

# Baptist and Reflector

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News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention

## SBC messengers face changes in Bylaw 16

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE (BP)— Messengers to the 1986 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention will be asked to make changes in a controversial bylaw when they meet June 10-12 in Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta.

Bylaw 16, which concerns the election of the Committee on Boards, Commissions, and Standing Committees, and its interpretation by SBC President Charles F. Stanley, is at the center of a continuing controversy which erupted during the 1985 annual meeting in Dallas.

During the Dallas meeting, Stanley, on advice of parliamentarian Wayne Allen of Memphis, ruled the report of the Committee on Committees nominating the 52 members of the Committee on Boards could not be amended by nominations from the floor. The ruling set off near pandemonium at the convention and has resulted in the filing of twin lawsuits in federal and state courts in Atlanta.

During its February meeting, the SBC Executive Committee adopted a recommendation from its bylaws workgroup which would change the wording of the

bylaw to allow nominations from the floor, but would prevent the nomination of an alternate slate of candidates.

Under the change, the Committee on Boards will continue to be nominated by the Committee on Committees, but two sentences are added: "Further nominations may be made from the floor. No messenger shall be allowed to nominate more than one person at one time for election to the Committee on Boards, Commissions, and Standing Committees."

During the discussion, Bylaws Workgroup Chairman John Sullivan of Shreveport, La., said the workgroup asked convention attorney James P. Guenther "to come up with language to bring our bylaw into conformity with Robert's Rules of Order. We feel this (the proposal) is the clearest language we could find."

Sullivan said he agrees with the prohibition against the nomination of alter-

nate slates and noted the workgroup "does not see this as impeding the process of democracy, but as involving more people." He added, "I have been quoted as saying I did not want someone from Virginia nominating somebody from Louisiana (to the Committee on Boards). That is right, but I would say the same thing about Texas or Oklahoma or Arkansas and every other state."

The former two-term first vice-president of the SBC told committee members that the 1986 Committee on Order of Business has agreed to schedule discussion of revisions to Bylaw 16 on the annual meeting program in advance of the report of the Committee on Committees.

Committee member Dewey Presley of Dallas proposed a substitute to the workgroup's recommendation, noting he sees "potential problems ... (because) different criteria have been set up for the

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## Week of prayer to focus on home mission needs

Churches across Tennessee will participate in the Week of Prayer for Home Missions, March 2-9, and urge members to contribute to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions.

Tennessee's goal for this year's offering is \$1,700,888. The national goal is set for \$33.5-million.

Offering funds will be distributed in three major areas: missionaries and field ministries, special projects, and advance in critical areas.

The largest allocation, \$22.8-million, supports missionaries and field ministries. These are on-going and continuing ministries, and contain eight areas: evangelism projects, church extension, Christian social ministries, language missions, interfaith witness, black church relations, chaplaincy ministries, and associational missions.

The second major distribution is \$3.6-million for 33 special short-term projects that support missionaries and home missions work. This includes funds for US-2 missionaries and summer student missionaries.

The third major area allocates \$7.1-million for advance in critical areas. This area expands the present HMB work in missions and evangelism. It includes \$2.5-million to increase missionary personnel; \$1.25-million to implement strategies for new missions work; and \$1.75-million to meet needs in large metropolitan areas.

All three major areas of funding have priorities. Needs in missionary and field ministries and special projects are designated high priority. Only after these are met does the remaining money fund critical needs.

If the 1986 goal is exceeded, the money will fund additional short-term projects in missions and evangelism.

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## Mission leaders report on unrest in Philippines

MANILA, Philippines (BP)— The five-man committee that directs Southern Baptist mission work in the Philippines began a three-day meeting on schedule the morning of Feb. 24, as unrest continued in one area of Manila, the nation's capital.

The mission administrative committee met at a location about 20 to 30 minutes' driving time from two military camps taken over by a faction of rebels and surrounded by a human barricade of civilians sympathetic to the revolt, said Southern Baptist Missionary Grover Turner, reached at his home in Baguio,

about a four-hour drive north of Manila.

Southern Baptist Missionary Mary Slack, who lives in northeast Manila about 15 minutes from the besieged camps, said she and co-workers in the area are taking the advice of the U.S. Embassy to stay home. The Baptist building in Manila was closed so Filipino workers, who live throughout the city, would not need to travel, she said.

Churches opened as usual Sunday

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## Committee to study messenger process

NASHVILLE (BP)— Alarmed by the potential for "chaos" at increasingly large Southern Baptist Convention annual meetings, the SBC Executive Committee has approved a special committee to study the "messenger participatory process" at the yearly gatherings.

The call for the special committee "arose out of concern for the cost involved in the annual convention and the effectiveness of conventions the size of Dallas and expected for Atlanta," said Dewey Presley of Dallas. The 1985 meeting in Dallas attracted 45,519 messengers, and some observers believe the Atlanta convention may attract similar numbers.

Presley moved the Executive Committee "request its officers to appoint a special committee to study messenger representation to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Edward J. Drake of Dallas concurred, noting, "The thought of accommodating 65,000 messengers staggers the imagination."

"If the numbers continue to increase, where do we go — a football stadium?" Drake asked. He pointed out messenger participation may decrease as the SBC Peace Committee does its work and controversy within the convention pos-

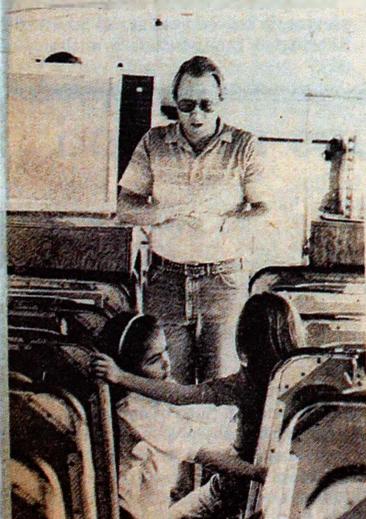
sibly subsides, but he warned future crises and increased interest in the denomination could push messenger registration to even higher levels.

Drake also insisted "intelligent participation" in annual meeting business sessions virtually is impossible with so many messengers.

"It's frightening if you think about it," he said. "The purpose is to permit free and open discussion among Southern Baptists, but we're only headed toward chaos with 50,000 or 60,000 messengers."

On the other hand, if certified messengers are not allowed to participate in annual meetings, "the democratic process is thwarted," Drake added. He also noted the expense of the annual meeting and asked, "Are we getting the best, most effective economical participation for the dollar spent?"

The Executive Committee approved the recommendation, along with an amendment by Sunnye Jones of Baton Rouge, La., which changed "messenger representation" to "messenger participatory process." Jones explained the amendment was needed to delineate clearly Southern Baptists' polity, which holds that, as autonomous Christians, messengers come from their churches but vote as their own consciences dictate.



LOVE REACHES OUT — Home Missionary James Underwood uses an old school bus, complete with games and Bible stories, as a chapel on wheels to reach children and families in Las Cruces, N.M.

# Controversy erupts over peace report

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE (BP) — Controversy erupted over the work of the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee after chairman Charles Fuller gave a report to the SBC Executive Committee's February meeting.

After Fuller's report on the work of the Peace Committee had been unanimously received by the Executive Committee, Paul Pressler of Houston asked if "all Southern Baptists should have access to the Peace Committee ... without fear of intimidation or discipline or anything like that?"

Pressler asked Fuller: "What should one do if he finds out that some individuals are intimidated, threatened with disciplinary action, and generally being attacked ... just because they wanted to meet with the Peace Committee?"

Fuller twice said he was "aware of no incident" concerning intimidation or threats. "I do not know of the disciplinary action of which you speak," Fuller told Pressler, but Pressler declined to be more specific, saying once he was "asking generally" and another time he was "asking in a vacuum."

The only controversy which has taken place concerning the visits of Peace Committee subcommittees to SBC agencies occurred at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., where members of a campus organization, the Conservative Evangelical Fellowship, met with three of the four members of the subcommittee.

James Bradshaw of Virginia Beach, Va., president of CEF, in an interview with the *Biblical Recorder*, news journal of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, confirmed he had set up the meeting, first talking with Jerry Vines of Jacksonville, Fla., a committee member, who referred him to Jim Henry of Orlando, Fla., subcommittee chairman,

as the one to work out the arrangements.

According to Bradshaw, Henry set the time of the meeting at about 9 p.m., Feb. 4, at the Plantation Inn, a motel near the seminary campus where members of the subcommittee were staying.

All members of the subcommittee were invited to have dinner with Seminary President Randall Lolley, but only Henry was able to accept the invitation. He left the Lolley home about 9 p.m., explaining he had a meeting of the subcommittee at the motel that evening.

William Poe, a subcommittee member, said the meeting got underway sometime after 9 p.m., and he stayed in it until about 11 p.m. but excused himself because he was not feeling well. The meeting continued until 12:15 a.m.

Although the meeting has resulted in formal statements from the SEBTS Student Council and a counter statement from the CEF, seminary officials say there has been no official action taken against anyone involved.

One seminary official said the matter was discussed during the President's Forum at Southeastern, during which Lolley "expressed concern."

"It was a pretty tense meeting, but most of the conversation was between the students. As far as I know that is the only thing that happened. I am not aware of any discipline, or intimidation, or threats," the official said.

Lolley was not available to respond directly to the allegations.

Although Fuller was unaware of any incident, he did respond by telling Pressler: "If I knew someone was attempting to reach us or talk to us ... and was being restrained from it, I would say they ought not to be. I would attempt to correct it."

He did say an attempt by an organization within an agency or institution trying to contact the committee "may be of a different variety," but said, "We have said all along that any individual can approach us."

After several minutes of questioning, Pressler asked Fuller: "Isn't the whole purpose of the Peace Committee so that Southern Baptists can express themselves and have an avenue for correction of grievances and we should do that in the context of freedom and no intimidation?"

Fuller responded by noting it is "also our responsibility to keep faith with the assignment we were given and that is

that in our deliberations and approaches, recommendations and so on, we will honor the trustee structure and the structure of the agencies."

In the miscellaneous business period at the end of the meeting, Pressler introduced a resolution, which he said was "carefully worded" and "one which all of us can get together on."

The resolution noted the purpose of the Peace Committee "is to discover any causes of discontent that are existent among Southern Baptists," and said "free access" to the committee is necessary if the group is to do its job. It also added it is "necessary for all Southern Baptists to function in an atmosphere of freedom and be able to express themselves without fear of intimidation ..."

Pressler's resolution said "there have been reports that there have been some efforts by some Southern Baptist agency employees to intimidate ones from appearing before the Peace Committee or discipline those who have expressed their freedom ..."

It called on the Executive Committee to "affirm the right of all to have free access ... and ... advise all employees of the agencies of the SBC that they should allow this free access, and if such is denied to anyone, the trustees of the agency involved should take a proper disciplinary action against the one denying it."

The resolution drew immediate objection. Alvin O. West of Washington, D.C., said he was concerned the resolution was "not specific. I could not vote for a resolution couched in such terms, saying some action had been engaged in by someone, but not knowing who that someone is."

Tennessean Richard Patton of Portland pointed out all members of the Executive Committee were "equally elected. I wonder why, if this is a real concern, all of us were not contacted, rather than just a few."

The resolution, however, drew the strongest objection from Lloyd Elder, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, who urged the committee to rule the resolution out of order because the Peace Committee is an organization of the convention and not the Executive Committee.

"I do not appreciate all the questions Mr. Pressler asked earlier, nor the implication of the resolution," Elder said, and referred to a "mysterious cloud"

which has been cast over the work of the Peace Committee.

"I plead with you not even to consider the merits, but if you do, I would like to request 20 or 30 minutes to report and summarize (the visit between the BSSB) and four excellent members of the Peace Committee," Elder said.

After Elder's remarks, Frank Ingraham of Nashville, moved that the resolution be tabled, and the motion was adopted 36-8.

After the action, Pressler commented: "Certainly in no way was I criticizing the Peace Committee for anything. I just wonder what redress can individuals have if they are disciplined for exercising their free right as Southern Baptists and a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ for going before the Peace Committee."

Milton Ferguson, president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., said the Peace Committee "established very clear guidelines" before their visits and there exist "very clear guidelines about the way in which the agencies operate."

"In any of those agencies, any individual member ... has a right to access to the Peace Committee as an individual and should be encouraged to exercise that avenue. But there are clear guidelines concerning administration, staff, faculty, student body, and particularly student body organizations, as to how they relate their concerns and or grievances to the agency involved.

"It is very important both sets of guidelines be respected, affirmed, and followed. I strongly encourage the dissemination of the understanding that any individual Southern Baptist who is a member of a congregation whose messengers are seated is encouraged and affirmed in communication with the Peace Committee.

"Any employee of any agency should both affirm and work within the established guidelines of those agencies and institutions," he added.

## Seven volunteers go to Venezuela

Seven more Tennesseans are going to Venezuela to participate in the Tennessee/Venezuela partnership which began in November 1985.

This brings the total to 34 persons who have participated in the project which is coordinated through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The team will be building a roof on the church building of Agua Larga Mission in Churuguara March 8-22. They will also be holding revival services at night.

The team includes the following laypersons: Charles Allen, Eastview Baptist Church, Georgetown; Joseph Cimino and Jack Wheeler, Brentwood Baptist Church, Brentwood; Harold and Wanda Denton, New Market Baptist Church, New Market; George Fulghum, First Baptist Church, Memphis; and Richard Lorah, Colonial Heights Baptist Church, Kingsport.

During the three-year partnership, which was approved by the 1984 Tennessee Baptist Convention, Tennessee volunteers are assisting in construction, crusades, training, evangelism, RA camp, and conferences especially in MasterLife, WMU work, and stewardship.

Persons interested in more information should contact the TBC, Clarence Stewart, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

## Southeastern student groups respond

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — Conservative Evangelical Fellowship, a student group at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, has issued a "statement of apology" for "the intense level of negativism and mistrust" caused by its meeting with members of a Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee subcommittee.

The two-page CEF statement was distributed Feb. 21 in response to three weeks of controversy which followed a Feb. 4 meeting between the campus organization and three of the four members of the subcommittee, which made an official visit to seminary officials Feb. 5. (See story above.)

The nine-paragraph CEF statement, entitled "An Apology," is in response to a formal statement by the Southeastern Student Council, which expressed "great concern and dismay" about the visit between CEF and the subcommittee.

The statement identifies CEF as a "group of ... students that agree that the Bible has complete authority and reliability, containing 'truth without any mixture of error'" and says the "purpose of this organization is to provide fellowship for students with conservative views ..."

The statement includes "regret if the efforts of the ... Peace Committee have been hindered because of misunderstanding between various groups" and regrets that "statements of good faith and intent" by some members of CEF have "for whatever reasons been misunderstood, ill conceived, or improperly channeled."

It also "regrets ... the purpose of the meeting was misunderstood." It says, "The written statement of intent provided to the subcommittee clearly emphasized that theological balance in the classrooms was the main concern and purpose for the session. There was no desire on our part to attack the integrity or the Christian faith of our professors. We did not and do not wish to have any professor dismissed, but only to promote balanced lectures or the addition of faculty who hold strong conservative Biblical views."

The Southeastern Student Council issued a formal statement Feb. 11, which says, "... We ... feel betrayed in that guidelines were violated, that a hidden agenda was carried out, and that no single elected representative of our student body was given the opportunity to present genuine concerns of the entire student population."



Schwartz

L. Baldrige

M. Baldrige

## Retreat set for Baptist Women, Baptist Young Women in state

Foreign and home missionaries, Tennesseans involved in missions, and musicians will lead the Baptist Women/Baptist Young Women Retreat March 14-16 at Paris Landing State Park, announced the Tennessee Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Tennessean Evelyn Schwartz, Southern Baptist missionary in Indonesia, will speak. The native of Winchester has served as a missionary for 37 years. Schwartz is a graduate of Carson-

Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. She is a general evangelist in Indonesia.

Martha Baldrige, a graduate of Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour, and Carson-Newman College, and her husband, Larry, who are both Southern Baptist home missionaries, will also speak.

Martha Baldrige served for eight years as a missionary associate and the Baldriges have served for 13 years as missionaries directing the week-day ministries at Caney Baptist Church, Pippa Passes, Ky. Baldrige is also pastor of the church. The daughter of foreign missionaries, Martha Baldrige was born in Brazil. The Baldriges are both graduates of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

The retreat, which begins at 8 p.m. on Friday and ends at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday, will also feature the four-member WMU mission action team that went to Venezuela in February 1986; Wilma Hundley from First Baptist Church, Humboldt, and coordinator of the Tennessee/Venezuela Prayer Net Partnership; Judy Trivette, Tennessee WMU president; Katharine Bryan, Tennessee WMU executive director; Carrol Kelly, Tennessee WMU associate; and Kelvin and Jetta Smith, musicians from Paris.

Kelly stated that six planned conferences are designed to help members of missions organizations be more effective. Also an enlistment spree featuring ideas and activities for enlistment will be held.

The cost of the retreat, including lodging and meals, is \$48 per person for four to a room or \$58 per person for two to a room and reservations are due by March 5 at the TBC, WMU, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

## Belmont invites youth to attend College Day

NASHVILLE - Belmont College is sponsoring College Day, a day of information and fun for prospective students, March 15.

The day will begin with registration at 9:30 a.m. in Massey Auditorium. At 10 a.m., the Belmont Reasons will perform.

Campus tours will be available. The day will conclude with an informative speech at 3 p.m. by Jim Gibson, minister to youth at First Baptist Church, Del City, Okla.

Prospective students and their parents will gain information regarding admissions procedures and financial aid, as well as participate in religious activities, academic conferences, and campus tours. Lunch will be provided, free of charge.

For more information, contact the Office of Admissions at Belmont College.

# Orlinda pastor credits God with outcome of abduction

ORLINDA - "God brought order out of disorder and absurdity," commented Pastor Richard Graham of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church after his wife and two children escaped from an abductor on Feb. 19.

Marian Graham and their two children, David (3) and Debbie (9 months), were abducted at gunpoint by an unidentified man from a Springfield shopping center on Wednesday morning of last week. After driving around Greenbrier, Goodlettsville, and Nashville for three hours, the captives escaped when the kidnapper stopped for a Nashville traffic light.

Clutching her two children, Mrs. Graham jumped from the car and ran into a nearby bank, as the abductor sped away.

"Marian was praying that God would deliver them," Graham said. "God gave her the courage and peace of mind to look for an opportunity to escape."

Graham said his family was all right after the experience, noting that the children were probably too young to realize what was occurring.

"God does not always keep crises from happening, but He does always provide strength and peace to overcome in the

face of crises," the Orlinda pastor said.

"We are asking God to bless all concerned, and to bring stronger faith to us all," Graham said. He added he was very proud of his wife's courage and composure during the trying situation and was thankful for God's protection over his family. "He watched over them and kept them safe."

Police investigations are continuing into the abduction. Early reports indicate that the occurrence may be related to a child kidnapping ring.

## Bylaw 16...

(Continued from page 1)

two nominating committees" of the convention (the Committee on Committees and the Committee on Boards).

He said efforts have been made "to get uniformity in our bylaws. Lack of uniformity... creates great problems in an institution."

Presley's amendment used identical wording to that currently in the rules concerning the report of the Committee on Boards. It says, in part: The report (of the Committee on Committees) may be amended on the floor of the convention by a majority vote of those voting....

During discussion on Presley's suggestion, Paul Pressler of Houston opposed the substitute, noting the bylaws workgroup "considered all alternatives and worked quite at length" to come up with the workgroup suggestion.

Dotson Nelson from Birmingham, Ala., noting he favored Presley's suggestion, said: "I feel strongly that in our setup as a convention we have to depend on the president to make the ruling. I happen to think he made a ruling that was obviously wrong. I don't think we are going to correct it, but I do think we ought to try."

Ed Drake of Dallas praised the work "and long hours" of the workgroup and opposed Presley's amendment, saying "slates are not desirable. There is a tremendous danger in slates."

Sullivan said he "does not see any other way" except the workgroup recommendation "to guarantee there will not be (alternate) slates. Some have objected because one-by-one nominations will take too much time. We were not asked to (consider time and) be the Committee on Order of Business. We were asked to clarify a bylaw."

Presley's amendment was voted down 34 to 23, with five abstentions, according to secretary Lois Wenger of Orlando, Fla.

The workgroup recommendation was amended by member Wallace E. Jones of Bridgeton, Mo., to add the words "at one time" to the second sentence, making it read: "No messenger shall be allowed to nominate more than one person at one time for election to the Committee on Boards...."

Jones explained the intent of the motion was to allow a messenger to make a nomination "and then be able to go to the back of the line" to wait a turn to make another nomination.

Jones' amendment passed 28 to 24 with 10 abstentions, Wenger said.

After the discussion, Drake moved to table the recommendation "because of the close division" on the two amendments. Although it was seconded, the motion received only one vote.

The recommendation passed with only two negative votes.

## Missions...

(Continued from page 1)

HMB President William G. Tanner has noted that there are more "lost people" in the United States who "do not have a saving faith in Jesus Christ" than the total populations of more than 104 of the 106 countries where Southern Baptists send foreign missionaries.

"Anyone who thinks that America is a 'Christian' nation just doesn't know the facts," said Tanner.

Citing research compiled by the Home Mission Board's research division, Tanner said that about two-thirds of the total population of the United States do not "have a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ."

That means, said Tanner, that out of the 239-million total U.S. population, there are 160-million people who are "lost" and "without Christ."

Southern Baptists send missionaries to only two countries, India and Indonesia, which have total populations greater than the 160-million number of "lost" in the United States, Tanner said.

Tanner challenged Southern Baptists during the Week of Prayer for Home Missions to be just as burdened for the lost in America as they are for those who do not know Christ in so-called "non-Christian" countries, and to give just as much to the support of home missions as they do to support foreign missions.

Tanner urged fervent prayer for the 1986 simultaneous revivals sponsored by the Home Mission Board called "Good News America, God Loves You."

## Horry Dungan leads Agape congregation

Horry Dungan is serving as pastor of Agape Baptist Church in Memphis.

A native of Humboldt, he attended Mid-Continent Baptist Bible College in Mayfield, Ky. He is presently studying at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis.

Dungan comes to the Agape congregation from Olivet Baptist Church in Paducah, Ky.

## Philippines...

(Continued from page 1)

morning. Many of the services turned into prayer meetings for the country. People were praying for the crisis to be resolved without bloodshed, Slack said.

Tyner, administrator of Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary, said revolutionary activities were confined to the one area in Manila, as far as he could tell from television reports in the country. "We don't feel apprehension or that there's going to be any problem with any of our people," he said.

Southern Baptists have 163 missionaries and short-term missionary personnel assigned to the Philippines, which has become one of the most responsive mission fields to the gospel in recent years. The country predominantly is Roman Catholic.

Tyner and some of his students met for an hour and a half the night of Feb. 24 to pray, he said. One of them has family about three miles from the camps.

"I sensed as we prayed that most people were very confident of the Lord's power in this thing," Tyner said. "We are aware in many of the churches that there are prayer meetings, and we see prayer and the outreach that this is going to cause as significant."

"One of the Filipino professors called on to give the opening prayer began it with a prayer of thanks that this was giving an opportunity for us to experience a new relationship with God. I think in all of this there is a deep spiritual undertone where people sense a degree of helplessness, yet they are getting a great deal of strength out of their spiritual power."

## W. Tennessee pastors to meet at Union U.

JACKSON - The West Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference will hold its monthly meeting at Union University, March 4. The featured speaker will be E. Keevil Judy, a retired Kentucky pastor.

The conference will meet at 11 a.m. in room D-3. There will be a fellowship preceding the meeting at 10:15 a.m. in front of the chapel.

## EDITORIAL

## Looking at the 1984-85 reports from TBC churches

How are we doing as Tennessee Baptists — statistically, that is?

It would appear "not too well," based on the collective reports of the annual church letters which are compiled by Wallace Anderson, statistical secretary for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Statistics do not tell the whole story of what is going on among Tennessee Baptist churches and their members, but these figures are a measurable indication of our victories, struggles, and deficiencies.

The 1984-85 statistical report, compiled from the "annual church letters," was released last week by Anderson. These church letters were shared by the churches with their associations last fall.

What do these church statistics tell us about what is happening in Tennessee Baptist life?

As of Sept. 30, 1985, there were 2,872 churches affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention. This is an increase of 81 churches above the 2,791 reported in 1984 — the largest increase in many years.

This represents an increase of 2.90 percent in the number of TBC churches in the past year.

These churches reported a total membership of 1,055,803, which is a net increase of 6,014 over the 1,049,789 reported in 1984. This is a 0.57 percent increase.

Resident membership increased from 775,214 in 1984 to 776,931 in 1985. This net increase of 1,617 represents a 0.21 percent increase.

However, non-resident membership increased from 174,475 in 1984 to 278,872 in 1985 — an increase of 4,397 to 1.60 percent.

Thus, of the 6,014 increase in membership, 1,617 was in resident membership and 4,397 was in non-resident membership.

In spite of an increase in church membership, all five church organizations reported decreases in enrollments during the 1984-85 church year.

Sunday School enrollment decreased from 543,995 in 1984 to 543,448 in 1985. This net loss of 547 in Sunday School enrollment represents a 0.10 percent decline.

However, Sunday School average attendance increased 6,711 or 2.35 percent — from 285,578 in 1984 to 292,289 in 1985.

Church training enrollment experienced a slight decline from 150,355 in 1984 to 150,276 in 1985. This drop of 79 in church training enrollment was a decline of 0.05 percent.

Brotherhood enrollment reports from the churches indicate a decline from 33,720 in 1984 to 33,268 in 1985 — a loss of 452 or 1.34 percent.

Woman's Missionary Union enrollment experienced the largest percentage decline of the church organizations — a 2.63 percent loss. WMU organizations' enrollment of 77,445 in 1984 declined by 2,033 to an enrollment of 75,412 in 1985.

Music organizations' enrollment dropped 1,011 or 0.82 percent, from 123,784 in 1984 to 122,773 in 1985.

This was the second straight year for declines in enrollment in Sunday

### Tennessee 1984-85 church statistics

	1984 Total	1985 Total	Change	Percent
Churches	2,791	2,872	81	+2.90
Baptisms	23,262	20,964	-2,298	-9.88
Church membership	1,049,789	1,055,803	6,014	+0.57
Sunday School enrollment	543,995	543,448	-547	-0.10
Church training enrollment	150,355	150,276	-79	-0.05
Church music enrollment	123,784	122,773	-1,011	-0.82
WMU enrollment	77,445	75,412	-2,033	-2.63
Brotherhood enrollment	33,720	33,268	-452	-1.34
Total receipts	\$236,780,070	\$250,907,690	\$14,127,620	+5.97
Mission expenditures	\$35,327,480	\$38,108,228	\$2,780,748	+7.87
Cooperative Program	\$18,470,707	\$19,555,062	\$1,084,355	+5.87

School, church training, Brotherhood, and Woman's Missionary Union and the third straight year for declines in music enrollment.

The only enrollment gain came in Vacation Bible Schools, which grew from 232,160 in 1984 to 234,135 in 1985. This enrollment increase of 1,969 is a gain of 0.85 percent.

The number of reported baptisms by Tennessee Baptist churches continued to decline for the fifth consecutive year. During the 1984-85 church year, 20,964 baptisms were reported — a drop of 2,298 or 9.88 percent below the 23,262 reported for the 1983-84 church year.

A review of reported baptisms in recent years provides these statistics: 26,298 baptisms for 1978-79; 30,434 baptisms for 1979-80; 28,206 baptisms for 1980-81; 26,893 baptisms for 1981-82; 24,852 baptisms for 1982-83; 23,262 baptisms for 1983-84; and 20,964 baptisms for 1984-85.

The area of stewardship continues to provide impressive gains in Tennessee Baptist life.

Total receipts in TBC churches were reported to be \$250,907,690 for the 1984-85 church year. This is a net increase of \$14,127,620 (or 5.97 percent increase) over the \$236,780,070 given during the 1983-84 church year.

Total mission expenditures as reported by Tennessee Baptist churches reached \$38,108,228 — which was 7.87 percent higher (\$2,780,748 higher) than the \$35,327,480 reported for 1983-84.

It should be noted that the percentage of total receipts going to mission expenditures grew from 14.92 percent for 1983-84 to 15.19 percent for 1984-85.

Cooperative Program mission gifts for 1984-85 were \$19,555,062.57 — which was a 5.87 percent increase (\$1,084,355.19 increase) above the \$18,470,707.38 given for 1983-84. The percentage of total church receipts going to Cooperative Program remained virtually constant: 7.80 in 1983-84 and 7.79 in 1984-85.

Using these figures, we can project what is the "average Tennessee Baptist church."

That average church would have 368 members — of which 271 are considered resident members and 97 as non-resident members.

Our average church would have 189 enrolled in Sunday School, with an average attendance of 102. This means that 53 percent of Sunday School enrollment is present on any given Sunday.

These enrollments would be experienced by this average Tennessee Baptist church: church training, 52 enrolled; Brotherhood organizations, 12 enrolled; WMU organizations, 26 enrolled; and 43 enrolled in music organizations.

Our "average" church had receipts during last year of \$87,363.40. Of that amount, \$13,268.88 went to mission expenditures, including \$6,808.87 for missions through the Cooperative Program.

Certainly, statistics are not the only indication of a church's interests and ministries, but figures do indicate specific areas of accomplishment and of concern.

Statistics are only important in that they represent people — and people for whom Christ died are very important!

CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE — 75,427

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# 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 and telephone number. Letters must not make personal attacks on the character or integrity of individuals.

## Defends Hinson

Dear editor:

In response to Jim Stroud's letter (Feb. 5) wherein he is opposed to E. Glenn Hinson's teaching at Carson-Newman College, I feel compelled to speak.

I am enrolled in the class in question. The course is a study of Christian devotional classics. It is not a platform for Hinson's theology. Conspicuously absent from the assigned reading are any of Hinson's books.

Stroud's letter indicates a deeper problem within our convention. Those who are most vocal in "defending" what Southern Baptists have believed for hundreds of years are seeking to do no less than restore us to a papal system by their assertion that unless we believe exactly as they, we cannot be a "true Southern Baptist." If I want someone to dictate to me the doctrines and practices of my faith, I will join a denomination with an ecclesiastical hierarchy.

It seems to me that the "quality Christian education" about which Stroud speaks should not be as concerned with goading students to believe a set dogma as it is with equipping them to think for themselves and make informed choices.

I, too, am concerned about the quality of education offered by Carson-Newman College. As a recent graduate, I can assure you that Carson-Newman indeed offers a "quality Christian education" because she offers her students the opportunity to study with people of the calibre of E. Glenn Hinson.

We are commanded in Scripture to "redeem the time for the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16). Would it not be a better use of that time if we spent it evangelizing the lost instead of persecuting our brothers and sisters in Christ whose experiences of faith are not identical to our own?

Rob Edwards  
P.O. Box 95  
Jefferson City, TN 37760

## Twisting the Word of God

Dear editor:

Thank God we still have men such as J. W. Glass and Jim Stroud (letters, Feb. 5) who speak out against those who twist the Word to God to suit themselves!

Concerning the five quotations from E. Glenn Hinson's book (which I have not read), where would a Christian teacher use such statements?

The writers of our Sunday School adult quarterly seem to want to show their knowledge of things — rather than teach the truth that is God's Word. We had a lesson a few weeks ago on the "New Covenant." Our Lord's name wasn't mentioned!

We need to get back to the Word of God. We need to remember what God's Word says in Romans 1:16, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Mrs. F. L. Hood Jr.  
6708 Locke Rd.  
Millington, TN 38053

## SBC procedures violated

Dear editor:

Harold F. Kissell (letters, Feb. 12) was obviously not a messenger to our last national meeting in Dallas or he would recognize the unpleasant necessity of the Crowders' lawsuit.

We hear the reasons against Christians suing Christians in court, but no person is being sued (including Charles Stanley). If Christians are not to deal with the government, why have Southern Baptists on a national level, every state convention level, and many local churches bothered to become incorporated by the states? Because it is the smart thing to do.

As a corporation, just like any "secular business," the SBC has set its rules and procedures (bylaws) for how it will carry out its "business." The rules and procedures of operation were flagrantly violated in Dallas. The reason the Crowders are in court is because the corporation (SBC) did not abide by the rules it made for itself as a corporation chartered by the State of Georgia. Later, the Crowders sought out the Executive Committee of the SBC (chartered by the State of Tennessee) and that group refused to correct the violations from the Dallas convention.

If Baptists groups don't want to be entangled with government and courts, they should not bother to get state charters and become incorporated.

If they do want to become incorporated (which, again, is the smart thing to do), then we need to do things "in a proper and orderly way" (according to Paul and to the courts). Unfortunately, this did not happen in Dallas.

The Crowders would not win any popularity contests these days. But, over the long haul, we'll end up appreciating the difficult task being undertaken by this ordinary Baptist couple from Birmingham.

Harold A. Phillips  
1723 Bardstow Rd.  
Louisville, KY 40205

## BJCPA files statement on tax reform legislation

WASHINGTON (BP) — In an effort to protect the tax-exempt status of church pension and welfare benefits boards, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has filed a written statement with the U.S. Senate Finance Committee.

Filed in conjunction with five days of hearings held by the Finance Committee on the Tax Reform Act of 1985 (H.R. 3838), the statement proposes deletion or amendment of Section 1012 of the bill. That section calls for stripping the Southern Baptist Annuity Board and other such church boards of their federal tax exemption.

Before taxing of those church boards could begin, however, the bill would have to be passed by the Senate and signed by President Ronald Reagan in the same form as it was passed by the House of Representatives in mid-December. Action by the full Senate is not expected until mid-1986.

In its written statement, the Baptist Joint Committee described church pension and welfare benefits boards as "an integral part of the mission and ministry" of churches since those boards carry out the "churches' spiritual task of

## Non-Baptist immersion

Dear editor:

Will the brethren who are leading our churches to accept persons into their church fellowship who have been immersed by those other than Baptist churches please answer one question for me?

This is the question: With all the baptisms that were taking place in Palestine at the time Jesus was baptized, why did He walk a distance of some 60 miles to receive baptism at the hands of John the Baptist?

Maybe some of the brethren can answer this. I hope so.

Marvin E. Hines Sr.  
120 Stone Mountain Rd.  
Clarksville, TN 37042

## No commercial music

Dear editor:

I sincerely hope that God's people will somehow stop the Sunday School Board from entering the business world of commercial Christian music. I am referring to the article, "BSSB trustees meet in unity" (Feb. 5, page 4).

BSSB President Lloyd Elder is right when he says that this venture is "a far-reaching change of direction." Indeed it is, and the wrong direction at that.

Many of our ministers and laymen now suffer from Balaam's limp because money has played too dominant a role in their lives. They no longer run; they hobble. This matter is serious. Let's not do such a thing.

J. W. Gill  
1233 Radmoor Dr.  
Chattanooga, TN 37421

## Baptists are free

Dear editor:

In regard to the letter by Rice A. Pierce (Jan. 29), he talks about "interdenominational fundamentalist Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority political movement expanding into a much larger target; drawing into our camp (SBC); electing

U.S. senators and congressmen, a Southern Baptist president; a radical alignment in principles and methods; fundamentalism."

I would like to say, I've never seen or known a Baptist yet who could ram anything down our throats. We are free. No one tells us who we can vote for or who we can't vote for. To go further, not Jerry Falwell, the SBC president, or Mr. Pierce, only God is our leader.

If believing the Bible was written by inspired men of God and every word in it is true, then I am a "radical fundamentalist."

Mrs. Paul Sliger  
Rt. 1, P.O. Box 275  
Niota, TN 37826

## Annuity Board reports gains

DALLAS (BP) — An open enrollment period for church term life and comprehensive medical plans was the most successful promotion in the Southern Baptist Annuity Board's history, trustees learned at the their annual meeting Feb. 3-5.

The open enrollment figures were a part of the 1985 annual report delivered by Annuity Board President Darold Morgan.

During the two-month period, 9,374 applicants were enrolled without having to provide evidence of good health, Morgan said, adding the board was able to suspend this requirement because of the strength of the plans.

Morgan's report also showed that in 1985 the board's assets rose to almost \$1.7-billion, more than \$43.7-million in retirement benefits were paid to 15,127 annuitants, a total of \$42.9-million was paid in insurance benefits, and investment income reached \$198-million.

In other business, trustees heard a report on a proposed relocation of the board's offices. Twelve sites in the Dallas area are under consideration, said A. George Avinger Jr., the board's director of administrative services, who spoke for the relocation committee. The board sold the building it currently occupies last year. Plans call for it to remain in that building until it builds a new facility or its lease runs out in 1988.

Trustees were notified of the appointment of Marvin T. York as interim director of the investments division. York was investment director for the board before his retirement several years ago. His return follows the resignation of Stan Morrow, the former chief investment executive. Morrow is returning to his work as a private consultant.

Bobbie Adrian, the Annuity Board's internal auditor, was promoted to director. Curt Sharp also was promoted to a director position in the marketing division.

## Weatherford to speak

NASHVILLE — Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, will speak at a Week of Prayer for Home Missions banquet March 5 at 6 p.m. at Brook Hollow Baptist Church, Nashville.

The church also has scheduled a day of prayer March 7.

## West accepts post at Lamar Terrace

Robert West recently began his service as pastor of Lamar Terrace Baptist Church in Memphis.

He previously served as assistant pastor of the church.

# Parks urges changes in SBC mission effort

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)— Southern Baptists must be willing to face a new and changing reality and make necessary adjustments in their mission efforts if Bold Mission Thrust is to be accomplished, warned Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks.

Speaking during the board's trustee meeting Feb. 10-12, Parks expressed "serious doubt that we are now on a course that will accomplish" the convention's Bold Mission Thrust goal of helping present the gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone by the year 2000.

He challenged trustees, staff, and missionaries to examine their maps of reality, quoting from M. Scott Peck's book, "The Road Less Traveled." In the book, Peck says one's view of reality is like a map. He suggests most people have grown tired by middle age and no longer are interested in new information which could cause them to revise their maps.

Again referring to Peck's book, Parks wondered aloud if the reason he and others are sometimes reluctant to revise their maps is laziness — "laziness based on fear of what would happen if we grappled with the situation as it really is."

These concepts disturb him, Parks said. "I have to ask myself, our staff, and this board if that's where we are in transforming the vision of Bold Mission Thrust into reality. Have we tended to keep our maps of reality as they were in 1976, and were they accurate then? Have we deluded ourselves to believing that, in fact, we were on the road to accomplishing the overarching objective of Bold Mission Thrust?"

"I do not have a blueprint for transforming that vision into reality," he acknowledged, but he offered several points

to consider in reaching that reality.

First, prayer for God's presence, power, and answer to the problem. Then, a definition of Bold Mission Thrust by which Southern Baptists will know if they have accomplished their goal. Once that definition is in hand, "we will need to stand at the year 2000 and look this direction. How can we get from here to there?" he asked.

Some things which may need to be changed are the board's organization, its budget, the structure of its missions on the field, and the way Southern Baptists work with Baptists and other Christians around the world, Parks suggested. The last step is to determine the appropriate role for the board.

"This is where a fear generated by an unrecognized laziness may be blocking my vision," Parks acknowledged. "We are all busy. Yet there continues to stir on an emerging map of a new reality that some of that 'busyness' is not strategic. There appear to be other more serious matters that need to grab the attention of missionaries, staff, board, and Southern Baptists.

"If, in fact, the vision of Bold Mission Thrust is transformed into reality, much of the burden, responsibility and privilege will be borne by this board and this staff and these missionaries. May God give us the faith and the love for a lost world that casts out the laziness created by fear."

In another report to the board, Isam Ballenger, director for Europe and the Middle East, explored some of the reasons the board works with registered churches in east European nations. He said the board has been criticized for not working with unregistered or "under-

ground" churches but insisted that the board remains concerned for and interested in these groups as well.

"We seek to obey the laws of the various countries, believing that this approach will offer us more possibilities in the long run," he said. "We desire to assist all Baptists where possible. I think we must say that God is using both groups, and neither group is of such perfection as to condemn the other."

Ballenger acknowledged that leaders of certain socialist countries allow measures of freedom for Christians with a definite degree of self-interest. In turn, Baptists welcome every opportunity for evangelistic visits, training pastors, building churches, and importing Bibles.

During the board meeting, trustees approved revisions to the board's program statement, which will be presented to the convention's Executive Committee and ultimately to the convention for approval.

The finance office announced a reorganization which created three departments where there had been one.

New department directors are John R. Moyer, overseas accounting; Donald L. Listrom, missionary benefits; and Brian J. Goodman, financial accounting. Also named were Carl D. Monfalcone, assistant to the vice-president; Martha I. Robertson, assistant treasurer; and Gary L. Stevens, controller.

Moyer, a former journeyman to Surinam, had been assistant to the vice-president for finance. Listrom, a board employee for 31 years, had been controller. Goodman had been director of financial reporting. Monfalcone had been assistant treasurer, and Robertson and Stevens had been managers of the accounting sections.

Lewis Myers, director of Cooperative Services International, announced the selection of his associate, Jack Shelby, missionary to Thailand. From a base in Hong Kong, Shelby will work with Myers in assisting Christians in China and other countries where missionary presence is not possible. He and his wife, Ava, have been missionaries to Malaysia, India, and Thailand since 1968.

## Overseas baptisms hit record high in 1985

By Art Toalston

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)— A record 158,626 baptisms were reported last year by overseas Baptists related to Southern Baptist mission work. The increase, however, was 1.5 percent, compared to 7 percent during 1984.

Overseas Baptists' membership topped 2-million for the first time, a gain of nearly 5 percent during 1985.

Cooperative work in 106 countries between local Baptists and Southern Baptist missionaries was reviewed by Charles Bryan, Foreign Mission Board senior vice-president for overseas operations, during the agency's Feb. 10-12 trustee meeting.

The number of churches increased to 15,635, nearly 6 percent over 1984, when there was a 9 percent gain. Counting churches, chapels, and preaching points, 32,969 locations were reported.

More than a fourth of overseas baptisms, some 43,000, were reported in Brazil. In 1984, with 49,000-plus baptisms, Brazil accounted for nearly a third of the total.

Second in baptisms were Nigerian Baptists, with nearly 18,850, up 321 over 1984.

In Tanzania, baptisms soared from 8,700 in 1984 to more than 12,500 — one baptism for every four members.

In the Philippines, nearly 12,500 people were baptized in 1985 as in 1984; in Mexico, 7,300, compared to 6,700 the year before; and in Korea, some 7,300, down from 8,700 in 1984.

On smaller mission fields, there were 1,200 baptisms in Togo — one for every 2.2 members — compared to 350 in 1984. In Lebanon, baptisms increased 75 percent, 79 in 1985, 45 in 1984. In South Africa, baptisms decreased 65 percent, 2,287 in 1985, 3,765 in 1984.

With sizeable gains in baptisms in recent years — averaging nearly 7 percent since 1975 — Bryan said declines in some countries occur as churches seek to disciple and involve new members. In other countries, baptisms increased as a result of special projects by Southern Baptist volunteers.

The baptismal total is far short of a

one-day increase in the world's population (230,000 people), Bryan said.

World population increased by 84-million during 1985, equal to the population of Mexico, he said. During 1986, the number of non-Christians may increase by more than 50-million.

The need for missionary evangelists remains critical, Bryan said.

## HMB elects physician to write abortion alternative materials

ATLANTA (BP)— The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board approved a missionary to write abortion alternative materials, reported on the status of Good News America simultaneous revivals, and elected three staff members in February board actions.

Fred Loper, a medical doctor from Oklahoma City, and his wife, Lavada, were appointed to write the board's first alternative-to-abortion materials and provide leadership in medical missions.

The materials are to be a result of Home Mission Board efforts to encourage the teaching of Christian sex education in churches and to inform them of abortion alternatives. The suggestions include ways churches can become involved in constructive prevention of abortions such as crisis pregnancy centers where women are counseled on abortion alternatives — keeping the baby or placing it for adoption.

Loper, the second board-appointed medical doctor, will devise ways physicians can be used in home missions, said Wendell Belew, board mission ministries division director. The board receives a number of requests from doctors who want to aid migrants, ghetto dwellers, and other indigents, but the current process prevents them from practicing outside of the state in which they are licensed, he explained.

Evangelism committee members reported that all state Baptist conventions and fellowships, about 90 percent of Southern Baptist district associations, and nearly 70 percent of SBC churches are scheduled to participate in the Good

News revivals set to kickoff next month. HMB evangelism leaders also anticipate 10-million Scripture portions will be distributed by the end of the six-week emphasis.

Committee member Lawson Schroeder of Stone Mountain, Ga., said the amount of Good News participation was an "important message to our country that we are planning and doing something about distributing the gospel of Jesus Christ."

In staff appointments, board members elected Fred White as associate vice-president of the evangelism section. White, who was promoted from director of the evangelism development division, replaced Joe Ford, who resigned last year to become co-pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church in Phoenix, Ariz.

Charles J. Williamson Jr. was promoted from system analyst to director of data processing services, a new position.

Timothy Dale Hill of Baldwin, Miss., was elected assistant director of the board's ethnic church growth department. He was a Home Mission Board chaplain to international seamen before assuming duties formerly held by Ken Chadwick, now director of missions in Salt Lake Baptist Association in Salt Lake City.

In other personnel matters, the executive committee appointed one missionary, two missionary associates, and a church planter apprentice. The committee also approved financial assistance for one student mission pastor, one state administrator, one language pastor, and 100 mission pastors.

## Arkansas leader dies in Texas

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)— L. L. Collins, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, died Feb. 18 in St. Joseph's Hospital, in Fort Worth, Tex., of complications after a stroke.

Collins, who joined the state convention staff in 1981, was attending Scholars' Week at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth when he was hospitalized with a bladder infection, Feb. 15. He had the stroke Feb. 17, while still in the hospital.

A Texas native, Collins was a graduate of Jacksonville (Texas) Baptist College; Baylor University in Waco, Texas; and Southwestern seminary.

He served as pastor of churches in Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma prior to joining the faculty of Southwestern seminary in 1973. He was director of admissions and registrar at the seminary 1974-1981. After the death of Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Secretary Huber L. Drumright in 1981, Collins was interim executive secretary for one year.

Surviving Collins are his wife, Cleo, of Little Rock; two daughters, Debra Lee Parker of Marietta, Ga., and Sharon Kay Fox of Fort Arthur, Texas; one son, Leo Bryan Collins of Houston; and two grandchildren.

The family has requested memorials be made to the scholarship fund at Southwestern seminary or a memorial fund established by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

**Personal Perspective**

By Tom Madden  
TBC Executive  
Secretary-Treasurer



Peter was imprisoned by Herod, chained to Roman soldiers, and locked behind iron gates. Humanly speaking, there was no escape possible. However, there were two positive forces at work.

There was the force of prayers by Peter's friends. "And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying" (Acts 12:12). You and I believe there is great power when a stream of prayer goes up to God from believing, devout people, on behalf of one known to be true and faithful.

There was the force at work from above. They prayed down an angel. "And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands" (Acts 12:7). With the force of prayer from below and with the force of the angel from above, strange and mighty things happened: the chains fell off and as they approached, the iron gate opened of its own accord.

Most of us have some iron gates in our lives: sickness, dreaded disease, failure, disappointment, loneliness, helplessness. In our own strength, we cannot open them. However, like the disciples of the first century, we can turn to the One Who can. We cannot batter them down, but we can move steadily toward them and then God opens them. We pass through and are set free once more into the paths of life when the angel leaves us.

We can go on through life with reassurance that when the going gets difficult, an angel of the Lord visited us, and there was light in the cell and the gate opened.

God still opens iron gates!

**Sanford Hill church calls Cole as pastor**

Elmer Cole accepted the pastorate of Sanford Hill Baptist Church, Henderson. He began his ministry with the church Jan. 29.

A native of Lawrenceburg, Cole is a graduate of Baptist Bible Institute, Graceville, Fla., and Union University, Jackson.

He has served in churches in Tennessee and Florida. Most recently, he served as pastor of Spring Creek Baptist Church, Spring Creek.

**Family sues church, association, two conventions**

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP) — The Tar River Baptist Association, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and the Southern Baptist Convention have been named as defendants in a \$5.75-million lawsuit filed Jan. 29 in Wake Forest (N.C.) Superior Court.

The defendants have 30 days to respond formally to the suit.

The complaint is being brought by Dana Renee Williams, a minor, by and through her parents, Ellerbee H. and Denise C. Williams, also listed as plaintiffs.

The plaintiffs allege Dana Renee Williams was injured in a June 20, 1985, accident involving a log truck and an automobile in which she was riding. The automobile was en route to a Girls in Action camp sponsored by Tar River Baptist Association. The camp was being held at Chowan College in Murfreesboro, N.C.

When the accident occurred, according to the suit, Dana Renee, whom the suit says is a member of Hopkins Chapel Baptist Church in Zebulon, N.C., was riding with seven other GAs in a vehicle owned and operated by Sharon Walker, also a member of Hopkins Chapel and GA leader at the church.

The plaintiffs contend Walker, as a

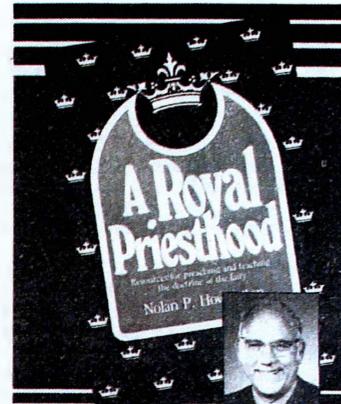
member of Hopkins Chapel church, was acting as an agent of the church while she transported GAs to the camp.

Because the congregation in Zebulon is a cooperating Southern Baptist church, the suit alleges Walker also was acting as an agent or sub-agent of the Tar River Baptist Association, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

The suit also lists as defendants the driver of the automobile, the driver of the logging truck, the owner of the logging truck, and Hopkins Chapel church.

Dana Renee, according to the suit filed by Attorney Fred R. Harwell Jr., of Winston-Salem, was injured to the degree she required hospitalization and continuing treatment by physicians.

Baptist State Convention General Secretary Roy J. Smith, an attorney from USF&G Insurance, and Baptist State Convention trustees met in early February to discuss the convention's response to the suit. USF&G insures the convention for liability losses.



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Nolan P. Howington is also the author of *Priesthood of the Believers* (audio-cassette).

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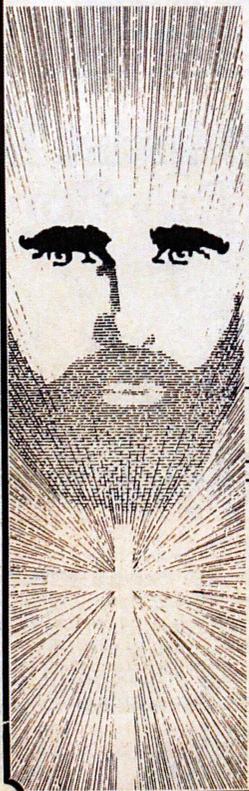
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# SBC statistics for 1985 show small gains, losses

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE (BP)— A mixture of small gains and losses characterizes the final report for 1985 statistics tracking the ministry efforts of Southern Baptists.

The most impressive gain for the year was recorded by the largest program, Sunday School, which increased by 1.3 percent, or 103,459 members, over last year, reaching a record total just short of 8-million.

Overall, the statistics reveal results in Southern Baptist Convention programs close to projections which were released in December, with all areas reporting totals higher than anticipated.

The loss which has raised the most concern is baptisms, which decreased by 5.6 percent, or 20,957, in 1985, to a total of

351,071. Baptisms were projected to decline by 6.9 percent or 25,670.

The baptism total reflects that in 1985 it took 41.3 Southern Baptist church members to win one person to Christ. That baptism ratio has been worsening for the past several years. In 1955, when the membership of the denomination was 8.5-million, the ratio was one baptism to every 20.3 members. As late as 1975 the ratio was one to 30.2.

This decline comes at a time when church staffs are bigger than in the past, more students are enrolled in seminaries than ever before, and there are more evangelism workers throughout the convention.

Church membership recorded a gain in 1985 of 1.0 percent, or 136,746, to reach 14,486,403. Membership was projected to

increase by 0.7 percent, or about 100,000.

Of the 14.5-million members reported in Southern Baptist churches, 4.2-million are reported as non-resident members, which leaves resident membership at about 10.2-million.

The number of churches in the convention increased by 239 in 1985, to a total of 36,979. The number of churches has increased by about the same number for each of the past several years.

Church programs which experienced losses this year are church training and Woman's Missionary Union.

The church training enrollment decrease of 0.2 percent, or 3,869 members, brings the new enrollment to 1,969,038 and is better than the projected 1.1 percent decline. This is the second consecutive loss for church training, but it follows four straight years of increases.

Enrollment in WMU decreased by 0.4 percent, or 4,390 members, to a new total of 1,165,240. This program was projected to decrease by 0.5 percent.

The program of church music recorded

its 20th consecutive gain, with an increase of 0.6 percent, or 10,353 participants, bringing enrollment to 1,677,738. The projected gain was the same as the actual increase.

The increase in Brotherhood enrollment was 0.9 percent, or 5,357 members, rising to 573,740. Brotherhood was projected to increase by 0.4 percent.

The 1.3 percent increase for Sunday School was more than the projected a 1.0 percent gain and was the fourth consecutive record high for the denomination's Bible study program.

Giving in the denomination continued to increase at a pace ahead of inflation.

Total receipts in Southern Baptist churches increased in 1985 by 6.0 percent, or more than \$220-million, to \$3.89-billion. The projected increase was 5.7 percent.

Mission expenditures for the year increased by 7.5 percent, or \$42.6-million, to almost \$611-million. A gain of 6.7 percent was projected.

Information in the annual statistical report for Southern Baptists is compiled by the research services department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. The information is taken from Uniform Church Letters mailed by about 36,000 churches to the research services department.

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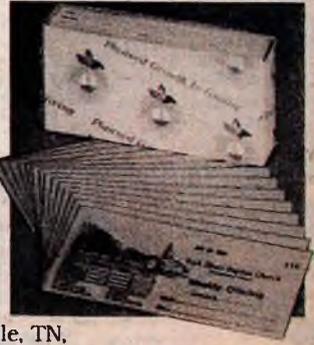
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Central Office  
205 Franklin Road  
Brentwood, TN 37027

Gerald L. Stow  
Executive Director-Treasurer

A Ministry of the  
Tennessee Baptist Convention

## WHAT IS RELIGIOUS LIBERTY?

We were reminded recently of how the world views much of our work. The government's attorney for the I.R.S. in Cincinnati, Ohio, stated that what we are doing with and for our children is not a religious activity. For them a religious activity is what happens inside the walls of a church building. Anything outside those walls would be non-religious.



Gerald L. Stow  
ligious activity is what happens inside the walls of a church building. Anything outside those walls would be non-religious. How blinded our world is to the truth, is it more religious to sing a hymn or feed a hungry child; to lead a prayer or listen to the problems of a teen-ager; to make an offering or place shoes on the feet of a needy child? Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

The reason we do these things for our children is because of our love for God. The end result is to teach the child of God's love for him. Otherwise our institution is no different from any other.

Thank you for praying for us as we again faced the court over the government's attempt to force us to comply with regulations from which we are exempted. The issue is a vital one for all Baptists everywhere.

We are thrilled at the completion of the new Min-Tom cottage in Chattanooga. You will note with interest the story appearing elsewhere on this page. We rejoice in the good work of Mrs. C. M. Deakins years ago in providing this fine facility. A formal dedication is being planned in the near future. Pray with us that God will provide for the burdens of teen-agers that need our help all over the state. We are having to say "no" to many of these because of the lack of space particularly in the Memphis area. Surely God will provide a way for us to meet this growing need.

This is the love month which reminds me to tell each of you that I love you and appreciate all you do to express your love to Christ through the wonderful care for our children.

Gerald L. Stow



Min-Tom Cottage scheduled to open around March 1, 1986.

## The Min-Tom Children's Home Ministry Takes Another Step In Time

In 1943, Mrs. C. M. Deakins, the superintendent of the Department of Negro Missions of the now defunct Ocall Association in Chattanooga, began a work with homeless black children. Mrs. Deakins named the ministry, Min-Tom, after her father, Reverend Thomas J. Smith, and her mother, Minnie Smith. In 1946 a larger facility was needed and Mrs. Deakins made her own personal



Rev. and Mrs. Bobo, Houseparents in the new Min-Tom Cottage.

note to buy thirty acres of land in the East Brainerd section of Chattanooga. A building was constructed and the home was opened for children.

The ministry was assumed by the Hamilton County Association in 1952 due to its growth, and in 1954 the Tennessee Baptist Children's Home was given the responsibility for its operation.

Mr. and Mrs. John Dunning were the supervisors of the Min-Tom Home until 1966. At the death of Mr. Dunning, the Rev. and Mrs. William Bobo came to the Home as houseparents.

Being under the direct supervision of the Chattanooga campus and to make it use more feasible the Min-Tom Home and land comprising the campus were sold in 1984-85. Funds from the sale of this property are being used to build a new Min-Tom Cottage on the main Chattanooga campus.

At this time the erection of a beautiful new cottage for the Min-Tom ministry is almost complete. The new Min-Tom cottage will open for child care sometime around March 1. Rev. and Mrs. Bobo who were moved temporarily to the Chattanooga campus, Johnson Cottage, will assume their positions as houseparents of the new cottage. God has given them a special love for children and an ability to teach them God's Word. Facilities change, but the work remains the same — loving children in the name of Christ that they may know Him.

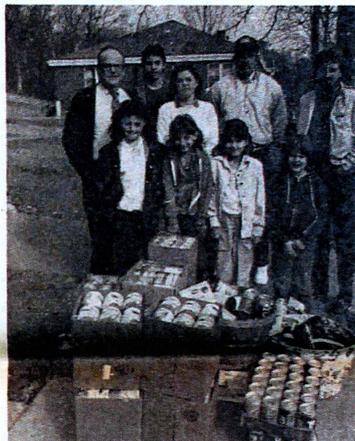


## Missions Is Helping

Many of the churches, through their mission organizations, provide helpful ministries to the residents of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. Senior Adult groups conduct craft classes for the children. The Woman's Missionary Union clips coupons, redeems them, and donates the proceeds to TBCH. Students from the nearby university Baptist Student Union tutor the children in the evenings. Pictured is a group of Royal Ambassador boys with their leaders from the West Frayser Baptist Church of Memphis. They recently visited and toured the West Tennessee Home, bringing with them a donation of groceries which they had gathered as a mission project. Such gifts of time, talents, and material resources are not only greatly appreciated but vitally essential to meeting the multiple and varied needs of today's children.

## FOOD FAIRS A WONDERFUL WAY TO SHARE

The Hamilton County Baptist Association's "Food Fair" brightens the day for the Chattanooga Children's Home. For several years the Association's Children's Home Committee has promoted the "Food Fair" during January and February. The Theme is "Children Sharing Their Love With Children." Usually the Missionary Organizations for boys and girls bring commercially canned food and other items to their church each Sunday during January until Valentine's Day in February. Most often at this time a missions group delivers the food to the campus, learns about the ministry to children, have their picture taken and visit. It is a rewarding experience for all who are involved. The Home usually receives 5,000-6,000 items valued at approximately \$4,000. Reverend Fate L. Thomas is Chairman of the Associational Children's Home Committee.



Philadelphia Baptist Church was the first to bring food for the "Food Fair" in 1986. Persons bringing the food were (L to R): Chostity City, Heather Williams, Sarah Owen, and Beth Owen. Last row: Micky Park, Terry Owen, Charles City, Lou Hiron, and Ron Edgeman.



## GOD'S LOVE LETTER

Mr. Jack Young, outreach director for the adult I Sunday School Department at Red Bank Baptist Church presents a Bible (God's love letter) to Michael Hopper, one of the children on the Chattanooga campus. Each child on the campus received his or her own personal Bible and heard a message on love by Mrs. Richard Greer in a special chapel service. Following refreshment time, the older children met with Mrs. Vestal Harwood who talked with them about the five false faces of love. At the conclusion of the program, Mrs. Greer gave a Ryrie Study Bible for each of the five cottages on campus.

TBCH would like to thank these concerned Christians for their love and support they give to our children and for the wonderful work they are doing for our Lord.

**BIBLE BOOK SERIES**  
Lesson for March 2

## Times of stress

By Ray Newcomb, pastor  
First Baptist Church, Millington

Basic Passage: 2 Timothy 3:1-17  
Focal Passages: 2 Timothy 3:1-7, 9-17

Paul warns us in this chapter of the apostasy that will come in the last days. He gives us the antidote for that apostasy, which is the Word of God. How vital it is that we have no doubts concerning the divine inspiration and full authority of the Holy Scriptures, the Bible!

"The last days" is a period of time that actually began with the life and ministry of Christ on earth. Within this period of "last days" there will be times of different kinds; but as the times draw to a close, they will become perilous. This word means "dangerous, hard to deal with, savage." This is the same Greek word that is used to describe the two violent demoniacs of Gergesenes (Matthew 8:28). This suggests that the violence of the last times will be energized by demons (1 Timothy 4:1).

Paul gives three charges in light of this time.

### Turn away from the false (3:1-9)

"From such turn away!" (v.5b). Believers should have nothing to do with the people Paul describes in this section. They like to operate under the guise of religion, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof (v.5).

**Their characteristics (3:2-5)** — Nineteen different characteristics are listed here. Their main emphasis is on love. Paul calls them "lovers of their own self" — self-lovers. "Covetous" means lovers of money. "Boasters" gives the idea of swaggerers. He walks like a peacock; he swaggers. "Proud" means haughty.

"Blasphemers" are railers. "Disobedient to parents" indicates rebelliousness. "Unthankful," they accept everything from God without ever returning thanks to Him. We are to avoid those who have such characteristics.

"Unholy" is profane. "Without natural affection" means abnormal relationships. We are living in a day when homosexuality is being accepted as normal conduct. God says in Romans 1:24, "Wherefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves."

"Trucebreakers" means refusing to enter into a treaty, irreconcilable, implacable. "False accusers" are slanderers, trying to tear down the reputations of others. "Incontinent" means without self-control.

"Fierce" means savage. "Despisers of those that are good" hate whatever is good. "Traitors" are betrayers. "Heady" refers to recklessness. "Highminded" is to be blinded by pride or drunk with pride.

"Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" indicates a choice between loving pleasure or loving God. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" sums up these false teachers.

**Their converts (3:6-7)** — Paul moves on to the subtle teachers who creep into houses to "take captive silly women" or "little women." This term describes women who were idle, silly, and weak. He is not saying all women are like this, or that all men are not vulnerable to the wiles of false teachers.

The indiscriminating people who flit

from one fad and fancy to another, willing to listen to anybody, "always learning," never come to the knowledge of the truth, because they would rather flit to some new fancy than face the moral demands of the truth already revealed to them.

**Their corrupt leaders (3:8-9)** — Paul gives us an example by naming Jannes and Jambres as false teachers who opposed Moses. These men opposed Moses by imitating what he did.

Satan is an imitator; what God does, he counterfeits. The religious leaders in the last days will have a counterfeit faith.

### Turn to the truth (3:10-12)

We are to follow the right spiritual leader in our day. Paul reminds Timothy that he had been a faithful servant of God. What were his characteristics?

His personal life was open to all (v.10). He followed his master and his theological truth of the gospel was "fully known." Paul had not hidden behind extravagant claims or religious propaganda.

He preached true doctrine (v.10). A preacher can be appealing, but if he does not preach the truth of God's Word, he does not deserve our support.

He practiced what he preached (v.10). Paul's "manner of life" backed up his message. He stood for truth, even when it meant losing friends and, in the end, losing his life.

His purpose was to glorify God (v.10). Paul's purpose was to do God's will and finish the work God gave him to do.

He was persecuted for standing for truth (vv.11-12). Earnest devotion to Christ must necessarily, says Paul, "bring persecution."

### Continue in God's word (3:13-17)

The only way to defeat Satan's lies is with God's truth. "Thus saith the Lord!" is the final answer to every question.

The Holy Scriptures are inspired (v.16). "All Scripture is God-breathed" or, literally, "out of God." I believe the Bible is absolutely reliable, trustworthy, and authoritative. It is the verbal inspired Word of God. Whatever the Bible says about itself, man, life, death, history, science, and every other subject is true.

The Scriptures are instructive (v.16). The Scriptures are profitable in four ways — for doctrine (teaching, reproof or conviction), correction or setting right, and instruction or discipline. It enables the child of God to become a man of God, matured in the things of the Lord. "Perfect" does not mean sinless, it means mature, and "thoroughly furnished" means "fully equipped."

The Scriptures are instrumental to make us "wise unto salvation..." (v.15), and to make us "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works..." (v.17).

### Conclusion

Paul views the man of God as being completely equipped for His work by the Scriptures.

"No other book is essential," says Paul. "The Scriptures are completely adequate for every good work."

The greatest need for Christians to live in the days of stress is the return to the Bible. If the churches do not preach God's Word, the Satanic deceivers will take over and millions will go to hell by default.



Newcomb

**UNIFORM LESSON SERIES**  
Lesson for March 2

## A living, confident hope

By Al Shackelford, editor  
Baptist and Reflector, Brentwood

Basic Passage: 1 Peter 1 to 2:10  
Focal Passages: 1 Peter 1:3-9, 13-21

Paul ends 1 Corinthians 13 with an affirmation of three great aspects of the Christian life — faith, hope, and love. Much is said, written, and preached about faith and love, while the glorious reality of hope is somewhat neglected.

Perhaps our neglect of this vital part of Christianity is because of our present-day definition of hope as a "doubtful wish." Our sentences which began with "I hope" often are merely a desire for something to happen over which we have little or no control.

Hope in the New Testament has a far deeper meaning. It is an assurance, not just a wish. It is seen as a characteristic which is necessary for survival — not only in this life but for eternity.

This lesson is the first of seven which revolve around the theme, "The Christian Hope."

### The basis of hope (1:3-9)

Following the normal pattern of the epistles, 1 Peter begins by identifying the author and the addressee of the letter. Peter is writing to the "aliens" who have been scattered throughout Asia Minor because of the persecution which arose in Israel after the ascension of Jesus.

By listing various provinces of Asia Minor, it appears that Peter's encouraging letter was to be circulated among these scattered groups of exiles (v.1).

Peter begins the body of his letter with a doxology of praise to "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v.3). God is praised for the salvation He has provided, for the inheritance which is assured, and for the protection which is promised.

The salvation experience (born, begotten again) was caused by God's great mercy. Peter was writing to those who had had such an experience. This rebirth had produced "a living hope" (an active assurance) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death.

The importance of the resurrection was evident in the life of Peter. You recall that on that glorious Easter morning, he had responded to the report of the resurrection by running to the tomb. He had burst into the empty sepulchre and "saw the linen clothes lying, and the cloth which had been about His head... folded up by itself apart" (John 20:6-7). This event had transformed a denying disciple into the fearless follower we find in the Acts.

The future reality of salvation is described as an inheritance "reserved in heaven for you" (v.4). This inheritance, which is assured by Christ's resurrection, cannot perish, decay, nor fade away. Our living hope of this eternal inheritance is not based on a doubtful wish, but on the assurance confirmed by the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Our salvation also has a present assurance — which was especially significant to those who were suffering because of their faith (v.5). Although scattered from the land of their faith, these valiant Christians "were being saved" — being protected or kept by the power of God through their faith, until the time when they would experience the complete promises of salvation which was already prepared for them.

This living hope produces rejoicing, even in the face of persecution, distress, and trials (v.6). Such trials are not to be seen as God's rejection, but rather as a proof of their precious faith which would

result in praise, glory, and honor to Jesus Christ (v.7).

Peter has known the Lord Jesus personally, has visited the empty tomb, and has seen Jesus after His resurrection. Now he praises the faith of those who had not nor cannot see Him, but believe in Him. (Compare with John 20:29). The outcome of this faith will be their souls' salvation (vv.8-9).

### The challenge to holiness (1:13-20)

Peter exhorts the readers to lash completely their living hope to the grace they will receive as the appearing of Jesus Christ (v.13).

This assured hope will produce obedience to the Father, rather than their former lusts. The standard of conduct will be the holiness of God Himself (vv.14-16). "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (Leviticus 11:45).

Peter also admonishes these believers to live their time on earth in fear (reverence, respect) of God, Who is the judge of all (v.17). The Christian can live thusly, because of the assurance that redemption is assured — not by a perishable payment, but by the "precious blood, as a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ" (vv.17-19).

Our living hope is assured by Jesus' death on the cross — God's gracious plan which was intended from the time of creation (v.20). Peter has cited this glorious truth in his sermon on the Day of Pentecost, "This Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death" (Acts 2:23).

As these early Christians, we live in an earthly interlude between redemption and consummation. Yet, this is not a time of despair. Our lives are overwhelmed by a living hope, assured by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Nothing in this world can destroy or even diminish that assurance. For this, we can "greatly rejoice with joy unexpressable and full of glory" (v.8).

## Rivergate church calls Bardowell to be pastor

Lloyd G. Bardowell accepted the call of Rivergate Baptist Church in Nashville, and will begin as pastor March 2.

He comes to Nashville from Bell Avenue Baptist Church in Knoxville. Previous pastors also include the Dilworth Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., and Alta Loma Baptist Church in Madison.

Fourteen years of Bardowell's ministry were spent in full-time evangelism.

Bardowell is a graduate of Wolmers Boys College, Jamaica; Bob Jones University, Greenville, S.C.; and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Rivergate Baptist Church was chartered in September after being sponsored by Park Avenue Baptist Church, Nashville. The congregation is temporarily meeting at Knox Doss Junior High School in Hendersonville.



Bardowell

LIFE AND WORK SERIES  
Lesson for March 2

# Christ as Lord

By Thom H. Bartlett, youth and recreation minister  
Highland Heights Baptist Church, Memphis

Basic Passage: Matthew 16:13-28  
Focal Passage: Matthew 16:15-24

Interpretations of this passage have been controversial to say the least. Some put major significance in it. Others in response virtually ignore it. Still others read a lot into it.

A couple of points will help put it in context. It is likely that Jesus spoke Aramaic. There is no distinction in that language between the word for "Peter" and "rock" as there is in Greek. The masculine (Peter) and feminine (the rock) designation of the words is not conclusive in helping determine the extent of what Jesus said.

Peter himself, his faith, his confession, Christ, or a combination of factors have all been offered as "the rock" in this passage. Peter was anything but a rock at this time (see Matthew 14:28-31; 16:22; 26:33-35; 26:69-75; Galatians 2:11-14). He was headstrong, erratic, and undependable, hardly a solid rock.

We could have a church today without Peter. It is evident that the church in Rome was just as dependent on Paul. Its existence did not rest on Peter. The only personal figure that is the core of our faith and the bond of our fellowship is indeed Jesus the Christ and no other.

This is not to neglect or cast Peter in a

negative light. He is a central figure among the disciples (Acts 3:11 to 4:22; 1 Corinthians 15:5; Acts 2:14). Peter was the disciple who openly declared Jesus to be the Christ in this passage.

In this passage, separated by a couple of statements, are two declarations: "You are the Christ" by Peter and "You are Peter" by Jesus. Perhaps the realization and acknowledgement of who the other was could be significant. There is a mutual acceptance of and commitment to each other that is necessary for the very special relationship of God and man — any man. It must be there in order for us to be in Christ and Christ to be in us. These are not mere words uttered, but a reflection of one's total being — an attitude of pure, undiluted commitment.

Name me any other being on this earth (or universe for that matter) who would be willing to accept us, knowing all about us that He does; who would be willing to die for us before we even acknowledged His deity; or would be willing to love us.

The word for church appears only twice in the gospels, yet it is a powerful word. The Greek and Hebrew words that are equivalent to each other both designate a literal "calling out."

How many times in the Bible can we point to God calling someone: Moses, the Hebrew children, Samuel, Isaiah, Daniel, John the Baptist calling Israel to

repentance, Jesus calling the world to Himself. The church (the "ones called out") has been called for a reason. This points to being "the salt of the earth," "city on a hill," "a lamp in the night." We are called out of sin, called out of the world's mind-set, called out to be given a purpose, called out to be different.

To be called out is not for our convenience nor for our own comfort. We are not called because we are more blessed, smarter, better, or richer. We have been called out strictly because of God's mercy and love. But the "call" extends to all mankind. That is what all the "called out," (not just the preachers and missionaries) are supposed to be about!

Looking at the church from the real meaning of the word, sometimes I wonder if we do not think that since we have responded to God's call, everybody else is either locked out or they can get in only if they get lucky or change their ways first.

We also tend to desire the designation of being "called out" but we do not want to be too different from those around us (attitudes, lifestyles, values) because it kind of puts us on the spot. You know, it makes everybody uncomfortable, and that is a no-no.

Peter learned again that perspective of a situation and attitude tend to count for a lot. In verse 23, he was not literally Satan, but his viewpoint was still based on man's purposes and not God's. He had not learned that God was not a rubber stamp for our interests and purposes.

We must allow God to change our reference point from ourselves to Him. As God calls us, He brings us to a new place in life. Let us not fight Him but gladly allow Him to mold us and make us into His new creation.

Straddling a fence is precarious and dangerous whether it is on the farm or in our relationship with God and this world.



Bartlett

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# Persecution drives student to Southwestern

FORT WORTH, Texas — For George Ibrahim Wakim, the trail leading to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary was a bit more treacherous than for most seminary students.

The trail and travail began when Wakim angered militant Sunni Moslems by refusing to broadcast Islamic propaganda over a Beirut radio station.

"In spite of me being a Christian, they wanted me to work for them," Wakim said. "They said, 'We'll pay you double,' but I refused. Their faces turned red. I thought, 'George, this is the day you meet your Creator.'"

Fearing for their lives, Wakim and his family fled Lebanon for the United States in 1983, eventually moving to Fort Worth, where he enrolled in Southwestern seminary and was called as pastor of an Arab mission.

Hoping to avoid a lengthy immigration process, Wakim applied for political asylum. He was denied and as his visa neared expiration, he faced deportation and uncertainty.

"If I were to return to Lebanon under present conditions, it is very probable I would go missing and never appear again," he said.

However, with the help of the seminary, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and University Baptist Church (sponsor of the mission), Wakim has been granted a permanent resident

"green card" and is no longer threatened with a forced return to Lebanon.

Wakim's father was pastor of a church founded by Southern Baptist missionaries. The younger Wakim decided the ministry was not lucrative enough for him and planned to become an electrical engineer.

But, he said, "God's ideas were different from mine."

After he failed his engineering school entrance exam, Wakim began writing and recording evangelistic radio programs in Beirut for a Lutheran radio ministry, which distributed tapes throughout North Africa and the Middle

East for broadcast to Moslem audiences.

Wakim's confrontation with the Sunnis occurred about seven years later.

"When I refused to work for them, the Lord gave me strength. I expected any day they would come get me."

Wakim, his wife, and his son were trapped for 21 days in their Beirut apartment when fighting broke out between the Lebanese army and the Shiite Amal militia. They ran out of food.

"I decided to risk going to the market, but a Moslem neighbor brought six loaves of bread — three for his family and three for us."

After fighting subsided, Wakim knew they must leave Lebanon.

Wakim eventually moved his family to Fort Worth and entered Southwestern's master of arts in communications program.

Wakim, who has received job offers in Lebanon, hopes to begin a broadcast ministry to Arabs living in the United States. He does not plan to return to the Middle East unless there are drastic changes.

"If peace comes back and the Lord wants me to go, I'll go," he said. "But there are 300,000 Arabs living in Michigan, 80,000 in Houston, 14,000 in Dallas-Fort Worth, and many more scattered throughout California and along the east coast. They need someone to reach them too."



**REFUGEE** — George Wakim, a Lebanese who fled his country under persecution by Arab militants, holds the flag of his native land. Wakim, a student at Southwestern seminary, is pastor of an Arab congregation in Fort Worth, Texas.

## Wakim faces challenge of reaching Arabs in Fort Worth

FORT WORTH, Texas — Many people have experienced the frustrating, hard work required to start a new church. For George Wakim (see story above), that challenge is compounded by the special focus of his ministry — Fort Worth's Arabic community.

Lebanese-born Wakim is enrolled in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's communications program and

has started an Arabic mission now sponsored by Fort Worth's University Baptist Church.

"When I came to Fort Worth I saw the other ethnic churches and thought, 'Why don't we have a church for Arabs? They need Christ too,'" Wakim said.

As a mission pastor, Wakim faces battles common to most new works.

"It is hard to get born-again Arabs in-

volved in a small mission," Wakim said. "Even Arabs like to be in big churches and have the things they offer."

Wakim also faces challenges peculiar to ethnic minorities.

"I know one born-again Arab who will not come to the mission because he does not want to be ostracized by other Arabs," he said. "Others who are not Christians will not come for the same reason."

Wakim blames "material mentality" as another factor which stands between many Arabs and the gospel. He told of an Arab friend who offered to attend the mission if doing so would mean Wakim would receive a greater salary.

"It is hard for them to understand that we are trying to serve the Lord and are not working for financial status," he said.

## Freedom mission purchases land

With the help of a Tennessee Baptist Convention loan, Freedom Baptist Mission in Bold Springs was able to purchase additional land adjoining their original property. They plan to build a church building on the new property.

The mission now meets in a mobile home.

The mission's sponsor, First Baptist Church in McEwen, helped to get the loan and also bought the land upon which the mobile home is located. The church's pastor is Thomas Drake.

Cecil D. Dyer, who has been pastor of the mission for one and a half years, reported that the mission has 19 enrolled in Sunday School.

The members of the mission plan to renovate a house on the original property for worship and classroom space. They need furnishings for the building, such as chairs, tables, and other equipment, according to Dyer.

"Foremost, we need prayers," concluded Dyer.

## Professor at C-N to teach in China

JEFFERSON CITY — Ronald G. Midkiff, chairman of the division of education at Carson-Newman College, has been invited by the English Language Institute/China to serve as a senior professor for two months during the summer of 1986 at a university in China.

He will assist secondary school Chinese English teachers to improve their skills and to encourage their personal development.

Midkiff also will lead a team of 10 English teachers from the United States to a Chinese college, university, teacher education center, or technical school where there is a need for foreign expertise in the development of a language program.

## Little Doe church calls Dwight Hobbs

Earl Dwight Hobbs has accepted the call as pastor of Little Doe Baptist Church in Butler.

A native of Kingsport, Hobbs was pastor of Carter's Valley Baptist Church in Church Hill. He is a graduate of East Tennessee State University in Johnson City and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

In addition, Hobbs has served as vice-moderator and Sunday School director of Holston Valley Baptist Association, and on the advisory committee of the Baptist Student Union at East Tennessee State University.

His wife is the former Donna Lynne Fox of Johnson City.



Hobbs

## Palm Beach Atlantic gets \$1-million gift

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (BP) — Palm Beach Atlantic College has received a \$1-million gift from Rose Sachs of Palm Beach, Fla., in memory of her late husband, Mortimer Sachs, announced Hugh R. Mathis, director of development at the college.

The funds will be used to help build an administration complex for the Baptist school, located in downtown West Palm Beach, Fla., Mathis said.

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