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Missionaries weep over order to leave Lebanon

By Art Toalston

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — If the U.S. Department of State refuses to soften its stance that Americans must leave Lebanon, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board expects its personnel to obey the order.

"We intend to abide by the laws and restrictions of our government," said Isam Ballenger, director of Southern Baptist work in Europe and the Middle East.

However, Ballenger said, "We are uncertain whether this (order) means that all Foreign Mission Board personnel will have to leave. On the surface, that appears to be the case. But we're still seeking clarification. It could be that some exceptions might be made."

The Jan. 28 order bars Americans from entering or traveling within Lebanon, according to State Department

spokesperson Dona Sherman in Washington. She said a 30-day "grace period" has been extended to Americans currently in Lebanon. Those remaining beyond 30 days face prosecution by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Sherman said exceptions to the order will be considered on an individual application basis.

Southern Baptist representatives have worked in Lebanon, now a country of 2.7-million people, since 1948.

Among missionaries in Lebanon, "the mood has been one of shock and sadness," said Frances Fuller in a telephone interview from Beirut. "We've done a lot of crying today," upon hearing of the State Department order. "It's like a nightmare come true for us. We never imagined... that our government would tell us to leave.

"None of us wants to go," said Fuller,

who has worked in Lebanon 16 years. "We all want to stay." Two cables to that effect from missionaries in Beirut have been sent to the Foreign Mission Board's home office in Richmond, Va.

Three Lebanese co-workers "collapsed in my arms and cried," Fuller said. "Our departure is going to be demoralizing to a lot of people. I think (Lebanese Christians) feel very hurt, very bewildered, that they somehow are being punished for something they didn't do. They seem to be asking, 'Is the rest of the world deserting us?'"

Fuller and other missionaries are urging that a distinction be made between West Beirut, which has been the scene of much chaos during Lebanon's 12-year-old civil war, and East Beirut, which is predominantly Christian and relatively peaceful.

Several missionary women learned of the State Department order while aboard a ship to Cyprus, en route to a conference for Southern Baptist missionary women in the Middle East.

At the hotel, the women were met by other conference participants and Dale Thorne, assistant to Ballenger for Middle East work. A spontaneous prayer meeting and sharing session soon was under way.

"There was a lot of emotion," Thorne said. "There was concern, shock, but still (they) evidenced a lot of faith and calmness."

The women's major concern was for the Lebanese Baptists they might have to leave behind, Thorne noted.

The Baptist sector of Lebanon's Christian community encompasses seven churches in the Beirut area and four in other locales.

Well over 100,000 people have died since 1975 in warring between militias of Maronite Catholics, Shiite and Druse Muslims, and Palestinians. Troops from Syria and Israel also have occupied Lebanese territory and engaged in fighting.

More than 230 U.S. Marines in a multinational peacekeeping force were killed in October 1983, when a terrorist rammed a truckload of explosives into their four-story command center in Beirut.

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Fire devastates church in Medon

A fire, which occurred sometime during the night of Jan. 25, destroyed New Union Baptist Church in Medon.

The church, which consisted of an auditorium, two-story educational building, and offices, was completely destroyed. The pastor is Danny Moss.

Deryl Watson, director of missions of Hardeman County Baptist Association, estimated the cost of the damage at \$500,000. He reported that the church was insured for \$127,000.

The fire marshal is still investigating the cause of the fire, said Watson, but arson is not expected to be the cause. The church's heating system, overloaded because of the cold temperatures, may have been the cause, according to Watson.

A special fund has been set up for contributions at Merchants and Planters Bank, 411 Market Street, West, Bolivar, TN 38008.

Adrian Rogers commits Bellevue to prayer for world missions

MEMPHIS (BP) — The president of the Southern Baptist Convention promised that the church he leads will be "united in heart with brothers and sisters across America" in prayer for world evangelization.

Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, noted he sees "monumental significance" in the SBC Foreign Mission Board trustees' call for "concerts of prayer" for advancing the gospel.

In December, the trustees urged Southern Baptist churches to initiate special prayer for world evangelization during all worship services, Sunday School classes, church training programs, and other activities on the first Sunday of every month.

A toll-free "PrayerLine," 1-800-ALL-SEEK (1-800-255-7335), at the Foreign Mission Board relays the latest prayer concerns from across the world.

"We may be on the brink of the greatest missionary advance the world has ever known," Rogers said in a telephone interview. "The world is ripe for judgment and ripe for evangelism. Sin has reached tidal wave proportions. On the other hand, there's a generation that, in a sense, has tried everything and found that nothing works. Many people are turning anew to the Lord.

"If God has given us an open door, we need to energize ourselves by prayer and step through it."

Rogers, who has been preaching from the New Testament book of Acts at Bellevue, noted, "If we prayed as the early church prayed, we might see more of the miraculous expansion of the missionary effort that they saw so long ago."

He also pointed to a "spinoff blessing" of concerts of prayer: "There may be some aspects in which we're not as unified as we could be, but I don't know a better source of unity than prayer. A

wise man said a long time ago that it's not enough to be wired together by organization or rusted together by tradition but fused together through prayer."

Bellevue, Rogers added, is "turning up the burner" in prayer.

He recently urged church members "to saturate every activity with prayer, from choir practices to deacons' meetings to Sunday School classes to staff meetings... that prayer not be some formalism that opens and closes the meetings, but an integral part of every meeting."

CP giving exceeds first quarter goal

Tennessee Baptists' mission giving through the Cooperative Program is ahead of the convention-adopted goal pace after the first quarter of the convention year, according to Tom Madden, executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Messengers to the 1986 Tennessee Baptist Convention set the Cooperative Program budget-goal for the November 1986-October 1987 convention year at \$22.5-million. The three-month goal would be \$5,625,000 (three-twelfths of \$22.5-million).

When the books for the first quarter closed last Friday, Madden reported that Cooperative Program mission gifts for the November 1986-January 1987 period were \$5,679,178.84. This means that receipts for the first quarter of the convention year are \$54,178.84 ahead (0.96 percent ahead) of the three-month goal, Madden explained.

Comparing these receipts to the previous year, the TBC executive secretary

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LARGEST MISSION CHECK — Tom Madden (left), executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, presents TBC's largest mission check in history to Harold Bennett, president of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee. The check for \$4,011,757.17 included \$880,324.23 for the SBC Cooperative Program and \$3,015,066.60 for the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions.

Supreme Court to review 'moment of silence' law

By Stan Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP) — Acting in a closely watched case involving religious exercises in public schools, the Supreme Court announced Jan. 28 it will review a New Jersey law requiring a daily "moment of silence" in the state's public school classrooms at the beginning of each school day.

The law, enacted by the New Jersey legislature in 1982, states, "Principals and teachers in each public elementary and secondary school . . . shall permit students to observe a one-minute period of silence to be used solely at the discretion of the individual student, before opening exercises of each school day for quiet and private contemplation and introspection."

Two years ago, the high court struck down an Alabama law that required a

one-minute period for silent meditation or prayer. But in that 6-3 decision, at least two justices voting with the majority indicated they might approve a law that did not specifically require silent prayer. More than two dozen states have passed laws calling for moments of silence without any specific mention of prayer.

When it hears the case next term, the high court will review decisions of two lower federal tribunals that struck down the New Jersey statute. A U.S. district court rejected state legislators' claim that the purpose of the law was secular, not religious, holding the claim was an after-the-fact rationalization and a pretext.

In addition, the district court held the law violated two other standards used by the Supreme Court since 1971 in that it had the primary effect of advancing religion and would foster excessive governmental entanglement with religion.

A second panel consisting of three judges of the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia agreed with the district court, 2-1, that the purpose of the New Jersey law was religious. But all three judges disagreed with the lower panel on the other standards. The state then appealed to the Supreme Court.

Because the high court already has scheduled arguments in all cases it is able to hear during the current term, the New Jersey case will be held over for the 1987-88 term. A decision in the case might not come down until the spring of 1988.

Reagan renews plea for school prayer

By Stan Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP) — President Ronald Reagan, delivering his sixth State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress, renewed his oft-repeated plea that lawmakers amend the Constitution to provide for "voluntary prayer" in public school classrooms.

But missing from the chief executive's list of legislative priorities for the new 100th Congress was any mention of two other key planks in Reagan's social agenda, aid to parents who send their children to sectarian schools and a Constitutional amendment to ban abortion. Reagan made his pitch for school prayer toward the end of the 30-minute address in the larger context of an appeal for educational excellence.

As he concluded that section of the speech, the president said, "Finally, let's stop suppressing the spiritual core of our national being. Our nation could not have been conceived without divine help. Why is it that we can build a nation with our prayers but we can't use a schoolroom for voluntary prayer? The 100th Congress of the United States should be remembered as the one that ended the expulsion of God from America's classrooms."

Despite Reagan's plea for a return to officially sanctioned prayer in public school classrooms, Congress is not likely to go along. The last time a Constitutional amendment on the subject came to a floor vote — in 1984 — a Republican-controlled U.S. Senate rejected it. The House of Representatives had not voted on such a proposal since 1971.



MUSIC OFFICERS — The Tennessee Baptist Church Music Conference officers for 1986-87 are (front row, left to right) Ed Hollis of Springfield Baptist Church in Springfield; second vice-president; Herman May of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, president; Tommy Webster of Ellendale Baptist Church in Memphis, first vice-president; (second row) Jere Adams of the TBC church music office, secretary-treasurer; Julian Suggs of church music department, ex-officio; and David Whipple of First Baptist Church in Franklin and past president, ex-officio.

Tucker Callaway dies in Georgia

DECATUR, Ga. — Tucker N. Callaway, a retired Southern Baptist missionary to Japan and Liberia, died Jan. 21 in his home in Decatur, Ga. He was 68 years old.

He had undergone surgery in early January for prostate cancer, according to his wife, Elizabeth. His recovery was successful and he had started teaching two religion classes at Morehouse College in Atlanta on Jan. 7.

He taught school on Jan. 21. At home, he and his wife were about to drive to an airport to spend time with Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Wilkinson, Southern Baptist missionaries to Liberia, just before they were to return to Liberia.

Callaway said he felt dizzy and lay on a bed, Mrs. Callaway said. "He coughed a little and then died." Doctors believe a clot related to the surgery may have formed and caused his death, she said.

He had made arrangements for his body to be donated for research at Emory University Medical School, Atlanta.

The Callaways received 35-year service pins when they retired in 1983 from the Foreign Mission Board. They served 20 years in Fukuoka, Japan, where he trained local pastors in seminary at Seinan Gakuin University. In Liberia, he taught local pastors at Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary. He also directed the Eliza Davis George Training School for pastors and laymen in Liberia. Mrs. Callaway taught English in Japan and Liberia.

A native of Atlanta, Ga., Callaway was a graduate of Mercer University, Macon, Ga., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Other than his wife, survivors include four daughters, Sarah Brett of Nettledale, England; Anny Callaway of Las Vegas, Nev.; Lynn Woodson of Decatur; and Susan Radick of Atlanta; a sister, Ann Martin of Atlanta; his father, Isaiah Tucker Callaway, 97, of Atlanta; and two grandchildren.

His brother-in-law, C. F. Clark, and wife, Polly, work at the Baptist Hospital in Kyoto, Japan, where he is a physician and she is the nursing school director.

A memorial service was conducted at Friendship Baptist Church in Atlanta on Jan. 25.

Teams plan Venezuela trips

Three teams totaling 22 volunteers will be traveling to Venezuela as a part of the Tennessee/Venezuela partnership, which has entered the second year of the three-year program.

The teams are leaving Feb. 16 and March 9.

Ten persons will work on construction of a girls' dormitory and a fourth floor addition to another building at the Baptist theological seminary in Los Teques Feb. 16-27. Four team members will serve through March 27.

A team of 10 persons will serve Feb. 16-28, remodeling the newly-purchased church building of Primera Iglesia Bautista de San Antonio de Los Altos (First Baptist Church in San Antonio, Los Altos).

From March 9-13, James Redding of the TBC missions department will lead a conference on cult groups which will be

held at the seminary in Los Teques. He will be accompanied by his wife.

Persons working at the seminary include Bill Whilhelm and John Viser Jr. from First Baptist Church in Memphis; Charles and Wanda Henry from First Baptist Church in Dunlap; Harold, Susie, and William Bass from First Baptist Church in Jackson; Lee and Virginia Floyd from Wells Station Baptist Church in Memphis; and Steve Sparks from Black Oak Heights Baptist Church in Knoxville. The Henrys and Floyds will serve through March 27.

The team that will work at the church are all members of Hermitage Hills Baptist Church in Hermitage. It includes James and Earlene Hinkle, Bobby and Carey Bass, James Jackson Jr., Jerry Wolverton, Thomas Coulter, Peggie Johnson, and Donald Kohanski.

Clarence Stewart, TBC coordinator of the three-year partnership which is also coordinated by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, noted that 278 persons have served since it began in November 1985.

Persons interested in serving as volunteers should contact Stewart, TBC, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

Court rejects airport case

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Supreme Court has refused to review two lower rulings that San Francisco officials were wrong when they refused to rent space to a religious group at the city's international airport.

In a one-line order handed down Jan. 27, the high court let stand the lower panels' holding that the presence of religious groups in a public forum such as an airport does not violate the First Amendment's ban on an establishment of religion. On the contrary, the lower courts held, to deny such presence to a particular class of tenants amounts to a denial of the equal protection of the law guaranteed in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

The case against the San Francisco airport authority — the official body that controls the West Coast city's international airport — was brought by the Christian Science Church after the authority refused during the years 1981-84 to continue leasing space to the religious body for a Christian Science reading room. The reading room had been a tenant at the airport since 1956.

Partnership roles need support

Two to six volunteers to lead two choral worship workshops and volunteers for construction work are needed to support the Tennessee/Venezuela partnership, noted Clarence Stewart, Tennessee Baptist Convention coordinator of the three-year partnership.

Projected dates for the workshops include: March 4-10, March 11-17, April 8-14, and April 15-21. Construction workers are needed for March 16-27 in Los Teques, March 30 through April 10 in Caracas, April 6-17 in Los Teques, and April 20 through May 1 in Los Teques.

The partnership, which began in November 1985, is coordinated through the Foreign Mission Board.

Persons interested in serving should contact Stewart, TBC, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

Armed convoy escorts Raglands to safety

By Art Toalston

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP) — First in a bulletproof car surrounded by heavily armed militiamen, then in a convoy guarded by militiamen and Lebanese soldiers, Southern Baptist Missionaries Jim and Leola Ragland left West Beirut Saturday morning, Jan. 31.

"Tomorrow will be our 33rd year here," Leola Ragland said in a Feb. 2 telephone interview from East Beirut, their temporary residence.

The Raglands described their departure as "very sad." Their careers have been devoted to the Beirut Baptist School, his as superintendent and hers as director of the preschool program. The Raglands hope to remain in East Beirut to help the school, which now is being operated by a committee of three Lebanese teachers.

On Jan. 28, the U.S. Department of State ordered all Americans in Lebanon to leave within 30 days (see story on page 1).

Ragland said he was notified by telephone at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 30, that arrangements could be made for him to leave West Beirut the following morning at 7:30.

"We were told by the embassy that ... that might be the last time they could do anything for us," Ragland said. "It was a very rushed-up thing."

West Beirut has been the site of numerous kidnappings of Americans and

other foreigners during the past two years. After the most recent kidnappings, militia guarding the area doubled the guards on the Raglands' street.

Soon after the call, Mrs. Ragland said, breaking into tears, "local people just massed in the house to tell us goodbye. It

was quite a sad farewell."

The Raglands placed a call to the 950-student school Feb. 2, when students and faculty members learned of the departure. "They told us it was really a sad occasion at school today," Mrs. Ragland said.

Samford launches center on religious legal matters

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Samford University has launched its Center for the Study of Law and the Church.

The center will serve the rapidly developing needs of clergy, congregational boards, and officials of church-related organizations at local, state, and national levels, said Thomas E. Cortis, president of the Alabama Baptist school in Birmingham. It will provide assistance and guidance through educational and service functions, counseling, research, and publications.

"The needs to be served are generated by the growing complexity of society and the increasing exposure of all institutions to legal liabilities and limitations," Cortis noted, citing a recent report that about 2,000 legal cases involving houses of worship, clergy, and religious groups are pending nationwide.

"Until now, no central core of professionally prepared information and advice was available to guide and assist the persons and boards involved in these matters," he continued.

The new Samford center, authorized by the university trustees last year, will conduct an annual law and church conference to provide in-depth exploration of emerging trends in the field of law and

religion, with presentations by recognized scholars in the field.

Director Chriss H. Doss will have offices in Samford's Cumberland School of Law. An incoming toll-free telephone line will be available for use by pastors and others who seek information from the center on church legal matters.

Parham Williams, dean of the Cumberland School of Law, said the center would "provide a basic form of counseling and would seek to complement the services of lawyers."

The center's staff, in addition to providing an informal advisory service to individuals and institutions, will produce a reference handbook of laws and regulations affecting the church, plus a monthly newsletter containing updated information.

Doss also will provide instructional support in such courses as "Law and the Church," which would be available not only to students in law, but also to undergraduates in the department of religion and other appropriate disciplines in the university.

A graduate of both Samford University and the Cumberland Law School, Doss also holds a theological degree from Eastern Baptist Seminary in Philadelphia and a master's degree in library science from Drexel University, also in Philadelphia.

He has been a pastor in Pennsylvania and Alabama and was law librarian at Cumberland. A member of the Alabama House of Representatives during 1970-74, Doss was chairman of the Jefferson County House Delegation for two years.

Paul Hall retires after 16 years

W. Paul Hall, associate director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention missions department retired Jan. 30 after serving in that department for more than 16 years.

Hall has worked as Tennessee's director of black church relations, coordinator of special mission ministries in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, church building consultant, and rural urban missions consultant since 1970.

He also has served as state director of Christian social ministries through the Home Mission Board.

Prior to joining the TBC staff, the native of Wilson County was director of missions in Holston Baptist Association.

He has been a pastor in Indiana and at the following churches in Tennessee: Lancaster Baptist Church in Lancaster, Rome Baptist Church in Rome, Mount Oliver Baptist Church in Leeville, Gladeville Baptist Church in Gladeville, First Baptist Church in Camden, First Baptist Church in Loudon, and Calvary Baptist Church in Kingsport.

Hall has held numerous associational positions and has been president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's library convention, a member of the TBC Committee on Committees, Executive Board, commission on American Baptist Seminary, board of trustees of Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy in Seymour, and advisory board of trustees of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City and East Tennessee Baptist Hospital in Knoxville. He preached the convention sermon at the state's annual meeting in 1959.

A graduate of Cumberland University in Lebanon and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

He is married to Clara Lee Agee Hall. They have two daughters and two grandchildren.

CP giving...

(Continued from page 1)

noted that Cooperative Program gifts for November 1986 through January 1987 are \$381,323.75 (7.20 percent) larger than the \$5,297,855.09 received during the November 1985 through January 1986 period.

Madden noted that the tremendous gifts to the Cooperative Program in January made it possible for Tennessee Baptists to be ahead of the first quarter goal.

During January, \$2,379,254.67 was given to missions through the Cooperative Program — the second highest month in TBC history.

The monthly goal for the current convention year is \$1,875,000 (one-twelfth of \$22.5-million). Last month's Cooperative Program gifts were \$504,254.67 above (26.89 percent above) the monthly goal.

However, last month's gifts of \$2,379,254.67 were 1.64 percent below the \$2,418,303.10 received in January 1986 — which is the TBC's record month in Cooperative Program giving.

January 1987 is now Tennessee Baptists' second highest month, replacing October 1985, when \$2,189,236.30 was received, in that position.

Madden also reported that in addition to the near-record Cooperative Program month, Tennessee Baptists also gave \$3,015,066.60 during January to the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions.

A church-by-church listing of Cooperative Program gifts and designated gifts will be printed in next week's issue of the Baptist and Reflector.

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Doss also will provide instructional support in such courses as "Law and the Church," which would be available not only to students in law, but also to undergraduates in the department of religion and other appropriate disciplines in the university.

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TBC announces help for music programs

Churches that do not have persons to play the piano or organ or to lead the singing in worship can find help through the summer music worker program, according to Jere Adams, program associate in the Tennessee Baptist Convention church music department.

Also, groups holding meetings or camps that need musicians can seek help, he said.

Those churches, especially ones with volunteer or part-time music leadership which need help in organizing the music ministry and training its leaders should apply for help from a summer music worker, Adams explained.

The workers, who are trained musicians, lead a one- or two-week music emphasis in churches and for groups during the summer.

The TBC church music department provides the music materials and teaching aids for the worker. The church provides room and board and a special offering for the summer music worker.

Churches and groups that are interested in more information should contact the TBC church music department, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

The bulletproof car was provided by the militia in control of the neighborhood where the school is located. Several of the militia's leaders have children in the Baptist school, which has more students from Muslim families than Christian families.

The car took the Raglands to the barren U.S. embassy in West Beirut. After a three-hour unexplained wait, the Raglands then were taken in separate cars tucked in a convoy to East Beirut.

Two armed guards were in each car with the Raglands. The Raglands said the guards were quite tense, fearing a possible attack, especially each time the convoy came to a stop in heavy traffic.

Once they were in East Beirut, a U.S. embassy official remarked, "I can't believe we got him (Ragland) out safely."

"Please remember that the Lebanese people are very wonderful people, and we love them," Mrs. Ragland said. "It's so sad that a few have just ruined the country" during Lebanon's 12-year-old civil war. "There are so many wonderful people who are having to suffer — so much pain and suffering that you just can't imagine."

Other Southern Baptist missionaries also remain in East Beirut waiting for word from the U.S. State Department about the possibility of exemptions that may allow some of them to continue working there.

Lebanon...

(Continued from page 1)

Eight Americans still are held hostage in a wave of kidnapping dating back to early 1984. More than a dozen other foreigners have been kidnapped — as well as hundreds of Lebanese.

War also has taken a toll on Lebanese Baptists. Several churches have been scattered by the conflict, and one prominent layman was kidnapped and murdered several years ago.

"The fact that our missionaries have remained thus far has been applauded by Baptists in Lebanon and by Lebanese dignitaries," Ballenger said.

"The crisis in Lebanon has brought, without question, new and unprecedented opportunities for service in media, publications, and educational work," he said. "Physical safety is not always their first consideration. They do not want to be foolish, and they do not want to break the laws. But they would first ask, 'Where is the highest service to be rendered and the highest value to be gained?' Here is where it's hard to judge."

Ballenger picked the word "suffering" to describe the missionaries: "They're suffering because they love Lebanon. They love the people and the land. They're suffering because the Lebanese people are suffering."

"The masses of Lebanese are not the types of people who are publicized by the media. The terrorists, the kidnapers, the warring factions are a small minority. The masses of Lebanese people — Muslim and Christian — are suffering people."

"I think some of the missionaries would say, 'I would just as soon face death as to leave Lebanon,'" he added.

"I think of Nehemiah in the Old Testament who said, 'I am doing an important work and I cannot come down,' when he was building the walls of Jerusalem. Our missionaries have exhibited that. They feel they're making a contribution to the kingdom of God, and they cannot stop."

Survey respondents back emphasis on evangelism

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE (BP) — Stepped-up efforts at winning lost persons to Jesus Christ should be the number one priority of Southern Baptist churches, according to a recent survey in which evangelism led by 10 percentage points over all other concerns needing greater emphasis.

In the study conducted for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, NFO Research Inc. of Toledo, Ohio, sent a mail survey to about 1,500 Southern Baptists 18 years of age and older. A total of 1,072 responded to the four-page questionnaire.

Asked to rank a list of 13 items according to the emphasis needed in Southern Baptist churches — ranging from greatly increased to greatly decreased emphasis — 57 percent of those responding called for greatly increased emphasis on winning the world to Christ.

In other areas rated high in the need for greatly increased emphasis, strengthening marriage was cited by 47 percent; reclaiming inactive members, 44 percent; training in Christian parenthood, 43 percent; and worship, 40 percent.

In designing the survey questionnaire, generic rather than denominational terms were used to avoid SBC-related bias in the responses, according to Cliff Tharp, planning research specialist in the board's research services department.

He said survey results "provide the largest, most solid picture of a national sample of Southern Baptists known to be available in recent years."

With a desire expressed for more emphasis on evangelism, 40 percent of the respondents said they had talked with an unsaved person about becoming a Christian during the last 12 months while 11 percent said they had led someone to make a commitment to Christ.

In another area, from a list of 23 moral or economic problems, respondents said drug use (51 percent) and child abuse (50 percent) concern them most.

Other issues which rated among the top ten were: divorce rate, 30 percent; abortion and drinking of alcoholic beverages, 28 percent each; terrorism and parental neglect of children, 27 percent each; homosexuality, 26 percent; immorality in sexual relationships, 25 percent; and hunger/poverty, 23 percent.

Issues receiving the lowest responses were: capital punishment, 2 percent; women's rights/opportunities, 4 percent; spouse abuse, 6 percent; and racial discrimination and nuclear disarmament, 7 percent each.

From a list of four possible theories of inspiration of the Bible, respondents divided equally (38 percent each) on two of the theories.

"God inspired writers in such a way that even though they used their own words, they were so completely enlightened, guided, and empowered that the whole of what they wrote was without any error," was the choice of one group of 38 percent of respondents.

Also chosen by 38 percent was the statement, "God worked in the lives and minds of writers to give them inspired ideas so that what they wrote expresses the revealed truth of God in words drawn from the writers' own backgrounds and experiences."

The inspiration theory chosen by only three percent of respondents said, "The writers were inspired in the same manner in which all the great poets and writers have been." A fourth theory, the so-called dictation theory, "God gave the Scriptures word for word," was chosen by 17 percent.

From a list of statements about which respondents could express agreement or disagreement, 67 percent stated varying degrees of support for prohibiting federal funding of abortions. A total of 61 percent expressed varying degrees of

disagreement with the idea that "a woman's life is fulfilled only if she can provide a happy home for her family."

Also, a total of 78 percent said they agree the federal government should encourage prayers in public schools.

Among the respondents, 48 percent indicated they were not church leaders. Of the remaining 52 percent, 19 percent rated themselves somewhat involved as a leader; 13 percent, moderately involved; and 14 percent, very involved.

Of the respondents, 34 percent have at-

tended church more than once a week during the past six months. The largest group, 17 percent, attend a church of 300-499 members. And 62 percent are involved in church to about the same degree as one year ago.

The largest group of respondents (20 percent) are in professional or technical occupations while 15 percent are retired and 14 percent are homemakers. A total of 55 percent described themselves as middle class and 44 percent said they are "somewhat conservative."

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.

Compelled to speak out

Dear editor:

During the process of searching for a basis of reconciliation within our convention, I have respected and honored the request of the Peace Committee to refrain from public statements which might inflame more than conciliate. This has not been easy for there have been many developments that have enraged me. Nevertheless, I have suppressed my desire to speak out.

However, the revelation that a new, independent, Baptist foreign mission organization has been formed compels me to break this silence. This is the most tragic of all the events since 1979. The one basis for agreement among all factions throughout our controversy has been the need to stay together for the sake of Bold Mission Thrust. Now the self-centered, treasonous attitudes of some are attacking this last bastion of cooperation.

How can the people behind the Genesis Commission call themselves cooperating Southern Baptists? Does their action not speak of an independent mindset? Of course, Baptists are autonomous, but autonomy has never meant that persons or groups can do as they please and still deserve the label "cooperative."

There is much room for diversity in the Southern Baptist Convention, but the formation of an independent mission body is mutiny. These people are free to support the Genesis Commission, but honesty compels them to forfeit the name Southern Baptist.

David W. Crocker
300 North Roan Street
Johnson City, TN 37601

Campbellism/Phariseism

Dear editor:

Southern Baptist denominational leadership has certainly deteriorated in Christian spirit and attitude. I speak of the recent opposition to the "Genesis Commission" by Dr. Keith Parks.

Dr. Bill Darnell has felt that God wanted him in church planting and that is actually what he is carrying out; God's wishes. But Mr. Parks feels that this will take money out of the Southern Baptist Convention's foreign missions' coffers. Therefore, Parks, along with other denominational leadership, is opposed to Bill's going into church planting.

Dr. Parks' spirit about this reveals several startling things.

1. A spirit of littleness.
2. Dr. Parks is using his office to tell us what we can and cannot do.

3. His spirit denies the leadership of the Holy Spirit in the lives of these brothers.

4. His attitude does not give room or freedom to the priesthood of the believer.

5. Simply stated, this is Phariseism. In our day it is like the so-called "Church of Christ," actually Campbellism. This means that if you are a Southern Baptist, then every religious thing that you do or say is to be geared around the denomination. It means that you are to be a 100 percent party man. If that be the case, by this standard, Paul or none of the New Testament disciples or apostles could have been a denominational Baptist. The fact is that Jesus would never have been considered a Southern Baptist.

Go on, Bill. Plant churches, win sinners to Jesus. You are in good company with Christ and Paul.

Vaughn W. Denton
4480 Kirby Parkway
Memphis, TN 38115

Waste of time, energy

Dear editor:

The new Genesis Commission that has recently gotten started appears to me to be a waste of time and energy.

If the people who have started this new mission agency would check in the records, they will discover that the Home Mission Board has been in the business of starting churches for a long time. If they will check in the records, they will discover that a church a day, or better, has been started every day since the end of World War II.

A boast of 30 churches in 1987 is nothing compared to what the Church Extension Department, working through state conventions and the associations, has done. In 1985, Southern Baptists started 1,337 churches (Quarterly Review, July-September 1986, p. 30). Granted, some probably started and failed, and some were started from church splits, but the vast majority of them were started because a local church saw a need for a new church and started one.

I don't know what the Foreign Mission Board has done, but I believe their mission strategy is to start a church and let the nationals take over the leadership at some point in time.

I believe the leaders of the Genesis Commission are being deceptive when they say they want to augment the work of starting churches. I believe it will become a sending agency for local church operated schools and theological seminaries. I don't think I am being deceived by their intentions and I hope other Southern Baptists won't be deceived.

Dean Preuett
3 East Maple
Lee's Summit, MO 64063

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Tennessee/Venezuela Prayer Net Partnership

—On Feb. 7 Kristi Pennington, a church/home worker in Caracas, has a birthday.

—Plans are being made in Caracas, which has 1-million people, to start family centers in areas where there is no Baptist church.

—Efrain Silva helps lead Iglesia Bautista Memorial in Caracas and two missions.

—An Electronic Media Communications Conference will be led by Alan Compton from the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond Feb. 11-13 to explore the possibilities of television ministries in Venezuela.

Seminaries release plans for inerrancy conference

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)— For the first time in their seven-year-old controversy, Southern Baptists will have a chance to talk together about the scholarly aspects of Biblical inerrancy May 4-7.

Presidents of the six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries are sponsoring the Conference on Biblical Inerrancy at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center. It is the first of three national conferences the seminary presidents will host in an attempt to resolve the denomination's ongoing political and theological controversy.

"This is the first time in the seven years of our debate that Southern Baptists will have an opportunity for a balanced, objective discussion of inerrancy apart from emotion," said Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Milton Ferguson, president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., said the presidents believe "it is time to move this issue from the arena of denominational politics to the arena of careful discussion and understanding."

The purpose of the conference is to "understand and evaluate Biblical inerrancy as a way of affirming the inspiration and authority of the Bible," he said.

The conference will be "an opportunity to reaffirm our Southern Baptist commitment to a high view of Scripture and the authority of God's Word," Dilday added.

Keynote speaker will be J.I. Packer, professor of historical and systematic theology at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia. Packer is a charter member of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, and a noted author on the subject. His books include *Fundamentalism and the Word of God*, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, and *Knowing God*.

Baptist names Keller to surgical position

NASHVILLE — Maggie Keller has been named director of surgical services at Baptist Hospital.

Keller will be responsible for managing the operating rooms and O.R. personnel at Baptist.

She joined Baptist after serving as director of surgical services for Middletown Hospital in Middletown, Ohio, where she was responsible for all surgical and recovery room operations. Keller has more than 15 years of experience in hospital administration and nursing care.

She is a graduate of Meridian Junior College in Meridian, Miss.

Other scholars scheduled to speak include Kenneth Kantzer, dean of the Christianity Today Institute; Clark Pinnock, professor at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario; Millard Erickson, dean at Bethel Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minn.; Mark Noll, history professor at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill.; and Robert Preus of Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind.

The conference will include six general sessions of worship, with addresses by key speakers. In Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon sessions, participants will discuss specific topics in smaller groups.

Professors from the six SBC seminaries will lead these discussion sessions. Topics will include "The Relationship of the Bible to Natural Science," "The Strengths and Weaknesses of Fundamentalism," "The Relationship Between Views of the Bible and Missions," and "Biblical Teaching on Inspiration and Inerrancy."

The opening worship session will feature Joel Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and vocalist Russell Newport of Springfield, Mo.

Dilday said the conference will allow ample time for informal discussion after the sessions. Lectures will be distributed in print, audio, and video reproductions. Other writings of the major speakers will be available at the conference.

All Southern Baptists are invited to attend the conference, Dilday said. Pastors, church staff, and lay leaders who are interested in a scholarly study of inerrancy will benefit, he noted.

The conference grew out of the presidents' "Glorieta Statement" made to the SBC Peace Committee Oct. 20. In that statement, the six presidents committed to help bring a resolution to the denomination's controversy.

Fundamental-conservatives and moderate-conservatives within the convention have been in disagreement since 1979. Much of that debate has centered on the six seminaries and the authority of the Bible.

Dilday said the presidents hope in the three conferences to foster serious discussion of the theological issues in the controversy. The other two conferences will be on Biblical interpretation and Biblical imperative.

Because the presidents expect a capacity crowd for this first conference, reservations should be made soon, Dilday said. Individual conference rates are \$148.75/single, \$110.50/double, \$101.80/triple, and \$97.45/four. Cost includes all lodging, meals, and conference fees.

A deposit of \$12.75 should be sent to Conference on Biblical Inerrancy, Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, Box 128, Ridgecrest, N.C. 28770.

Ga. Baptists, Methodists defeat pari-mutuel bill

ATLANTA (BP)— Georgia Baptists and Methodists played key roles in defeating a proposed Constitutional amendment which would have legalized pari-mutuel gambling on horse races in Georgia.

The House Industry Committee of the Georgia General Assembly voted 18-6 against the bill, in effect killing it for the 1987 legislative session.

Thousands of Baptists and Methodists wrote letters opposing the legislation to their representatives and senators and to members of the House Industry Committee.

Opposition to the bill was led by the Georgia Council on Moral and Civic Concerns, an organization of Baptists and Methodists in Georgia established in 1943 by the late Louie D. Newton and Bishop Arthur Moore.

Emmett Henderson, executive director of the council, attributed defeat of the bill to an outpouring of letters, phone calls, and public outcry from concerned Christian citizens in Georgia opposed to legalized gambling.

"To my knowledge, at no time in recent history has there been a greater public response in Georgia that changed

the course of legislation so quickly," said Henderson, a former Georgia Baptist pastor for 25 years.

Henderson said the chairman of the House Industry Committee, Rep. Sonny Watson of Warner-Robins, received almost 1,000 letters against the bill, including at least 200 from his home district. Most of the letters were handwritten messages "from truly concerned people."

Henderson especially praised the roles of the *Christian Index*, the Georgia Baptist state paper; the Wesleyan Christian Advocate, the state paper for United Methodists; and the leadership of Clark Hutchinson, president of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

Hutchinson, pastor of East Side Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., wrote a personal letter to all Georgia Baptist pastors encouraging them to urge church members to write letters to their representatives opposing the bill. Hutchinson made a similar appeal to pastors attending the Georgia Baptist state evangelism conference in Savannah just one week before the subcommittee was to consider the bill.

In January, the *Christian Index* and the Wesleyan Christian Advocate each carried a series of front page articles, editorials, and two full-page ads urging Baptists and Methodists to oppose the legislation. "This was probably the major factor leading to the defeat of the bill," Henderson said.

"This demonstrated what concerned Christian citizens can do when they really want to affect legislation," he added. "It was citizen participation by Christians in the best possible way. And it worked."

Although Henderson said there is a possibility the bill might come up again in the Senate, the defeat in the House committee was so overwhelming, he feels the bill is dead for this year in Georgia: "Most folks wrote to their senators as well as to their representatives, so I doubt it will come up again this year. But it probably will again next year."

Handbell Festival competitions set

The 1987 Handbell Festival competitions for handbell choirs are slated for four locations across the state.

Persons interested in beginning church handbell choirs also are encouraged to attend.

The middle Tennessee competition will be Feb. 20-21 at Judson Baptist Church in Nashville. The west Tennessee meet will be the same dates at Englewood Baptist Church in Jackson.

Manley Baptist Church in Morristown is the site of the upper east Tennessee meet and Concord Baptist Church in Chattanooga is the location of the east Tennessee competition. They will both be Feb. 27-28.

Registration forms and additional information may be obtained from the TBC church music department, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

Training to cover VBS, Backyard Bible Clubs

Training for associational Vacation Bible School and Backyard Bible Club or Mission Vacation Bible School workers will be held in six locations across the state.

The training, which includes 12 age group conferences, will qualify associational workers to train youth, sponsors, and other workers in churches.

The sessions, which begin at 9 a.m. and end at 2:15 p.m., will include lunch and child care if reservations are made.

The meetings will be Feb. 16 at Manley Baptist Church in Morristown, Feb. 17 at Westwood Baptist Church in Cleveland, Feb. 18 at First Baptist Church in Pulaski, Feb. 19 at First Baptist Church in Cookeville, Feb. 20 at Forest Hills Baptist Church in Nashville, and Feb. 23 at West Jackson Baptist Church in Jackson.

Persons wishing to obtain more information or make reservations should contact the TBC Sunday School department, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

C. Maddox reports increases at C-N

JEFFERSON CITY — Carson-Newman President Cordell Maddox reported to the Jan. 22-23 board of trustees meeting that the Baptist school's enrollment, applications, and gifts are all riding an upward trend.

According to statistics compiled through Jan. 23, 1,618 students have registered for the 1986-87 spring semester at Carson-Newman. Another 35 students are enrolled in C-N's Bible School. Enrollment is up by 119 students over the 1985-86 spring semester, an increase of nearly 8 percent. Fall enrollment was up by 5 percent.

Net applications are up by 121 percent over this time last year. The number of students accepted is up by 54 percent, and the number of deposits paid shows a 51 percent increase.

Figures on gifts to the college for the first half of fiscal 1986-87 show that contributions are also on the rise. Funds donated during the period from August to December reflect an increase of 76 percent over the same period last year. In the month of December alone, giving increased by 139 percent.

Overseas baptisms rise 17 percent during 1986

By Art Toalston

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Year-end statistics offer new hope that Bold Mission Thrust goals may not be impossible dreams: Baptisms by overseas Baptists related to Southern Baptist missions climbed 17.1 percent during 1986.

The 185,689 baptisms surpass the previous record of 158,626 in 1985. The total also more than doubled the number baptized in 1975, the year before Bold Mission Thrust began.

An annual growth rate of nearly 10 percent was envisioned in overseas baptisms and churches when Bold Mission Thrust goals for the year 2000 were adopted during the 1976 Southern Baptist Convention.

But the goals have not been met. In baptisms, the average increase had been about 7 percent. To meet Bold Mission Thrust goals, yearly growth of 11 percent will be needed until the year 2000. Thus the 1986 increase in baptisms gives fresh hope.

Overseas Baptists reached record levels in other categories of work during 1986 and, in most cases, posted healthy increases.

The number of churches, 16,699, is 6.8 percent above the 1985 total. Counting

churches, mission congregations, and preaching points, 35,233 locations were reported, up 6.9 percent over 1985. Overall membership, at just over 2-million, increased by 1.5 percent.

The growing numbers reflect far more than the efforts of Southern Baptist missionaries, according to Charles Bryan, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board senior vice-president for overseas operations.

"There are dedicated laypeople in those churches, dedicated pastors in those pulpits, and dedicated leaders in those conventions," he said.

Congregations overseas averaged one baptism for every 11 members, compared to one baptism for every 12 members in 1985. Among Southern Baptists, the average is one baptism for every 41 church members.

An average of 20 new Baptist churches were organized every week, up from 16 in 1985 and eight per week five years ago.

The primary role of missionaries, Bryan said, is to "enhance, assist, bring added vitality to" the work of overseas Baptists. A measure of their effectiveness as encouragers and co-workers is the ratio of baptisms per missionary,

51.6 to 1, up from 44 to 1 in 1985 and 36 to 1 five years ago.

Brazilian Baptists accounted for nearly 30 percent of all overseas baptisms. Their 1986 total, topping 55,000, was 29 percent above 1985.

Second in baptisms were Tanzanian Baptists, whose 22,000-plus total marked a 75 percent increase over 1985. In Nigeria, just over 22,000 were baptized; in the Philippines, some 11,300. Korean baptisms numbered 9,000, up 24 percent over 1985. In Kenya, some 7,800 were baptized, 1,000 over the year before. Also, the number of Kenyan Baptist churches increased 40 percent, to 846, and church membership was up nearly 50 percent, to 47,000-plus people.

Baptist churches in India grew to nearly 600, from 400 in 1985, and healthy increases were recorded there in baptisms, church membership, and preaching points. Baptisms in Burkina Faso spiraled from 141 in 1985 to some 1,300 in 1986. Momentum in the West African country has been attributed in part to various human needs projects and evangelistic endeavors by three dozen missionaries and numerous volunteers, primarily Tennessee Baptists, in recent years.

Partnership efforts between Southern Baptist volunteers and overseas Baptists in numerous countries, including Brazil, Tanzania, and Kenya, have had "a measurable impact upon the number of decisions and baptisms and the growth in church membership," Bryan noted.

The number of pastors among overseas Baptists increased by 9 percent, to some 14,500. Still, there are not enough pastors for every church and mission congregation. In many cases, however, laypeople handle church leadership roles.

The increase in pastors reflects sizable

gains in seminary enrollment from 1983 through 1985, up more than 50 percent, and in theological education by extension, up more than 40 percent during the same period. In overall enrollment in both types of training, overseas Baptists remain ahead of Bold Mission Thrust challenges.

Despite economic turmoil in many countries, total giving by overseas Baptists increased to an equivalent of \$86.4-million, 5.3 percent over 1985.

In publishing work, the number of books printed for overseas Baptists nearly doubled, to 4.5-million during 1986. A new translation of the New Testament in Spanish and the widening use of MasterLife and other discipleship materials account for much of the increase.

Media missionaries and national co-workers produced more than 50,000 radio broadcasts, up from some 35,000 in 1985, for a potential audience of 166-million people. They also produced 2,150 TV programs, almost triple the 762 of 1985, for a potential audience of 57-million viewers.

Healthcare missionaries and national co-workers cared for about 137,000 inpatients and more than 1.3-million outpatients.

Community centers ministered to some 142,000 adults and children, and children's homes cared for more than 3,800 residents.

New Friendship church calls Ted Anderson

Ted Anderson recently began serving as pastor of New Friendship Baptist Church in Cleveland.

For the past 14 years he has been serving as pastor in Florida. He has also served in pastorates in Georgia and Alabama.



BETTER TIMES — In Shanghai, China, a woman prays during a weekday adult Bible reading class at a city church. Times are much better for Chinese Christians, who, along with millions of other Chinese, suffered greatly during the so-called Cultural Revolution. A number of Southern Baptists now are living and working in China in education, technology, health care, and other areas. The Foreign Mission Board's Cooperative Services International Office helps such Southern Baptists express their love and concern through service to people in China and other "restricted" countries. Photo by Warren Johnson.

Baptist Sunday School Books

By Frank Wm. White

NASHVILLE (BP) — For many Southern Baptists, vivid mental images of scenes from the Bible are based on teaching pictures and illustrations from childhood Sunday School classes.

Making those pictures as historically and Biblically accurate as possible is a primary goal of the art department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

For the last six years, art department personnel have stepped up efforts at researching details to ensure the accuracy of their work. That quest has led to visits to museums in London, Berlin, and throughout the United States, as well as trips to historic sites in the Holy Land.

Artist-designers call the photo and slide collection developed from those trips the "million-dollar file." Its 19,000-plus photos would cost more than \$1-million to purchase, says Jerry Ross, art department director.

A 10-volume cross-reference index describes the artifacts illustrated in the photos. With the index, the collection becomes a valuable tool for illustrators depicting scenes from the Bible. An additional 15 volumes of research material document historical data to aid artists in their work.

"This may be the only collection of research that provides a Bible commentary from an illustration standpoint,"

notes Jean Bowman, master artist designer, who has compiled the research materials.

Commentators generally do not deal with what people looked like, what they wore, or what buildings or places looked like, she points out. But artists need that information.

The research has been more involved than expected, Ross explains. "We realized after it took three years to complete research for six Bible stories that this was a long-term project."

Paula Savage, master artist designer who is responsible for art for *Biblical Illustrator* magazine, likens the project to unraveling a mystery. "Once you get started on it, you find more things to investigate," she says. One museum visit will provide answers to some questions but those questions lead to others, she explains.

In addition to research by the art department, artists rely on other resources. "We don't just draw what we think. We rely on what the research shows," says Bill Latta, supervisor of the youth-adult curriculum design section.

"Some of the research is giving images different from those we grew up with," Ross says. That creates a struggle over how to portray different stories. "Do you follow tradition or the research?" he asks.

Things like the length or color of Jesus' robe and the length of His hair have been

Players' lives tell score for C-N's football coach

By Randy Hutton

JEFFERSON CITY (BP) — Winning a national football championship represents an achievement most coaches and players only dream about. Rarer still is the duplication of that feat. But three out of the last four years, Ken Sparks' Carson-Newman Eagles have brought the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics football trophy home to Jefferson City.

Since becoming head football coach at Carson-Newman College in 1980, Sparks has led his teams to four appearances in the NAIA playoffs and three national championships. The Eagles claimed their most recent title by defeating Cameron University of Oklahoma 17-0 in the 1986 Champion Bowl.



Sparks

The Tennessee Baptist school's two previous championships came in 1983 and 1984.

Sparks' teams also have won four South Atlantic Conference titles in the past five years. With a seven-year record of 59-22-1, Sparks has the best winning percentage in the history of C-N football.

While his Eagles have enjoyed great success on the field, Sparks is eager to talk about other reasons he enjoys coaching at Carson-Newman: "I don't know of any other place where you have more opportunities to influence young people. It is important that we be educated to do the best we can spiritually, physically, and intellectually. The great thing about C-N is that it is a balanced institution."

The college has had "a major impact" on Sparks' own life. A Knoxville native, he first came to Carson-Newman as a

transfer student in 1964.

"I was a new Christian," Sparks recalls. "My pastor told me I needed to be someplace I could grow. Carson-Newman was exactly what I needed."

A wide receiver on the football team, Sparks remembers benefiting from contact with Christian teachers and coaches like offensive line coach Dal Shealy.

Sparks received his degree from C-N in 1968. Two stints as a high school coach followed, along with a job as an assistant coach at Tennessee Tech University, Cookeville, where he also earned a master's degree.

In 1972, Sparks came back to C-N as offensive coordinator under Shealy, who then was head coach. "He was a strong influence on me as a Christian and as a football coach," Sparks notes. The offense Sparks helped develop was ranked in the top five in the nation for 1972. The Eagles also made their first trip ever to the NAIA Champion Bowl, where they lost a thriller to East Texas, 21-18.

Sparks left C-N in 1977 to become head football coach at Farragut High School in Knoxville. While at Farragut, Sparks took his team to the semifinals of the state AAA playoffs and earned several coach-of-the-year honors.

Upon his return in 1980 as head football coach and athletic director, Sparks began the work of turning the 1980s into the decade of the Eagles in the NAIA. His success led reporters at the press conference following C-N's latest Champion Bowl victory to ask Sparks if he believed the Eagles had established a football dynasty.

"I don't believe in dynasties," Sparks responded. "They're for the media. I believe in things happening inside. I'm thankful to the Lord — not for the scoreboard, but for what's happening inside some of our guys."

What Sparks had in mind seemed to be reflected in senior defensive tackle Don Bramlett's words to the media. "It's a great feeling to be part of a national championship team," said Bramlett, who had just been voted the game's outstanding defensive player. "But the greatest day in my life was the day I gave my life to Jesus Christ. We just play to honor the Lord. That's what our team is based on."

Sparks notes other team leaders like Mike Davis and Reggie Mays had expressed similar thoughts following the Eagles two earlier playoff wins. "That tells me they have their priorities in the right order," Sparks insists.

"Ken Sparks has a unique approach to football," observes Ken Smith, a minister from Tallahassee, Fla., a close observer of the team. "All of the Carson-Newman coaches have a human quality. Their concerns for their players go beyond football."

"Now all major colleges are getting concerned about their players," says Smith, who is chaplain of the Florida State University team. "They are realizing that things like crack and cocaine are moral problems. But what many others are beginning to do now, Ken Sparks has done for years."

A drug-testing program instituted at C-N this fall was indicative of Sparks' personal interest in his players. The testing was not required by the NAIA or any other governing body. "It was strictly our doing," Sparks says. "I raised the money to get it done. I felt it was something we owed these kids."

Understanding the severity of the problem of drugs in athletics and all of society, Sparks was apprehensive about learning the results. "I was preparing myself for some pretty serious counseling," he remembers.

When an official from the testing agency arrived with the results, he entered Sparks' office and closed the door. "He said, 'I want to tell you something I've never been able to tell any athletic director,'" Sparks recalls. "You are the first team we've ever tested that was completely clean."

The season which followed brought Sparks even more good news about his team. The Eagles won their last 10 games to finish with a record of 12-1 and an NAIA title. Sparks was named Coach of the Year by the South Atlantic Conference, the third time he received that award. In 1984 he was NAIA Coach of the Year.

Sparks lives in Jefferson City with his daughter Chanda, 17, and his son Chad, 19. Chanda is a senior at Jefferson County High School, where she was elected senior class president and homecoming queen. Chad is a freshman at C-N and plays on the football team.

A member of Manley Baptist Church in Morristown, Sparks teaches a Sunday School class for young marrieds there. He also is active in local, state, and national Fellowship of Christian Athletes organizations.

With 14 of this year's 22 starters returning next year, Sparks' Eagles would seem to be poised to make another run at the NAIA championship in 1987. However, Sparks' interest in his players' futures goes beyond the next football season.

"I'm anxious to see what has gone on inside these players," Sparks says. "I want to see where they'll be five years from now. I'm excited about what they are going to do on their jobs and what contributions they're going to make to their churches. I think that's the bottom line, and that's the evaluator we should use, not a scoreboard."

Artists' research details seeking Biblical accuracy

Developed as definite images based on tradition. For example, in the dusty desert of the Holy Land, research indicates Jesus likely did not wear a robe and dragged the ground.

"People have taken the concept of the Christ in a flowing white robe and applied that to His whole life," Ross writes.

Credibility is the key reason for the research, Latta points out, stressing, "The art needs to be consistent with the Biblical text and historical facts."

Latta singles out one teaching picture with a Roman battering ram in an Old Testament setting, long before Roman times. "Few people would notice that, but we need to be as accurate and consis-

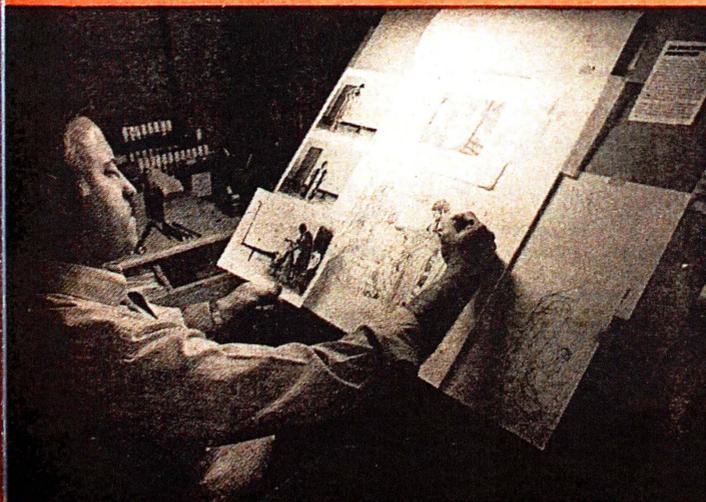
tent as possible," he says.

Teaching pictures also must meet the editorial needs, says Doris Adams, former supervisor of the preschool-children's curriculum design section, which includes production of teaching pictures for preschool and children's materials.

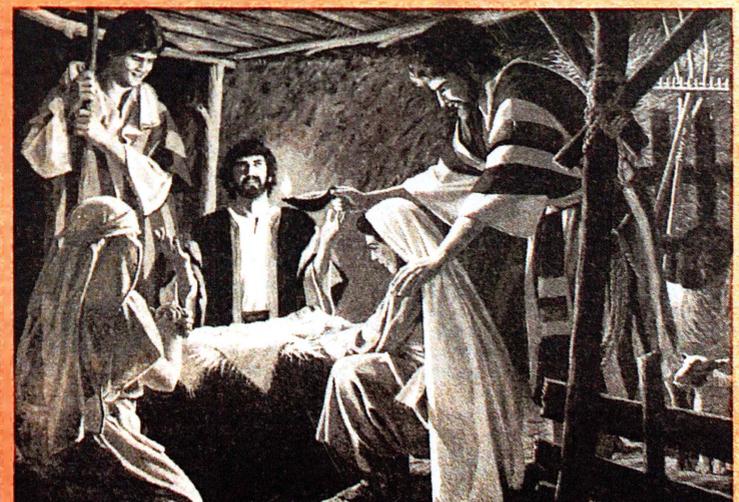
The plan for how a teaching picture is

to support a particular story must be considered when planning the artwork, she explains: "We go over the sketches in detail. There are so many elements to think of. The attention to artist's detail is costly."

But, Latta says, the details are important because the visual images developed in childhood do matter.



ON THE DRAWING BOARD — Cal Shiver, artist-designer in the Sunday School board's art department, begins with simple parts of a manger scene in pencil sketches before doing a final sketch.



FINAL PRODUCT — After a final sketch is complete, BSSB artist Cal Shiver puts careful detail into the final version.

Youth ministry survey shows dramatic changes in decade

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE (BP)— A new era in Southern Baptist youth ministry may be emerging, based on the results of a survey that reveal typical youth ministers are older, better educated, and stay longer than their predecessors 10 years ago.

A dramatic difference is apparent, says Richard Ross, youth ministry consultant in the church administration department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

"Churches are becoming more and more aware of the complex issues facing teens and families of teens," Ross explains. "And they are seeing value in someone coordinating a comprehensive and balanced ministry to teens and parents of teens."

The survey, in which questionnaires were sent to 868 paid and volunteer youth ministry coordinators, showed the average age of youth ministers now is 32.9 years, which Ross says is higher than in the past.

"We are just moving out of an era when most staff members who worked with youth did so only as a stepping-stone to some other vocation," Ross notes. "New trends in the number of years served as a youth minister point to longer ministry efforts."

Among full-time youth ministry coordinators, the survey reports an average of 3.2 years at their present church. Even higher was the average of 3.9 years in the present church for full-time youth minis-

ters who serve in some combination position, such as minister of youth and music, education, or recreation.

More than 31 percent of full-time youth ministers have served as a youth minister for more than four years, the survey shows. About half of the youth ministers in combination positions have served more than four years.

"This is a radical difference from an average tenure of 18 months found in a survey a decade ago," Ross says. "Many youth ministers feel it takes two years to build a foundation for a significant ministry in a church."

The survey, conducted by the research services department at the board, was sent to churches with 300 or more members, Ross reports. A total of 371 usable questionnaires were returned.

Among full-time ministers of youth, 33 percent reported they hoped to stay in youth ministry for 16 or more years, which Ross says is significant because it points to the longer-term commitment of persons in youth ministry.

The most significant new trend in the field is the expansion of the scope of youth ministry to include parents of teenagers, he adds. This likely is tied to the higher average age of youth ministry coordinators.

"Older, more experienced youth ministers tend to do more in the area of ministry to parents of youth because they are nearer in age to the parents," he continues. At the same time, "I think it is as possible for youth ministers to build significant relationships with teenagers during the middle years of life as it is when they (ministers) are in the younger 20s."

Ross estimates about 10,000 persons serve as youth ministry coordinators in Southern Baptist churches. Of that total, 32 percent are full-time combination positions; 12 percent, or about 1,000, are full-time ministers of youth; 7 percent are part-time combination positions; 14 percent are part-time paid ministers of youth; and 35 percent are volunteers.

The education level of people who work in full-time youth or combination positions is 17.6 and 17.9 years, respectively, according to the survey. Persons in the part-time youth and combination positions report education levels of more than 16 years. Of the total number of youth ministry coordinators, about 27 percent are female.

"Youth ministers are discovering that ministries that make a difference in people's lives often are related to staying in one church over a period of years," Ross asserts, based on his contact with some 3,000 ministers of youth in the two and one-half years he has been youth ministry consultant at the board.

"Churches also are supporting the trend toward longer tenure by upgrading salaries and making it possible for youth ministers to meet financial obligations, becoming part of the community, and ministering in the church for a number of years," he says.

Information related to longer tenure and older average age among youth ministry coordinators led Ross and the church administration department to plan a series of three advanced youth ministry seminars in March and April of this year for persons who have been in youth ministry for persons who have been in youth ministry for five or more years.



DEDICATION DAY — Third Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, dedicated their newly renovated auditorium and new grand piano in conjunction with a special Homecoming '86 service on Nov. 23. The piano was dedicated in memory of Florence Esther Mathis, who died last February. Her father, Murray Mathis, is pastor of the church. Pictured from left to right are: Tom Madden, executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention; Pat Powell; Dan Bashor; Sandy Jackson; Mathis; Wayne Simpson; and Stan Baskin.

Safety board urges churches to improve bus maintenance

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)— The National Transportation Safety Board has approved a letter that is to be mailed to various denominations and church groups throughout the nation in an attempt to improve church bus safety.

The letter is a result of the board's investigation since 1974 of 10 major accidents involving church-operated activity buses resulting in 42 fatalities and 259 injuries. Three of those accidents occurred during 1985 and accounted for 13 fatalities and 88 injuries.

Board chairman Jim Burnett said the suggestions for church bus safety improvement grew directly from the board's findings during investigations of those accidents. The board hopes churches can learn from the accidents and their causes so that the potential for future tragedies can be reduced, he added.

"A close look at these accidents reveals that some might have been prevented by simple, relatively inexpensive measures, such as inflating soft tires or

providing drivers with more training and experience," Burnett said. "There are measures that churches, even with limited financial and administrative resources, can take to improve their margin of safety."

The board's major concern, Burnett said, is bus maintenance. Poor mechanical condition — especially brakes and tires — was a recurring factor in church bus accidents investigated by the board.

The board has suggested churches establish preventive maintenance programs, focusing especially on brakes and tires. The first step in establishing such a program is to develop a regular maintenance schedule.

"Some private groups assume that they do not need to keep the same level of maintenance as the public schools do because they will not be using their buses as frequently," Burnett said. "However, because churches often purchase used buses, maintenance should be at least comparable to that performed by public school systems. Older buses are more likely to break down or have other failures which might affect safety."

Another suggestion involves requiring bus operators to be properly licensed and qualified. In addition to being familiar with the particular bus he will be operating, a driver always should make a pre-trip inspection of the bus to ensure that all critical systems function properly.

Additional information about church bus safety may be obtained from the National Transportation Safety Board, Washington, D.C. 20594.

FMB names Smith to aid recruitment

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)— Pam Smith, a former journeyman and Southern Baptist Home Mission Board church planter, has joined the denomination's Foreign Mission Board as an associate director of the personnel selection department.

Smith, who joined the staff in Richmond, Va., in January, works with two other associate directors, William Kruschwitz and Wendy Norvelle. The three associate director positions were established to allow Louis Cobbs, department director, more time to visit seminary campuses and state Baptist offices to help recruit more missionary and journeyman candidates. Previously, Kruschwitz was the only associate director, while Norvelle was manager of auxiliary personnel in the department.

Smith will oversee the application process of the journeyman program, help enlist and evaluate career and associate candidates, and visit seminary campuses, churches, and camps to speak to Southern Baptists about missions needs and appointment qualifications.

Her experience includes work as a summer missionary for the South Carolina Baptist Convention; a journeyman to Ajloun, Jordan; a public school teacher in Easley, S.C.; and a Home Mission Board church planter in Iowa.

She is a graduate of Mars Hill (N.C.) College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.



Smith

Belmont enrollment climbs 6.2 percent

NASHVILLE — Belmont College's spring enrollment has increased 6.2 percent over last year.

A record 2,122 students enrolled in Belmont's undergraduate Schools of Business, Humanities/Education, Music, Nursing, and Sciences, representing a full-time student equivalency (F.T.E.) rating of 1790.4.

Forty-nine students enrolled in the Jack C. Massey Graduate School of Business.

Jackson church hosts workshop on literacy

JACKSON — A Basic Literacy Training Workshop to train tutors to teach adults to read has been set for Feb. 16, 17, 23, and 24 from 6-9 p.m. at Highland Park Baptist Church, Jackson.

Volunteers attending the four sessions of the workshop will be certified to tutor adults in literacy.

Registration for the workshop will be \$10.00 to cover the cost of supplies.

Singleton assumes post with Clark Street church

Clark Street Baptist Church in Johnson City recently called Michael Singleton to serve as pastor.

Former church pastorates include Ramsey Heights Baptist Church, Fort Hill Baptist Church, and Union Valley Baptist Church, all in Knoxville; Forest Park Baptist Church, McMinnville; and Calvary Baptist Church, Streetsboro, Ohio.

A native of Pineville, Ky., Singleton is a graduate of Cumberland College in Williamsburg, Ky., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Tennessee

PEOPLE . . .

First Baptist Church, Lynchburg, ordained Ed McGee as a deacon on Jan. 18. John Norman is pastor.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Stephens recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at First Baptist Church, Shelbyville. He has served as interim and supply pastor for churches in Tennessee, Mississippi, and Ohio. Milton Knox is pastor of the Shelbyville church.

First Baptist Church, Dresden, ordained George Ed Cunningham as a deacon on Jan. 11. James Gaines is the pastor.

Four new deacons were ordained Jan. 18 at Forest Hill Baptist Church in Germantown, where Lloyd Barker is pastor. They are Nathaniel Alston, Duane Pulsifer, Stephen Stoner, and Jim Yarbrough.

Leadvale Baptist Church in White Pine

licensed Steve Hannah to the gospel ministry on Jan. 11. The pastor is Stan Vespie.

Mr. and Mrs. James Long were honored on Dec. 28 with a reception for their 50th wedding anniversary. It was held at First Baptist Church in Martin where Roger Oldham is pastor.

CHURCHES . . .

The Woman's Missionary Union of Little Hope Baptist Church in Clarksville celebrated 100 years of organization on Jan. 31. The celebration included two days of festivities at the church where Eual Ursery is pastor.

LEADERSHIP . . .

Ricky Roberts serves as minister of worship/praise through music at LaBelle Haven Baptist Church in Memphis. Jerry Smith is pastor.

Dave Rogers is minister to youth/college and career at Broadmoor Baptist Church, Memphis. Jack May is pastor. He comes to the church from Briarlake Baptist Church in Atlanta, where he served as minister of youth/college. He is a graduate of Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, Miss., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Mike Parker has accepted the responsibility of interim activities director of First Baptist Church, Jackson. Trevis Otey is the pastor.

George Scott resigned as minister of music and youth at Poplar Corner Baptist Church, Brownsville, effective Jan. 1. Jerry Smothers is the pastor.

Bob Dalton has resigned as pastor of Memorial Baptist Church, Hixson, to become minister of education at Monte Vista Baptist Church, Maryville. Howard Olive is pastor of the Maryville church. Memorial Baptist Church has elected Edward Seanor to serve as interim pastor.

Travis Forsythe has joined the staff of Walnut Hill Baptist Church, Bells, as minister of youth. He is a student at Union University in Jackson. Ed Spegal is pastor.

Scott Andrews has been called as minister of music and youth at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Oneida, where John Shepherd is pastor. He comes to the church from South Seminole Baptist Church in Chattanooga, where he has been for the past two years. Bill Delaney is pastor of the Chattanooga church.

Poplar Avenue Baptist Church, Memphis, extended a call to Kenny Prewett on Jan. 7, to serve as assistant to the pastor with special emphasis on young adults and their families. Paul Palmer is the pastor.

James Shumate resigned as pastor of First Baptist Church, Smyrna, to accept the pastorate of Sand Hill Baptist Church in Ellisville, Miss. He has been pastor of the Smyrna church for five and one-half years. His last Sunday was Jan. 18.

John Morris is resigning as associate pastor of Criewood Baptist Church, Nashville, effective Feb. 22. He will be serving as chaplain at Baptist Hospital of Nashville.

Meeting to focus on spiral growth

The first conference in Tennessee to introduce the growth spiral concept for Sunday School growth will be March 10 at Judson Baptist Church in Nashville.

Baptist Sunday School Board workers will lead the conference, which is designed to attract pastors, other church staff members, Sunday School general officers, and age division workers.

Roy Miller of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Sunday School department said, "The growth spiral is both a growth tool and an evaluation tool to synchronize balanced growth in all phases of Sunday School work and for all age groups.

"We hope this first conference will help enlist more churches to use the growth spiral, and set the pace for next year's attendance at the three regional conferences."

The Growth Spiral Basic Conference is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. through 4:15 p.m. and includes lunch.

Persons may register by contacting the TBC Sunday School department, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

Personal Perspective

By Tom Madden
TBC Executive
Secretary-Treasurer



"There was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre" (John 19:41).

It is my understanding that the practice that prevailed at the time of our Lord's life upon this earth was for each family to possess their own grave site. There was no law that prevented them from being buried in any spot they could call their own.

If at all possible, a typical family would select and purchase the site that seemed to them to be the most desirable place to be buried. After purchasing a site, they would plant flowers, grass, and shrubs and make a garden. It was regarded as a sacred place.

Apparently Jerusalem abounded in such beautiful spots. Close by Calvary was a garden with its sepulchre that was owned by Joseph of Arimathea. It was to this place that loving hands bore the crucified body of our dear Lord.

Let me share two or three thoughts from this verse.

There is a grave in every garden. No garden on earth, however lovely and attractive, is without its own tomb. The beautiful flowers and the climbing ivy may hide it from the eyes of those who pass by, but in a corner of the garden is a tomb in which lies buried something to which someone once clung. Some hope, some ambition, some expectation, some dream or vision lies buried in some neutral corner of every life. There are other funerals besides those which we see going from the funeral home or the church to the cemetery.

A second observation is that a garden may surround every grave. God wants us to live in the sunshine and beauty of the trees and flowers and birds of this earth. He does not want us to live in the grave. A lovely garden helps us bear up even in the sight of the grave. There may be a grave in every garden, but thanks be to God, there is a garden surrounding every grave.

Let us covet together to live in the garden instead of the grave.

Interpretations

The challenging Christ

By Herschel H. Hobbs

"Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17).

Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen by trade (Mark 1:16, 19-20). Earlier they had received Jesus as the Christ (John 1:36-42). (It is assumed that Andrew's companion was John, the author of the fourth gospel, and that John probably brought his brother James to Jesus.) Evidently they were some of the disciples mentioned in John 2:4. But now they were plying their trade.

On this occasion, Jesus saw them as He walked along the shore of the Sea of Galilee. First, seeing Peter and Andrew, He challenged them to leave their fishing business and become His traveling companions. Then, seeing James and John, He did the same. Instead of catching fish, they were to catch people for Jesus.

Note that Jesus said He would make them "to become" fishers of men. The verb for "to become" means they would become what they had not been before. He would train them for a new vocation. We now know that they were to be the nucleus of the group later called apostles. Without hesitation, they followed Jesus.

Now as then, Jesus does not call every believer to leave his/her vocation. But He does challenge each one "to become" a fisher after men.

Talents and time which you use to earn as honest living can be used to serve the Lord. If you can sell soap, you can "sell"

salvation. If you can plead a case before a jury, you can plead Jesus' cause before human hearts. It requires training and experience to learn to do the former. The same is necessary to do the latter.

If you are willing, Jesus can enable you "to become" what He wills you to be.

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BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for Feb. 8

The True Vine

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

Basic Passage: John 15:1-17
Focal Passages: John 15:1-11, 13-17

Many husbands at one time or another have given their wives roses for some special occasion. For awhile these lovely flowers are beautiful as they sit in attractive vases. But it is not long before these lovely expressions of affection begin to wilt and fade. The petals begin to fall, primarily because the stems have been severed from the main life-giving stalk of the rose bush.



Bush

This is similar to the illustration our Lord used in comparing the extraordinarily beautiful relationship between Himself and His disciples. Connected to Him, the Life Source, disciples could thrill to a glorious existence. But, cut off from and apart from Jesus, their source of spiritual strength was dead.

God always moves toward man first. He always reaches out with the hope that mankind will reach toward Him. The Heavenly Father fully intends to bring people into a right relationship with Himself.

This relationship is voluntary in that when knowingly confronted with the gospel, humanity is given the opportunity to receive or reject the grace of God. After having received the message of truth, the children are to live after the example of Christ, to tell the good news. When this pattern is not followed, something is wrong, the relationship is in question.

It would be highly questionable for one saved sinner to make the decision concerning the validity of another individual's experience of redemption. Ultimate questions like this can only be answered by the Father.

However, people must be careful not to become smug in their delusions that very little is expected of disciples, that they can become inactive church members without dangerous repercussions, or that they can cease to grow in Christlikeness and retain their kinship regardless of what they do or how they live. Callous contentment is still a major disease among God's people.

Rather than becoming embroiled in arguments about validity of salvation in the lives of other persons, it is the Biblical approach to focus on the initiative of God in offering a redemptive plan and to describe the ongoing work of the Spirit in the life of a Christian.

The long held Baptist doctrine of "once saved always saved" has strong Scriptural foundation. Even New Testament Greek grammatical structure lends defense to our views about the security of a believer. A literal translation of the word "saved" is thus rendered, "you were being saved, you are being saved, you shall continue to be saved."

However, this covenant relationship carries with it obligations on our part, obligations which were not negated just because we come up with what seems to us good and logical rationale. The branches are not the vine and never shall be. Branches have their functions and if they fail in their designed purpose, they shall be cut off, according to Scripture.

In other words, being a Christian is not a game, not a sweet sentimentality, but a new life. It is a new dynamic, active, and aggressive drive motivated by the Spirit of God. It is not some artificially self-designed structure made with human hands and minds. Disciples can always improve. Receiving the heavenly life means, to quote an old spiritual, we "just got to heaven and we can't sit down."

This spiritual life is always to exhibit itself in a context of love. Years ago a college friend of mine would say after I had thanked him for something — a ride to the campus, a favor — "I know you say you appreciate it but do you?" It was his way of saying, "Don't just flippantly say 'thank you' but really mean it."

Christians are to avoid lifestyles patterned after the world. Ministers and congregations should not love each other just to get something from one another. Their love for one another is to be genuine. Regretfully, some of the worst hurts in life are inflicted in church circles, among people who are supposed to be gentle, kind, long-suffering.

Love for the people of God is not to be an after-thought but the constant motivating force. Jesus is very clear about this, for He says even further that genuine love initiates obedience, not disobedience; service, not lethargy; sacrificial love, not just convenient kindness.

Yes, we are friends of Christ. We are also His servants who willingly spread testimonies of faith and seek to heal the hurts of society. It is important to be faithful and avoid being concerned so much over what we may deem success. As a dedicated missionary once said, "Our calling is to be faithful, not successful."

Faithful Christian living and service is our part and the results are up to God, never us, although often that is not the way we tend to think and act. We Christians need to compare all that we think, plan, and do to the life of Christ. The old classic story urges us to ask in all things, "What would Jesus do?"

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for Feb. 8

Set free to love

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

Basic Passages: James 2:8-26; 1 John 4:7-12
Focal Passages: James 2:8-18; 1 John 4:7-12

After two lessons on how we BECOME Christians, we now shift our attend to what it means to BE a Christian.

Since our salvation is based on our faith, rather than our works or adherence to the Jewish law, how do we respond to the freedom granted by God's grace? Paul addressed this question, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1-2).

Our redemption is complete, eternal, and irrevocable. If we cannot lose our salvation by future actions, are we free to do anything we desire?

Deeds reveal faith (James 2:8-18)

James, the half-brother of Jesus, was the leader of the church at Jerusalem. His epistle, which I hope you studied in depth during the recent January Bible Study, focuses on how the believer should respond to what he calls "the law of liberty" (1:25, 2:12).

Although believers are not under the rabbinical law, James reminds us that we are now under the "royal law" — which he defines as "thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself" (v.18). If we fail to keep that law or commandment, we have transgressed Christ's "law" (v.19).

Just as the orthodox Jew sought to keep all the rabbinical laws, a Christian cannot be selective in which of Christ's commandments he or she will obey (vv.10-11). No longer under a "law of bondage," the Christian is free to exercise a "law of liberty" (v.12).

If we are to be judged by the law of liberty, what does that "law" involve? Obviously the key element of that law is mercy (v.13). The basis of God's judgment on the believer's life will be mercy. The believer who refuses to show mercy "shall have judgment without mercy" (v.13). James proclaims, "Mercy rejoiceth (triumphs) against judgment."

Stephen Playl assumes Woodlawn church post

Stephen Playl recently assumed his position as pastor of Woodlawn Baptist Church in Bristol.

His previous pastorates include Lincocya Hills Baptist Church, Nashville; First Baptist Church, Sparta; Shellsford Baptist Church, McMinnville; Coral Hill Baptist Church, Glasgow, Ky.; and Zion Baptist Church, Hardyville, Ky.

Playl also served as minister of music and youth at Auburn Baptist Church in Auburn, Ky.

A native of Madisonville, Ky., he is a graduate of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

What then is the relationship between saving faith and merciful works? The two are inseparable. A faith that does not produce such activity is dead or devoid of power and life (v.17).

James asks several questions (vv.14-16) which can be summarized, "If your belief in Christ does not result in Christ-like, compassionate love, can we be sure that we have authentic faith?"

An authentic Christ-honoring faith will be actively involved in doing Christ-honoring works (v.18). Our works do not produce salvation, but these do prove our saving faith.

Love produces deeds (1 John 4:7-12)

John, who described himself in his gospel as "the beloved disciple," wrote this epistle late in his long life. Some theorize that 1 John was written when John was about 90 years old.

As the elder statesman of the early church and perhaps the last surviving disciple, John was able to interpret properly the true essence of the Christian life — love.

At the time of this writing (near the end of the first century), there arose in the churches a group called Gnostics who claimed to have higher knowledge than other believers. You will note that 1 John deals in depth with how believers can "know" they are children of God.

John declares that our love for one another is our assurance that we know God. "Every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (vv.7-8). This should remind us of a key verse in John's gospel, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciple, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

This Christlike love is of God; it comes from God (v.7). That love was manifested (actively revealed) when "God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (v.9). Doesn't that sound like John 3:16?

The true meaning of ultimate, self-giving love is seen in God's love which led Him to send "His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (v.10). This did not come because of our feeble love for God. Who loves the unloving. "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8, New American Standard Bible).

Because God has so loved us, "we ought also to love one another" (v.11). Certainly, we should be able to love anyone who God loves!

Apparently the Gnostics claimed that their superior knowledge could result in a mystical vision of God. John refutes this (v.12). But the Christian has something far better than a claimed "vision" — God's indwelling presence. His love is perfected (brought to completion) in us, if we love one another.

It is futile work to try to love like God loves, unless God abides with us. But because God has saved us and lives within us, we are free to love God and to love one another.

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LIFE AND WORK SERIES
Lesson for Feb. 8

Confessing Christ

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

Basic Passages: Luke 9:1-22, 28-45
Focal Passages: Luke 9:18-22, 28-31, 34-36

Jesus climaxed His Galilean Ministry of about 18 months by several withdrawals in the nature of retreats which He spent with His disciples.

The final of these was when He went with them to Caesarea Philippi near the foot of Mt. Hermon. From Matthew's account of the incident in this week's lesson, we learn this was the place of Peter's great confession.



Wood

Dialogue about deity (Luke 9:18-22)
For nearly three years, Jesus had taught His disciples spiritual truths concerning His kingdom. The time was drawing near when He would close His ministry and He wished to see how much they understood of His message. He knew that in order for them to be His future missionaries to the world, they must understand His nature.

Opinions differed among the people as to what type of person the Messiah would be, but one thing was essential. They must recognize His complete deity. He was not one among many great religious teachers. He was unique because He was God in the flesh.

Peter's confession was "on target." Matthew's account records that Jesus told the apostle that He would build His church on that great fact — Jesus is the Son of God! The one non-negotiable truth of Christianity is that Jesus Christ was God come to earth in human form.

Ralph Waldo Emerson did not include Jesus Christ in his list of "Representative Men" because he said it would "require too much strength of constitution to put Him in the same category with

ordinary human beings."
Though He was pleased with Peter's statement, Jesus cautioned them to keep silent about this great fact because He was not yet ready to reveal Himself in all His fulness. He then told them of His coming death.

Demonstration of deity (9:28-31)
In order to reinforce the truth in Peter's confession of faith, Jesus gave His followers a vivid lesson. No human explanation can account for the event when Jesus became radiant and His glory was revealed to them.

Matthew called it "transfigured" and used the verb form of the word from which we get our noun "metamorphosis." They did not see merely a reflection of God's glory as the people saw on Moses when he came down from Sinai. They saw rather the source of the light, the glory Jesus had with the Father before He came to earth in human form. They saw Him revealed as Perfect Man and Perfect God in one glorious personality.

One devout student said, "If there had been the slightest flaw in the life of Jesus, He could not have endured the sudden voltage which surcharged Him there on the mountain peak ... Had Christ been less than God's perfect man, He would have died upon the mount. The shock of the sudden glory would have slain

Him ... The transfiguration means that deity blazing up in Jesus, in instantaneous and full effulgence, found His manhood a flawless crystal."

In the midst of the glory, Moses and Elijah appeared to confirm what He had told His disciples earlier. The Messiah must suffer! They went even further and declared He must die!

Demand of deity (9:34-36)

What does God require from us? Obedience! Believe what Jesus says! The words from the cloud were a rebuke to Peter, who (Matthew 16:22) refused to accept the fact that Jesus must suffer and die.

Times have not changed! Most people still want a conquering Christ, not a suffering One. Thrones and diadems still dominate our thinking!

The way to God's kingdom is through suffering, and the greatest glory of His kingdom is service. We all need to remember constantly that Jesus said He came "not to be ministered unto but to minister."

What a difference will come to our individual lives and our churches when we understand this fundamental truth that Jesus both taught and demonstrated.

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New Orleans mission reaches diverse group

By Breena Kent

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Donnie Wiltshire is a pastor, but the majority of his congregation will never hear him preach.

As the pastor of Baptist Deaf Mission in New Orleans, Wiltshire preaches in sign language.

"Most persons who lead our worship are deaf people," he says. "They will sign, and someone will read their sign and interpret into English. There is no piano or organ, because most of our people are deaf; deaf people lead the music, and hearing people sing along.

"Being a deaf mission, we have some rather unique needs," he notes. "We're not only an ethnic group, we're a multi-ethnic group. The church is comprised of deaf persons, hearing persons, deaf-blind people, white folks, black folks,

yellow folks — we've got them all."

To accommodate such a diverse congregation, Wiltshire speaks audibly as he signs his sermons.

"We are a growing congregation," notes Wiltshire, who has been working through the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board as pastor of the mission for nine years. During that time the attendance has increased from five to 44.

Baptist Deaf Mission began in the late 1970s, when Southern Baptists started "congregationalizing" deaf people, Wiltshire reports. A mission of Lakeview Baptist Church, it was one of the first Baptist deaf congregations in the United States.

As a mission, the budget is supplemented by the Louisiana Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, New Orleans Baptist Association,

the sponsoring church, and a co-sponsoring church.

When the mission was begun, it was responsible for 20 percent of its budget needs. "Now we're responsible for 65 percent," says Wiltshire.

The mission is situated adjacent to Lakeview Baptist Church.

"Having this relationship to the sponsoring church, we are able to minister better to the hearing and the deaf in the church," Wiltshire says. For example, "hearing children go to the sponsor church's Sunday School. They are also able to meet together (with their deaf parents) for worship."

Wiltshire's interest in deaf people began as a teen-ager in Corpus Christi, Texas. "When I was a junior in high school," he says, "I met a deaf girl. I decided to learn sign language to talk to her."

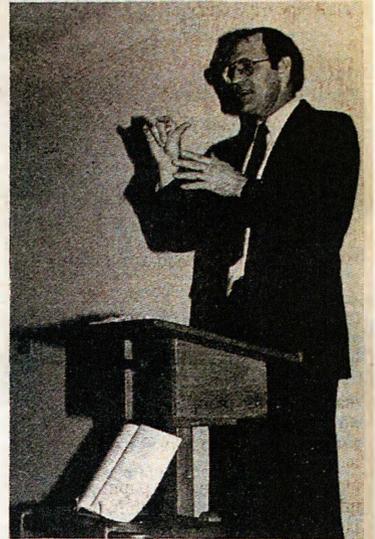
He did and it was not long before he was interpreting for the deaf in a church in that city. "And I've been in (deaf ministry) ever since," he reports.

In addition to his position as pastor of Baptist Deaf Mission in New Orleans, Wiltshire also is a doctor of theology student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, where he also has worked with deaf students.

"None of our seminaries have programmatic commitments for theological education for deaf people," says Wiltshire, chairman of the board of trustees for the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf. "I hope to help us move past that so that not only will they accept deaf students when they come, but actually seek deaf (students)."

His work with the deaf is not limited to the United States, however. Wiltshire also is seeking opportunities of ministering to the deaf abroad. "There is an estimated 200-million world deaf population," he says.

Having returned from a trip to the



VISUAL PREACHING — Donnie Wiltshire, pastor of Baptist Deaf Mission in New Orleans, uses his hands to share the message of Christ.

Dominican Republic, Wiltshire notes that whereas most foreigners may take years to learn a language, "I could be talking with a deaf person in two days quite fluently because of the visual (sign) language. We had no communication problems at all. I couldn't read or write what they said, but I could understand sign language."

Wiltshire's wife, Irma, is also fluent in sign language, as are his two children — Kyle, 8, and Wendy, 5.

Although he is involved in ministry to the deaf throughout the United States and abroad, Wiltshire says, "I plan to continue pastoring the mission as long as the Lord keeps me here."



DIVERSE MISSION — The Baptist Deaf Mission in New Orleans has attracted hearing as well as deaf people and includes members from a variety of racial and economic backgrounds. Donnie Wiltshire (left) has served as pastor of the mission for nine years through the sponsorship of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Farmers' plight woeful, USDA official observes

By Joe Westbury

ATLANTA (BP) — Things may have stopped getting worse for the American farmer, but they are not likely to get much better anytime soon, observed a spokesman for the United States Department of Agriculture.

Fred Woods, public policy specialist for the government agency, updated the plight of rural America during a rural-urban leadership conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"We need to stop kidding ourselves that government programs intentionally designed to help volume production, symbolized by the large farmer, are also going to benefit the struggling midsize farmer. The programs were never designed to aid the farmer caught in the current financial crisis," Woods insisted.

The crisis has centered around one-third of American farmers who built up high debts relative to their income in the 1970s and then were victims of high interest rates and low farm prices in the 1980s, he explained. Results of the expansion became even more severe when portions of the nation were hit with repeated drought in an already slow market.

Legislation that supported farmers in the past has been dismantled and their safety net no longer exists. The commodities program now under fire never was intended to help farmers in their current predicament, he noted.

Although the nation continues to lose about 65,000 farms a year due to bankruptcy or consolidation, Woods said the loss is not a threat to national production. "We lost a much greater number of farms from 1940 to 1960, but the farming community did not have the organized voice that it has today," he said.

Woods debunked the myth that loss of farms translates into a loss of national production. Actually, America has an excess of crop land due to higher yields, and the government is seeking to remove 65-million acres of land from production, he said. The nation is not losing production, but it is losing rural jobs, he added.

"Seventy percent of the nation's farms produce less than 10 percent of America's food and fiber products, yet it is those farms that are caught in the financial crises. Those farms account for 1.6-million of the nation's 2.3-million farms and basically satisfy local market needs," he said. "The local farmer characterizes rural America and symbolizes the rich values and traditions of country living. But there are too many myths attached to family farms and the rural life which distort the picture of the current crisis.

"The problem these farmers face is that they have just enough income to prevent them from seeking employment off the farm but not enough to produce a satisfactory standard of living. Their only option is to grow larger and increase their income or seek full employ-

ment in a non-farm job and reduce the size of their operation.

"We are grossly naive or unfair if we want to preserve, through government aid, a midsize farmer whose operation cannot provide a decent standard of living," he said. "A more sensible solution would be to respond with rural development programs that entice industry to smaller towns to create a larger job market."

Don Evans, state rural-urban missions director for the Missouri Baptist Convention, told conference participants that Southern Baptists in his state are continuing to view the crisis as an opportunity for new and creative types of ministry.

Evans, whose state has the highest farm bankruptcy rate in the nation, said he could attend four or five farm auctions a week. "In many instances the loss of a farm is as great emotionally as the loss of a family member," he noted.

Evans encouraged churches to aid such families by paying utility bills or providing breakfasts for schoolchildren. Missouri Baptists also have compiled a booklet on free counseling and dental and medical care currently available through federal programs.

"The farm family which suddenly cannot support itself can take advantage of numerous social programs which many of them do not know exist. Simply informing them of what is available is a tremendous ministry," he said.

Allen and Delores Baugh, co-directors

of missions for Severns Valley Baptist Association in Elizabethtown, Ky., discussed their approach to ministry in the crisis. After assessing the needs in their area, the couple founded Friends of Agriculture, a non-profit organization that mobilizes community support around struggling farmers. Although partially funded by the association, the Kentucky Baptist Convention, and the Home Mission Board, the Baughs sought to broaden the venture's appeal by soliciting help from local agribusiness, banks, and farmers.

The group offers practical seminars such as "How to Locate Off-Farm Employment," "Better Farm Management," "Low-Cost, High-Yield Farming," and "Stress Management." The joint venture between the denomination and secular business community has grown to include 37 supporters and a six-member steering committee.

Baugh, a career farmer who has served the association in a bivocational capacity for 12 years, credits the organization's success with its low-key approach to the denomination. Although he views it as ministry, it is not promoted from that perspective, he said.

"We're not as concerned with who gets the credit as we are with the ministry that's accomplished. We're trying to build a fence at the top of the hill so we don't have to send an ambulance to the bottom of the hill," he explained.