

Baptist and Reflector

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News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention

Peace Committee adopts diversity statement

By Dan Martin

ATLANTA (BP)— A statement acknowledging theological diversity within the Southern Baptist Convention was adopted by the SBC Peace Committee Feb. 24-25.

The three paragraph statement "is an acknowledgement of the state of affairs" in the 14.4-million-member denomination, according to Peace Committee chairman Charles Fuller, "but more importantly is a predication on which we can attempt to build relationships

through which and by which we can do mission together."

Acknowledging the statement can be taken as a "preamble" to any Peace Committee report at the 1986 annual meeting of the SBC June 10-12 in Atlanta, Fuller said, "For the moment, it will be the basis on which we will seek to find ways in which we can legitimately work together."

The statement says:

"The Peace Committee has completed a preliminary investigation of the theo-

logical situation in our SBC seminaries. We have found significant theological diversity within our seminaries reflective of the theological diversity within our wider constituency. These divergencies are found among those who claim to hold a high view of Scripture and to teach in accordance with and not contrary to the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963.

"Examples of this diversity include the following, which are intended to be illustrative but not exhaustive: (1) Some accept and affirm the direct creation and historicity of Adam and Eve while others view them instead as representative of the human race in its creation and fall. (2) Some understand the historicity of every event in Scripture as reported by the original source while others hold that the historicity can be clarified and revised by the findings of modern historical scholarship. (3) Some hold to the stated authorship of every book in the Bible while others hold that in some cases such attribution may not refer to the final author or may be pseudonymous. (4) Some hold that every miracle

in the Bible is intended to be taken as a historical event while others hold that some miracles are intended to be taken as parabolic.

"The Peace Committee is working earnestly to find ways to build bridges between those holding divergent views so that we may all legitimately coexist and work together in harmony to accomplish our common mission. Please pray that we may find ways to use our diversity to win the greatest number to faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord."

Fuller commented, "Regardless of the theological differences we have found and acknowledged to be in our seminaries, we believe the Peace Committee also has found many reasons to greatly affirm the work of our seminaries."

With adoption of the statement, Fuller said attention of the committee will now shift to political matters in the SBC. "The agenda now calls upon us to be as thorough and candid in an analysis of political activity in SBC life; the political causes underlying our conflicts should be no less considered than the theological (Continued on page 2)

Missionaries in Philippines view future with optimism

By Marty Croll

MANILA, Philippines (BP)— Southern Baptist missionaries heard firecrackers and gun blasts late into the night Feb. 25, as Filipinos in Manila celebrated the rise to power of a new government promising democracy and free speech.

Missionaries are optimistic about the future of work in the Philippines, having seen no sign that Baptists will be less welcome with President Corazon Aquino than they were with former President Ferdinand E. Marcos. Marcos fled the country as a rebellion of military officers and civilians ended his 20-year rule.

During the rebellion, Southern Baptists' mission chairman in the Philippines and the four other administrative committee members went on with a scheduled meeting at their offices in Manila. In Davao City, on the island of Mindanao, a training workshop led by Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to other countries also went on as planned.

Missionaries are not anxious about being in the country, said Les Hill, the mission chairman. "Our impression is the populace as a whole leans toward the revolution," he said, about three hours before the Philippine people heard that Marcos and 55 of his family and aides had fled from Malacanang Palace, home and office of the Philippine president.

"Today the people have been very happy, rejoicing over a new feeling of being relieved of fear," said Hill's wife, Jan, as confirmation came Wednesday, Feb. 26, that Marcos was en route to Guam and Aquino was beginning to set up her new government. "They sound like they are so eager to start over."

Jan Hill recalled leading a Bible study in which business people expressed their anger, and fear, at Marcos.

"There have been a great deal of prayer meetings, both Catholic and Protestant, since the first of the year," said Les Hill. "It is valid, I think, to say what is happening may well be the answer to that kind of prayer."

The Philippines, a predominantly Roman Catholic nation of 55-million people,

in recent years has been one of the countries most responsive to Southern Baptist sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ in recent years. Three Filipino Baptist conventions, with help from 163 Southern Baptist missionaries and short-term personnel, last year reported baptizing 12,452 Christians. This was the fourth-largest number of baptisms reported by missionaries in any of the 106 countries where Southern Baptists work.

Marcos began losing his grip on the country's armed forces Feb. 22, when two top military leaders broke from his regime and announced their support of Aquino, who had opposed him in national elections Feb. 7. The officials, Lt. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, deputy chief of the armed forces, and defense minister Juan Ponce Enrile, turned Camp Crame in Manila into their command post and called for a provisional government led by Aquino. Crowds estimated up to 1-million people surrounded the post to keep Marcos' tanks at bay Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday.

Aquino had been named winner of the election by an independent group of voters. (Continued on page 2)

Stanley asks for suggestions for committee appointments

ATLANTA (BP)— Southern Baptist Convention President Charles F. Stanley has asked for assistance in selecting nominees for four 1986 SBC appointive committees.

Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta, made his request in an open letter to "all state convention executives, elected persons, and all others."

"The very important task of presenting the 1986 Committee on Committees nominees, as well as those to serve on the Resolutions Committee, Credentials Committee, and Tellers Committee is underway," he wrote. "We would count

it a blessed favor and a great service to our Lord if you would prayerfully assist us in this effort."

As convention president, Stanley is charged with the responsibility of appointing members to the four committees in consultation with the SBC's two vice-presidents — W. Winfred Moore, first vice-president, of Amarillo, Texas; and Henry Huff, second vice-president, of Louisville, Ky.

"Many hundreds of names are submitted each year from various sources, and the winning process is crucial and tedious," Stanley said. "We want only that which will be God's will to His glory."

He asked for "names of pastors and lay people from your state convention that you feel would serve true to God's Word and their assignment," adding, "these persons must be above reproach in their moral life and Christian demeanor."

Information needed for each name submitted includes telephone number and address of both the person's home and church, the church's Cooperative Program giving percentage, and the church's baptism figures and resident membership. Stanley also said he needs to know whether or not the proposed persons plan to attend the SBC annual meeting in Atlanta in June and each individual's length of time in his or her church and state.

The information should be sent to Stanley in care of First Baptist Church, 754 Peachtree St., NE, Atlanta, GA 30365.

Mission giving increases 9.59%

After one-third of the current convention year, Cooperative Program mission gifts from Tennessee Baptist churches are running 9.59 percent ahead of last year's receipts, according to Tom Madden, executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Cooperative Program gifts for the November 1985-February 1986 period were \$6,820,503.03, which is 9.59 percent higher (\$596,778.89 higher) than the \$6,223,724.14 in gifts received during the November 1984-February 1985 period.

However, Madden noted that receipts for the first four months of the convention year are below the convention-adopted goal pace. Based on the \$21-million budget-goal adopted by messengers to the 1985 state convention, the four-month goal would be \$7-million. Receipts for the four months were \$179,496.97 or 2.56 percent below the goal.

Cooperative Program receipts for February reached \$1,522,647.94. Madden reported that this amount is \$155,469.56 or 11.37 percent higher than the \$1,367,178.38 received in February 1985.

However, last month's Cooperative Program mission gifts of \$1,522,647.94 were \$227,352.06 or 14.93 percent below the current year's monthly goal of \$1,750,000 (one-twelfth of \$21-million).

SBC messengers face decision in new representation method

NASHVILLE (BP)— A new method under which churches in new areas can qualify for representation on Southern Baptist Convention boards was approved during the February meeting of the SBC Executive Committee.

The plan — which creates a new bylaw and revises another — will be recommended to the annual meeting of the SBC in Atlanta, June 10-12, 1986.

Under the recommendation, participation in convention affairs is broadened, and a three-tiered set of requirements for representation is proposed.

Currently, Southern Baptists from conventions and fellowships with less than 25,000 members are ineligible to serve on any convention committees or on any of the boards of agencies, institutions, or commissions.

The proposal creates a new Bylaw 31, which says: "To allow participation in the affairs of the convention, any member of a church who is eligible to be a messenger to the convention may be appointed teller, a member of the Credentials Committee, a member of the Committee on Resolutions, and a member of the convention's special committees."

The current Bylaw 31, which deal with "Representation from New States and Territories," would become Bylaw 32 and be designated, "Representation from Qualified States and Territories."

The new Bylaw 32 sets up a process through which cooperating Southern Baptist churches in a state or territory may make application for representation, specifying the application is to be presented to the Executive Committee at its February meeting containing information about membership. The committee will study the application, and, if it is approved, will be presented to officers of the SBC for action at the following convention.

Under the plan, when cooperating churches in an area reach a membership of 15,000, they become eligible for representation on the SBC Executive Commit-

tee, the Committee on Committees, and the Committee on Boards, Commissions, and Standing Committees.

At 20,000 members, the churches are entitled to representation on the Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, and Sunday School Board.

At 25,000 members, the churches can gain representation on the Annuity Board and on the commissions, institutions, and standing committees, unless the individual agency's charter provides otherwise.

Although the matter of representation of new state conventions has been studied six times since 1974, the new study began following two motions made at the 1985 annual meeting, requesting revision of Bylaw 31 to broaden participation in convention affairs.

Following the adoption of the recommendation to change the bylaws, the Executive Committee asked the special study committee to continue to work, studying other matters in the convention bylaws concerning representation.

Philippines . . .

(Continued from page 1)

counters. But Marcos denied it and went ahead with his own inauguration by the chief justice of his Supreme Court Feb. 25, in front of about 500 people holed up in the presidential palace. Hours later he asked for safe exit out of the country. Aquino, guarded by soldiers formerly under Marcos, also was inaugurated Feb. 25 in a country club. She was setting up her government on Feb. 26 after Marcos left.

"The big phrase that is being stated here is that seldom in history is tyranny successfully brought down to a democracy, but it is unheard of where civilians have protected the military. The people see this as a spiritual victory," said Les Hill. "They stopped the tanks by standing in front of them and then asking the soldiers to climb down and pray with them. And the soldiers did. What they were saying was, 'The Bible says prayer can move mountains; well, in this case, we have seen prayer that has turned tanks.'"

During the campaign and unrest preceding the election, Baptist churches scheduled several prayer meetings, Jan Hill said. Her husband attended a prayer breakfast involving evangelical churches the day before the election. He also attended meetings among evangelical leaders who debated whether to schedule special pre-election prayer meetings at strategic points in the city. They decided against it out of concern that prayer could become subservient to politics, he said.

During the revolt itself, churches were opened for prayer meetings and people prayed in the streets for a peaceful resolution. Most of the turmoil was centered around Camp Crame and Manila's radio and television stations. The Hills listened to the Protestant radio station, DZAS. That station had offered its services as a communications arm of the revolution if Marcos' forces took Radio Veritas, the Roman Catholic station, off the air, Les Hill said. DZAS regularly interspersed Scripture readings in its ongoing coverage.

"The people attribute what is going on to their Christianity," he said. "I think you'd find the Catholic and Protestant alike in their viewpoint on that here."



S. Cain



M. Cain



McClure

Acteens' Summits set for girls in junior, senior high schools

The annual statewide Acteens' Summits will be March 21-23 in Nashville for junior high students and March 27-29 in Gatlinburg for senior high students. Missionaries, missionary kids, and a music group will be the program leaders.

June Hardy, a missionary kid from Japan and a missionary journeyman for two years in the Philippines; Beth Harris, a summer missionary in Georgia who is now a student at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City; and Cathy McClure, a Tennessean who is a US-2 missionary for two years in New York City, are features of the Friday-Sunday junior high summit to be held at the Maxwell House in Nashville.

Alan Duncan, missionary kid from Kenya who is now a professional football player for the Memphis Showboats; Mark and Lisa Cain, home missionaries in New York; and McClure are headlining the program for the Thursday-Saturday senior high summit to be held at the Holiday Inn in Gatlinburg.

The Nashville music and ministry team, Harbor, made up of Paul Guffey and David Bell, will be a part of both summits, which begin at 8 p.m. and end at 11:30 a.m.

The theme of "Discoveries . . ." will also be carried out through training ses-



Alan Duncan

sions on clowning, puppetry, enlistment, and communications for Acteens; a session for mothers; and a session for Acteens' leaders.

Studiact recognitions will be held, and at the senior high meeting Activator training and commissioning will be held.

Those interested should contact their church's WMU director or the TBC, WMU, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

Mercer, Tift plan merger

MACON, Ga. (BP)— Tift College will merge with Mercer University as of June 1 and become Tift College of Mercer University.

The merger is subject to approval of the Georgia Baptist Convention Executive Committee, which meets in Atlanta March 11.

The historic merger agreement was announced at a press conference in Macon, Ga., Feb. 21 by R. Kirby Godsey, president of Mercer, and O. Sutherland Sims Jr., president of Tift.

Boards of trustees of Tift and Mercer met that same day to recommend the merger, which has been under discussion for several months with Godsey, Sims, and Georgia Baptist Convention leaders.

Tift, which was chartered 1849, will continue to operate on its 60-acre site in Forsyth. All faculty members will be offered one-year contracts by Mercer. Current on-campus enrollment at Tift is 205 students. In addition, the Forsyth school enrolls 310 students in its off-campus centers.

As part of the merger agreement, current Tift students will be accepted as students of Tift College of Mercer University. The 9,200 alumni of Tift will be accepted as alumni of Mercer.

Stanley requests . . .

(Continued from page 1)

differences have been."

Fuller said he believes the diversity statement "is an accurate statement and is in line with the assignment of the committee, which was to discover and to bring to the attention of Southern Baptists some of the causes of our controversy."

Fuller was asked if the statement would put a "smoking gun" into the hands of those who have been critical of theological education at the six SBC-supported seminaries.

"The Peace Committee does not see that as the purpose of the statement. I think we would ask the people to handle this statement with care. To mishandle it is to forfeit whatever opportunity we have to build upon it," Fuller said.

Fuller said the statement "is an accurate statement of our denominational picture. Now we have to look at it and decide how we will live together, serve together, do mission together. All of that is at stake; therefore if we mishandle it, we destroy whatever opportunity we have."

The five subcommittees which visited 11 national SBC agencies made reports at the February meeting.

"The reports of the visitation committees brought our diversity to the front, the reasons for our diversity, and memories of the diversity," Fuller said. "We had to put the spirit of the Dallas meet-

ing on the back burner while we dealt with immediate reactions to the reports."

"Now, I think that instead of banging against each other when we meet, we can go back to the statement and say we have accepted the fact of our diversity. Now, I think we can get on to determine what we should do from here."

In addition to adopting the diversity statement, the committee adopted a statement calling on all Southern Baptists "as they express themselves in support of the (presidential) candidate of their choice, that they do so in Christian love and in such a manner that God is honored."

The group also authorized Fuller to "appoint the necessary subcommittees to research and report on various aspects of politics in the Southern Baptist Convention to include voter registration, voter irregularities, the powers of the president, and ongoing political activities in the convention."

He also was authorized to appoint a subcommittee "to consider the effects and advisability of negative designation" in Cooperative Program giving.

The Peace Committee, in the light of controversy which developed over the visit of the subcommittee to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., authorized Fuller to arrange for another visit to the campus if administrators and others believe such a visit would be helpful.

Executive Committee adopts 1986-87 budget allocations

NASHVILLE (BP)— A record \$136-million goal has been proposed for the Southern Baptist Convention's 1986-87 Cooperative Program unified budget.

The 69-member SBC Executive Committee voted Feb. 19 to recommend the Cooperative Program proposal to messengers who will attend the 1986 SBC annual meeting this June in Atlanta.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' means of funding missions, education, and ministry programs around the world.

state convention and Southern Baptist Convention ministries.

—“The Southern Baptist Convention to seek by A.D. 2000 or sooner to allocate 75 percent of the SBC Cooperative Program allocation budget to home and foreign mission ministries.”

The 1986-87 Cooperative Program allocation budget proposal “represents a first effort toward achieving the Southern Baptist Convention part of the strategy,” Duke said. He noted the combined allocation for the SBC Foreign and Home Mission Boards is 69.88 percent of the basic operating budget, up from 69.64 in 1985-86.

Against an overall increase of 5 percent for the first phase of the operating budget, the two missions boards both were allocated 5.36 percent gains. In that phase, the Foreign Mission Board's allocation was raised from \$60,300,000 to \$63,532,700. The Home Mission Board's portion went from \$23,690,500 to \$24,960,600.

As a percent of the first phase basic operating budget, the Foreign Mission Board's allocation climbed from 50 percent to 50.17 percent, and the Home Mission Board's share grew from 19.64 to 19.71.

Other allocations from the first phase basic operating budget and their percent of increase include SBC operating budget — the Executive Committee, \$1,778,400 (4 percent increase); Annuity Board, \$999,200 (4 percent); Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, \$7,533,242 (6.58 percent); Southern seminary, \$5,597,924 (5.75 percent); New Orleans seminary, \$4,230,657 (4.59 percent); Southeastern seminary, \$3,966,352 (2.84 percent); Golden Gate seminary, \$2,479,411 (3.44 percent); Midwestern seminary, \$2,136,814 (4.33 percent);

Also, Southern Baptist Foundation, \$275,500 (4.75 percent increase); American Baptist Seminary Commission, \$244,500 (2.52 percent); Brotherhood Commission, \$924,000 (4 percent); Christian Life Commission, \$772,800 (4 percent); Education Commission, \$461,300 (3.99 percent); Historical Commission, \$432,000 (4.85 percent); Radio-Television Commission, \$5,237,600 (3.96 percent); Stewardship Commission, \$431,300 (4 percent); Public Affairs Committee, \$435,700 (4.01 percent); and Planned Growth in Giving promotion, \$200,000 (new item).

The \$5.9-million capital needs budget calls for disbursements to Golden Gate, New Orleans, Southeastern, and Southern seminaries for capital improvements to their campuses and for funds to be channeled to the seven occupants of the new SBC Building in Nashville — Seminary External Education Division, Southern Baptist Foundation, Christian Life Commission, Education Commission, Historical Commission, Stewardship Commission, and Executive Committee.

The second phase of the basic operating budget is designed to distribute almost \$3.5-million to the recipients of the first phase, in the same proportion in which they received first phase disbursements.



Seed Company



Robert Erwin

1986 Royal Ambassador Congress to attract RAs from across state

“The Word Is Freedom” is the theme of the 32nd Tennessee Royal Ambassador Congress to be held at Freedom Hall in Johnson City, March 28-29.

The annual congress, for boys in grades 1-12, will feature a Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil, a Baptist college music group, a hot air balloon, a police dog team, and a ham radio demonstration, in addition to Royal Ambassador events.

Robert S. Erwin, a missionary to Brazil, will speak. Erwin grew up in Oak Ridge and Knoxville, was graduated from the University of Tennessee, and has served as a missionary for 16 years.

“Seed Company,” a music group of college students from Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, will perform. Ken Sparks, head football coach at Carson-Newman College; Keith Rogers, US-2 missionary working with Appalachian Outreach, a mission project at Carson-Newman College; and Johnny McKinney, pastor of Litz Manor Baptist Church in Kingsport, also will speak.

The police dog team from the Johnson City Police Department and the hot air balloon from WCYB Channel 5 in Bristol are features along with a media presentation and a parade in downtown Johnson City.

Royal Ambassador events include competition in RA racers, speak-out, individual and chapter projects, campcraft rodeo, and the election of state officers.

Other highlights include a missions fair, special offering, Ambassador Ser-



hot air balloon

vice breakfast, and awards presentations including honor chapter and National Ambassador Service awards. Missions conferences will feature work with Cherokee Indians, prisoners, blind persons, Venezuela, Brazil, and Appalachian Outreach.

The congress, which begins at 7:30 a.m. on Friday and ends at noon on Saturday, is sponsored by the Brotherhood department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. State RA officers Chris Kagay and Steve Gilleland will preside.

Registration information may be obtained from church Brotherhood directors or the TBC Brotherhood department, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

The \$136-million Cooperative Program budget is divided into three categories. The first is \$126,630,000 for the first phase of the SBC basic operating budget, or operating funds supplied to 20 convention agencies, institutions, or programs. The second is \$5,874,000 allocated to meet capital needs of 12 agencies and institutions. The third is \$3,496,000 for the second phase of the basic operating budget.

The disbursement priority will be to supply the first phase of the operating budget, then to meet capital needs, and finally to enter the second phase of the operating budget, if revenue is available.

In conjunction with the budget proposal, the Executive Committee adopted a “special note” to emphasize Planned Growth in Giving, the stewardship campaign adopted in 1983 to support the SBC Bold Mission Thrust plan to present the message of Christ to the entire world by the year 2000.

The special note highlighted a four-part strategy which has been designed to lead Southern Baptists to reach their Planned Growth in Giving objectives, said Nelson Duke, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jefferson City, Mo., and chairperson of the Executive Committee's program and budget subcommittee, which formulated the budget proposal.

The strategies are: —“Church members increase personal giving to their church each year by some percentage of personal income.

—“Churches increase giving by some percentage through the Cooperative Program each year with the goal of having grown by at least 7.5 percentage points of their undesignated budget receipts to missions support through the Cooperative Program; and a planned increase in giving to the (local) association.

—“State conventions continue to work toward a 50-50 division of undesignated Cooperative Program receipts between

Fesler begins pastorate with Brotherton church

Since January, Lee Fesler has been serving as pastor of Brotherton Baptist Church in Cookeville.

A senior at Belmont College, Nashville, he previously served as minister to single adults at Radnor Baptist Church in the same city.

Fesler has also been associate pastor at Laguardo Baptist Church in Lebanon. He is a native Nashvillian.



STATE EXECUTIVE LEADERS — Recently elected officers of the Southern Baptist Association of State Convention Executive Directors are (left to right) Ellis Bush of Pennsylvania-South Jersey, secretary-treasurer; Dan Stringer of Florida, president; and Tom Madden of Tennessee, vice-president and president-elect.



PRESS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS — Newly elected officers of the Southern Baptist Press Association are (left to right) Lynn Clayton, editor of Louisiana's *Baptist Message*, president; Presnall Wood, editor of the *Texas Baptist Standard*, president-elect; and Jack Brymer, editor of the *Florida Baptist Witness*, secretary-treasurer.

Fly joins committee

Barbara Fly, public relations coordinator for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, has been named to a three-year term on the Southern Baptist Public Relations Advisory Committee.

Fly also serves as administrative coordinator for the Baptist Public Relations Association.

My personal perspective**An apology for my handling of the Hinson situation**

By Alvin C. Shackelford

I apologize to you, the readers of the *Baptist and Reflector*, for what has been printed in this and recent issues because of my handling of accusations against E. Glenn Hinson.

The word "apology" has two distinct definitions in the dictionary: (1) a formal spoken or written defense of some idea, religion, philosophy, etc., and (2) an acknowledgement of some fault, injury, insult, etc., with an expression of regret and a plea for pardon.

These words are written with the latter definition in mind.

It is not my purpose to defend the writings or actions of anyone involved, including myself, in this incident. I am not sure that these writings or actions, including my own, are defensible.

I made a mistake in judgment when confronted by this situation. I regret this, offer my public apology, and ask for your forgiveness.

I ask myself, as you probably have, "How did it happen?" On Jan. 3, I received a "letter to the editor" from Jim Stroud, pastor of Third Creek Baptist Church in Knoxville, in response to a Dec. 25, 1985, article about Glenn Hinson teaching a course on the campus of Carson-Newman College. The letter cited five quotations from a 1977 book, *Jesus Christ*, written by Hinson.

Along with the letter, Stroud enclosed a copy of a similar letter he said he had "mailed to 200 east Tennessee pastors." That letter stated that "Carson-Newman College will offer" the course.

I have taken pride in that during my nine years as editor I have printed every controversial "letter to the editor" which met the stated requirements.

My first consideration of Stroud's letter concerned one requirement, "Letters must not make personal attacks on the character or integrity of individuals." But I had also written (editorial, Jan. 9, 1985), "We will consider letters which deal specifically with what an individual has said or done."

My examination of Stroud's letter seemed to indicate that he had done just that. He had cited what an individual had said (written).

My second consideration was to verify the cited quotations. I sought (unsuccessfully) to get a copy of the book from bookstores, from friends, and from Dargan-Carver Library at the Sunday School Board. The book is out of print.

On Jan. 17 I called Stroud, explained why I had not printed his letter, and asked him to bring a copy of the book for me to read when he came to the Evangelism Conference the following week. On Jan. 21, after the afternoon session of the conference, Stroud and I talked for about 30 minutes. He had a copy of the book he had gotten from Southern seminary's library, but he said he needed to keep it.

On Saturday, Jan. 25, Stroud called me at home, saying he had found a copy of the book in a Knoxville library and would mail it to me.

On Feb. 3 I called Stroud to tell him I had not received the book. I was told that he had loaned it to someone else. He again questioned why I had not printed his letter. I agreed to print it, but because I had not read the book, I would print a response under it. I read my response to him on the telephone. His letter and my response were printed in our Feb. 5 issue.

Stroud's letter and my response has produced a number of "letters to the editor" which were printed Feb. 19, Feb. 26, and in this issue.

The controversy led to a Feb. 23 debate between Stroud and Wayne Nicholson, pastor of McCalla Avenue Baptist Church in Knoxville. The debaters asked me to serve as moderator-timekeeper for the debate. I declined because of previous commitments for that Sunday and because I felt nothing would be accomplished

except to heighten the emotion and deepen the division of the issue.

On Feb. 19 Stroud spent two hours and 20 minutes in my office — stating he would embarrass me publicly for my lack of concern for Knoxville Baptists, if I did not come and report the debate in the *Baptist and Reflector*.

I proposed a compromise (which at the time I thought was wise): I would come as an "observer" but would not be the moderator, and rather than try to report the debate, the two debaters would write a summary of their positions which I promised to print, without alteration, in the paper. (These are printed on page 6.)

Please allow me to make two additional comments — accepting the risk of being misunderstood.

First, I have now read the book, *Jesus Christ*. Stroud sent me a photocopy of the entire book which I received Feb. 14. Here are my observations:

(1) Hinson was not as careful as he should have been in differentiating between what he believes and what are quotes from "historians" and "scholars." This could explain some of the problems cited.

(2) There is a longtime theological debate about how much of Jesus' eternal knowledge He limited from Himself in the incarnation (Philippians 2:5-8). Hinson's apparent view is that God gradually revealed this knowledge to Jesus throughout His ministry on earth. The critics' view seems to be that Jesus retained most, if not all, of such knowledge. This difference in interpretation leads to a number of cited quotations from the book.

(3) However, these two observations do not explain all the problem quotations. There are several statements in the book which I would in no way seek to defend.

My second comment concerns Hinson himself. I have never met him, nor have I heard him speak. I have talked to him twice on the telephone (Feb. 20 and Feb. 26) because I felt someone needed to apprise him of the Knoxville debate.

In reading the book, *Jesus Christ*, I am convinced that Hinson believes that Jesus was the Son of God, that He lived a sinless life, that He died an atoning death on the cross, that He was resurrected from the tomb, and that He is coming again in triumph. To me, this makes Hinson a child of God.

Therefore, I approach this situation with fear and trembling, lest I do anything that would hinder a child of God from performing the ministry to which he believes God has called him. I have been told that I have the book and the lists of cited quotations, and that I am "accountable to God" for what I do with these. I will accept that accountability.

I believe the *Baptist and Reflector* has given the matter a complete hearing. The debaters were allowed to present unaltered their own positions. We have printed "letters to the editor" from both sides.

Therefore, I am calling a halt to the printing of letters on this subject as of this issue. I see no good that can be accomplished by printing additional letters, since those I am now receiving are somewhat repetitious of letters already printed.

Hinson's worthiness to teach at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is a judgment to be made by the SBC-elected trustees for that institution. The matter belongs in their hands. If the messengers to the convention do not feel the trustees are acting properly on this matter — or any other matter — the trustees can be replaced by the messengers.

In conclusion, let me end where I began. I apologize for permitting the *Baptist and Reflector* to become a disruption among our pastors and churches.

I pledge to focus on the publication's purpose as stated in the convention-adopted program statement: "To unite Tennessee Baptists in advancing the cause of Christ by providing news, inspirational materials, features, and information concerning all the ministries of the Tennessee and Southern Baptist conventions and to inform, inspire, promote, and enlist the interests of Tennessee Baptists in these ministries" (1984 TBC Annual, page 36).

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**Tennessee/Venezuela
Prayer Net Partnership**

(Each week the *Baptist and Reflector* will print specific prayer requests related to the Tennessee/Venezuela partnership mission. Please clip these out and pray diligently for God's blessings on this exciting opportunity.)

—Pray for the construction/evangelism team leaving March 8. Churches represented on this team are Eastview Baptist Church, Georgetown; Brentwood Baptist Church, Brentwood; New Market Baptist Church, New Market; and three Memphis churches: Colonial Heights Baptist Church, First Baptist Church, and Wells Station Baptist Church.

—Pray for evangelistic teams preparing to go to the island of Curacao in May.

—Pray for Eglee de Nunex as she leads Venezuela WMU.

—Pray that New Jerusalem Baptist Church, Valencia, finds land to purchase so a building can be erected in which this congregation can meet.

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.

Diversity being destroyed

Dear editor:

The current controversy concerning Glenn Hinson's volume entitled *Jesus Christ* is symptomatic of the problems associated with the attempted fundamentalist takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention. Heresy hunters are on the rise both in Tennessee and the SBC as a whole. We have no peace because of the constant cries of "liberalism" which again and again are proven false.

Our diversity as Baptists is being destroyed by those who would command uniformity in theology and practice.

Matthews resigns S.C. pastorate

GREENVILLE, S.C. (BP) — Denominational leader C. David Matthews has resigned as pastor of First Baptist Church of Greenville, S.C., "for personal reasons."

Matthews' resignation was received during a special session of the church board of deacons Monday, Feb. 24. Matthews asked that the resignation be effective immediately.

Matthews was not present at the meeting, but a letter he had written was read by Thomas Kirby, chairman of the deacons. Part of that letter stated, "Personal circumstances now beyond my control make it necessary that I submit my resignation immediately."

Associate Pastor Donald H. Rose was named interim senior minister.

A Texas native, Matthews had been pastor of the Greenville congregation since 1976. Under his leadership, the church added 500 members, reaching a total of 2,900. The church's budget tripled to \$1.3-million annually, and its annual support to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget increased 400 percent. The congregation completed a \$5-million building program about two years ago.

He has been involved in Southern Baptist Convention work on state and national levels. He was president of the general board of the South Carolina Baptist Convention in 1982-83. He is a member of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission and was that group's chairman from 1982 to 1984. Matthews also has been on the Southern Baptist Denominational Calendar Committee and was a member of the Commission on Pastoral Leadership of the Baptist World Alliance.

Matthews was a featured speaker at the Southern Baptist Forum, held prior to the SBC annual meeting in Kansas City, Mo., in 1984. He is co-chairman of the moderate-conservative movement among South Carolina Baptists.

He is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. In addition to the Greenville pastorate, he has been pastor of churches in Texas and Oklahoma.

Meanwhile, the world outside is beginning to ignore our message and pay attention to our squabbles.

What can we do to remedy the problem?

First, we can call off the witch hunt mentality which currently persists. The attack upon Glenn Hinson is the clearest example of this mentality yet. Hinson combines spirituality and scholarship in a magnificent manner. He is as fine a scholar and Christian as Southern Baptists have ever had.

Second, we can return to the pre-1979 days in Southern Baptist life. Perhaps it is the time to renounce denominational politics and return to our work of missions and evangelism.

What do we do if the witch hunt mentality continues to flourish in our convention? Let me suggest, with tongue firmly planted in cheek, that we appoint a group of bishops to edit every work by seminary and college professors, preachers, and denominational workers, and even Sunday School teachers. Who knows how Southern Baptists have been able to do their work for these many years without heresy hunters!

Marvin G. Cameron
600 S. Parkway
Gatlinburg, TN 37738

Pay the publisher

Dear editor:

With much dismay I noticed that the Feb. 19 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* printed four letters referring to Glenn Hinson and his book *Jesus Christ*. Each of these letters were very critical in nature.

To call one a "heretic" is a very serious matter. It should not be done without very careful consideration of the consequences of such action. In the Scriptures, Jesus once challenged "those without sin" to cast the first stones. There were no takers. I am not so sure that I, personally, would be so anxious to cast stones either.

One letter referred to the fact that the book, which is out of print, was in the hands of 20 pastors in the Knoxville area. I have seen one of those "books," and it was a photostatic copy.

While this may not violate any copyright laws, in my view, it is a serious violation of moral laws. This violation could be corrected in part, however,

Ronald D. Hicks retires from Kingsport pastorate

Ronald D. Hicks retired March 2 from a 29-year pastorate with Colonial Heights Baptist Church in Kingsport.

A native of Winston-Salem, N.C., Hicks attended Wake Forest University there. He also graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Previous pastorates include Enon Baptist Church in Oxford, N.C.; Mount Zion Baptist Church in Berea, N.C.; New Hope Baptist Church in Springfield, Ky.; and South Fork Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Hicks is available for interim pastorates, pulpit supply, and revivals. He is currently serving on the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.



Hicks

when those doing the copying send the publishers of the book the purchase price for each book copied. While the argument may be advanced that no one is selling these copies, my contention would be that someone is having to pay for the cost of duplication thus the exchange of money is involved.

I am tired of folks throwing punches, using photostatic copiers, mass mailings, and grandstanding by challenges to public debate. Let's get on with the business of witnessing, teaching, preaching, and growing. We must overcome Satan who is running to and fro in the world. We shall gain nothing by continued rebel rousing. We shall all lose our voice of effectiveness in a lost world. In all of this Jesus Christ is the biggest loser of all.

Larry Alan Reeves
P.O. Box 220
Jacksboro, TN 37755

Observation, requests

Dear editor:

I am writing in regard to the letter of Jim Stroud (Feb. 5) and your reply. May I make one observation and three requests?

Observation: You speak in your reply about reading in context, yet distort Stroud's statements of opposition. In his first paragraph he does seem to misunderstand the relationship between Carson-Newman College and Southern seminary's extension courses. Stroud later, however, clarifies his being "opposed" (same word as in the first paragraph), as opposition to Glenn Hinson's teaching "on Carson-Newman College campus."

Requests: (1) Name those "who have read" the book that you spoke with. (2) Take the five quotations that Stroud took out of context and place them in the correct context. (3) Lastly, please tell us what the premise of the book, *Jesus Christ*, is.

Steve Whitman
5266 Old Higdon Rd.
Joelton, TN 37080

Printing of letter 'significant'

Dear editor:

Your recent printing of the letter from Jim Stroud (Feb. 5) concerning the appearance of E. Glenn Hinson on the campus of Carson-Newman was significant. I appreciate your reticence to accept criticism uncritically. It did disturb me somewhat, however, to see that you were unaware of Hinson's book and that you have accepted so readily the report of those who have questioned Stroud's understanding.

It is true that his quote referring to page 78 in *Jesus Christ* is taken out of context; however, Stroud's other quotes were not out of context and communicated Hinson's positions clearly. In fact, Stroud did not point to the most devastating areas of Hinson's book. For example, on pages 111 and 112, Hinson calls into question the reality of the physical resurrection and confirms that the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus were merely in the nature of Old Testament theophanies, rather than actual physical appearances.

Hinson seems infatuated with the idea of embellishments in the New Testament. He carries this so far that he reports, "Jesus, Himself, had no consciousness of 'divinity'" (pp. 83 and 84). He goes on to say, "He, Himself, disclaimed a suggestion that He was on a level with God, Himself." The positions

represented in these quotes are devastating for the orthodox understanding of Jesus Christ as God in the flesh, as the God/man fully aware of His relation to the Father and intent from the beginning of His ministry to go to the cross to suffer vicariously for the sins of men.

Other quotes could be listed, but these should inform the reader that Southern Baptists have men in their employment who call into question the very foundation of the faith once delivered to the saints. Certainly this is cause for responsible action by the duly appointed.

Patrick T. Stewart
2784 Chiswood
Memphis, TN 38134

A devout, godly man

Dear editor:

I am saddened and hurt by the venomous and vicious attacks on Glenn Hinson. After reading the recent letters to the editor, I wonder just what purpose is being served. Is the purpose of Christ enhanced? Do these letters reflect Christian concern and love? Do they have redemptive intent? I wonder.

I was fortunate to be a student of Hinson. Through his classes in church history and the study of the classics of Christian devotion, my faith was deepened and expanded. My experience of Hinson is that he is a devout and godly man who embodies a Christlike spirit. He began every class with prayer. He voluntarily led a prayer group of interested students at 7:00 on Tuesday mornings before class. He has endured physical disability and persevered when others would have given in to despair.

I invite his critics to take seriously what Jesus prescribed in Matthew 18:15 and following, and act on it. If they do this, I know they will be reconciled and perhaps even humbled. The purpose of Christ then will be served in reconciliation, a ministry to which we all have been called.

John Morris
480 Hogan Road
Nashville, TN 37220

Thank you, Tennessee

Dear editor:

As president of the Tennessee club, I would like to thank Tennessee Baptists on the behalf of the Tennessee students of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary for the tremendous banquet and fellowship time they provided for us this past week. I would also like to thank you for allowing William Harbin to counsel with many of our Tennessee graduating students, and host this banquet.

I dare say Harbin is one of the most knowledgeable individuals in our Southern Baptist Convention concerning the relationship and dealings of the pastor search committee with the prospective pastor. He has authored a book entitled *When a Pastor Search Committee Comes... or Doesn't Come* (Broadman Press). It is the only one of its kind in our convention or any other convention. With over 35 years experience in the pastorate, and 10 years as director of the church-ministers information department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, he has vast knowledge in this subject. This book has much to say to the graduating seminary student who is seeking his first church staff position, as well as the experienced minister, and will especially be helpful to those serving on a pastor search committee.

With all the pressures of seminary life and the preparation of the ministry to come, it is a comfort to know Tennessee Baptists are praying for and supporting their seminaries and the Tennessee students.

Roy Lee Saint
4428-C Seminary Place
New Orleans, LA 70126

Editor's Note: On Feb. 23, two Knoxville pastors held a public debate on whether or not E. Glenn Hinson's book *Jesus Christ is a violation of the 1980 SBC Resolution 16*, which states in part that "seminaries and other institutions . . . only employ, and continue the employment of, faculty members and professional staff who believe in the divine inspiration of the whole Bible, infallibility of the original manuscripts, and that the Bible is truth without error."

The two pastors were requested to provide a summary position statement of their Feb. 23 presentations. I promised to print these, without alteration, as submitted. The statements printed below are SOLELY the personal opinions of the writers, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the *Baptist and Reflector*, its editor, or its Board of Directors. The writers' addresses are printed, so that any responses can be made directly to them.

Resolved: the book *Jesus Christ* violates 1980 SBC Resolution 16

By Jim Stroud, pastor
Third Creek Baptist Church
4917 Western Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37921

The book is cause for concern. This is a theological critique, not a personal vendetta or attack upon the author. I wish him well and hope he leaves the seminary soon. He does not uphold our view of the divine inspiration of the whole Bible, infallibility of the original manuscripts, and that it is truth only without error. In fact he says, "Luke was obviously correcting the quotation found in Mark and Matthew" (page 63).

When you realize this book was intended as "help" for college students and seminary students, you really get upset. Hinson leads the student into extremes of form and source and genre criticism. Those who are presently defending his book as though it represents "mainstream conservative theology" will ultimately be exposed for the liberals they are, once people get a copy and read this book.

Imagine the spectacle at the Feb. 23 debate when three "doctors" from Southern seminary, while trying to show that I had misquoted Hinson when he said that Jesus was in error, showed their true colors, and revealed that they really do believe that Jesus was wrong, they believe that He thought that the consummation would occur in His lifetime (their proof texts were Matthew 10:23 and Mark 13:30). Their error is due to their fallacious eschatology and ineptitude to interpret the prophetic portions of the Word of God. And one of these learned doctors speaking with condescending chicanery, attempting to trap me, linguistically lacerated himself and hung himself on the gallows he had built for me. And no man armed with the knowledge of John 2:19-21 will ever be deceived to think Jesus was ever in error.

Hinson in his book *Jesus Christ* says that the Gospels are not "absolutely factual." They contain embellishment, exaggeration, alteration. The temptation of Jesus "may have been the creation of the evangelists or sources upon which they depended . . . the story (is) in more or less mythological terms when it had to be a deeply personal and interior experience . . . Quite possibly, however, the account went back to Jesus Himself." Hinson speculates on page 64. Hinson says about the Gospel of John, "Some scholars are at least willing to say that, while details are probably inaccurate, the possibility of a pre-Galilean ministry in Judea has much in its favor" (page 65).

Hinson claims that there is a kernel of historical fact which underlies the early church's handling of the Gospel material. Although much alteration and reshaping has occurred, Hinson believes that the early believers preserved a credible "core" of Jesus' own words. However, he questions whether some of the red letter words of Jesus are really His words! For example, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it" Hinson says may not be the words of Jesus. Read Matthew 5:32. Hinson says, ". . . the exception

clause was almost certainly introduced by Matthew" and not by Jesus.

Referring to Matthew 23:13-15 Hinson says, "At times Jesus seems virtually to equate scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites" and that after they have made proselytes they are twofold more the child of hell than before as themselves. Then Hinson says, "Whether such strong indictments accurately reflect Jesus' own sentiment is subject to question," although the Gospel of Matthew states that Jesus said those words! Hinson presumes to sit in judgment on and edit God's Holy Word (see page 28).

Hinson claims that the Gospel writers exaggerated "the sinister manner in which they (scribes and Pharisees) went about this (plot to kill Jesus)," says that they were made to look worse than they were! Hinson claims that some of the healing and miracle narratives of Jesus probably had some truth about them, but we have to "discount" for embellishment and exaggeration which he says "undoubtedly occurred."

Hinson shocks the college students with his view that Jesus was in "error" in thinking that He would see the coming of the Son of Man and the consummation of the Kingdom in his own lifetime. He cites as a proof text Matthew 10:23 and Mark 13:30. Poor Jesus! He found out later that He was wrong. Here's Hinson's exact quote: "Indeed, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Jesus expected the return of the Son of Man and the consummation to occur within His own lifetime. His 'error' was due to prophetic foreshortening. So urgent was His sense of mission, it seemed as if God had to consummate His kingdom immediately" (page 76).

Hinson does not think that Jesus ever "intended the church" as we know it today. He says, "(Albert) Schweitzer concluded that Jesus left no place for the church in His plan, for He expected the consummation to occur within His own lifetime" (proof text cited Matthew 10:23). Hinson says, ". . . this observation . . . is in itself probably accurate . . ." (page 95). Poor Jesus! The historical Jesus of Hinson was very limited.

Hinson shocks us once again when he says, "The meaning of the Last Supper has not been debated by scholars, and Jesus may not have commanded its repetition, as suggested by Paul (1 Corinthians 11:24, 25)." Hinson thinks Paul falsified the matter, although Hinson concedes, "They could, however, have represented His wish." Now that makes Hinson a nice liberal fellow, doesn't it? When anyone says there are no liberals in the Southern Baptist seminaries, Hinson makes a liar out of them. And we do have some dishonest folks among us who won't admit the truth if they are forced to see it in the book.

May God have mercy on churches with pastors who uphold Hinson. He ought to be fired and so should those pastors. The need of the hour is for men of God who really believe the Word of God. Hinson the man may be a distinguished gentleman, but I take issue with his religious views. He is not my kind of a Baptist.

By Wayne Nicholson, pastor
McCalla Avenue Baptist Church
3800 McCalla Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37914

I am a Southern Baptist. I am a graduate of both a Southern Baptist college and seminary. I am the pastor of a Southern Baptist church. I am happy to serve the great Tennessee Baptist Convention as a board and committee member. I love Southern Baptists and am proud of all our institutions, agencies, and leadership. God has blessed us remarkably and the world has been blessed through our witness. I regard all Baptists as my extended family, and I hurt when one is wronged.

I have known Dr. E. Glenn Hinson for 15 years. His life is strikingly marked by scholarship and piety. For reasons unbeknownst to me, my highly esteemed teacher has been maligned for a book (*Jesus Christ*) he wrote in 1975. He was asked by a non-Baptist publishing firm to inform college students and professors what a contemporary, mainstream historian may assert about Jesus. The discerning reader will quickly observe that Dr. Hinson demolishes the idealistic and unhistorical portrait of Jesus presented by liberalism, and then he proceeds to set forth what critical, conservative scholarship has to say about Jesus and His teachings.

Why do I say that Dr. Hinson has been maligned? First, he is said to have deviated from Resolution 16 of the 1980 SBC, although the book was published in 1977. This is a classic case of *ex post facto* guilt. I get a ticket for speeding today and next month go to court to pay the fine of \$50.00. The judge says I have one week in jail instead because the legislature has passed a new law in the interval stating that the penalty has been changed. Second, Baptists are not a creedal people. Remember the earlier generations of preachers who thundered, "No creed but Christ"? Remember the preamble to the 1925 and the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statements where it is declared that statements of faith have no "quality of finality or infallibility"? I refuse to crucify any Baptist on a creedal cross. Third, the book in question is a historically-oriented book and is now in a few respects dated. History and Biblical studies are in flux. I would not want to hold any person to statements made a year or more ago. Finally, and most importantly, Dr. Hinson is unjustifiably accused of having a position that he, in fact, seeks to refute. He is on record as denying theological assertions attributed to him. Surely, an author knows what he writes.

Perhaps a few examples will show how Dr. Hinson has been quoted out of context. First, Dr. Hinson is accused of claiming that the Gospels are not factual. Anyone who reads the book with an unjaudiced eye will note that Dr. Hinson argues against liberal critics who say that there is no historical Jesus. Dr. Hinson gives the reader his considered opinion: "There is . . . no justification for the skeptical attitude which would declare the whole story nothing but a figment of later Christian imagination. Behind the early Christian preaching . . . lies an historical event . . ." (page 57).

Second, Dr. Hinson is accused of claiming that the miracles are embellishments or myths. Nothing could be further from the truth. He is familiar enough with the Greek manuscripts to know that sometimes the Gospels report the same event or saying with minor nuances. For example, consider Mark 1:41. The more ancient manuscripts say Jesus felt anger. By the fourth century A.D., the verb that was commonly accepted was pity. Matthew and Luke do not tell us how Jesus felt. But the point is a leper was healed. The evidence is too great to say, as liberals do, that healings are myths. Dr. Hinson says, ". . . impressive evidence of Jesus' healing ministry remains." (page 67).

Third, Dr. Hinson is accused of claiming that the words of Jesus have undergone considerable reshaping. Surely that is not what the author says when he writes, "This highly skeptical attitude toward the sources has been disputed by other scholars" (page 78). On the following page Dr. Hinson numbers himself among these "other scholars" who strongly believe we have "a credible core of Jesus' own words" (page 79). I am confident that the unbiased reader of the book will note that Dr. Hinson has indeed been quoted out of context.

What purpose does the book serve? It informs the reader that the Jesus of history is the One the church has proclaimed Him to be. Theologians and preachers would put more flesh on the skeleton, but thanks to the painstaking research of this Christian historian we have the necessary skeleton. To my knowledge not one secular historian has refuted the information this gentle scholar has given us about Jesus and the reliability of His teachings. Further, this book assures the pastor that the Christ of faith has a definite rootage in the Jesus of history. It describes the world into which Jesus was born, what can be undogmatically known of Him, and how the church that Jesus formed shaped the world.

Permit me a personal word. Many young people from my present and previous congregations are now students in Baptist colleges and seminaries. They are studying to be pastors, ministers of music, missionaries, and medical workers. They are studying under brilliant, conservative scholars like Dr. Hinson, and to a person their faith remains undimmed. They eagerly look forward to the day when, as faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, trained to rightly divide the word of truth, they embark on life's greatest adventure and faith's highest joy — proclaiming to a lost world the Gospel of the Son of God and Saviour.

When all is said and done, Dr. Hinson is not on trial. We are. As the nation's strongest and largest evangelical body we are not content to increase our efforts in evangelism and missions. Rather, we shamelessly seek to take one another to court and vilify professors. Do you know what alarms me? We do it without tears! And the tragedy of it all is Satan scoffs and the unsaved perish, while we grow increasingly hostile. Is there a word from the Lord? Yet bet there is! It is an abomination to sow discord among brethren. (Proverbs 6:16, 19).

Campus BSU president gives 'gift of life'

By Charlie Warren

The gift that Ronnie Edwards, Baptist Student Union president at Columbia State Community College, gave his sister last year was no ordinary gift. It was a gift of life.

On Nov. 19, 1985, Ronnie donated a kidney to his sister, Donna, who had suffered complete kidney failure. It was a day neither of them will ever forget.

"It's a miracle," Ronnie explained as he recalled Donna's condition a year ago. At that time, she was in a wheel chair and was so sick and weak she had to be lifted in and out of the chair.

Today, a stranger who met her would not know she ever had a problem, although she still is regaining her strength. A graduate of Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, with a degree in elementary education, Donna plans to return to the classroom this spring as a substitute teacher. By fall she expects to return to full-time teaching.

"Donna never gave up," said her dad, Frank Edwards, pastor of Hannah's Gap Baptist Church, Petersburg, for the past 16 years. "But we almost gave up last winter," he admitted.

Ronnie echoed his father's confession. "Two times last year, we didn't know what would happen. We really prepared ourselves for the worst."

Medical experts think Donna's problem began with an infection when she was 10 years old. By 1975, they discovered Donna had only 15 percent use of her kidneys.

In March 1984, they began to quit functioning entirely.

The first of seven surgeries was April 4, 1984, when Donna was equipped for continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis. In September 1984, she got peritonitis (inflammation of the abdominal cavity) and had to go on hemodialysis. Physicians surgically put in an external shunt, but within two weeks, it had failed.

Donna was back into the hospital for installation of a straight cortex, another method for dialysis. It failed. A week



GIFT OF LIFE — Ronnie Edwards (right) donated a kidney to his sister, Donna (left), who was critically ill last winter. Both are doing well since surgery in November.

later they tried peritoneal again and it failed.

Finally, a horseshoe cortex was placed in her right arm and it functioned until the transplant.

In addition to the surgeries, even on the best of weeks, Donna had to go three times a week to a dialysis center for three-and-a-half-hour treatments.

By October 1984, doctors at Nashville's Vanderbilt Hospital began discussing with the family possibilities of a transplant. The Edwards learned that a relative could donate a kidney.

"There was really no question as far as I was concerned," Ronnie said. "She (Donna) didn't ask me. My parents didn't ask me. No one really talked to me about it. When they were talking about matching up someone, I was there to sit down and do it."

"I talked to other donors who were in the hospital. They said, 'When your

brother or sister is real sick and hurting a lot, you want to do anything you can.'"

Blood work indicated a match between Donna and Ronnie. In July 1985, they did a donor specific, a procedure in which they take a pint of the donor's blood and give the recipient a third of it every two weeks to see if there are signs of rejection.

During the procedure, Donna was given rejection medication, which lowered her white blood count and therefore, her resistance. She contracted mononucleosis, and then two viruses.

Transplant surgery had to be postponed twice as they worked to get Donna well enough to endure the surgery.

For Ronnie, the decision to donate was easy, but the waiting was difficult.

"When the surgery was put off twice, it was very frustrating," Ronnie admitted. "I had prepared myself mentally, then it was postponed. I gained patience."

The surgery was at Vanderbilt Hospital, with Ronnie in one operating room and Donna in the adjoining room.

Ronnie remained in the hospital for a week after surgery and Donna was there for 19 days.

Ronnie had to drop out of Columbia State for a quarter, but continued his responsibilities as BSU president even during that time. He has had no difficulties since surgery except for normal recovery.

"It's been great for me," Donna stated. "So far they've been real pleased. I haven't had any rejection episodes."

Donna will have to take medication for rejection indefinitely, but the dosage will decrease until it reaches a maintenance level.

Ronnie and Donna both mentioned the dramatic effect the surgery has had on their relationship as siblings.

"It's drawn us closer," Ronnie stated. "We feel connected, bonded together somehow," Donna added.

Both mentioned the strong support of individuals, businesses, and churches.

"We've been shown a lot of love even from some people we don't know," Ron-

nie explained. "They called here: they've written cards and letters."

His BSU contacts provided spiritual support. People Ronnie had met at state-wide BSU functions asked to be kept informed. Prior to the surgery, Ronnie contacted the student department at the Tennessee Baptist Convention. They in turn contacted BSU leaders on campuses across the state. Student groups told churches. Prayer groups were formed. Letters from as far away as Colorado pledged prayer support.

Finances posed another seemingly insurmountable problem. When Donna began work, she was dropped from the family's health insurance. She got a policy of her own, but it provided only minimal coverage. Her dad estimated that the total cost will exceed \$250,000.

"Dad was talking in terms of selling everything because of the cost," Ronnie said.

Instead, people rallied to help. The bank in Belfast, where they live, set up a fund for Donna, taking contributions to help with the medical bills. Two different groups held benefit auctions. Churches of several denominations took up collections. Medicare has covered some of the expense.

Several hospitals and other medical facilities provided care for Donna. Instead of demanding payment, they told the family to pay whatever they could each month. The family continues to "pay what we can," Edwards said.

"We've been really blessed," Edwards stated. "Everybody's been real good to help us. We're going to make it."

Members of Hannah's Gap Baptist Church "just showed real concern and love and interest and supported us every way they could — spiritually and financially," Edwards said. "They told me, 'Don't worry about anything here.'"

Donna summed it all up in a sentence. "Last year in January, if it had not been for God and the prayers of a lot of Christian people, I wouldn't be living today I don't think."

But God used an extraordinary gift from Ronnie to answer those prayers.

Executive Committee approves guidelines for Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP) — Operational guidelines for Baptist Press, the news service of the Southern Baptist Convention, were adopted during the February meeting of the SBC Executive Committee.

The purpose of the news service, as stated in the guidelines, is "to report factually and fairly the news of, about, and for Southern Baptists."

The guidelines acknowledge that ownership and management of Baptist Press is vested in the Executive Committee "to provide the required freedom and responsibility necessary for the benefit of Southern Baptists."

"The news service will strive to be factual and fair, as objective as possible, staying not only in the bounds of legality but also at a high level of professional and Christian ethics," the guidelines say.

On handling of controversial news, the guidelines say that Baptist Press releases are expected to be positive and constructive, adding that "when necessary, Baptist Press also will report forthrightly and accurately the valid news produced by controversy and adverse

events."

"In its role of reporting to the Southern Baptist constituency, Baptist Press will encourage and have a right to expect Southern Baptist agencies, institutions, boards, commissions, organizations, and committees to be open and cooperative in news handling," the guidelines add.

The guidelines call for the Baptist Press central office in Nashville to strive to develop and maintain trustworthy relationships with both news sources and with the users of the news.

"To achieve its ultimate purpose, the news service must be both highly professional in its journalistic function and highly useful as one specialized means employed in the broad denominational effort to bring all persons to God through Jesus Christ," the guidelines concluded.

The set of 13 guidelines have been in preparation for more than a year, according to BP Director Wilmer C. Fields, who characterized them as a summary statement of what Baptist Press already has been doing in practice for years.

The call for guidelines for the 40-year-old organization came in September

1984, after Houston Appeals Court Judge Paul Pressler, a member of the Executive Committee, complained the news service was unfair to him in two stories concerning the alleged taping of a telephone call.

On the day Pressler attended his first Executive Committee meeting, Sept. 17, Baptist Press released a story concerning charges by a Southern seminary student that Pressler taped a telephone conversation. Pressler's response was released the next day.

Pressler's complaint the stories were unfair resulted in a three-hour hearing before the Executive Committee's Administrative and Convention Arrangements Subcommittee in February of 1985. Following the hearing, the subcommittee adopted a recommendation concluding the two stories "when taken together" give a balanced presentation of the news.

The recommendation, which said it was "untimely" and "unfortunate" the first story appeared separately, also expressed support for the BP staff for "their strong commitment to timely,

accurate, and well-balanced news reporting." It also reaffirmed "its longstanding policy of openness in its deliberations and actions" and "its support for a responsible and free press as an essential element for an informed Southern Baptist constituency."

The entire report, along with the statement that the Executive Committee staff was preparing guidelines for the operation of Baptist Press, was adopted by the entire Executive Committee almost without comment.

When the guidelines were presented for adoption at the February 1986 meeting, there was almost no discussion.

The guidelines had been discussed extensively at a meeting of the Southern Baptist Press Association in Williamsburg, Va., Feb. 12, where representatives of the 37 state Baptist newspapers took official action that they "favorably received" the guidelines.

The guidelines were discussed during a meeting of the SBC Public Relations Advisory Committee Feb. 17, and during a session of the Executive Committee's Public Relations Workgroup.

Pioneer missionary to Chile dies in Santiago

SANTIAGO, Chile — R. Cecil Moore, who made Chile his home for 44 years as a missionary and 20 as a retiree, died Feb. 21 in Santiago at the age of 92.

Moore and his wife, Mary, who died in 1980, were Southern Baptists' second missionary couple in Chile. They were appointed in 1919 and retired in 1964.

He was the founder of Baptist publications, bookstore, and radio work in Chile.

The Moores chose to retire in Chile because, "after all, that was home," said Charles Moore of Melbourne, Fla., one of

the missionaries' six children. Two daughters live in Santiago "and all their friends."

The Moores lived in Florida for a year after retirement and in Texas during 1973, but "He would find lots of excuses for having to go back," joked another daughter, Elizabeth Walz of Iowa City, Iowa.

Moore had attended Santiago's Second Baptist Church in recent years. For about 10 years after retiring, the couple worked with a small mission in the city.

Moore, a former president of Chile's Bible society, was active in the organization into his late 80s. His involvement led to a close friendship with the archbishop of Santiago, who came to the airport

when the Moores left the country to live in Texas.

Moore wrote several books in Spanish and one in English and two Bible correspondence courses. He continued writing tracts in retirement. For 17 years, at different intervals, he edited the national Baptist newspaper. He also operated a bookstore out of his home from 1920 to 1945.

He founded the Baptist Radio Hour in 1950 and fashioned a 19-station network.

During their career, the Moores saw Baptist churches increase to more than 100, 20 of which they had a hand in establishing. Today there are about 200.

His first work in Chile was opening Baptist witness in the city of Concepcion. After 14 years, he became pastor of First Baptist Church, Temuco, staying there 16 years, until entering full-time media work in 1950.

A Florida native, he was a graduate of the former Columbia College, Lake City, Fla.; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Besides Charles Moore and Elizabeth Walz, he is survived by two other daughters, Anita Moline and Ruth Moreno of Santiago and two other sons, Robert of Houston, and Mario of New York City.

Personal Perspective



By Tom Madden
TBC Executive Secretary-Treasurer

Across the street from the Executive Board Building in Brentwood, a commercial company is building a gigantic office building. We have literally watched the building come out of the ground and I have marveled at the dexterity and ability of the workmen as they have hammered and welded, riveted, layed brick, poured concrete and a beautiful building is taking shape.

As I have watched the building go up I found myself focusing on Psalm 127:1, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build in."

As His disciples, we are builders. We are not wreckers or destroyers or on-lookers. We are builders, but we are not building things that are temporal and perishable.

To erect the building across the street, they had to demolish another building. But we are dealing with hearts and lives that are eternal. Our greatest business is to lead people to accept Christ as Saviour and Lord and to make them living stones as they place themselves in the hands of Christ to be shaped and positioned in the temple of God.

There are no builders in the world dealing with materials so valuable or engaged in a task so important.

We are building for Jesus. As we build, we are glorifying Christ, exalting His name, enlarging the scope of His influence and power.

It is good to remember that it is the Lord Himself Who is doing the building and this assures success. It is Christ Himself Who is working in us and through us. To be the kind of builders our Lord wants us to be, our relationship to Christ must be such that what we do is His doing as He works in us and through us.

It is good to be reminded that as long as we rely fully on Him for results, we can never fail.

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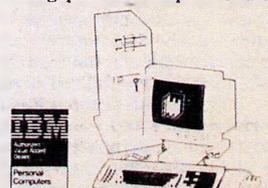
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WHEN	ASSOCIATIONS	WHERE	TIME
March 6	Crockett Haywood	First Baptist Church Alamo	6:30 p.m.
March 10	Weakley Beulah	First Baptist Church Dresden	6:30 p.m.
March 11	Madison-Chester Gibson	First Baptist Church Jackson	6:30 p.m.
March 13	Lawrence Indian Creek	Park Grove Baptist Church Lawrenceburg	6:30 p.m.
March 17	Maury Giles	First Baptist Church Columbia	6:30 p.m.
March 18	New Duck River William Carey	Southside Baptist Church Shelbyville	6:30 p.m.
March 20	Duck River Central	Trinity Baptist Church Manchester	6:30 p.m.
March 24	Union Salem	Union Baptist Association Center Sparta	6:30 p.m.
March 25	Stone New Salem	First Baptist Church Cookeville	6:30 p.m.
March 27	Alpha-Judson Truett-Stewart		
March 31	Cumberland Plateau Riverside	Central Baptist Church Crossville	6:30 p.m.

Tennessee Scene

LEADERSHIP . . .

Paul D. Sharpe began serving as minister of education at Second Baptist Church in Clinton Feb. 17. Sharpe is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He previously served as pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Dutch Valley, and as associate pastor of Smithwood Baptist Church in Knoxville. The pastor of Second Baptist Church in Jim McPherson.

Bluegrass Baptist Church, Hendersonville, recently called John Wright Bailey as minister of youth and church activities. A native of Memphis, he is a graduate of Memphis State University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. Bailey has been on staff with First Baptist Church, Memphis, and he was assistant director of the recreation/aerobic center at the Texas seminary. Robert Wooddy is pastor of the Bluegrass church.

John Daniels, a music major at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, has accepted the call of part-time minister of youth at Magna View Baptist Church in Talbott. Jerry Brittingham is pastor.

Bill Griffith, pastor of Bangham Heights Baptist Church in Cookeville for the past 12 years, has resigned.

Allen Baptist Church, Brownsville, has called W. G. Alexander as associate pastor. At one time he was pastor of the church. He also served as pastor of Shaw's Chapel Baptist Church in Brownsville. E. B. Bowen is pastor of the Allen church.

REVIVAL PRAYER REQUESTS . . .

Evangelist Phil Glisson will lead revival services at Oakville Memorial Baptist Church April 13-16. James M. Roberts is the pastor of the Memphis church.

CHURCHES . . .

Mack's Grove Baptist Church, Dresden, held commitment and praise services Feb. 2 for the new buildings that were recently completed. Over 3,100 square feet have been added to the church, including education and office space and a new fellowship hall. David Abernathy is the pastor.

On Dec. 29, Alfred E. Smith, pastor of Marbledale Baptist Church, led the Knoxville church in their 75th anniversary celebration and note-burning/dedication service. John Chance, a retired pastor who had celebrated his 90th birthday prior to the service, delivered the dedication message.

Eastland Baptist Church, Nashville, is celebrating their 75th anniversary throughout the month of March. With the theme, "A Glorious Past . . . A Shining Future, 1911-1986," special services are planned for each Sunday in the month. Special guests will include Lloyd Lawrence, pastor of Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville; Robert Cate, professor at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif; Lloyd Elder, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville; Mr. and Mrs. Hayward Highfill, former pastor and wife; and Mr. and Mrs. Talmadge Butler. The pastor of the church is J. L. Ford.

MISSION PROJECT . . .

Ridgeview Baptist Church in Chattanooga hosted an international luncheon Feb. 23. The event was part of a "Missions Month" emphasis which will conclude with the Week of Prayer for Home Missions March 2-9. The church is also sponsoring a mission trip to Michigan, where the pastor Gary Rickman, and minister of music and education, Bruce Maples, will be leading revival services near Lansing. The leaders, along with volunteers from the Ridgeview church, will be doing construction work on the church building near Lansing.

PEOPLE . . .

Highland Heights Baptist Church in Memphis recently ordained Keith Magness, Cliff Norville, and Jack McAdoo as deacons. Ray E. Fowler is the pastor.

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Dennis C. Beamer, E. Judson Leverette, and Douglas S. Pace were ordained as deacons at North Johnson City Baptist Church on Feb. 9. Mark O. Johnson is pastor of the Johnson City church.

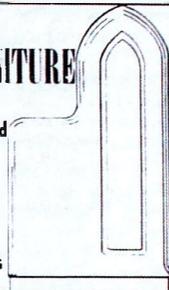
Byron Hulgan was ordained as a deacon at Lookout Valley Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Feb. 17. Joe Walker, assistant pastor of the church, preached the ordination service. Alan Johnston is the pastor.

Douglas Watterson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Knoxville, will speak during the March 21 chapel service at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

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BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for March 9

A solemn charge

By Ray Newcomb, pastor
First Baptist Church, MillingtonBasic Passage: 2 Timothy 4:1-22
Focal Passages: 2 Timothy 4:1-13, 16-17

Few passages in the Bible have so solemn and searching a tone as do these verses. The very sound of them lays a spell upon the soul which causes us to acknowledge immediately that the authority of heaven is behind them.

Timothy, as well as every man entering the ministry, must remember that he is under the constant observation of the One before Whom he shall stand at the last judgment.

What is Paul's solemn charge to ministers and Christian workers everywhere?

Paul's charge (4:1-5)

"I charge thee" was Paul's solemn warning. Paul and Timothy would be judged one day when Jesus appeared. We, too, will stand before God, Who is the Lord Jesus Christ in this reference, to be judged at His appearing.

Because of our coming judgment, we must "preach the Word!" The "Word" here refers to the whole body of revealed truth. The Word was to be proclaimed with the authority of heaven behind it. We are not to preach about the Book, but preach the Book.

The Word of God will reprove those who are in error until they are convinced they are wrong. It will rebuke courageously against evil and all error. Timothy must exhort with long-suffering and doctrine.

The Word is to be preached because people will flock to hirelings who will scratch their "itching ears" by saying what they want to hear. In the end, they reach a point where they are no longer able to discern the truth. They turn away from it and "turn aside unto fables" (v.4).

The apostle goes on to tell us how Timothy was to engage in the work of preaching the Word. He was to watch in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of his ministry. Moffatt translates it, "Discharge all your duties as a minister." The man of God who stays by the stuff and sincerely seeks the salvation of those whom God has given him to love will have no time to wander after myths.

Paul's crown

Paul is now ready to be released from the bondage of the earth. The time of his

departure is at hand. The picture is that of a great ship taking leave of the harbor to move out into its native habitat, where are found the good, free winds of God. Paul gives us three views as he approaches his departure.

Paul took a backward look. As a fighter he said, "I have been in the arena for God, fighting desperately, and I have done my best!"

As a runner he said, "I have finished my course!" The course for the apostle's race was very carefully marked out, as Acts 9:15-16 assures us, and what a rough and difficult course it was. Paul had grit as well as grace and kept going right to the end. As a believer he said, "I have kept the faith" — that is, the holy deposit of truth that was committed to my charge. Paul's confidence and trust in God had not wavered.

As he looked upward, Paul was now ready to be poured out as a drink offering, and the time of his departure had arrived (v.6). He was ready to be unloosed and depart to a better life.

Looking forward, the life to come was before Paul (v.8). Death does not end all, for there is a glorious "henceforth." The return of Christ was constant inspiration for the Apostle Paul. This hope would likewise fill our hearts and inspire our service. The Righteous Judge would be waiting for Paul to give him his reward, a crown of righteousness. Thank God, the reward is for everyone who loves His appearing.

Paul's concern (4:9-16)

Paul had three needs which Timothy could be of help.

First of all, Paul needed Timothy's companionship. "Do your best to come to me soon." Demas, Crescens, and Titus had all gone away. Luke was with Paul but he still desired Timothy to come and bring Mark with him. Paul and Mark had been reconciled since their parting in Acts 14:36-41. Mark was now useful for ministering.

The second need was his cloak he had left at Troas. It was getting cold in Rome.

The third need was his books. Paul wanted his books, for he was a student to the very end and wished to feed his mind during the lonely hours. Especially did he desire the parchments (v.13).

Paul warned Timothy of Alexander, the coppersmith, who did him much evil. God would reward him for his evil works.

God would see Paul through until the end. He encouraged Timothy to continue in faith to God regardless of the suffering and trials he would face. God will strengthen and see us through, for His glory.

Paul's conclusion (4:17-22)

During all the trials and hardships, Paul's main concern was the preaching of the Word that the Gentiles might be saved. It should be our main concern to preach the Word to our generation.

Paul names many of his close companions in closing his letter. "Grace be with you" (v.22) was his personal farewell, used at the end of his letters as a "trademark." "Grace" was the key word throughout his ministry. May it be the key word in our lives today.

Our challenge from this lesson is to be faithful so that (if the Lord does not return soon) future generations may hear the gospel and have the opportunity to be saved.



Newcomb

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for March 9

A hope worth suffering for

By Al Shackelford, editor
Baptist and Reflector, BrentwoodBasic Passage: 1 Peter 2:11 to 5:14
Focal Passages: 1 Peter 3:13-17; 4:12-19

Peter's first letter to the scattered believers in Asia Minor contains three main divisions. Last week's lesson dealt with the first section: the blessings of God's redeemed people through a living, confident hope. This lesson focuses on the two other main divisions.

The second division of 1 Peter could be described as the responsibilities of a Christian in the world (2:11-4:11). It begins with some practical, ethical instructions on relationships: to others (2:11-12); to governments and their officials (2:13-17); to earthly masters (2:18-20); to Christ who suffered (2:21-25); and to family members (3:1-7). These relationships are summarized by recounting several Christian virtues: unity of spirit, compassion for others, and love for believers (3:8-12).

Response to suffering (3:13-17)

Suffering and persecution for our faith are rarely considered a part of a Christian's life in America today. Too often we hear pulpit pleas to "come to Jesus and all your problems will be solved."

Those TV religious talk-show guests declare that, if you are really committed to Christ, you will have financial and worldly success.

Such was not the experiences of Christians in the New Testament.

Peter notes that there is certainly a possibility of persecution for those who are zealous for good or for those who suffer for righteousness sake (vv.13-14). He assures these believers that if they work for what is good and right, they either will not be mistreated or such treatment will be of little consequence.

Peter quickly adds that such persecution will bring blessings to the believer. No doubt he remembered Jesus' promise, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me" (Matthew 5:10-11).

Perhaps we are not required to suffer very often for our Christian beliefs and actions, but when we are, God promises to bless us. Such suffering is a possibility — not a certainty. We should not seek persecution, but if it comes, we can face it with God's promised blessings.

Our protection from and defense for persecution is to sanctify (reverence) Christ as Lord and to be ready to defend rather than deny our faith (v.15). Peter urges the persecuted to give an account for their living hope — not with hostility or condemnation, but with gentleness and reverence.

In verse 16, Peter admonishes believers to live a Christian life with a "good conscience." This way, anyone who slanders or speaks evil of you will have to be ashamed for their charges.

If God does will or permit you to be slandered, Peter observes that it is much better for you to be so criticized for doing "right" instead of for doing "wrong" (v.17).

On those rare occasions when we face criticism, it is proper for us to ask ourselves and God if these attacks have come because we are seeking God's righteousness, rather than our goals and ambitions.

Peter goes on to remind us that our example is Jesus Christ who suffered and died for the sins of everyone (the just and

the unjust), "in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit" (v.18). Peter further cites Christ's mission, our response, and the exalted position of Christ (vv.19-22).

This division on a Christian's responsibilities is concluded by Peter with admonitions to holy living (4:1-6) and to sober living (4:7-11).

Attitude toward suffering (4:12-19)

Peter begins this third division of his epistle with the term of endearment, "beloved." As one who had experienced the fiery trials of testing — not always successfully — Peter identified with what these believers faced.

Expectation: Peter advises the believers not to be surprised when fiery trials come to test them (v.12). Such testing is not strange or unexpected. No believer should claim that he has been singled out; it will happen to others.

In America where there is little or no physical persecution for a Christian, our trials are more subtle — taking the form of mental, psychological, and spiritual testing. What do we do with the grace, knowledge, and resources which God has showered on us?

When we compare what these first century believers did with what they had and what we are doing with what we have, it would appear that we are failing — or at least ignoring — our test.

Rejoicing: Rather than fearing these expected trials, Peter tells the believer to rejoice — as "partakers of Christ's suffering." Paul described this as the "fellowship of His suffering" (Philippians 3:10).

Peter gives two reasons for our rejoicing: (1) Christ's glory in our victory over persecution, and (2) God will give us His Spirit and His glory (vv.13-14).

He reminds us as he had earlier (3:16-17) that this kind of suffering must be because of our holy living, rather than our sins (v.15). Thus, we can face life and its difficulties unashamed (v.16).

Justification: A day of judgment is coming. Peter asks, "What hope do those have who do not obey the gospel of God?" (vv.17-18). The righteous have a living hope of salvation; the godless sinner does not.

The believers' living, confident hope is the assurance of God's grace in this life and throughout all eternity. To Peter, this kind of hope was truly worth suffering for.

Commitment: "Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will (permission) of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right" (v.19).

Gossett accepts post with Fairview church

Al P. Gossett began serving as pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Paris on Jan. 27.

The Memphis native attended the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. He also graduated from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif.

Previous pastorates include Lincoln Park Baptist Church, San Francisco, Calif.; Munford Baptist Church, Munford; Salem Baptist Church, Trenton; and Highland Park Baptist Church, Jackson.

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LIFE AND WORK SERIES
Lesson for March 9

Humility in service

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

Basic Passage: Matthew 18:1-14
Focal Passages: Matthew 18:1-5, 10-14

Seeking fame, honor, and recognition was a problem 2,000 years ago just as it is today. Attitude, motive, and ambition can be difficult words with which to deal. The disciples definitely tripped over them.

After almost three years of being with Jesus, seeing the water turned to wine, hearing the Beatitudes, observing miracles, and even being present at the Last Supper, the disciples still were hung up with "me, myself, and I." If they can fall victim to that, you and I had better not write it off just because we are teachers, deacons, staff members, or have been Christians "forever."

Even if we avoid using negative terms like "preppies," "rednecks," and "wetbacks," if we have judged ourselves to be superior to other persons or groups, it will show. Perhaps it shows in the fact that there are certain "types" of people we will not go visit because they do not seem to fit our church. Even in our churches there are people we write off or at least categorize as being more or less important. We draw from the same group for church committees, and let some opinions override others. Leadership should not mean special privilege but special responsibility to be rendered before God.

The disciples felt that after all this time, surely Jesus had placed them in an order of importance based on ability. They were wrong! He looked past them to a child. A child such as the one the disciples had discouraged earlier from "bothering" Jesus because "He was too busy."

Jesus is not impressed by who we know, what we know, who we are, what we look like, or how we dress if it is

somehow used by us to draw attention to ourselves.

A child is dependent and trusting. The word "converted" carries the connotation of "turning around" and "being strengthened from the foundation up." This type of humility is how God measures greatness.

The disciples were thinking like a lot of their Jewish neighbors: the Messiah will come and set up His kingdom. He will throw out the Romans and rule with power and might. They mistakenly thought in terms of a realm, a place, a geographical area instead of a reign — a reign that is in people's hearts and lives. There is a time and place for the earthly realm to be under His rule, but until His return, it is His reign in our lives that is referred to as the "kingdom."

Remember, grace is God giving us what we do not deserve. Mercy is God not giving us what we do deserve. With that being the case, how should we interact with others? Where is the kindness and concern for others (not based on what we think they should have coming or what we can get out of it) that is based on the grace and mercy God has shown us.

Jesus treated the disciples' arrogance and self-importance with mercy, grace, and loving discipline. They deserved harsh judgment. He showed them the truth and made it possible for them to change. In a way, they were trying to use Jesus as a means to greatness. Each wanted to be the right hand man of the Messiah Who was going to rule the world.

We should be careful not to trip over our attitudes or our motives. We can do some really great things for people in order to receive some great praise, honor, money, or position. But God sees through that like we see through glass. If we have the right motives, we really will not care who gets the credit or if anyone



Bartlett

gets the credit for a job well done. All we would seek is for the job to be well done (although everyone needs a pat on the back sometimes). Jealousy, envy, pettiness, and some criticisms can pinpoint where our motives rest.

That brings us to ambition. Ambition is normal. It is a part of being a person. But it can be perverted and misdirected.

The disciples were ambitious for power and authority. Lucifer in Isaiah 14, the rich fool in Luke 12, Nebuchadnezzar in the Book of Daniel, King Saul, just to name a few, had perverted ambitions.

Ambition must be directed and channeled. The only way to do that is with God's direct help. The key, according to Matthew 5:6, is righteousness. As D. Stuart Briscoe says in his book, *Tough Truths for Today's Living*, "righteousness should be possessed... practiced... promoted."

Be ambitious in life for the right things!

If it is important to God it should be important to us! In the latter part of this passage, Jesus talks of some insignificant items: one child, one sheep out of many, things that get overlooked in the hustle and bustle of life. The emphasis here is on God and His attitude toward what the world deems irrelevant. The world writes people off. God seeks to restore them.

If we go against the world, it can be uncomfortable, but ultimately what is

more important, what God thinks or what the world thinks? It is an individual decision we make every day. It is sad, but we fall victim so easily to the subtle anesthesia of today's world and become unknowing and unfeeling concerning the needs around us. Jesus does not write people off and neither should we.

The Shepherd went after the one sheep, though 99 were safe. If Jesus cared that not one should perish maybe you and I should too.

Our attitudes, motives, and ambitions are showing, but what are they showing?

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Deadline for Application — March 19, 1986

'Pogo' Smith believes 'life is what counts'

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE (BP) — You might expect someone with a nickname like Pogo to come jumping out at you with a fire-and-brimstone handshake.

But not Frank Hart Smith. Smith skips the handshake and demurely ushers visitors into his office, offering a choice of two antiquated rockers, both with obvious sentimental value.

A 24-year veteran of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church recreation department, Smith relaxes, leans back, and props his feet on his memorabilia-filled desk. At 5 feet 4 inches, that is no easy task.

Smith's dimly-lit office literally is a montage of old photographs, drawings, cartoons, and slogans.

But the character which stands out most is Smith's nick-namesake, Pogo, a cartoon personality Smith admires because of his philosophies like, "That's enough to drive a man to think," or "We have met our enemy, and he is us."

"Pogo has a pretty good philosophy of life," Smith acknowledges.

But Pogo, the cartoon character, is not the only one with an admirable philosophy on life. Pogo, the man, also views the world with a rare maturity.

"I don't take anything for granted. Every experience is precious," Smith says. "Just the idea of getting up in the morning is exciting to me."

If Smith sounds like a man who has tasted death, that's because he has.

Eleven years ago, Smith had a newly-discovered intestinal bypass operation, designed to help trim off some of his excess weight. Smith weighed 280 pounds, and although his doctors told him he was not in bad health, they feared he was approaching that state.

The operation achieved its purpose, and Smith is now a slender 150 pounds. But six years after the operation, he experienced kidney failure. Beginning last August, he started dialysis treatment three hours a day, three days a week.

Doctors are unsure if the operation caused his kidneys to fail, Smith says. But several patients who had the intestinal bypass operation later developed kidney failure.

Smith, however, spends no time lamenting over his predicament. "The operation was new, and doctors didn't know about the side effects," he says. "I'm just happy I can go through dialysis and be good as new."

"Twenty years ago we didn't even have dialysis machines. Where would I be now?" he shrugs.

Smith, a sponsor of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at Vanderbilt University, says he considers the nine hours a week he spends on dialysis "a gift of time."

On Tuesday and Thursday afternoons while on dialysis, he spends his time working for the board "because they've been so good to me." On Saturday mornings, he studies his Sunday School lesson.

"I teach college freshmen at my church (Woodmont Baptist Church in Nashville), so the first thing I do on Saturdays is my Sunday School lesson.

"I know I wait kind of late, but . . ." his voice trails.

When Smith is not writing speeches, working for the board, or studying his Sunday morning lesson, he sneaks in a mystery novel or two.

Because Smith took his kidney failure



ENJOYING LIFE — Donning a church recreation department jacket, Frank Hart Smith relaxes with a cup of coffee in his memento-filled office.

so matter-of-factly, his doctors have asked him several times to go to the hospital and talk to new patients with the same problem.

"One man was just so active, and he knew his life was over. He was so discouraged. But I told him how I travel all the time, and all of a sudden, he changed," Smith relates.

He explains he can hook up to a dialysis machine wherever he travels just by making advance appointments with the local center.

Smith says he believes one should learn from a crippling illness.

"Material things are just not important. Life and living is all that counts."



CLARKSVILLE CONGREGATION WATCHES ON — Members of First Baptist Church, Clarksville, gather as ground is broken for their \$3-million educational building and sanctuary on Jan. 19. John Laida is pastor of the church.

BOOK REVIEW

By Michael Davis

Singles want to serve

Single Adults: Resource and Recipients • For Revival by Dan R. Crawford; Broadman, 182 pages.

The number of contributing authors may give some readers the first impression that they are going to hear many voices saying the same thing. However, each of the 37 writers speaks from an experience, discipline, or position related to single adult ministry and evangelism that is uniquely their own.

Although each writer's material stands separate and in its own right, the authors share a common belief among them. In the introduction, Dan Crawford writes about this commonality. "Perhaps the greatest commonality is the belief that single adults will be reached best when single adults are used in the reaching. The focus of E-1 evangelism, which 'evangelizes people in one's own language and culture' must be narrowed

even more. Within language and culture, the best evangelism is done among people with common life situations."

This volume is divided into five parts: Role of Single Adults, Groupings of Single Adults, Locations of Single Adults, Avenues to Single Adults for Revival, and Challenge for Revival Among Single Adults. The first part will be especially helpful to readers in developing their own theology for the involvement of single adults in outreach and evangelism. This material discusses single adults in the Bible, their role in revival movements of the 18th and 19th centuries, and the conditions that are shaping their lives today.

The remaining four parts provide an awareness of who single adults are, where they live, how they can be reached with the good news of Christ, and their place in reaching others. F. Maurine Freeze, business administrator, Arkansas Digestive Disease Clinic, Little Rock, Ark., is a single adult who writes: "With the church's acceptance of singleness as a valid lifestyle comes an awareness of the vast potential single adults have for evangelistic purposes in Southern Baptist churches."

This book has much to offer its readers. Single adults will find encouragement as they see their abilities being affirmed. Church leaders are given a fine resource for evaluating the place of single adults in the mission of the church.

Leo Crismon dies

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Leo T. Crismon, known to three generations of students as librarian at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., died in his sleep Feb. 19 in his Louisville home.

Crismon, who was only four days from his 80th birthday, was librarian at Southern seminary from 1951 to 1971. He began working as assistant librarian for the seminary in 1937.

A native of Iberia, Mo., Crismon was a graduate of William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.; Southern seminary; and Columbia University, New York, N.Y.

Early in his career, Crismon was a pastor in Missouri and in Indiana.

Crismon was a former member of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, former assistant secretary of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, and was church clerk of Louisville's Crescent Hill Baptist Church for more than 30 years.

Youth Evangelism Conference

Vanderbilt Memorial Gymnasium, Nashville March 7-8

(All times listed are Central Standard Time)

Because the Fire Marshal has limited the number of people who can enter the gymnasium and the anticipated high attendance, it is **IMPERATIVE** that those attending follow this schedule for sessions and the Personal Witnessing Conferences.

Friday Afternoon

FOR WEST and MIDDLE TENNESSEE

- 4:15 Pre-session music
- 4:30 Welcome; announcements
- 4:35 Scripture, prayer by Cherie Carson
- 4:40 Let's sing; "Gabriel" (Robin Lyle, Robert Noland, Jeff Walter)
- 4:50 Testimony by Brent Johnson
- 5:00 Special music by "Proclamation," Union University
- 5:10 Prayer Time
- 5:15 Let's sing; "Gabriel"
- 5:25 Message by Knox Talbert
- 6:00 Benediction by Tom Madden

Friday Night

FOR EAST TENNESSEE

- 7:45 Pre-session music
- 8:00 Welcome; announcements
- 8:05 Scripture, prayer by Cherie Carson
- 8:10 Let's sing; "Gabriel" (Robin Lyle, Robert Noland, Jeff Walter)
- 8:20 Testimony by Brent Johnson
- 8:30 Special music by "Proclamation," Union University
- 8:40 Prayer Time
- 8:45 Let's sing; "Gabriel"

- 8:55 Message by Knox Talbert
- 9:00 Benediction by Tom Madden

Saturday Morning

FOR WEST and MIDDLE TENNESSEE (East Tennessee will be attending Personal Witnessing Conferences)

- 9:15 Prelude, All-State Youth Choir, directed by Dick Ham
- 9:30 Welcome; announcements
- 9:35 Scripture, prayer by Tim Spencer
- 9:40 Let's sing; "Gabriel"
- 9:50 Testimonies by Angela Kelley and Mike Thornton
- 10:00 All-State Youth Choir
- 10:10 Let's sing; "Gabriel"
- 10:20 Solo by Rick Swett
- 10:25 Message by David Ring
- 10:55 Commitment
- 11:00 Benediction by Carroll Owen

Saturday Afternoon

FOR EAST TENNESSEE (West, Middle Tennessee will be attending Personal Witnessing Conferences)

- 1:15 Prelude, All-State Youth Choir, directed by Dick Ham
- 1:30 Welcome; announcements
- 1:35 Scripture, prayer by Tim Spencer
- 1:40 Let's sing; "Gabriel"
- 1:50 Testimonies by Angela Kelley and Mike Thornton
- 2:00 All-State Youth Choir
- 2:10 Let's sing; "Gabriel"
- 2:20 Solo by Rick Swett
- 2:25 Message by David Ring
- 2:55 Commitment
- 3:00 Benediction by Carroll Owen