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Braidfoot analyzes pari-mutuel issue

By Charlie Warren

The only way to keep pari-mutuel gambling out of Tennessee is to organize coalitions, enter the political arena, and then fight and fight hard, according to a Southern Baptist expert on the gambling issue.

Larry Braidfoot, general counsel for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, told participants at the July 16 Middle Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference that even as the Aug. 6 referendum in Davidson County approaches, they still "have the option of keeping this stuff (pari-mutuel gambling) out."

"If we allow this to happen," Braidfoot told the

pastors, "we, in a sense, bring the judgment of God on ourselves by our passivity, our lack of cooperation, our lack of commitment."

He praised the efforts of Nashvillians Against Pari-mutuel Gambling, a political action committee composed of pastors and other interested citizens from a number of denominational groups. Braidfoot commended them for crossing theological, political, and denominational lines to work together for the defeat of the moral threat of pari-mutuel gambling in Nashville.

While praising them, Braidfoot also asked where they were when the pari-mutuel bill was being considered in

the state legislature. He noted that the bill passed in both houses "by the absolute minimum number needed for passage."

"If the equivalent of the efforts that have been made in Davidson County alone in the last 45 days had been made when the legislature was in session, we would not be faced with this thing," Braidfoot suggested. "If we had scattered those efforts across the state, the issue would have died a very quick and sudden death."

"It is easier to keep something out than it is to turn

(Continued on page 2)

Parks suggests dialogue with 36 mission groups

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Leaders of 36 denominations and organizations active in world missions have been invited to discuss their concerns "in reaching all the people of our generation for Christ."

R. Keith Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, is proposing that the discussion take place this fall in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

In his letter suggesting the meeting, Parks expressed "a deepening concern for more communication" among U.S.-based missions groups. In seeking to spread

the faith, he asked, "Is there a way to share information or plans that would avoid wasted effort and lost time?"

Among the denominations queried about the initial meeting are Conservative Baptists, National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Christian and Missionary Alliance, Assemblies of God, United Methodist Church, and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Interdenominational organizations contacted include the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, American Bible Society, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Campus Crusade for Christ, and North American Charismatic Renewal.

The initial meeting will include a maximum of two representatives from each group, including the Foreign Mission Board. But it may lead to further consultations encompassing additional staff members as well as representatives of other denominations and organizations, Parks said in an interview.

"None of us is large enough, strong enough, wise enough to make a significant impact on the whole world," Parks said. "We need each other. If we can help each other have a more effective part in world evangelization, we're having a greater impact than if we lived and worked in isolation."

Parks said he envisions a "networking" among the groups — "information sharing, learning from each other, the kind of sharing that will allow each of us to retain our identity." He said he is not proposing anything involving detailed theological concepts or church ordinances.

"We want to talk about how each group can more effectively carry out the Great Commission," Jesus Christ's command to share the gospel worldwide, he said.

In discussing their present activities, future plans, and information-gathering efforts, the groups might move toward "a deliberate strategy . . . being certain that all of the world's people groups have somebody praying for and working toward witnessing to them," Parks said.

Many of the people groups — totaling more than half of the world's 5-billion people — are in communist-bloc, Islamic, and other countries where foreign missions work is either prohibited or restricted.

Through the proposed meeting, Parks said: "I believe we can learn something from the other groups, and they may learn something from us. If we can learn from each other's strengths, we end up all being strengthened."

Inflation catches SBC giving

NASHVILLE (BP) — The economy's tortoise has caught the Southern Baptist Convention's hare.

After racing ahead of inflation for months, the SBC Cooperative Program is locked in a dead heat with the consumer price increase — about 4 percent annually.

The Cooperative Program is the SBC's convention-wide missions budget, which supports evangelistic, educational, and ministry efforts around the globe. Southern Baptists contributed \$11,851,554 to the fund during June, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee.

Contributions to the Cooperative Program at the end of three-quarters of its fiscal year are \$98,114,965, or 4 percent ahead of the same point last year, Bennett said.

That gain compares to a U.S. inflation rate of about 3.8 percent, said Tim A. Hedquist, vice-president for business and finance of the Executive Committee.

The race between inflation and the Cooperative Program has evened out because the inflation rate has speeded up while the CP's increase has slowed. For example, inflation swayed down to below 2 percent for periods when the CP grew at a 4.5 percent to 6 percent pace.

"We are not disappointed with the year-to-date

Cooperative Program total compared to the inflation rate," Bennett said. "But if inflation goes above 4 percent, we hope receipts will reflect that trend."

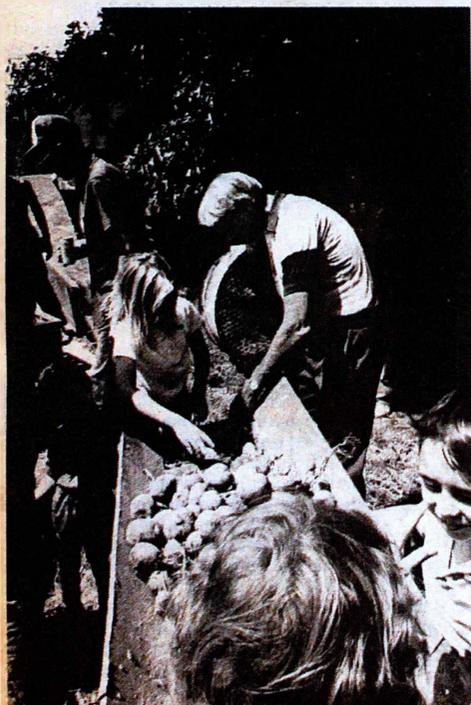
Bennett cited two encouraging factors:

"First, the three states hardest-hit by the farm and petroleum crises — Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana — are not as far below last year's giving levels as some had predicted. We are concerned about the states afflicted with economic problems, and we appreciate the sacrifices they are making for the Cooperative Program.

"Second, the other larger state conventions are leveling off in their giving. Their increases are healthy."

The \$11.8-million total for June represents a 17.27 percent increase over June of 1986. However, it includes about \$2-million which was contributed the last Sunday in May but arrived at the Executive Committee after the books closed on the month. Consequently, the high June actually balances out the low May and presents the Cooperative Program with a fairly accurate picture of its year-to-date status, Hedquist said.

If the 4 percent rate of increase holds through the final quarter of the fiscal year, the Cooperative Program should receive about \$130-million of its \$136-million goal.



POTATO DIG — Gene Gafford, director of the Memphis campus of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc., gets lots of help from residents of the home as he bags potatoes in preparation for loading and transportation to four TBCH campuses. (See story and additional photos on page 6.) Photo by Mike Day.

'Hap' Bryant redefines 'retirement'

By Rhonda Gibson

Gladys "Hap" Bryant, former chairperson of Belmont's history department, surprised everyone on campus by retiring May 9, but her retirement will not be a typical one.

Bryant has more activities scheduled for the next year than most people plan in five years.

"I don't like the word 'retirement,' whatever it means," she said. "I'm just getting started."

During this first summer of "retirement," Bryant has led a three-week tour of China, taught a course in historic preservation in Belmont's Elderhostel program, and will leave in August for a year of volunteer missionary work in Japan.

Bryant first came to Belmont in 1960 as a part-time faculty member. She became full time in 1963 and has taught history and political science courses for more than 20 years.

The Greenville, S.C., native said she has enjoyed watching Belmont "grow up."

"When I came in 1960, we had a student body of 350 and now there are more than 2,300," she said.

Most of Belmont's graduates since 1960 had at least one course with Bryant, and many still have fond memories of her.

"She was incredible," said George A. West III, chairman of Belmont's board of trustees and a 1967 graduate in history and political science. "She really made you think. I loved her political science classes, especially international relations."

Linda Denton, a 1986 Belmont graduate in English, said Bryant's "practical experience" made her classes special and helpful. "She was very good because she knew what she was talking about," Denton said.

Looking back over the more than 25 years she was at Belmont, Bryant said her favorite times were those spent with students outside the classroom.

"My best memories are of sitting across the desk or at lunch with a student and just talking," she said.

Bryant is known on Belmont's campus and by most of its alumni as an expert on international students and their concerns. Having visited 27 countries, she is well qualified.

The professor said she has a "genuine global concern" that increases her interest in international students. "I have learned so much from the international students. Just to sit and talk with them about their country is like a visit."

Having Bryant at Belmont makes many of the international students feel more at home, they say.

"She's like my family here," said Nikki Obianwu, a 1986 graduate in history and political science from Nigeria. "It's so sad that she's leaving — she's one of the best professors I've ever had."

Obianwu said Bryant is genuinely interested in international students. "She sits with us and we talk about home, and it makes me feel good," she said.

Denny Timuari, a sophomore in business management from Indonesia, said Bryant was "more than a professor.

It's more like a friendship than a teacher-student relationship," he said.

Bryant continued her international travels in June, when she took her sixth trip to China. She and 12 other people, including several Belmont students, visited seven cities in China, including Hong Kong, the Imperial Palace and Temple of Heaven in Beijing, the Stone Forest outside of Kunming, and the Great Wall.

Bryant said she is mesmerized by the Great Wall. "I have been there five other times, and each time I have climbed the Great Wall, it is just as incredible as the first time," she said. "It's something I think I dreamed of from the time I was old enough to know I was dreaming."

The "retired" professor has been spending the month of July back at Belmont with the national Elderhostel program, teaching a course on historic sites and preservation in Nashville.

She plans to resume her travels in the Orient in August when she leaves Nashville to become acting director of the Friendship House in Fukuoka, Japan, for one year.

"It's kind of like going home — I know so many people there," said Bryant, who worked in Japan in 1981. "Japan is a fun place to go."

After her year in Japan, "I would like to teach in China, either English or some type of American or political history," she said.

Bryant said she would not have considered leaving Belmont if she had not had such an exciting future.

She had considered retirement before, but this time it "felt right," she said. "I think God has such wonderful direction in people's lives, and when it's the right

time, you know it's the right time."

Bryant said she hopes to keep in touch with her friends at Belmont. But the newly-retired professor may have to do so by postcard, because she has no intentions of settling down in one place. "I just have so much to do," she said.

What is her next stop after trips to China and Japan? "Maybe Australia or New Zealand," she said. "I've never been there."

So much for retirement.

Braidfoot...

(Continued from page 1)

around and throw it out after it's already here," he noted.

He reported on political action coalitions that are being formed in Memphis and Knoxville in preparation for working to defeat referenda that may surface on the ballots of future elections in those locations.

Braidfoot outlined the moral and economic reasons Baptists should be opposed to gambling, and further explored the consequences Tennesseans will face if any of the local racetrack referenda are successful.

He said the Economic Impact Study that implied pari-mutuel gambling would help Tennessee's economy "should be put under the 'F' section of the library, under 'fraud.'"

The ethicist noted that 90 percent of the people who race horses lose money, as do more than half of the people who breed horses.

"It's a tax write-off industry," Braidfoot said. "These people are using a hobby as a tax write-off."

He noted that promoters speak of stimulating the tourist industry, suggesting that 15 percent of the people at most tracks are not local people.

"Let's talk about the 85 percent," Braidfoot countered. "They're saying that 85 percent of the dollars that are already here in the Davidson County area ought to be spent on gambling at a track, rather than at food stores, clothing stores, and general shops."

Using the gambling industry's own figures, Braidfoot showed that the income received by the state as a result of a pari-mutuel industry would not be enough to support the cost of regulating that industry.

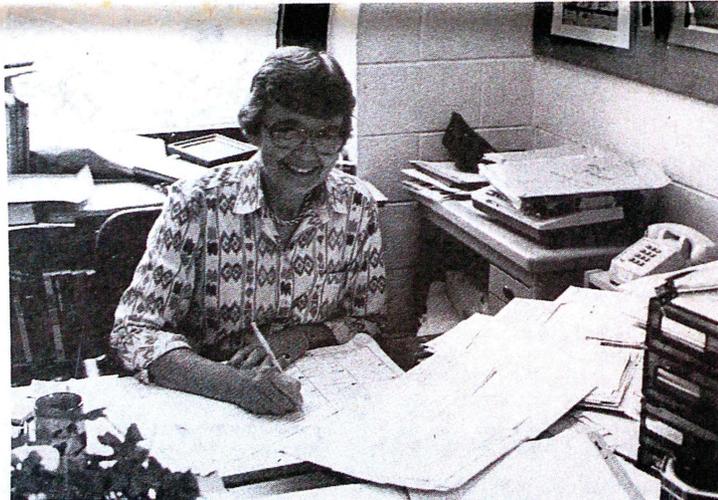
"It's a financial boondoggle," Braidfoot charged. "Bad morality is bad economics."

Among the consequences, he noted, the tracks would attract people who "drift looking for action," resulting in increased crime against personal property and increased prostitution activity. He further predicted a dramatic increase in the number of compulsive gamblers, with the resulting economic impact on those individuals and their families.

For convenience sake, bookie operations would spring up, and "there cannot be any significant bookie operation without organized crime ties."

The industry also has a "predatory effect" on ethnics and poor people, Braidfoot noted. He cited the track in Birmingham, Ala., which was originally marketed to attract a white-collar clientele, but which now has revised its marketing strategy to concentrate more heavily on trying to attract blue-collar and black people to the track.

Braidfoot urged the pastors to continue their anti-gambling efforts and get their people to the polls to defeat the Aug. 6 referendum.



BUSY IN RETIREMENT — Gladys "Hap" Bryant, newly retired Belmont College professor, has vigorous activities planned as she makes a smooth transition into retirement. Teaching, traveling, and doing mission work dominate her plans.

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Agriculturist opens work in Madagascar

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar — Agricultural Evangelist Fred Sorrells and his wife, Sami, arrived in Madagascar May 12 to open Southern Baptist work there.

About 10-million people live on Madagascar, the world's fifth largest island, located off the southeast coast of Africa. The Southern Baptist missionary couple had previously been assigned to the tiny east African nation of Burundi.

Horace Higgins retires

Horace Higgins retired as pastor of Clear Creek Baptist Church in Dayton June 28.

He had served as pastor of the church for seven years. Prior to this pastorate, he had retired after serving in several churches in the Holston Baptist Association.

Higgins plans to remain active as a supply and interim pastor.

Polish Baptists report growth

WARSAW, Poland — Twenty percent growth in two years has been reported by the Polish Baptist Union. Polish Baptists numbered 3,049 at the end of 1986, 566 more than 1984's membership. Union funding from its 50-plus churches has increased 100 percent during the same period.

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MEMORY QUILT — Robert Chandler (left), president of Baptist Health System, Knoxville, accepts a quilt on behalf of Baptist Hospital from Dorothy Scott, dean of Carson-Newman's college of nursing, and Betty Shelley, director of the Baptist Hospital School of Nursing. The quilt, which commemorates the closing of the nursing school, features squares contributed by members of each graduating class from 1949 to 1987.

Gallup poll reveals reversal of televangelists' popularity

By Eric Fox

WASHINGTON (BP) — A growing number of Americans believe television evangelists are dishonest, insincere, uncaring, and do not have a "special relationship with God," according to a recent Gallup survey.

The survey revealed a sharp reversal of public opinion toward television preachers compared to a similar study taken in 1980. The survey was released recently by Gallup's Princeton Religion Research Center of Princeton, N.J. The center said the figures suggest the recent scandals among television evangelists have "cast a long shadow" over many of the nation's most popular evangelists and "the cause of organized religion as a whole may have been harmed."

Only 23 percent of respondents stated TV evangelists were "trustworthy with money," while 63 percent said they were not; the 1980 survey showed 41 percent said they were trustworthy, while 36 percent said they were not. Nearly all surveyed in 1987 (92 percent) stated that as a result of recent scandals "religious organizations should make full disclosure of the funds they receive and how they are spent."

The number of people who said TV evangelists are dishonest more than

doubled from 26 percent in 1980 to 53 percent in 1987. Fifty-one percent of the respondents said televangelists are insincere, and 38 percent said they "don't care about people," compared to 25 percent and 21 percent, respectively, seven years ago. The percentage of those who said TV evangelists "do not have a special relationship with God" jumped from 33 percent in 1980 to 63 percent in 1987.

Respondents also rated evangelists individually and, with the exception of Billy Graham, all listed dropped in favor with the American public. Former PTL host Jim Bakker suffered the most serious drop, as 77 percent gave "unfavorable" responses; over half (58 percent) viewed him favorably seven years ago. Other evangelists who showed a decline in support since 1980 included Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart, Pat Robertson, Robert Schuller, and Rex Humbard. Jerry Falwell was not included in the 1980 survey but received unfavorable responses from 62 percent of the 1987 respondents.

With regards to the 1988 presidential election, the number of respondents likely to vote for a presidential candidate who considers himself a "born-again, evangelical Christian" dropped 20 points in the last seven years, although a majority of Americans continue to say religious status would not make any difference.

—Eric Fox is a summer intern in the Washington bureau of Baptist Press and a student at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee.

Bob McGuire dies

Tennessee Baptist chaplain, Bob McGuire, 59, died July 12 at Parkview Hospital in Nashville following an extended illness.

Funeral services were held July 15, in Rossville, Ga. Lane Funeral Home was in charge.

Memorial services are scheduled at Nashville's Two Rivers Baptist Church on Aug. 2.

He is survived by his wife, Jo-Ann; his daughter Joy Wright; his sons Don and Mike McGuire; two sisters; and three grandchildren.

McGuire served as Tennessee-area director of the Prison Fellowship, an ecumenical group. He was endorsed by the Home Mission Board for his work in prison ministries. Before moving to Nashville, he worked with Chattanooga Prison Ministries.

British Baptist union elects woman president

BRADFORD, England — A woman minister, Margaret Jarman, has been elected president of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland for the first time in the union's 175-year history.

The only other woman president of the union, Nell Alexander, elected in 1978, was a lay person. Jarman has been pastor of the West Coventry Fellowship in Coventry since 1977.

She was the first woman to attend Spurgeon's College in England where she earned the bachelor of divinity degree.

Dilday discusses peace report with seminary faculty, staff

By Mark Wingfield

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — How the Southern Baptist Peace Committee report is interpreted will determine the document's effect on Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, President Russell Dilday told the school's faculty and administrative staff.

In separate meetings with the two groups, Dilday reviewed the report, which was overwhelmingly adopted by messengers to the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis. The Peace Committee was formed in 1985 to identify problems and answers in the 9-year-old denominational controversy.

"From the very first paragraph to the last, the report gives itself to a wide range of interpretations," Dilday said. How the seminary's faculty and staff will be affected depends upon how trustees and others interpret the document, he said.

But Dilday found more in the report to agree with than to disagree with. He cited 18 things he was pleased with and only eight problem areas.

"Our response to the continuing controversy in the convention will be to go on doing the best job we can," Dilday said. "Southwestern has the respect and enthusiastic support of the vast majority of our convention. It has maintained a steady course in its effort to combine constructive, conservative theology with excellence in practical scholarship.

"Our faculty and staff have been sensitive and responsive to the issues of these past nine years and having learned from these developments, they have made significant adjustments in our work in order to do a better job," he said.

"Southwestern seminary is poised to become the major influential institution in Southern Baptist life," Dilday said. "The effort to lead out is going to belong to that institution that retains its integrity and commitment to practical, unapologetic biblical scholarship."

Dilday took his staff and faculty through the six-page report column by column, pointing out the "constructive features" he agrees with:

— "We should find ways to bridge our differences and work together."

— "It is proper for trustees and administrators to preserve the Baptist heritage of our agencies and institutions using the Baptist Faith and Message as a guideline."

— "We ought to discontinue political activity."

— "We ought not impose certain views of Scripture on individuals and churches."

— "There should be no effort to eliminate any doctrinal view among us which is consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message."

— "The seminaries should continue to affirm their commitments to the Baptist Faith and Message and the promise of fairness and balance in the Glorieta Statement."

Other areas of agreement included reaffirming a high view of Scripture, calling for SBC appointments representing the diversity of Southern Baptists, striving for denominational reconciliation, and supporting the Cooperative Program, the convention's unified budget.

But Dilday said he still disagrees with the report's conclusion that the source of controversy is theological: "I don't see Baptists in disagreement over our basic theology. We are practically unanimous in our belief in the total trustworthiness of Scripture."

Rather, he said, differences arise over issues such as whether Southern Baptists

will be cooperative or independent and how certain passages of Scripture should be interpreted.

Dilday also said he is troubled by the report's description of doctrinal diversity. The report illustrates this diversity with four points, such as that some faculty members believe the miracles were historical events while others believe they were parabolic.

"This implies that our seminary faculties are divided 50/50 over these positions," Dilday said. "That is not true. Those who hold the 'liberal' views illustrated in the report are very, very few. I don't know any here at Southwestern who do not accept the conservative position on such issues."

And where there is diversity among Southern Baptists, "it is usually expressed within the general framework of conservative theology," he said.

Also, the report "does not come down hard enough on the shameful political manipulations of the past few years," Dilday said. "There's not much in the report to strongly discourage further political activity."

Another problem is that the report "comes dangerously close to codifying or canonizing a list of Scriptural and textual interpretations as addenda to the Baptist Faith and Message," Dilday said.

He referred to the report's conclusion that "most Southern Baptists see 'truth without any mixture of error'" as affirming a specific interpretation of four points of Scripture — Adam and Eve, authorship, miracles, and historical narratives.

"While as simple bibliocists we readily agree with those interpretations, the danger is that we as Baptists have never lifted certain interpretations to that level of authority," Dilday said. "What will be on the next list — eschatology or national political issues?"

Such additions make the Baptist Faith and Message "a different statement," he said. Since faculty members were employed upon acceptance of the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message, making them sign something else would create problems, Dilday said.

Other problem areas in the report include "legitimizing the takeover success of the militant party," applying the conservative label to only one group, setting a precedent of avoiding discussion on divisive subjects, and the "unwise" continuation of the Peace Committee for another three years.

Dilday thanked the faculty and staff for being responsible in the heat of the debate. "I've not had to apologize for anybody," he said.

National Avenue calls Robert Tyson as pastor

Robert Tyson has been serving as pastor of National Avenue Baptist Church in Memphis since May 10. Previously, he served as pastor of Broadway Baptist Church in Broadway, N.C.

He also served as associate pastor at Youngsville Baptist Church in Youngsville, N.C., and as associate pastor working with music and youth at Silerton Baptist Church in Silerton.

Born in Memphis, Tyson was graduated from Union University in Jackson and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

His involvement with Little River Baptist Association in North Carolina includes having served as associational Sunday School director and president of the pastors' conference.

News analysis

Church-state law faces change under Bork

By Stan Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP) — If President Ronald Reagan's new choice for the U.S. Supreme Court, District of Columbia Court of Appeals Judge Robert H. Bork, is confirmed by the Senate, some changes in church-state law can be expected, especially in cases testing aid to parochial schools.

Although the 60-year-old Bork has not had to handle a single major church-state controversy during his five years on what sometimes is called "the second most important" court in the land, some evidence exists to suggest he would look favorably on federal and state laws aimed at providing financial assistance to sectarian elementary and secondary schools or to parents who send their children to such schools.

Because the man Bork would replace — retired Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr. — accumulated a mixed record in such cases during his nearly 16 years on the high court, a Bork-for-Powell switch likely would mean advocates of parochial aid would gain a stronger ally. And since a number of recent key cases in this field have been decided on 5-4 votes, some of which have struck down provisions for such assistance, the change could make the crucial difference.

Only two years ago, for example, Powell provided the key fifth vote in a pair of 5-4 decisions striking down programs in New York City and Grand Rapids, Mich., that sent public school teachers into parochial schools to provide remedial education to underprivileged students. The decision in the New York case brought an end to a 19-year practice of using federal funds in a program presumed to be constitutionally unassailable by advocates of aid to sectarian schools.

In spite of his votes in those cases, Powell on other occasions has voted to uphold parochial aid, as he did in providing the necessary fifth vote in a 1983 decision upholding a Minnesota law granting all parents of school-age children a tax deduction for expenses incurred in either public or private schools. Bork certainly could be expected to side with parochial aid advocates in virtually any kind of case testing such programs.

But in other areas of church-state law — including religion in public schools and

governmental intervention in religion — the switch of the ideologically conservative Bork for the more centrist Powell usually would not make much difference.

While much is known about Bork's views on a number of key social issues recently before the high court — including abortion, affirmative action, capital punishment, and obscenity — his approach to church-state issues is unclear. This is true in part, to be sure, because the D.C. Court of Appeals has dealt with no significant church-state cases during his tenure there.

Even before Reagan nominated him to that court in 1982, Bork apparently had little to say about church-state matters. The same has not been true with respect to other sensitive social issues addressed candidly by the outspoken judge in articles and speeches.

Bork's nomination, however, appears headed for trouble in the Senate Judiciary Committee, where several Democratic members have pledged to fight it. In addition, a broad coalition of civil rights and civil liberties organizations are engaged in an all-out battle to defeat Bork. Their efforts are being countermanded by Reagan's personal appeal to the American people to lobby their senators for confirmation and by an equally determined effort by conservative organizations to sway the vote for Bork.

Although the Pittsburgh-born jurist may be only marginally more conservative than his former appeals court colleague Antonin Scalia — named to the court last year — the battle lines have been drawn because Bork stands to alter the court's ideological balance on certain key issues important to both conservatives and liberals. The two issues most often cited by both sides where the Bork-for-Powell switch would make the critical difference between victory and defeat are abortion and affirmative action.

Despite these important differences, Bork would not alter significantly the court's position on other key social issues, including the death penalty and obscenity. Powell voted consistently for capital punishment and for tighter restrictions on the flow of obscene materials, positions likely to be mirrored by Bork.

In the church-state field, Bork generally seems to be more of an advocate of

preferential treatment of religion and religious institutions such as parochial schools, than was Powell.

One sign of such a view came in a September 1985 speech to a small group of religious leaders convened by the Brookings Institution in Washington. Speaking on the general subject of religion and politics, Bork made clear his view that nothing in the Constitution prevents government from providing non-preferential financial aid to religious institutions, including sectarian schools. According to participants at the meeting, he also endorsed the view espoused by Attorney General Edwin Meese III and Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist that the nation's founders intended to do no more in the establishment clause of the First Amendment than prevent establishment of a national church or preferential treatment of one religion over another.

Although Powell's votes in the multitude of important church-state cases during his tenure on the court left no doubt he did not agree with that assessment, he nevertheless took the stance that government should display a "benevolent neutrality" toward religion. He also was a strong advocate of the other religion clause of the First Amendment — guaranteeing the free exercise of religion — except in those cases where a governmental interest in limiting free exercise was so overriding as to set aside the individual's claim.

But Powell often sided with government and against individuals when he believed the governmental interest in limiting free

exercise overrode the citizen's claim.

In future cases testing the limits of free exercise, Bork could be expected generally to come down on the same side as did Powell.

In the other major category of church-state cases — those testing the unconstitutional establishment of religion — Bork's views generally seem to square with Powell's, but with certain exceptions.

Based on his few public statements on such issues, one can conclude Bork would have agreed with Powell's 1983 vote upholding the right of Congress and the states to employ legislative chaplains and his crucial vote the following year in a 5-4 opinion that cities may include a nativity scene in Christmas displays.

But Bork probably would not have voted with Powell in a pair of highly publicized cases involving religious practices in public schools. In 1980, Powell sided with the narrow majority in a 5-4 decision striking down a Kentucky law that required the posting of the Ten Commandments in every public school classroom in the state. And in 1985, Powell was one of six justices voting to strike down an Alabama law mandating silent prayer in public schools.

In a concurring opinion in the latter case, however, Powell stated his view that "some moment-of-silence statutes may be constitutional." One of those laws, from New Jersey, will be tested at the court during its upcoming term. As Powell probably would have done, Bork — if confirmed — could be expected to vote to uphold it.

Guest editorial

Our priceless possession

Editor's note: Following is an excerpt from a devotional delivered during one of the state children's Bible drills and regional youth Bible drills and speakers tournaments. At the July 3 event at Immanuel Baptist Church, Lebanon, Billie Friel, pastor of First Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet, delivered these comments.

By Billie Friel

How proud we are of our children and youth this day! You are all champions as you have studied and memorized the Word of God.

Paul told Timothy: "From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15).

The Word of God is our priceless possession from God. How blessed we are to have the written record of God's revelation in our hands today! The Bible's ability to make us wise unto salvation far exceeds any earthly riches of this life. Yet, statistics tell us a sad fact: While over 90 percent of Americans say they believe in a superior being, 82 percent do not open the Bible even once a year. Also, only 52 percent have a positive attitude toward the church. Oh, I pray you will read the Bible!

It is not enough for you to read the Bible. Paul told Timothy to be an example to the believers in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, and purity (1 Timothy 4:12). The apostle made the dramatic statement

in 2 Corinthians 3:2-3 that we are "epistles of Christ, known and read of all men." We are walking Bibles! Each of us is a living advertisement for Christ by the way we live. We may be the only Bible someone may ever read.

I love the Bible! When I was saved in 1964 in a small central Florida town, a lady came through the line and offered me either a dozen pair of socks or a brand new Bible. I chose the Bible and began to study with her for the next few months, especially on the theme of prophecy. Later I went to college and carried my Bible with me everywhere. How I openly loved the Word of God! I realize now that my emphasis was not totally correct, but I would actually kiss the Bible in front of agnostics, infidels, and atheists. Praise God for His Word!! Read the Bible!

I exhort you to read the Bible and relate it to others through your life. What potential you have! It is said that Michelangelo attempted 44 statues but completed only 14. His "failures" are on display in a monastery courtyard in southern Italy. One sees a block of marble with a leg sticking out and imagines a body imprisoned within. Will you ever become what God intended for you when He made you?

God's goal for you is to be "complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:17). You will only realize your potential by reading His Word and relating the Word to your life. I promise you, it will work! God's Word is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). Praise God for His Word! Let us become wise unto salvation, live by it, and one day, die by it.

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Letters to the editor

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

Fate of the unborn

Dear editor:

As a Tennessee Baptist pastor and the father of three beautiful children, my heart has ached for the millions of unborn

Personal Perspective

By Tom Madden
TBC Executive
Secretary-Treasurer



One of the earliest and most vivid memories of my childhood was attending the revival with my grandfather. His farm was located between Verden and Anadarko, Okla. I was about 6 years old and was spending a large part of the summer with my grandparents.

The revival was held in the schoolhouse. Before the revival began, the men went all over the community fixing the roads so people could come to the "protracted meeting."

Grandpa owned a model "T" Ford and he kept apologizing to the others because he would have to leave the revival services early because we had to use lanterns for headlights and we had to leave "before the dusk got up."

Even then I recall the blessings that came to the people and how my own life was impressed. That first revival was about 60 years ago and across the years revivals have always been a refreshing experience to me.

To me revival brings a refreshment of memory. It is good to recall the experience of being born again and being baptized. It strengthens the security of our own salvation and increases our awareness of God's tender mercies and great grace.

There is the refreshment that comes from forgiveness. Revivals bring us face to face with the fact of sin in our daily living. Conviction brings us to repentance. Burdens get lifted and with a cleansed heart comes a thrilling kind of refreshment.

There is the refreshment of a sweet fellowship. The warmth, the intensity of a revival service helps us renew a right relationship with the Lord and revitalizes our fellowship with our fellow believers.

I don't believe anything refreshes us more than seeing people respond when the appeal is made and people walk the revival aisle making things right with God. Great joy comes, especially if we have had some little part in the lives of those professing a saving faith in Christ. I have noticed that people do not get in a hurry to leave.

It is my prayer, and I ask you to pray with me, that across Tennessee, God will send refreshing revivals. I believe a time of refreshing waits to be claimed.

children who have been killed for convenience sake since 1973.

The Supreme Court justice who wrote that tragic decision and gave its deciding vote has retired. President Reagan has nominated Mr. Robert Bork to replace him. Mr. Bork, presently a court of appeals judge, is a highly respected lawyer and jurist.

The only opposition to him appears to be his conservatism and past rulings on moral issues. Our own senators from Tennessee may hold the fate of his nomination in their hands. They will be highly pressured by their more liberal colleagues and associates to oppose his nomination, but I believe they will listen to the voice of Tennesseans.

I want to encourage all Tennessee Baptists to call or write both Senator Sasser and Senator Gore supporting the nomination of Mr. Bork.

The life or death of many unborn children may rest in your hands.

Wayne Addison
Rt. 11, Box 162
Kingsport, TN 37663

Here are my thoughts

Dear editor:

I would like to share with your readers my thoughts on three controversial topics.

Regarding works versus faith, good works is the physical expression of spiritual living faith.

On predestination versus free will, according to Henri Louis Le Chatelier's principle (1888), "if a change occurs in one of the conditions of a system initially in equilibrium, the system will adjust, tending to nullify the change and return to equilibrium." Le Chatelier's principle divides natural processes into two groups: stable equilibrium - those who follow the rule (determinism, predestination); and unstable equilibrium - those who are exceptions to the rule (free will). As Rabbi Joseph ben Akiba (A. D. 50-A. D. 132) said, "Predestination is set up, but free will is also provided."

Concerning nurture versus nature, nurture (environment) becomes operational through nature (genes).

Archimedes A. Concon
4939 Princeton Ave.
Memphis, TN 38117

Give conservatives time

Dear editor:

Your editorial evaluation, "State paper editors analyze 1987 SBC," in the July 1 issue of the Baptist and Reflector was well presented, most interesting, and informative. However, as in previous years, the biases of the individual state paper editors was reflected. The editorial commentaries were obviously indicative of

the superior number of moderate state paper editors.

Regrettably, the hard-working Peace Committee, consisting of fairly equal numbers of moderates and conservatives, was too severely and unjustly criticized for content and delay in its report. Evidently, it appeared favorable to most of the messengers. Certainly, they deserve our praise and prayers for concluding an enormous task.

Then, in the July 8 B&R article, "Historian claims SBC faces identity crisis," Bill Leonard claims a new cure

for diversity and identity. His eloquent terminology is somewhat above my restricted comprehension. Leonard, professor of history, and other Southern staffers' "treatment for the cure" will no doubt continue to surface.

Summarily, I believe he is trying to say the convention would pursue a new pluralism which might allow diverse, practical, and theological approaches - in essence, "go back to the way it was during moderate rule."

Please give conservatives ample time to return the convention back to the religious tradition.

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



NEW COMMISSION MEMBER — William L. Palmer (center), president of Harrison Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour, is welcomed to the Education Commission by Bob R. Agee (right), president of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee and chairman of the commission, and Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director of the Education Commission. Palmer recently attended the agency's annual meeting in Kansas City, Mo.

Bellevue leads in baptisms

Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis led Tennessee Baptist churches in reported baptism last year, according to Jerry King, program associate of the Tennessee Baptist Convention evangelism department.

Compiled from annual church letters, the statistics showed that 13 Tennessee churches reported more than 100 baptisms during the October 1985 through

September 1986 church year.

Bellevue Baptist Church led the state again with 608 reported baptisms. Adrian Rogers, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, is pastor of the church.

Second in the state last year was Central Baptist Church, Oak Ridge, where Tom Melzoni is pastor. The church had 171 baptisms.

In third place was Bethlehem Baptist Church, Oneida, with 169 baptisms. John L. Shepherd is pastor.

Fourth in last year's reported baptisms with 132 was Radnor Baptist Church, Nashville, where Paul Durham is pastor.

Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Knoxville, where Terry Taylor is pastor, was in fifth place with 129 baptisms.

Following closely with 128 baptisms was Park Avenue Baptist Church, Nashville. Bob Mowrey is pastor of the sixth-place church.

First Baptist Church, Millington, was seventh with 123 baptisms. Ray Newcomb is pastor.

In the eighth position was Leewood Baptist Church, Memphis, where Jerry Glisson is pastor.

Five other churches reported more than 100 baptisms. They are:

- First Baptist Church, Clarksville; 107 baptisms; John Laida, pastor;
- Central Baptist Church, Hixson; 106 baptisms; Ron Phillips, pastor;
- Broadway Baptist Church, Memphis; 105 baptisms; Bobby Moore, pastor;
- First Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet; 104 baptisms; Billie Friel, pastor; and
- Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, 103 baptisms; Jerry Sutton, pastor.

Correction

In the Baptist and Reflector story about the upcoming Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Retreat in the July 8 issue, Walter E. "Bucky" Phillips, was incorrectly identified.

Phillips, who will be directing the special music at the retreat, is minister of music at First Baptist Church in Sevierville. He was incorrectly identified as Trenton Street Baptist Church, Harriman, where he previously served.

The B&R staff regrets this error.



Tennessee/Venezuela prayer net partnership

Pray for:

—John Murphy, theological teacher in Los Teques, who celebrates his birthday July 28.

—Mr. and Mrs. James Porch, who will be in Venezuela July 24-26 for the national Baptist convention. Pray for Porch, convention leaders, and missionaries who participate in this meeting.

—Volunteers Lee and Helen Floyd, who are at the seminary in Los Teques to help with maintenance during the furlough of Roger Busby.

God's six little acres yields TBCH harvest

Story by Bill Bangham
Photos by Mike Day

JACKSON — The Saturday morning sun scorched the field and dust choked the air.

Forty men and women and 30 young people stumbled across the stubble of a potato field, churned the dust and followed a mechanical harvester dislodging potatoes from sod, bagging, hoisting, and lifting them into waiting trucks.

When the Baptist Men of Ararat Baptist Church, Jackson, set aside six acres of land for a potato patch, someone commented, "It's just like God's Little Acre times six."

But unlike the characters of the Erskine Caldwell story, moving God's little acre with each whiff at economic gain, the men of Ararat stood pat. And God blessed.

Estimated yield for the field was 60,000 pounds. But last week when they harvested, about 100,000 pounds of Irish potatoes were gathered and given to Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc.

"I don't know what these potatoes are worth," said Gene Gafford, director of the Memphis home. "But what we're able to save (in food costs) we can use in other areas."

Residents of the homes are seldom orphans. Most come from broken homes. Many have been abused and often require skilled professional help. Any money saved for those "other areas" is money well spent.

Gary Burhop of Malone and Hyde, a wholesale grocer in Memphis, currently quotes Irish potatoes for non-profit agencies at 20 cents a pound. Later in the year, they'll cost more. So the gift of this small, rural church on the outskirts of town is significant — worth, perhaps, \$20,000 or more.

"We don't feel like it's such a big deal," said Jim Clement, a member of the church who owns the automatic transmission business just down the road from the field. "It's pulled our church together and given us the opportunity to help someone else."

The idea grew out of a revival led by Gerald Stow, executive director of TBCH. "Dr. Stow was here and got everyone charged up..." said Clement. "We



GOD'S HARVEST — John Deere and Mike Haynes (driving) lead the way as members of Ararat Baptist Church and several local residents begin the process of harvesting six acres of potatoes raised by Baptist Men from the church.

wanted to do something to help the kids out."

At a Baptist Men's meeting, Ararat's pastor, George Hill, mentioned planting a small potato patch 20 years ago at another church where he served as pastor, giving the yield to one of the children's homes. The men liked the idea.

Billy Haynes, a farmer in the church who donated the land, remembers saying, "Well I've got six acres of land next to my house."

From there, the project fired the imagination of the entire community.

John McKenzie donated 5,000 pounds of seed potatoes. Tennessee Seed donated pesticide. Doy Smith Produce Co. of Huntingdon donated 1,000 burlap sacks. Madison County Farmers Co-op donated fertilizer. Averitt Express, a trucking company, donated four trucks and the expense of hauling the potatoes to TBCH campuses in Memphis, Chattanooga, Johnson City, and Franklin. Steve Spencer donated a tractor and he and Bob Murphy plowed the field. Jordan Farms of Gibson donated the mechanical harvester.

About 100 people prepared the seed potatoes for planting, and 100 worked another day to plant them.

As the July 11 harvest day arrived,

farmers in the church paid some of their hands to work the harvest. Some volunteered their time.

Women from the church's Woman's Missionary Union hauled heavy water coolers across the field to thirsty workers and provided lunch to everyone who worked.

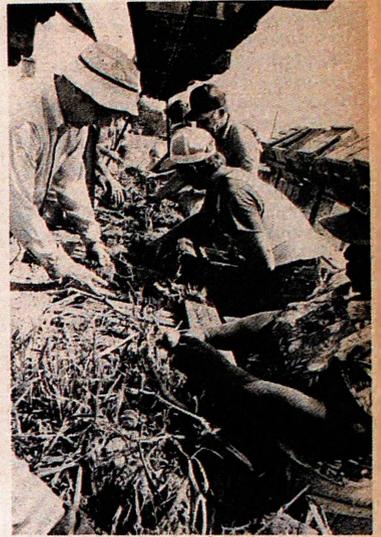
A fellow from Ramer, repairing a nearby cotton gin, heard about the project, came by, and rode several rounds on the machine.

"We've always had a good relationship in our church," said Clement. "But this is pulling people together... people who don't come often, neighbors. It's become a joint church-community effort."

Twelve young people from the Franklin TBCH campus and 20 from the Memphis campus helped during the Saturday harvest.

"There's something special about having the recipients out here working with us," said Kenny Pierce, a church member who has an accounting office in town.

"You see these kids here," said Jerry Blasingame, director of the home at Franklin. "This will be some lifetime



TEAM EFFORT — Church members and local farmhands team up to harvest potatoes raised by Ararat Baptist Church, Jackson.

memories for them."

Several of the children from the Memphis TBCH campus returned to rural Ararat Baptist Church for Sunday services. Explained Will Moore, their house father, "It impressed our young people so much that the members of this church cared enough to do all this."

Since the harvest still wasn't complete by Saturday evening, the church worked Sunday afternoon, canceled evening services, and worked into the night.

"I guess you could say the ox was in the ditch," said Clement.

By Monday evening, there were still 20 rows of potatoes in the ground. The men of Ararat Baptist Church were exhausted. Many needed to get back to their jobs and their own fields.

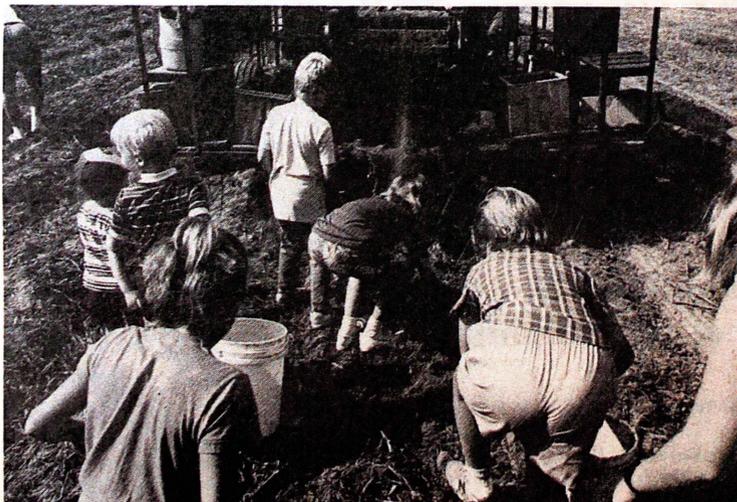
The trucks were gone and it was still undecided what to do with the remainder of the crop. Perhaps lay it on the field for the community to glean. Rain ended their speculations and settled the dust of their labor.

Clement looked over the field. The rain had revealed potatoes lost to machine and the human army trudging behind it. They stood out, washed, red spots against the darkening soil.

"It seems a shame to leave them," he said. "If we could just get those to some people who are hungry. Even if it was just enough for one meal..."

Once the tons of potatoes arrived at each TBCH campus, staff members worked to clean and store as many of the red Irish potatoes as possible. Several thousand pounds were stored in cooled rooms or in basements on six-inch layers of straw. The Franklin campus also shared 2,000 pounds of potatoes with the Tennessee Children's Home, a similar but unrelated ministry based in Spring Hill.

Despite long hours of labor and much ingenuity, staffers were unable to provide suitable storage for the abundance of potatoes. Still, the commissary of each campus profited from the surplus, because the excess potatoes were either sold at farmers markets (with the proceeds applied to the food budget) or given to food banks in exchange for credit.



GLEANING THE FIELDS — Children from the Franklin and Memphis children's homes glean the potatoes missed by the mechanical harvester. Thirty-two residents of the homes assisted in the harvest.



BUCKET BRIGADE — Will Moore of the TBCH Memphis campus serves as "chief bucket carrier," as residents Patty Farris (left) and Elizabeth Smith (right) pick up some bypassed potatoes.

Tennessee journeyman adapts to Thai culture

By Maxine Stewart

Two years can seem like a long time, but for Betsy Whaley, who served as a journeyman in Thailand, it seemed so short she could hardly believe it was time for her to return to the United States.

Whaley, a member of First Baptist Church in Pigeon Forge, taught English at the Baptist student center in Bangkok. The graduate of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville wanted to be with the Thai people as much as possible, so she lived in a girls dormitory at Ramkhamhaeng University.

She found this to be a very rewarding experience. Although she didn't have a roommate, she often had at least one person in her room.

"If no one is in my room," she said, "I go to someone's room and we talk or watch Thai TV."

Not having a kitchen, Whaley doesn't cook at the dorm. She "eats off the street"

with the students. There are many food stalls and food carts all around.

"I never eat American food anymore," she said. "I think moving to the dorm, living with the students, and getting into the culture has helped me to better understand about the Thai people, maybe helped me to relate to them better.

"It has been a highlight just getting to know the university students and live with them, eat with them, sleep with them, laugh with them, and counsel with them. This gives me opportunities to see how I can better relate the gospel to them. I find that Thai people are usually closed about their deep feelings, but there are a couple of girls who are willing to talk to me about God."

There was one girl at the Thai dorm who was very close to accepting the Lord. "We have Bible study together," Whaley pointed out. "I believe eventually she will become a Christian, but she has a real

problem of taking that leap of faith — something that she can't see or touch."

The students are delighted that she is so fond of Thai food. One of her students at the center is always bringing her some tasty treat. One day she presented her with a sack of fried grasshoppers. Loving and appreciating this girl, Whaley felt she should at least try one. Another day she brought a whole fried frog — not just frog legs, but the entire frog.

Some of Whaley's favorite foods are those with pig intestines, cooked blood — either cooked in the food or cooked and cut into squares and served on top of roast duck and rice, and snake meat.

Whaley discovered shortly after arriving in Thailand that some of the journeymen on the field used motorcycle taxis for transportation. She found this to be one of her favorite modes of transportation and through this, she soon met a Thai man who became a dear friend. He was 36 years old, never attended school, could not read or write Thai, and spent a total of about 15 years in and out of prison and jail for theft as he developed a heroin addiction problem.

She has witnessed to him about how God can help him if he is willing to let Him. When he has a problem, he either calls or goes to talk with her. She counsels him on his problems, giving her another opportunity for witnessing.

"He is such a sweet guy," said Whaley. "I just love him. He's just like a brother. His whole spirit is so sweet."

She longs to see him accept Christ.

In visiting in some of the homes of her student center friends, some of the parents found Whaley to be far different from what they feared. She arrived at their homes well groomed, well mannered, polite, and respectful, unlike some of the foreigners they had seen on the street or on television. She had pleasant visits in the homes, being able to speak a considerable amount of the Thai language. One of the mothers told her she was relieved when she saw how she looked and how she conducted herself.

Since Whaley was an urban studies major, she found that being able to build relationships with so many Thai people was one of the things she enjoyed most about

her assignment.

"Being in a job that focuses on relationships, I am able to meet people and really try to see where they are and where they are going and what their needs are. Being in those relationships I can see God using me to meet some of their needs," she said.

For young adults who are considering the journeyman program, Whaley said, "if they really want to step out and learn about themselves, and learn about God's power and His missions, and step out of the familiar, then they should become a journeyman. But if they are not really interested in changing, they want to come overseas and be just like they are at home, then don't come. But if they really want to see who they are and how God can use them, it is one of the best ways."

—Whaley returned to Tennessee in late June. Maxine Stewart is a missionary to Thailand.



CYCLE TAXI — Betsy Whaley "bargains" for a fair rate for transportation on the motorcycle taxi driven by her friend, Jawt, who she says has become "just like a brother."

Southern Baptist educators pursue proposed consortium

By Lonnie Wilkey

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — Southern Baptist college and university presidents are considering a proposal to form a consortium in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va.

The FMB proposal was one of several matters considered by members of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools during their annual meeting June 29 through July 1 in Kansas City.

Lewis I. Meyers, director of Cooperative Services International, a subsidiary of the board, presented the consortium concept to about 100 college presidents and deans.

Meyers told educators about the board's commitment to global cooperative evangelism and of its desire to establish the Cooperative Services International Educational Consortium with Baptist colleges.

He noted educational institutions offer a potential solution for placing Christian witnesses into countries where missionaries are prohibited.

Many developing countries are seeking means to advance in technological areas, Meyers said. As a result these countries are open to educational institutions establishing new programs or conducting faculty exchange partnerships with existing universities.

Earlier this year, Meyers and other FMB personnel met with 21 Baptist college representatives to "explain ways of expanding and more effectively using the Christian education operational base in global evangelism," he said.

Meyers related that an immediate opportunity existed to establish a graduate university in Yrumgis, China, in cooperation with a Chinese university.

He noted, however, this effort may be delayed until Chinese officials raise funds to construct the school in the northwest part of China. After construction is completed, the proposed consortium would supply the faculty members.

Other possibilities, such as exchange of faculty and students, exist in other countries, including some where Baptist colleges already have relationships with universities, Myers said.

A smaller committee from the original group which met with the board developed a proposed missions statement and charter of the organization.

According to the charter, the purpose of the Cooperative Services International

Educational Consortium is "to provide a framework by which member colleges and universities work cooperatively for the purpose of being involved in higher education in international settings that mutually benefit the overseas university and the member institution."

Meyers admitted many details would need to be worked out. Bob R. Agee, president of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee and a member of the original committee, agreed: "We are blazing new trails. There has to be a willingness to let evolutionary processes occur."

Meyers said membership forms and other details about the consortium would be mailed soon to college presidents. At that time the schools will be able to announce their decisions regarding the consortium, he added.

Also during the annual association's meeting, educators heard an update from officials at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City regarding the seminary's correlated degree program. Vernon Davis, dean of the faculty and vice-president for academic affairs, said school officials are pleased with the pilot program after its first year.

The program, designed for graduates of Baptist college religion programs, attempts to build upon the students' academic background, rather than force them to duplicate courses or material they had in college, he said.

Davis noted students are able to structure the program so they can complete the 88 hours required for a master of divinity degree in two years rather than the traditional three years.

Midwestern's effort was lauded by Baptist educators because it represented the first attempt by a seminary to work closely with Baptist colleges in correlating programs.

Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director of the Education Commission and executive secretary of the association, reported on discussions held with Vasily Logvenincko, president of the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the Soviet Union.

Walker said Russian Baptists are willing to visit college campuses for dialogue with faculty and students. While noting problems such as finances would have to be dealt with by the parties involved, Walker offered the services of the Education Commission as coordinator for such a program.

BSSB names T. W. Hunt to prayer consultant post

NASHVILLE (BP) — As part of a major Southern Baptist Convention effort to train church leaders in establishing and conducting comprehensive prayer ministries, T. W. Hunt has been named to a newly created position as prayer consultant in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department, effective Aug. 1.

Hunt, 57, has been a professor of church music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, for 24 years. He is the author of the 1987 adult Baptist Doctrine Study textbook on prayer and a 13-week Lay Institute for Equipping course, PrayerLife, to be released in January 1988.

Roy Edgemon, director of the church training department, said the new position has been created to develop a nationwide network of prayer groups. He said Hunt's efforts will be focused on training church leaders to use the resources in conducting a comprehensive prayer ministry that would include missions, evangelism, ministry needs, intercessory prayer, and other concerns.

In addition, the church training department will utilize a newsletter and Baptist Telecommunication Network programming to provide regular information to prayer groups.

Hunt hopes to establish a formal prayer network including as many as 10,000 churches with a goal of involving 20,000 churches by 1995. He believes revival will be the result.

"In Christian history, when a unity of prayer has been achieved, it has always resulted in revival," said Hunt. "I am hoping to get thousands of seasoned prayer warriors to pray for the same thing in the same spirit. God is faithful to His promises, and He will give us that which He has led us to ask for."

Share
BAPTIST AND REFLECTOR
with a friend

1987 Children's Bible Drills attract 915

The 915 participants in the 1987 State Children's Bible Drills was an increase of 61 over last year, reported Cindy Franks of the Tennessee Baptist Convention church training department, which sponsored the events.

One of the largest meets ever held was the June 29 southwestern regional event at First Baptist Church in Jackson, which drew 300 Bible drillers.

The children that qualify for the eight

regional drills have passed qualifying meets in their churches and associations.

In the regional meets, the children, who are 9-11 years old and/or 4th to 6th graders, compete in groups of 12. All of the

participants earn either a state participant, state winner, or state winner superior award.

Those pictured received plaques for participating three years.



NORTHWESTERN REGION — Three-year participants include (from left, first row) Cindy Garrett of Zion Hill Baptist Church in Friendship, Michelle Steiner of West Paris Baptist Church in Paris, Stormie Gale Kesterson of Bethel Baptist Church in Greenfield, Kristie Sturdivant of First Baptist Church in Huntingdon, Anita Kay Hawkins of First Baptist Church in Camden; (second row) Jared Ackerman of Zion Hill Baptist Church, Amy Jill French of First Baptist Church in Bruceton, Carissa Hayes of Macedonia Baptist Church in Kenton, and John Greer III of First Baptist Church in Bruceton.



NORTHEASTERN REGION — Three-year participants include (from left, first row) Russell Foster of Central Point Baptist Church in Rutledge, Melanie Brewer of Russellville Baptist Church in Russellville, Andrea Porthouse of Pigeon Valley Baptist Church in Hartford, Tina Leffler of Northport Baptist Church in Newport, Lance Morgan of Calvary Baptist Church in Morristown, Brad Cunningham of First Baptist Church in Blountville, Ben Fitzgerald of Oak Grove Baptist Church in Gray; (second row) Toni Price of Orebank Baptist Church in Kingsport, Gina Armentrout of Bowmanstown Baptist Church in Jonesborough, April Griffin of Cave Hill Baptist Church in Newport, Lora Moore of Pigeon Valley Baptist Church, Stephanie Hitchcock of First Baptist Church in Fall Branch, Candace Anderson of Russellville Baptist Church in Russellville, Rodney Hartsell of Lincoln Avenue Baptist Church in Newport; (third row) Brandon Langell of Oak Grove Baptist Church, Julie Stratton of Central Point Baptist Church, Emily Morgan of Central Point Baptist Church, Deedra Purkey of Pleasant View Baptist Church in Talbot, Melissa Riddle of Pleasant Grove Piney Baptist Church in New Market, Suzanne Douglas of Dumplin Baptist Church in New Market, and Janet Sparks of Orebank Baptist Church. Not pictured is Scott Farmer of Southwestern Baptist Church in Johnson City.



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION — Three-year participants include (from left, first row) Kevin Bosher of Southside Baptist Church in Mt. Pleasant, Angela L. Young of First Baptist Church in Lewisburg, Joy Lambert of First Baptist Church in Lewisburg, Rachel Shaddix of First Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg; (second row) Clayton Sanders of Kirkland Baptist Church in Tolt, Terry Hasling of Parkview Baptist Church in Lewisburg, and Jennifer Bledsoe of Bradshaw Baptist Church in Pulaski.



NORTH CENTRAL REGION — Three-year participants include (from left, first row) Emily Ruth O'Neal of Auburn Baptist Church in Auburntown, Amy Brandon of Burt Baptist Church in Woodbury, Michelle Crosslin of First Baptist Church in Manchester; (second row) Ben Stapleton of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Crossville, Kyle Copeland of Wilhite Baptist Church in Cookeville, and Adam Morris of Central Baptist Church in Crossville.



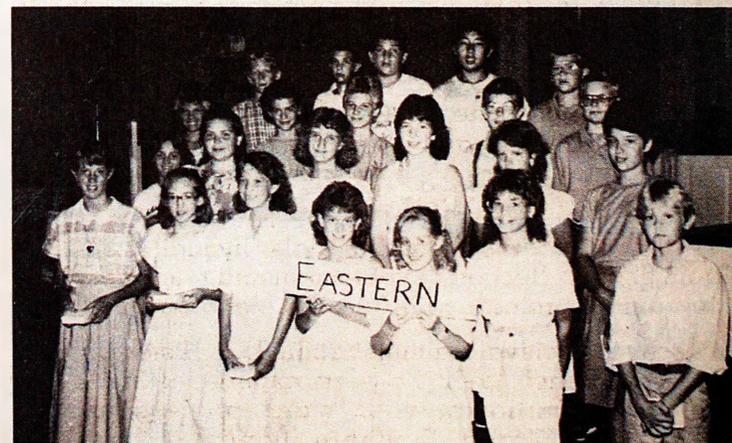
SOUTHEASTERN REGION — Three-year participants include (from left, front row) Danyon Keith of Bellefonte Baptist Church in Cleveland, Angie Bishop of Chestee Baptist Church in Calhoun, Lori Stanley of Chestee Baptist Church, Kerri Hudson of Michigan Avenue Baptist Church in Cleveland, Daniel Scaer of Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga; (second row) Pansy Vore of New Friendship Baptist Church in Cleveland, John Duggan of Michigan Avenue Baptist Church, Greg McDonald of Clearwater Baptist Church in Athens, Christy Davidson of Clearwater Baptist Church, and Alison Housley of East Athens Baptist Church in Athens.



CENTRAL REGION — Three-year participants include (from left, first row) Melinda Gray of Big Rock Baptist Church in Big Rock, Angela Davis of Two Rivers Baptist Church in Nashville, Amy Margaret Moore of Bellefonte Baptist Church in Cleveland, Andrea Nelson of First Baptist Church in Murfreesboro; (second row) Danielle Harris of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in Cross Plains, Katie Stewart of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, Laurie Fitts of Fall Creek Baptist Church in Morene, Stacy Samuels of New Providence Baptist Church in Clarksville; (third row) Troy Brachey of Judson Baptist Church in Nashville, Andy Haynes of Judson Baptist Church, Josh LeMay of Parkway Baptist Church in Goodlettsville, Josh Walters of Two Rivers Baptist Church, and Laura Friel of First Baptist Church in Mt. Juliet. Not pictured is Shane Wooten of Parkway Baptist Church.



SOUTHWESTERN REGION — Cindy Franks (left, first row) of the TBC presents the three-year participants that include (from left, first row) Daolatda Phowbanhdith of First Baptist Church in Memphis, Nellie Truxills of Faith Baptist Church in Atoka, Scott Van Neste of First Baptist Church in Millington, Jimmy Anderson of Speedway Terrace Baptist Church in Memphis, Caleb Finch of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Kenneth Milligan of Speedway Terrace Baptist Church, Caleb Sparks of Broadway Baptist Church in Memphis, Melissa Ruff of Ellendale Baptist Church in Memphis; (second row) Lori LaRae of Elendate Baptist Church, Tricia McCall of First Baptist Church in Memphis, Amy Wilson of First Baptist Church in Memphis, Anthony Wilson of New Union Baptist Church in Medon, Brandon York of Friendship Baptist Church in Friendship, Murray Dickson of Germantown Baptist Church in Germantown, Lane Smith of Germantown Baptist Church; (third row) Alison Wright of Eudora Baptist Church in Memphis, Wendi Lovelace of Whitten Memorial Baptist Church in Memphis, Jennifer Bevil of Broadmoor Baptist Church in Memphis, Mandy Hathcock of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jennifer Sigler of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jessie Childers of Bellevue Baptist Church, Allen Wilson of Englewood Baptist Church in Jackson, Jennifer Flemmons of Bartlett Baptist Church in Bartlett, Ashley Jones of Bartlett Baptist Church, Amy Seabrook of Woodland Baptist Church in Jackson, Tracy Gillis of Broadmoor Baptist Church; (fourth row, Eddie Gillentine, Mark Street, Gann Brewer, Jeremy Wilson, Joy Foster, Beth Binkley, Sally Spott, Jenny Jordan, Lynn Coombs, and Mary Beth Crockett, all of Bellevue Baptist Church. Not pictured are Renee Rutledge of First Baptist Church in Collierville, Mandy Fouts of Bluegrass Baptist Church in Hendersonville, Joy Murphy of Unity Baptist Church in Ramer, Michael Tucker of West Frazier Baptist Church in Memphis, Jessica Sharp of Covington Pike Baptist Church in Memphis, Kristie Browning of Fisherville First Baptist Church in Eads, Jamie Newman of Malecus Baptist Church in Jackson, and Michael Johnston of Unity Baptist Church.



EASTERN REGION — Three-year participants include (from left, first row) Le Ann Jared of Mt. Olive South Baptist Church in Knoxville, Lisa Kelly of Mt. Olive South Baptist Church, Stephanie Hubbs of Stock Creek Baptist Church in Knoxville, Niki Saylor of West Lonsdale Baptist Church in Knoxville, Amy Lewelling of West Lonsdale Baptist Church, Tanya Gerth of Cumberland Baptist Church in Knoxville, Mark Singleton of Salem Baptist Church in Knoxville; (second row) Jennifer Frazier of French Broad Valley Baptist Church in Kodak, Samantha Hall of Beech Park Baptist Church in Oliver Springs, Jennifer Baby of Beech Park Baptist Church, Christy Johnson of Calvary Baptist Church in Lenoir City, April Woodard of Shelbyville Mills Baptist Church in Shelbyville, Nikki Houston of East Maryville Baptist Church in Maryville; (third row) Carrie Everett of East Maryville Baptist Church, Heather Everett of East Maryville Baptist Church, Crystal Carter of East Maryville Baptist Church, Jeff McPherson of Wallace Memorial Baptist Church in Knoxville, Danny Carter of East Maryville Baptist Church; (fourth row) Steve Crosby of First Baptist Church in Concord, Neal Pinkston of First Baptist Church in Seymour, Lucas Harkbrood of French Broad Valley Baptist Church, Cheng Tao of Calvary Baptist Church in Knoxville, and Shay Coker of East Maryville Baptist Church. Not pictured are Chuckie Fine of East Maryville Baptist Church, Laura Hepburn of First Baptist Church in Alcoa, and Kimberly Graham of Sharon Baptist Church in Knoxville.

Bennett, Weatherford plan to meet with pope in September

NASHVILLE (BP) — Two Southern Baptist leaders will meet with Pope John Paul II when the Roman Catholic pontiff visits the United States this fall.

Harold C. Bennett of Nashville and Carolyn Weatherford of Birmingham, Ala., will join a small group of U.S. Protestant leaders who will meet privately with the pope Sept. 11 in Columbia, S.C. Bennett is president and treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, and Weatherford is executive director of the SBC Woman's Missionary Union.

The pope will greet each leader individually during the meeting, to be held during the afternoon at the home of University of South Carolina President

James B. Holderman. Twenty-four non-Catholic leaders have been invited to participate in the private meeting.

In addition to the individual greetings, that meeting will include presentation of a paper produced by the Americans on the state of Christianity in the United States, a response by the pope and time for discussion.

Following will be a public service of Christian witness in the university's 70,000-seat Williams-Brice Stadium. The service will focus on the family.

"I am pleased Southern Baptists will be represented in the small meeting with Pope John Paul II," Bennett said. "It will afford me the opportunity to express a

personal welcome to one of the religious leaders of the world.

"In my capacity as president and treasurer of the Executive Committee, I will convey to Pope John Paul II a personal greeting on behalf of the largest non-Catholic group in the United States," he added.

Of the private meeting, Bennett said he hopes to share with the pope and other religious leaders "something of the life and work of Southern Baptists."

Weatherford added: "I have accepted the invitation and am delighted to be included in the dialogue. Southern Baptists have work in so many countries where Roman Catholics are in a missions relationship with us. We need to be talking with each other more."

She also expressed pleasure that the group includes a woman. "Simply because there are a lot of women who are Roman Catholic, I think the pope is wise to include a woman in the discussion," she said. "If he is seeking to understand religious life in the United States, he certainly needs to include the perspective of women."

SBC President Adrian P. Rogers of Memphis has confirmed he will not participate. During a press conference shortly after his re-election to the presidency in June, Rogers declined to give his reasons for not meeting with the pope, saying "they are best not expressed in public media."

Gene Gladney accepts Clarksville pastorate

Gene Gladney began his pastorate with Gracey Avenue Baptist Church in Clarksville on May 1.

He comes to the Clarksville pastorate from Vevay, Ind., where he was pastor of Spring Branch Baptist Church. Previously, he served as associate pastor of Central Baptist Church, Douglasville, Ga.; Baxter Avenue Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky.; and First Baptist Church, Byhalia, Miss.

A native of Memphis, he is a graduate of Union University in Jackson, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Baptist takes disaster post

SARAGOSA, Texas (BP) — Manuel Galindo, vice-president of student life at Valley Baptist Academy in Harlingen, Texas, has been appointed liaison between government agencies, volunteers, and the local building committee in Saragosa, the west Texas town virtually leveled by a tornado May 22.

Galindo, who is on a sabbatical from Valley Baptist Academy, had been on-site disaster relief volunteer coordinator in Saragosa for Texas Baptist Men.

In his new role, he will relate to federal entities such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, state authorities, the Saragosa Building Committee, and volunteers. The job is expected to last at least six months, and Galindo's salary will be paid through a government grant.

Galindo also was elected Varones Bautistas (Baptist Men) vice-president or disaster relief operations during the June 30 meeting of Hispanic Texas Baptist Men in Houston.

Texas Baptist Men will coordinate volunteers and materials to rebuild Saragosa, according to Bob Dixon, direc-

tor of the emergency task force for Texas Baptist Disaster Relief.

Of the 107 homes in the community, 60 were destroyed by the tornado, and 47 sustained damage but were considered habitable. Temporary housing for the homeless is being provided in mobile homes set up on donated land.

Tentative plans call for a weeklong Texas Baptist Men volunteer construction project this fall to rebuild the remaining houses, but no firm date has been set, said Dixon.

HBU gets \$1-million

HOUSTON (BP) — Houston Baptist University has received a gift of real estate from Sun Exploration and Production Company valued at more than \$1-million, announced HBU President E. D. Hodo.

The proceeds of the gift will be applied to the William H. Hinton College of Education and Library Tower Campaign and will qualify for the current matching gift program.



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BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for July 26

Judgment and assurance

By Marvin P. Nail, pastor
Whitsitt Chapel Baptist Church, Nashville

Basic Passage: Revelation 6:1 to 7:17

Focal Passages: Revelation 6:2-5, 8-9; 7:2-4, 9, 14

Though there has been general agreement among Bible scholars about the intent of this book up to this point, from here onward there will be much divergence of understanding about the rest of the book. I will not try to list all of the options for you. If that is your desire you will have to look elsewhere. In this limited space I will simply present a single option in hopes that it will provide a word of encouragement and hope to you.



Nail

A view from earth

The coming of the four horses with riders representing the course of history as it was then developing and some things that were about to happen. These are, first of all, words of reality and then words of encouragement in a time of trouble.

The rider on the white horse seems to represent Christ and His followers. Though some would name Him otherwise, I know of no other person in history who is given a crown of victory before he sets out to conquer. Our Christ was assured that His work on Calvary would be successful. The followers of Christ were told that not even the gates of Hades (or Hell as in the KJV) could prevail against them.

In the midst of their conquering comes the second rider who represents the execution of many believers and not general war. These persecutors were given permission to try their hand at destroying the church.

With the third rider comes inflation which always makes it hard on the poor. In John's day the Christians were being disenfranchised and made poor which meant that they were suffering still more from persecution.

The fourth horse and rider serve to remind the persecuted believers that others would be having their own share of troubles.

A view from heaven

With the breaking of the fifth seal our vantage point shifts to heaven. Like the prophets of old, John will be moving back and forth from earth to the courts of heaven.

On earth it looked as though the church of Jesus Christ was being defeated at every turn. These devoted followers of the Lord were being killed at every turn.

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Where was the victory in this?

Then John sees these souls, who had given the ultimate sacrifice, in heaven. He sees them being given the white robes of victory and purity. They had seemed defeated, but God has given them the robe of victory. They are told that others will suffer the same fate on earth, but they will receive the same reward in heaven.

With the breaking of the sixth seal, John is shown that those who appeared to have the victory on earth will face the judgment of God. The awful calamity which will surely befall them will be much worse.

The future secured by God

We might have expected next the breaking of the seventh seal, but not so. We will find this pattern throughout the book. The final stage will not come until the end of the book.

In chapter 7 is what might be called an interlude in this dramatic picture. It is not an interlude such that it is unimportant. Rather it is a moment for the reader to catch up on some other important details of the story.

We are reminded here that none of this harm is to take place, none of the persecution and judgment will come to pass, until the saved of all the earth are made secure. The picture is of God's angels restraining all these forces of God's judgment.

Though it might have appeared that being identified as a Christian meant certain suffering, God identifies them as His own and they will be delivered through the suffering.

There is an illustration of this from the logging industry in the Northwest. Many logging companies may cut in the same general area and float their logs down the same river to the mills. To be sure of which logs belong to which company, they brand each log before it slips into the water.

God, by His Holy Spirit, has put His brand on us. We are not taken out of the world but we are kept while we are in the world by His power. All of the saved throughout the ages make up the true Israel of God as identified by the 144,000 who are sealed. This does not represent Jews who are saved during the "tribulation." By his use of wrong names for the tribes he gives us the clue that he is speaking of spiritual Israel.

All of these, who are without number, will dwell eternally in the presence of God and give Him glory throughout all the ages. They are present with God because they have been washed clean from their sin by the blood of the Lamb Who is Jesus Christ. What a glorious word of encouragement to a frightened band of believers who thought they saw it all slipping away!

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UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for July 26

New life in the Spirit

By William L. Palmer, president
Harrison Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour

Basic Passage: Romans 8:1-27

Focal Passages: Romans 8:1-14, 26-27

When the Apostle Paul asked the question in Romans 7:24, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" a triumphal answer came in 7:25, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

A more complete answer is given here in chapter 8 and verse 1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." We do not have to rely on the futility of our own power to live the holy life. Verse 2 tells us that "Christ Jesus hath made me (us) free from the law of sin and death."

Romans 8 celebrates freedom from the fear of death. The fear of death is paralyzing. One held in the bondage of the fear of death is not free. Listen again to the words in verse 1: "No condemnation!" This is more than justification. "Now no condemnation!" - this is "in Christ Jesus."

Verse 2 introduces "the law of the Spirit of life." This is "in Christ Jesus." Jesus has done what the law could not do. Believers are free from the law of sin and death. We are no longer under the law of sin. Listen to verse 3, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

The law is not sufficient for our justification. The law is not capable of moving us out from under the bondage of sin. The flesh is weak. The law sets the standard, but the law cannot furnish the power. The law cannot provide the moral power to meet its own demands.

"What the law could not do," (v. 3) God did. God accomplished our justification through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus. God did in Jesus what the law could not do.

Jesus was truly a man. Jesus shared the human nature, but Jesus did not sin. Jesus was the sacrifice for sin. In Jesus' death on the cross God dealt with sin. "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (v. 4). Through that which Jesus accomplished in His death and resurrection, the Spirit makes alive in the believer.

Believers should be joyful and confident that there is now no condemnation (v. 1). They are free (v. 2). The demands of the law have been settled (v. 3). They now walk in the Spirit (v. 4).

Once again the Apostle Paul deals with the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. In verse 5 he warns about living in the flesh, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh."

Men have a fleshly (carnal) nature. Men mind fleshly things. Fleshly things are the things that please them most and that give them the greatest satisfaction. These earthly desires take in the whole personality. The end result is death. "To be carnally minded is death" (v. 6).

The carnal mind is hostile to God (v. 7). The carnal mind is in rebellion against God's law. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (v. 8). Such men are separated from God. "He is none of His" (v. 9b).



Palmer

In contrast the Apostle Paul affirms life that is possible "in the spirit" (v. 9a). This man knows the Spirit-controlled life. The distinguishing truth for a Christian is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the source of his holiness and happiness. "The Spirit is life" (v. 10). Jesus is alive and the Spirit "that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (make alive) your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (v. 11).

We know real life in Jesus now. We know that we belong to Him. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (v. 14). "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (v. 16).

The Spirit of God brings hope for the final redemption of the body (v. 23). The Spirit of God not only maintains a hope within us of our future glory, but He "also helpeth our infirmities (weaknesses)" at the present (v. 26). Griffith Thomas wrote, "Amidst present sufferings the indwelling Spirit does far more than inspire us with hope. He actually helps us in our present distress." The Holy Spirit is our helper. The Holy Spirit is our "prayer partner." He makes intercession for us. He knows how to translate our requests into acceptable petitions before our Heavenly Father (v. 27).

That gives us the holy boldness to say, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose" (v. 28). Those words begin next Sunday's lesson. Let us live in the consciousness of the Spirit's presence and leading in our lives in all things.

Cullum sets retirement

Eldridge V. Cullum will retire as pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Knoxville, on July 26.

Cullum has been the pastor of Grace Baptist Church for 19 years. He has served as a Baptist minister for 38 years.

Previous pastorates include Harmony Baptist Church in Harmony, N.C., Dublin Baptist Church in Dublin, Va., and Chatham Baptist Church in Chatham, Va. He is a graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Cullum is a past president of the Knox County Baptist Ministerial Association and served on the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Cullum's home is in the Karns community. After his retirement he will be available for interim and supply work in area churches.

Gleason church extends C. Ward call as pastor

Chris Ward began serving as pastor of First Baptist Church, Gleason, on June 7.

The Ripley native is a graduate of Union University in Jackson, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Previous pastorates include Jones Chapel Baptist Church, Paris; Eva Baptist Church, Eva; Leatherwood Baptist Church, Waynesboro; and Houston Baptist Church, Waynesboro.

Ward also served as associate pastor of Warren Baptist Church in Augusta, Ga.

LIFE AND WORK LESSON SERIES
Lesson for July 26

Speaking boldly

By Johnny M. Johnson, pastor
First Baptist Church, McEwen

Basic Passage: Acts 27:1 to 28:33
Focal Passages: Acts 28:23-28, 30-31

We have watched the Christian world mission unfold, from Bethany and the ascension of Jesus to a Roman jail. The gospel spread from Jerusalem to Judea, to Samaria and on to the capital of the mighty Roman Empire. As the Holy Spirit worked through willing witnesses, barriers were crossed, and the saving message of Jesus was shared "quite openly and unhindered" (v. 28). The church, filled with the Spirit of Christ, continued the mission and ministry of the risen Lord. We, too, are charged to continue to speak boldly, pray boldly, and work boldly until every person has heard the good news.



Johnson

Having appeared before Palestinian officials, Paul exercised his right as a Roman citizen. He appealed to Caesar, and after a perilous journey, the apostle came to Rome. The commission given to Paul was not in vain, for he took the name of Jesus "before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel!" (9:15).

Acceptance uncertain (28:23-24)

Our last sight of the missionary apostle shows him speaking boldly about the Lord Jesus. We ought to follow this example and use every opportunity to speak of the grace of our Lord. Paul was especially eager to witness to his Jewish brothers (see Romans 9:1-5, 10:1) because of his great desire to see them saved.

While in Rome, Paul was under arrest and guarded, but he lived in his own accommodations and was at liberty to meet there with anyone he wished. By a formal arrangement, he welcomed a great number of Jews to his lodgings and spoke with them. "From morning till evening" (v. 23) Paul expounded about the "kingdom of God . . . trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets" (v. 23). The apostle was ever faithful to share the gospel and always spoke to people in

terms they could understand.

As we witness we cannot be certain our testimony will be accepted. As Paul spoke "some were convinced (or "began to be persuaded") while others disbelieved" (or "continued to disbelieve" v. 24). Everyone will respond to our testimony, but not all will be saved. The choice to accept or reject salvation belongs to the freedom of every individual, and the obligation to witness belongs to every Christian.

Access unparalleled (28:25-28)

Paul "made one statement" (v. 25) that characterized his Jewish listeners and brought the session to an end. This statement, a quotation from the prophet Isaiah, speaks of the unparalleled opportunity the Jewish people enjoyed.

The Son of God was manifested among the Jewish people, some of whom accepted him, while others rejected him. God had worked with the children of Abraham, doing mighty acts in their midst. He had chosen them for Himself, spoken through the prophets, and provided the written Scriptures.

The Jewish people had seen and heard God's special revelation of Himself and His salvation, yet, says Paul, "their ears are heavy of hearing and their eyes they have closed" (v. 27). Paul says that the majority have closed their eyes, rejecting the salvation available only through Jesus Christ. As a result of the hardness of the Jews, Paul took the gospel to Gentiles, who had already manifested receptivity.

Ambassador unhindered (28:30-31)

Paul "lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him" (v. 30). While he was truly an ambassador in chains, he was not hindered from his mission by the bonds. The apostle continued his ministry, "preaching the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 31).

Truly the word of God is not bound (see 2 Timothy 2:9) today. The church in China

faced oppression by the Communist regime. After years of restriction, many churches were allowed to open. A degree of tolerance was evident. The church was found to be alive and well, and perhaps, stronger than ever.

Acts seems to end abruptly. If we consider his purpose of sketching the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth, Luke seems to have reached his conclusion. This gospel of the crucified and risen Christ has swept across the world and is now being preached "openly and unhindered" in Rome, the capital of the world.

Paul is left suddenly, but so was Philip, Barnabas, Peter, and others. After all, Luke is writing about the gospel of Jesus Christ, not about Paul. Let us strive to welcome all who will listen and share the good news about the Lord Jesus in our corner of the world and to the ends of the earth.



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Music professor sets Scripture to music



BIBLE LYRICS — Claude Bass, music professor at Southwestern seminary, believes Scripture often makes the best text for a hymn or anthem.

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — The best text for a hymn or Christian anthem is Scripture, according to Claude L. Bass, widely known Southern Baptist teacher, composer, and text writer.

"Scripture is beautiful to me. Maybe as I read Scripture, I hear music more than from any other texts," said Bass, professor of music theory and composition at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He considers himself a teacher first and a composer/text writer second.

As the music composer and text writer for numerous works, many of them commissioned for special occasions, Bass seems to turn more often to Scripture than to life experiences for words.

"Our society is so I-centered," he observed. "God should be at the center of it, not what we have experienced or how we feel about something. That can be done in personal devotions.

"I like to shed as much light on the Scripture as I can. I try to find the best way to wed it to music so the music does not detract from it. I'm trying to paint in music what the text is saying."

His settings of Scripture cover a wide range of texts. "Psalm Twenty-three," published more than 25 years ago by Broadman Press, is representative of his earlier settings of Scripture to music. Later works published by Broadman in-

clude "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:31-33), "Christ, My Strength" (Philippians 4:13, Psalm 28:7), "Wait on the Lord" (Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:30-31), "Ye are the Light of the World" (Matthew 5:14-16), and a work from "Contemporary Canticles," Matthew 6:19-21 from an original translation by W. A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas.

Bass said he always begins with the text, preferring that the music come from the text rather than forcing the text to fit the music.

"I do background work with commentaries and read a lot of different translations of the Bible," he said. "I look for the specific character of the text and then I try to match it in music. Intuition is a part of it, but it's also a matter of applying craftsmanship. I have to put myself in that framework to match the mood of the text to the mood of the music.

"I do ask the Lord to help me a lot when I am setting His Word to music," said Bass. He lamented that "God's Word is trivialized by a lot of music.

"I generally go for more formal language, and the King James Version has that," he added.

Paraphrasing Scripture, he said, is more difficult than using the exact words

from Scripture, "because paraphrasing has to be stylistically consistent. That's what I want — something that fits together. The Scripture itself is already stylistically consistent."

Bass said he feels not enough time is spent on praise, adoration, and worship: "I like to concentrate on texts that praise God rather than on one that tells how I feel or how I'm doing in a certain point in my day. I would rather my music point toward God."

Mark Blankenship, who has been Bass' editor in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department for a dozen years, said some Bible passages are more easily set to music than others because of their metrical flow.

However, Bass "has the ability to take most any Scripture and give it a poetic flow with his music, even if there is not a natural metrical pattern to the syllables," Blankenship observed. "His unique gift of melody seems to pull the most important meaning and emotion from every word of the text."

Bass recalled one of his teachers telling him that "the sacred music we write presents to the world our view of God." This really stayed with me.

"Music can give expression to things that words cannot express."

Report suggests possibility of taxing investment income

WASHINGTON (BP) — A staff report issued by the House Ways and Means Committee and Joint Committee on Taxation suggests the imposition of a 5 percent excise tax on the investment income of tax-exempt organizations — including religious organizations — as a possible means of increasing revenue for the federal budget.

Such action, the report said, would generate more than \$15-billion over a three-year period.

Under current tax law, private foundations generally pay a 2 percent excise tax on their net investment income. Although originally imposed to help offset the cost of administering tax laws relating to ex-

empt organizations, the current tax now generates revenues exceeding the total Internal Revenue Service costs of administering the total exempt organization program.

The proposed 5 percent excise tax would be levied on the net investment income of all tax-exempt organizations, including religious, charitable, educational and scientific organizations, social welfare organizations, and labor unions and trade associations.

In arguing for the proposal, the staff report stated in times of large federal budget deficits all organizations that benefit from federal government expenditures should be called upon to contribute to reducing the deficits. The report specified the proposed excise tax would not apply to non-investment income, such as membership dues, charitable contributions, or related business income, and would be "sunsetting" so that it would not apply once the budget deficit was reduced to a specific level.

The report conceded imposition of such a tax, which would break tradition with past practice relating to exempt organizations, would reduce the funds available to and needed by those organizations and thus adversely affect those benefiting from the organizations' programs.

A panel of representatives from tax-exempt organizations testified during three days of House hearings on the 291-page staff report, which contains a wide range of possible options for increasing revenues.

Brian O'Connell, president of Independent Sector, told the joint congressional panel that non-profit organizations during the past six years have faced a major increase in service caseloads and expectations because of reductions in federal spending, a dramatic reduction in government financial support for their services, and a reduction in private contributions triggered by the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

Mexican Baptists in Texas table name change motion

HOUSTON (BP) — Messengers to the Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas tabled a controversial name change, re-elected a president, and underscored their commitment to missions during their annual meeting, June 29 through July 1 at First Baptist Church in Houston.

More than 2,000 persons, including about 900 messengers, met for the yearly gathering of Hispanic Southern Baptists in Texas.

David Dixon, pastor of Central Hispanic Baptist Church in Fort Worth, introduced a motion to change the convention's name to the "Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas," which he said he considered more inclusive. At the recommendation of the committee on constitutional revisions, the convention voted to table the issue for one year, allowing time for the matter to be

discussed and prayerfully considered by all cooperating churches.

The convention also re-elected Manuel Rodriguez, pastor of the Hispanic congregation of Harlandale Baptist Church of San Antonio, for a traditional second one-year term as president.

In his presidential address, Rodriguez challenged the Mexican Baptists to be united in their efforts to meet the spiritual needs of Hispanics in Texas. Noting that 300 Texas Baptist Hispanic churches and missions are without pastors and reminding convention-goers of the Mission Texas goal of starting 2,000 new congregations by 1990, Rodriguez offered an invitation to become Mission Texas workers. At least 26 pastors agreed to lead their churches to begin new work, and 36 laymen surrendered to full-time vocational Christian service.

Interpretations

The astounding Christ

By Herschel H. Hobbs

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:24).

The rich young ruler had chosen his wealth instead of Jesus (vv. 21-22). So Jesus noted how difficult it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God (v. 23). It is not impossible, but difficult.

The ancient Jews regarded wealth as a sign of God's favor. Then Jesus astounded the disciples with the words of verse 24. (Of interest is the fact that Matthew and Mark use the Greek word for a sewing needle. Luke, a physician, uses the one for a surgical needle.)

From earliest times, efforts have been made to tone it down. Some have suggested that Jesus referred to a small door in the Jaffa gate in Jerusalem called the "Needle Eye Gate." To enter, a camel

had to be stripped of its load and gear and then go through on its knees. But no evidence of such has been found in Jerusalem or in any other walled town in Palestine.

Others change the word for "camel" (kamelos) to kamilos, a rope or cable. But the latter word has not been found in any Greek writing. It was evidently invented to explain away Jesus' difficult statement.

The fact is that Jesus stated an impossibility. No man, rich or poor, can enter God's kingdom on the basis of his possessions or efforts. All must enter by the grace and power of God.

So astounded were the apostles that they asked, "Who then can be saved?" (v. 25). Jesus said, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (v. 26). Truly the ground is level at the foot of the cross.