

Baptist and Reflector

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News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention

BWA affiliate churches add 1-million members

WASHINGTON — Churches of Baptist World Alliance member unions and conventions worldwide have reported a gain of nearly 1-million members over the past year.

The alliance's 134-member bodies in seven world geographical regions show a total of 33,190,977 baptized members in 128,289 local congregations. This is 984,974 members, or 3 percent, more than the 32,206,003 reported in 1985.

The new figures were compiled by the alliance's Division of Study and Research from statistical tables submitted by BWA affiliates. Statistics from several countries where Baptists are known to experience rapid growth did not arrive at the new BWA office by the report closing date of June 1. The addition of new figures for such countries would put the total increase at well over 1-million.

The tables also reveal an increase of

2,481 more churches among alliance affiliates.

For the first time in recent history, every region showed a membership increase rather than some having a decline. All but one area — the Middle East — reported more churches.

Baptist World Alliance General Secretary-Treasurer Gerhard Claas said, "In a time when there are so many reports of decline, I am glad to see the number of Baptists increase, not just within family circles but through real mission outreach calling others to Christ and His church."

North America is the region with the greatest numerical increase. The 691,441 more church members make a grand total of 27,840,016 baptized believers in 90,061 congregations. There also were 300 more local churches than previously.

North America figures are from Canada, Mexico, and 11 different Baptist bodies in the United States.

South America, which had 4,189 congregations last year, now reports 5,121 for a 22 percent rise, the largest number of new churches in any region. South America also had the second largest membership increase, 127,414, to bring the total of church members in 12 conventions (11 countries) to 807,159.

Europe, where Baptists had slight decreases overall recently, made a gain of 229 members this year, for a total of 1,108,690.

Baptists in the Middle East maintained the 29 churches previously reported but have 138 more members in three conventions (Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon) for a total of 1,700.

Cotey chairs committee to seek HMB executive

ATLANTA (BP) — A seven-member search committee, headed by Tennessee Eugene Cotey, has been appointed to recommend a new president for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board to succeed William G. Tanner who has become executive director-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

Cotey, pastor of First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, is chairman of the search committee.

Committee members were appointed by the five elected officers of the 85-member board in accordance with the agency's bylaws.

Travis Wiginton, pastor of Bethel Baptist Church in Norman, Okla., and chairman of the board, announced the selection of the search committee in a letter to all members of the board the week after the Southern Baptist Convention in mid-June.

In the same letter, Wiginton also announced appointment of an eight-member "site development committee" to study and recommend improvements in the board's property in midtown Atlanta.

In an interview, Wiginton said the five officers sought to appoint members of the search committee to give a balance between men and women, pastors and lay members, new and older members.

"The committee was not appointed on the basis of theology or politics in the denomination," Wiginton said. He added there was no attempt to "balance" political points of view on the committee.

Wiginton said he and the officers had received 35 suggestions of persons to serve on the committee, yet the bylaws stipulated the committee could not be more than seven members.

Cotey urged all Southern Baptists to pray for the committee, and to send any recommendations they want the committee to consider to him in writing in care of First Baptist Church, 200 East Main, Murfreesboro, TN 37130.

The committee will hold its first meeting in Atlanta on July 8 to begin drawing up a profile of the qualifications they will look for in a president and reviewing resumes, Wiginton said. Cotey and Wiginton asked recommendations be

submitted in writing before that date.

Other members named to the search committee are J. Don Aderhold, pastor of Columbia Drive Baptist Church, Decatur, Ga.; Lawanna McIver, television hostess on the ACTS network and member of Wilshire Baptist Church, Dallas, where her husband is pastor, Troy L. Morrison, director of church-minister relations for the Alabama Baptist State Convention, Montgomery; Lula D. Walker, Woman's Missionary Union director and adult Sunday School teacher for First Baptist Church, Beaverton, Ore.; Frank S. Wells, pastor of Briarcliff Baptist Church, Atlanta, and former missionary to Indonesia and director of the SBC Foreign Mission Board's missionary orientation; and M. A. Winchester, medical doctor and member of First Baptist Church, Stearns, Ky.

As chairman of the board, Wiginton will be an ex officio member of both the search committee and the site development committee.

Appointed to the site development committee were John P. Faris of Greenville, S.C., chairman; Carolyn Byrd of Charlotte, N.C.; R. Herschel Chevallier of Knoxville; Clifford E. Hogue of Midland, Texas; Ronnie H. Yarber of Mesquite, Texas; Clark G. Hutchinson of Marietta, Ga.; Helen S. Landers of Jonesboro, Ga.; D. F. Norman of Stone Mountain, Ga.; and Marvin L. Prude of Birmingham, Ala.

U.S. Postal Rate Commission recommends ending subsidy

WASHINGTON (BP) — Following an extensive study, the U.S. Postal Rate Commission has recommended that Congress eliminate its current revenue foregone appropriation to subsidize postal rates for non-profit mailers.

In a report released June 18 and summarized during a joint congressional hearing, the commission also recommended the creation of separate subclasses for mail currently qualifying for preferred rates.

Postal rates for non-profit mailers — including state Baptist newspapers and some church newsletters — have been on a steady increase since 1970. At that time, Congress initiated a 16-step plan to phase out the federal subsidy providing reduced mailing rates for non-profit publications. Although step 15 of the plan was not scheduled to take effect until this summer, decreases in congressional appropriations pushed non-profit mailers beyond step 16 in early 1986.

The Postal Rate Commission was charged by the Consolidated Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1985 with studying

possible reduction or recalculation of the revenue foregone appropriation, as well as analyzing who uses and benefits from the special rates.

During the congressional hearing, Janet Steiger, Postal Rate Commission chairman, testified that the commission's report "recommends a way of eliminating the revenue foregone appropriation entirely — except for the small amount needed for free mail for

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May CP gifts top \$11.5-million

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists played "catch-up ball" in May with their Cooperative Program unified budget, passing along more than \$11.5-million in undesignated receipts.

May's Cooperative Program total of \$11,501,228 was up \$1,249,750 over the same period last year, for an increase of 12.19 percent.

After the first eight months of the current fiscal year, Cooperative Program receipts total \$84,236,504, an increase of 7.8 percent over receipts of \$78,144,259 through May of 1985.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' unified giving plan that supports 19 agencies and institutions which conduct mission, education, and ministry activities worldwide. The Cooperative Program fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30.

May was the second-best Cooperative Program month in history, trailing January of this year, when receipts almost reached \$12.8-million.



FREEDOM — The Venezuelan child with Missionary Stan Parris looks as interested as Parris in what the pastor is saying. Venezuela, predominantly a Catholic nation, has a law establishing religious freedom. Photo by Joanna Pinneo.

Congress on leadership focuses on tomorrow

GATLINBURG (BP) — Leaders from various walks of life have agreed that tomorrow's leaders must have vision, imagination, communication skills, and competence and that Southern Baptist educational institutions have an important role in developing those leaders.

About 800 educational, religious, and secular leaders, gathered in Gatlinburg for the National Congress on Leadership in the 21st Century, heard the topic of leadership from a variety of perspectives. The congress was sponsored by the Southern Baptist Education Commission and the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools.

R. Kirby Godsey, president of Mercer University in Macon, Ga., and chairman of the steering committee for the congress, said problems facing Baptist higher education are the result of "very basic and strong fears."

The fear of freedom has led many to abhor free inquiry which "lies at the very soul and essence of an educational endeavor. Take away free inquiry and we have made our institutions into ideological factories, propagandizing, indoctrinating, and seeking to protect our students from the perils of searching for the truth," Godsey said.

He insisted free and open inquiry must not be crippled in Baptist schools, and educators and students should not be afraid to think, because the mind is a gift from God.

In order to meet the challenges which lie ahead, Godsey called for the development of trained leaders: "We see clearly that it is far easier to attain authority, even power, than to become a leader. Leadership requires imagination. Call it vision or intuition. Unless our activities are punctuated with a vision of where we are going, we very quickly begin to go nowhere."

He urged Baptist educators to "celebrate the contributions of Baptist higher education" while also being willing to "confess our failures in the same arena."

If education is ever excluded from the



MADDEN HONORED — Tom Madden (right), executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention receives a plaque for outstanding service to the Southern Baptist Education Commission by Executive Director Arthur L. Walker Jr. during the agency's annual meeting in Gatlinburg. Madden served as secretary of the commission for 11 years.

mission of the church, the church will lose its sense of heritage and destiny, he added.

Warren Bennis, a professor at the University of Southern California and co-author of *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge*, said successful leaders envision the future and communicate what they see.

Bennis said the subject of leadership is "remarkably complex, illusive, even mysterious." With more than 350 definitions, leadership is the "most studied and least understood subject in schools of management," he added.

The management expert, who spent five years studying 90 top American corporate, government, and organizational leaders, related two themes present in every leader he studied.

"The first thing that really stood out was their management of attention through vision. When they talked about their organizational vision — their goals — they made me interested. They had the awesome capacity to create a vision which would take you to a different place," Bennis said.

Leaders also must be effective in "the management of meaning through communication," he related. "In order to get commitment, a vision has to be communicated. The leader is the person who can cut through the dense plethora of information and tell people the meaning."

According to Cal Turner, president and chief executive officer of Dollar General Corporation in Scottsville, Ky., a good leader is one who spends a lifetime "constantly parrowing the gap between who you know God wants you to be and who you really are. And you can only do that with God's help."

Turner said good leadership requires the "highest calling." Many people, including Christian educators and pastors, are good at what they do, "but they are not leaders."

A major problem in America today is "neglect of good leadership, not ignorance of it. We know how to do it. The problem is that we're only giving lip service to it," he maintained.

An aerospace industry executive agreed Baptist schools must provide value-centered education for the training of tomorrow's industrial leaders.

Lois Wenger, senior staff member to the vice-president for operations at Marietta Aerospace Industries in Orlando, Fla., and recording secretary for the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, said Christians hold the key to the realization of a new kind of leadership for American industry. "God is literally invading the corporate structure of America" with Christian leaders, she said.

Wenger profiled the effective Christian leader of the 21st century as a person of unquestioned integrity, people-oriented, creative, committed to excellence, an expert communicator, a team leader and a team builder, one who exercises leadership through consensus, and a person with global vision.

She urged Baptist schools to "continue reinforcing these principles of leadership in the hearts and minds" of young people who will become tomorrow's industrial leaders.

James L. Sullivan, retired president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, noted the "Bible doesn't say much about leadership per se, but it has a lot to say about servanthood and service."

Good leaders are good learners, he emphasized. Sullivan quoted his mother's advice that "anybody in the world knows something you don't and is your potential teacher."

Unless leaders "recognize that people are the greatest resource we have," he said, "then we have failed before we've even begun."

Sullivan said good leaders will be persons of integrity and high moral character who know how to "love people regardless of background."

Hal Wingo, assistant managing editor of *People* magazine in New York, urged educators to look to the future with confidence.

Faced with the mind-boggling challenges of the 21st century, Christians can either "wither into uselessness" or embrace the future with the confidence that "God is always out there ahead of us."

Wingo said a required characteristic for Christian leaders in the future will be the "ability to suspend disbelief within the framework of faith." The Christian must be open not only to new advances in technology, science, and other fields but also to new possibilities for God's work in the world, he said.

He added it will be increasingly important as civilization enters the next century that Christian leaders "be willing to see the hand of God in whatever is to be." He cautioned that such a viewpoint does not mean blindly accepting evil or tragedy as God's intention. Rather, it entails the willingness to be surprised by the greatness of God.

The future, with its capacity to turn today's fantasy into tomorrow's reality, may be awesome, Wingo said, but "isn't the mind of God greater than Steven Spielberg's?"

Wingo said Christian leaders can face the future with a certain faith: "Our task is to dare the 21st century to show us its stuff. And we will show it a people whose God is not through with this world yet."

Women in Ministry group hears challenge to be empty vessels

ATLANTA (BP) — Effective Christian ministry begins only when a person realizes he or she has nothing to say but must be an empty vessel to speak the words of God, Baptist Chaplain Janet Fuller Carruthers told 500 persons attending the June 8 morning worship service sponsored by Southern Baptist Women in Ministry in Atlanta.

"We dare not preach ourselves," said Carruthers, a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board appointee serving as chaplain and director of campus ministries at Yale University, New Haven, Conn. "We have nothing of our own to say, but we will gladly sing the song God has given us."

"We are empty vessels, earthen and common," she continued. "We have no corner on the truth. Christ does not belong to us. God is not a man or a woman. God is not even a Southern Baptist."

In an earlier session, an unemployed woman minister encouraged other Baptist women in ministry not to lose heart and quit, but to preach Christ despite opposition and criticism.

Clista Whitehurst Adkins of Augusta, Ga., former professor of Old Testament at Belmont College, Nashville, compared women Baptist ministers to the

Apostle Paul. Many Southern Baptist women in ministry are discouraged because, like the Apostle Paul, they are criticized, maligned, and rejected, she said.

Adkins urged Baptist women to allow God to change their pain, suffering, and discouragement into a positive, redeeming purpose and quietly to continue serving and preaching.

During another major address, a former vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Christine Gregory of Danville, Va., commended the group for their quiet, persistent efforts to be women ministers.

"You have not been raucous, crude, or rude, but you've made gains by saying 'This is God's will for my life,'" said Gregory, currently a vice-president of the Baptist World Alliance and a former president of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

During a business session, Southern Baptist Women in Ministry adopted its first Constitution as an organization and heard a report that the organization has incorporated and sought recognition as a tax-exempt, not-for-profit charitable organization.

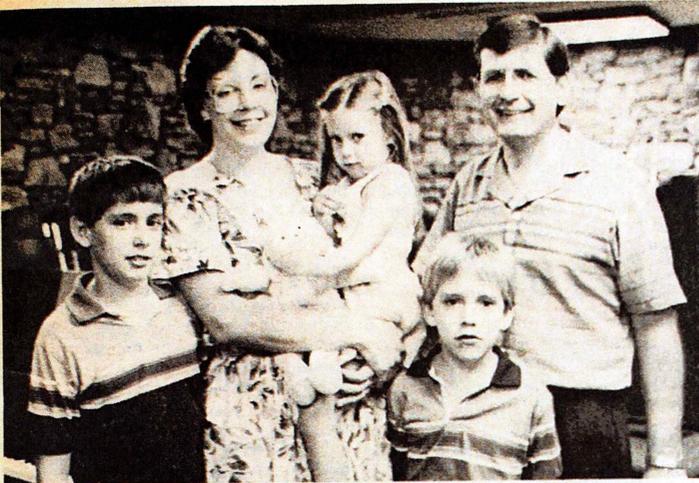
Kelly replaces Kennedy at Arkansas state paper

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — Betty J. Kennedy, managing editor of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, news journal of Arkansas Baptists, has resigned, and the newsmagazine's board of directors has named staff writer Mark Kelly to succeed her.

Kennedy was managing editor for 16 years. A native of Hot Springs, Ark., she is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark. She will move to Dallas where her husband, Bill, is director of patient accounts for Methodist Hospital.

Kelly joined the newsmagazine staff as an intern in 1983. A year later he was added to the permanent staff.

He is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Okla., and attended the University of Chicago and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.



FURLOUGHING FAMILY — Al and Karen Hodges and their children visited the TBC staff while on furlough from their assignment as missionaries in Burkina Faso.

Al Hodges reports on work, changes in Burkina Faso

By Connie Davis

BRENTWOOD — Missionary Al Hodges, who returned home on furlough June 14 after serving in Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta), reported that he had a good two years despite the many changes in the country since the August 1984 revolution.

Al Hodges spoke during chapel service recently at the Executive Board Building of the Tennessee Baptist Convention where he served as missionary-in-residence for the Cooperative Program and stewardship promotion department in 1983-84 between terms of service in Burkina Faso. He and his wife, Karen, and their three children have served in the West African country since 1978.

Since the "Communist-type revolution" when its name was changed, Burkina Faso has endured many coups d'etat, explained Hodges. The government leaders have retained most of the Constitution, but eliminated the guarantee for religious freedom, and led the country to become "very nationalistic," he added.

He described seeing youth in school yards training to become "Young Pioneers," a military organization that promotes atheism.

Moselee Atwood dies in Arkansas

Moselee Atwood, the father of Director of Missions Raymond Atwood in Loudon County Baptist Association, died recently.

The funeral was held in Paragould, Ark., on June 21 at Mitchell Funeral Home. Atwood was a member of New Friendship Baptist Church in Paragould.

Kenneth D. Smith accepts Ridgely church pastorate

First Baptist Church, Ridgely, recently called Kenneth D. Smith as pastor.

A native of McMoresville, Smith is a graduate of Union University in Jackson, and Southwestern Baptist Theological seminary in Fort Worth Texas.

He is presently serving as pastor of First Baptist Church, West Melbourne, Fla.

John Adams has been interim pastor of the Ridgely church.

Explaining his struggle to start churches in the capital city of Ouagadougou, Hodges estimated the population to be at least 600,000 and over 1-million if the outlying villages are included.

Hodges returned to Burkina Faso two years ago with plans to open new work in a remote area. When he returned, though, the six churches he previously worked with in Ouagadougou had formed an association, and the pastors asked him to remain in the city. The result has been an increase from six to 20 churches and preaching points in the city. He dreams of seeing over 100 churches in Ouagadougou.

He also enthusiastically described receiving an "amazing" answer to prayer. The mission received permission to import and distribute 20,000 French-language Bibles to the military. Even though the government decided against allowing the distribution on military facilities, the ban has not discouraged Hodges, who explained that the churches are inviting the soldiers to worship services where they can pick up their free Bibles.

He explained that the Bibles which were the French version of the Good News for Modern Man translation, included the plan of salvation and instructions for forming Bible study groups.

Hodges likened his work to the Apostle Paul's because Paul received many calls from other areas, like Macedonia, to come and preach the gospel. Hodges described the many persons who travel hundreds of miles by foot, on bicycles, and motorcycles asking him to come and preach in their area.

One Muslim leader walked 200 miles to visit him every week for 10 weeks, asking him to preach in his village. When Hodges preached there, about 30 persons were saved.

Referring to the five-year hunger and relief project in Burkina Faso in which 452 Tennessee volunteers participated from 1980-85, Hodges reported that churches have been started in up to a 70-mile radius of the Sanwabo project.

Hodges thanked Tennesseans for their prayers for rain which were answered last year. He predicted the rainy season would also be good this year, but said now the country is facing a problem with grasshoppers that may destroy crops, causing hunger again.

The Hodges will return to Burkina Faso in three months.

SBC Executive Committee re-elects David Maddox

ATLANTA — David Maddox, a layman from Fullerton, Calif., was re-elected as chairman of the 70-member Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention at meetings during the recent convention in Atlanta.

Harmon Born, an Atlanta automobile dealer, was re-elected vice-chairman 33-21 over Jimmy Jackson, a Huntsville, Ala., pastor. Born is considered a moderate-conservative, while Jackson is considered a fundamental-conservative.

Darrell Robinson, a Mobile, Ala., pastor was elected as recording secretary without opposition.

Besides the vote for vice-chairman, fundamental-conservative leaders forced votes on two other items not on the printed agenda at the June 11 organizational meeting.

Alan Sears of Louisville, Ky., sought unsuccessfully to put the body on record altering the customary process of selecting a successor to W. C. Fields, vice-president for public relations, who has announced his intention to retire from that post next April.

Sears asked the Executive Committee to name a committee, composed of the chairman of the public relations workgroup, the chairman of the personnel workgroup, and the chairman of the Public Relations Advisory Committee, to "assist" Executive Committee president Harold Bennett in bringing a recommendation for Field's successor.

Bennett explained the process required by the body's bylaws involves his recommending a candidate to the Administrative and Convention Arrangements Subcommittee after consultation with the Executive Committee's three officers. He added that his past practice has been to include the three chairmen of the body's subcommittees in the selection process.

Sears' motion was defeated by a 2-1 ratio, after lengthy discussion.

In other actions, the Executive Committee rejected by a 27-17 vote a motion from Paul Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge, to ban visitors from speaking to motions on the floor of the body, unless specifically approved on a case-by-case basis.

Referring to a heated debate that included visitors at the body's June 9 pre-convention meeting over a proposal from the Administrative and Convention Arrangements Subcommittee which asked the Peace Committee to investigate what Pressler called "inflammatory" reports of voting irregularities at the 1985 SBC, Pressler expressed the view that only "duly elected" members be allowed to speak during debate. The subcommittee statement also would have asked the Peace Committee to "eliminate such unfounded accusations in the future."

Before this section was deleted from the recommendation by a 38-16 vote, it was amended to replace "unfounded" with "alleged."

At the June 9 meeting, Pressler had objected specifically to three articles, one that ran in Baptist Press (June 17, 1985), quoting SBC registration secretary Lee Porter of Nashville as having personally observed voting irregularities at the 1985 convention.

Porter responded by denouncing Pressler's accusation, adding that he had not been consulted by the subcommittee. "I personally resent that kind of action," he stated.

After removing the challenged statement, the Executive Committee approved the subcommittee's recommendation to the Peace Committee which acknowledged receipt of a number of letters "requesting personal identification of persons registering as messengers" and the employment of an accounting firm to "certify the number of votes and proper credentials of registered messengers." The approved recommendation also asked the Peace Committee "to continue to evaluate" the allegations of voting irregularities.

Postal rates . . .

(Continued from page 1)

the blind and free voting-rights mail."

"Doing this would not harm the eligible non-profit mailers unduly, if at the same time you amended the rate-making statute to provide separate subclasses for them. If that were done, the Postal Rate Commission would be instructed, when recommending rates, to take into account the public benefits these organizations confer."

Steiger explained the subclass option would mean preferred-rate mailers would pay some share of "institutional" — or Postal Service overhead — costs, in addition to "attributable" — or actual mailing — costs.

Adding that such a plan would result in mail users paying almost the entire cost of the Postal Service, Steiger said the division of that cost between preferred-rate mailers and regular-rate mailers would depend on the cost coverages assigned in the next general rate change, at which time the recommendation could be instituted.

Should Congress decide to continue the revenue foregone appropriation, the commission recommended a new system for determining the needed amount of appropriation. Through calculating revenue foregone by applying the same proportionate contribution to the institutional costs of the Postal Service that is made by regular-rate pieces, the appropriation would be reduced by about \$265-million a year, according to the report.

The commission's report also recommended restricting eligibility for advertising or commercialized uses of non-profit rates, noting "We see no reason for public subsidization of non-profit publishers' advertising, which is in competition with commercial publishers' efforts."

Thus, the commission recommended such subsidy be continued for the editorial portion of the non-profit publication only, forcing the advertising portion to pay the regular rate.

Another portion of the report focused on subsidy for within-county second-class mail. The commission recommended restricting the use of such subsidy to publications with more than half of their total paid circulation in the county of publication and to not more than 20,000 copies per issue.

In preparing its report, the commission held public hearings in Washington, and seven other cities. Three Southern Baptist representatives who testified before the commission were Bobby S. Terry, Missouri Word and Way editor; Presnall H. Wood, Texas Baptist Standard editor; and Jim Newton, Atlanta bureau chief of Baptist Press.

EDITORIAL EVALUATIONS

Baptist state paper editors analyze Atlanta SBC

By Al Shackleford

Last week on this page I printed my own personal evaluation of this month's Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta.

Because most of our readers do not see the other Baptist state papers, since 1980 I have reprinted excerpts from their editorials in which my fellow state paper editors present their analyses of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting.

Printed below are direct quotations from last week's editorials in six Baptist state papers. There is no special significance in these six papers from which I am quoting — they are the only ones I had received when this was compiled on Monday of this week.

The six papers and their editors are:

- Illinois Baptist, Bill Webb,
- Louisiana's Baptist Message, Lynn Clayton,
- Mississippi's Baptist Record, Don McGregor,
- Missouri's Word and Way, Bob Terry,
- South Carolina's Baptist Courier, John Roberts, and
- Texas' Baptist Standard, Presnall Wood.

CONTROL OF THE CONVENTION

"The Southern Baptist Convention said clearly that we are a conservative body with every intention of staying that way. . . . In every way the convention held confidently to a steady course in its more conservative pattern of recent years." (South Carolina)

"There was absolutely no question that in Atlanta the fundamental-conservatives were firmly in control from the opening gavel to the closing prayer. This editor sees no possibility of this changing in the immediate future." (Louisiana)

"Though messengers were quieter and more orderly in Atlanta than they were last year, the 'us and them' attitude was as pronounced as it has ever been." (Illinois)

"Seven years of secular-type politics in the SBC have polarized the national convention of Baptists into at least two parties which have come to be described as fundamental-conservatives and mod-

erate-conservatives. Since both groups claim to be conservative and hold to the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement that the Bible is 'truth without any mixture of error,' some have believed control of the institutions was the major difference." (Texas)

STANLEY'S PRESIDING

"The procedures of this year's convention were much better than last year's. Charles Stanley carefully and willingly followed the advice of his parliamentarians and avoided the mistakes of last year. His presiding greatly relieved the turmoil of last year's convention." (Louisiana)

"Stanley deserves praise for the fair and tolerant presiding he performed during the business sessions. . . . No one can claim they were mistreated or the rules of the convention were seriously violated.

"In Atlanta, Southern Baptists surely set a world record for the number of points of order made in a three-day convention. Through it all, the president maintained his composure. Even when it appeared that some of the points of order bordered on badgering the chair, Stanley maintained a professional attitude. Perhaps some of the badgering could have been avoided had Stanley not become the first SBC president, at least in modern history, to endorse a candidate to succeed him and had the annual president's address not been filled with political references." (Missouri)

"It must be said that president Charles Stanley presided fairly if perhaps a bit rigidly. With 40,000 in the audience, however, some amount of rigidity is necessary." (Mississippi)

PROFESSIONAL PARLIAMENTARIAN

"Perhaps the hero of this year's convention was not a Baptist at all but a Church of Christ preacher who is a professional parliamentarian. He was Barry McCarty, an ever present figure on the platform whose advice kept the convention running on an even and equitable course." (Mississippi)

"C. Barry McCarty, the Church of Christ parliamentarian, hardly moved

from the president's elbow, making the tough decisions for him as well as reminding him of routines like asking for a 'second' after a motion had been made. McCarty gets high marks for running a smooth and fair convention and Stanley should be commended for hiring him." (Illinois)

ROGERS AS NEW PRESIDENT

"New president Adrian Rogers, in a news conference shortly after his election, asked for all Southern Baptists to stop fighting each other and join forces in fighting the devil. He called for love and reconciliation. We join him in that plea. His past record indicates he will be reasonable and conciliatory in his communication with all Southern Baptists." (South Carolina)

"If president Rogers is correct and the division among Southern Baptists is only a 90-10 division, then he should be able to appoint Southern Baptists who reflect the 90 percent of conservative Southern Baptists. Undoubtedly, some of those individuals will not have voted for him for president or may not agree with political activities from whatever side.

"But presidential appointments and trusteeships are not supposed to be the spoils of war. They are supposed to represent the breadth of Southern Baptists, at least the 90 percent who are anchored in our common theology. At his news conference president Rogers said he would not choose people from a particular political camp for appointments. He promised to choose people who were the best qualified morally, theologically, denominationally, and intellectually.

"When this promise becomes reality, president Rogers will have led the way for peace to return to Southern Baptists. Most Southern Baptists want peace, but peace cannot return if presidents lead political parties instead of a united brotherhood of believers." (Missouri)

PEACE COMMITTEE

"The Peace Committee called for restoring trust 'among all Southern Baptists so that we may continue our journey toward reconciliation and peace.' Such trust will come more from actions than from sermons or speeches.

"Neal Jones prayed at the conclusion of one of the sessions, 'Lord, take us to Your woodshed, and keep us there until we love You and each other we way we should.'

"The convention adopted a Peace Committee recommendation that 1986-87 be a Year of Intercession. Southern Baptists better get to God's woodshed, and start interceding in prayer for president Rogers; the Peace Committee; those who head the denomination's boards, agencies, and committees; and each other in order that the SBC controversy may become the SBC reconciliation." (Texas)

"Messengers approved the SBC Peace Committee report that includes seven recommendations. The first recommendation requests a one-year moratorium on political activities. It calls for a 'deceleration, if not a dismantling of the political power structures.' That is the will of the messengers. Surely all leaders of the political activities that have dominated SBC life will honor that will. There should be no political-type rallies, no 'information sessions,' no mailouts,

no enlistment phone calls. Independent publications should stop charging others and inciting political activities. State papers should, as the committee asks, bend over backward to be fair to all concerned." (Louisiana)

"The Peace Committee report contains some good advice about improving attitudes and cutting back on rhetoric to promote reconciliation. It also calls for a dismantling of denominational political parties. I suspect some members of the committee need to begin doing what they are asking the rest of us to do. Peace Committee members from both extremes were among the most active in political activity and bombastic rhetoric during the past year. This committee needs to demonstrate leadership rather than provide us examples of what not to do." (Illinois)

THE HOST ATLANTA

"Every detail seemed anticipated and cared for. It was simply the best organized convention for its size that we have ever attended.

"In the city, bus and cab drivers, restaurant and hotel employees, police officers, and others were cordial and helpful to the visitors.

"A sincere 'thank you' is due the hundreds of Baptists who worked on various local arrangements committees and the people of the city for work well done. Most messengers with whom we talked are anxious to return to the Georgia capital for another Southern Baptist annual meeting." (Missouri)

FUTURE OF THE SBC

"What effect do actions and trends in the Southern Baptist Convention have on the average church member? Virtually none directly or immediately, but the effect can be considerable over the period of a lifetime.

"Baptist churches are autonomous and therefore not governed by anything the convention may do. But the steady push toward a more conservative position will have a dramatic impact in time. There will be more conservative sermons and Sunday School lessons, because of preachers and lesson writers taught from a more conservative perspective.

"Some say this is getting back to where Baptists once were. Others say it represents a loss of diversity. Both are right, as Baptists are both a conservative and a diverse people." (South Carolina)

"There is a controversy, however, and it must be reckoned with. This year's convention kept that fact sharply in focus. It is not going to go away easily. Any time the split is as close as it is, the losing side is not going to give up." (Mississippi)

"Peace has little chance of coming as long as attitudes of anger, arrogance, deceitfulness, unfairness, and bitterness, which occasionally surfaced in the Atlanta convention, are permitted. The spirit of forgiveness, which also occasionally surfaced, must have priority." (Texas)

"After the 1986 annual meeting in Atlanta, the fundamental-conservatives are firmly in control of the Southern Baptist Convention and most of its agencies. The question now is, 'What will they do with the convention and its agencies?' (Louisiana)

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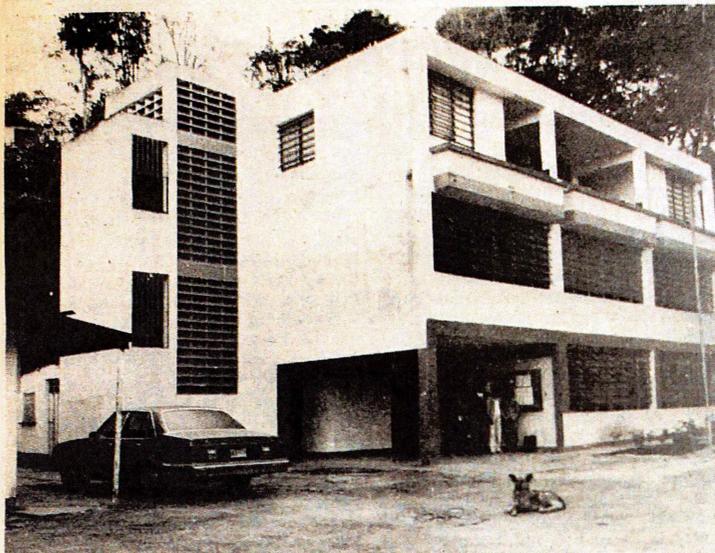
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News Journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention
Tom Madden, Executive Secretary-Treasurer

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VENEZUELA PROJECT — Volunteers from Tennessee are being enlisted to add a fourth floor to the main building of the Baptist Theological Seminary of Venezuela, Los Teques. Six construction teams are needed during the August-October period.

Venezuela seminary, church need construction teams

Construction teams are needed immediately for two projects in Venezuela, according to Clarence Stewart, foreign mission coordinator for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

One project will be adding a fourth floor on the main building at the Baptist Theological Seminary of Venezuela, located in Los Teques. This building houses classrooms, the library, administrative offices, and some dormitory rooms.

Stewart said that originally the project had been planned for this fall, but materials are now available, and the mission has requested that the construction work be done during August through October.

The specific request is for six teams of 8-10 workers per team to work for two weeks each. A team would need to have block layers, cement mixers (common laborers), and cement finishers. Blocks

to be laid would be cement or red clay brick.

Stewart said that spouses could be used to paint or clean in other facilities at the seminary.

Los Teques is located about 20 miles west of Caracas.

The second construction project would be to remodel the newly purchased building of First Baptist Church of San Antonio de Los Altos. A construction team of 10-12 workers would be needed during the first part of September.

The team would help remove some existing walls and replace them with walls of cement block or red clay brick. They will be needed to mix cement, lay block, finish out walls, paint, and help in roofing. Some non-technical electrical work will be needed.

Stewart added that spouses could be of help in doing manual labor.

San Antonio de Los Altos is located about 10 miles west of Caracas in one of the fastest growing areas of Venezuela.

Tennessee Baptists are in the first year of a three-year partnership mission with the Venezuela Baptist Convention.

Additional information concerning these two projects — and other opportunities — can be secured from Clarence Stewart, P. O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027. The telephone number is (615) 373-2255.

Pastors' Retreat set for August

BRENTWOOD — The annual Tennessee Pastors' Retreat sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention's evangelism department will be held Aug. 11-15, one week earlier than usual, noted Forrest "Woody" Watkins, director.

The site of the retreat is Camp Carson in Newport. The program will include Bible study on the Book of James, special music, recreation and fitness programs, and preaching.

The program personalities include Tom Madden, executive secretary of the TBC; Ron Phillips, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Hixson; Eugene I. Enlow, pastor of Beechmont Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky.; Joe Stacker, director of the church administration department at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville; Laderel Harrison, minister of music at First Baptist Church in Lenoir City; and Ed Jenkins, minister of activities at Central Baptist Church, Fountain City in Knoxville.

To make reservations, pastors should send \$1 to TBC, evangelism department, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

Perry Price, 89, dies in Columbia

Perry W. Price, father of Wendell Price of Knoxville, who is retired director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Sunday School department, died June 11 in Columbia at the age of 89.

Price, who lived in Lebanon most of his life, had lived in Columbia for several years. A funeral service was held June 13 at First Baptist Church in Lebanon with Pastor Ray Cleek officiating. He was buried at Bryan Family Cemetery in Shop Springs.

Price is survived by another son, Hoyte Price of Greensboro, N.C.; two daughters, Mrs. L. Ken Johnson of Goodlettsville and Mrs. James Baker of Columbia; and nine grandchildren.

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.

Support our missionaries

Dear editor:

Words fail me in an effort to express the anguish I feel on behalf of our Southern Baptist home and foreign missionaries. The convention just completed saw the gathered messengers debate and vote so closely that balloting was required on an amendment to a resolution that would do nothing more forceful than encourage our churches to give at least 10 percent to world evangelization through the Cooperative Program. Ten years ago a resolution encouraging 10 percent Cooperative Program giving would probably have been approved unanimously at a Southern Baptist Convention.

The messengers also failed to enact a motion to give our world missions reports priority program time and access to larger numbers of messengers. There were nearly 40,000 messengers present to vote for a convention president, but fewer than 10,000 came back Tuesday and Wednesday nights to see the reports of the Home and Foreign Mission boards. This motion was referred to the Committee on Order of Business which has previously received this suggestion and chosen not to act on it.

May I express my opinion (with the bias of a former missionary) that this attitude toward missions does not reflect how most Southern Baptists feel about our missionaries and their work. There were fewer than 10,000 of 14.4-million Southern Baptists present when these decisions were made.

I appeal to all Southern Baptists to find ways to express to our missionaries that we love them; that we believe in them and in what they are doing; that we realize that the Cooperative Program is their lifeline; and we will not fail them or the Lord.

Let's not be discouraged. In the longer perspective of history, these days will be recorded as a period when Southern Baptists' cooperative missions philosophy was tested but not defeated.

Robert L. Perry
4406-A NE 45th Terrace
Kansas City, MO 64117

Better Bible teaching

Dear editor:

A few years ago a leading magazine had an article entitled "The Most Wasted Hour of the Week" and it dealt with the Sunday School. The article described how bad the teaching was in the average Sunday School. I am not sure the situation has improved a great deal over the years. I have been in many churches during the past 15 years as guest speaker and always try to attend Sunday School.

There are some good teachers and some good Sunday Schools. The picture is not all black, of course, but there are many poor teachers and Sunday Schools.

More times than I can remember teachers have never opened their Bibles during an entire class period. In one incident the teacher read the entire lesson verbatim from the pupil's book, and he was not even a good reader. Many teachers will use the teacher's book but read from it. The old standby is to have each

pupil read a verse and discuss it. In some cases the teacher and class spent more time on ball games than on the Bible.

I have no actual record but probably less than two percent used the teacher's teaching plan at the end of the lesson.

We are going through a period of accusing each other of not believing the Bible. If our pastors and educational directors really are concerned about teaching the Bible as the Word of God, then they should start in their own churches and in their own Sunday Schools. This is where people will learn the Bible, in our preaching and in our teaching.

Wilburn Hoglen
P.O. Box 129
Rockville, VA 23146

'Frosty' loved people

Dear editor:

Thank you for the article in the May 28 Baptist and Reflector concerning the death of my husband, Sam B. "Frosty" Holt.

All of the other reports of his death were done by sports writers who were, of course, interested in his achievements in that field.

No one mentioned that he was a member of First Baptist Church of Jefferson City since 1929 and that he was superintendent of the Intermediate Sunday School Department for 14 years. He also taught a class of teen-age boys. He considered those things of great importance. "Frosty" loved people — old and young — and they in return loved him.

Bonita Sharp Holt
201 West Ellis St.
Jefferson City, TN 37760

Thanks from the Gillelands

Dear editor:

My family and I would like to express our gratefulness to Christian friends for their prayers and sympathy at the home going of our two sons (grandsons) — Steve and Trent Gilleland.

No better expression than that on our church's outside bulletin board: "In loving memory of Steve and Trent Gilleland. Graduated to glory June 1, 1986."

God bless you all.
Carlene and Roy Gilleland III
Evelyn and Roy Gilleland Jr.
1715 Warfield Ave.
Nashville, TN 37215

Tennessean receives Golden Gate degree

MILL VALLEY, Calif. — One Tennessean was among the 124 students receiving degrees during spring commencement at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary here.

Marshall Pierce III of Knoxville earned the master of divinity degree. Pierce previously had received the master of religious education degree from Golden Gate.

RECORDING TECHNICIAN

The Foreign Mission Board needs a Recording Technician to do original audio production recording, editing, mixing and dubbing. Also location audio for video and motion picture production. Studio single and multi-track recording, editing and mixing experience necessary. Two to five years' work experience required.

Send resume to Dorothy Murphy, Foreign Mission Board, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230, or call (804) 254-9408.

James Dunn evaluates move to withdraw BJCPA funding

ATLANTA — The executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs expressed pleasure that messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention voted to refer to the SBC Executive Committee a motion which called for defunding his agency.

In voting 12,001 (56 percent) to 9,556 (42 percent) to refer, the convention rejected a motion by M. G. Daniels of Mobile, Ala., to "remove participation from the BJCPA and establish an exclusive Southern Baptist presence in Washington, D.C., for the purpose of more truly reflecting our views."

At a news conference during the SBC annual meeting, James Dunn of Washington, D.C., told reporters, "At least the Executive Committee will take a few weeks rather than a few minutes to deal with the issue."

Asked if the fundamental-conservatives were out "to kill the Baptist Joint Committee or hang James Dunn," Dunn replied part of the problem could be his tendency to "speak unminced words." He added, however, he has not received any "threatening calls or hate mail" since 1981-83 when he happened to be on the board of People for the American Way, a first amendment advocacy organization.

Dunn said Southern Baptist response caused him to decline a second term on the board. Dunn said there were times the BJCPA had to be on the same side of issues as the Moral Majority and "every group imaginable but there's no connection."

He said many Baptists do not understand the program statement of the BJCPA. Many Baptists confuse the Bap-

tist Joint Committee with the SBC Christian Life Commission whose task is to deal with abortion and other social issues, he observed.

Dunn, director of the BJCPA for about six years, said confusion regarding abortion dates back to the involvement of two former leaders of the BJCPA with some pro-abortionist organizations.

The turf for the abortion issues, he said, now lies with the Christian Life Commission.

The Baptist Joint Committee's assignment is to deal with religious liberty and separation of church and state, he explained.

"The nature of our job makes it difficult for us to get credit for what we do," he said. Anyone who "has messed around in politics" knows there are just some things you can't talk about, Dunn said. "Sometimes we have to suffer in silence."

If Southern Baptists could know all the BJCPA does, they would "rise up and call us 'blessed,'" he said.

In Dunn's opinion, withdrawing funding from the Baptist Joint Committee would hurt the Southern Baptist Convention.

"When we draw circles narrower and narrower instead of larger, we hurt ourselves more than anyone else," Dunn said. "Our bigness demands a spirit of openness."

Should funding ever be withdrawn, the Baptist Joint Committee would continue to function, he predicted. It is the child of nine conventions and conferences and a lot of Southern Baptists, dedicated to what they are doing, would designate gifts for its support, Dunn said.

Belmont hosts ministers' conference

NASHVILLE — The 34th annual Middle Tennessee Summer Ministers' Conference is scheduled for July 7-11 on the campus of Belmont College, Nashville.

Jointly sponsored by the Golden State Missions Offering and Belmont College, this year's conference will feature guest speakers T. T. Crabtree, pastor of First Baptist Church, Springfield, Mo., and Harold T. Bryson, professor of preaching and chairman of the pastoral ministries division at New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

Conference activities for ministers and their wives will begin with dinner and an evening session July 7. Registration will be from 3-5:45 p.m. in the college's new

Maddox Residence Hall.

Sessions are planned for mornings and evenings, with afternoons left free for visiting, sightseeing, or other leisure activities. The week will close following the Friday morning session.

Special morning seminars and activities are scheduled for the ministers' wives.

Other program participants during the week will be Bill Vernon, pastor of Nashville's Twelve Robes Baptist Church; Roy Fisher, pastor of First Baptist Church, Donelson; and Roy Edgemon of the Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department.

Housing will be in Maddox Residence Hall, with registrants furnishing linens and pillows. No provisions will be made for children. Cost of the week is \$25 for husband and wife, or \$15 per individual.

For more information, contact the office of religious affairs, Belmont College, Nashville, TN 37203.

Mount Sinai calls Singleton to lead

William Dale Singleton began serving as pastor of Mount Sinai Baptist Church in Buchanan on May 4.

A native of Paris, Singleton is a graduate of Mid-Continent Baptist Bible Institute in Mayfield, Ky.

Previous pastorates include Ramble Creek Baptist Church in Big Sandy and Bethel Missionary Baptist Church in McKenzie. Singleton also served as youth minister at Fairview Baptist Church in Paris.

High court rejects appeal in home schooling case

By Stan Hasteley

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Supreme Court has rejected the appeal of a Virginia couple who sought to teach their children at home in defiance of state law.

Richard and Margaret Snider, who describe themselves as "traditional Catholics" opposed to changes in the Roman Catholic Church resulting from the Second Vatican Council, failed to convince the high court to review earlier decisions by Virginia courts refusing to exempt their two children from the state compulsory school attendance law.

The Sniders had contended they qualified for an exemption under a provision of the state statute excusing "any pupil who, together with his parents, by reason of a bona fide religious training or belief, is conscientiously opposed to attendance at school." But the Virginia courts held the Sniders' beliefs did not qualify under the "bona fide religious" test.

During two trials, Margaret Snider testified she became a member of the conservative "Pius X" or "traditional Catholic" movement in 1977. Her husband said he joined the movement in 1983.

In the meantime, Margaret Snider began teaching their children — Domini-

que, now 11, and Aaron, 13 — at home, even though she did not hold a teaching certificate. After several unsuccessful efforts to convince the Sniders to send their children to public or parochial schools, the Henrico County school board took the couple to court. The Sniders subsequently were convicted of a criminal misdemeanor, fined \$100 each, and ordered to send their children to school.

On appeal, the Virginia Supreme Court affirmed the lower decisions.

Through their attorney, William A. Beeton Jr. of Fairfax, Va., the Sniders asked the nation's high court to review the proceedings on grounds the state law violated their free exercise of religion and "parental liberty," and deprived them of the equal protection of law. At the heart of the dispute is the law's requirement the children under age 17 be sent to a public or parochial school or, in the alternative, be taught at home by a state-certified teacher.

Beeton noted the Sniders are "conscientiously opposed" to sending their children to public schools because to do so "would expose them to the religion of secular humanism." Nor are Catholic parochial schools suitable alternatives, he said, because of "secular influence" on those schools since Vatican II, the ecumenical council held in Rome between 1962 and 1965.

But H. Albert Nance Jr., attorney for Henrico County — a Richmond, Va., suburb — said the Sniders lost in the state courts because they "did not have bona fide religious beliefs" that would prevent "traditional" Catholics from sending their children to public or parochial schools. Other traditional Catholics have complied with the law, he noted.

Nance argued further the Sniders' beliefs, while sincere, "are philosophical and moral rather than rooted in religion."

Tennesseans earn MWBTS degrees

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Three Tennesseans were among the 108 persons receiving degrees during recent commencement exercises at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here.

Michael O. Jernigan of Memphis received the master of religious education with church much leadership degree.

James A. Rawdon III, formerly of Memphis and Nashville, earned the master of religious education degree.

Barry G. Horn of Clarksville received the master of divinity degree.

Oak Hill academy elects Ed Patton

MOUTH OF WILSON, Va. — Ed F. Patton, a native of Memphis, was elected in May as president of Oak Hill Baptist Academy, Mouth of Wilson, Va.

Patton has been dean of students, director of admissions, and principal of the 107-year-old Baptist boarding school. He is a graduate of Appalachian State University, Boone, N.C., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

He was ordained as a minister at Meriton Avenue Baptist Church, Memphis.

Cedar Hill church calls James McAfee as pastor

Cedar Hill Baptist Church in Baxter called James D. McAfee as pastor effective June 1.

McAfee was born in Clarksville. He has attended Virginia Highlands Community College in Abingdon, Va., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Previous pastorates include First Baptist Church in Red Boiling Springs and Bethel Baptist Church in Bristol, Va. Most recently, McAfee was pastor of New Life Baptist Church in Russellville, Ind., which is a pioneer mission area.



McAfee

Baptists in India note openness to gospel

By Marty Croll

BANGALORE, India (BP)— The ranks of Baptists in India are swelling at an unprecedented rate as entire households of Hindus and Muslims have begun turning their backs on the gods of their fathers.

Veteran Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers liken the movement to the days of early Christianity, when people en masse came to realize their gods had failed them and embraced Jesus Christ as their only Lord.

The stories range from familiar salvation experiences and destruction of fetishes to reports of miracles. But the result in each case is evidenced by changed hearts among new believers.

Volunteers visiting the predominantly Hindu nation recently how related God had prepared Indians they met to understand about Jesus Christ before they arrived to explain how salvation could be found through Him. They also reported seeing God's power heal people of various infirmities and free them from symptoms of disorders like seizures and stammering.

"I must confess my faith in prayer has been increased almost 100 percent," said Ermal Locke of Americus, Kan. "God showed me miracles I had never seen."

In one instance during a 10-day evangelism crusade ending in early April, a team of Baptists was invited into a Hindu temple in Bangalore, where a team member shared the gospel with the temple priest's wife and 12 others. "I noticed the people putting down mats and bringing in chairs," recalled Ruth Reid from Kansas City, Kan. "My heart skipped a beat. 'Lord, will we be able to share Christ here?'"

A team member clearly spelled out what Jesus had done that their gods could not do. In two or three different ways, Reid said, those attending were told they must "give up their gods to accept Christ. All stood to accept Christ that day in the Hindu temple."

During the same crusade in the town of Kolar Gold Fields about 50 miles outside of Bangalore, an upper-class Hindu family living within earshot of the revival tent's loudspeaker heard Les Arnold of Manhattan, Kan., preaching about the second coming of Christ.

The family climbed into their car and drove closer to the tent. The next morn-

ing, family members sent word they wanted to talk to Arnold. The wife told him how she had a vision of Jesus by her bed during recent surgery but was unsure how to know Jesus. The husband and wife and their three teen-age children became Christians that day and opened their home for Bible study.

During the evangelistic crusade, 50 Southern Baptist volunteers from Kansas and Nebraska worked with 33 Indian Baptist churches to help lead about 3,000 people to faith in Christ. One church was begun immediately in Bangalore, and others there and in Bombay were expected to start.

Until about three years ago, most Southern Baptist mission work with Indian believers was centered around Bangalore, near the southern tip of this dense nation of 762-million people. But in 1982, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board expanded outreach through an entity named National Indian Ministries.

National Indian Ministries pooled the efforts of Southern Baptist missionaries and other Baptist groups working in the country. One of its primary goals is to help train national Baptists to start churches in areas without witness.

The number of baptisms reported by groups associated with the ministries is

BOOK REVIEW

By Michael Davis

Huffman interprets Ecclesiastes 3

The Best of Times by Vicki Huffman; Broadman; 142 pages.

Those who read this study will meet a woman who discovers new meaning to Biblical truth through her interpretation of the well-known "time" passage in Ecclesiastes 3. She treats the 28 subjects of time and their themes as significant for all age groups.

"Solomon was not writing about mid-life crises or age cycles. The 'times' he speaks of occur in every part of life. The child as deeply feels joys and sorrows as the parent or the grandparent. Gaining and losing, loving and hating, war and peace are not restricted to certain periods of our lives. They affect us all."

A unique feature of this study — and

growing, and new churches are springing up throughout the country. Reports show at least 405 churches are now related to the organizations, more than 50 of which were begun by church planters last year. Since January of this year, seven new congregations have begun services in the Bombay area.

In the region of Orissa, a group of 15 Baptist churches set a goal of 60 baptisms last year. By year's end they had recorded nearly 120 baptisms. "They are themselves astonished at the way the Holy Spirit is working these days," said Sri Daniel James, executive director of the Orissa Baptist Evangelistic Crusade.

Nearly 1,500 Indians were baptized in all groups associated with Southern Baptist mission work last year. Southern Baptists counted 18,423 believers in churches associated with their work at the end of 1985.

"People in India are very responsive. They're very willing to listen to the gospel and they're seeking," said veteran Missionary Physician Rebekah Naylor, who works at the Baptist Hospital in Bangalore. "They're wide open."

Naylor is leading MasterLife discipleship groups of employees at the hospital. A nurse in one of her groups was so afraid to speak that Naylor was unable to hear her questions during MasterLife sessions. But now the nurse goes back to

the hospital after work to share with patients she has cared for during the day.

"She told me about one man who was my patient, who had a leg amputation and it had been very, very slow getting well," said Naylor. "He was very depressed. She sat and talked and talked with him a long time about everything, and then she talked to him about Christ."

"The next day she went back to see him just to see if he felt better, and he said, 'You know, I haven't had any more pain since last night.' She said, 'That's good, but what happened?' And he said, 'Well, I believe now in Christ. After you talked with me I realized Christ was the only way to God. Since then I feel such joy inside that I don't have pain.'"

The hospital has been the cornerstone of work in Bangalore, around which a convention of about 250 churches has been developed. Most of the growth has taken place over the past three years, during which more than 200 new congregations have begun.

Activity at the hospital has increased since it was dedicated in 1973. The hospital reported a total of nearly 7,000 people who attended mid-week worship services and more than 4,000 who came on Sundays last year. The pastoral care staff visited nearly 250 patients at their homes after discharge last year.

One of the most significant changes in the direction of Baptist work in India, Naylor said, could be the inroads begun into the lives of affluent people. Baptists in Bangalore have worked primarily with the poor masses. But Naylor, for example, has begun working with an interdenominational group of medical students and practitioners who hold meetings at which professions of faith are made regularly.

"In the future, these people will obviously be responsible citizens," she said. "They'll be the leaders."

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Interpretations

The eternal Christ

By Herschel H. Hobbs

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

With this we begin an extended study of Christ. The place to begin is "in the beginning" whenever that was (Genesis 1:1).

"The Word" (ho logos) is a synonym for "Christ." Philo Judaeus, the Jewish-Alexandrian philosopher, used logos about 1,500 times, at times almost, but not quite, making it a person. It appears 330 times in the New Testament. But only John uses it as a name for Christ (John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1; 5:7; Revelation 19:13). Logos means the open, spoken manifestation of the speaker (Colossians 1:15a).

"Was" renders a verb tense of the Greek word "to be," which means "always was." "To be" expresses essential, in this case, eternal being. There

never was a time when Christ did not exist.

"With God" (pros ton Theon) means face to face with God. The term was used to express equality.

"The Word was God" in Greek reads, "God was the Word." God is emphatic, so "God Himself."

A literal translation reads, "In the beginning always was the Word, and the Word always was equal with God, and the Word always was God Himself" (see Williams translation).

Moffatt and Goodspeed read "divine." Had John meant "divine," the Greek language had a word for it (theios, 2 Peter 1:3-4). John did not use it. He ascribes full deity to Christ.

So in one sentence, John expresses the eternal co-existence, co-equality, and co-deity of Christ with God. Indeed, He was God in His full revelation of Himself (John 14:8-9). You cannot pour more truth than that into one verse.

Professor urges Baptists to oppose deprogramming

By Jim Newton

WASHINGTON (BP) — A Virginia sociology professor has urged Southern Baptists to oppose legislation which would legalize kidnapping of young people involved in cult groups so their parents can have them deprogrammed.

David Bromley, chairman of the department of sociology and anthropology at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, said such laws, if passed, could be used against Baptists and people of other religions and are dangerous to society.

Bromley, author of several books and a nationally recognized expert on cults in America, made the statements during a national conference sponsored by the interfaith witness department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Several state legislatures, Bromley said, are considering legislation passed in 1981 by New York but vetoed by the governor which would, in effect, legalize kidnapping. Such laws use "guardianship and conservatorship" provisions allowing parents to get a court order declaring their adult sons or daughters psychologically incompetent. With such a court order, a "cult deprogrammer" may legally kidnap the youth and force him or her to undergo psychological "treatment."

Bromley said such laws are dangerous to all religions because laws passed to be used against one religious group can be used against another group. If anybody should oppose such legislation, said the Virginia professor, it should be Baptists because of their historic stand on religious freedom.

He debunked the myth that religious cults "brainwash" their converts and force them against their will to accept a religious lifestyle. He said such a view is the result of a "conspiracy theory" promoted by former members of cults and anti-cult groups which depend on this kind of scare tactic for their financial support.

It does not make sense that cult groups are able to manipulate, brainwash, and exploit their members through brainwashing, according to Bromley. "If they could brainwash people, you would assume their success rate for recruitment would be very high, and that the escape and defection rate would be very low," said Bromley, noting the opposite is true.

He estimated there are less than 25,000 members of all cult groups combined throughout the United States.

Citing statistics from his nationwide research, he said there were never more than 7,500 "Moonies" (members of Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church) at their peak, and now are probably less than 3,500. He said the Moonies are successful in recruiting only about 100 converts a year.

He added there were probably 3,000 members of Hare Krishna and now only about 1,500 to 2,000. The only cults that seem to be growing are The Way International and the Church of Scientology, Bromley said.

The defection rate among cult groups ranges from 20 percent to 50 percent per year, he noted. One reason the defection rate is so high is because most cults are ripped apart by schism and conflict, he added.

Bromley said it is not true that the cult phenomenon is new or that these new religions pose an unparalleled threat to American culture and religion. American history, he said, is full of the development of new religions which usually do not survive the death of their founder. "This phenomenon is characteristic of American society," he said.

The myth that all these cults are similar is also untrue, he said. "If you read their theology, they are as different and diverse as General Motors and the local school system."

Neither is it true that all cults are led by power- and money-hungry gurus. For example, the founder of Hare Krishna died in poverty, not in wealth, he said.

"It is true that some of these groups have done some seedy, nasty things, but the fear and apprehension they create is

not sufficient for states to pass drastic legislation that could be used against people of all religions," he said.

Gary Leazer, associate director of Home Mission Board's interfaith witness department, responded to Bromley's address by pointing out already the American government has used similar techniques against both Baptists and cults.

Pointing out that after Internal Revenue Service withdrew the tax exempt status of The Way International, several Tennessee Baptist churches in Jackson, faced possible loss of their tax exempt status after they fought legalized liquor-by-the-drink in a local-option election.

Black Baptists donate \$6,000

ATLANTA — Black Southern Baptists gathered just prior to the Southern Baptist Convention this month donated almost \$6,000 for the first building named for a black Southern Baptist.

Two years ago, black Southern Baptists pledged \$115,000 for the W. W. Colley building, part of the Foreign Mission Board's Missionary Learning Center in Rockville, Va.

W. W. Colley was one of the first appointed black Southern Baptist missionaries. He served in Africa from 1874 to 1879, according to Willie Simmons, FMB black church relations manager.

Black Southern Baptists from across the nation met at Union Baptist Church in Atlanta for their annual fellowship meeting. The first \$5,000 of the sum donated at the meeting was Union Baptist's third installment for the FMB building.

Simmons said the building is already a catalyst for black Southern Baptist foreign mission involvement.

"The W. W. Colley building," said Simmons, "is a historic moment. It is the only thing I know of that has been named for black Southern Baptists . . . Too little has been said about black Southern Baptists' participation in foreign missions."

As early as 1845 to 1880 more than 40 blacks were appointed as missionaries by the SBC, he said, and in the last three years, 40 black Southern Baptists have served foreign missions as short-term volunteers.

Three black Southern Baptists are currently serving as career foreign missionaries.

Speedwell church calls pastor, Randy Pressnell

Haynes Flat Baptist Church in Speedwell recently called Randy Pressnell as pastor. A bi-vocational pastor, Pressnell is manager of the Home Center in Tazewell.

A native of Claiborne County, he has served as pastor of several churches in the Cumberland Gap Baptist Association. Most recently, he was pastor of Midway Baptist Church in New Tazewell.

Offices held in the Cumberland Gap association include assistant treasurer and evangelism chairman. He is now serving as missions committee chairman and vice-moderator.



Pressnell

Personal Perspective

By Tom Madden

TBC Executive Secretary-Treasurer



The story of the prodigal son in Luke 15 is so familiar. The younger son asked his father for his inheritance, took it to a far country, spent it all there in a grand fling, then got himself in want, abandoned, ashamed, and despairing. But he came to himself, went back home, and discovered that happiness was at home.

Reading the old story not long ago, I found myself focusing upon the "wants" contained in the account.

The story begins with, "I want my share." "Father, give me the portion of the goods which falleth to me." While the elder brother would get more than he, the father was willing to advance him his share. I believe there are some things of which God wants us to ask a share. He wants us to have our share of His grace, His strength, His peace, and His joy.

Another want is this, "I want my way." Wanting our way, we create much of our own misery and tragedy. Wanting our way and getting our way could very well lead us into a far country. It is better to say with our Lord, "Nevertheless, not my way but Thy way."

The third want could be, "He began to be in want." Some kind of poverty usually follows when we demand "our way."

One more want surfaces in this story, it is, "I am wanted." While he was yet at a great distance, his father saw him, had compassion, and ran to embrace him. I remember one time Wallace Bassett, preaching to us in a chapel service at Oklahoma Baptist University, noted that this is the only picture in all the Bible where God is shown as being in a hurry.

Wonderful good news it is to know that I am wanted!

Ministry group elects Duvall as chairperson

ATLANTA (BP) — Robert W. Duvall, director of hospital chaplaincy at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, has been named chairperson of the Council on Ministry in Specialized Settings, an interdenominational council consisting of 12 pastoral care professional organizations, 23 religious endorsing bodies, and three consumer groups.

Duvall will be chairperson for two years.

Voucher proposal appears 'on hold'

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — When U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett introduced a proposed educational voucher plan last fall, he predicted it would be in place by July 1. As the summer slips by, however, it appears the proposed legislation is, as a House aide stated it, "on hold and most likely nothing will happen" during this congressional session.

Although an Education Department spokesman said the legislation, known as The Equity and Choice Act of 1985 (TEACH), remains a high priority for his agency, press aides for the Senate and House committees to which the voucher proposal was referred said the department has stopped efforts to push through the legislation.

Currently under Chapter 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, federal funds go to public

schools that provide compensatory education services for children who are economically and educationally disadvantaged. The proposed voucher program would allow parents of those children to obtain vouchers that in turn could be "spent" at the school — public or private — of the parents' choosing.

Bennett repeatedly has vowed to find a way around a year-old Supreme Court decision that held unconstitutional a New York City program that sent public school employees into private schools to provide specialized services under Chapter 1. He called the TEACH bill a ticket for parents to find the best possible schools — including private, church-related elementary and secondary schools — for their children.

Advocates for the bill concede that the proposal probably will stand a better chance of passage during the next session of Congress.



Tennessee/Venezuela Prayer Net Partnership

—Pray for the missionary families whose children are leaving this summer for school in the U.S.

—Pray for Missionaries Gene and Eva Kimler in Trujillo. They are trying to get incorporation papers for a church, work with 500 prisoners, and start a church at Sabana Grande de Monay where unemployment is high and many of the people believe strongly in witchcraft.

—Pray for the organization of missionaries as they meet in San Cristobel June 18-30 and for Don Smith, chairman, and Patsy Davis, vice-chairman, as they lead them.



NEW AUDITORIUM — Hilldale Baptist Church in Clarksville dedicated their new \$1.5-million auditorium on May 4. The new structure has the capacity to hold a congregation of 1,200. Verlon W. Moore is the pastor.

Vose asks Southern Baptists to look above controversy

ATLANTA — The current controversy within the Southern Baptist Convention creates reverberations that are felt worldwide, Noel Vose, president of the Baptist World Alliance, said in a news conference at Georgia World Congress Center during the SBC annual meeting.

He pleaded for Southern Baptists to "keep their eyes up" above denominational matters and sectarian issues and gain a worldwide vision.

Because of Southern Baptists' high profile and the news coverage their actions receive, any significant event within the denomination affects Baptists

around the globe, Vose said, echoing an earlier statement he made at the Southern Baptist Convention Forum that "it gives us a cold when you sneeze."

"If people outside not only Baptist churches but outside the church at large see any factions, any spirit of controversy, among us, it causes them to narrow their eyes and say with a sneer, 'See how these Christians love one another,'" he said.

The Australian Baptist leader expressed belief that the current Southern Baptist controversy is part of a worldwide insecurity caused by "threats that darken the horizon."

"When you have great insecurity, you have one of two reactions — either fear or aggression and you have polarization."

He encouraged Southern Baptists to "swim against the current" of insecurity and polarization, noting that God is "in the business of reconciliation." Vose viewed as hopeful signs the report of the Peace Committee and statements by newly elected Southern Baptist president Adrian Rogers of Memphis and defeated candidate Winfred Moore of Amarillo, Texas, in post-election press conferences.

While Southern Baptists deal with their internal divisions, Vose noted that worldwide a "strong current of feeling" exists among Baptists in opposition to such issues as the nuclear arms race and racial intolerance.

"Wherever injustice exists, in whatever form, there is a need for Biblical, New Testament Christians to speak," he said. "We need to speak against injustice in any form, and I would not qualify that one bit."

S.Cusaac joins staff at Baptist Hospital

NASHVILLE — Shirley Cusaac has been named an associate director of nursing services at Baptist Hospital, Nashville.

Cusaac, who has more than 25 years of nursing experience, will assist in overseeing the daily operations of nursing for the 750-bed hospital.

Prior to her employment at Baptist, Cusaac was the director of nursing at the Orangeburg-Calhoun Regional Hospital in Orangeburg, S.C.

Certified parliamentarian keeps SBC business 'fair'

By Karen Benson

ATLANTA — Barry McCarty, the Church of Christ parliamentarian hired to help Southern Baptist Convention president Charles Stanley during business sessions this year, said he believes God gave him a clear mind to be able to "think things through and be able to make the right decisions."

Never before had he been called upon to assist in a convention as large as the Southern Baptist Convention, he said.

"The pressure has been intense," he said, during the convention. "There have been 40,000 people out there waiting for you to make split-second decisions — and it hasn't been just one split-second decision, it's been a hundred split-second decisions."

Not one person said anything negative to him about his parliamentary advice, he noted. In fact, he was "overwhelmed" with messengers stopping him coming

and going from the convention center and his hotel, saying "thank you for helping us out."

"I am very appreciative of the warm spirit in which they have received me," he said.

McCarty said Stanley hired him with the admonishment to be "right and fair according to the rules." He said he feels he lived up to that commitment.

"Folks on every side of the issues have stopped me to say 'thanks.'"

McCarty said he spent two months of "intensive study of Southern Baptist Convention bylaws and Constitution, and studying last year's convention annual."

He also spent "many hours viewing videotapes of last year's convention in Dallas," then viewed the same tapes with Stanley.

McCarty said he would frequently tell Stanley to "do that again," or "don't do that," and that Stanley was willing to take every piece of advice.

Although Stanley is "not a professional presiding officer," McCarty said, "I have never met one better than he on his willingness to take professional advice."

If asked, McCarty said, "I'd do it again."

McCarty declined to reveal the amount of his fee, saying, "If Dr. (Harold) Bennett (SBC Executive Committee president and treasurer) wishes to release that, he may."

"I will say this," McCarty said. "They paid me a lot less this year than they paid for a lawsuit last year."

Moncrief Jordan accepts Jefferson City pastorate

A. Moncrief "Monty" Jordan resigned as pastor of Signal Mountain Baptist Church on June 1 to accept the pastorate of First Baptist Church in Jefferson City, effective Aug. 1.

Jordan has been pastor of the Signal Mountain church for more than 17 years. Previously, he was pastor of Covenant Baptist Church and associate minister of National Baptist Memorial Church, both in Washington, D.C.



Jordan

Born in Decatur, Ga., he is a graduate of Mercer University in Macon, Ga. He earned his seminary degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Jordan's denominational service includes serving terms as a trustee for Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, a member of the Committee on Boards for the Southern Baptist Convention, president of the Greater Chattanooga Clergy Association, and a member of the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Two Tennesseans lead Ridgecrest conferences

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Two Tennesseans will participate in the Woman's Missionary Union Conference June 30 through July 6 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Norma Stevens, professor of education at Belmont College, Nashville, will lead childhood education conferences throughout the week.

Southern Baptist Foreign Missionary Carlos Owens, a native of Henry County, will participate in the missions vespers. He serves as a general evangelist in Namibia/South West Africa.

Clinton DOM retires

H. P. Barrington, director of missions for Clinton Baptist Association, retired at the end of May. The association honored him with a reception at First Baptist Church in Clinton on May 18.

Barrington has been the associational missionary for the Clinton association for 18½ years.

A native of Florida, he is a graduate of Stetson University in De Land, Fla., and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

After serving in the U.S. Navy for six years, Barrington was licensed to preach by Melrose Baptist Church, Melrose, Fla. His pastorates included Rockville Baptist Church in Jackson, Ala., and Barbara Locklin Baptist Church in Perdue, Ala. Before moving to Tennessee, Barrington directed missions for the Bethlehem and Choctaw County associations in Alabama.

Leslie Baumgartner, director of the missions department for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, was present at the reception to recognize the retiring director of missions. Highlights of Barrington's tenure with the Clinton association include the establishment of a mission church in Piedmont, S.D., the increase of associational giving from \$1-million to \$4-million, and the construction of the Friendship Center building in Briceville.

Barrington will remain in Clinton, and has been named interim pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church there.



Barrington

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BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for June 29

The Feast of Purim

By Mike McGinnis, pastor
Central Baptist Church, Chattanooga

Basic Passage: Esther 8:1 to 10:3

Focal Passages: Esther 8:4-6a, 10-12; 9:20-23, 26a

In the previous chapter, the judgment was pronounced upon Haman and the execution of that judgment was carried out. Additionally, Queen Esther was given power over all of Haman's household, who might do her or her people harm.

That, however, did not alter the decree that had gone out against the Jews. The decree still stood. On a certain day, the Jews in the 127 provinces, all the way from India to Ethiopia, were to be destroyed.



McGinnis

Instead, God's plan was perfectly performed, not simply in spite of but because of the efforts of these enemies of Judah. God is always intimately in control. Not only did God use the plans of the enemies to ultimately deliver His people, He used their own efforts to bring about their own destruction.

God used both Esther and Mordecai to accomplish His intentions. However, God also used Haman to bring about His purpose. If not for the plan of wicked Haman and the irrevocable decree of Ahasuerus, the enemies of Judah, dispersed throughout the kingdom, would never have been destroyed. To be an enemy of God, or His people, is to become one's own enemy. It is extreme folly.

In chapter four, Haman devised a plan to destroy all the Jews in the kingdom. He sealed the decree with the ring of Ahasuerus. God used this wicked plan to eventuate the destruction of the enemies of Judah. The second decree was sealed with the same ring.

In chapter five, the weak, egotistical Haman was filled with rage and built a gallows to eventually hang the man he hated the most: Mordecai. God would use those very gallows to destroy Haman. The monarch which Haman had casually drunk with as he plotted the death of the Jews would order his death in the end.

In chapter six, Haman developed an elaborate ceremony to be honored by the king. God used his ceremony to honor Mordecai before the entire kingdom.

This is not an unusual theme in the Bible. God often uses His enemies to accomplish His purpose. Certainly this is illustrated in the life of Joseph. Driven by jealousy, his brothers sold him into slavery. This apparently destroyed the possible fulfillment of Joseph's dreams. However, what is apparent is not necessarily what is true, especially in God's economy. The ultimate accomplishment of God through this act of Joseph's brothers was to use Joseph as the deliverer for his entire family. In seeking to thwart the prophecy of their youngest brother, the brothers of Joseph became the tool that God used to fulfill the prophecy.

In the final two chapters of Esther, the story is told of the establishment of the Feast of Purim. The Jews still celebrate the Feast of Purim each year. "Purim" comes from the word "pur," meaning "lots." Haman rolled the pur like dice to determine the day of the Jews' execution.

Just as it was poetic justice that Haman was hanged on the very gallows he had prepared for Mordecai, it is again poetic justice that the very day Haman had determined as a day of destruction for the Jews became a day of celebration for them.

Every wicked thing that Haman determined for the people of God, God used it for their good. This is similarly expressed in the words of Joseph to his brothers when they were reunited in Egypt, "and as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive" (Genesis 50:20).

Our enemies may plot evil against us, but God will use even their efforts for our eventual good. The Bible certainly expresses this well in Romans 8:31, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Chapter 10 is a fitting conclusion to the Book of Esther. Haman, who had been promoted to a place of power and prestige in the kingdom, lies silent in the grave. Mordecai, who had been marked for destruction, is second only to King Ahasuerus. Again we are reminded, man proposes, God disposes.

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for June 29

Test of a true prophet

By Don Garner, assistant professor of religion
Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City

Basic Passages: Jeremiah 23:9-40; 27:1 to 28:17

Focal Passages: Jeremiah 23:16-17, 21-22; 28:5-9, 15-16b

Throughout the books of the Old Testament prophets, the issue of "true prophet versus false prophet" frequently arises. In this week's lesson, Jeremiah confronts the false prophets of his day.

Every generation of God's covenant people (whether Old Testament Israel or the church) must work carefully to sift the true prophets from the false ones. It is easy, and often expedient, to toss the label "false prophet" or "blasphemer" — or their modern equivalent, "liberal" — in the direction of someone whose ideas or interpretations do not match up identically with our own. It is much more difficult to determine for sure whether a given spokesman is giving us a true word from God.

Jeremiah versus Hananiah (27:1-28:17)

Jeremiah came out to preach one day wearing a wooden ox yoke to illustrate his message: "If you don't surrender to Babylon's yoke of dominance, your nation will be destroyed unnecessarily" (27:1-17). Jeremiah's hearers surely asked: "How could any self-respecting true prophet of God say something like that about Judah, God's own chosen and 'invulnerable' people?" Such a sermon sounded like heresy against God's truth and treason against God's nation! A group of self-styled heresy-hunters even were out to silence Jeremiah (see 19:14 to 20:10 and 38:1-6 for examples).

Jeremiah knew his challenging message would be countered by other prophets with their appeals to status quo, security, and comfort. Sure enough, Hananiah confronted Jeremiah, removed the ox yoke, and then preached a contradicting sermon (28:1-4, 10-11; see also 23:16-17). Jeremiah was stunned, but not stopped (28:12-17).

Read Jeremiah 27-28 and think of yourself in the crowd that day listening to both men. Both started by saying, "Thus saith the Lord." Which one would you have believed? Because we like what he said better, most of us would have sided with Hananiah. Most of us also would have yelled out to Pilate, along with the rabble-rousing scribes and Pharisees, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Testing for false prophets

Both the true prophet and the false ones begin by saying, "The Bible says," both use God's name freely to persuade listeners with their message, and both sincerely believe themselves to be right and succeed in convincing others. How can God's people tell the difference between the two?

Too often we apply the wrong human



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Garner

tests and are misled. We are too impressed with a preacher's popularity. We should recall that Hananiah was popular and led the people in the wrong direction (28:15; see also Matthew 23:13-15). We are too impressed with a preacher's self-confident presentation. But despite his public performance, Hananiah was flat wrong, while the silenced and humbled Jeremiah was proven right. We are too impressed by a preacher's words about God and the Bible, but Hananiah and others like him saying, "Thus saith the Lord," does not make it so! We want to accept the soothing Hananiah and avoid the disturbing Jeremiah; but "the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and ... the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life ... Beware of false prophets" (Matthew 7:13-15).

False prophets and the SBC

In general, we Baptists are a trusting group, easily led to do great things in Christ's name through a spirit of combined cooperation. Our history since the convention was organized in 1845 provides countless examples, one of the best being the success of the Cooperative Program since 1925. It is this trusting responsiveness in us as a group that ought to make any Baptist in a position of leadership take pause and be very careful about the awesome and sacred task of leading — and very possibly misleading — this flock of God's people. Each of us who leads will be held responsible by God for our conduct as to whether it was false leadership or true.

The Biblical principle here is that quite often the religious leaders whom the people followed as true prophets were rejected eventually by God as false ones; but the leadership so often rejected by the people as false was God's provision of true prophetic guidance for His people.

The price paid by God's people for mistakenly following the misleading of a false prophet is high (see Jesus' words in Luke 13:34-35). Because they listened to Hananiah, the people of Judah went into prolonged exile from home.

It is so easy for well-intentioned, sincere, gifted, and good people to become misleaders among God's people. False prophets never think they are wrong; rather they are dogmatically confident that they themselves are the unique bearers and defenders of God's truth. That is what makes them so deceptively dangerous. That is why Jesus warned His flock to look out for them: "Beware of false prophets who come to you like harmless sheep when in reality they are ravenous wolves" (Matthew 7:15). Appointing themselves the defenders of God's truth, these modern-day Pharisees stubbornly refuse to consider that they might be wrong! Unhindered by any humility from within their own humanity, they take on the role of God Himself, judging anyone who dares to differ with them to be a "liberal heretic" or a "dogmatic fundamentalist."

Learn from the record of Holy Scripture that God's true prophets rarely have been popular or even "orthodox" as men, with their rigidly pharisaical systems, have defined orthodoxy. We ought to obey God rather than men. Yet how can we hope to obey Him more fully if we continue to reject the true prophets whom He sends to us with a clearer presentation of His Word for our times?

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LIFE AND WORK SERIES
Lesson for June 29

Victory in Jesus

By Danny Bush, associate minister
First Baptist Church, Oak Ridge

Basic Passage: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17
Focal Passages: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8, 13-15

This is the last lesson in this exciting and confidence-building unit, "Hope In The Christian Life."

Biblical passages we have considered have reminded us as believers that our King is a living, resurrected-from-the-dead leader, that His return could be any moment, and that while we wait for that glorious time of His appearing and reuniting of all disciples, there is much to be done.



Bush

Christians are children of the victorious Son of God. What then should we fear? Nothing!

Having said there is nothing to fear, it must be added that there are many enemies within us and around us. Therefore, we must be aware and alert so that our guard is ready, our defense is sure.

Problems usually arise when we attempt to go it alone, to wage battle without the power of God and by our own ingenuity. Any expert on secular military tactics will recommend that before war is waged, it is wise to know the strength and capabilities of the enemy.

Evil, sin, and Satan are all united in direct opposition to Christ and should never be underestimated. Disobedience to the work and ways of the Lord can be subtle or right out in the open. For most Christians, the "big" sins are not too-obvious and for some of us this has become a matter of pride.

Another area which troubles God's people is ignorance or lack of intelligent spiritual discernment.

A number of years ago I heard a good definition of the difference between major and minor surgery. "Surgery is minor if it is on you and major if it is on me."

For you or me to truly experience the victorious life God intends, He must be allowed to constantly clean out the things in our lives which obstruct His divine work and instruct us. This is called sanctification. Sanctification is the ongoing process of salvation. Salvation is not static. It is active and life-changing as we allow the Spirit of God to function in every nook and cranny of our existence.

Believers in Thessalonica were so much like believers today. They tried to interpret spiritual things through physical means. Many thought Rome was the final enemy and that Messiah would do His final battle with that force. As a

youngster I heard sincere people claim Hitler was that final epitome of evil. Later there were those who claimed Stalin was the one. Even later was Kruschev or at least the Soviet Union in general.

Paul wanted the Christians of his day to know that whatever history records, God is in it, God is in control. To us who stand at a small point in history, it is difficult and impossible to grasp eternity. Since this is true, we have no other choice but to trust in the Timeless One, the Righteous Father, the King of Kings.

The blind man whom Jesus healed could not explain his healing, so he just thrilled at the victory of sight by saying, "Once I was blind and now I see!" (John 9:25).

No matter whether you have a long string of seminary degrees or you pride yourself in a long tradition of self-taught religious notions, your hope ultimately is to be found only in Christ. Everything else we learn is revealed by the Spirit of God and even then the information is limited. We need to be careful and avoid false teachers who claim to have most or all of the answers and interpretations. The Apostle urged those early Christians and the same urgings are before us in the written Word as well as in the revealed Word Himself, Christ Jesus, to glory only in Christ.

It is wise to pray and search for answers to spiritual dilemmas rather than make up answers. When answers are not readily available, faith in God must take over. The world and sometimes fellow believers are obstacles along the way of faith. But, our calling is to serve Christ no matter who or how many actively devote their God-given energies to the kingdom.

Praise God, there is victory in Jesus!

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Seminarian 'hears' call of Holy Spirit

By Craig Bird

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Although Yvette Aarons was born deaf, she has no trouble hearing the call of the Holy Spirit.

"The Lord has called me to foreign missions," Aarons says. The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary student is undaunted by the barriers between her and her goal.

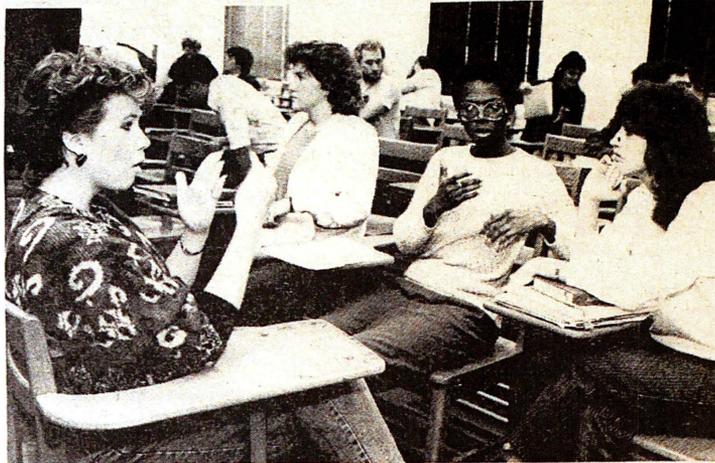
"My deafness has nothing to do with my understanding of God. I really believe God will send me overseas. But until then, my job is to get experience and wait. And wait."

As a high school student in Kingston, Jamaica, Aarons began attending a deaf mission operated by Pentecostal missionaries. Not long after her salvation experience, she became interested in foreign missions.

"I was impressed that people would leave their homes to help people in another country," Aarons says. "I knew I would like to do that."

In 1975, just months after becoming a Christian, Aarons and her mother moved to the United States for better educational opportunities. She was bewildered by the profusion of denominations. "I thought all Christians were one church," she recalls.

So she was receptive when a man on the street handed her a tract. "The picture on the front was of Jesus holding a lamb — it looked very comforting," she says. Two weeks later she left home to join The Church of Bible Understanding.



CLASS PREPARATION — Yvette Aarons (center) and interpreter Rebecca Hicks (left) converse before a class convenes at Southwestern seminary. Aarons hears professors through her interpreter's hands and provides another student with carbon paper to copy class notes.

But her mother tracked her down and persuaded her to leave the cult.

Aarons kept searching for a "church where they really taught the Bible" and eventually found the Long Island (N.Y.) Church of the Deaf, a Southern Baptist congregation.

After obtaining a bachelor's degree in English and visual arts and a master's degree in deaf education, Aarons felt the need for additional religious education.

She compared course offerings from various Southern Baptist seminaries and chose Southwestern because the missions emphasis "was the best I could find."

At seminary she chooses her own interpreters for classes. She supplies carbon paper for someone in each class to copy notes, which she recopies while studying. She does not use tutors.

"I have to rely on my own mind," she

says. "I like to do it on my own." In class, she reminds her professors to speak to her and not to the interpreter. She asks the interpreter to "use the professor's exact words so when I see it on a test I'll know what it is." She works with hearing children in a YMCA after-school program and performed in Southwestern's production of "Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" in April.

But still the call to foreign missions is a constant.

"The deaf are just as much a language group as any spoken language in Africa," she says. Aarons hopes to teach deaf children in a mission school and give other children the type of opportunities she has had. Deaf children in many foreign countries do not have the advantages found in the United States, she explains.

"Many times a deaf child is locked away in a closet and called dumb. I'd like to tell them they aren't dumb and to teach their parents they don't have to feel guilty if their child is deaf, that it's OK to have a deaf child," she says.

Aarons sometimes wonders if she may be "the only deaf person in the world who is considering foreign missions," but she will not abandon the call.

"I feel I have so much inside of me that God wants to let out," she says. "I haven't done much yet, there are talents. God can use I haven't turned over to Him. That is my struggle — to be more and more what He wants me to be."

Baptist Hospitality House stimulates prison ministry

By Ken Camp

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (BP) — An around-the-clock effort by about 270 volunteer builders signaled the beginning of a new era in Southern Baptist prison ministry as workers erected a Hospitality House near state penitentiaries in Huntsville, Texas, May 23-24.

The volunteers completed much of the work on the 7,000-square-foot, two-story building within 24 hours. Some planned to stay for another week to complete bricking and finishing work. The completed structure will be valued at about \$300,000.

Sponsored by the State Missions Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Texas Baptist Men, and Tryon-Evergreen Baptist Association, the Hospitality House will provide a temporary home for visiting families of inmates in Texas Department of Corrections facilities in the Huntsville area. The house was built on land purchased by the convention and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The house, the second of its kind in the United States and the first sponsored by Southern Baptists, will accommodate up to 48 overnight visitors in dormitory-style rooms and will include a common kitchen where guests will be able to prepare their own meals. Visitors will be asked to pay no more than \$2 a night to help defray the cost of laundering linens and to give the guests a sense of helping to pay their own way.

Like most states, the Texas prison population is taken disproportionately

from low socioeconomic groups. Since prisons are centered in east Texas far from many inmates' homes, visits with loved ones in prison are luxuries family members outside the prison walls seldom can afford. The Hospitality House is designed to provide affordable overnight housing for these families and offer encouragement for them to visit the prisons more often.

"The two greatest rehabilitating forces in the correctional system are the strong ties of the earthly family and the eternal ties to our heavenly family. Whenever someone is sent to prison, there is almost always a family of some kind left behind to wait," said W. J. Isbell, director of Baptist Men for the Texas convention, Texas convention.

"These family members represent an unusual opportunity for dedicated Christians to minister," said Isbell. "They need our love and concern. These people represent an excellent opportunity for Christian outreach, and they will be much more receptive to the gospel than usual because of this crisis in their lives."

This dual purpose of ministry and outreach was foremost in the minds of the board of trustees as they developed plans for the Hospitality House, said chairman Bill Glass, evangelist from Cedar Hill, Texas.

"The Hospitality House presents the opportunity to do social action and evangelism. It is a beautiful combination of the two," said Glass. "It's a great opportunity to meet a real human need, and it is a door opener to sharing the gospel with the inmates' families."

Part of meeting that "real human need" of the inmates' families will mean involving churches in ministry to them, said Bob Dixon, executive director of

Texas Baptist Men. He explained while only weekend visits are permitted for inmates with family living within 350 miles of the prison facility, those outside that boundary are considered "hardship" cases and are allowed weekday visits.

"We expect to see churches involving their Baptist Men in bringing to Huntsville prisoners' wives and children in church vans that would otherwise go unused during the week so that they can visit their loved ones and stay in the Hospitality House," said Dixon. "Our prayer is that as they come here to stay in these rooms that they would come to know Jesus."

The Hospitality House is scheduled to open in mid-July under the direction of Bob and Nelda Norris, who will live in a

four-room apartment in the house.

"Our objective is to meet the needs of people — physical, emotional, and spiritual," said Norris. "We intend to make ourselves available to everyone who comes, giving them an opportunity for counseling and discussion of problems. Then we want to get them in touch with a local church back home as part of an ongoing ministry."

"We want to give this place a real home atmosphere for the families who visit here. We want it to be a place of safety and refuge for them," Nelda Norris said.

Assisting the Norrises will be Mission Service Corps volunteers and workers from Tryon-Evergreen Baptist Association who will serve as needed. Local leaders in prison ministry see this as one of the greatest benefits of the house.

Baptist center celebrates resident's 100th birthday

Residents and staff at Baptist Health Care Center in Lenoir City had a celebration to recognize Joe Griffiths who turned 100 May 23.

Griffiths was born "just down the road" from the center where she now lives. The mayor of Lenoir City, Charles Eblen, recognized her on her special day as an "outstanding individual."

As the oldest member of First Baptist Church in Lenoir City, Griffiths still attends special events at the church.

Griffiths, whose maiden name is Monger, is the youngest of 12 children. When she was almost 50 she married Will Griffiths who died about 20 years ago.

Now, except for her nephew, Robert Bogle, her close relatives have died. "I'm the only one to live to be so old as I am," she says.

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