

Baptist and Reflector

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BAPTISTS AT OPRY HOUSE — Comedian Jerry Clower (far right) speaks to about 3,800 Tennessee Baptists gathered at Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House Jan. 20 for an emphasis on laypeople during the Tennessee State Evangelism Conference.

Evangelism Conference draws 3,800 Baptists

By Connie Davis

The response of participants in the Jan. 19-20 annual Tennessee Baptist Evangelism Conference can be measured in part by the closing session's attendance at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, which drew 3,800 persons.

Responsive crowds also met in other sessions to hear personal testimonies and strategies and motivation for witnessing. About 1,000 people gathered for the conference's sessions at Belmont Heights Baptist Church in Nashville.

Jerry Clower, Baptist humorist from Yazoo City, Miss., "brought the house down" and received a standing ovation after his message of "I love y'all" (see story on page 3) in the closing session.

Joel Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, also spoke during the evening gathering and led the church staff members present in a commitment time.

Leading the Bible study times during the five-session conference was Ray E. Roberts, second vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention from Asheville, N.C. (See story on page 2.)

In his address at the Grand Ole Opry House, Gregory called Baptists to consider John 12:32, "If I be lifted up I will

draw all men to myself."

The former assistant professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, encouraged the listeners to lift Jesus up personally, redemptively, and magnetically.

Gregory warned against a trend of super churches to "lift up" the preacher. Describing the magnetism of Jesus, Gregory observed that Jesus draws with sensitivity and universality.

"You can't possibly take the gospel to the wrong person in light of this verse," he continued.

Maintaining that persons who are drawn closer to Jesus Christ are drawn closer to each other, Gregory charged that persons in our denomination might be seen as repelling each other instead of loving one another.

"We're living in a world that basically ignores us (Southern Baptists)," said Gregory. Beautiful buildings, mighty institutions, and a great denomination will be ignored. The answer is to lift Him up, he asserted.

In an earlier session of the conference, Gregory posed the question, "Is the first century New Testament strategy for

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Witnesses laud, censure Baptist Joint Committee

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE (BP) — Witnesses lauded and censured the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs during hearings by a special fact-finding committee in late January.

The hearings were conducted by a nine-member committee appointed in September by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee to study the relationship between the 14.6-million-member denomination and the BJCPA, a 50-year-old religious liberty advocacy organization composed of representatives of nine Baptist bodies in the United States and Canada.

The committee was appointed after an effort was made during the 1986 SBC to sever the ties between the two organizations and establish "an exclusive Southern Baptist presence" in the nation's capital.

The man who made the motion, M.G. (Dan) Daniels of Mobile, Ala., was one of the 22 persons who offered testimony during the two-day meeting.

Daniels' criticism of the BJCPA centered around its opposition to the Prayer Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which Daniels said "is a matter which determines whether the nation stands or falls."

"I will give them (the BJCPA) full credit for the good they have done, but these things (the Prayer Amendment) can make or break America," he said.

Daniels also said Southern Baptists "are sending the wrong message through the Baptist Joint Committee."

In addition to Daniels, 21 people gave testimony, 15 in support of the work of the Baptist Joint Committee and six in opposition to it.

Some who testified say they wish to

keep the relationship and the funding intact, and praised the BJCPA for its work in such matters as Equal Access legislation; opposition to an ambassador to the Holy See; clarifying Internal Revenue Service interpretations of "integrated auxiliaries" of churches, ministerial housing, double taxing missionaries; and other matters.

Bill O'Brien, executive vice-president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, commended the BJCPA for helping more than 3,700 foreign missionaries in reference to the overseas earned income tax matter.

O'Brien said the expert help provided by the committee in clarifying the issue of double taxation of missionaries had saved Southern Baptists "about a million and a half dollars a year, more than triple the amount the SBC invests in the Baptist Joint Committee."

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C-N offers summer courses in new graduate program

JEFFERSON CITY — Carson-Newman College has announced the addition to its curriculum of a graduate studies program in education for grades K-12 classroom teachers.

Beginning this summer, Carson-Newman will offer two courses of study leading either to a master of education degree (M.Ed.) or a master of arts in teaching degree (M.A.T.).

"The M.Ed. and the M.A.T. programs will meet two different kinds of needs in

teacher education today," said Roy Dobyms, C-N vice-president and academic dean. "The M.Ed. program was created for persons already certified at the B.A. level who are seeking an advanced degree in curriculum and instruction. The M.A.T. program offers college graduates who want to become teachers the opportunity to meet state certification requirements while earning a master's degree."

"College personnel and classroom teachers worked together to develop these programs," said Ronald Midkiff, chairman of the division of education and graduate studies. "The courses have been designed to provide opportunities for graduate students to develop leadership skills which will help them become more effective in the schools."

Carson-Newman's graduate studies program is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The M.Ed. program consists of 30 semester hours of study; the M.A.T. program requires 45 semester hours. Students who enter either program may transfer up to nine semester hours of graduate credit from a regionally accredited college or university. Transfer hours must have been earned within five years of a stu-

(Continued on page 3)

Executive Board to meet March 27

The Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention will hold a special called meeting on March 27, according to Marshall Gupton, board president. The purpose of the session will be to hear a report and recommendations from the board's Program, Personnel, and Planning Task Force.

The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. at the Executive Board Building in Brentwood.

At its Dec. 12 meeting, the Executive Board authorized Gupton to call this special meeting when the Task Force is ready to make its report.

The Task Force was created by the board in September 1985 "for the purpose of reviewing program organization and building (space) needs." The 12-member committee was appointed jointly by Jerry Oakley of Springfield, then Executive Board president, and Tom Madden, executive secretary.

In authorizing the called meeting the Executive Board requested that information about the Task Force's report be mailed to the Executive Board members at least seven days prior to the meeting.

Evangelism Conference draws 3,800...

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evangelism a strategy we can use in 1987?"

He encouraged Tennessee Baptists to witness first where response is most likely to be found, speak with a perpetual, holy, natural boldness and crystal clarity, and change strategies decisively and creatively when needed.

He suggested that in the U.S., many people have not rejected the gospel, they just do not understand it.

"Someone's building a big hospital; over on the other coast, someone's building a college, and they (the lost) look at somebody else being slain in the spirit, at somebody else naming and claiming it, at somebody else saying, 'Something good's going to happen to you,' at somebody else looking for the 10 lost tribes, and they wonder what is going on.

"If we ever become unwilling to risk a new strategy to confront America with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the same sovereign Lord Who passed over Israel and Judah and moved the church will pass over us too," he concluded.

Jackson

The pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church in Phoenix, Ariz., Richard Jackson, contended that too often finances, food, fashion, and fitness capture the interest of people.

He compelled the crowd to be "transformed by the power of a single commitment" to Christ, which sanctifies all of our circumstances and satisfies our curiosities.

Jackson suggested that it may not have been God's perfect will that Paul go to Jerusalem, but God used Paul in that circumstance to win many of his guards to Christianity.

"God's not going to trust you with any other circumstances until you are fruitful where you are," he proclaimed.

A single commitment also squelches envy and critics, he said, adding that he does not mind the critics who claim that

'Woody' Watkins sets retirement

Forrest H. "Woody" Watkins, Tennessee Baptist Convention director of evangelism, announced his retirement during the annual Tennessee Baptist Evangelism Conference Jan. 19-20 in Nashville.

Watkins, who will retire Feb. 28, has served in his current role since 1982. He has accepted the pastorate of North Stuart Baptist Church in Stuart, Fla. The church was started by First Baptist Church in Stuart, where he served as pastor 20 years ago.

The Georgia native has been the director of missions in Hamilton County Baptist Association, director of associational evangelism at the Atlanta-based Home Mission Board, and a consultant in the church training department of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

Watkins has served on church staffs in other Florida churches and is a graduate of Mississippi College in Clinton and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

An author, he also was consultant on "WIN" materials, a member of the board of trustees of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, past president of state directors of missions fellowship, and the state Brotherhood vice-president of lay renewal.

He and his wife, Marian Caldwell Watkins, have two daughters.



CHORALE — The Tennessee Baptist Chorale, led by Julian Suggs of the TBC church music department, sang during the Monday night session of the Evangelism Conference.

his church does nothing except win people.

Church staff members will stop worrying about a raise, the personnel committee, or the coming judgment when they are able to say, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21).

In another message, Jackson explained the act of being born again includes the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and exaltation of Christ.

"Everything that Jesus was in the flesh, Jesus is in our flesh as we yield ourselves unto Him by faith."

"We are running around trying to crucify ourselves," he said, instead of letting God do it.

Finley

Dean Finley, evangelism consultant of the Home Mission Board in Atlanta, Ga., asked three questions: Will I be a reconciler of the population? Will I be involved in personal evangelism? Will I be a reconciler in my place?

Bold Mission Thrust will be a joke if Southern Baptists do not do more evangelism. Instead of looking for a growing church in the suburbs, church staff members need to recognize that, "He's put us in a place for a reason," Finley said.

Evangelism, though, will not occur until persons heal relationships and pray, Finley stressed.

Burroughs

The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's consultant on evangelism with women, Esther Burroughs, asked Tennessee Baptists to consider the fact that 165-million of the 255-million people in the U.S. are not Christians.

She also pointed out that God's first institution was the home, not the church.

She noted that students at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, where she recently spoke, reported that only two percent of their families had regular family devotional times. It was being replaced by the television, she maintained.

Tennesseans

Forrest "Woody" Watkins, TBC director of evangelism, announced his retirement during the meeting. (See story on this page.)

Jerry Oakley, TBC president and pastor of Springfield Baptist Church in Springfield, presented people's need for God's vision based on Proverbs 29:18.

He noted that some church programs block the vision of churches from the reason they exist.

"Without commitment, we'll do nothing forever and ever," he said, adding that as a pastor he would rather be attacked than ignored.

Tom Madden, TBC executive secretary-treasurer, spoke on the rich man's experience in hell from Luke 16:19-31.



PARK AVENUE CHOIR — The church choir from Park Avenue Baptist Church, Nashville, performs on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry House during the Tuesday night session of the Evangelism Conference.

Persons should look to God instead of themselves, do missions, and repent, he concluded.

Jimmy Terry, pastor of Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church in Clarksville, encouraged Baptists to follow his example of witnessing in bars and gambling establishments each week, even though he acknowledged that he is often afraid when visiting these places.

"The Great Commission is not to be debated," he proclaimed, noting the rewarding results of his work.

Charles "Toonie" Cash, evangelist from Johnson City, indicated that evan-

gelism is not a gift, but a command to every Christian. We have the mandate, mantle of the Holy Ghost, and message of peace, he said.

Musicians

Jim McNiell, gospel concert artist from St. Louis, Mo., did two dramatic monologues and special music during the two-day conference. The Tennessee Baptist Chorale, Nashville's Park Avenue Baptist Church choir, and Gary Rice, music evangelist from Johnson City, also sang.

Verlena Davidson from Arnold, Mo., was the pianist and Ethel R. Lunn from Nashville was the organist.

Ray Roberts leads Bible studies

By Connie Davis

Ray E. Roberts, second vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention from Asheville, N.C., led four Bible study times during the Tennessee Baptist Evangelism Conference in Nashville Jan. 19-20.

He spoke on the message, motivation, method, and mandate of witnessing.

"You and I are not to tamper with the message that God has given us to deliver," he said.

The message includes experience, events, expression, and expectancy, Roberts shared.

Because the gospel is based on historical events, persons "don't have to throw reason out the window" to accept it, continued Roberts.

Persons should rediscover the expectancy of the gospel, which is the "dynam-

ite of God," Roberts exclaimed.

The Bible is only relative if you believe it all." He maintained that lost persons are not troubled by differing theological perspectives.

The former executive secretary of Ohio's convention recited the reasons why he witnesses: "I would be afraid not to because of judgment day; I receive joy from witnessing; and I love Jesus."

Roberts explained, "He'll record us, reward us, and judge us accordingly." God promises, though, to reward us "a hundredfold" (Matthew 19:29). He warned against expecting those rewards on earth.

Commenting on the heavy criticism that church staff members receive, Roberts counseled the group to "consider the source."

Even though a preacher has other weaknesses, if the Word of God is preached from a church's pulpit, the devil cannot kill the church, he proclaimed.

When asked how he got elected as SBC second vice-president, he explained, "The rougher element of the denomination just rose up and demanded representation."

Roberts discussed the tendency to criticize a person's method of witnessing when not witnessing. Asking persons to simply issue the challenge of Christianity, Roberts reminded the listeners that persons do not need a theological degree in order to be a witness for Christ.

The only thing a Christian can do that a lost person cannot do is to lead them to Christ, Roberts pointed out. He reminded the audience that church members are sometimes not saved.

Besides letting good works crowd out witnessing, Roberts noted that pride of flesh, pride of the eye, and pride of life keep persons from witnessing.

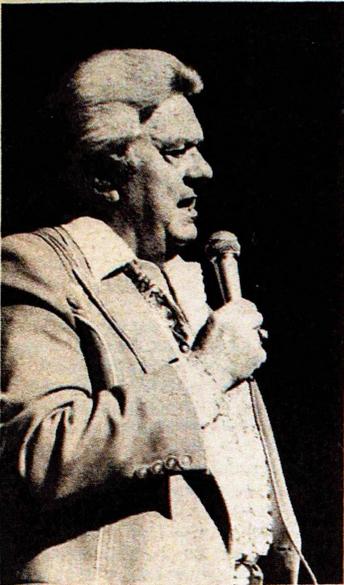
He observed that neither evangelism nor social action should be used as an "excuse for not doing the other."

He advised churches to win rather than attract people.



BIBLE STUDY LEADER — Ray Roberts, second vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention, led Bible studies during the Evangelism Conference.

Clower blends testimony with humor, 'wisdom'



ON THE INSIDE — Comedian Jerry Clower told 3,800 Baptists at the Grand Ole Opry House, "I love y'all," reminding them that as a fellow Southern Baptist, he is on the inside "amongst you."

By Charlie Warren
 "I love y'all." Comedian Jerry Clower told about 3,800 Tennessee Baptists gathered Jan. 20 at Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House for laypeople's night of the Tennessee Baptist Evangelism Conference.

"I'm qualified to tell you that I love you," Clower continued. "I became a Christian at age 13 at Route 4, Liberty, Miss. — home missions of a Southern Baptist church. I have been an active Southern Baptist for 46 years. I love y'all."

*'We don't play church.
 We get after it.'*

For the next hour, the Southern Baptist humorist stood on the stage of the Opry where he often performs and held the crowd captive with his humor, carefully blended with his own personal testimony and a dab of southern country wisdom.

"All kinds of folks come and tell you they love you, but they're on the outside looking in. I'm on the inside with you, looking out," Clower said. "I've done paid my dues. And when I tell you I love ya, I love ya. I don't play at this. I'm a storehouse tither."

He noted that his church, First Baptist Church, Yazoo City, Miss., gives 30 percent to the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' unified budget plan that supports mission efforts at home and abroad.

"My little ole church has got a 30-10 program. In the last 10-year period, we started 30 new churches in pioneer missions. We don't play church. We get after it."

"I ain't here to try to straighten you out," Clower quipped. "I'm one of you. I love you. I'm a dyed-in-the-wool Southern Baptist. I ain't mad about nothin'."

Clower shared his conversion experience which occurred during a revival service. The preacher told the congregation that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" and "the wages of sin is death."

"I caught ahold of the back of the pew," Clower confessed. "I said, 'If everybody has sinned and the wages of sin is death, then I'm in a mess.'"

"But then he (the preacher) smiled and said, 'But God commendeth His love

toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And if you'll confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you can be saved.'

"And while they were singing, 'Only Trust Him,' I walked down that aisle and I had that experience with grace that only comes in the saving power of God. And I've been a Christian ever since."

"The older I get, the more I'm convinced the church is where it's at," Clower explained. "The first place of Christian service for any Christian ought to be the local church. If I have a burden, I want it announced in the church house. I just feel relieved right off knowing how many are going to go to praying and get me through my burden. The Bible says, 'Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.' Get it on! The church is where it's at."

A strong advocate of tithing, Clower said the only way to fight the world is for every Baptist to be a tither.

"I make a motion at every business meeting that we print the names of all that haven't given anything and post it on the vestibule wall," Clower said. "We've got too many Christians in my church. They vote me down everytime. But the

real thing that bothers me about folks that ain't giving, I'm gonna tell you the truth, they're robbing themselves of a blessing."

Using humor as a tool, Clower masterfully drove home some of his perspective on politics in the Southern Baptist Convention and the world in general.

"I love y'all 'cause you ain't a bunch of pessimists," he said. "Negativism can kill us and there's more of it going on now than any other time in my life. Everywhere I go I see negative folk."

He related some encounters he's had with negative reporters.

One reporter in Atlanta, knowing Clower was a Southern Baptist, and knowing Southern Baptists were "in the height of our discussion of who believes the Bible the most," asked Clower what he thinks of Charles Stanley, an Atlanta pastor who was then president of the SBC.

"Well, fella, he's a Christian and I'm a Christian and it ain't my option what I think of him," Clower responded. "God didn't make it optional. If you get saved in Hong Kong and another person gets saved in Timbuktu, the minute they're saved, they become brothers and there ain't nothin' they can do about it. It ain't optional whether they love one another. It's automatic."

The reporter followed through. "Oh, you don't get the point, Mr. Clower, what do you think about Charles Stanley's theology?"

"I said, 'He's too liberal for me,'" Clower countered. "That fella went to rolling up the wire."

Another reporter asked him, "What do you think about prayer in public schools?"

Clower answered, "Lady, I'm for prayer in public schools if a Baptist is leading the prayer. The first day a Moonie shows up, I'm agin it. My mother is for prayer in the public school, but you let anybody other than a Baptist lead the prayer and she'll set fire to the school."

Returning to his theme, Clower told the Baptist crowd, "I love y'all 'cause I ain't seen nobody jogging during this convention. I've got to do a lot of praying to keep from hatin' all flat-bellied joggers that eat yogurt and don't know it's clabber."

"I love y'all 'cause you're so active in your church work, you don't have to jog."

"I love y'all 'cause you're working hands. I don't care what you do, whether you're a pastor or whether you're in some other kind of vocation, you'll keep a lot of folks off your back if you ain't lazy. We still live in a country that respects folks that ain't lazy."

"I love y'all," he continued. "I'm grateful to be here amongst ya. I do one 'tithing' date a month. My manager calls them 'freebies.' I try to tithe my time like I do my money. The Lord's been helping me do it."

"I'm the most blessed entertainer in America, but through it all, through the 18 albums and the awards, all the wonderful things that have happened to me, and the money, I want you to know I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold. I'd rather have Jesus than riches untold. I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land. I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand. I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause. I'd rather be true to His dear cause. I'd rather have Jesus than anything this world affords today."

"I'm a Christian entertainer and I feel the greatest thing in my life is to witness for Christ wherever I have the opportunity to do so."

C-N offers . . .

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dent's acceptance into the C-N graduate studies program.

Courses in both programs will be taught during the college's two summer sessions, with evening classes to be offered for fall 1987 and spring 1988. Classes will be taught in Morristown and Knoxville, as well as on the Jefferson City campus. Tuition will be \$100 per semester hour. Financial aid is available to students admitted to the M.Ed. or the M.A.T. programs.

"The addition of a graduate studies program is in keeping with Carson-Newman's tradition of excellence in teacher education," said Cordell Maddox, president of the college. "Over the last 15 years, the college has graduated 1,084 teachers from its undergraduate program."



EVANGELISM — Charles "Toonie" Cash, vocational evangelist from Johnson City, spoke to the crowd on evangelism as a command for all Christians.



COMMITMENT — Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, Ariz., urged the Evangelism Conference crowd to be "transformed by the power of a single commitment to Jesus Christ."



FAMILY EMPHASIS — Esther Burroughs, evangelism consultant with women for the Home Mission Board, spoke on the role of the family in winning and discipling Christians.

EDITORIAL

To conform or to be transformed?

Anyone considering what is a Christian's relationship to the world in which we live, should examine the words written by the Apostle Paul in Romans 12. These classic verses set some high standards on Christian attitudes, conduct, and service — with other Christians and even our enemies.

These supreme standards cannot be accomplished without dependence on the first two verses of that chapter.

After having spent 11 chapters examining God's love, salvation, and mercy, Paul now comes to one of his significant "therefores." He notes that before the service (vv.3-21) must come the sacrifice (vv.1-2). Our bodies are to be "living sacrifices."

In Christian history, some have been called upon to become martyrs for their faith. Paul himself was one of them. But these verses remind us that all Christians must give their bodies (lives) just as completely as a continuing sacrifice. Elsewhere, Paul has written that we are "dead in Christ" and we are "crucified with Christ."

In verse 2, Paul uses two verbs which deal with our relationship with this world.

"Be not CONFORMED to this world." The word formed or shaped has the prefix "con" which carries the idea of "together." Don't be shaped along with the rest of the world, Paul says. The Phillips translation expresses the thought vividly, "Don't let the world squeeze you into its mold."

In our day, there is much pressure from the world to conform to its standards. Everyone is bombarded with promises that IF we use the right deodorant, drive the right car, live in the right neighborhood, and drink the right beverages — we will be successful, handsome, admired, rich, and sexually appealing.

If you don't think there is conformity today, just listen to how many acts are justified by "everybody's doing it." Even those who oppose conformity, conform in their opposition.

"Be ye TRANSFORMED by the renewing of your mind." The prefix "trans" imparts the concept "over," so Paul is saying that we are to be "formed" over or completely changed.

The Greek word used is the same root from which we get our word "metamorphosis" which is used to describe drastic change, such as a tadpole becoming a frog. It is the same word translated "transfigured"

in Matthew 17 as Jesus is revealed to Peter, James, and John in His heavenly glory. There God — not the world — shaped Christ's appearance.

How can you be transformed?

The word "mind" used here can easily be understood as determination, reason, or will. God reminds us or transforms us as we continually renew or recommit our wills to Him. Then we are able to know and to follow the will of God.

If our lives are shaped by God's will, rather than the world's standards, we should have little problem with the other commandments of Romans 12. If our relationship with God is proper, we can handle our relationship with ourselves, with the church and its members, with our own spiritual gifts, with our service, and with all people.

Continued giving

January is Make Your Will Month.

It is gratifying to note that an increasing number of Tennessee Baptists are not only making wills — but also are including provisions for a portion of their estates to aid Baptist causes. Rather than choosing a specific Baptist activity, some elect to designate these funds for support of the Cooperative Program.

We all rejoiced last year to learn that Tennessee Baptists through wills and trusts administered by the Tennessee Baptist Foundation had given \$245,000 to missions through the Cooperative Program. This amount is a growing and vital part of all that Tennessee Baptists do together, as it is united with what is given by church members in carrying out the Great Commission.

Your will is important to your future — and to future ministries and missions of Tennessee Baptists.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Unneeded mission board

By Richard T. McCartney,

"The Baptist Messenger," Oklahoma City, Okla.

The Southern Baptist Convention came into being in 1845 as a channel through which Baptists in the South could do missions. Missions has been the glue holding our cooperative system together ever since. Now, it appears that someone has started a foreign mission board in opposition to the one organized by our first convention.

No other denomination, or group of denominations, has been able to approach Southern Baptists in the scope or effectiveness of our foreign mission enterprise. More than 3,700 missionaries in 109 countries carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. According to Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board, the emphasis is "evangelism that results in churches."

Overseas churches baptized 158,626 people in 1985. They work through almost 33,000 churches, missions, and preaching stations. They are partners with other Christians in each nation to establish churches, train leaders, and produce literature and materials to support the ministry of local churches. Now it appears someone does not think Southern Baptists are doing it right.

A group of people has established the Genesis Commission. Either out of ignorance or deliberate misrepresentation, its leaders hint that the Foreign Mission Board is more concerned with schools and hospitals than with evangelism and new churches. That simply is not so, and if these folks had bothered to inquire, they would have known better.

Parks has made "evangelism that results in churches" a major emphasis in every message I have heard him deliver since he became FMB president. Reports printed in the convention Annual each year emphasize the work being done to establish new churches, missions, and preaching stations.

Members of Southern Baptist churches, from the beginning, have been the source of support for all of our mission activity. Any effort to establish a parallel missionary sending agency is bound to erode some of that support. Are we willing to jeopardize the most effective missionary program in the world to fund an independent organization with no accountability to Southern Baptists? I think not.

Southern Baptists have a great missionary program. Let's not cripple it through an organization that would duplicate its work while weakening its support.

Cicero's comment



By the editor

"Cicero, there is a person with a paper bag over his head here to see you," my secretary announced over the intercom.

Without questioning how a person with a paper bag over the head could see to find my office, I replied, "Well, show the old bag in!"

My visitor stumbled in and quickly explained the reason for the bag. "I am A. Nonnie Mouse, the one who writes those anonymous letters to the Baptist and Reflector. The bag over my head is so I can remain anonymous and you won't know who I am."

Cicero reacted, "You mean you write some of those unsigned correspondence which I receive?"

"Don't feel so important," Mouse squeaked. "I am the one who writes ALL those anonymous letters to ALL publications! I can prove it — just look at the calluses on my middle finger. You have heard of the silent majority — well, I am the vocal minority."

I questioned, "They are ALL from you? But they are all so different — some typed, some handwritten in pencil on yellowed tablet paper; some are letters, some are postcards; and they are postmarked from different cities."

"That just shows you how professional I am," Nonnie noted. "It keeps you off guard. And what about my sending you a complimentary letter occasionally? I bet that shakes you up!"

I agreed that I do receive a rare complimentary anonymous letter, which is certainly unusual. "I just figured the writer was afraid to admit he liked the paper, lest I later goof up."

A. Nonnie Mouse asked to see my file of anonymous letters.

"Sorry," Cicero replied. "I read them once and throw them away."

Mouse jumped as if someone had cut off his tail with a carving knife. "You ungrateful editor — don't you know that it takes just as much time to write and just as much postage to mail an anonymous letter as a signed letter. Those with names and addresses, you print in the 'letter to the editor' feature. But you discriminate against me just because I am too chicken to claim those stupid statements I make in my letters!"

Cicero noted that it was the clearly stated policy not to print letters without names, addresses, and telephone numbers. "That's not discrimination, because I treat all anonymous letters alike."

But, Nonnie was not appeased. "It is discrimination because you print those signed letters — regardless of how stupid they are."

I tried to trap Mouse into writing a "letter to the editor" protesting my policy.

"What if I let you use my picture instead of my name?"

Cicero was confused, "You mean you might take off the bag and let me take your picture?"

My visitor paused, "Well, I just might let you take my picture, if you will let me say 'cheese,'" A. Nonnie Mouse muttered.

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

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Letters to the Editor

Letters on any religion-related subject are welcomed. Letters of over 300 words will not be used. Other letters may be shortened at the discretion of the editor. No unsigned letters will be printed, but writer's name will be withheld for sufficient reason. Letters must contain complete address and telephone number. Letters must not make personal attacks on the character or integrity of individuals.

Pray, give, support

Dear editor:

What the devil will do to cause discord among Christian people when they are trying to do what God wants them to do!

I could not believe what I was reading when I saw that a group of people who call themselves "Southern Baptists" were organizing a new foreign mission board.

As director of Woman's Missionary Union in our church, I am very much concerned about our missionaries and we already have a wonderful mission program. I feel if we would pray more, give more, and support our 3,700 foreign missionaries, we would see what great things God could and would do.

This movement will not only discourage the missionaries and their families that have given so very much to go to these foreign countries, but it will also discourage others from going.

If only this group would give this \$2-million to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, God could do such great things with it. Seventy-five-million dollars is needed for the foreign mission work this year and that is a lot of money, but it would not be hard to reach if everyone would do what they could and band together. The devil must have been aware that we would reach this goal this year, so he planned a diversion to keep us from reaching our goal. How sad!

Mildred Grayson
661 Hwy. 68 West, Apt. 47
Sweetwater, TN 37874

Who will listen?

Dear editor:

The Genesis Commission's stated intent is "to recruit and finance like-minded pastors, who will plant Baptist churches, primarily in foreign countries" (Baptist and Reflector, Jan. 7).

Intended or not, this noble effort will in all probability result in competition for funds from mission supporting Southern Baptists. Many Southern Baptists have been wrestling with their conscience concerning the use of Southern Baptist funds. They know that a proportionate amount of the Lord's tithes and their offerings are paying the salaries of liberal seminary and college presidents and professors, who are perceived to be proclaiming and teaching heretical theology. This serves to quicken their sincere

concern of being "wise stewards." Thus, intended or not, the emergence of the Genesis Commission could mean an alternate choice for these.

The Southern Baptist Cooperative Program is indeed "a remarkable program for spreading the gospel." Still, I would remind our Southern Baptist leadership it is not the only way Southern Baptists can enhance the spreading of the gospel throughout the world.

It is my hope that this announcement concerning a new mission organization in our midst will say to all those occupying authoritative positions of leadership throughout our Southern Baptist Convention that they must do something about these liberal seminary and college presidents, these liberal professors and their liberal theological teachings, and do it soon!

Could it be that this is the thrust of what the Genesis Commission is saying to any who will listen?

God truly works in mysterious ways! May this new organization in some unforeseen way bring us closer together as Southern Baptists working for the cause of Christ.

Johnny Miller
Rt. 3, Box 50
Dickson, TN 37055

Unacceptable organization

Dear editor:

The recent announcement of a fundamentalist group creating their own foreign missions organization among Southern Baptist churches is uncalled for and I hope unacceptable to most Southern Baptist people.

It comes at a time when we are attempting to reach our Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$75-million. We need to remember that we have not reached our national foreign mission goal since 1981.

What does this say to our 3,700 foreign missionaries about the confidence we have in them and their work? Southern Baptists have the finest missions program of any evangelical denomination in the history of all of Christendom. Yet, there are those who are dissatisfied with its work. I wonder why those who have started this competitive foreign missions board have not discussed their concerns with Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Foreign Mission Board.

We can only hope and pray that this undermining of our foreign missionaries and the sowing of seeds of discord and division among Southern Baptists will soon come to an end. In the meantime, let us affirm with confidence the work which is going on in 109 countries around the world, and let us hold up to God in prayer every single one of these dedicated, sacrificing, and courageous Southern Baptist foreign missionaries.

Leonard Markham
303 Wright St.
Sweetwater, TN 37874

Prayers of Southern Baptists

Dear editor:

I happen to be one of those fortunate home missionaries who were born during the month of December. In the divine providence of God, He led leaders in our Southern Baptist Convention to focus my wife and myself in a number of the mission periodicals for December 1986. God had His reason for doing this.

During the month of December, thousands and thousands of Southern Baptists began praying for Joy and me and our work in the Puget Sound Baptist Association. We received hundreds of birthday and Christmas cards from young RA's and GA's, some who could barely print their names; Achteens; Baptist Young Women; WMU groups; and Baptist Men's groups.

God so chose, in His infinite wisdom, to have them pray for us at a very crucial time in my life. On Dec. 15, I went into the hospital and had open heart surgery. I was not aware of this problem until a few days prior to that time. I had experienced pains in my chest, but I was determined to wait until after the holidays before I had them looked at seriously. God gave me some indicators and I saw a doctor who said that if I had not had the surgery I probably would not be around to continue my missionary service.

My wife and I express our sincere appreciation for the prayers of thousands of Southern Baptists who pray on a regular basis for their missionaries. Most of the time they do not hear how God answers those prayers or how He works in the lives of their missionaries.

I thank God for those churches who on a weekly or monthly basis pray for their missionaries and send out cards expressing these seasons of prayer for them.

Keep on praying, Southern Baptists! You don't know how much good you're doing!

David Holden
P.O. Box 3089
Federal Way, WA 98003-3089

Sad, serious situation

Dear editor:

Accept my congratulations and appreciation for the marvelous message editorialized, "The Christmas message sent 'unto you'" (Dec. 17). Also for our good editor's Cicero's Comment in paraphrasing the beautiful heartwarming story, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus." Certainly it brought joy to many.

English Creek church extends call to Fife

Patric Fife began his pastorate with English Creek Baptist Church in Newport, Jan. 4.

Previous pastorates include Delano Baptist Church, Delano; First Baptist Church, Elk Grove Village, Ill.; Pontoon Baptist Church, Granite City, Ill.; Ozark Baptist Church, Ozark, Ill.; Hickory Mountain Baptist Church, Siler City, N.C.; and Gum Springs Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg.

The Harrisburg, Ill., native is a graduate of Belmont College, Nashville, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

Davis leads Bethel church

Ron Davis is now pastor of Bethel Baptist Church in Henderson. He began his pastorate Nov. 23.

A native of Madison, Davis comes to Henderson from Enville, where he was pastor of Enville Baptist Church.

Active in denominational life, he fulfilled a term as president of the Pastors' Conference in Madison-Chester Association in 1985.

Turning the page to "letters," impressive was the excellent situation appraisal — from the young minister in Johnson City — addressing a new area of concern relating to the ongoing SBC diversity. What an adverse impact it can generate among the forthcoming seminary students and graduates — both clergy and laity.

Pete Tackett, touching on Cecil Sherman's resignation (Peace Committee) and Slatton and Moore's press conference, summed it up well in one short sentence, "It seems that some are enjoying the battle too much to quit."

Yes, it is a sad and serious situation when a young minister aspiring to do his portion in winning the world for the Saviour regretfully confesses, "The only memories I have of our convention — state and national — are memories of struggle, politics, and yes, even gossip."

Turning another page, the glaring headline, "Missouri laymen organize to preserve Baptist heritage" was not only unexpected but predicted in my recent letter. It follows the same line of gracious goals and overtly over-zealous objectives as the Texas and Florida groups to "get peace back into the convention." It tastes and sounds like the same people with the same pattern, same party, same promises, same purpose, and same politics that perhaps originated with the Gatlinburg Gang.

Most disturbing was the last paragraph purporting to start parading the political spokesman, Norman (where have all the Baptists gone) Cavender to initiate new and strengthen existing "hate clubs" within the convention.

Moderates can ill afford further mass exodus resulting from these anti-conservative speakers. Heed Pete Tackett.

W. T. Barner
3655 Rhodes #4
Memphis, TN 38111

Personal Perspective



By Tom Madden
TBC Executive
Secretary-Treasurer

I was reading in Hosea the other evening and came to the 11th chapter where it talks about how Israel is expressing tremendous ingratitude to God. I stopped at these words, "Mine heart is turned within me" (Hosea 11:8).

My impression is that they were breaking God's heart. It caused me to ponder whether or not there is heartbreak in heaven.

What breaks God's heart? Some possibilities could include the following: When God's house is not filled with radiant worshipping people on God's day. Ingratitude surely must break God's heart. If we fail to give sacrificially to God's cause, I believe we break His heart. Lives that are empty and without faith and love and compassion surely must break God's heart. A failure to witness must cause God's heart to break.

If God's heart can break, it also can be made to rejoice. The 15th chapter of Luke speaks of great joy in heaven.

There are many things that make God rejoice. When a person repents and comes in humble faith to accept Christ as Saviour, there is great rejoicing all over heaven. When we fill our minds with God's Word, fill God's house with worshipping people, fill our hands with God's offerings, bring the lost to a saving faith in Christ, and fill our lives with love for Jesus, then we bring joy, and not heartbreak to our Heavenly Father.

Erwin congregation calls Leon Green as pastor

Leon Green began his new pastorate with Central Baptist Church in Erwin on Dec. 1.

A native of Milfay, Okla., Green comes to this pastorate from Blanchard, La., where he served as pastor of Westlake Baptist Church.

Green is a graduate of South Plains College in Levelland, Texas, and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

Baptist Joint Committee . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Others, such as Daniels, suggested a complete severing of ties.

One at-large SBC representative on the BJCPA, Albert Lee Smith, a former U.S. Congressman, now an insurance executive in Birmingham, Ala., promoted a complete break between the two organizations.

Smith was critical of the BJC's opposition to the Prayer Amendment, but was more critical of Executive Director James Dunn's participation in People for the American Way, an organization founded by television producer Norman Lear to promote First Amendment issues.

Dunn participated in PAW for three years (1981-84) as a director, but declined to serve a second term after criticism developed toward the organization and its founder.

Smith said the views of Southern Baptists "are not being represented by the BJCPA, and added the SBC "is too big and too influential to have our voice diluted by participation in the BJCPA. We are the largest Protestant denomination and we ought to have a separate office (in Washington)."

Two other witnesses, both of whom support the Baptist Joint Committee, told of help provided by the BJCPA and the estimated worth of such services.

Paul Jones, executive director of the Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, said that he estimates the services provided to Mississippi Baptists by the BJCPA in providing research and information on issues of importance to his state amount to about \$12,000 per year.

Jones also expressed concern that, if Southern Baptists sever relations, "people like me will have no place to go for the kind of research and information provided by Baptist Joint Committee files." He added he fears it would take several years for Southern Baptists to develop the kind of files maintained by the BJCPA, thus creating a "gap."

Grace Langley, a homemaker and pastor's wife from Huntsville, Ala., told committee members the work of the BJCPA to restore the ministerial housing allowance tax relief has "saved my family \$6,000 per year."

She told the committee she had come to "commend the Baptist Joint Committee as heartily and thoroughly as possible," and, when asked what changes she would make, suggested giving "more money and more staff" to the Washington-based organization.

Another witness, Richard Land, vice-president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, who will soon become a special assistant to the Governor of Texas, Bill Clements, suggested retaining the relationship, but on a reduced financial level.

He said Southern Baptists "ought not be a major contributor to any organization that is not fully accountable to the people of the SBC."

"The Executive Committee ought to consider trying to work out a way we can retain membership in the Baptist Joint Committee but also establish our own office in Washington," he said.

The chairman of the SBC Public Affairs Committee, Sam Currin of Raleigh, N.C., said he favors the establishment of a separate office, "perhaps under the aegis of the Christian Life Commission," which would deal with moral and social

issues, while letting the BJC focus on strictly religious liberty and separation of church and state.

During the two days of hearings, committee members heard discussion about the "accountability" of the Baptist Joint Committee to the SBC, and listened as witnesses talked about both what they perceived to be the responsiveness and non-responsiveness of the organization to the wishes of Southern Baptists.

The study committee heard four basic plans suggested for the relationship of the two organizations:

-Retaining the current relationship, which stresses the advantages of coalition with groups representing 27-million Baptists across the nation rather than 14-million Southern Baptists. Some who favor this approach also favored creation of Christian Life Commission office in the capital to deal with moral and social issues.

-Continuing to participate, but in a modified fashion. Suggestions included changing the membership of the SBC's Public Affairs Committee to include more at-large members.

-Continuing to participate, but in a reduced fashion, while, at the same time, establishing an exclusive Southern Baptist presence, perhaps through placement of a Christian Life Commission staffer in Washington.

-Severing all relationships with the BJCPA and establishing an organization which will "better represent" the views of Southern Baptists to government leaders.

"I think this was the best meeting we have had, in terms of the information we received," said Gary F. Young, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Phoenix, Ariz., and chairman of the special committee.

Young said he believes the facts gathered by the committee will help the group "make progress toward possible solutions," but added, "We have not yet begun to formulate those solutions."

The diversity of opinion expressed, however, "points up the immense difficulty of our task," he said.

"All of this makes me believe that ultimately the Lord is the only One Who has the wisdom to reveal a solution for this complex challenge," Young said.

Young urged Southern Baptists "to continue to pray for us, particularly in our next meeting, Feb. 14, where we will begin to work toward our preliminary report."

The committee will report to the Feb. 16-18 meeting of the SBC Executive Committee. It will make its final report at the Executive Committee meeting June 8, on the eve of the 1987 annual meeting of the SBC in St. Louis.

In addition to its Feb. 14 meeting, the committee is scheduled to meet March 27-28 in Nashville, where the committee will begin formulating its report.



VENEZUELAN PARTNER — An orientation session for Alejandro Javier Garcia (middle), the first Venezuelan to serve in Tennessee as part of the Tennessee/Venezuela partnership, is led by Brad Gray of National Student Ministries, Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, with translation assistance by Dianne Tribble of Nashville, who grew up as the daughter of missionaries in South America.

Venezuelan arrives for BSU work

The first volunteer from Venezuela to participate in the Tennessee/Venezuela partnership arrived in Tennessee Jan. 21.

Alejandro Javier Garcia will serve as a Baptist Student Union intern at Union University in Jackson through May. He is being financially supported while in Tennessee by Tennessee Baptist Student Unions. The National Baptist Youth Association in Venezuela paid his travel expenses.

Garcia, who will assist BSU Director Richard Holloman, is the executive secretary of the Association of Baptist Churches of Zulia, where he has served since 1984.

He is a graduate of the University Zulia in Maracaibo, where he studied industrial engineering. Garcia is a member of the Primera Iglesia Bautista de Maracaibo (First Baptist Church, Maracaibo).

He has been a lay preacher, coordinator of evangelism and family groups, and founded a new mission in his country.

The partnership, which began November 1985, is coordinated with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Land takes position with Texas governor

DALLAS (BP) — Richard Land, vice-president for academic affairs at Criswell College in Dallas, has been named administrative assistant to Texas Governor-elect Bill Clements.

Land will serve as Clement's adviser on church-state issues, right-to-life concerns, anti-pornography and anti-drug abuse programs, and "traditional family values" issues.

Land has applied for a leave of absence from Criswell College, where he has served since 1975. If the leave is granted, Land will have no formal ongoing relationship with the school and will receive no remuneration from Criswell College while serving the governor, but he will be able to return to his post at the end of Clement's term in office.

Clements was sworn into office Jan. 20, and Land will assume his new position in Austin Feb. 15.

Dwight Bledsoe serves as Pulaski church pastor

Dwight Bledsoe is serving as pastor of Bradshaw Baptist Church in Pulaski.

He began his pastorate Nov. 30. He previously served as pastor of New Grove Baptist Church in Ardmore.

Bledsoe is a graduate of Martin College in Pulaski and Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro.

Clark undergoes tests

Paul Clark, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Jackson, is in Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis undergoing tests for a possible heart transplant.

Clark's 20-year anniversary celebration as pastor of the church, planned for Jan. 18, was canceled when he became ill.

Toby Everett accepts Eastland Heights call

Toby Everett recently began his pastorate with Eastland Heights Baptist Church, Springfield, The Starkeville, Miss. native began his new pastorate Dec. 29.

Everett comes to Springfield from Mount Pleasant, where he served as pastor of First Baptist Church for six years.

Other church staff positions include serving as associate pastor of Sky View Baptist Church in Memphis, minister of youth at Bashford Manor Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., and as minister of music and youth at Meadow Grove Baptist Church in Bandon, Miss.

Everett is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., and is working on his graduate degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.



Everett



Tennessee/Venezuela Prayer Net Partnership

- On Jan. 29, Robin Booth, a journeyman working with youth in Margarita, celebrates his birthday.
- The young men who made decisions during the recent RA Conclave need prayers to help them become strong leaders.
- Construction volunteers are needed to serve in Venezuela in February and March.
- All the details have not been worked out to buy land for a camp/conference center.

B & R keeps you informed

'Current developments' please conservatives

By Dan Martin

DALLAS (BP)— "Current developments in the Southern Baptist Convention" are encouraging to Paul Pressler and Paige Patterson, the two fundamental-conservative leaders have said in a statement prepared for the SBC Peace Committee.

In a 3-page 11-point statement, Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge, and Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, said they would "like to express our appreciation for current developments in the Southern Baptist Convention and to make certain recommendations for peace and harmony within the convention . . ."

The "Statement of Appreciation and Affirmation" was made in response to a request by the SBC Peace Committee's political activities subcommittee and subsequently sent to Baptist Press, the state Baptist newspapers, and secular religion writers across the nation.

Pressler said the statement is "the first formal statement we have ever made, and we issued it in order to set forth where the two of us believe the convention is at the present time."

Patterson added: "I guess we grew a little weary of somebody else saying what we thought and said. I am not sure anybody is all that concerned about what Paul and I are thinking, but since we were getting cited here, there, and yonder, I thought we ought to say it outright."

Peace Committee chairman Charles Fuller, of Roanoke, Va., said the report "was distributed at our last meeting (Jan. 8-9), but was not discussed. We were seeking to find out just what the various factions are willing to do and what they think about the current situation. Neither Judge Pressler nor Dr. Patterson were volunteering the statement. We asked them for it in an effort to gather the information that will help us write a report with substance to it."

Patterson told Baptist Press that he and Pressler "are encouraged by many of the things that we hear being said, but, having experienced over a long period of time the sometimes vacuous nature of talk, are still waiting to see the implementation of the promises."

In their statement, Pressler and Patterson noted their support for the "Glorieta Statement" of the six SBC seminary presidents. The statement, issued in October, committed the seminaries to seven specific actions, including enforcement of the doctrinal statements and fair treatment of all views of Scripture.

It also said the presidents believe the Bible "is not errant in any area of reality."

The Pressler-Patterson statement also expressed "strong support" for the SBC unified giving plan, the Cooperative Program; pledged they will "work towards a harmonious convention in St. Louis;" called upon "those in our institutions and agencies to treat all Southern Baptists with love and concern," and called on the Baptist news media "to be fair."

It also called on "all Southern Baptists to work together constructively to correct the problems" in the convention; disavowed "harsh rhetoric, unfounded accusations of disloyalty to our . . . heritage and misrepresentation of the positions of other Baptists," and called on all Southern Baptists "to discuss the issues openly and honestly without rancor or bitterness and without propagandizing through the press."

It repeated the basic position fre-

quently expressed by Pressler and Patterson: "For conservatives the issue in the convention has always been whether or not the Bible contains error or is truly the perfect revelation of God, 'truth without any mixture of error,' and 'not errant in any area of reality.'"

"We call on all Southern Baptists involved in the controversy to address the issue and all of our seminary professors and other denominational employees to address forthrightly and honestly this issue in such a way that there are no ambiguous phrases or hidden meanings."

It added, "Our problems are real. They were not faced adequately in the Elliott Controversy in the early 1960s or in the Broadman Bible commentary controversy of the early 1970s."

"We are grateful that increasing numbers of Southern Baptists are now recognizing that these problems can no longer be disregarded and that we must have our institutions operate from the predicate that the Bible is 'truth without any mixture of error' and 'not errant in any area of reality.' We call upon all Southern Baptists to work together constructively to correct the problems created by those who deny this basic belief."

"Failure to acknowledge or deal with these problems will only insure that the controversy will not abate. As these problems are acknowledged and dealt with and as the Glorieta Statement is im-

plemented, the controversy will abate."

The statement continued: "We praise God for what is happening in the Southern Baptist Convention. The purpose of our involvement has been to strengthen our theological moorings in such a way that we will be better equipped to reach individuals for a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ."

"To this end we dedicate ourselves, and we urge full cooperation by all Southern Baptists to this end."

"As problems are resolved, unity will return and we will see the accomplishment of the purposes for which we were created, namely missions and evangelism based upon thorough Biblical training and the equipping of the saints for the ministry to which they are called."

In their statement, Pressler and Patterson noted they "greet with enthusiasm the statement of the seminary presidents in Glorieta and appreciate their recognition that there is 'legitimate concern' about the seminaries and that the teaching of inerrancy has not been given 'a fair shake' in the schools."

"We support them in their pledge to work to rectify these problems and stand ready to be of assistance in implementing this declaration. We regret that for many years these facts were denied, but we are grateful that they have now been acknowledged."

In the section affirming support for the

Cooperative Program, Pressler and Patterson noted they are "distressed that some of those in Southern Baptist life who have raised the loudest hue and cry against a societal approach have now seemingly embraced it by actions such as the Virginia Convention designating funds for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs."

The statement referred to action taken at the annual meeting of the Baptist General Association of Virginia which specified Cooperative Program funds up to \$75,000 would be sent directly to the BJCPA, in the event that organization is defunded by the SBC in 1987.

The statement also said efforts to oppose incumbent officers for re-election have "been harmful and polarizing. Never has opposition to incumbent officers who are eligible for re-election . . . come from conservatives. We pledge ourselves to continue to work toward peaceful conventions and urge all others to unite behind those who are eligible for re-election and to support the reports and recommendations of the committees which have been duly constituted and accepted by our convention."

It also noted that the writers "are grateful that we have a system . . . where in our people can correct the course of our cooperative endeavors when the direction of our efforts need correction," noting gratefulness at being a denomination "which recognized the priesthood of all believers and allows oversight of all denominational institutions by the people . . ."

In reference to terminology, Pressler and Patterson said they "reject the harmful and misleading phraseology of 'fundamentalist-conservative' and 'moderate conservative,'" and urged that these "should be replaced by the more accurate and less volatile 'conservative' and 'moderate.'"



GO YE THEREFORE — Jimmy Terry, pastor of Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church in Clarksville, told the Evangelism Conference crowd that the Great Commission is not to be debated.



MUSICAL PRAISE — Jim McNeil (right), music leader for the Evangelism Conference, called out to the audience 91-year-old William Hubert Nixon of Smithville, a retired Baptist pastor, to help him lead the congregational singing.

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Brotherhood teleconference unites men in prayer effort

NASHVILLE (BP) — Carrie Blackaby celebrated her 16th birthday last Dec. 10, two days before she learned she has cancer.

Her father, Henry Blackaby, director of missions for Capilano Southern Baptist Association in Vancouver, British Columbia, recently made an appeal to Baptist men across the United States and Canada to pray for Carrie, who wants to be a foreign missionary.

"She made a commitment to be a foreign missionary this summer," said Blackaby. "She made a commitment to lead her friends in school to the Lord."

"This month we'll baptize five from her 11th grade that she influenced for the Lord," he said during a live teleconference on the Baptist Telecommunication Network. "She started a Bible study in her school with 20 coming. She is a committed girl."

Blackaby made his appeal during the Jan. 10 Baptist Men's Teleconference hosted by James H. Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. Blackaby and Joe Lennon of Warrenton, N.C., were Smith's guests. The theme was "Baptist Men in Mission Involvement Through Prayer."

Following the teleconference, Smith said Blackaby's request for prayer gave the teleconference a personal appeal that reinforced the theme.

"Our making a commitment to something doesn't mean there is an immunity from our having some kind of physical devastation," said Smith. "In my own personal life I've never made a definite commitment to something I felt God was calling me to, that short way down the road I didn't face some kind of a test."

"I think that is where she is. I think God is going to take that experience with Carrie... both in her life and even in connection with those who heard (the teleconference)."

Vancouver hosted the World's Fair last summer, and Blackaby coordinated Southern Baptist ministries there.

During the teleconference Blackaby said Expo 86 originally was to have no religious presence on site. But through prayer, Canadian Southern Baptists began to see obstacles removed.

Blackaby reported members of the Capilano association first made a commitment to pray and then 10,000 Southern Baptists from throughout the world joined in the prayer effort. The results were sometimes dramatic.

"We literally saw before our very eyes the activity of God," said Blackaby.

Canadian Southern Baptists became the catalyst to the evangelical community and brought five Baptist denominations together for two worship services at Expo 86, he added. In addition, 58 separate locations including shopping centers and malls were open for ministry by music, drama, and puppet groups.

Blackaby said the association had wanted to expand its ethnic work, and Expo 86 opened those doors. The day after his staff prayed about starting new ethnic work, a letter arrived from a foreign mission couple on leave saying God was leading them to Vancouver to help with such an effort.

The profound effect of prayer connected to Expo ministries still is being felt in the association. "I don't think there is a church or mission in our association that doesn't have an active prayer ministry," said Blackaby.

Lennon, prayer support coordinator for North Carolina Baptist Men, also is familiar with active church prayer ministries. He is working toward starting a men's prayer unit in every Southern Baptist church in North Carolina.

During the teleconference, Lennon said the purpose of the Baptist men's prayer units is "to encourage and inspire men to come to grips with their relationship with the heavenly Father."

The power of prayer has been evident in many phases of Baptist men's work in North Carolina, he reported. Recently in Asheville, N.C., Baptist men conducted simultaneous lay-led revivals in seven churches. Over 800 homes were visited and 58 persons prayed to receive Christ. Lennon also cited the work of agricultural missions as another example of answer to prayer.

The teleconference was the first such event for Baptist Men. Next year the theme will be "Baptist Men in Missions Involvement Through Daily Living."

Staley lectures feature Aleshire

NASHVILLE — Daniel O. Aleshire of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., is the speaker for this year's Staley Distinguished Christian Scholar Lectures at Belmont College, Feb. 4-6.

Aleshire, associate professor of psychology and Christian education and director of seminary professional studies at Southern, will speak at 10 a.m. daily in Massey Auditorium.

A graduate of Belmont, Aleshire also holds degrees from Nashville's George Peabody College, and Southern seminary.

Before joining Southern's faculty in 1978, Aleshire was research scientist on the staff of Search Institute, Minneapolis. Prior to that he served several churches in Kentucky and Tennessee as pastor or youth director. He is presently associate pastor of Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville.

The Staley Distinguished Christian Scholar Lecture program was established by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Staley to contribute to the survival of Christian colleges by providing distinguished Christian scholars to preach the "contemporary, relevant, and meaningful message of the gospel."



EDUCATION OFFICERS — The 1987 Eastern Baptist Religious Education Association officers (left to right) Bill Johnson, minister of education, Crescent Hill Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky.; Bill Clemmons, professor, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; Sandy Sigmon, education assistant, Atlanta Baptist Association, Atlanta, Ga.; Bill Rogers, dean, School of Christian Education, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville; and Dwayne Zimmer, minister of education and associate, Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville, met Jan. 16 at Woodmont Baptist Church.

Handicapped senior citizen finds 'joy of giving is joy of living'

Ann Sklar, a handicapped senior citizen, has been in and out of the hospital during the past four years, including at least a dozen operations. But such circumstances have failed to keep her from serving God and helping others.

Basically homebound, the longtime member of First Baptist Church, Nashville, uses her telephone to raise money for Muscular Dystrophy Association Inc. During 1986, she raised \$805 for "Jerry's kids." As a result, 7-Eleven stores awarded her four bicycles — one for every \$200 raised.

She has given the bicycles to the Franklin campus of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc., in the name of the Fidelis class at First Baptist Church, where she has been a member since 1950.

In the four years Sklar has been involved in her project, she has raised more than \$2,500 for muscular dystrophy victims and given 10 bicycles to the

Franklin home.

Sklar, who walks with difficulty using a cane or walker and has failing eyesight, lives by a motto, "The joy of giving is the joy of living."

"I hope others will follow my example," she said. "Not only does it help muscular dystrophy victims, but it brings happiness to boys and girls at the children's home as well."

"If I can do it, anybody can do it."



ONE MORE BIKE — Ann Sklar shows the 10th bicycle she has given to the Franklin campus of the Baptist Children's Homes Inc. She "wins" the bikes by raising money for muscular dystrophy.

Murdock begins pastorate with Antioch congregation

Pat Murdock accepted the call as pastor of Antioch Baptist Church, Horn-beak, and began Nov. 14.

A native of Anderson, S.C., Murdock is a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Previous pastorates include Clear Creek Baptist Church, Dyer; Mount Olive Baptist Church, Union City; and Mesquite Baptist Church, Mesquite, N.M.

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Love Month Just Around the Corner

"Greater love hath no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13

February is traditionally known as the love month. It is the time for candy, flowers, valentines and other expressions of our love. I



Dr. Gerald Stow am grateful that Tennessee Baptists make every month a love month for our TBCH children. The one principle we seek to share with our children at the home time and again is that God loves them and we love them.

You can imagine however, how difficult it is to teach a child that his Heavenly Father loves him when his earthly father has abused him. We try to overcome these negative feelings by the loving care of our houseparents, social workers and other staff. Recently one of our social workers had the privilege of leading one of our girls to Christ in a counselling session.

I trust you will remember to continue expressing your love to our boys and girls through the many avenues opened to you. Your help with food, linen, and paper showers really help. The work groups coming to our campuses help. Certainly your financial gifts help.

There are several prayer needs that you can help meet, we need the resources to open our second alternative home in middle Tennessee. The need for a boys ranch in Memphis increases daily. The need for a work with status offenders is needed in east Tennessee. The need to establish pregnancy crisis centers across the state is an urgent need. Join us in prayer for these needed projects.

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Potato Project

The Brotherhood group of the Ararat Baptist Church, Jackson, Tennessee, has chosen as a mission project the growing of potatoes which will be used for Jesus and the Children's Home of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. The Brotherhood has divided into committees and each committee is responsible for certain aspects of the project.

The project is going well. Six acres of

ground has been turned and they are looking forward to the 3rd week in February to plant the potatoes, weather permitting.

Pictured above left to right are Jim Clement, Steve Spencer, Harvey Neely, George W. Hill, pastor, who stopped by the potato field to thank God that they can have a part in such a worthy project.



Open House at Christmas

The Greeneville Alternative Home had open house at Christmas. Many friends and persons involved in the ministry came by to share in the fellowship and delicious refreshments. Pictured above are: Jane Stroud, social worker, Bob Hammond, resident director, Mrs. Hammond, housemother, and

friends from East Rogersville Baptist Church. The Home provides an alternative to abortion, and an opportunity to have a Christian witness to young girls with problem pregnancies. It is not unusual for the girls to return to visit the home after leaving and continue their friendship with the staff and residents.

Company Gives Satellite

Satellite Earth Stations, one of the largest wholesalers of satellite receiving equipment in the United States, donated a satellite receiving system to the Tennessee Baptist Children's Home, Franklin Campus.

The donation was made through Satellite Earth Stations, Nashville division. Sharon Wolverton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wilkey Jones, houseparents, is employed as a salesperson with Satellite Earth Stations. Sharon was anxious for the children at Franklin Campus to be able to receive good TV (programming). Miss Olivia Anthony, manager of the Tennessee division, was equally eager to participate in the donation. Satellite Earth Stations is owned by Joe and Millie Fontenot of Mamou, Louisiana.

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Mr. and Mrs. Fontenot hope the Children at Franklin Campus will enjoy and benefit educationally from the use of the satellite receiving system.

One of the dealers of Satellite Earth Stations volunteered to install the systems for the Home.



Labor of Love

Dr. James Thomas was honored on December 16, at the annual Christmas banquet of the West Tennessee Home, for providing dental services for over thirty years without charge to children in care. Literally thousands of children have been blessed by both professional care and the Christian witness of Dr. Thomas. His faithful service through the years cannot be measured by mere human or material standards. Only God knows the vast length and depth of his labor of love.

Rev. Erba Butler, longtime past Superintendent of the Memphis Home, spoke of his gratitude for Dr. Thomas. Mrs. Sue Butler, who served as a Social Worker for the children, read a poetic narrative, which she composed, covering highlights and humorous events of Dr. Thomas and the children. In recognition of his outstanding service, a lovely plaque of appreciation was presented to him.

Not only have the skills of Dr. Thomas been employed in meeting physical needs, but his life serves as a noble example to all who would walk in the steps of our Lord Jesus Christ.



**Boy, I Wonder What
Is In My Package**

Several area churches made Christmas at the Johnson City Cottage a wonderful occasion for the boys and girls who live there. Above, Chris looks anxiously at the packages to be opened. In a short while after this picture was taken, ribbons and paper flew, and sounds of joy and glee could be heard all over the cottage.

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BIBLE BOOK SERIES
Lesson for Feb. 1

Disciples' preparation

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

Basic Passage: John 13:31 to 14:31
Focal Passages: John 13:33-35; 14:1-6, 12-20

Christmas a year ago was the last one my father-in-law shared with his little family.

For many years he had been a farmer and then a finish carpenter. Hard labor had been his main lifestyle. After his retirement he continued to raise a productive garden and to fix or build things around the house as long as he was able.

It has been our custom to spend Christmas Eve with my in-laws and Christmas Day with my parents and my sister and her husband. Following the usual schedule, it was decided we would bring my wife's parents to Tennessee for Christmas Day.

Our daughter had to work that day and Pops dearly wanted to see her. As we drove through the snow in the North Carolina mountains, we sang Christmas carols. Pops had been in poor health for several years and was failing rapidly. We all sensed that this would be the last Christmas we would spend together. It was. In the middle of last year, I conducted his memorial service.

In his own way, Pops was saying goodbye to all of us. Although he had been most generous to us, he kept apologizing to us that he could not do more. We kept assuring him of our deep appreciation for the gifts for we were most grateful. But, our chief thankfulness was that he was able to enjoy sharing with all of us his love.

Some while before his passing, he had seen to it that necessary documents had been prepared making it possible for his widow and only daughter to be provided for with his modest earthly possessions. With these legal matters resolved, he was free to sing carols and celebrate the

season as best he could with a body and mind riddled with Alzheimer's disease.

Certainly it is not an exact comparison, but the principles are similar when you consider preparation for death by our loved one and the preparation for the death of our Lord.

Pops loved us. Jesus loved His disciples. Pops knew his time here on earth was limited so he made preparation. Jesus knew His time spent in human flesh was soon to come to an end and therefore He attempted to prepare His followers of "the way" for coming events and to assure them they would receive His presence through the Holy Spirit following His death and resurrection. In this and many other ways Jesus showed His deep love and concern for His followers for He knew full well the challenges and persecution they would experience by being identified with Him and His teachings.

Bible teacher and seminary professor Frank Stagg helps us understand the truths in this gospel in a series of taped lectures. The following statements will give you further insights into this week's passage: "It is not the function of this passage to give us a precise picture of heaven but to assure us that life begun with Jesus Christ continues unbroken beyond death - His and ours. . . . Could we say that Jesus Christ is God present in the limitations of an actual human bodily existence and the Holy Spirit is the same God in the world but apart from these bodily limitations. This seems to be what Jesus is saying. . . . Three claims in Scripture are not negotiable. There are others not negotiable but among them we list these three: the oneness of God, the deity of Jesus Christ, the continuing presence of God in His world, thus known as Spirit. However well or poorly we understand or express all of this, these are basic claims which must stand."

It is not for you and me to fully understand the Trinity. How can any finite human being even begin to understand the Infinite God but through His grace and our faith?

Those early disciples, like us, had to believe and trust God for the unknown. Because of their faith and the work of the Holy Spirit in them and in their known world, thousands of people turned to belief in Christ. For this to be true in our day should be our earnest prayer and applied action.



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UNIFORM LESSON SERIES
Lesson for Feb. 1

By grace through faith

By Al Shackleford, editor
'Baptist and Reflector,' Brentwood

Basic Passages: Galatians 2:15-21; Ephesians 2:1-10
Focal Passages: Galatians 2:15-21; Ephesians 2:3-10

Last week's lesson, "Good news for all people," dealt with the WHO of salvation. This week, we look at the HOW of salvation.

In the experience of Peter at the conversion of Cornelius, God revealed that a non-Jew could receive God's gift of salvation. But what was necessary for a sinner to be redeemed?

Not by law (Galatians 2:15-21)

On their first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas ventured into Galatia, a region of southern Asia Minor. As Paul clearly preached the gospel in a synagogue in Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:16-41), Gentiles asked Paul to preach to them on the next sabbath.

In spite of Jewish protest, Paul did proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles, and many accepted Jesus as Saviour. Paul explained that he was obeying God's command, "I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation to the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:47).

But a controversy arose, as others disputed Paul's "free" salvation, misleading many to believe that the Jewish law must also be obeyed. This dispute led to a high-level conference in Jerusalem (see Acts 15:1-29).

Paul then wrote to the churches of Galatia. He begins by chiding them, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ to another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (1:6-7).

In Galatians 2, Paul relates a confrontation he had with Peter about this issue. Our focal passage is apparently part of what Paul had said to Peter.

Paul and Peter were Jews by birth and were not transgressors of the Jewish law as Gentiles (2:15), but they both knew that a person is not justified by obeying this law. Justification comes "by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ" (v.16). In case Peter missed it, Paul emphasized, "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

Not one to temper his words, Paul reminds Peter that they were "sinners" under the Jewish law - and to preach that justification by faith in Christ also requires adherence to the law would make Christ a minister (agent, partner) of law and not grace. Paul's response is "God forbid!" (v.17).

Paul believed that if he now "resurrected" the legal requirements which he had slain or destroyed in his own conversion, he was a transgressor against God's grace. Paul's dependence on the law for justification had been destroyed, so that he might have the life God offers (vv.18-19).

Salvation depends on identification with Christ, not the law. Paul saw his own sinful nature dying on the cross with Christ - but he now has life; not his life, but Christ's life was dwelling in him. Paul's new life resulted from his faith in the "Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me" (v.20).

Let us (or Peter) miss this glorious truth, Paul declares that he does not intend to frustrate (nullify) the grace of God.

To depend on the law for righteousness in any sense is to make Christ's death meaningless (v.21).

Not by works (Ephesians 2:1-10)

Paul begins this tremendous chapter by reminding the Ephesians of the "lostness" from which they were saved (vv.1-2). He cites the lifestyle which has made them "children of wrath" (v.3).

Now comes those glorious words, "But God..." (v.4). Condemned to an eternal hell, without hope, sinners were unworthy of any consideration from God. They were "dead in sins" (v.5).

But God - in His mercy and His love - reached down from heaven and made us alive with Christ, raising us up together with Him, and giving us a place in God's heaven with Christ Jesus (vv.4-6).

How are we saved? Paul's answer from God is, "By grace through faith" (v.8). This brings God's gift of salvation.

"Grace" was a word dear to Paul. He used it 17 times in this epistle. It means "unmerited favor" or "undeserved gift." We might define it as the ultimate generosity of God which He gives to sinners who deserve no consideration.

"Faith" is more than merely agreeing with an idea. It is a total reliance and trust in God and an eagerness to follow the will of God. The phrase, "not of yourselves," could mean that our faith (our ability to believe and to commit) is a gift of God.

Our salvation is not dependent on our works or good deeds, so we have no reason whatsoever to brag about what we did for God to save us (v.9).

But good works are important - not to provide salvation, but to prove salvation. Having received God's great gift of salvation, we must become workmen for Him. Our lives are to show the world that God is at work in us.

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LIFE AND WORK SERIES
Lesson for Feb. 1

Receiving God's Word

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

Basic Passage: Luke 8:1-56
Focal Passage: Luke 8:4-8, 11-15

Though we often think of Jesus as rejected by the people and forsaken by His disciples, at a certain period in His ministry the opposite was true. He became so popular that it made Him uncomfortable.



Wood

This happened during the busy Galilean Ministry. Crowds thronged Him wherever He went. He, however, recognized that much of the praise given to Him was superficial and did not allow Himself to become deceived or puffed up with pride.

During this period, another phenomenon developed, the very opposite of the first. A group began to be jealous of Jesus, and plotting against Him started early. Some from Jerusalem came north to listen and observe in order that they might "load their guns with ammunition" for future use against Him.

Teaching in parables

In order both to strengthen and protect His ministry, Jesus began a new type of teaching and preaching, the use of parables. This was not an unknown method, but Jesus enhanced it.

The term, "parable," has become almost synonymous with His ministry. The noun is made up of two Greek words, "throw" and "alongside of," indicating

its nature and function. You will recognize the "para" as the word from which we get the modern one "parallel." In a parable the speaker or writer uses one truth to illustrate another. A preacher of several generations ago called a parable, "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning."

An important fact should be remembered when we interpret a parable. It contains one basic truth. We should not try to press every detail in the story for a meaning. If we do, we can run into both theological and ethical problems. Symbolism is good, when used wisely, but when we let our imagination run wild in an effort to multiply spiritual truths in one story, we often become ludicrous and even dangerous in our efforts to teach.

Four kinds of hearers

Though the parable for this week's study has been called "The Parable of the Sower," a better name is "The Parable of the Soils." The emphasis is on the relationship between hearing God's Word and putting it into practice. We should not try to apply it toward personal salvation and the possibility or non-possibility of "falling from grace." Other Scriptures make plain that the true believer is eternally secure.

As some seed fell by the wayside and were trodden down immediately, so some hearers never even receive God's message in the first place. They are hopeless! Nothing can be done with them

except to try again some time!

The seed that sprang up too soon illustrates the kind of people with which we are all familiar. They respond so quickly that they lack stability. They never count the cost of discipleship or long-term commitment.

A third group, better than the first two but still leaving much to be desired, are not so much emotionally unstable as they are materialistically enslaved. They love the world and the things it offers too much to endure very long in consecrated service.

When the famous "Dark Day" in Connecticut came, a young man rushed into Ralph Waldo Emerson's office shouting, "Mr. Emerson, it's the end of the world!" He looked up and said quietly, "That's all right, son, I think we can get along without it."

This third group of people that Jesus pictured love the world too much to give it up, causing their dedication to become choked.

Only those who are faithful in both good times and bad know the joy of Christ's abiding fellowship. They live unselfishly and interpret the Christian life as an opportunity for service.

What about you?

Jesus did not ask His hearers that

question directly, but that, of course, was the intent of His story. We have developed recently an alarming trend in many churches. A group has arisen that wants to listen to the preacher and boast of his greatness as a pulpiteer but never become involved in service. This was exactly the thing Jesus feared when, in Galilee, He became too popular.

We should, of course, appreciate the speaker, but He, like Jesus, is to be followed, not merely listened to and "bragged on!" Edgar Guest said that he had "rather see a sermon than hear one any day." He also said, "to see good put in action is what everybody needs."

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Saxophonist alumnus gives talent to God

By Elizabeth Watson

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Gospel saxophonist Vernard Johnson holds notes so long some people think he has a third lung.

But the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary alumnus says his second wind comes from God.

That he can even play the saxophone is a miracle, Johnson notes. As a child and teen-ager, he suffered chronic asthma. "I used to gasp for breath every night, sometimes wondering if that breath might be my last," he recalls.

Johnson wanted to shed his sickly image, so he decided to play the saxophone in the school band when he was 12 years old: "I knew it would be a monumental task for me to blow a horn, but I desperately wanted to make my parents proud." So I struggled, blowing one note and gasping for air as I learned to play.

Johnson soon began playing his saxophone in his Kansas City, Kan., church. By age 17, he was playing with the Modern Jazz Prophets band, still suffering with asthma. He was "empty and lonely, in search of 'soul satisfaction.'"

"Thank God one day someone walked up to me and said, 'Vernard, I know Someone Who sits high but looks low. Who will hold your hand through the storm and rain. His name is Jesus, and you need to try Him,'" he reports.

Two weeks later, Johnson did. Walking along a downtown Kansas City street, he looked up and told God, "I've heard You are a doctor in the sick room. If You are truly real, heal my lungs and I will play for You the rest of my life."

"While walking down that street, God began to convict me," Johnson says. "He told me if I would give Him my life, He would do more than touch my lungs — He would touch my whole life. Tears began to roll down my face and right there on the street I accepted Christ as my Saviour."

"A few days later, I decided to put my horn down and please Jesus. But God spoke to my heart saying, 'Vernard, don't put your horn down. Just change your song.'"

So Johnson traded tunes such as "My Amazing Love" for "Amazing Grace." Before Johnson's 18th birthday, his asthma attacks completely stopped.

Johnson earned a bachelor's degree in music education from Kansas State Teacher's College. A professor there encouraged him to study at Southwestern seminary.

Frank Stovall, former professor of voice, ran into Johnson the day he visited Southwestern for the first time. Johnson says that encounter changed his life:

"Can I help you?" Stovall asked Johnson.

"Yes, sir," Johnson said. "I hope to go to school here."

"Oh, wonderful!" Stovall said. "What

will your major be?"

"Gospel saxophone," Johnson said.

"What?" Stovall asked. "I've never heard of that major before. Can you sing? Play the piano?"

"No, I just play the saxophone," Johnson said.

"Well, you come back in the fall, and we'll set you up. Don't you worry," Stovall told Johnson.

Johnson took the professor at his word and came back to Southwestern — twice. The first time he earned the master of music in church music degree in 1973. The second time he earned the doctor of musical arts in church music in 1979, becoming the first black person to receive that degree at Southwestern.

Today Johnson shares the gospel in more than 200 "soul-winning concerts"

each year. Last year more than 17,000 decisions for Christ were made as a result of his ministry. He has played his saxophone for presidents of the United States, Billy Graham, and other dignitaries around the world.

"God told me if I would stop playing for the world and play for Him, He would allow me to play before kings and queens," Johnson says. "I still haven't had the privilege to play before kings and queens. But I know I will someday because God hasn't let me down on any of His promises yet."

Banks urges WMU support despite ordination policy

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — The recent Southern Baptist Home Mission Board policy prohibiting future board financial support for women pastors is "probably the best action the board could have hoped for," said Bob Banks, the board's executive vice-president and interim chief executive officer.

Banks spoke to Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union leaders during a Jan. 12 session of their executive board meeting.

Banks noted he hopes churches and individuals who disagree with the new policy will not withhold their Annie Armstrong Easter Offering or Southern Baptist Cooperative Program gifts as a form of protest.

"If churches or individuals withhold funds, they punish 3,700 missionaries, provide less ability to reach this nation for Christ, and hurt home missions in their state and nation," he said. Refusing to give would be to "opt out of a voice and participation in that part (of home missions) which is good, productive, and carries forward the Lord's work."

"Here in the midst of a convention in turmoil and travail; here in the midst of unsettling economic times when missions giving is threatened; here when other mission-sending groups are being organized; here in the midst of pressures of every sort, these missionaries are giving their lives in service to the Lord," Banks stressed.

A focus on the missionary puts the work of the entire denomination into proper perspective, he told the WMU leaders.

"As we look at these missionaries who have been called out to serve and to share the gospel, somehow the purpose of WMU and the HMB is very clear. We are here as enablers, as helpers in the chain of faith," he said.

Although there is deep personal conviction, and therefore sharp division, on both sides of the ordination issue, the new policy is consistent with what the board's ordination study committee perceives to be the opinion held by most Southern Baptists, he said.

"I don't see any reconsideration of this

policy at this time," he added, noting, the committee was divided over the question, and the new policy itself is a compromise.

He emphasized the policy only prohibits board funding for women who are pastors of local churches.

About 40 churches, in the Southern Baptist Convention have women pastors, and only one of those receives board funds. That church will not lose funding, since the policy applies only to future requests from churches with women pastors.

Banks reminded WMU leaders the policy neither prohibits the appointment of ordained women as missionaries, nor prevents the use of board funds to employ ordained women in other church or associational staff positions, such as student workers or Baptist center directors.

"We have stressed that the HMB is the mission board of all Southern Baptists. Even if someone may not agree with all the policies, we hope they will be unwavering and unfaltering in support of home missions," he said.

Much is at stake for home missions today, and supporting the vast scope of home missions work is more important than any controversy, he stressed.

God has led Southern Baptists to do missions together, Banks said, adding, "I challenge us to be about our Father's business."



GOSPEL SAX — Vernard Johnson, a graduate of Southwestern seminary, plays a gospel concert on his saxophone. Johnson, who overcame asthma to be able to play the sax, now gives his talent to God.

Enrollment at Baptist colleges increases despite predictions

NASHVILLE (BP) — Predictions of declining student enrollments failed to materialize once again at Southern Baptist colleges and universities.

Last August the U.S. Department of Education's Center for Statistics forecast college enrollments would decrease by 83,000 students. Instead, a recent federal survey of colleges indicated enrollments grew by 151,000 students, a 1.2 percent increase.

Southern Baptist colleges and universities, however, saw their enrollments increase 2.0 percent, from 95,539 students in 1985 to 97,453 students during the 1986 fall semester.

According to figures released to the Southern Baptist Education Commission, 35 of the 51 Southern Baptist junior and senior colleges reported increases ranging from 0.4 to 26.1 percent. Figures do not include students enrolled in non-credit courses.

Missouri Baptist College in St. Louis reported the largest increase, 26.1 percent, while Virginia Intermont College in Bristol, Va., saw its enrollment decline by 18.29 percent.

All three Tennessee Baptist colleges reported increases. Belmont College,

Nashville, with 2,364 students, enjoyed a 4.7 percent increase. Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, also increased 4.7 percent to an enrollment of 1,681. Union University, Jackson, with 1,546 students, experienced a 2.3 percent increase.

Arthur Walker Jr., executive director of the Education Commission, attributed the overall increase in SBC colleges to more aggressive recruiting procedures.

Walker observed Baptist college administrators have realized the number of traditional college-age students has declined in recent years, and in all probability it will continue to decline.

As a result, he said, colleges have initiated programs designed to attract students who for one reason or another did not choose to attend college after high school.

These "non-traditional" students, Walker noted, will be the key to the growth of Baptist colleges. "Southern Baptist colleges and universities must continue to develop programs to attract racial minorities, women, and those who have attended college but are now interested in courses in additional vocational areas," he said.

Atwood church calls Johnson as pastor

Robert Johnson accepted the call of First Baptist Church, Atwood, to serve as pastor, and began Nov. 19.

A native of Gibson County, Johnson previously served as pastor of Old Bethlehem Baptist Church, Rutherford; East Laurel Baptist Church, Jackson; and New Salem Baptist Church, Mason Hall.

Johnson served as senior adult director and on the missionary advisory committee for Beulah Baptist Association.

He is a graduate of Union University in Jackson.

Last week's Bible Puzzle answers

A	S	S	D	R	E	S	S	B	E	D	
W	I	L	L	O	F	M	A	N	E	L	A
I	M	A	G	E	M	Y	A	N	G	E	R
F	O	B	S	P	A	Y	D	U	C	E	
E	N	S	C	R	U	E	L	I	T	E	
S	H	A	L	E	M	A	C	C	E	D	E
T	E	N	T	S	A	P	E	D			
B	A	A	T	O	M	E	S	S	A	L	
T	L	O	B	O	S	G	E	R	A		
C	H	I	L	I	D	N	H	I	V	E	S
H	E	E	R	E	T	A	I	N	E	T	H
I	N	N	A	S	H	E	S	R	E	A	

"But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid" (John 6:20).