

Baptist and Reflector

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MISS AMERICA AT C-N — Kellye Cash was on the campus of Carson-Newman College Nov. 8 for "Celebrate '86" and the Miss Carson-Newman pageant.



DAVID RING — "You don't have problems," Ring told 4,000 youth. "You are a problem." He went on to explain how Christ can change their lives.

Kelley Cash, David Ring say life's success found in Christ

By Mona Collett

The 4,000 young people attending "Celebrate '86" were told that "success is finding God's will for your life." Alan Duncan's words were reinforced by Kellye Cash and David Ring as they shared their personal victories in Christ. Following Cash's inspirational testimony and song, and Ring's moving message, hundreds of youth came forward to make decisions about their own pilgrimage.

Duncan, minister of recreation at First Baptist Church in Cleveland, hosted the 11th annual youth rally sponsored by Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City.

Charles Johnson, president of the ministerial association at the college,

estimates the number of decisions made at over 400, including rededications and statements of faith.

Both featured program personalities captured the curiosity of the large crowd attending the Nov. 8 meeting. When Cash entered the packed Frosty Holt Field House, all eyes turned to see the reigning Miss America. Ring, full-time evangelist from St. Charles, Mo., broke the ice with his listeners by explaining that his limp and "funny speech" are the results of cerebral palsy. No oxygen could get to his brain during the first 18 minutes of his life.

Cash, in contrast, was born healthy and with enough talent, poise, beauty,

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Presidents 'repudiate' claims of capitulation

By Dan Martin

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — "We repudiate all 'victory' claims and 'capitulation' allegations as completely foreign to the spirit and intent of our initiative," the presidents of the six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries said in a statement issued to Baptist Press this week.

Milton Ferguson, president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., and spokesman for the presidents, said the presidents made their statement in response to "apparent misinterpretations and distortions of the intent" of the Glorieta Statement issued in late October and aimed at bringing reconciliation to the SBC.

The presidents, in addition, urged that the effort at reconciliation "move forward on both theological and political fronts," and pledged their support for "all good faith efforts to achieve fairness and balance in the election of our convention leadership, in appointments to convention committees, and in nominations of trustees, board members, and commissioners."

The Glorieta Statement, made jointly by the six presidents during a prayer retreat of executives of SBC agencies and the SBC Peace Committee, Oct. 20-22, announced a plan aimed at bringing an end to the seven-year theological/political dispute in the SBC. (See Oct. 29 Baptist and Reflector for details).

In the November statement, Ferguson said the seminary presidents "are encouraged by the positive response to our Glorieta Statement.... We are glad our initiative has produced new hope for reconciliation and peace among Southern Baptists.

"We are eager to move ahead with the peace process in every way possible," the statement said. "There are two

things we will do to undergird this desire.

"First, we will seek to correct apparent misinterpretations and distortions of the intent of our Glorieta Statement, reflected especially in some of the initial reports in the secular press. We repudiate all 'victory' claims and 'capitulation' allegations as completely foreign to the spirit and intent of our initiative. Our purpose is not 'victory' or 'defeat' for anyone, but a new level of mutual respect and cooperative endeavor for all.

"Second, we will encourage and support good faith efforts to make progress in the political aspects of the controversy which has plagued us."

The statement adds, "The peace process among Southern Baptists must move forward on both theological and political fronts. Bold initiatives by those who have the position and power to resolve the political conflict are needed if the progress made at Glorieta is to have a lasting impact for good."

The statement urges Southern Baptists to join them by "praying for the Peace Committee, especially during its next meeting, Dec. 1-2," and by "encouraging and supporting those who must take the initiative in resolving the political struggle."

The statement was agreed to by the six presidents: Ferguson; Roy Lee Honeycutt, Southern; Russell Dilday, Southwestern; Randall Lolley, Southeastern; Landrum Leavell, New Orleans; and Harold Graves, Golden Gate. Ferguson said William Crews, newly elected president of Golden Gate, was told of the statement, "but was not asked to put his name on it."

Three of the six seminary presidents also responded to a "formal moderate-side proposal" for denominational peace and reconciliation, issued by moderate-conservative leader James Slatton immediately after the Glorieta Statement was made public.

Slatton, pastor of River Road Baptist Church of Richmond, Va., was joined in his proposal by Peace Committee member Winfred Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, and moderate-conservative candidate for SBC president for the past two years, and Norman Cavender, a layman from Claxton, Ga.

The proposal calls on SBC President Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, to appoint the sitting presidents of eligible state conventions and the sitting presidents of the Woman's Missionary Unions of those conventions as the 1987 Committee on Committees.

It also calls on fundamental-conservatives to "stand down on political organizing," on the Southern Baptist Advocate to "cease publishing attacks on Southern Baptist institutions and their

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State pastors, WMU elect officers

JOHNSON CITY — Richard White, pastor of First Baptist Church, Franklin, was elected president of the Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference and Judy Trivette, a member of Central Baptist Church of Fountain City, Knoxville, was re-elected to an unprecedented fifth term as president of Tennessee's Woman's Missionary Union.

Both elections were held Nov. 10 at preliminary meetings to the annual meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention at Johnson City.

Trivette's election followed an amendment to the by-laws of Tennessee WMU, which passed unanimously during the morning business session. The amendment changed the tenure of the president and recording secretary from four to five years. It was reported that the change made the by-laws more consistent with WMU, SBC, other state WMU organizations, and associations.

The WMU's nominating committee also recommended Nancy Tilley to serve a fifth year as recording secretary. Both

Trivette and Tilley were re-elected unanimously. Tilley is a member of West Jackson Baptist Church in Jackson.

White was elected by a two-thirds majority over Eugene Cotey, pastor of First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro.

The new Pastors' Conference president was nominated by Charles Sullivan, pastor of First Baptist Church, Lenoir City, who recommended White as "his own man," "God's man," and a "denominational man." Cotey was nominated by Ken Hubbard, pastor of Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Knoxville.

Guy Milam, pastor of North Knoxville Baptist Church, Knoxville, was elected vice-president by acclamation. Darrell Avery, pastor of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, Knoxville, was elected secretary by acclamation.

The Pastors' Conference met at University Parkway Baptist Church, Johnson City, and the WMU annual meeting was at Central Baptist Church, Johnson City.

Telephones set for TBC meeting

Two convention office telephones, a press room telephone, and a Baptist and Reflector telephone will be in operation this week during the Tennessee Baptist Convention at Freedom Hall in Johnson City.

The convention office telephones may be used by those needing to contact messengers and visitors attending the convention. The two numbers will be (615)926-1755 and 926-3635.

Messages telephoned to these numbers will be relayed to convention attenders.

The press room number is (615) 926-2365.

The Baptist and Reflector number is (615)926-0435.

High court affirms decision on state funding, abortion

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)— The U.S. Supreme Court has affirmed a lower court decision that the Arizona legislature may not withhold state funding from an agency simply because that agency provides abortion services, counseling, or referrals.

By a 5-3 vote to affirm, the nation's highest tribunal elevated the lower court opinion, giving it precedential effect throughout the United States rather than only in the circuit in which it was decided. Three members of the court — Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and

Justices Byron R. White and Antonin Scalia — indicated they voted to schedule oral arguments in the case. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor did not take part in the action.

In 1980, the Arizona legislature appended a footnote to its appropriations act stipulating that no state money could be spent on "abortions, abortion procedures, counseling for abortion procedures, or abortion referrals." The footnote also mandated no state money could be given to "agencies or entities" that offered any of those services.

Two Arizona branches of Planned Parenthood sought state funds to provide family planning services. When state funds were denied Planned Parenthood, the non-profit corporations, joined by medical director Jack Bashaw, filed action in the federal district court for Arizona.

The district court found the state law to be unconstitutional on First Amendment and vagueness grounds and enjoined state officials from refusing to pay state funds to Planned Parenthood. The appeals court eventually affirmed that decision, citing the state's ability to monitor and prevent misuse of its funds rather than to withdraw all funds.

In their appeal to the Supreme Court, attorneys for the state of Arizona argued such monitoring would place an "onerous and impossible burden on the state."

Attorneys for Planned Parenthood, asking the high court to affirm the circuit court's decision, contended the law would force Planned Parenthood both to give up its freedom of speech that enables it to discuss abortion with clients and to forfeit federal funds that require it to make all medically necessary referrals, including abortion referrals.

Harold G. Sanders dies in Louisville

LOUISVILLE, Ky.(BP)— Harold G. Sanders, retired executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, died Oct. 30 at his home in Louisville, Ky., following an extended illness. He was 79 years old.

Following services Nov. 2 at Louisville's Crescent Hill Baptist Church, his body was carried to Tallahassee, Fla., for burial.

Sanders was pastor of Norwood Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., 1941-43, and First Baptist Church of Tallahassee, 1946-61. He left that church to become executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky convention, the post he held until retirement in 1972.

Congress maintains postal rates

WASHINGTON (BP)— Congress has approved an overall spending bill that contains sufficient funds to maintain current postal rates for non-profit publications, including Baptist state newspapers, through September 1987.

The continuing resolution contains \$650-million in federal subsidy to provide reduced mailing rates for non-profit mailers. That amount will allow the Postal Service to maintain current rates through the 1987 fiscal year, according to Senate and House reports.

Although Congress currently approves an annual revenue foregone appropriation to subsidize the difference between what the Postal Service would receive at full unreduced rates and what it actually receives at the reduced rates, the Reagan administration is backing a plan that would eliminate such appropriations. The administration has said it will propose legislation to enable the Postal Service to continue reduced rates for most existing subsidized mailers without Congress' revenue foregone appropriations.



LEADER OF LEADERS—Brotherhood Commission President James Smith (left) congratulates Archie King, Brotherhood director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, upon his election as co-convenor of the Brotherhood Leadership Group, which consists of all state Brotherhood leaders and Brotherhood Commission staff.

Women in Ministry leaders protest decision by HMB

ST. LOUIS (BP)— Leaders among Southern Baptist Convention women ministers have expressed alarm concerning a decision by the SBC Home Mission Board not to fund the ministries of women pastors.

The board voted Oct. 8 not to give future financial support to any woman who is pastor of a local church.

The steering committee of Southern Baptist Women in Ministry has followed with a statement of response "concerning personnel policies regarding ordained women."

"We are deeply grieved to learn of the decision of the board of directors of the Home Mission Board to reject future requests for church pastoral aid from local Baptist congregations with women serving as pastors," the statement said.

It called the Home Mission Board action "an obvious affront to Christian women and men who understand pastoral leadership as a gift given by the Holy Spirit not according to gender." It added the action "is an even greater affront to the autonomy of the local church and to the good news of the gospel, which declares that there is neither male nor female in Christ."

"We further express concern about the impact of this decision upon our denomination's evangelistic efforts because of what it communicates about division among Christians and because it eliminates women pastors as a potential personnel resource for certain bold mission endeavors," the statement continued.

The women ministers charged the board's action "hinders the goal of peace

and unity" called for by the SBC Peace Committee, the group charged with offering solutions to theological/political strife within the 14.5-million-member denomination.

"While some may hope to discourage women from pastoral leadership by this (the board's) action, women will continue to answer God's call," the statement asserted. "And God will continue to choose whomever God wills — regardless of the vote of a board of fallible human beings."

Central assemblies

Five new pastors in churches of Central Baptist Association were recognized during the Oct. 20-21 yearly gathering of the association. The meeting was held at Madison Street Baptist Church in McMinnville and First Baptist Church in Morrison.

Dan Long, pastor of First Baptist Church in Smartt, was elected to serve as moderator. He succeeds Willard Ralph Jr., pastor of Mount Elim Baptist Church in Spencer.

Other officers include Rodger Davis, pastor of First Baptist Church in Morrison, assistant moderator; M. D. Overton, a member of First Baptist Church in McMinnville, treasurer; and Wynette Ballard, a member of Shellsford Baptist Church in McMinnville, clerk.

On Oct. 19-20, 1987, the annual meeting will be held at Westside Baptist Church and Madison Street Baptist Church in McMinnville.

Ralph E. Hoover is the director of missions.

Belmont sponsors free tax seminar

NASHVILLE — "The Effect of New Tax Laws on You and Your Church" is the topic of a free seminar at Belmont College Nov. 15 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. in Freeman Hall.

Designed for pastors, deacons, finance committees, and concerned church members, the seminar will be led by Steve Wood, attorney with Boulton, Cummings, Connors, and Berry.

For reservations or more information contact Belmont College, Nashville.

Volunteers go to Venezuela

Sixteen more volunteers will be going to Venezuela during 1986 to make a total of 271 persons who have served there as a part of the Tennessee/Venezuela partnership which began in November 1985.

A seven-member team will be working Nov. 10-21 constructing sidewalks at the Baptist theological seminary in Los Teques. Three persons will be participating Nov. 12-17 in the first Royal Ambassador Conclave in Venezuela. A two-member team will be doing construction at the seminary and a four-member team will be doing maintenance work there Dec. 1-12.

The seven-member team going to the seminary is from First Baptist Church in Kingston and includes Don Davis, Robert Allen Harris, Pastor Ronald Murray, Jean King, Jim and Mary Odom, and Lloyd Morrow.

The team going to the RA Conclave is made up of Archie King, Tennessee Baptist Convention Brotherhood director; Tim Spencer, past president of Tennessee Royal Ambassadors from First Baptist Church in Collierville; and John Herron, state RA president from Belmont Heights Baptist Church in Nashville.

The seminary construction team includes Glynn Reynolds of New Bethlehem Baptist Church in Dyer and George Tittsworth of Shelbyville Mills Baptist Church in Shelbyville.

The following are members of the seminary maintenance team: Farrel Green of Calvary Baptist Church in Lenoir City, Reid Walls of First Baptist Church in Oliver Springs, and Nell Rogers of First Baptist Church in Ardmore, Ala.

Retired pastor's wife dies

Waymon Ailene Newman Wayland, 76, died Nov. 4 in Hohenwald. Her husband, Marvin Wayland was pastor of First Baptist Church, Spring City, for 17 years before his retirement.

Services were held Nov. 6 at McDonald Funeral Home, with graveside services at Swiss Cemetery, in Hohenwald. Clarence Stewart and Louis Minner led the services. Stewart is consultant on foreign mission ministries for the Tennessee Baptist Convention and Minner is pastor of First Baptist Church, Hohenwald.

Along with her husband, survivors include a son and a daughter in Hohenwald, Doris Duncan and James Wayland; two sisters in Florence, Ala., Clara Thornton and Pearl McMackin; a brother in Old Hickory, P. M. Newman; six grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Police arrest murder suspect in death of Ouachita trustee

EUDORA, Ark. (BP)— Earl Verser, former chairman of trustees for Ouachita Baptist University, was found dead at his Eudora, Ark., home Oct. 31, an apparent murder victim. He was 62 years old.

Preliminary indications were that Verser died of several blows to the head suffered during a burglary of his home, Eudora Police Chief Lawrence Webster

said. The body was transported to Little Rock, Ark., for an autopsy.

A suspect, Glen Allen of Eudora was in custody without bond in the Lake Village County Jail on charges of capital murder and theft of property, according to the Chicot County sheriff's office.

Allen was arrested Oct. 31 in Fort Worth, Texas, after becoming involved in a barroom fight, Webster said. Fort Worth police discovered the vehicle he was driving was registered in Verser's name, and subsequent investigations connected him to the Arkansas crimes.

In addition to the automobile, nine guns stolen from the Verser home were recovered.

Verser, a deacon at First Baptist Church of Eudora, also had been a volunteer lay preacher and singer in Arkansas' partnership mission with two Baptist conventions in northern Brazil.

Ken Fraley assumes Kirkwood pastorate

Kenneth W. Fraley is the new pastor of Kirkwood Baptist Church in Clarksville.

A native of Missouri, Fraley served for 13 years in the U.S. Army.

He comes to the Kirkwood pastorate from Northside Baptist Church, also in Clarksville.

Associational service includes serving as evangelism chairman for Cumberland Baptist Association. He is also publicity chairman for the Greater Clarksville Youth Council.

His first service with Kirkwood Baptist Church was Nov. 2.

Rheubin South dies

ST. LOUIS (BP)— Rheubin L. South, executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention, died Nov. 6 at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis following a battle with leukemia. He was 64 years old.

South, executive director for almost 12 years, previously was pastor of Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock, Ark., for 23 years.

During his career, South was president of the Arkansas Baptist Convention, chairman of the ABC Executive Committee, and a trustee of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia and Baptist Medical Center Systems in Little Rock. For 14 years, he was a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. He also was national president of the alumni association of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and was a trustee of the school at the time of his death. He was the immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Association of State Convention Executive Directors.

South is survived by his wife, the former Verna Lois Roberts; three children, Gregory, a physician in Decatur, Ala.; Sharon, the wife of Mark Copenberger, pastor of First Baptist Church, El Dorado, Ark.; and Diedra, wife of Phillip Bittle of Morgan City, La.; seven grandchildren; and his mother, Mrs. M.V. South of Portales, N.M.

Weakley County meets, elects new officers

Messengers of Weakley County Baptist Association elected Jerry Powell, pastor of Southside Baptist Church in Martin, as moderator during their yearly meeting Oct. 20-21. The association met at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Greenfield and Jolley Springs Baptist Church in Dresden.

Other persons elected to serve as officers are Lynn Walker, pastor of Eastside Baptist Church in Martin, vice-moderator, and Mrs. Jerry Seamans, a member of Adams Chapel Baptist Church in Dresden, treasurer-clerk.

Powell succeeds David Abernathy, pastor of Mack's Grove Baptist Church in Dresden, as moderator.

The next annual meeting will be Oct. 26-27, 1987, at Bible Union Baptist Church in Martin and First Baptist Church in Gleason.

The association's director of missions is Richard Skidmore.

Private services held for Cooper, layman, former SBC president



Owen Cooper

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)— Owen Cooper, 78, the last layman to serve as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, died Saturday, Nov. 8, after a three-week illness with cancer.

Cooper, who headed the SBC 1972-74, was buried in private graveside services at his own request in Jackson, Miss., on the day of his death. A memorial service was held Sunday, Nov. 9, at First Baptist Church of Yazoo City, Miss.

A leader in religion, politics, economics and humanitarian causes, Cooper in 1985 was named Layman of the Century by the Mississippi Baptist Convention. At the 1986 annual meeting of the SBC, Cooper was presented the Distinguished Service Award of the Christian Life Commission in recognition of his contribution to moral and social concerns.

Cooper was born April 19, 1908, near Vicksburg, Miss. He also had been a member and former chairman of the SBC Executive Committee, vice-president of the Baptist World Alliance,

Law allows clergy to file for refund

WASHINGTON (BP)— Ministers who have been ineligible to claim mortgage interest and property tax deductions and wish to take advantage of a provision in the new tax revision must file amended income tax returns by upcoming deadlines.

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 revoked Revenue Ruling 83-3, an Internal Revenue Service ruling that froze the ability of ministers receiving tax-exempt housing allowances to take deductions on mortgage interest and real estate taxes if they own their homes.

Since the new law makes that revocation retroactive, ministers who have been unable to claim those deductions since 1983 are eligible to file amended tax returns seeking refund of taxes overpaid.

The statute of limitations, however, requires amended returns for 1983 to be filed no later than April 15, 1987. Amended returns for other years must be filed within three years after the date the original return was due.

Persons filing amended returns should use Form 1040X and attach an amended Schedule A. Most states also will require the filing of amended state income tax returns.

president of the Pan-American Union of Baptist Men, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, president and secretary of the Mississippi Pioneer Missions Committee, member and chairman of the board of trustees of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and a trustee of the Southern Baptist Foundation.

He also had been one of the founders of Baptist Laity Journal.

Cooper was chairman of the board of Agricultural Missions Foundation and president of Global Outreach, both groups interested in providing support for the efforts of agricultural missionaries around the world.

He was a graduate of Mississippi State University, the University of Mississippi, and the School of Law of Mississippi College.

He had been executive director of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation. He established the Mississippi Chemical Corp., the first farmer owned synthetic nitrogen plant in the world. He was president of the corporation until his retirement in 1973 and a member of the board until his death.

In his church, Cooper participated in mission activities and helped lead the church to become one of the top givers to the SBC Cooperative Program. He had been a deacon, Sunday School superintendent and director of Church Training.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth; four daughters, a son, a brother, a sister, and nine grandchildren.

Dyer elects officers

The messengers of Dyer Baptist Association gathered Oct. 20-21 and elected William Summers, pastor of Curve Baptist Church in Ripley, as moderator.

The yearly meeting was held at Mary's Chapel Baptist Church in Ripley and at Harvest Baptist Church in Dyersburg.

Other officers elected for the upcoming year were Charles Halliburton, pastor of Finley Baptist Church in Finley, assistant moderator; Larry Fowlkes, a member of Fowlkes Baptist Church in Fowlkes, treasurer; and Cathy Cavness, a member of First Baptist Church in Dyersburg, clerk.

Summers succeeds Truman Spurgin, pastor of First Baptist Church in Halls, as moderator.

The next yearly meeting will be held Oct. 19-20, 1987, at Springhill Baptist Church and Hawthorne Baptist Church in Dyersburg.

The director of missions is Joe T. Naylor.

Tommy Dye accepts Oak Hill pastorate

Tommy Glenn Dye assumed his pastorate with Oak Hill Baptist Church in Fayetteville Oct. 5.

A native of Nashville, Dye previously served as pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Shelbyville; Lone Pine Baptist Church in Viper, Ky.; and Blue Ash Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio.

While in Kentucky, Dye served as chairman of evangelism for Three Forks Baptist Association.

He is a graduate of Clear Creek Baptist School in Pineville, Ky.

Presidents . . .

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employees;" for the SBC Forum and Pastors' Conference to be united and non-political; for a "true and actual peace conference" between the opposing sides; and for a "joint committee of moderate-conservatives and fundamental-conservatives" to choose a candidate for SBC president in "1988 or sooner if Dr. Rogers chooses not to run again next year."

Lolley said he "shares the concerns and sees genuine hope for reconciliation in proposals such as those put forth by James Slatton, Winfred Moore, and Norman Cavender."

Ferguson said he "commends" the initiative taken by Slatton, Cavender, and Moore but has "reservations about the feasibility of some of their proposals. Nevertheless, they may be a starting point for good-faith deliberation by all those who are committed to further progress in the peace process."

Honeycutt said, "Reconciliation is a two-step process. We have taken one step, and it is up to others to take the second step and address the political aspects. We are dealing with the classrooms; it is time for someone to deal with the boardrooms. I do not think peace will come without both of them."

Honeycutt said the "specific proposals" of the moderate-conservatives "are certainly deserving of support. The specificity of them is good. If we could come together on that statement, we could make St. Louis (the site of the 1987 annual SBC) a celebration of reconciliation."

"These two proposals would take us at least two-thirds of the way toward reconciliation. My perception is that wherever I go, people want an end to this, an end which is amicable and which allows people to maintain their convictions."

"If we can do this (bring theological and political reconciliation), we will have done what no one else in American Christianity has ever been able to do: to come this near to fragmentation and yet remain together."

EDITORIAL

What is a 'cooperating Baptist church'?

What is the "Tennessee Baptist Convention"?

Technically and officially, the convention is the church-elected messengers who gather together in an annual or called special meeting — such as is happening this week in Johnson City.

The purpose of these conventions is to make decisions which affect the work of the convention's organizations, to elect trustees and directors who are responsible to the convention for carrying out these decisions, and to generally determine the future course and emphases of those who identify with Tennessee Southern Baptists.

When the messengers convene, they pass a motion to organize into a deliberative body, adopt an agenda for the meeting, and vote to adjourn when this agenda is completed. While in session, the messengers conduct their activities under the leadership of officials who have been elected by this gathering or earlier conventions and under provisions or rules which have been approved by this or previous conventions.

These messengers are elected by and certified to the convention by "cooperating Baptist churches." But what is a cooperating Baptist church?

Let's look at these three key words.

A **CHURCH**, according to the Baptist Faith and Message statement, is "a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth."

BAPTIST is a word which specifically identifies the beliefs and distinctives of that congregation.

Basically, there are five distinctives, according to Historian Robert Tolbert, that Baptists hold which are peculiar to our group. Other denominations may hold to one or more of these principles, but Baptists seem to be the only one that emphasizes all five.

1. **Baptism by immersion.** We believe that baptism is by immersion as practiced in the New Testament and as administered to Jesus Himself by John the Baptist. The word in the Greek New Testament means "immerse," but since the Church of England did not immerse, a new word was transliterated

"baptized" in the King James Version. The new word could then mean whatever its interpreters want it to mean, but the true meaning is immersion.

2. **Salvation by grace through faith.** God's redemption for a sinner comes because of God's love and power **ONLY**. A person does not deserve it; can never earn or merit it, but only gratefully receive it as a gift from God. Since salvation is totally God's act — and not our activity — it is irrevocable and eternal.

3. **Priesthood of the believer.** Every believer is a "priest" in that he has direct access to God. It is not necessary to confess or to pray through an earthly mediator, since every believer can go directly to God. Likewise, God deals directly with every individual without going through another person or organization.

4. **Autonomy of a local church.** In simple words, this means that a Baptist church can do what it wants to do. A local congregation is free to pursue God's will, without interference from any denominational organization or official or any other church. Each church calls its own pastor, determines its own budget and program, and decides what projects will receive its support. The denomination exists only to provide a channel of service for a church and its members.

Related to this is the Baptist belief that the church and civil authority should be separate, with government having no power over a church or religious organization and vice versa.

5. **Authority of the Scriptures.** Basic to these distinctives is the principle that all Baptist beliefs and practices are based upon the Biblical revelation of God. The Bible was inspired by God to reveal His perfect knowledge to us. All that we do individually and collectively should be rooted in God's Word.

COOPERATE, according to the dictionary, comes from the Latin word *cooperatus* (co- "with" plus *operari* "to work"). This verb is defined "to act or to work together with another or others for a common purpose; to combine, so as to produce an effect."

Obviously, there are churches which either meet or come close to the Baptist Faith and Message definition of "a church." Also, there are many congregations which fulfill these "Baptist" distinctives. Therefore, to distinguish a Tennessee Southern Baptist church, we must also look at the word "cooperating."

Both the TBC Constitution and the SBC Constitution use the word "cooperating" in defining the composition of these bodies.

A cooperating church would be one which joins with other churches in pursuing the goals and purposes of these conventions. It implies commitment — and an active participation which will seek to achieve these goals and purposes.

Attitude is a vital part of cooperation, implying a supportive spirit. If there is criticism, it should be constructive in form, aimed at accomplishing the goals and purposes of the denomination — not the goals and purposes of an individual or faction.

Activity is related to cooperation. This would result in the active participation in the programs and projects of the denomination.

And cooperation must include support — including financial support. Both the TBC Constitution and the SBC Constitution state that messengers (which compose these conventions) are from churches which have made financial contributions to these conventions' work. As Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21). The reverse of this is also true: "Where your heart is, there will your treasure be also."

Perhaps there are other factors which could be added to define a "cooperating Baptist church." Regardless of how it is determined, congregations which claim this distinction bear the privilege and the responsibility of guiding our denomination in fulfilling the commands of Christ and the kingdom of God.

Cicero's comment



By the editor

Cicero had stopped by to visit a session of the Unanimous Baptist Association.

After several reports and messages by pastors of the association, it became time to elect officers for the coming year.

Moe D. Rater, who was elected moderator by the messengers to last year's annual meeting, was presiding.

Before he called for nominations for moderator, he asked of a point of personal privilege, which he (as moderator) graciously granted.

"Before we have the election, I want to tell you how much I have enjoyed being moderator of Unanimous Baptist Association during the past year. It is such an honor to be elected to such an important post that I appreciate the fact that you recognized my ability to fulfill these duties. I have accomplished many things during the past year, and I certainly can envision many plans for the coming year which I would like to do, if I just happen to be re-elected to this post," Moe mouthed.

"As you know, according to the association's Constitution, I am eligible for re-election to serve a second one-year term — not that I'm asking to be re-elected — I just wanted you to know that I am eligible and available," he added.

Pointing to the association's history, Moe D. Rater noted that the second term is not automatic. "Theo Logan was not elected to a second term in 1896 — but, of course, he died during his first term."

Moe then called for nominations for moderator.

A voice from the back shouted, "I nominate Moe D. Rater."

Moe stood silent for a moment. Then with great emotion he said, "Thank you. This is most unexpected. And it is especially meaningful that my wife nominated me."

The gavel banged. "Does anyone wish to make a nomination — that is, besides my nomination? I will recognize anyone who wishes to make a nomination of someone to oppose me — should there be an uninformed messenger here who does not know what a great job I have done this year," Moe announced.

Moe reminded the messengers that the association's Constitution requires a written ballot IF more than one person is nominated for moderator. "It would take time to count the votes," Rater judged, "but that would be all right — even if it is now 12:05 and the fried chicken is getting cold downstairs in fellowship hall."

The moderator paused for slightly less than one second. "Then, do I hear a motion that all nominations — other than mine, of course — cease and that I be elected by acclamation?"

The motion was made.

"Thanks again, dear."

Assuring the messengers that there was no need to take a vote since there was no opposition, the moderator cast the association's unanimous vote for Moe D. Rater.

Moe then expressed his appreciation for the firm mandate — and humbly accepted the position of moderator for the coming year, noting the overwhelming vote of confidence in his leadership.

CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE — 74,871

Alvin C. Shackelford, Editor

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Baptist and Reflector

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Ansell Baker, chairman; Jerry Oakley, vice-chairman; Paul Bryant, David Drumel, Marshall Gupton, Calvin Harvell, Mrs. Richard Hawkins, George Hill, Baylon Hilliard, Fred Isaacs, James McCluskey, Calvin Metcalf, Perry Michel, Jere Plunk, Dennis Pulley, Lon Shoopman Jr., Fred Steelman, and Hoyt Wilson

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.

Church autonomy lost

Dear editor:

The great Baptists of the past just turned over in their graves.

The largest Baptist body in existence, the Southern Baptist Convention, isn't Baptist anymore.

It happened recently in Atlanta, when the trustees of the Home Mission Board decided that the board will no longer, through the church pastoral assistance program, help a struggling church to pay its minister if that minister happens to be female.

Never mind that this decision was part of a "compromise package" that apparently presumes to tell Southern Baptist women to what areas of ministry God is permitted to call them. No, there's a

more disturbing issue here.

At stake is the question of what it means to be a Baptist and what it means to be a Baptist congregation. Our Baptist forebears championed the principle of the autonomy of the local church. As autonomous churches we come together voluntarily, cooperatively supporting the work to which God has called us, doing together what none of us could do alone.

But none of us tells any of us what our local congregations are to do. That's been the Baptist way to do it — until now.

But now the Home Mission Board, through its program of financial aid to struggling churches, has determined that conviction of the majority of the trustees about women in the pastorate must be the conviction of all churches aided by HMB funds. The board is, in effect, dictating to the churches on a point of doctrine.

Your church or mine may choose not to hire a woman as a pastor. That's our right as autonomous Baptist congregations. But neither can we coerce other autonomous congregations to view the matter precisely as we do. When we begin to do that, it's time to drop the "Baptist" from the "Southern Baptist Convention."

Sandra Hack
Box 27730, Furman University
Greenville, SC 29613

Supplements, not contradicts

Dear editor:

In the Baptist and Reflector (Oct. 22), Donald K. Dixon wrote a letter, the caption above it was "SBC disinformation."

In his letter he cited Genesis 1-2. God created all the creatures of the earth before He created Adam. Then he cited Genesis 1:24-26 and Genesis 2:18-19 that God created Adam before all the creatures of the earth.

Genesis 2:4-4:26, called "generation of heaven and earth," is sometimes called the "second account" of creation.

It starts with reference to the desolate condition of the earth (Genesis 2:5-6) which corresponds to the early part of the "third day" in the "first account" (Genesis 1:9-10), then proceeds with the story of "man's fall." It is supplemental, not contradictory; added details are not contradictions.

Adam lived to the eighth generation of Seth's descendants (Genesis 5:4-25), so everything happened in Adam's lifetime. Mr. Dixon must remember Adam had no tape recorder, typewriter, or ballpoint pens — maybe writing had not been invented while Adam was alive. Adam probably told these things over and over in his family circle. Remember God re-

vealed His Word to His people, so when Moses (or whoever) wrote the book of Genesis, God was his source.

May I go so far to ask Mr. Dixon what part of the Bible is true and what part is untrue? If only part of it is true, then none of it is true. Why not throw the Bible away and take The Book of Mormon that Joseph Smith wrote from some gold plates that a man of God, direct from heaven, gave him? Or we could take the Koran, the sacred book of the Muslims, or go chanting like the Buddhists or Hindus or thousands of other cults and religions?

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

Abortion fence-straddlers

Dear editor:

"Sanctity of Life" Sunday for 1986 has passed. Since then, one thought continues to weigh heavily on my mind. We must be more active and outspoken for the rights of unborn children.

Until recently, even I was a fence-straddler on abortion. In most cases I felt it was wrong, but my depth of understanding stopped there. On July 10, 1985, I suddenly received a new perspective on life with the birth of my daughter. Within minutes of her birth, we were looking into each other's eyes and a bond was formed that will last forever. Life is too precious to allow doctors and scientists to decide its beginning and end or for others to stop as a matter of choice or convenience.

Southern Baptists must be more educated on abortion. The April 23 Baptist and Reflector stated 31 percent of Southern Baptists favor Roe vs. Wade while 9 percent have no opinion at all! Convention resolutions against abortion are a good start but should not be the final act of our activity. When 40 percent of Southern Baptists do not support the rights of the unborn, then something is terribly wrong.

Abortion is neither a moderate nor a fundamentalist issue but rather a moral issue. There should not be any Southern Baptist nonchalantly straddling the fence. Learn about abortion, get involved against it, and speak out for those tiny individuals who need our help so desperately.

Americans Against Abortion, Box 70, Lindale, Texas 75771-0070 has very good Christian materials available for becoming more educated and involved as a concerned Christian citizen.

Michael V. Johnson
7620 Yellow Pine Dr.
Harrison, TN 37341

Inward circumcision

Dear editor:

As I read the SBC president's response to questions from state paper editors for some reason my memory of one of my teachers was triggered. This man, now deceased, stands out in my experience as one of a handful of preacher/teachers who related the Christ with clarity.

Yet this beloved teacher in one of our SBC seminaries could not have passed Dr. Rogers' theological litmus tests.

Dr. Rogers explained to the editors that the primary issue in our current impasse is theological. He is right — but the key to understanding what is happening is the realization that it is not a matter of what you believe but who administers the test. Dr. "C" loved the Bible. He spent 50 years mining its treasures and exposing them to us to see. But he loved Christ more. His love of Christ is the first thing which stands out in my memory of him.

My challenge is this. Choose with fear and trembling a standard for employment in our institutions and agencies. As I read the Bible, the standard since Jesus is a Person, not a creed. Some want our employees circumcised with their circumcision. But the Bible says that the true Jew is he who is one inwardly and "the true circumcision is one of the heart, directed not by written precepts but by the Spirit; such a man receives his commendation not from men but from God" (Romans 2:29 New English Bible).

Dr. "C" was a "true Jew" and will receive his commendation from God. But others like him will soon be exiled if they don't receive some commendation from men. Can we find room for those who do not bear the external marks of circumcision but who are circumcised in heart?

Larry Maples
1060 Mt. Vernon Rd.
Cookeville, TN 38505

Personal Perspective

By Tom Madden

TBC Executive
Secretary-Treasurer



God, when requesting that Moses leave the wilderness and return to Egypt to lead Israel from their land of slavery to the promised land, said for him to tell the people, "I AM hath sent me unto you" (Exodus 3:14).

It is my own personal conviction that among the meanings contained in this statement is the truth that whatever the needs of Israel in their wilderness crossing, God would meet their need. They would need assurance of God's presence as well as shade during the daylight hours and protection and warmth during the coldness of the desert night, and thus we read, "So it was always: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night" (Numbers 9:16).

The appearance of the cloud changed according to their need. When the cloud lifted and moved forward, the camp marched. When it would become motionless, the march stopped and the tents were pitched. Whatever the pillar did called for prompt obedience. Whether the cloud rested two days or a month, they were obedient. Always they had those appointed to watch the pillar, and the moment the alarm was given, the whole camp bustled.

One observation from this account is that God still guides and provides. Their sustenance came by manna and ours comes by God's blessing on our daily work, which is better. God still guides us, if not by a pillar, by His Word, His Spirit, circumstances, and His Son.

Another observation is that we need perpetual watchfulness, lest the pillar lifts unnoticed. We do not want to run before Him but neither are we to sink our roots so deep that it would take a tornado to move us. The habit of prompt spiritual obedience is most commendable.

It is comforting to know that all the way our Saviour leads us.



Tennessee/Venezuela Prayer Net Partnership

—Missionary Sherry Murphy, who serves with her family in Los Teques, has a birthday Nov. 16.

—The members of Iglesia Bautista Memorial in Caracas are trying to raise \$75,000 to purchase the building next to their present location.

—The Iglesia Bautista Nueva Jerusalem in Valencia meets in the pastor's home and needs a new meeting place.

—The daughter and wife of the pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista de Guacara were at home when robbers broke into it. The robbers held the daughter while the wife went to the bank for their money, which included what the church had saved to build a building. The family is safe, but the church needs \$10,000 to begin a building on the land they are buying.

Stone notes issues on alcohol, peace

Four resolutions, including one fighting a referendum on the Nov. 4 general election ballot on alcoholic beverages, which was defeated, were passed during the 121st annual meeting of the Stone Association of Baptists Oct. 16 at New Home Baptist Church in Boma.

The referendum would have allowed packaged-liquor stores in Baxter. It was defeated by a 66 percent margin. The association's resolution also called for a Nov. 2 Day of Prayer on the issue.

A resolution on the Southern Baptist Convention's Peace Committee supported its Oct. 19 Day of Prayer for peace.

The messengers passed a resolution honoring Byron R. Epps, who served for eight years as Sunday School director of the association, by dedicating the association's annual minutes to him.

A resolution thanking New Home Baptist Church in Boma for hosting the meeting also was passed.

The association's officers that were elected include Joseph E. Wiles, pastor of Silver Point Baptist Church in Silver Point, moderator; Guy Farris, a member of Wilhite Baptist Church in Cookeville, assistant moderator; George H. McKay, a member of First Baptist Church in Cookeville, treasurer; and Mrs. Verble Nash, a member of Nash Grove Baptist Church in Baxter, clerk.

The 1987 meeting was set for Oct. 15 at Eastwood Baptist Church in Cookeville.

Michael L. Prowse is director of missions.

TENNESSEE BAPTIST FOUNDATION

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THANK YOU, TENNESSEE BAPTISTS "TEAMWORK DID IT AGAIN"

The trustees and staff of the Tennessee Baptist Foundation express to Tennessee Baptists and the institutions we are privileged to serve our sincere appreciation for making 1986 the most productive year in the Foundation's 48-year history. It will be remembered as the year that teamwork built. Your continued support and prayers are essential to our future progress.

Howard B. Cockrum, Trustee Chairman
Earl H. Wilson, President/Treasurer

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1986 RECORD ACHIEVEMENTS

INCOME DISTRIBUTED	\$1,874,397.40
COOPERATIVE PROGRAM	\$ 245,000.00

"To God Be the Glory - Great Things He Hath Done"

Tennessee Baptist Foundation

**The Churches of
Holston Baptist Association
Welcome the Messengers
to the 112th Annual Session
of the
Tennessee Baptist Convention**



**Ministering in the Mountains
of East Tennessee
for 200 Years
"THAT UPPER EAST TENNESSEE
MIGHT KNOW HIM"**

Tennessee Baptist Convention Treasurer's Report

November 1, 1985 — October 31, 1986

RECEIPTS

Cooperative Program	\$ 20,831,030.34
Annie Armstrong Home Missions Offering	1,773,386.13
Lottie Moon Foreign Missions Offering	4,644,290.40
Golden State Missions Offering	712,730.47
Reported Gifts*	1,279,917.79
Other Gifts	1,484,912.98
Other Income*	1,678,485.38
TOTAL	\$ 32,404,753.49

*Reported by Belmont College, Carson-Newman College, Union University, Harrison Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. These gifts sent directly to institutions.

*Income from Annuity Board, Home Mission Board, Baptist Sunday School Board, Baptist and Reflector, Camps, earned interest on daily deposits, and refunds.

DISTRIBUTION

	Cooperative Program	Designated	Total
SBC GIFTS:			
Foreign Missions	\$ 3,828,743.38	\$ 4,901,883.13	\$ 8,730,626.51
Home Missions	1,504,000.39	1,834,874.00	3,338,874.39
World Hunger		329,480.01	329,480.01
Six Southern Baptist Seminaries	1,568,576.58		1,568,576.58
Radio & TV Commission	318,714.76	56.30	318,771.06
All Other SBC Gifts	435,368.53	3,782.36	439,150.89
TOTAL SBC GIFTS:	\$ 7,655,403.64	\$ 7,070,075.80	\$ 14,725,479.44
WORLDWIDE SPECIAL MISSIONS:			
		\$ 18,565.28	\$ 18,565.28
TBC GIFTS:			
Belmont College	1,445,798.48	138,551.93	1,584,350.41
Carson-Newman College	2,080,145.02	358,347.59	2,438,492.61
Union University	1,445,798.48	532,799.49	1,978,597.97
Harrison Chilhowee Academy	433,535.42	60,263.84	493,799.26
Audits for Schools	38,186.76		38,186.76
CRV Scholarships	79,220.41		79,220.41
Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes	1,018,241.58	961,656.21	1,979,897.79
Hospitals		652.36	652.36
Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes	108,696.33	190.34	108,886.67
Audits for TBCH, Hospitals, Adult Homes	35,013.49		35,013.49
General Convention Services	1,526,020.78	7,500.00	1,533,520.78
Executive Offices	190,042.48		190,042.48
Baptist and Reflector	216,789.52		216,789.52
Tennessee Baptist Foundation	227,137.59	30.00	227,167.59
Convention Ministries Departments	1,327,688.51	42,950.00	1,370,638.51
Conv. Ministries - Annuity Programs	1,152,330.91		1,152,330.91
Conv. Ministries - Mission Programs	762,484.84	312,000.00	1,074,484.84
Conv. Ministries - Student Campus Work	750,493.10	19,500.00	769,993.10
Woman's Missionary Union	338,003.00	95,250.00	433,253.00
All Other TBC Gifts		276,904.93	276,904.93
TOTAL TBC GIFTS	\$ 13,175,626.70	\$ 2,806,596.69	\$ 15,982,223.39
TOTAL GIFTS	\$ 20,831,030.34	\$ 9,895,237.77	\$ 30,726,268.11
OTHER INCOME:		\$ 1,678,485.38	\$ 1,678,485.38
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 20,831,030.34	\$ 11,573,723.15	\$ 32,404,753.49

DISTRIBUTED GIFTS

SBC	47.99 percent
TBC	52.01 percent
	100.00 percent

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HOMECOMING '86
NOVEMBER 23

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FOR SALE Size 55. Worn only two months. Original cost \$239. Will sell for \$100. Contact John Pursell, 104 West King St., Jefferson City, Tenn. Telephone: (615)475-5263.

S. Williams accepts Fairview pastorate

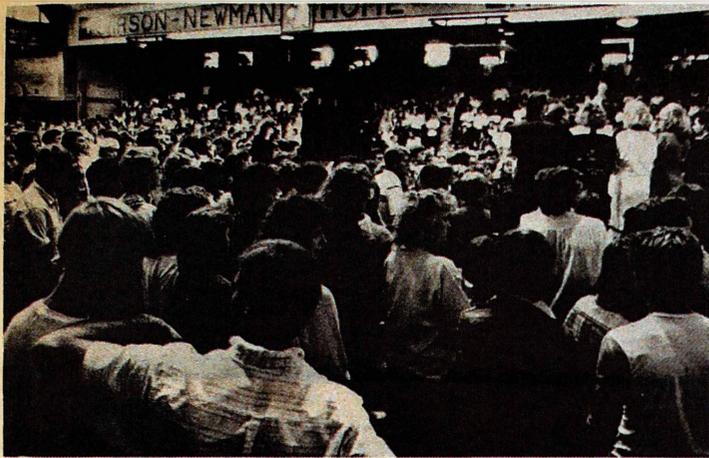
Stephen Williams began serving as pastor of Fairview Baptist Church, Newbern, on Sept. 21.

A native of Brownsville, Williams is a graduate of Union University, Jackson. He attended seminary at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.

Previous pastorates include Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, Harrisonville, Mo.; First Baptist Church, Jameson, Mo.; and Stanton Baptist Church, Stanton.

Denominational experience includes serving as field education supervisor at the Midwestern seminary and as an associate to the interfaith witness department with the Home Mission Board in Atlanta, Ga. He was also active in the Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association while in Missouri.

CHURCH FURNITURE - 476' of pews plus pulpit furniture. Solid Oak w/padded seats, in excellent condition. Reason for selling: Building larger sanctuary.
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DECISIONS MADE — Over 400 decisions were made at "Celebrate '86" as Something Special from Carson-Newman College sang the invitation after success of life in Christ was exemplified by David Ring and Kellye Cash.

Kellye Cash, David Ring...

(Continued from page 1)

and ability to communicate gracefully to become Miss America. She is as quick to credit God for her crown as Ring is to praise Him for his victories over the obstacles of his handicap.

The youth attending the rally from churches across the state saw how God can work in two very different lives to accomplish His purpose. Cash and Ring have their faith in common, and both had to work very hard to get where they are.

Cash sang, and relayed three lessons she has learned in her experiences. The first is that it is easy to compromise standards and beliefs. Because she has not compromised, she felt she could become Miss America without the outbreak of controversy that has followed the pageant in recent years. The second lesson she relayed is that God puts people in your life to help you get where He wants you to be. Finally, Cash emphasized the importance of prayer, meditation and Bible study, saying she would get no where without them.

Ring began his message with the prayer that everyone would leave knowing they had been with God. "If Kellye Cash touches you, you'll get over it. If David Ring touches you, you'll get over it. If God touches you, you will never get over it," Ring told the crowd.

Leading into his personal testimony, Ring said that "self" is the root of all problems. Adding that to be anything in life we have to love ourselves, without being conceited. "Loving is giving," said Ring. "The more you love yourself, the more you give yourself away. The more you give yourself away, the more you love yourself to give yourself away."

Everyone listened reverently as Ring gave his dynamic testimony, responding with bursts of laughter to his keen sense of humor. A preacher's kid and the youngest of eight children, he went to church all his life. His father died when he was 11. His mother died four years later. Devastated, and very much alone, he too wanted to die. Everyone had given up on him, even his family. One sister did not give up, and encouraged Ring to go to church.

Ring began his personal relationship with Jesus Christ at the age of 16, though he had had "head-knowledge" all his life. With a change in attitude, and His availability to God, Ring has accomplished all the things that other people

told him he could not. He graduated from college, became a preacher, married, became a father, and has a thriving ministry as a full-time evangelist. "The world says I'm a cripple," stated Ring, "the Bible says I'm a conqueror."

"I have cerebral palsy, what's your problem," Ring asked, as he offered the invitation for everyone to begin their personal relationship with Christ. Ring told the youth that without Christ, they were the ones with handicaps. In response, hundreds of young adults followed the lead of Cash and Ring when they decided to pursue success in life through Christ.

Annuity Board to lease building

DALLAS (BP) — The Southern Baptist Annuity Board has reached an agreement with Equitable Real Estate, a subsidiary of the Equitable Life Assurance Society, to lease a new office building constructed to the Baptist agency's specifications in Dallas.

The board will move to the office just north of the city's central business district in late 1988, Annuity Board President Darold H. Morgan announced.

Morgan said the contract includes a long-term lease with an option to buy. Trustees approved a plan to negotiate a long-term lease last April after a two-year study concluded leasing would be preferable to purchasing or constructing a building.

The Annuity Board acquired the property, which includes a two-story office building to be razed, and transferred ownership to the Equitable as a part of the development project, Morgan said.

Construction plans are in the early stages and site work will begin in the spring. The lease will be an effective \$14 per square foot with the possibility of additional savings prior to occupancy.

The board made a substantial profit on the sale of its office at 511 North Akard in Dallas which it has occupied for 27 years, Morgan said. The present Baptist office was sold to Lincoln Properties Inc. in 1984. A lease arrangement allows the board to remain in the building through 1988.

Kellye Cash labels herself as conservative Christian

By Mona Collett

In response to questions on controversial issues directed to the newly crowned Miss America, Kellye Cash summed it all up by stating that she is a conservative Christian. During the press conference immediately following the pageant in Atlantic City, N.J., there was not enough time to answer all the questions at length, so Cash felt a statement of her faith should give everyone an idea of where she stands on most issues.

Cash is very open about her faith, as is indicated by her acceptance of the invitation to sing and speak at the "Celebrate '86" youth rally in Jefferson City. At the press conference following the meeting on the campus of Carson-Newman College, Cash was asked her reaction to the rally. Her enthusiasm was obvious as she expressed the joy of seeing young lives changed.

Television viewers saw a dry-eyed Miss America when Cash was crowned eight weeks ago. "I'm not a crier," she explained, "but I must admit that seeing those young lives changed brought tears to my eyes."

During her testimony at the rally, Cash emphasized how blessed she felt, having grown up in a Christian home. She is presently a member of Kirby Woods Baptist Church in Memphis. Born in Memphis, Cash has lived all over the country, as her father is a naval officer. Presently, her parents and younger brother live in Virginia Beach, Va., where her father is captain of a navy ship.

While living in Memphis for the past three years, Cash has been attending Memphis State University there. With a major in communications, she hopes to pursue a career in broadcasting after finishing the year-and-a-half of studies she has left after giving up her crown in September.

Cash says moving so often helped form her sense of identity. "I had to be myself," she said, adding that she could not put on a new face every time she moved. Thus, Cash impressed those attending the youth rally as being very genuine, according to youth interviewed by a local television station immediately following the meeting.

Cash made her profession of faith at the age of seven while her family was living near San Diego, Calif. Her pastor at Bethel Baptist Church prophesied her future by referring to her as Miss



Kellye Cash

America, 1986. He was one year off since her reign is for the year of 1987.

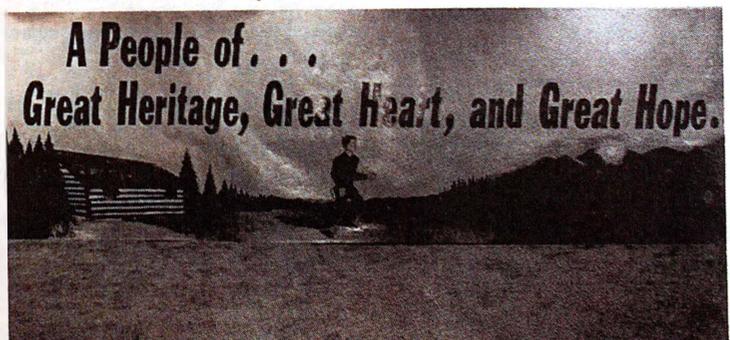
During her testimony at the rally, Cash told the youth how easy it is to compromise standards and beliefs under peer pressure. She especially saw the pressures of society at work while attending high school in California where the life-style tends to be more liberal. Cash says she felt she could become Miss America because she has not compromised her standards.

Cash's mother is her only real role model, she says. Adding that she has always put the family first. Now that her children are grown she has resumed her career, and often speaks to Christian women's groups. Cash reflected the same values when asked her view of the woman's role in today's society. "Women should use their talents," she stated, as she intends to pursue a career. "But if it came down to a choice," Cash was emphatic about family being the number one priority.

Cash also credits a youth director named Bonnie as being a strong Christian influence on her life. The dynamic youth minister encouraged Cash to be involved with the youth program at her church.

Cash mentioned that people are often surprised to find that she is a "real person too." In her own words she is "just an average girl who works hard."

Emphasizing Christ and hard work, Cash, as well as others at "Celebrate '86," allowed themselves to be examples of those who have been successful in discovering God's will in their lives. (See related story on page 1.)



CONVENTION THEME — When the 112th annual Tennessee Baptist Convention meets Nov. 11-12 in Johnson City, messengers and visitors will be greeted by a giant banner displaying the convention theme. The banner was designed by Mrs. John Perkins, wife of the pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Elizabethton, and painted by Shane Moody.

Tennessee Scene

LEADERSHIP...

Norris Smith has resigned as pastor of Ardmore Baptist Church in Memphis to accept a position with the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. He has served as pastor of the church for 10 years.

J. C. Carpenter has accepted the call of Wrigley Baptist Church in Lyles to serve as interim pastor, effective Oct. 26. Carpenter serves as a program associate in the missions department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Tennessee Baptist Foundation

By Earl Wilson
President



Most everyone is looking for a good investment — one that is sound, safe, and pays great dividends. Well, I am going to tell you about one of the best investments you could ever make. Why not invest in the lives of young people preparing for full-time Christian service? Can you think of a better investment? I can't!

Almost every week we receive letters from worthy and deserving young people requesting financial assistance so they can remain in the seminary and continue their training. We assist all we can, but the need is always greater than our funds.

You can help these young people by establishing a scholarship trust with the foundation. The dividends of such an investment are love, joy, peace, and the satisfaction of knowing you are helping God's chosen servants prepare to serve Him. The bonus benefit is that you can enjoy the dividends both in this life and the next.

The following excerpts are from a letter I received today: "Please accept this note of appreciation for the scholarship check your office sent me recently. The money will go a long way in helping to pay some of the bills that naturally occur during seminary days. I am a living testimony that one's commitment to Christ can continue even after his/her death. Thanks again, Greg Bowers."

If you would like to establish a scholarship trust now or in your will, please call or write: Tennessee Baptist Foundation, Earl H. Wilson, president-treasurer, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027. We would be happy to assist you.

East Tennessee meets

The 148th annual meeting of the East Tennessee Baptist Association was hosted by First Baptist Church in Newport and Bethel Baptist Church in Parrottsville on Oct. 23-24.

The following persons were elected to serve as officers during 1986-87: Tom Moaty, pastor of West End Baptist Church in Newport, moderator; F. M. Blevins, pastor of Wilsonville Baptist Church in Newport, assistant moderator; Grace Hill, a member of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Newport, clerk; and Linda Watts, a member of River-view Baptist Church in Newport, treasurer.

Jack Parker is the director of missions.

First Baptist Church, Jellico, called Phil McCarty as minister of music and youth. He began Oct. 5, at the church where Robert Jolley is pastor. McCarty is a student at Cumberland College in Williamsburg, Ky. He previously served at Calvary Hill Baptist Church, Stanford, Ky.

Fred Freed is the new minister of music and youth at First Baptist Church, Troy, where Chuck Williams is pastor. Freed previously served as minister of music and youth at Bear Cove Baptist Church in Sparta.

Calvary Baptist Church of Alcoa recently extended a call to Royce Willis to assume the position of minister of education and outreach. A native of Shreveport, La., Willis comes to the Alcoa church from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Dean Haun is pastor of Calvary Baptist Church.

Arden L. Taylor has joined the staff of North Knoxville Baptist Church as minister of activities and youth. Guy Milam is pastor of the Knoxville church.

Joel Marshall has accepted the call of First Baptist Church, Burlington, N.C., to become minister of music, effective Dec. 1. Marshall is a native of Knoxville, and has served in several churches in Tennessee, as well as Virginia and Kentucky. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

PEOPLE...

Middle Valley Baptist Church, Hixson, ordained Roger Messingill to the deacon ministry Oct. 26. Ben Mitchell is interim and associate pastor.

On Oct. 12, First Baptist Church of New Tazewell ordained Danny Ferrell as a deacon. Greg Long is the pastor.

An ordination service was held at First Baptist Church, Shelbyville, on Oct. 12. Gary Cooper, David Crowell, and Alan Gill were ordained as deacons. J. Milton Knox is pastor of the church.

J. W. (Bill) Stinnett Jr. was ordained as a deacon at First Baptist Church in Ashland City on Oct. 26. Bill Sims, pastor of the church, brought the message.

Lake Country Baptist Church in Concord ordained Milton Thompson as deacon Nov. 2. Chris Francis, the pastor, delivered the ordination sermon.

First Baptist Church, Jacksboro, recently ordained John Cain as deacon. Robert Lawson was to be ordained in November, at the church where Larry Reeves is pastor.

Bethel Baptist Church in Greenfield ordained Duane Patrick and Larry Pentecost as deacons on Oct. 12. Wayne Perkins is pastor.

CHURCHES...

Bellshire Baptist Church, Nashville, had a note-burning service Oct. 5, in conjunction with their Homecoming '86 celebration. This marks the final payment on their family life center. Tim Garrett was the featured speaker at the church where Thomas Mosley is pastor.

Madison Baptist Church in Johnson City held a note-burning ceremony Nov. 9 to mark final payments on their \$75,000 fellowship and activities building. The building was dedicated in 1979. Gerald Smith is the pastor.

On Oct. 5, Westover Baptist Church, Jackson, dedicated their church building which has been remodeled. This was also the church's Homecoming '86 celebration. Special guests were Calvin Moore, Tim West, and Ron Haney. John Poor is the pastor.

First Baptist Church, Martin, dedicated their adult educational complex Oct. 26. Other areas of the church were also renovated at the church where Roger S. Oldham is pastor.

Mannings Chapel Baptist Church in Newport dedicated their new fellowship and educational wing on Oct. 5, the same day of their Homecoming '86 celebration. Johnny Adamson is the pastor.

Hicks accepts post at ETBH system

KNOXVILLE — H. James Hicks Jr. has joined the administrative staff of East Tennessee Baptist Health Care System.

As vice-president and chief operating officer, Hicks is responsible for the planning and development of most system corporations. He also will manage shared services of the health care system.

Institutions for which he will be responsible include Cocke County Baptist Hospital, East Tennessee Baptist Health Support Inc., Blount Professional Pharmacy Inc., ETB Development Inc., Shared Services Inc., ETB Realty Inc., and ETB Inc. Baptist Hospital and East Tennessee Baptist Foundation Inc. also are included in the health care system.

Hicks, a Knoxville native from the Powell community, is a graduate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

He is a former vice-president for Baptist Regional Health Services Inc. and associate administrator for Baptist Hospital in Pensacola, Fla. Hicks also has been a health care management consultant and regional manager for Medicus Systems Corp., Chicago, Ill., and assistant director at Memorial Hospital in Johnson City.

Gass assumes post with Southside congregation

On Oct. 1, Mike Gass began his pastorate with Southside Baptist Church in Shelbyville.

Gass previously served as pastor of Stewarts Chapel Baptist Church in Flintville, and Charlotte Baptist Church in Charlotte Court House, Va. He also served as associate pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., and Faith Baptist Church in Crete, Ill.

Associational duties include having served as vice-moderator and on the credentials, evangelism and mission committees for William Carey Baptist Association, and on the associational youth council for Duck River Association of Missionary Baptists.

A native of Birmingham, Ala., Gass attended Motlow State Community College in Tullahoma. He is also a graduate of Liberty Baptist College, Lynchburg, Va.

REVIVAL PRAYER REQUESTS...

First Baptist Church, Hartsville, will have revival services Nov. 16-21, with Rocky Freeman from Fort Worth, Texas, serving as the evangelist. Mike Scott will lead the music at his own church, where Jim Growden is pastor.

Revival services are scheduled Nov. 16-19 at Gallatin Road Baptist Church in Nashville. Featured speakers include H. Franklin Paschall, Don Mathis, John Christian, and John Laida. Randall Rogers is the pastor.

REVIVALS...

John Humphrey from Dandridge led Pleasant View Baptist Church in revival services Oct. 19-22. There were 20 professions of faith and one rededication. Ricky Scott is the pastor.

First Baptist Church of Whitwell was led in revival services by Paul Vick of Houston, Texas. There were 66 professions of faith and six additions to the church by letter. Bob McFarland is the pastor.

Revival services were held at Bellshire Baptist Church, Nashville, Oct. 5-8. Joel Thielepape, former pastor of the church and now pastor of Friendship Baptist Church, Austin, Texas, was the evangelist. Four decisions were made at the church where Thomas Mosley is pastor.

Wilson County buys office building site

The Wilson County Baptist Association took action during their yearly meeting to purchase land in downtown Lebanon for an office building. The messengers met Oct. 16-17 at Rocky Valley Baptist Church in Lebanon and Mount Olive Baptist Church in Mount Juliet.

The associational office currently located a building of First Baptist Church in Lebanon.

The pastor of LaGuardo Baptist Church in Lebanon, Bobby Johnson, was re-elected as moderator and the pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Lebanon, Earl Baker, was re-elected to be assistant moderator. The newly-elected clerk is Kenneth Tramel, pastor of Shop Springs Baptist Church in Lebanon, and the treasurer is Curtis Woods, pastor of Gladeville Baptist Church in Gladeville.

On Oct. 15-16, 1987, the next meeting will be at Fairview Baptist Church in Lebanon and Gladeville Baptist Church in Gladeville.

The association's director of missions is Robert D. Agee.

B. Keck serves as pastor of Buffalo Trail church

Benny E. Keck began his service as pastor of Buffalo Trail Baptist Church in Morristown on Sept. 28.

The native Knoxville previously served in the pastorates of Leadvale Baptist Church, White Pine; National Avenue Baptist Church, Memphis, and Lyn Acres Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky.

Denominational service includes serving on committees in Nolachucky and Long Run Baptist associations.

Keck is a graduate of Walters State Community College in Morristown, Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Brentwood to host BSSB conference

NASHVILLE — The last of seven regional ChildLife conferences supporting the Baptist Sunday School Board's 1985-86 children's church training emphasis, "Growing Children Growing," will be held at the Tennessee Baptist Executive Board Building, Brentwood, Nov. 17-19.

The seminars are planned to help church leaders understand and minister to children and their families, to focus on a child's needs in society, to challenge churches to provide quality education, and to emphasize the need for discipleship development for older children.

The conferences are designed to expose children's leaders, parents, and church staff members to the world of children and their needs or problems and to challenge churches to provide programs and services for children and their families.

The board's family ministry and Sunday School departments will assist the children's section of the church training department in conducting the conferences.

Andrew Lester, professor of psychology of religion, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., will be the featured speaker at the conference.

Registration for the conference is \$25. Additional information about the "Growing Children Growing" emphasis or the conference is available from Regional ChildLife Conferences, Preschool/Children's Section, Church Training Department, 127 Ninth Avenue, North, Nashville, TN 37234.

Lawrence County honors Michael

Lawrence County Association of Baptists honored a deceased pastor during their annual meeting Oct. 16-17.

Action was taken at the meeting, which was held at Liberty Grove Baptist Church in Loretto and Bonnettown Baptist Church in Bonnettown, to dedicate the association's 1986 annual to the memory of Milton Michael, former pastor of Mars Hill Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg.

The officers, who were all re-elected, are Bob Jones, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Loretto, moderator; Lamar

Moore, pastor of Leoma Baptist Church in Leoma, vice-moderator; Jerry Putman, a member of Park Grove Baptist Church in Ethridge, treasurer; and Susie Paris, a member of Mt. Horeb Baptist Church in Ethridge, clerk.

The annual meeting in 1987 will be Oct. 22-23 at Mt. Horeb Baptist Church and First Baptist Church in Loretto. The association's director of missions is Frank Proffitt.

New Bethel church calls Ronnie Sells as pastor

Ronnie Sells began his ministry as pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church in Middleton on Sept. 21.

A native of Memphis, Sells previously served as pastor of Lakeview Baptist Church, Selmer.

Sells was graduated from Union University in Jackson.

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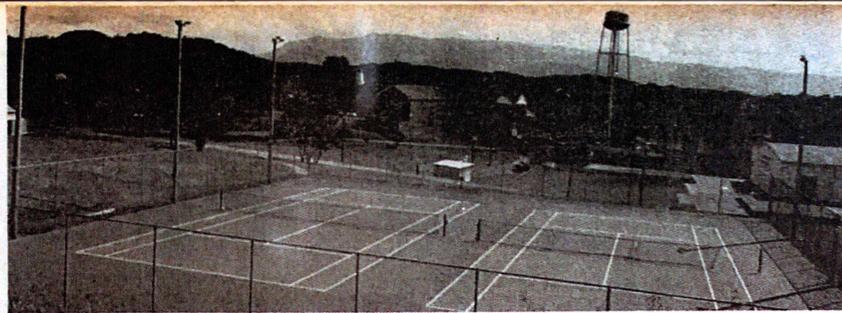
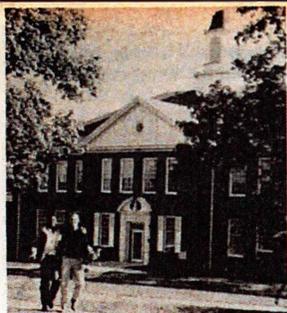
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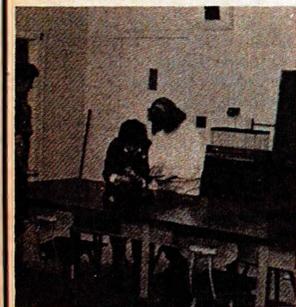
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President's Address

A people of great heritage, great heart,

Editor's Note: This is the manuscript of the President's Address for this week's Tennessee Baptist Convention in Johnson City. The message was scheduled to be preached Nov. 11 by James McCluskey, TBC president and pastor of Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville.

By James McCluskey

I. Tennessee Baptists: A People of Great Heritage

Two hundred years ago this area in which we meet for the 112th annual session of the Tennessee Baptist Convention was on the frontier of a new nation.

The first settlers came into Tennessee while the earliest colonies in America were still under the rule of England. As new settlers came into this Indian territory, Baptists were among them.

Baptists in the original colonies of America had already organized and adopted the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. Though few in number, the influence of our Baptist forefathers was significant in forging principles of religious freedom in this emerging nation.

From North Carolina and Virginia, settlers came across the mountains we call the Great Smokies. By 1772, four groups had built their homes in the Tennessee Territory claimed by the Cherokees. One group settled along the Watauga River, another near the present site of Bristol, a third in Carter's Valley, and the fourth group built on the Nolachucky River.

After the Revolutionary War, the new Congress of the United States of America proposed that the states give their western lands to the federal government so that Congress could sell the lands and pay war debts. All the states agreed, and in 1784 North Carolina ceded to the United States the territory that is now Tennessee. Three counties existed at this time — Washington, Sullivan, and Green.

Even as the short-lived State of Franklin came into existence, the first Baptist churches were being formed by our Baptist forefathers. Among the earliest churches established were Sinking Creek, Buffalo Ridge, Clinch River, and Glade Hollows. While the exact dates of the beginnings of these churches are not known, all of them existed by the year 1779.

Baptist churches were organized rapidly after about 1780. Willow Murphy, James Keel, Thomas Murrell, Isaac Burton, Matthew Talbot, Joshua Kelby, and John Chastain came from Virginia and Tidence Lane came from North Carolina to settle in what was called the Holston Valley. These ministers were accompanied by a number of the church members from the churches which they had left behind.

By 1781, a number of other churches had been organized. These churches met together twice a year for fellowship and mutual strengthening and help, while remaining under the direction of the Sandy Creek Baptist Association in North Carolina.

Because of the distance and the difficulty of travel and communication with the approval of the North Carolina brethren, they organized their own association, called the Holston Baptist Association. On October 30, 1786, when the United States of America was 10 years old and this area was a developing frontier, our Baptist forefathers organized their first Baptist association in Tennessee Territory. Tidence Lane was elected the first moderator.

The churches grew and experienced steady progress with the increasing population. New churches were organized as new communities grew up. By 1802, Holston association contained 36 churches with between 2,000 and 3,000 members. Revivals and new settlements rapidly increased the number of churches.

Time does not permit tracing our Tennessee Baptist heritage through 200 years of exciting history, but our heritage is woven with dedication in the face of difficulty, vision in storms of disappointment, and determination in the times of frustration. Institutions have been born of travail and divine leadership. Ministries have been developed with meager resources.

But heritage is not merely to be reflected upon. Heritage is to be a base to build upon and continue. We will repay the debt of our heritage by reaching new heights as we build upon the foundations laid before us. Tennessee Baptists are not only a people of great heritage, we also have been a people of great heart.

II. Tennessee Baptists: A People of Great Heart

In the Bible, the heart is spoken of as the repository and directive center of thought, will, feeling, and conscience. The heart is the seat of emotion: it can be glad, sad, troubled, courageous, discouraged, fearful, envious, trustful, generous, loving. The heart is said to fail, to faint, to melt, to tremble, to throb, to flutter, to grow hard, to be sick, to be broken.

The heart is also the center of intellectual life. "To think" is "to say in the heart." With the heart man makes his plans, seeks knowledge and understanding, stores memory, and processes wisdom.

The heart is also the center of will and of the moral life. The heart can be evil: it may be filled with pride, become hardened, stubborn, godless, or turned from God. The heart can be good: perfect, blameless, clean, upright, honest, and pure.

The heart is the point of contact with God. The heart speaks to God, trust Him. The Word of God dwells in it; there faith takes its rise. God looks upon the heart and knows its secrets. Christ dwells in the heart and the peace of Christ reigns.

My impression is that in the context of this historic convention, the use of "great heart" refers to a great commitment of faith that has resulted in determination, endurance, and accomplishments.

We have no Baptist "saints" in the canonized sense. We do thank God today for those set apart to His service, whose great commitment of heart, their very being, has brought us to this moment.

Like the author of Hebrews when naming those in "Faith's Hall of Fame," time would fail me if I tried to name those of great heart in our heritage.

People like Tidence Lane, William Murphy, Isaac Barton, J. M. Robertson, J. T. Henderson, A. U. Boone, William Cornelius Golden, Oscar Eugene Bryan, John D. Freeman, J. T. Warren, Fred Brown, and R. G. Lee, all now among the cloud of witnesses, should inspire us as we run the race that is set before us.

These and other men and women whose names have long been forgotten had great hearts of commitment. By faith, they conquered lands, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, overcame obstacles, were made strong from weakness, became mighty in power, experienced disappointments, and were tested.

One of the great-hearted men of our denomination was Dr. Fred F. Brown, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Knoxville from 1921-1946. He was president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1933. During the years of the Great Depression in the early 1930s, Tennessee Baptists were devastated by economic conditions and the failure of the 75 Million Campaign. Tennessee Baptists and Southern Baptists were heavily in debt — and almost bankrupt.

In 1932, gifts to the Cooperative Program by all of the 1,873 churches in Tennessee totaled \$290,953. Of that amount, the First Baptist Church of Knoxville, under Dr. Fred Brown's leadership, gave \$46,427 — over 15 percent of the total amount. For one church to give 15 percent of our present budget would require a gift of over \$3-million! Never before or since has this convention received such a percentage of support from one church.

III. Tennessee Baptists: A People of Great Hope

The word "hope" turns our thoughts from the past to the present and to the future. Hope in the New Testament is not a wishful dream, but unshakable confidence in the person and work of Jesus Christ, Who Himself is "the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

Hope is blessed assurance. If time permitted, we could recall the times during the past 200 years when Tennessee Baptists have demonstrated great hope in seemingly hopeless times and circumstances.

But history provides a foundation for acting in the present and the future. The basis of past hope is the ground for present hope. A Scriptural and spiritual base can be affirmed in a passage of Scripture and in two great hymns.

The Scripture is 1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

One hymn is: "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ the solid rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand."

Another hymn says: "O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, our shelter from the stormy blast and our eternal home."

God will be faithful to us! The question is will we be faithful to God? Therefore I would like to mention some basis of hope related to our faithfulness to God.

The hope of evangelism/missions — I purposefully use these two words together. It seems to me the difference in these two words is basically geographical. There may be distinctions that can be made and should be made in other contexts, but for here and now, I

distinguish between evangelism/missions by location. Evangelism is sharing and ministering the good news of Jesus Christ in your own "Jerusalem." Missions is sharing and ministering the good news of Jesus Christ in your "Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth."

Some churches are characterized as very evangelistic oriented churches. Other churches are characterized as very missions oriented churches. An "either/or" syndrome easily develops. New Testament churches were not "either/or"! They were "both/and" — both evangelistic and missions oriented. A church has not fulfilled Christ's commission when it has done "either/or."

The hope of Tennessee Baptists is to continue to develop a great ministry of evangelism/missions. Evangelism/missions must be given the number one priority of individuals, churches, and the convention.

The hope of independence/cooperation — These two words seem to stand in contradiction. But both words as related to our churches are vital to our hope.

The autonomy of the local church is a Baptist principle that must be preserved. Some Baptist churches call themselves "Independent Baptist." Every Baptist church is an independent church, free from the authority of any other church or body. But independence from authority does not mean independence from the responsibility of cooperation. Cooperation is as much a Baptist principle as independence.

Independent Baptists will not be a vital force in winning the world to Jesus Christ. A spirit of self-centeredness eats away at their potential growth. Lack of cooperation stifles a comprehensive program of evangelism/missions.

A few years ago, a member of our church, who had served in the military for many years, died. His widow requested that his favorite song be sung at his funeral. His song was, "I Did It My Way."

I sense a threatening spirit of independence among us. It is couched under an idea of a willingness to cooperate only if things are done "my way." That kind of independent spirit will lead to self-destruction.

A popular phrase among us today is, "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, diversity; in all things, love." That's good — as long as I get to decide what are the essentials!

Cooperation does not call for the compromise of truth. Cooperation does require a spirit of love, humility, and commitment. It is often more tempting to compromise the spirit of love than of truth!

The hope of participation — There is a healthy emphasis in Baptist life today on participation. Recent events in Southern Baptist life have certainly resulted in increased participation in convention affairs. For years I lamented that more lay people did not attend the Southern Baptist Convention. No more.

The desire for participation in Baptist life is good, as long as the desire to participate has as the motive of serving rather than ruling. The Tennessee Baptist Convention needs those who would be servants, not lords. Broader representation of Tennessee Baptists on Committees and Boards is needed. Much attention has been given during this past year by the Committee on Committees and the Committee on Boards to including people from more churches and

and great hope

geographical areas to serve our convention. Where inequities exist they should be corrected. I have sought to call attention to the inequity that few women now serve on our boards and committees.

Attempts to deal with the makeup of committees and boards by hard rules and regulations defining numbers from churches, number of laymen or laywomen would, in my opinion, create more problems than solutions. The insertion of political strategies to accomplish well-meaning objectives would be detrimental and divisive.

But greater participation by Tennessee Baptists must be far more than attendance at conventions and meetings. The hope to win our world to Jesus Christ depends upon enlisting, training, and equipping Tennessee Baptist saints in personal witnessing and serving. Tragically, few of our people are in the game. Most are idle spectators and not very enthused spectators at that.

Volunteer missions will play an increasing role in our effective outreach. Our sister relationships with Venezuela and Michigan are resulting in hundreds of Tennessee Baptists participating in effective evangelism/missions. Evangelism/missions is no longer just something you give money to, it is something you do! This kind of personal involvement and participation is a great hope. Each church needs to offer the opportunities of discipleship training and leadership training to all members. Members of our churches must be aided in discovering and developing their spiritual gifts. Every Tennessee Baptist should be a minister of Jesus Christ.

The hope of faithful stewardship — Wouldn't it be wonderful if our proposed budget gave the needed financial support to every area of our work? The truth is that if Tennessee Baptists were faithful in giving as God has blessed us, we would not lack for anything we need.

All pastors have played the "What if..." game. In the perplexity of working out our own church budget for the coming year, we have figured the tithe potential of our church and thought about what could be accomplished if every member tithed.

The sad truth is that in the average Tennessee Baptist church, the members return about two to three percent of their income to God's work through His church.

When denominational workers play the "What if..." game, they figure the potential of the Cooperative Program if every church gave a worthy percentage of their income to world missions through the Cooperative Program.

The sad truth is that Tennessee Baptist churches last year gave about 7.6 percent of their income to world missions through the Cooperative Program. Whatever you want to say about that, it isn't bold and unless we are more faithful stewards individually and as churches, "Bold Missions" will be only an idle slogan without great effect in the last decade of this century.

When preparing to lead a conference on "Planned Growth in Giving" last year, I did some "What if..." calculations. What if we led the people of our Tennessee Baptist churches to better stewardship that reached just the 5 percent level of giving (just half of a tithe),

and what if Tennessee Baptist churches increased giving to an average of just 12 percent to the Cooperative Program of world missions? The results would be of giving through the Cooperative Program in 1987 over \$60-million, almost three times our proposed budget for next year!

When in Venezuela last February, I was amazed at how much our Venezuelan Baptist friends accomplished with so little. By contrast, I am ashamed at how little we as Tennessee Baptists accomplish with so much.

The hope of grace — Tennessee Baptists have been "a people of great heritage, great heart, and great hope." It is amazing what God has done for us, to us, with us, and through us. His grace is amazing.

Recently in preaching through the Gospel of John, I preached a message entitled, "The First Stone," based on the story of the woman caught in adultery and brought before Jesus. Every person in the congregation was given a stone as they entered the sanctuary. The message centered on the forgiving spirit that comes from being forgiven by Jesus Christ.

I concluded the sermon by sharing a story from Roger Lovett of Clemson, S.C. He related that a woman came to see him once and told him that she was eaten up with guilt over the way she had treated someone else. She had done some terrible things to someone she loved. Now that person was dead and she could not find forgiveness. She did not know what to do. Week after week she came back, repeating the same sad story. She desperately wanted to be forgiven, but she could not feel the cleansing power of God.

Finally, after many visits, he grew desperate. How could this woman under-

stand that God would take her sins and remember them no more? So one week he took a chair, put it in front of her, and said, "God is sitting in this chair. I want you to tell Him whatever you want Him to know about how you feel about what you have done. Whatever you want to tell Him, just let it out. I'm going to sit here and listen. But I want you to talk to God and not me."

So reluctantly, she began to pour it all out, bits and pieces of her guilt and her sin. Finally after a long time, she seemed to be finished. He then asked her to move to the chair where God had been sitting and sit there. Puzzled, she did this.

Then he said, "Now I want God to respond to this woman and to all she has said today. What would He say if He were sitting where you sit?" She sat there for just a minute and then said, "Can I move back into the other chair for a minute? I've got something else to tell Him." She moved, talked for just a minute, and then moved back to the chair where God had been sitting. She looked for a long, long time at the chair where she had sat and confessed.

Then, very lovingly, she spoke quietly. "I want to tell this woman that I know how she feels, and I know that she means it and I forgive her right now, but it will probably take her a long, long time to realize she's forgiven." Without any coercion on Lovett's part, she moved from God's chair back into her own. Tears streamed down her face, and over and over again she said the same thing, "Wow! Wow! Wow!"

When I think of what God has done for me, when I think of what God has done for Tennessee Baptists, when I reflect upon our great heritage, our great heart, our great hope, I too say, "Wow!"

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Convention Sermon

The people of God and His commission

Editor's Note: This is the manuscript of the Convention Sermon for this week's Tennessee Baptist Convention in Johnson City. The sermon was scheduled to be preached Nov. 11 by Dillard Mynatt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Oak Ridge.

By Dillard A. Mynatt

Text: John 1:40-45; Matthew 28:16-20

Do you know what the following people have in common: Ava Barber, Doug Dickey, and Albert Gore Jr.?

As a struggling young singer, Ava heard that Lawrence Welk was going to be in Nashville playing golf. She drove to Nashville, found the golf course, and finally found Welk. Impressed by her determination, he listened to her sing. As a result of this very unusual audition, she became a featured soloist of country and western music on his television show.

Doug Dickey is a very familiar name to Tennessee sports fans. In addition to being the father of Daryl Dickey who led the Tennessee Volunteers to a Southeastern Conference football championship last year, Doug is also the athletic director of the University of Tennessee. Expectations of him are high.

Albert Gore Jr., of course, is our junior senator from Tennessee. He is already making quite a name for himself and appears to have a very promising political future ahead of him.

Now let me tell you what these people have in common. They are all Tennesseans. They all have done quite well in their professions. They all are Baptist

and hold membership in Tennessee Baptist churches.

Baptist people are as diverse as these three of our members. In that diversity lies the genius and richness of our heritage. Our buildings are different. We have both the simple meeting houses of worship and the large multi-purpose structures. Our worship styles are different. Some churches sing the first, second, and last verses. Others do not even announce the hymns. Music ranges from string quartets to shaped notes. We are not Xerox copies of one another. Our methods of "doing church" differ from congregation to congregation. I believe this diversity enriches us. This diversity of Baptists and our varying styles of churches give us, I believe, a better shot at carrying out the Commission of our Lord and winning a fragmented world.

I believe that our Lord had this in mind when He issued the challenge of this Commission. He knew there would be people like Matthew who could quickly look at the facts at hand and act on them right on the spot. He knew there would be people like Thomas who were always reaching out for spiritual certainty. He knew there would be people who would be a little slower in coming to conclusions, peo-

ple who would be determined to weigh the evidence before acting. He knew there would be people like Nathaniel. Any pastor can tell you what it is like dealing with people like Nathaniel. These are the kind of people with the "can anything good come out of Nazareth" attitude that can be so distracting as they work through their call of discipleship. He knew there would be people like Andrew. These are the kind of ordinary people who end up doing so many extra-ordinary things. He treasured such people who looked upon servanthood as keeping self in the background. Then, of course, he knew there would be people like Simon Peter. We are told more about him than any other disciple. I believe one of the reasons for this is because so many are reminded of themselves when they think of Simon Peter. His hot and cold allegiance required a lot of patience from our Lord. Yet, our Lord worked with him and led him into becoming one who would be leading others.

Here we see people so unlike one another in so many different ways who allowed the claims of Jesus Christ to take them and make of them a part of a movement that would shake the very foundation of the world.

If there is anything that has forged unity out of diversity among Tennessee Baptists it has been our commitment to the Great Commission: to go into all the world and make disciples. This is our mandate and we must be faithful to it if we are going to be found faithful to His call.

1. Let us look at what this Commission calls for us to do.

It has a double thrust to make disciples involves "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." This is an evangelistic dimension of this Commission. It also involves "teaching them to observe all I have commanded you." This is an ethical dimension of the Commission. Our mission involves both. The integrity of the gospel demands both.

A Baptist scholar in applied Christianity in the early part of this century put it this way, "There are two great entities in human life, the human soul and the human race—and religion is to serve both."

This double dimension involves both baptizing and teaching. This translates into a two-fold task of preaching grace and teaching the things of grace. Elizabeth O'Connor claims that the Great Commission has an internal, as well as an external, meaning. She contends that our Lord was referring 'to ourselves within' as well as to the peoples of other lands and cultures. I agree.

(1) What are we doing about the first dimension of this Commission? Our first priority is the proclamation of the saving grace of Jesus Christ. This is basic. We cannot nurture someone in faith who has not been reached. The church that does not take this dimension of our Lord's Commission seriously is living dangerously with its very future.

Through the years evangelism has been one of our strongest priorities. However, this does not seem to be the case now. For example, Southern Baptists grew by 45 percent in the 1940's; 37 percent in the 1950's; 16 percent in the 1960's; and 14 percent during the 1970's. We grew from 4.9-million denomination in 1940 to more than 13.6-million in 1980.

But this rate of growth has leveled off.

The average Tennessee Baptist church is doing little more than baptizing its own young, but another alarming trend has developed in Baptist life. Let me be specific. For the past five years, Southern Baptist churches have averaged receiving 2,500 children under six years of age into their memberships by baptism per year. I think this says something far more about our indifference to reaching outside the walls of the church in evangelism than it says about the abundance of God's grace.

In view of this indifference we need to realize that 80-million Americans have no church tie. Nearly one half of the population of Tennessee has no church tie. According to the latest figures that I could obtain, out of our total population of 4,591,120, only around 2,250,000 Tennessee residents are members of any kind of church. The prospects are around us. Even as the trend has moved toward zero population growth, we are not keeping up. In fact we are losing ground.

We must take this dimension of our Lord's Commission more seriously. If we really believe that Jesus Christ can make a difference in a human life, we need to start doing a better job proclaiming it.

I thought it was well said by an old janitor friend of mine one day. He said, "There is not a lot of difference in people but that difference can make all the difference in the world." Nothing can be more important for us to be doing. The Great Commission calls us to be about telling others about a difference that can make all the difference in the world.

(2) What are we doing about the other dimension of the Commission? In the Great Commission the baptism is followed by teaching — believing is hooked up to behaving. Teaching is necessary because the gospel is concerned both with salvation and starvation, with both redemption and racism, with both prayer and peacemaking. According to this Commission, we do not have the luxury of either-or; it must be both-and.

Conversion as taught in the Bible is deeply personal, but it is never private. Conversion and the lordship of Jesus Christ go hand in hand. There are no neutral zones left untouched when true conversion is experienced.

The founder of the Salvation Army, William Booth, questioned the conventional Christianity of his day and speaks also to ours when he asked, "Why all these temples and tabernacles to save people from a perdition in a life to come, when never a helping hand is stretched forth to save people from the inferno of their present lives?"

Teaching them to observe all things involves dealing with the tough and complex issues of life. We should be concerned in helping our people through teaching and action. We should be involved in helping to build up, not to tear down. We must teach our people that God in Jesus Christ has directed His mercy to everyone of us right down to the last and the least. Soon many of our churches all over the state will be singing the Messiah. I am not sure that we are aware of the volatility of its words, "Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low" (Isaiah 40:4). Isaiah was not talking about rezoning real estate. He was saying that the God Who is to come in power is concerned with the inequities of life and will be right here in the middle of

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them all trying to correct them with all of us from the least to the last.

One of the illusions that many people have is that if enough people are converted to the Christian faith, then everything is going to be fine and all the vexing problems of society are going to disappear. The difference between such a simplistic view and truth lies in teaching. This is the reason that Jesus made teaching a part of the Great Commission. People must be taught. It cannot be assumed that a profession of faith will result automatically into Christ-like living.

We must never forget that there were many Christians who shouted "Never" to integrated schools. We must never forget that in some of our areas were housed not only strong churches but also some of the strongest outposts of the Ku Klux Klan. Unfortunately, some of the members were dually aligned. It does not follow that a believer in Christ will automatically behave like one. There must be teaching.

I believe we can come a long way if we will attempt to grasp the words of our Lord as recorded in Matthew 25, "As you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me." Carefully, He is teaching us that love is something you do. A church at its best represents not dogma in search of conformity, but love in search of form. Just as Jesus is God's love personified, so the church is God's love organized—organized to share His grace that we might be taught in it wherein we can know why we should stand for justice and right and reach out to heal the wounded and the broken.

II. Let us look at some opportunities that we will have to proclaim this Commission.

The concluding words of the Great Commission, "And, lo, I am with you always unto the end of the world," are not there by accident. Every one of these words is emphatic. There is a promise here of a spiritual presence to be ever among His followers to guide, lead, and direct. Realizing this promise, we must seek and follow His leadership in regard to the opportunities that we have to put this Commission into practice. Although there are many, I would like to mention the following:

(1) It appears that we as Tennessee Baptists are going to have the opportunity to witness to more people from different backgrounds and cultures than ever before in our history. The population of our country is migrating South and West. For the first time in our country's history the majority of our population lives in Southern and Western states. The Census Bureau is projecting that by the turn of the century that 43 percent of the population will live in the Sun Belt states. Try if you can to draw an imaginary line from Richmond, Va. to Los Angeles, Calif. Below this line are the states where the people are coming, and Tennessee is right in the middle of them all. As these new people move into our state, we are going to have the opportunity to witness to more people from complete different backgrounds in American life. We are going to have the opportunity to share a witness to more people than ever before—of different nationalities and from different cultures.

Some of you in the larger cities of Tennessee are already dealing with some of these opportunities. If these projections prove to be accurate, these opportunities will touch every town and village in Tennessee. For example, in the city where I serve, which has a population of around 28,000 people, we have a significant number of people who have moved there from other countries and, of course, brought their religious traditions and

customs with them. I have found these people to be good people and excellent citizens but most of them have never heard of the name of Jesus Christ.

What an opportunity we have! Perhaps we need to be reminded of Paul's visit to Athens. As he entered the city, he could see the countless gods. Paul looked upon this visit as an opportunity of a lifetime. He didn't case the situation and say, "Well, I see that you have your gods and I have my God. I was just traveling through making a study of comparative religions. Does anyone know of a good Greek restaurant where I can eat tonight?" No—Paul saw an opportunity and he preached unto them the Resurrected Christ. These people offer for us a great opportunity, Tennessee Baptists, and let's do something about it.

(2) The Great Commission calls for us to minister more to families that are rapidly changing in character. Last year there were 2.1-million marriages and 1.1-million divorces in America. It is believed that the high divorce rate and deferred child-bearing will continue. Consequently, single parent and individual households are projected to increase from 53 percent of all American families to 57 percent by 1990.

Here in Tennessee last year a record number of single people applied for the adoption of children. Regardless of the very impressive numbers of these people, most of them still feel out of step or feel that they don't fit in church life because of our programming toward the traditional family. These people are the objects of God's love, and we must respond by doing all that we can to convey it to them.

Another group of the family that we must minister to is the elderly. With life expectancy now reaching into the mid-70's, the 75 and older group is the fastest growing segment in our population. Less than 5 percent of these people are residents of some kind of nursing home. More than 75 percent of them live independently. These people must not be forgotten or overlooked because they may not be as useful and productive as they once were. They, too, are the objects of God's love, and we must respond by doing all that we can to convey it to them.

(3) I would like to mention one other opportunity that is rapidly coming upon us. This opportunity involves a new breed of young people 21 years of age and younger who have been raised on the computer. It would certainly be an oversimplification to suggest that all the values and lifestyles of this group have been shaped by the computer age, but there can be no question of the fact that their attitudes will have to be dealt with in the sharing of the gospel.

I am indebted to an article about this subject entitled, "Here Come the Computer Babies," by Reginald McDonough. He points out five characteristics that we will have to deal with in a witness of this group.

(a) They are very autonomous people. This group has been trained to scan through large amounts of information to find specific solutions. They will be more inclined to want the freedom to be 'on their own' in searching for answers rather than being confined to a group.

(b) They will be very selective people. They place great emphasis upon the best choice from all the alternatives available. Vague and general answers to their questions will turn them off.

(c) They are people of great flexibility. They have been conditioned to believe that the end result is what counts. Process is less important to them than results. They will be very responsive to

innovation. To them flexibility is the name of the game.

(d) They are influenced by a world view of things. The computer has made them accustomed to world ideas. They will be very impatient with persons who want to limit their search for answers to the immediate vicinity. The ability and desire of this group to access the resources of the world will affect their view of religion and how they feel about faith.

(e) They will be very concise people. Dealing with so much information so rapidly, they like to come to the bottom-line immediately. They will not be responsive to a lot of detailed discussions or sifting through a lot of paper work. They will look for an answer and look for it quickly.

A special sensitivity will be needed to share the gospel with this group and help them grow in Christlikeness, but it is an opportunity that we must be a part of. They are objects of God's love and we must prepare and do all that we can to convey it to them.

III. The integrity of what is promised in the Great Commission must not be compromised.

Jesus illustrated in the Temptation experience that truth cannot be compromised for attention, fame, or power. He could have attracted larger numbers of people at times had He been willing to compromise His claims that were involved in following after Him. His call in salvation is for the total person—mind, soul, heart, and body. Jesus was also upfront with His potential followers that possible peril could be in store. He put it this way, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nests; but the Son of man hath no where to lay His head" (Matthew 8:20). He saw people 'turn and go away' from His call. Thomas O'Kempis read it right when he wrote, "Jesus has many lovers of His

heavenly kingdom but few bearers of His cross."

It takes integrity to claim that the Christian life is not always easy, but it is also true that it is a life that is fulfilling. It takes integrity to claim that the Christian life can complicate life when one responds to the pains and hurts of others, but it is also true that there is a sense of fulfillment found in walking along beside others who turn to us.

Yet, it is the life above all life. It is a life that can make life. It is a life that can give real meaning to life, and we as Tennessee Baptists must do everything we can to commend it to others.

I have a young minister friend who uses a beautiful play on words in describing those closing moments in the life of Moses as he was leading the children of Israel to the Promised Land. My friend describes it this way, "Moses didn't get into the Promised Land but the Promised Land got into Moses."

With a similar play on the words of the Great Commission, I would like to appeal to you, my fellow Tennessee Baptists, that we allow the words—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" to get into us and that we do something about them.

From one end of this state to the other; from the smallest church to the largest church; from the farmer to the executive; from the oldest to the youngest—everyone of us as Tennessee Baptists—I appeal to you, let's get on with it. Let's begin and do something now.

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BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for Nov. 16

Jesus declares authority

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

Basic Passage: John 5:19-47
Focal Passages: John 5:20-24, 26-29, 36-40, 46-47

During His incarnated ministry, Jesus was so dedicated to doing the will of the Father that His works were identical to the Father's (John 5:19-20).

This is the perfect example for disciples of today. Does what you do in life reflect God? What concepts about God do other people gain from your talk and actions?



Bush

The less you and I allow the Spirit of God to work in our lives, the less authority we have to claim God as our Father. We are His children, His sheep, and as we behave accordingly so will our influence on other lives be gauged.

From 5:21-30, we receive clear instruction from Jesus that He and the Father are in an unusual partnership, an extraordinary relationship. They possess power over both physical and spiritual life and final judgment is theirs. It does not belong to anyone else or any group. Praise be to God that His disciples will not be condemned for their sins, though they deserve condemnation and judgment.

As believers read this passage of Scripture, they can appropriately sing and even shout, "Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a sinner like me."

In verses 31-32, it seems that Jesus is referring to Mosaic Law which required at least two or more witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15) to corroborate a case. Jesus, in verse 32, refers to "another" witness Who is God. Later in verse 33, He speaks of John the Baptist who declared the truth as to Who Jesus was.

It is wonderful that even though people were pestering Jesus, questioning His authority, He was deeply concerned for

their salvation (verse 34). Are you eager for communists, Buddhists, Moonies, and other enemies of the gospel of truth to be your brothers and sisters in Christ or do you hate them and prefer to bomb or in some other way destroy them?

The power of God cannot be enjoyed in a life until belief in the Son and obedience to Him is exercised (vv. 36-38). The works of Jesus revealed His divine power. He was not just some wandering prophet or itinerant preacher and teacher. Even though Jesus displayed divine power—healing the sick and raising the dead to life—His critics still denied Who He was.

Blindness to the miraculous work of God, to the truth of God, is still much in existence today. Short of living and speaking the truth as it has been revealed to us, there is nothing we can do to change the minds of those who will not listen. But, we still must live and proclaim Jesus to unsaved neighbors and the world in the hope that they eventually will receive Christ.

Remember, you and I are not responsible for the results of our witnessing but we are responsible to God for living and telling the truth of the gospel. What people do with the truth is between them and God. By the way, the same is true concerning Christians. That is, Christians who refuse to grow even when confronted with truth must answer to God for their sluggishness, their hardness of heart.

Religious folk almost 2,000 years ago confused the law (5:39-47) with the Person as to the source of redemption. In our day and time, followers of the Lord Christ, if they are not careful, may confuse the power of a certain prescribed set of written words with the Source Whom those words of truth are supposed to reveal.

Life is in Christ. Revered written words and words proclaimed by men and women inspired by God to preach and teach the truth of God must point to God and not themselves. Otherwise a form of idolatry and misplaced emphases may occur.

Serious Bible study and prayer which seeks to keep on learning new truth and to reaffirm wholesome convictions about Christ and His will is vital to those who would grow and learn, those who would be dynamic and gracious Christians for "the living of these days."

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for Nov. 16

A promise of return

By W. Clyde Tilley, professor of religion and philosophy
Union University, Jackson

Basic Passage: Zechariah 8:1-17
Focal Passage: Zechariah 8:3-13

Assyria conquered Israel and scattered her so that she was never gathered again. Babylon conquered Judah and colonized her in Babylon, thus preserving her identity. Persia conquered Babylon and then permitted the colonized Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their city.



Tilley

Zechariah, along with Haggai, prophesied to Jerusalem during those early years when the rebuilding of the Temple lagged.

Zechariah 8 is a series of ten oracles (messages) from God, each of which is introduced with the words, "Thus says the Lord of hosts" (vv. 2,3,4,6,7,9,14,19,20,23). Five of these are involved in the focal passage.

A picture of peace (8:3-6)

A remnant of Judah already had returned to Jerusalem. Now the promise is that the Lord Himself will return and dwell in the midst of the city (v.3). This sense in which God will return has to do with the impending completion of the Temple which will permit Him to take up residence there again. It also refers to the coming peace of the city which will signal the full presence of God.

Some translations render the promise, "I will return" (RSV), as past tense (KJV, NEB). The Hebrew verb is a prophetic perfect tense denoting something in the future as having already the certainty of an accomplished fact because God has determined it. The Jerusalem of the future is called "faithful" and "holy," two characteristics that had certainly eluded it in recent years.

In this picture of future peace in verse 4, we have a cross-section of the extremes in the population of the city: the very old and the very young.

Living to an old age denoted fullness of life. The elderly sitting in the street with their staffs denoted the quietude and tranquility of the city.

Children playing in and filling the street suggests fruitfulness and hope for the future.

The togetherness of senior citizens and children suggests the instilling of an ancient heritage from one to the other.

The question of verse 6 is a difficult one. Perhaps it means something like this: Such an accomplishment is not only a wonder to you; it is so great as to be no less a wonder to God!

A promise of peace (8:7-8)

It is almost as if you have a third dimension superimposed upon the picture of verse 6. There young and old dwell together. Here God's own presence

complements that picture and interacts with its people.

The mutuality of this relationship is underscored in that "they shall be My people and I will be their God" (v.8). This reaffirms the covenant relationship that had been under strain in the exilic experience.

The kind of peace depicted above is bound up with God's saving activity and His personal presence. The work of God in restoration was to be understood as saving activity in the same way that His original deliverance of them from Egypt had been.

A further gathering of the dispersed Jews is anticipated. Large numbers of them had gone not only to Babylon but had fled to Egypt. This gathering and saving work will involve the bringing of God's people from different directions. This renewal and mutual relationship will be characterized by faithfulness and righteousness on the part of both parties of the covenant.

The pursuit of peace (8:9-13)

Amid the promises of a peaceful society that shall prevail when the Temple has been restored and God's residence among them is secured, there is an appeal for renewed activity, for a resumption of building. "Let your hands be strong" both begins and closes this oracle (vv.9,13).

God is going to reverse the fortunes of His people. Up to now there has been unemployment, idleness, insecurity, and conflict (v.10). In this new era there will be peace, prosperity, productivity, and abundance (v.12). The people shall cease to be a curse to the nations and become a blessing (v.13).

Interpreters disagree about whether these promises are conditional or unconditional, past or future, literal or symbolic. What seems clear is that God's promises of a new day are not a substitute for human involvement but an incentive for it.

How often have God's people used His promises of a golden age for our future as an excuse for not attacking the difficult social problems and injustices of our time? "God will set things right and He will do it soon."

This we have maintained for almost 2,000 years as a church, often using it as a cop-out for not being activists in the fields of human and social need. We do not feel a need to get involved in peace issues because God's peace is coming; or hunger issues because God's plenty is coming.

Whatever God's promises embrace, they are certainly intended to involve us more deeply in the problems of the world about us rather than to insulate us from them. Wouldn't it be strange if while we wait for Christ's second coming, He is waiting for us to incorporate the truth of the gospel of His first coming into our lives and into our societies? "Let your hands be strong."

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LIFE AND WORK SERIES
Lesson for Nov. 16

Obedience

By Fred M. Wood
author, preacher, teacher, Memphis

Basic Passage: Genesis 6:1 to 7:24
Focal Passages: Genesis 6:5-9, 12-14; 7:5,23

Most cultures, perhaps all, have a flood story in their national heritage. This gives credence to the fact that the Genesis account is rooted in history.

The Biblical story far surpasses those of other groups, being related to judgment of the people for their moral bankruptcy. A high concept of God's holiness is present in the Hebrew account. This is seldom, if ever, found in other flood literature.



Wood

Though the line from Cain deteriorated rapidly, the descendants of Seth remained godly for only a period of time. Eventually, the entire world became filled with wickedness. God could not allow the condition to continue!

A divine decision (6:5-7)

Sin spreads rapidly. The new beginning that took place with Seth came to an awful conclusion. When God viewed His creation, He saw nothing but abounding iniquity. We must not understand God's repentance as having a moral connotation. God has a free will and can change His mind.

Jeremiah gave us a classic statement of the conditional element in all God's promises or pronouncements to His creation (18:1-10). To harmonize the statement that "it repented the Lord that He had made man" with God's omniscience, is not necessary. Higher laws exist in the spiritual world than we can possibly understand.

The statement that the thoughts of the people's heart were "only evil continually" is a great indictment of their sinfulness and, according to one scholar, "the strongest statement concerning human depravity in the Old Testament." God would have been untrue to His holiness had He allowed the condition to continue any longer.

One righteous man (6:8-14)

The emphasis of this lesson, however, is not on the sinful world but the obedient man who lived in the midst of it. The expression "found grace" means "attained approval" and indicated Noah sought conscientiously to serve God regardless of how corrupt the society of his day.

The word translated "perfect" means fully developed or complete. It does not refer to sinlessness. Noah was the only person God could find who seemed to be trying sincerely to follow God's leadership.

The phrase "walked with God" means a spiritual fellowship based on obedience and faithfulness. People who so positionize themselves come to a fuller understanding of God's purposes.

Obedience rewarded (7:5,23)

How would you feel if you suddenly realized you would see the world destroyed in your lifetime? Noah must have listened intently as God outlined His plans for saving a remnant of the ruined race.

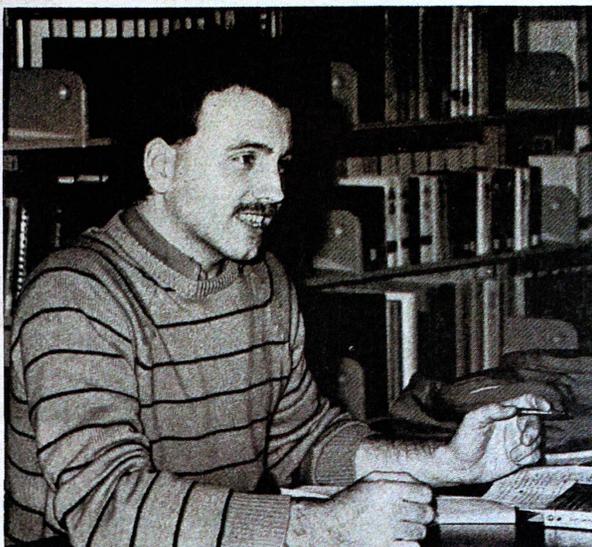
The proportions of the ark are important even today in seagoing vessels. They were exactly correct to withstand a flood of the kind that came. God gave careful instructions concerning the preservation of animal life.

He also allowed Noah's family to be continued through his sons that would be spared. We are not told of their character before the flood, but a later story reveals their tendencies. They are not presented as measuring up to their father's dedication. One especially was guilty of inexcusable conduct. At a later time, even Noah displeased God, but before the flood, he was completely obedient. The Bible presents its character as they were, "warts and all."

Noah's obedience brought his deliverance. If the words were not so familiar, we would be shocked by the statement, "Every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground... Noah only remained alive and they that were with him in the ark."

We of the nuclear age need to read this flood account often! Though we know the Lord will return at God's time, nothing prevents a great holocaust of our own making before that time. We have the resources to do it. God rules everything, however, and can deliver His own any way He wishes at any time in history.

Let us be obedient to His revealed will as we understand it in our day!



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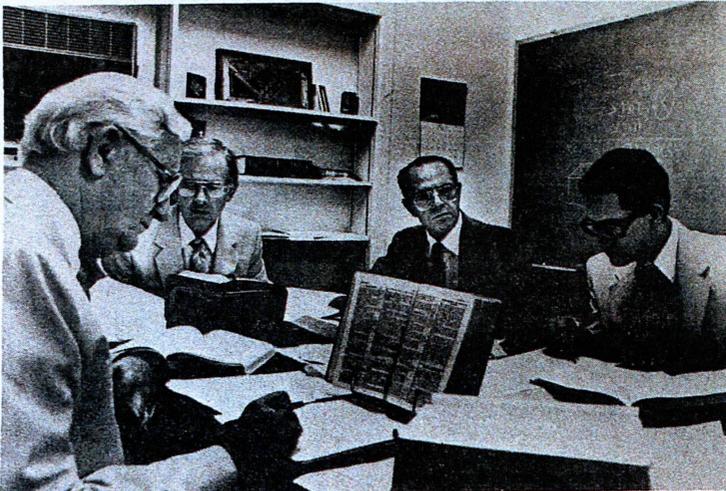
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Missionaries revise classic Spanish Bible



WORD BY WORD - Southern Baptist Missionary Joe Poe (second from left) and his colleagues are revising the classic Reina Valera Bible, the version most beloved by Spanish-speaking evangelicals. Retired Missionary Cecil McConnell (left) and Peruvian Bible scholar Moises Chavez (right) are Poe's main partners in the project. Spanish Baptist Jose Borrás (second from right) is one of many consultants from throughout the Spanish-speaking world who are helping the trio.

By Erich Bridges

EL PASO, Texas (BP) - In a quiet room in west Texas, three men are making history.

Word by painstaking word, they are laboring to produce the first popular revision in a generation of the classic Reina-Valera Bible, the 400-year-old Spanish contemporary of the King James Version.

The men are Southern Baptist Missionary Joe Poe, retired Missionary Cecil McConnell, and Peruvian Bible scholar Moises Chavez. Their dream is a modern Spanish Bible, faithful to the Scriptures and the literary beauty of the Reina-Valera, but understandable and affordable to 250-million people of the Spanish-speaking world.

The complete New Testament began rolling off the presses in May. The full Bible probably will appear in 1988, almost a decade after the project began.

The Baptist Spanish Publishing House in El Paso, an arm of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, is publishing the Reina-Valera Actualizada Version. Poe directs the Bible Publications Department at the publishing house, which distributes Christian literature to more than 40 countries.

Nearly 750,000 New Testaments already have been sold, including a record-breaking order of 235,000 on a single day in August.

Mexican Baptists ordered 100,000 paperback New Testaments - with special covers reading "Mexico, Come Unto Me" above a national map and a soccer ball - for distribution in relation to the recent World Cup soccer competition. Another 100,000 are going to El Salvador with a special cover. Other orders are coming in from throughout Latin America. The New Testament also will be available at Baptist Book Stores and other bookstores in the United States.

The first edition of the New Testament features 13 short Bible studies in the back. The lessons are "designed for people who know nothing about the Bible, have never studied the Bible, or perhaps don't even know how to find a chapter and a verse," says Missionary Sam Shaw, promotion and distribution coordinator for the new Bible.

Publishing house staffers envision training Baptists to use the New Testaments to start as many as 20,000 evangelistic Bible studies. "That's based on each church that we know of in Latin America starting three Bible studies - home studies or in a club, a factory, a park, whatever," Shaw explains. The ultimate goal is for at least 5,000 of the Bible studies to evolve into churches.

Casiodoro de Reina and Cipriano de Valera would approve. Unlike the state church-sponsored scholars who produced the King James Version, the two 16th century Spanish monks risked their lives to begin translating the Bible into the language of the common people. That was a dangerous heresy during the Spanish Inquisition, which banned translation of the Latin Bible into "vulgar tongues."

The pair eventually escaped into Protestant Europe, but a number of their sympathetic brethren at the Monastery of Saint Jerome in Seville were burned at the stake. In 1569, de Reina published the first complete Bible in Spanish, 42 years before the King James Version appeared. His younger companion produced the first revision in 1602.

Do the current revisers feel a spiritual kinship to their courageous predecessors? "Very definitely," replies McConnell, a veteran of more than 40 years of missions in Latin America, who contributed to the 1960 Reina-Valera revision. "Of course, we're not facing the hardships they had to face, the dangers to their lives and lack of support. We also have a wealth of material they just didn't have."

Aided by some 200 consulting Bible scholars from throughout Latin America and Spain, the trio aims for the most accurate revision yet made. Clarity is the key.

"If we have to choose between clarity and the old literary expression, I think we would choose clarity," McConnell explains. "But if the old is clear, then why change it?" McConnell has another maxim, however: "Don't make the Bible clearer than it is."

"When some of our consultants say, 'Let's say it like this because it sounds better in Spanish,' our answer is, 'It may sound better, but is that what it says?' We want it to say what it says."

The three colleagues hope to produce a Bible for general use by church members, preachers, seminary students, and professors - and the Spanish-speaking masses searching for the Word of God.

Judging from soaring sales of the New Testament, they may succeed.

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