker Jr. of Tennessee to provide floor action on a Constitutional amendment early in the 98th Congress.

Bakke urges Baptists to face urban needs

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists cannot afford to believe in the Bible without practicing its message in the city, a Chicago seminary professor says.

Raymond J. Bakke, professor of ministry at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Lombard, Ill., told Southern Baptist urban pastors and directors of missions urbanization of the world is a reality and Southern Baptists must accept responsibility for urban needs.

With 232 world class cities with populations in excess of 1-million people "it's obvious that God is urbanizing the world," said Bakke. And, he added, God "is internationalizing every major city."

He noted that in his Chicago neighborhood, 60,000 people representing 17 different nations live in a one-mile-square area. In addition, of the 232 nations in the world, 52 of them are represented in the public school attended by his children. Such pluralism, said Bakke, has implications for Southern Baptist missions.

"The foreign board and the home board are going to have to cooperate," he said. "Everything we've learned about international ministry now needs to come out of Atlanta and all the stuff your Southern Baptist missionaries need to know overseas they ought to be taught during their furloughs by being cycled into urban research and development at home."

"The day when missionaries come home and trot around to churches and talk about what they do overseas to a group of people who ought to be doing that very same thing within a mile of their building is over," he asserted.

Bakke said Southern Baptists must develop educational and ministry models for the city and suggested that the Baptist Sunday School Board designate a title of its budget to create models for urban ministry. But, he added, Baptist agencies, like other denominational agencies, claim to be support bases for churches doing ministry instead of "doers" of ministry.

"So what happens is that everybody uses cities but nobody ministers to them," said Bakke. Instead denominations establish "clubhouses," or head-

quarters in cities and use city services, public transportation, and schools for their children but "they do all their ministry somewhere else."

"We're not reaching the cities," claimed Bakke. "In fact our presence there is probably keeping us from seeing what we ought to see. We live out (in the suburbs) and we commute in and do our thing and go back. Our products are so diffuse but we've never defined the turf where the 'clubhouse' is as a recipient of our ministry. We've no plan to penetrate and to saturate the area."

Bakke noted that urban centers are attracting ethnics, further illustrating that English-speaking people are the minority of the world. With a United States hispanic population greater than the total population of Canada, Bakke stressed that America has already become a bilingual nation.

He pointed out that foreign missionaries are required to learn the language and culture of the people with whom they work and suggested those requirements now have implications for home missions. He applauded the Home Mission Board's language missions division for being "light years ahead" of most denominations in providing resources for cross-cultural ministries.

Yet Bakke feared Anglos' insecurities may prevent churches from becoming involved in ethnic ministry. "I think one of the reasons that (homogeneous) church growth theory is being received right now with such enthusiasm has to do with the psychological need of whites to feel big," said Bakke. "The internalization of our own 'minorityness' is starting to get to us. We've never felt like it was necessary to have 5,000 seats in a sanctuary before."

Although he admitted there is truth in church growth principles, Bakke questioned whether churches weren't "building walls and resegregating the church in the name of homogeneous units."

Bakke said reaching cities requires that Christians become personally involved again with people in the inner-city. "When I went to Chicago I saw churches backing out of the city and all the time claiming to have the answer in an inerrant Bible," he recalled.

During the late 60s he noticed church strategies for urban ministry began to imitate Vietnam war strategies. U.S. planes would fly from Guam on bombing runs, then return to the Pacific island for "a night's sleep," said Bakke.

Similarly, suburban churches organized evangelism "explosions" and "crusades" as a way to do urban ministry. "We (the church) had abandoned relationships in the city and were retreating to programmatic and impersonal media and blitz strategies to cover the tracks of a fleeing church," said Bakke.

"It's not by having super-duper programs and inviting people to the sanctuary that we're going to reach the cities," said Bakke, "but by allowing laypeople to identify their primary relationships and then evangelizing in those networks."

"Jesus offers news, which is something that's already been done for you. Announce that news, and people hear that Jesus loves them, cares for them, and suddenly they get the energy to transform their prison called the ghetto. Tell them good news and then help them work out how to deal with the consequences of the news, which is to change social structures and to bring freedom."

Carpenter to fill Union PR post

JACKSON — Cindy J. Carpenter, manager of membership and community development with the Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce, has been named director of public relations at Union University.

The Memphis native and 1979 Union graduate will assume the new post on April 4 and will succeed Joe Westbury, who is accepting a position with the Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis.

A student columnist for The Jackson Sun while an intern in the college's public relations department, she was also editor of Union's newspaper and yearbook.

She also has served as public relations assistant at Louisiana College, Pineville, and has been employed as a commercial production coordinator at Jackson's WBBJ-TV.

Miss Carpenter is a member of West Jackson Baptist Church.



Miss Carpenter

SBC CP giving drops in February

NASHVILLE (BP) — Cooperative Program gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention last month failed to surpass figures from a year ago for the first time since November 1980.

The national unified giving program received \$8,858,267 during the month, a drop of .84 percent (\$75,344) from receipts in February 1982. It was only the third time in the past decade for the monthly figures to show a decline.

The SBC Cooperative Program is still ahead for the fiscal year. Since Oct. 1 receipts have totalled \$42,415,118 — an increase of \$2,426,668 (8.8 percent) from the first five months of the 1981-82 fiscal year.

Designated giving to specific agencies or causes within the SBC are up 12.45 percent after five months. Most of the \$41,432,132 in designated gifts has been for the Foreign Mission Board (\$39,827,932) through the special Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

EDITORIAL

The reality of the resurrection

The events of the last 24 hours had been overwhelming.

In peace and comfort the group had celebrated the Passover supper together in an upper room, remembering God's miraculous mercy in sparing His people when the plague of the death angel slaughtered the first-born of the families of Egypt.

Around the table, the leader of these disciples taught them of the power and the will of God. Although He warned them of the trials and tribulations that would come to them and to all believers, Jesus gave them the encouraging promise that the Holy Spirit would come to be with them when Jesus went away.

Then, in simple symbolism, Jesus illustrated the meaning of the climactic event of all history that was to occur in just a few hours. The broken bread illustrated His soon-to-be-broken body; the poured wine denoted His blood which was to be shed for them.

The disciples went from that upper room ... to sleep while Jesus prayed in agony ... to deny Him while others accused Him falsely ... to desert Him

The Joy of Resurrection Morning



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Alvin C. Shackelford, Editor

Charlie Warren
Associate Editor

Steve Higdon
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Eura Lannon
Advertising, Subscriptions

Betty Walker
Production Assistant

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when He was arrested ... to hide in fear while He was led hurriedly through six illegal trials — alone.

In fear the disciples avoided possible arrest and ridicule when Jesus was led through Jerusalem's streets. Only one of this group apparently stood by the cross as Jesus died in the redemptive act which granted the promise of forgiveness of sin.

His dead body was taken from the cruel cross and hurriedly given the rites of burial. A mere handful of His friends risked reprisal to see His interment.

The dull thud of the stone as it was rolled into the tomb's opening gave finality to the shattered hopes and dreams of His followers. The stone was sealed. Soldiers guarded the tomb — in an unfounded belief that these fearful disciples might become courageous, steal Jesus' body, and claim that He had risen from the grave.

But as that fateful Friday ended, the followers and disciples remained in hiding. Any hopes they might have had the previous day had now become permanent fear.

However, only a few days later we see these same cowardly people tried for their testimonies, being cast into prison, and stoned to death without fear.

What made the difference? — the reality of the resurrection!

These once-scared men would not have faced ridicule and death to advance a lie. They denied Jesus while He lived — certainly they would not die for Him if He were dead!

Do you believe that Jesus arose from the dead?

Unless we believe emphatically that "God has raised Him from the dead," we can never experience complete commitment to Christ — and know the daring difference made by the reality of the resurrection!

Draper commended

Shortly after his election as president of the Southern Baptist Convention last June in New Orleans, James T. Draper Jr. promised that he would seek to be open and aboveboard in performing the duties of the office to which he had been elected.

He distributed an "open letter" to the Baptist state papers, emphasizing his desire to intensify communications between the leaders of the various factions of our denomination.

Draper has worked hard to fulfill those promises.

The SBC president has arranged occasions for spokesmen of our two convention "political parties" to meet together — in formal and in informal relationships.

He promised that he would consult with the two SBC vice-presidents in making his appointments and nominations and that these appointments and nominations would be made and released well before the June 1983 convention in Pittsburgh. He also consulted with the pastors and denominational leaders of these nominees and appointees.

This week Draper has completed the fulfilling of this promise with the naming of the Credentials Committee which will serve during the SBC. Earlier he had released the names of those being nominated or appointed to other SBC committees.

Taken as a group, we believe that Draper's appointments and nominees are representative of Southern Baptists. Oh, we realize that party politicians of either faction could focus in on some of those named, but by and large, it is an honest, sincere attempt to name responsible individuals to responsible positions.

Draper promised to be "his own man" — that he will make his own decisions. He promised to be open in all that he does as our president. He promised to aid communications among Baptists.

We commend President Draper for making — and keeping — these promises during these nine months.

Cicero's comment



By the editor

Several years ago while we were living in Indianapolis, 14 families of our church "adopted" 14 public health officials from foreign lands who were in that city for a special study at nearby Indiana University Medical School.

My family had the joyous experience of getting to know a quiet, smiling Buddhist from Thailand named U Thai.

During his six months in Indianapolis, U Thai was in our home several times. I recall that he made an interesting observation about our having the "thanks" before meals. U Thai wondered if it would not be better to wait until after you ate — to see if you were truly thankful for that food.

We also took him to see some of the sights of the city, and of course, to visit our church, the Speedway Baptist Church in the Indianapolis suburb of Speedway.

The first time that U Thai went to a church service with us was on an Easter Sunday morning.

In his youth, U Thai had briefly attended a Catholic mission school and knew a little about the Christian faith. As we waited for the service to begin on that Easter morning, I tried to explain to him why Easter was such an important day for Christians.

In simple terms, I related the events of the crucifixion and the resurrection and what these events mean to a believer.

U Thai nodded as I talked, and then in halting English responded by saying, "Your church is much different from a Catholic church."

Picking up on this statement, I expounded the features of our building which would differ from a Catholic church building — simple design, pulpit in the center, the location of the choir, the absence of the altar, etc.

He waited patiently for me to finish, and then pointing to the stained-glass window which depicted a simple cross in the baptistry, he said, "Yes, that's true. But I was thinking about your cross doesn't have a man on it."

Startled at his observation, I realized that while I was engaged in a discourse on church architecture, U Thai had focused on the glorious truth of Easter and the foundation of the Christian faith — the cross is empty!

Jesus was tried and condemned to be crucified on a cross. He was nailed to that cross. He was there on that cross, suffering the ridicule of the mob and the pain of crucifixion while His life ebbed from His physical body.

But, Jesus is no longer on that cross.

The empty cross has a significant meaning to Christians. We must never forget that on the cross Jesus paid the price for our disobedience of God's law, and He died once. That once was more than 1,900 years ago. In His own words, "It is finished!"

Jesus was on that cross, but now He is in heaven, interceding for us before the throne of God.

He died — the cross is empty!

He arose — the tomb is empty!

Hallelujah!

Personal perspective

By TOM MADDEN
TBC executive secretary

The parable of the good Samaritan reminds me that any one of us may be wounded.

The traveler, when he began his day, did not expect he would be robbed, beaten, thrown in a ditch on the far side of the road, and left for dead.

We do not have to be robbed and beaten to be wounded. Experiences of life have a way of wounding us. Our hearts get broken, our plans altered, our dreams shattered, and our hopes blighted.

When we are wounded we often find help from unexpected sources. We may be disappointed when help does not come from those from whom you would normally expect it. But help does come even though God directs one we are not expecting to help us.

Being wounded does not mean you are not going to recover. I was reminded recently that the good Samaritan not only gave his present resources, but used that which we had earned in the past, and also pledged a generous portion of his future. The wounded did recover.

The wounded traveler was left at the inn to convalesce. I would like to believe that today our Lord wants those who have been wounded in the struggle of life to look to those of us who are disciples to help bind up the jagged wounds, to minister to the brokenhearted, and to restore hope to those who have been robbed.

Those of us who have been wounded and have been nursed back to strength need to walk again the road of service, looking for those who have been robbed, beaten, and thrown on the far side of the road. I don't believe we will have to go very far.

Nashvillian gives U of R \$2-million

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The University of Richmond has been given \$2-million by Mr. and Mrs. W. Dortch Oldham.

A Nashville business executive, Oldham is a trustee and former student of the university. He is a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Nashville.

The gift, the second largest financial commitment from an individual donor in the history of the university, will be used to initiate a new merit scholarship program to be known as the Oldham Scholars Program.

The gift was announced by the Baptist school's President E. Bruce Heilman, who said the Oldham gift will be used to enhance educational opportunities for exceptionally bright, able students "who possess the clear potential to become effective leaders in the broader society."

Oldham attended the University of Richmond through 1941, financing his education by selling Bibles, dictionaries, and encyclopedias in the small communities of the Northeast and South for a Nashville publishing firm, Southwestern Inc. Later he became president of this firm when he acquired the controlling interest.

He has been a trustee of the University of Richmond since 1972.



Madden

Women's task force to organize pre-SBC meeting in Pittsburgh

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — A diverse group of 34 Southern Baptist women has named a task force to plan a pre-Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Pittsburgh for women involved in ministry roles.

The group, which met in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission annual seminar in Louisville, also enlisted the help of the commission to sponsor and promote the meeting.

According to coordinators of the Louisville meeting, the nine-member all-women task force will set an agenda for the pre-convention meeting to provide a forum for discussion which will possibly lead to the formation of a steering committee on women in ministry.

Other expected agenda items include the sharing of ideas on ways to improve the role and status of women in ministry, the possible formation of an ongoing professional association or network, and

ways to encourage SBC agencies to give additional support to women in ministry.

Members of the task force include Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union; Lela Hendricks, special project coordinator for the Christian Life Commission and the Home Mission Board; Nancy Hastings Sehested, associate minister of Oakhurst Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga.; and Ann Neil, retired missionary and visiting professor of missions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Other members are Jenny Weisz, an attorney from Chapel Hill, N.C.; Ann Davis, associate professor of social work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; Sarah Frances Anders, professor of sociology at Louisiana College; Evelyn Stagg, freelance writer from Bay St. Louis, Miss.; and Reba Cobb, minister to younger youth at Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville.

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.

Sellers' anniversary

Dear editor:

The Sellers Baptist Home and Adoption Agency is 50 years old this year. The work was begun in 1933 in New Orleans and continues in that city today as a strong ministry of the Home Mission Board.

In these 50 years, more than 3,300 maternity clients have come to us from across the United States and foreign countries. In addition, more than 2,200 children have been placed for adoption.

We want to take this occasion of our 50th anniversary to express our gratitude to Southern Baptists for their continued interest and support of our work through the years. Thank you, Southern Baptists.

Mary Dan Kuhnle
2010 Peniston St.
New Orleans, LA 70115

Literal interpretation

Dear editor:

For some time now, people have spoken and written about the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of the Bible.

On one hand, some people seem to say the Bible presents God's plan of salvation and provides illustrations of ways Christians should live — although most of these illustrations are not to be taken in a literal way.

There are others, on the other hand, who believe the Bible presents God's plan of salvation, but they say they believe everything in the Bible is literally true without contradiction or error. They apply this view toward matters of doctrine and to specific actions. For example, Jimmy Davis in his March 2 letter quotes 1 Timothy 3:12 as the basis for saying that only men should serve as deacons.

Both groups, it seems, are willing to accept certain matters in the Bible without question and to ignore or overlook other matters. For example, Jesus was very specific in Matthew 5:29-30 about what to do if a person's eye or hand caused the individual to sin, yet I have not heard anyone suggest that we put this into practice today. In John 13:3-17,

Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and said He had given an example that was to be followed. So far as I know, this example is not followed in our churches. In describing the last supper, the writers tell that Jesus said the bread was His body and the cup contained His blood. He did not say this was a parable as He did in other instances, however. I have not heard or read of anyone who says these elements actually became His blood or body.

I believe you can provide a great service for us, the readers. Ask the various leaders in the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention the basis they use in deciding how to accept or respond to very specific statements as the above. It will be a good feature article.

Robert S. Thurman
729 Whirlaway Cir.
Knoxville, TN 37923

Are we 'Protestants'?

Dear editor:

In reading the Baptist and Reflector, I see Southern Baptists referred to as "the largest Protestant denomination."

Since when did Baptists become a Protestant denomination and who are they protesting against — not the Church of England, not Catholics. Baptists were organized long before either of these began to oppress the people in the name of religion.

I suggest you read "The Little Baptist," found in most older church libraries.

Manson Roby
Rt. 2, Box 59
Henderson, TN 38340

Baptist Press uses the term "Protestant" because religions in the United States are generally classified as Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish. I note my dictionary defines a "Protestant" as "a Christian denying the universal authority of the pope and affirming the Reformation principles of justification by faith alone, the priesthood of all believers, and the primacy of the Bible as the only source of revealed truth." However, realizing that some Baptists object to the designation, I usually change the BP news releases to read "the largest evangelical denomination." (editor)

Citizen's Corner

By Jerry M. Self
Public affairs and Christian life consultant

Pinball machine gambling could have new life in Tennessee depending on the action of the General Assembly.

John Ford of Memphis has introduced before the state Senate SB 333 in an effort to return pinball machine gambling to legality and put a tax on the machines.

Alvin King and others are sponsoring the House version, HB 559. The Senate bill was scheduled to be heard before the Finance, Ways and Means Committee on Tuesday of this week.

A pair of questionable bingo bills also have been introduced. SB 339 by Riley Darnell has passed the Senate Judiciary Committee. Its House companion, HB 393 has already passed the House. This bill would allow anyone who has a bingo license to conduct bingo games at multiple locations. Another bill would allow an applicant for a bingo license to pay \$250 and waive the five years in business requirement. The bill numbers and sponsors are SB 400 by Milton Hamilton and HB 348 by Harold Love.

A bingo bill which merits your support is SB 1007 by Ray Albright and HB 1032 by Ralph Yelton, Dana Moore, Ruth Montgomery, Clyde Webb, Zane Whitson, Steve Bivens, and I. V. Hillis Jr. This bill would disallow a charity exemption for bingo games if the organization requesting the exemption does nothing but sponsor bingo games.

Senators Ed Davis and Avon Williams are sponsoring SB 944 and Representative Harold Love is sponsoring HB 350 attempting to apply a privilege tax to video machines. This seems like a good idea.

These bills will be considered before committees very soon. To make a difference in the decisions made by the General Assembly you need to contact your legislators now. Write them at the State Capitol, Nashville 37219.

Parker to write lesson comments

Jack Parker, pastor of Forest Hill Baptist Church, Parrottsville, has been named to write the Bible Book series Sunday School lesson commentaries for the Baptist and Reflector during the next quarter.

His first lesson commentary appears in this issue of the Baptist and Reflector.

A native of Alabama, Parker came to Tennessee in 1970. He has served as pastor of Concord Baptist Church, Mohawk, and Telford Baptist Church, Telford. He also has served as minister of education at Clark Street Baptist Church, Johnson City.

Parker has attended Tennessee Temple College, Chattanooga, and the University of Oklahoma, Norman.

During his ministry in Tennessee, he has served in several associational positions and has written articles, columns, and curriculum for Baptist and secular media.



Self



Parker

Liberation theology shapes Latin church

By Erich Bridges

SAO GERALDO DO ARAGUAIA, Brazil (BP) — Brazilian military authorities claim 13 peasants ambushed federal police in 1981 in the northern village of Sao Geraldo do Araguaia.

Two Roman Catholic priests, both French missionaries, were arrested and tried for inciting violence and promoting "collective disobedience to the law and class struggle." Both were deported last year.

This church-state showdown was far from the first of its kind in Brazil — and far from the last.

Southern Baptist foreign missionaries reject direct political involvement in any country but a growing number of other Protestant and Catholic ministers, missionaries, and theologians in Latin America declare that faith without political action is no faith at all.

"When you see your own people raped and killed by rightist terrorists ... and when you realize that two percent of the population already controls three-quarters of the wealth, you cannot bury your head in a Bible and ignore these realities," says a Catholic missionary in Central America. "In the midst of such violence, not to take sides is to take sides."

The Roman Catholic Church has always taken sides in Latin America but now it is switching sides. For centuries Catholic bishops shared power with the military leaders and landowner families of the region. Now many bishops call generals "tyrants" and urge seizure of rich landowners' properties.

Why the change? Thousands of once-quiet Catholics (and Protestants) sprang into action after the revival of military

Foundation

Things have changed

By Jonas L. Stewart

It is possible that your will no longer accomplishes the purpose which you intended if it has not been reviewed recently. Many changes were made by Congress beginning in 1982.

Did you know that a husband or wife can now leave the entire estate of whatsoever kind, character, or size to each other free from all federal estate tax? If your will was written according to previous law, you may not have this provision. Even if the surviving spouse can inherit tax free, each needs a will because if both die in a common disaster, the estate will pass from the one without a will unless each has a will.

There were also tremendous changes in the exclusion amount to pass free of taxes to heirs. However, you should be aware that in 1983 the federal estate tax rate on the first taxable amount above the exclusion begins at 34 percent. There is also a state inheritance tax that has only a \$10,000 exclusion in some states.

Your gifts to your church, the college of your choice, the Children's Homes and/or other mission causes may not be as generous as you want them to be.

Be sure to check on your named executor. If he has moved out of the state, he can no longer qualify. Check the signature of witnesses. Is one or both deceased or otherwise unavailable?

It pays to have legal counsel to check your will occasionally. This is more important when family circumstances, financial conditions, or laws change.

If you do not have a will or if you do not consider that you have a Christian will, write the Tennessee Baptist Foundation, P.O. Box 347, Brentwood, TN 37027 for information about preparing a Christian will.

dictatorship in numerous Latin American countries during the 1970s. Hundreds of priests, religious workers, and missionaries were arrested or killed, including El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero, assassinated while saying mass in 1980.

Pope John Paul II urged peace and moderation during his March visit to Central America, a region where rightist and leftist terror has killed thousands of innocents. Well-versed in the realities of life in a communist state, the Polish Pope calls for justice for the poor and oppressed but warns the faithful not to sanctify any one political formula (such as Marxism) to achieve it.

In Latin America today, Catholics are on both sides of the conflict but the Pope may find even his enormous influence will bring little calm. For many, faith has become inseparable from politics.

The seeds of change sprouted after decades of rapid urban growth shook the Catholic church's entrenched structure of domination. To regain losses, the church helped form labor movements and Christian democratic political parties. Many young reformers embraced Marxism.

The Latin American Conference of Bishops condemned the "institutional violence" of dictatorship and the "colo-

rialism" of capitalist enterprise. Many priests and nuns have interpreted the bishops' statements as a simple call for ministry to the poor but others have taken them as a mandate for radical political action.

A powerful new doctrine also challenges the Pope's political neutrality: liberation theology. Responding to the revolution in the traditional Latin American church in the last generation, a number of Catholic and Protestant theologians in the region developed this concept setting forth their case for change.

Liberation theologians declare God is the great liberator of history, freeing people from every sort of bondage — spiritual, social, economic, political. To the Egyptian oppressors, God said, "Let my people go." When they refused, He acted, crushing their might and freeing the children of Israel from poverty and slavery.

In Christ, God identified Himself completely with the poor, say the liberationists. He entered the world through humble birth and declared in His first sermon His mission to preach good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives, liberate the oppressed (Luke 4:8).

Liberation theologians reject the "spiritualizing" of these events — that

is, interpreting them in spiritual terms alone. God continues to act in history, they assert, sometimes through mass revolutionary movements.

Does liberation theology then embrace violence as a means of bringing justice to the world? Leading theologian Gustavo Gutierrez of Peru maintains those who "attribute violence to the theology of liberation do not know what they are talking about." But in fact many liberationists readily approve of "armed struggle" to free exploited people.

A controversial example from Africa is the World Council of Churches' "Programme to Combat Racism," under renewed attack after critical profiles appeared recently in Reader's Digest and on the CBS news program "60 Minutes."

In 1978 the World Council awarded \$85,000 to a Marxist guerrilla alliance fighting the white-ruled government in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). On June 15 of that year Southern Baptist Missionary Archie Dunaway was stabbed to death by guerrillas on the Sanyati Baptist Hospital Compound in Rhodesia, one of dozens of Protestant and Catholic missionaries murdered during the seven-year war.

The World Council insists its grants to guerrillas in Rhodesia and several other countries have gone strictly for food, medical supplies, and other "humanitarian" aid. But guerrilla funds are then rechanneled into arms. The \$85,000 grant drew widespread condemnation; the Salvation Army, a founding council member, suspended membership.

In Nicaragua, meanwhile, a huge government-coordinated rally greeted Pope John Paul's arrival March 4, with the cry, "Christianity and revolution — there is no contradiction!" The Catholic Church, numerous mission groups, and many other public organizations in Nicaragua supported the 1979 overthrow of the corrupt Somoza regime by Sandinista guerrillas.

Today, however, liberationists find themselves defending an increasingly hard-line Sandinista junta with close military ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union. The Sandinistas regularly censor the press and arrest opponents. They are accused of exporting violent revolution to neighboring countries like El Salvador, forcibly relocating and allegedly murdering rebellious Misquito Indians and harassing the Catholic Church itself.

Some mission groups have been pressured to leave or have been denied visas. Southern Baptist missionaries left Nicaragua last April on the advice of Baptist leaders in the country, though cooperation in literature ministry continues.

But the Maryknoll Order, a U.S. Catholic missionary society, continues to support the Sandinistas, explaining their actions as necessary unpleasantnesses of the revolution. Former Maryknoll missionary and Communication Director Miguel D'Escoto is Nicaragua's foreign minister. He and several other priests in the government have rejected the Pope's command that clergy refrain from direct government involvement.

The contradictions of liberation theology appear when theory collides with reality. But its teachings strike a deeply responsive chord in the hearts of poor and downtrodden people who find hope and courage in a God who declares His special concern for them.

That chord is being struck in Latin America now and the poor are responding. The nature of their response will determine the future of the church in the region, and possibly the future of the region itself.



ARMED STRUGGLE — Nicaraguan youths brandished Molotov cocktails and stones as they hid their faces to prevent identification during the 1979 revolution. Were those weapons instruments of God's justice? Many Catholics and Protestants thought so and supported the revolution, but today's repressive Sandinista government tactics are causing some to change their minds. Photo by Bob Harper.



CRY OF THE PEOPLE — Simple survival is a thing to be celebrated by the people of this slum in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Roman Catholics and many Protestant groups are advocating liberation theology, which teaches that God frees the poor and oppressed from political as well as spiritual bondage, sometimes through revolutionary movements. Photo by Don Rutledge.



COLLEGIATUS AWARD — Mr. and Mrs. Henry Horrell (center) accept a memento noting their induction into the Belmont College Collegiatus. With the Horrells at the March 24 Collegiatus banquet are Morris Early (left), college trustee chairman, and William Troutt, college president.

Belmont inducts Horrells into school's Collegiatus

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Horrell of Nashville were presented Belmont College's Collegiatus awards during a banquet March 24 on the Baptist college campus in Nashville.

Founded in 1978, the Belmont College Collegiatus annually honors individuals whose support of Christian higher education has been of special relevancy and significance in the life of the college. Selections are made by the Board of Trustees.

Horrell, president of a commercial real estate firm, was a Belmont college trustee from 1964 to 1977, serving as chairman for six of those years.

Mrs. Horrell, the former Kathleen Brazelton, has been an active participant in the Historic Belmont Association, Belmont Aid, and the Landscape Committee.

The Horrells are active members of Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville.

Speaker at the sixth Collegiatus was Herbert C. Gabhart, chancellor and former president of Belmont College.

Using the subject "Seven Pillars of Institutional Greatness," Gabhart based these seven pillars on the letters of "Belmont." These were said to be built on an abiding foundation, established an authentic identity, launch on accountable stewardship, mount attainable goals, attain astute personnel, nurture "avant courier" friends, and trust in the agape promises of God.

Gabhart said the foundation of a great

institution must be in Jesus Christ, and it must be accountable for its stewardship to the educational process, to the denomination which supports it, and to God.

"When God is involved in your institution, you can expect great and mighty things from Him," Gabhart added.

The award is endowed by the family of Lemuel B. Stevens, who served as chairman of the college's trustees. He died in 1977.

Previous recipients have been Stirton Oman (posthumously) and Albert B. Maloney in 1978; Willette Thomason Wright and Hollis E. Johnson in 1979; Mrs. Margaret Oman Leu and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Moench in 1980; Mrs. Dorothea Wright Douglas and Joe C. Davis in 1981; and Goebel G. Bunch and Gene Kidd in 1982.

Presiding at the March 24 ceremony were William Troutt, Belmont College president, and Morris Early, trustee chairman.

\$10-million funds campaign voted by Belmont trustees

A three-year, \$10-million capital funds campaign for Belmont College was approved by the trustees at their March 24 meeting in Nashville.

William Troutt, college president, reported to the trustees that advance gifts and pledges from trustees and friends of the college toward the campaign have already reached the total of \$4,750,000.

The additional funds needed to reach the campaign goal will be generated primarily through the \$15-million statewide endowment campaign which will be launched in November. That campaign, which was approved by the 1980 Tennessee Baptist Convention, will seek to raise \$5-million each for the three TBC colleges — Belmont College, Carson-Newman College of Jefferson City, and Union University of Jefferson.

Among the projects which will be included in the Belmont College campaign will be funds to renovate the north front building on the campus, which will house the college's administrative offices.

Troutt said that the renovation of the north front and other improvements in the funds campaign are a part of the five-year long-range plans adopted by the trustees last August.

The trustees named J. Robert Clark

Strom Thurmond introduces Reagan prayer amendment

WASHINGTON (BP) — President Ronald Reagan's proposed Constitutional amendment on prayer in public schools has been reintroduced in the 98th Congress.

Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, introduced the measure, promising early action by his panel. Although the proposal was the subject of three days of hearings last year, the Judiciary Committee took no action on it and the measure died.

In a statement on the Senate floor, Thurmond, a Southern Baptist, attacked the U.S. Supreme Court decisions of 1962 and 1963 that struck down state and local laws requiring prayer and Bible readings in public schools.

The proposed amendment is needed, he said, "to restore the meaning of the First Amendment that had existed throughout most of the nation's history," a meaning Thurmond said was "abruptly upset" by the 1962 and 1963 rulings. He said those decisions in effect overturned "the original intent that Congress be neutral as between religious views," a concept the Supreme Court "transformed into a notion of neutrality between religion and irreligion."

Thurmond also revived another argument against the high court rulings, declaring the First Amendment's ban on an establishment of religion was directed to the federal Congress only, not to states and localities.

At the White House, meanwhile, a "Fact Sheet" on the proposed amendment reiterated a point made last year that "the selection of the particular circumstances for prayer would be left to the judgment of local communities based on a consideration of such factors as the preferences of parents, students, teachers, as well as other community interests."

Last May, when the president first indicated he would push the measure, the White House issued a similar document

explaining that under the proposal state governments and local school boards would be empowered to write the prayers to be recited.

That statement read in part, "Since the voluntary school prayer amendment will eliminate any federal Constitutional obstacle to voluntary school prayer, states and communities would be free to select prayers of their own choosing. They could choose prayers that have already been written, or they could compose their own prayers. If groups of people are to be permitted to pray, someone must have the power to determine the content of such prayers."

Last June, during its annual session in New Orleans, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a resolution supporting the prayer amendment. The resolution declared in part that the proposed amendment "does not constitute a call for government-written or government-mandated prayer."

The issue is expected to be debated again when the convention meets June 14-16 in Pittsburgh.

Douglas Hudgins dies in Jackson

JACKSON, Miss. (BP) — W. Douglas Hudgins executive secretary emeritus of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, died March 23 in Mississippi Baptist Medical Center of a pulmonary embolism. He was 77 years old.

Hudgins entered the hospital March 9, and underwent surgery March 10 for replacement of an aortic valve in his heart.

A native Tennessean, Hudgins was born in Estill Springs and lived in Nashville while growing up. He was a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Hudgins was named acting executive secretary of the Mississippi convention in July 1968, after the executive, Chester Quarles, died in Peru. He became executive secretary in February 1969, and retired in 1973. Prior to assuming the post, he had been pastor of First Baptist Church of Jackson, Miss., where he served 1946-1969.

He also was pastor of Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Tex., 1936-43, and First Baptist Church of Houston, 1943-46. Hudgins had been chairman of the SBC Executive Committee and president (now chairman of the board) of the Foreign Mission Board. He was vice-chairman of the special committee which wrote the Baptist Faith and Message Statement, adopted by the SBC in 1963. He was first vice-president of the SBC in 1958.

Hudgins' father was Sunday School secretary for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, 1908-1934.

Memorials should be sent to First Baptist Church of Jackson, to be used for the W. Douglas Hudgins Chair of Preaching, which was established at the church in 1982.

Westwood Baptist Church is celebrating Pastor James M. Gregg's 50th Anniversary in the ministry April 10, 1983. Special service at 10:50 A.M. with Guest Speakers Reception from 2-4 P.M. Friends and Co-workers invited 6100 Charlotte Avenue Nashville, Tenn.

Blanchard accepts call to Cedar Hill church

Maurice Blanchard was called as pastor of Cedar Hill Baptist Church, Chattanooga, a ministry he began in January.

Blanchard, who had been serving the church as interim pastor, is a former missionary to India, and was president of the Baptist seminary there. He is a previous pastor of Lookout Mountain Baptist Church, Lookout Mountain; Bulls Gap Baptist Church, Bulls Gap; and Second Baptist Church, Austin, Ill. He came to Cedar Hill from East Ridge Baptist Church, Chattanooga, where he was interim associate pastor.

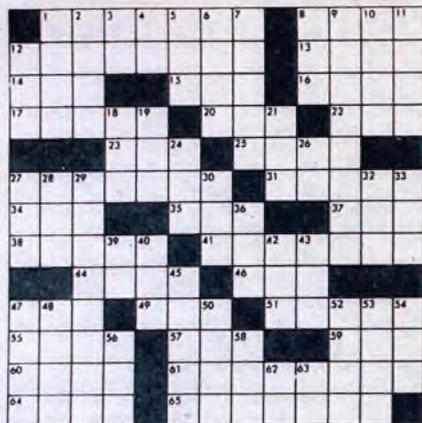
Blanchard is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and has attended Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lombard, Ill.

The next scheduled meeting of the college trustees will be June 23.

Send a Baptist and Reflector subscription to a friend

Bible Puzzle

Answers on page 10



DOWN

- 1 Arizona: abbr.
- 2 Ferry — (2 Sam. 19:18)
- 3 Regarding: abbr.
- 4 Arrival: abbr.
- 5 "— and thigh" (Judg. 15:8)
- 6 "threshing floor of —" (Gen. 50:10)
- 7 "Persia and —" (Esth. 1:3)
- 8 Jether's son (1 Ch. 7:38)
- 9 Consolation (Acts 4:36)
- 10 Suffix: diminutive
- 11 Exam
- 12 King (1 Ki. 15:22)
- 18 "To — is human"
- 19 Presidential nickname
- 21 Place
- 24 Doze
- 26 Rhode Island: abbr.
- 27 Food bit
- 28 Liberian native
- 29 "God with us" (Matt. 1:23)
- 30 Mozambique native

ACROSS

- 1 Sarah's husband (Gen. 17:15)
- 8 Aid
- 12 "Hothan the —" (1 Ch. 11:44)
- 13 Value
- 14 Keresan Indians
- 15 Cushion
- 16 Liberal —
- 17 Indians of Mexico
- 20 Immerse
- 22 "Cast the —" (John 21:6)
- 23 "one of them —" (Matt. 27:48)
- 25 Emanation
- 27 "— it with pure gold" (Ex. 25:11)
- 31 Bone, leg
- 34 Abraham's offering (Gen. 22:13)
- 35 Hadar's city (Gen. 36:39)
- 37 Curve
- 38 "as at other —" (Num. 24)
- 41 "3,600 to —" (2 Ch. 2:2)
- 44 Turkish regiment
- 46 Men from — (2 Ki. 17:24)
- 47 Peninsula: abbr.
- 49 Distance measure, Jap.
- 51 David's wife (2 Sam. 3:5)
- 55 Mother goddess; Baby.
- 57 Sorcery, W. Ind.
- 59 Tree, Philippines
- 60 Red River Rebellion leader
- 61 "licked —" (Luke 16:21)
- 64 "go —" (Matt. 28:10)
- 65 "But the — man" (1 Cor. 2:14)

CRYPTOVERSE

W X O D X R M X Q X I Y R F Z Y

U X O Q R

Today's Cryptoverse clue: Q equals L

Interpretation

Walking on water

By Herschel H. Hobbs

"They see Jesus walking on the sea" (John 6:19).

When Jesus sent the apostles away from the scene of the feeding of the 5,000, it was late evening. They were in a boat heading back to Capernaum. The sea "was rising" (imperfect tense) because of a strong wind (v.18). "Had rowed" is a perfect tense, denoting the difficulty in doing so because of the wind and waves.

It was after midnight, between 3 and 6 a.m. Due to the difficult conditions, they were about six or seven miles into the sea, about halfway across. It was then that the apostles saw Jesus coming to them, walking on the water. In the darkness, they thought they were seeing a ghost. So they were terrified (Matthew 14:26).

John 6:19 uses the Greek word *peripatounta* for "walking." The prefix *peri* may mean around or about. Some see this to mean that Jesus was walking around the lake. But this word is followed by *epi*, upon. So Jesus was walking about upon the sea. This agrees with Matthew (14:25) and Mark (6:48).

Seeing their terror, Jesus said, "It is I; stop being afraid" (John 6:20).

Matthew tells of Peter's request that he might come to Jesus, also walking on the water. Jesus told him to come to Him. As long as Peter kept his eyes on

Jesus, he did so. But when he looked down at the windswept waves, he began to sink. Jesus responded to Peter's cry for help (Matthew 14:30-31).

Of interest is the fact that only Matthew records the event about Peter. Luke omits the entire story. John gives an abbreviated account. Mark tells of Jesus walking on water. But he says nothing about Peter's experience. It is said that Mark heard Peter preach and wrote down what he said. Apparently Peter conveniently omitted his experience from his preaching.

As soon as Jesus entered the boat, the wind ceased (Matthew 14:32). John says that "immediately the ship was at the land whither they went" (v.21). This does not mean that miraculously the boat was at land, but that with a calm sea, the rowing was easier. Soon they arrived at shore near Capernaum.

With Jesus in our boat the going is always easier.

NOBTS frustees set salary hike

NEW ORLEANS (BP)— A record \$5.734-million budget was adopted and an 18 percent base salary increase for all New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary faculty members was approved by the seminary's board of trustees during its annual meeting March 15-16.

The faculty salary increase coincided with the board's approval of a dual track program allowing students to complete a seminary degree program by taking courses at night. Faculty members are therefore compensated for the extra teaching load.

Cliff Amos was elected vice-president for development for the seminary and Jo Morton Bevington was elected assistant professor of childhood education. Amos has been director of development for the past two years. Mrs. Bevington will join the faculty in July after three years at Biola University in Los Angeles where she is assistant professor of education.

M. Thomas Starkes was named professor of Christian missions and also designated Chester L. Quarles professor of Christian missions. C. Ferris Jordan was promoted from associate professor to professor of adult education.

Professors in the School of Christian Training were granted rank on the seminary faculty. SCT Director Jerry Breazeale was granted full professor status as professor of New Testament. Charles E. Graham was elected associate professor of Old Testament; Robert Barnes, associate professor of church history; and Luther M. Dorr, associate professor of preaching.

In response to a request from the student body, the board approved a \$218,000 proposed expansion of the seminary-owned telephone system to include telephones in dormitory rooms and guest housing.

Tennessee ranks high in student baptisms

NASHVILLE — Tennessee was seventh among state conventions last year in the number of college students baptized in Southern Baptist churches, with 631.

Nationwide, 11,702 students were baptized, a 19 percent gain over the 1981 total of 9,765, according to information compiled from the Uniform Church Letter.

Texas led all states with 2,257; Oklahoma was second with 1,015.

Other states in the top 10 were: Florida, 959; California, 919; Georgia, 698; Alabama, 653; Mississippi, 411; North Carolina, 382; and Kentucky, 337.

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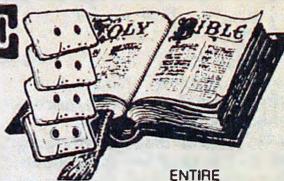
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PEOPLE...

Cris Alexander was licensed to the ministry March 6 by Center Hill Baptist Church, Counce. Alexander is a student at Union University, Jackson. Chester W. Harrison is the pastor of the church.

Third Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, ordained Jimmy Carman as a deacon. H. H. Carman of Fayetteville brought the charge to the candidate. The church's pastor is Murray Mathis.

Bill Selecman was ordained into the gospel ministry March 6 by Central Baptist Church, Crossville. Selecman, who has led lay revivals and renewal meetings across the country, will serve the church as minister of evangelism and outreach. He is a native of Louisville, Ky., a graduate of the University of Louisville (Ky.) Dental School, and has been a dentist in Crossville for 31 years. The pastor of the church is Kenneth R. Clayton.

Calvary Baptist Church, Smithville, ordained Kenneth Magness and Jimmy Posa into its deacon ministry March 6. Kenneth Tramel, a former pastor of the church, delivered the sermon for the ordination service. John H. Norman Jr. is the pastor of the church.

John Steven Coke was recently licensed to the ministry by First Baptist Church, Waynesboro. Norman O. Baker is the church's pastor.

REVIVALS...

Evangelists Henry Linginfelter and Dick Barrett recently led revival services at Virginia Avenue Baptist Church, Bristol. The pastor of the church, David B. Lay, reported 26 professions of faith, 14 new members by letter, and numerous other decisions as a result of the revival.

CHURCHES...

Twin Oaks Baptist Church, Cedar Grove, recently voted to enlarge its sanctuary and renovate its building. Howell Gossett is the pastor of the church.

A new steeple was recently installed atop the building of Wilsonville Baptist Church, Newport. The church's pastor is Robert L. Galloway.

Smith begins ministry in Three Forks pulpit

Clifford Smith recently began duties as pastor of Three Forks Baptist Church, Crawford, in response to a call from the congregation.

Smith, a native of Overton Co., was previously pastor of Mount Pisgah Baptist Church in Obion County, Oakdale Baptist Church in Clay County, and Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church near Livingston.

Parkers Gap calls interim as pastor

Parkers Gap Baptist Church, Chattanooga, recently called Gene Lewis as its pastor.

Lewis, who served the church as interim pastor prior to the call, is a former pastor of Hamill Road Baptist Church, Chattanooga, and First Baptist Church, Flat Rock, Ala.

Lewis is a native of Chattanooga.

LEADERSHIP...

Erik Chandler accepted a recent call from Immanuel Baptist Church, Knoxville, to come as youth director. Chandler is a senior at South-Young High School in Knoxville. The pastor of the church is Joe Chandler.

Kelvin Smith was called as minister of youth by West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson. Smith is a junior at Union University, also in Jackson. John Lee Taylor is the pastor of the church.

Stevens Street Baptist Church, Cookeville, recently called Mark Collins as minister of music. Dewey Robinson is the church's pastor.

Red House Baptist Church, Blaine, called Gary L. White as interim pastor.

First Baptist Church, Watertown, called W. L. Baker as interim pastor, a ministry he began March 6. Baker, of Lebanon, retired from the pastorate of First Baptist Church, Donelson, in 1973.

Westwood Baptist Church, Nashville, called Karen Louise Lea as minister of education and youth, a position she will begin April 1. A native of Louisville, Ky., Miss Lea is a graduate of Georgia Southern College, Statesboro, Ga., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. The church's pastor is James M. Gregg.

Charles Wainscott recently submitted his resignation as pastor of Hodges Chapel Baptist Church, Palmersville.

Ronnie Brashear has resigned as pastor of Birds Creek Baptist Church, Paris, to accept the pastorate of West Corbin Baptist Church, Corbin, Ky.

Dan Hodges resigned as pastor of Raleigh Baptist Church, Memphis, to accept the pastorate of First Baptist Church, Albany, Ga. April 3 will be Hodges' last day at the Memphis church.

REVIVAL PRAYER REQUESTS...

Harsh Chapel Baptist Church, Nashville, will hold a revival April 4-10. Leading the 7 p.m. services will be Hiram LeMay, brother of Harsh Chapel pastor Robert LeMay. Revival music will be under the direction of Robert Holt.



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BIBLE BOOK SERIES
Lesson for April 3

The resurrection of Jesus

By Jack Parker, pastor
Forest Hill Baptist Church, Parrottsville

Basic Passage: Luke 24:1-53
Focal Passages: Luke 24:1-12, 44-46

Before we begin studies in 1 Kings, we take one lesson to focus on Luke's account of the Easter story.

Easter is not a celebration traced to the New Testament. However, since Jewish believers in the early church did celebrate Passover, it was natural for this to grow into observance of the death and resurrection of our Lord.

Luke gave the most condensed record of the first day after Christ's resurrection.



Parker

The women and the angels (24:1-8)

In the previous chapter, the body of Jesus was placed in an unused sepulcher. Jewish symbolism suggested that anything emphasized as unused, unbroken, or untried was reserved for royalty.

Women who followed Jesus during His earthly ministry inspected the grave and saw "how His body was laid." They prepared spices and ointments for proper burial, but in accordance with Old Testament work ethics, they could not apply them on the sabbath.

The opening of chapter 24 signals a change in emotions surrounding the events. In chapter 23, Jesus' followers placed His body in a tomb prepared for Joseph of Arimathaea (Matthew 27:57-60). His followers experienced sorrow and defeat. They had lost a beloved friend and a respected leader. Furthermore, there was doubt about the future strength of the work Jesus began (review the hopelessness expressed in Luke 24:21).

Chapter 24 opens in dilemma. On the first day of the week, women returned to complete burial preparation. They wondered (Mark 16:3) who would open the sepulcher for them. Imagine their bewilderment when they discovered the open tomb and no body!

Drama sharpened when they encountered the angels (men in shining garments) and heard their rebuke. When they remembered Jesus' words (Luke 24:8), that became a turning point in their lives. They recalled prophecy recorded in Luke 9:22 and 18:33 concerning Jesus' resurrection. Their misty past became a clear present and focused on sharp promise for the future.

The women and the disciples (24:9-11)

Christ arose! Imagine the excitement of the women! They had good news to

share. Yet the disciples accepted the message as mere nonsense. Insight into their unbelief is found in Luke 24:16, "... their eyes were holden that they could not see (recognize) Him." They were so involved in the events of the last three days and their thoughts were so centered on their own sorrow and discouragement that they could not recognize the reality of the resurrection.

Peter's discovery (24:12)

Some authorities suggest verse 12 is missing from better manuscripts. Even so, we recall the same events supported by John 20:1-7. In both passages, Peter examined the grave clothes. John reported (John 20:5, 7) that the linen which was wrapped around Jesus' body was undisturbed. Jesus slipped from within them, leaving them in place.

Such an act was a human impossibility. The broken seal on the tomb, the empty tomb, and the undisturbed grave linens are outstanding proofs of the resurrection.

The rolling away of the stone demands additional interest. If Jesus could depart the grave clothes and leave them undisturbed, that is wrapped as if they were still around His body. He could leave the tomb through closed doors or even through rock walls. Remember the door was sealed (Matthew 27:66). It would violate Roman law for the followers of Jesus to open it. We can only conclude the stone was rolled away not to allow Jesus to leave, but to enable the disciples to enter and examine the empty tomb.

Jesus' appearance (24:44-46)

Jesus appeared to more than one group in and around Jerusalem after the resurrection. He had a physical, earthly body. This is supported in Luke 24:39 where Jesus invited the disciples to examine His hands and His feet and to touch Him.

In verses 44-46, Jesus reminded the disciples of Old Testament prophecies and of His own prophecy during His earthly ministry concerning His death, burial, and resurrection. His death was central to the work of redemption. His resurrection was the Father's seal of approval on the substitutionary penalty for sin. Now the task was complete. All that remained was for unbelievers to accept the payment made for sin.

Some may ask, "Should we have an annual celebration for such when there is no Scriptural command for it?"

Yes! Christ's literal, physical, bodily resurrection from the grave and the eternal value a lost world can experience from it is teaching and celebration that cannot be over emphasized.

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES
Lesson for April 3

Confronted by the risen Lord

By Hyran E. Barefoot, vice-president for academic affairs
Union University, Jackson

Basic Passages: Acts 9:1-31; 1 Corinthians 15:3-11
Focal Passage: Acts 9:1-16

Luke began the Book of Acts with a spotlight focused on the 12 apostles, among whom Peter was clearly the dominant figure. The scene was set entirely in Jerusalem and was totally Jewish in nature.

Next he highlighted seven men elected to serve tables, among whom Stephen and Philip were singled out as the major figures. The scene was no longer Jewish only but was much broader and more universal, even including Samaritans and a God-fearing Gentile.

Finally Luke focused on Paul and from this point onward in Acts, Paul is in the center of the activities of the book. Paul, introduced in connection with the death of Stephen, was a rabid opponent of Christians (7:58; 8:1).

But we must keep in mind that the Book of Acts is not a biography or even a partial one of Peter, Paul, or any of the apostles. Luke is interested in showing how Christianity became a universal religion for all people as it shook itself free from the narrow confines of Judaism.

Luke focused on Paul because he was the apostle to the Gentiles and the one in whom the gospel made the transition to the Gentile world.

The background of Paul

The background of Paul and a knowledge of the many-sidedness of his nature helps us understand why he was the perfect instrument for the gospel's transition to the Gentile world.

Paul was first, foremost, and always a Jew. He was proud of his ancestry and referred to it in pride on many occasions. He was of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee, well-trained in the Law, and possessed a proud, distinctive Hebrew name, Saul. He had even studied under the famous teacher Gamaliel in Jerusalem.

Paul also had kinship with the Greeks. He knew, understood well, and wrote in the Greek language. He was from the city of Tarsus which was markedly Greek in its culture. He knew and understood Greek philosophers, poets, and distinctive thought patterns. He used as his Bible, the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint).

Paul was also a Roman. He was a Roman citizen, the son of a Roman citizen. He was proud of Roman citizenship and used it on numerous occasions. His Roman background is noted in his name Paul or Paulus.

All of these diverse elements in his background could and probably did provide the occasion for conflict and tension in Paul, but they also provided for his being the ideal instrument for interpreting the good news to a Gentile world.

The fourth element in Paul was that he was a Christian.

The conversion of Paul

The conversion of Paul is told in a very vivid and dramatic way. This can some-

times be a problem for others who have not experienced such a dramatic turnaround.

Paul was changed from being an open opponent of Christians to becoming one of them. He was not converted instantaneously without any reference or relation to his former life or without any development having gone on in his life. Paul had apparently failed to acquire a sense of righteousness and relation to God by keeping the Law. Keeping the Law seemed to have produced a sense of despair and frustration in him (Romans 7:7-25).

Paul knew fully well what Christians believed and what they taught about Christ before he was converted. The death of Stephen must have made a great imprint upon Paul. The spirit of Stephen's death, his attitude and prayer toward his executioners, and his claim to have seen Jesus at the point of his death must have left gnawing questions and wonder in Paul's mind.

That Paul was filled with tension, conflict, uneasiness, and doubt can possibly be discerned from two facts. One was the fanatical fury and rage with which he attacked Christians. Emotional instability and anger comes forth most quickly when one is uncertain and has doubts. The usual way to try to quiet doubt is to heighten fury. Second was the realization that came in his conversion experience. "It is hard for you to kick against the goads" (Acts 26:14). The metaphor of kicking against the ox goads or pricks suggests that there was reaction or rebellion toward God that was only hurtful to himself.

The heart of Paul's experience was his confrontation by the resurrected Christ, Jesus of Nazareth. Trying to psychologically understand the tensions and factors in Paul does not mean we understand his conversion. These factors or tensions may have contributed to his conversion but they did not produce it.

Sunstroke, epilepsy, mysticism, or hallucination does not touch the reality of the experience. A man's life is not reversed by sunstroke; something more must be assumed.

Christ had appeared to him — the very Christ who had been crucified and resurrected. Jesus Christ had come to Paul on the same level of the other resurrection appearances (1 Corinthians 15:5-8).

The details of the experience will vary in the three accounts of it (Acts 9, 22, 26) and the externals of it will be variously interpreted. There was a light, a voice, and a blinding experience.

It is significant that Paul himself in his writings made little or nothing of the externals of the experience and clung rather to the transforming religious experience itself. We, with an excessive emphasis upon the externals, can get the experience out of focus and can create the wrong image of conversion. It was not an external or objective experience but essentially a subjective and spiritual experience.

In one sense very few of us Christians have had that vivid external-type experience. In another sense all of us have had the selfsame experience that Paul did — confrontation by the risen Christ and His claim laid upon our lives.

The reality of his conversion is indicated by the filling of the Holy Spirit, his baptism, and his dedicated life of service.



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LIFE AND WORK SERIES
Lesson for April 3

Beyond suffering, hope

By Calvin S. Metcalf, pastor
Central Baptist Church, Fountain City, Knoxville

Basic Passages: Matthew 27:1 to 28:3; 1 Peter 1-2
Focal Passages: Matthew 27:41-46, 50; 1 Peter 1:3; 2:21-25

How do people suffer and die with no hope in Jesus Christ? How does one approach the ultimacy of death when there has been no attempt to claim God's death-defying promises? It must be a shock to one's inner being to face the unknown with an unknown God.



Metcalf

The trauma of pain and death is too much for our human resources. Our suffering is endurable only as it turns our thoughts and actions toward God. Facing death is bearable only as we are able to see beyond it.

Resurrection hope in Jesus Christ gives meaning to every experience of life.

Saving others (Matthew 27:41-44)

The cruelty of crucifixion was bad enough in and of itself without the taunts, the jeers, and the sarcasms of those who watched. Of all the verbal abuse that Jesus received, it seems that the most severe came from the religious leaders.

The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders joined the passing parade of pathetic people in their scorn of Jesus. They received some kind of sadistic satisfaction in ridiculing His claim to be the Son of God.

Their rationale was based on physical survival. They reasoned that if Jesus were authentic then God would rescue Him. If His saving of others from disease and demons was valid then they assumed He could save Himself.

They did not understand, however, that salvation was based more on giving life rather than guarding life. They had not grasped the meaning of grace so they saw His pain as a part of God's penalty for blasphemy. Little could they see that the One they despised was God's beloved Son in whom He was well pleased.

The despair of death
(Matthew 27:45-46, 50)

The darkness was perhaps symbolic of God's judgment upon those who rejected His Son. It could have been the Father's merciful way of hiding His Son's dying moments from His merciless tormentors. Nature drew the curtains on the drama of divine suffering so that only the audible was recorded.

From the blackness of that midday "night" came some strange words from the lips of our suffering Saviour. "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" was His cry of despair.

What did these words mean? Surely they are more than the mere babblings of human expiration. Here was the cry of God's Son bearing in His body the penalty of human sin and feeling that He was utterly alone in that agony. Here Jesus was suffering the pain of the unexplained. Here His unaided love was to suffer in forsakenness.

Love and not power was given a chance to win. Here we are able to see that it was the power of love and not the love of power that best defines God. The real beauty of it all is that in that darkest despair, His words were personal and possessive, "My God, My God."

A living hope (1 Peter 1:3)

Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, there is a reason to praise God the Father. Because of the

resurrection we have a living hope. In mercy God raised Jesus from the grave and has given us new birth by the same power.

Early Christians needed encouragement to face the hostilities of their pagan world. Peter assured them and us that the foundation of hope lies in the resurrection of Jesus. God's ultimate purpose for all His people is illustrated in the resurrection and that makes suffering endurable.

Living for righteousness (1 Peter 2:21-25)

Early Christians faced the prospects of suffering unjustly, especially those who

were slaves. In an effort to help them accept their mistreatment patiently, Peter reminded them of the example of Christ which they were to follow.

In Jesus there was no sin nor deceit. When He was insulted and inflicted with pain, He did not threaten retaliation. He committed such matters to God who would judge accurately.

When His righteous conduct and submissive spirit led Him to His death, it was a vicarious suffering on the tree (cross). Jesus died for the sins of the world. Through His efforts, the righteous life is possible for us. By His wounds, we can be spiritually healed.

Peter described us all as sheep having gone astray, but because of our suffering Saviour, we are returned to the Overseer of our souls. Peter used the words "Shepherd" and "Bishop" to describe God as one who protects, guides, and cares for His own.

Something to ponder

Grace is that special word which describes the divine disposition. It

defines the unbelievable reaction of God to man's disobedience. It suggests love and forgiveness where they are not deserved. It projects healing where sin's harm and pain prevail. It offers the light of hope where the darkness of defeat is strong.

Although from the human perspective grace may appear as weakness when it refuses to fight back, in reality, it is the product of God's power. Only God can discipline without destroying. He alone can take the circumstances of failure and mold them into a pattern of victory. Only God can save to the utmost.

The event which substantiates the power of His grace is the resurrection of Jesus.

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Century-old Kenyan 'puts down stick' for God

By Robert O'Brien

ILMAMEN, Kenya (BP)— Kiriswa Nairrotiai, killer of many lions, lived in Kenya's arid bush for more than a century before the aged Masai tribesman "put down the stick" for God.

The honored Mzee (elder) "put down the stick" — the Masai way of saying "made a decision" — after hearing about Jesus Christ from his own son sometime between his 103rd and 110th year.

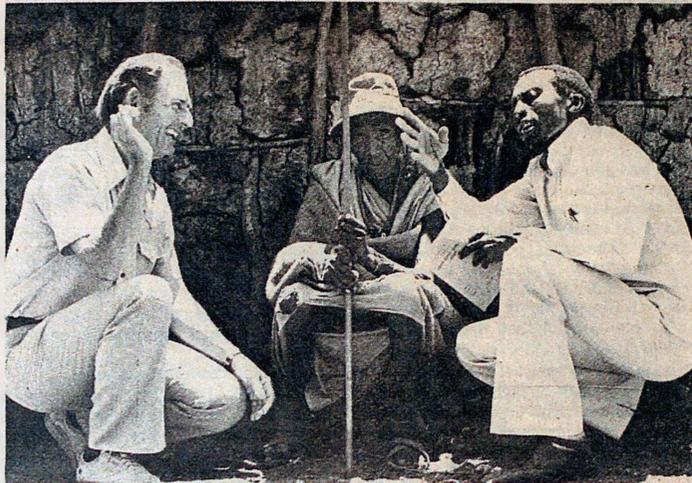
No one knew his exact age when he walked two miles to the Ilmamen Baptist Church to be baptized by Southern Baptist Missionary Harold Cummins in February.

The Masai date their age by events. The old man remembers being a boy when the first British came to Kenya in 1888. He remembers having passed the stringent qualifications to become a Masai Moran (warrior) in his mid 20s about a year before Nairobi, now Kenya's capital city, existed. It was built in 1899 as a site of railway workshops and became a seat of government in 1905.

In a culture in which old men have special status and influence, his baptism represents a turning point in the slow-growing Masai work of Cummins and his wife, Betty.

It is one of two recent "cracks" in the wall between the two missionaries and the fiercely independent Masai. Not long after the old man put down his stick for God, Masai leaders in nearby Osarai, with whom the Cummins have been in contact for four years, put down their sticks in favor of building a church in their area.

The new church will become the fourth the Cummins have started among the nine contact points they have developed with the cowering Masai since they began working with them in 1975. By contrast, they have launched more than 90 churches among the Kamba people since 1971.



MORE THAN A CENTURY — Kiriswa Nairrotiai (center), killer of many lions, talks through an interpreter with Harold Cummins (left), the missionary who baptized him.

They believe the conversion of the old Masai will greatly influence other Masai men as they sit around the evening fires and palaver (talk) in the Masai way. Sitting proudly erect, the old man shows them scars from combat with lions. He tells them not only of the many lions he killed as a young Moran, but also of his recent life-changing experience with Jesus Christ. He tells them he has led all in his Boma (homestead of several extended families) to Christ.

The young men, who respect the wisdom of his years, hear him say they should stop preventing their wives and children from attending the Baptist church.

"I also tell them that Jesus Christ is not just for women and children but for men, too," said the old man, renamed Paul Kiriswa after his baptism. "I tell them that Jesus can save old men, not

just young men."

When a Masai makes a decision for Christ, says Cummins, it is a "multi-individual decision." He explains spiritual rebirth is an individual thing but a group-oriented Masai will keep the decision a secret or not make it at all if the older men say no.

"The Masai do not listen passively and accept individually: they listen, discuss, let each person present his ideas, and come to a consensus," Cummins says. "The old man's decision may have great impact as time goes on."

The decision by the Masai leaders to build a church at Osarai seemed to come largely because they had seen the beneficial effects of the church in other Masai communities where lives had changed as people accepted Jesus.

They also saw something they liked in Cummins. "Bwana Cummins, you bring

light to the Masai," a leader commented during the palaver to make the final decision on the church. "We have already seen that you have given your heart to help us. People will know Jesus because of you. A church here will help us and our children."

As the afternoon continued, each man spoke his piece and heard from Cummins and two other visitors. "The church in other areas has brought oneness among the people because one thing — Jesus — is being preached," one leader observed, as others nodded. "If we all pull together and pray together, God will help us."

A particularly old Mzee spoke up. "We knew about God from the beginning, but we did not know about Jesus Christ."

Speaking in proverbs in the Masai way, he told Cummins: "Your word to us is like two men walking together. One sees a rhino. He warns his friend of danger and says, 'Let us walk another way together.' You have come from God to warn us of danger. We are inviting you to walk with us and warn us which way to walk."

By the time Cummins drove away, after sharing a meal of goat meat and roasted corn, the leaders at Osarai had promised a 60-acre tract on which to build a church and school. They also hoped, they said, something could be done to develop a water supply there to help their families survive.

Cummins left happy over the decision but frustrated at the lack of missionary personnel to follow up on growing opportunities among the Masai and continuing development and community work such as agricultural evangelism.

In his travels through the bush, he has seen no other missionaries but himself and his wife working in a 100-mile area from Kajaido in the south central portion of Kenya to the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro on the Tanzania border.

If they come they will find plenty to do, Cummins said.

Pastors express agony of forced termination

By Linda Lawson

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)— The burgeoning numbers of ministers being fired or forced to resign amid conflicts in Southern Baptist churches was characterized as a state of emergency and a cancer by several ministers who have experienced forced termination.

In sessions in which 30 ministers sought to honestly share their feelings, the experience of forced termination was compared to the grief of death and divorce. The loss of something they believed God had called them to do could not easily be explained or understood.

"I never woke up in the morning with nothing to do," said one minister. Another said his needs suddenly were as simple and as seemingly insurmountable as food and a roof over his head.

"I'm dying," another said quietly. The two-day conference, believed to be the first of its kind in the denomination, was sponsored by the Missouri Baptist Convention and directed by C. D. Butler, church minister relations consultant. "Our purpose is to help these ministers and to find ways to help churches in conflict," he said.

Sessions on understanding the perspectives of the churches and the ministers and in dealing with financial problems and emotional hurts were led by Brooks Faulkner and Bruce Grubbs, both of the church administration department of the Baptist Sunday School

Board in Nashville

"He's been here too long" is the reason most frequently cited by churches which terminate a minister, said Faulkner. "The congregations that keep their ministers a long time can relate to them as human beings and allow them to fall on occasions."

Other frequent factors listed in forced terminations included professional or interpersonal incompetence and power struggles in the congregation, Faulkner said.

He listed six early warning signs of potential problems, beginning with frequent complaints by church members on anything from a pastor's preaching to his sermon preparation to the way he moderates a business meeting.

Others include withdrawal from the pastor, drops in giving and attendance, radical changes in lay leadership, adamant stands being taken by groups who used to be flexible, and changes in the pastor's behavior (such as becoming defensive).

Faulkner urged ministers to look at a church's history in ministerial tenure as part of considering a call. "You can't change a neurotic church, but you can keep yourself from being swallowed up by one," said Faulkner. "However, God can change the church."

He also urged the ministers to evaluate themselves and to be aware of problems they have which may have contributed to conflicts in the church. He warned that a

minister who has been fired by one church may, if not careful, repeat the mistake and be attracted to a similar situation.

Grubbs said the reasons the ministers were terminated each may be different, but they share the experience of termination and can support each other. "What is needed is for ministers who have been hurt to help others in the same experience," he said.

The need for personal and professional support during unemployment and continuing concern for the churches they had left were two issues cited most frequently by participants.

"What I learned from my experience is terminated ministers are crying for help and nobody is helping," commented one pastor. "What these people are asking for is understanding, healing, and placement."

Another observed, "My wife and I went more than a year without support. In churches where we had spoken and led conferences, we felt like an island by ourselves."

On the other side, one pastor said, "The support was there for me. We need the support plus the work in the interim. What bothers me is what's happening to the church in which I invested four years of my life."

Another pastor said he did not attend any church for several weeks after his termination. "I needed a time just to

realize God loves me anyhow and I didn't have to earn His love."

The ministers said urgent needs exist to help churches deal with problems leading to the termination of leaders.

They also requested help for the wives and children of terminated ministers who need assistance in dealing with their hurts. The need was cited for an insurance compensation program where ministers and churches could contribute so terminated ministers could receive compensation while unemployed.

"I really believe our churches love the concept of the pastor," said one pastor. "This (insurance program) would be a means whereby a pastor could offer his resignation before the conflict becomes too heated in a church and still know he will have compensation to live."

Illustrating the concern about finances, a pastor observed, "I was in no financial position to go to a counselor and in no emotional state to spill my guts to anyone at first. What I needed was food for my family, a roof over my head, and a place to put my furniture when I had to leave the pastorate."

The pain of termination was perhaps best voiced by one pastor who pleaded, "I'm dying. I need someone to give me life. For a year and a half now I've died every day. I don't believe I'm the only one here who feels this way. I am concerned that I not be perceived as a complainer or a griper. I am someone who doesn't know what to do."