

Baptist and Reflector

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Newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention

Vote fails by 15-15

CLC's Baker survives board's effort to fire

By W. Fletcher Allen

Larry Baker, executive director of the Christian Life Commission, survived an abortive effort to unseat him last week as the Southern Baptist Christian ethics agency met in Nashville.

The Tuesday afternoon vote of 15-15 enabled Baker to continue as agency head. He was elected in January by a slim 16-13 vote, and apparently benefitted from the action of several commissioners who switched their support to him.

After Baker gave his annual report to the commissioners in a packed Executive Committee Building conference room, James Woods, Georgia, successfully led a move to change the meeting's agenda.

The change allowed miscellaneous business, including the bid to unseat Baker. Joe Atchison, Arkansas, moved that the Christian Life Commission "dismiss Larry Baker immediately and that a new search committee be appointed by the new chairman, and an interim director be named."

That precipitated a discussion which dominated the meeting, delaying a 7 p.m. banquet, and culminated with the 15-15 vote at 8.

Chairman Lynn Clayton, Louisiana Baptist Message editor, ruled the motion

out of order, but after lengthy discussion, his ruling was overturned.

Atchison said his motion was made particularly on Baker's stance on abortion, women in ministry, and capital punishment. He and others were dissatisfied with Baker's January statements and said they could see no change in his personal convictions.

During the January meeting, Baker cited four cases where he believes abortion "may be allowed as an exception" — threat to the life of the mother, rape, incest, and "perhaps in the case where traumatic and severe deformity to the fetus is involved."

He also expressed his beliefs that "God calls women to serve Him in ministry as He calls men to serve Him in ministry" and "capital punishment runs counter to the Christian ethic and the Christian gospel."

Several commissioners affirmed Baker and the progress the commission has made under his leadership, but they said he should be terminated because of the views he expressed in January.

Baker is doing "meritorious work," but the effort is marred by the "inconsistency between his expressed beliefs and his action," said Rudolph Yakym, a

stockbroker from South Bend, Ind. "His (Baker's) stated positions are not what I would seek in a man ... to continue to lead us."

On the second day of the meeting, commissioners passed a statement that directed the ethics agency to take a hard line against abortion and ordination of women. "The answer to his longevity may depend on how he reacts to these new policies," commissioner Gary Crum, Virginia, said. "Can he disagree with them and still faithfully carry out the wishes of the board?"

Baker says that the CLC will fight the "moral evil" of abortion though he personally does not agree with everything in the strict anti-abortion statement.

The statement asks CLC staff members to produce new brochures that condemn euthanasia and infanticide and urges pro-life amendments that prohibit abortion except to prevent the death of the mother. Baker maintains such restrictive wording makes it difficult to persuade legislatures to pass anti-abortion laws.

Coy Privette, North Carolina, said he opposed the motion to unseat Baker "because it is unethical. No one was given prior notice. If we are to be leaders of the Christian Life Commission, we ought to

be above reproach."

Jerry Hopkins, Kentucky, who said he had voted against Baker in January, agreed that the effort was "not constructive, but a backward step. Because there may have been improper procedure in the past, we should not act the same way."

Hal Lane, South Carolina, reminded the group that "It was unfortunate the way he was called. I pled, I was turned down. I feel the Search Committee is responsible for this unfortunate situation." Some members felt the committee was not balanced with conservatives.

There were pro and con statements and pleas for the next four hours.

An attempt to discuss financial support for Baker if he were released was ruled out of order by Chairman Clayton as not being germane to the motion.

Answering a query by Curtis Caine, Mississippi, about his current convictions on the three main issues, Baker declined to respond, he said, "because I have spoken to commissions, to the public, the press, groups, at length, candidly, and honestly. The statement which we passed at the Consultation in St. Louis is my statement, joyfully and gladly."

Baker added: "What I have experienced on the part of some persons on this board is either inability or refusal to understand my word. What I've experienced on the part of some is an adversarial relationship which takes my words and uses them in a combative way ... to try and tack my hide to the wall. I would rather not have my words to you (Caine) used by people whose ears are unhearing (Continued on page 6)

San Antonio housing reservations due

NASHVILLE (BP) — People who plan to attend the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas, next summer must make their housing requests Oct. 1, announced Convention Manager Tim A. Hedquist.

The annual meeting will be held in San Antonio June 14-16. The SBC is holding 4,000 downtown hotel rooms for Southern Baptist messengers, said Hedquist, vice-president for business and finance of the SBC Executive Committee.

"If a person wants a chance for a room,

he or she must mail the housing request Oct. 1," he added. "It doesn't matter what time of day the request is mailed; all requests will be opened by the date of postmark."

Housing request forms — complete with instructions, room rates and a map of downtown San Antonio — are available from state Baptist convention executive directors, he said. A copy of the request form and all information is printed in the September issue of "The Baptist Program," a magazine published by the Executive Committee.

"The housing assignment process is conducted by the San Antonio Housing Bureau — people who are not Southern Baptist and who do not know who anyone (in the SBC) is," Hedquist noted.

Housing request forms postmarked prior to Oct. 1 will be processed by the housing bureau after those postmarked Oct. 1 or Oct. 2, he said. History indicates all hotels listed on the form will be filled by individuals who mail forms those two days. Hedquist warned Oct. 1 postmarks probably will exhaust all 4,000 rooms.

Individuals cannot reserve blocks of rooms through the housing bureau, he said. A person or group can send multiple forms in the same envelope, but when that envelope is opened, each form will be treated individually. Requests in the same envelope are not guaranteed to be in the same hotel or even to all be assigned to

rooms, he added. Duplicate forms will not be processed.

Once the housing bureau's rooms are assigned, the unassigned requests will be returned to the Executive Committee, he said. Executive Committee staff members will send the requestors information about other San Antonio hotels and travel agents who can help the people reserve rooms in the city.

Individuals who do not want to be processed through the housing bureau may write the Executive Committee and receive the names and telephone numbers of hotels not included in the housing bureau block. The Executive Committee address is 901 Commerce St., Nashville.

Also, mobile handicapped people who have written verification of their handicap may contact the Executive Committee before Oct. 1 to get housing reservations immediately adjacent to the convention center, he said. Individuals with special medical needs also may contact the Executive Committee for pertinent information.

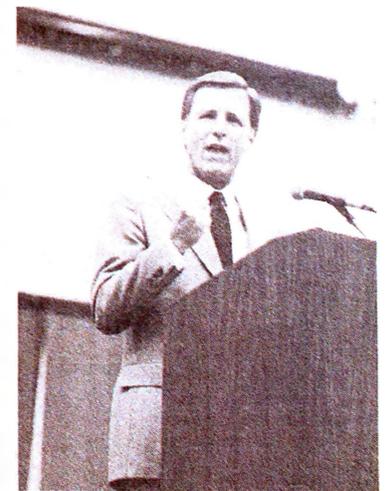
San Antonio has about 13,000 hotel rooms and one of the highest concentrations of rooms near the convention center of any city where the SBC annual meeting convenes, Hedquist said. Because of that high concentration of nearby rooms and local ground transportation, a special shuttle for SBC messengers will not be offered during the annual meeting next summer.

Contact TBC officials for reservation forms

Messengers from Tennessee churches should contact the office of Tom Madden, Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood 37024, for an official form.

Hotel/motel choices may be selected from the form, which also shows rates and locations.

The Hyatt Regency San Antonio will serve as the headquarters hotel. The Pastors' Conference, WMU, and Convention sessions will be held at the San Antonio Convention Center. The WMU will be headquartered at the Hilton Palacio del Rio Hotel.



TEACHING — Charles Page, pastor of First Baptist Church in Nashville, teaches the senior adults during a Bible study session. (See story on page 7.)

Elder urges BSSB employees to seek role as peacemakers

NASHVILLE (BP) — Employees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board were urged to be peacekeepers and peacemakers by President Lloyd Eder during a recent chapel service.

In his address, Elder explored the role of Southern Baptist Convention agencies in implementing and observing the Peace Committee Report alongside the Baptist Faith and Message statement.

"We are charged with the same peace-keeping and peace-seeking effort as was our Savior," Elder said. "Regardless of what we do as part of a strategy of peacemakers, if we lose sight of the peace we have in Jesus Christ our Lord, all else becomes shallow and our efforts are not productive. Peace given by Christ is not simply the absence of war or conflict in this world, but an abiding inner right relationship with God, self, and others. The world can neither give nor take away such peace (John 14:27)."

"The eternal peace of Jesus Christ must be the central factor for Southern Baptists as they interpret the role and responsibility of agencies and others in implementing the Peace Committee Report and following the guidelines of the Baptist Faith and Message," he continued.

Elder read the motion passed by board trustees in their August meeting which assures the Southern Baptist Convention that "we will operate the Baptist Sunday School Board in compliance with the spirit and the letter of the Peace Committee Report."

In an affirmation of the work of the Peace Committee, Elder said copies of their report would be distributed to all employees in Baptist-required positions at the board.

He urged employees "to study carefully with your head and your heart the full Peace Committee Report ... to seek to understand it ... and to give your fullest support to it."

"As we have been doing, we must continue to show good faith to our trustees in following their guidance and pursuing peace with all our hearts," he said.

Elder said the Baptist Faith and Message statement, which has been signed since 1969 by board employees in Baptist-required positions "is an outstanding confession of faith but a sorry creed."

"It has not been nor is it now intended to be a creed. It is a guideline of the expectations of our convention upon us and we will treat it carefully and faithfully," he said.

At the same time, Elder added, "Holy Scripture itself is the authority for our work at the Baptist Sunday School Board. The authority is not a man-made document but it is a revelation of God in Jesus Christ come down to us in Holy Writ and given to us in a trustworthy and dependable fashion over which we do not have judgment but which has judgment over us."

"This does not diminish the Baptist Faith and Message, but clarifies what it is intended to be," he said.

"We will continue to pursue our programs assigned to us by the Southern Baptist Convention by the Baptist Faith and Message," he explained. "We will publish our products and render our services gladly measured by the confession of faith of our people called Southern Baptists."

"The end result I could hope is spiritual results in local churches," Elder said. "We must urgently pursue peace to see churches grow in a likeness of Jesus Christ in the peace that only He can give."

"Let it be said of us that we have sought peace and continue to seek peace to make these the best days of service at the Sunday School Board," he concluded.

Lewis asks vice-presidents to delay retirement plans

ATLANTA (BP) — Two Southern Baptist Home Mission Board vice-presidents have been asked by HMB President Larry Lewis to delay their retirement plans.

Gerald Palmer, missions vice-president, and Leonard Irwin, planning vice-president, were to retire at the end of 1987. At Lewis' request they both plan to continue until the end of 1988.

"With their almost 70 years of experience, they are valuable to the board, especially during this transition when we are seriously considering reorganization," Lewis said.

Both Palmer and Irwin will be part of the Home Mission Board task force, scheduled to begin working in October. Planning future mission strategy and reorganization of the Atlanta Home Mission Board offices will be part of their work.

Palmer, with 41 years of missions experience, has been vice-president since 1974. "I didn't feel a need to stay for my

RTVC sets '87-88 budget, names four vice-presidents

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Trustees of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission approved an \$8.78-million operating budget for 1987-88, named four vice-presidents, and heard reports of ACTS network growth during their fall meeting Sept. 14-15.

The new budget is based on "experience rather than aspiration," officials said.

Jimmy R. Allen, commission president, said, "With the adoption of this budget, we can say to Southern Baptists that the ACTS network is stabilized financially."

The four new vice-presidents are present commission employees. Bob Thornton was named vice-president for production and programming; Ed Malone, for radio, a new title; Michael Wright, affiliate relations; and Larry Johnson, engineering and operations, also a new office.

They will join Controller Jerry Stamps; Charles Roden, vice-president of support services; and Richard McCartney, executive vice-president, to form the executive management group for the RTVC.

Wright replaces Bill Nichols, who resigned in July to become president of ACTSCOM, a subsidiary of Atkins Advertising of San Antonio. ACTSCOM will

represent the ACTS network in national advertising sales. Thornton takes the post vacated by Bob Taylor, who left the commission in August. Malone and Johnson, who previously were directors of radio production and engineering, respectively, fill new vice-presidential posts.

In adopting the budget, trustees also affirmed the administration in the use of contingency reserves "in sensitivity, commitment, and integrity." The action came after they were reminded reserves had been tapped periodically to bridge periods of low income. Administration officials said reserves were used rather than borrowing temporary operating funds, and reserves were restored as quickly as possible. The adopted budget includes \$50,000 to be added to reserves during the year, to bring total reserves to \$350,000 by October 1988.

Michael Hamlet of Spartanburg, S.C., chairman of the commission's affiliate relations committee, reported 500,000 on-line subscribers had been added to the network since the April trustee meeting. He called it "nothing short of miraculous," and reported that more than 6.9-million households now are able to receive ACTS programming.

Production and Programming Vice-president Thornton reported that only about 10 percent of programming in the fall ACTS schedule would be reruns. Among new programs being produced, he said, are new "Invitations to Life" episodes, six college football games, new "Profiles" programs, and a new southern gospel music series to begin in January.

Development staff members reported more than \$869,000 in cash and pledges had been received in a capital fund drive in the Atlanta area. Included was a \$200,000 grant from an Atlanta-based foundation to be used to fund a central distribution system for ACTS. In addition, the staff reported, a \$350,000 deferred gift was received which was not included in the reported total. A goal of \$1.2-million was announced for the campaign.

The recent Southern Baptist Convention controversy surfaced briefly during trustee discussions. John Peper of Maryland took note of the conservative swing in SBC resolutions and said, "My prayer is that our commission is going in that direction."

In response, Allen said he had resisted any tendency to "politicize" commission programming. He said, "We try to address our various publics with people who are preaching the gospel." Allen added he is trying to be certain that a broad range of viewpoints is represented on the network, but the emphasis is on preaching the gospel.

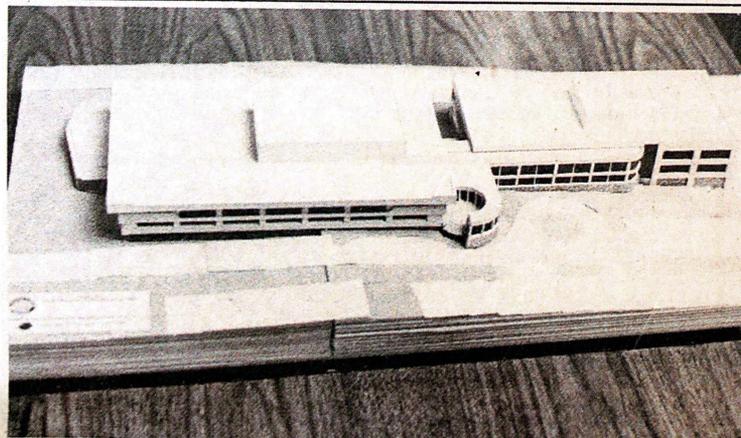
TBC announces volunteer needs

Volunteers are needed for a construction team needing two to four more team members and a team of two to three persons to lead music workshops, as a part of the Tennessee/Venezuela partnership.

The music team is needed Oct. 27 to Nov. 3 or Nov. 3 to Nov. 10 to lead the music workshops in four different regions of Venezuela.

The construction workers are needed to work at the Baptist camp, Campo de Carabobo, in Valencia from Nov. 2-13.

Persons interested should immediately contact Clarence Stewart, TBC foreign mission ministries, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024.



NEW LOOK FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD BUILDING — A model of planned new construction and renovation of the Baptist Building was displayed for the first time Sept. 11 during the Executive Board meeting. A new front entrance (center foreground) leads into renovated existing building. New building is at right, with conference center in middle portion.

personal fulfillment, but my concern is for the good of the board. If my being here helps, then I'm glad to stay," he said.

Palmer will work on the task force to further develop the board's strategy of missions. By staying an extra year, he hopes to "help shape the new-work emphasis and to help make an orderly transition to any organizational changes."

Irwin, who has been at the HMB 27 years, has been vice-president of planning since 1971. "Larry Lewis is a man with vision and commitment who can lead the HMB toward accomplishing Bold Mission Thrust. It would be rewarding to make my last 27 years more effective by staying one more year," Irwin said. "It's good to know you're in a place where you're wanted and where you can make a contribution to the kingdom's work."

Hatley retires

James W. Hatley announced his retirement from Second Baptist Church in Memphis, on Aug. 30. His retirement is effective Sept. 30.

A native of McHenry, Ky., Hatley was graduated from Georgetown (Ky.) College; the University of California in Los Angeles; Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas; and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Before coming to Tennessee, he served as pastor of churches in Kentucky, Texas, and Colombia, South America.

Hatley also worked as supervisor of the adult section in the church training division of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

He has also served as a BSSB trustee, on the Executive Board and administrative committee for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and as chairman of the Christian literature and translation group for the Baptist World Alliance.



Hatley

Conservatives sweep CLC officer election

NASHVILLE (BP)— Conservatives swept the election of the new officers of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, turning down nominations of three persons who supported CLC Executive Director N. Larry Baker.

Elected were Fred Lackey, pastor of First Baptist Church, Athens, Ala., chairman; Joe Atchison, director of missions in Rogers, Ark., vice-chairman, and Rudolph Yakym Jr., a stockbroker from South Bend, Ind., secretary.

All three of those elected were supporters of an attempt to dismiss Baker, who had been hired in January 1987, on a 16-13 vote. All three were nominated from the floor, also by persons who had supported the firing attempt.

The nominating committee of Don Blanton, an engineer from Bel Air, Md., Larrey Noia, a minister of music and school administrator from Fountain Valley, Calif., and Jerry Berl Hopkins, pastor of Reidland Baptist Church,

Paducah, Ky., nominated three persons who opposed the effort to fire Baker. The members of the nominating committee also were on record supporting Baker.

Nominated, but not elected, were Coy Privette, director of the Christian Action League of North Carolina, Raleigh, for chairman; Carl Garrett, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Overland Park, Kan., vice-chairman; and Virginia Hendricks, a homemaker from Glorieta, N.M., secretary.

Privette, who had been vice-chairman who by tradition moves up to the chairmanship, had told the commissioners he voted against Baker in January, but had made a mistake. He said he was supporting Baker against the ouster attempt. Garrett also was opposed to the dismissal effort, saying it was "not Baptist."

While Hendricks did not speak during the debate over Baker's firing, she had been a member of the search committee which selected Baker for presentation in January.

While no mention was made of the positions commissioners had taken in reference to the effort to oust Baker by the nominators, one commissioner — Charles Wade, pastor of First Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas, and chairman of the search committee which presented Baker — did plea that the officers represent "the balance of the board" and urged the election of Garrett as vice-chairman to "give him at least one (person) who had in-

dedicated support of him."

The commission, however, elected as officers three persons who vocally had supported the dismissal move.

Lackey had praised Baker, but noted he did not support the executive on abortion, capital punishment, and women in the pastorate. Atchison had made the motion to dismiss Baker, and Yakym said Baker's "stated positions are not what I would seek in a man . . . to continue to lead us."

'B&R' board of directors approve research plan

The Baptist and Reflector's board of directors at its Sept. 10 meeting approved a research plan to determine how Baptist state papers, specifically this paper, can increase reader subscriptions.

A subcommittee of the board, headed by Dennis Pulley, studied and reviewed the

plan over a period of months, and recommended it. The research will be done by a Nashville firm.

The study likely will be done in conjunction with at least four other Southern Baptist state convention papers. Pulley emphasized that Tennessee will go ahead with the study whether or not others join in.

According to the research firm, a single-state effort would require a month to complete, while a more inclusive five-state study could take as long as three months.

The board's action stipulates that the study should begin by or before Jan. 1. The main goal, Pulley said, is to increase the circulation of the Reflector. Many state papers are facing the same problems, he said, and could benefit in a joint effort.

Board members believe this kind of study will benefit the Reflector and lead to subscription gains.

The researchers will evaluate the paper from the users' view, reviewing and analyzing existing subscription data. A certain number of pastors, budget committee leaders, and other lay members will be interviewed during the study.

Pulley's subcommittee had conferred with former editor Al Shackelford and associate editor Charlie Warren, as well as new editor Fletcher Allen prior to making the report.

Personal Perspective

By Tom Madden
TBC Executive
Secretary-Treasurer



When I was beginning in the ministry Ed Hutchinson was my neighboring pastor. He was seasoned and experienced and shared with me helpful counsel, his library, and experiences. One experience he shared with me was when he was trying to determine God's will for his life. He made an appointment with George W. Truett. He traveled from Houston to Dallas to see him and shared with Truett his burden. Among other things, Truett said, "Anyone who sincerely and honestly seeks God's will can find it." He also said, "Ed, you are rich in friends."

A person may not be rich in many things, but if he is rich in friends, he is truly blessed. I have been thinking about friendship lately, and found myself turning to the beautiful example in God's word of David and Jonathan. "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (1 Samuel 18:1). What a marvelous friendship that must have been.

I have thought of the fickle friendship of Judas to Jesus and the disciples which he used to betray the Christ. Our Savior also desired friendship. That is one reason He would take Peter, James, and John with Him as He went into the Gethsemane experience.

The Bible says that Abraham was a friend of God. I have thought of some of the qualities of Abraham that identified him as a friend of God. He knew God personally. We can know people photographically through their pictures. We can know them by reading about their lives, but the best kind of knowledge is a personal, experiential knowledge.

Abraham loved God and responded to God's love and demonstrated this by doing God's will throughout his life. Abraham shared a common interest. The interest of God was the interest of Abraham. Whatever God asked him to do, Abraham was loyal in carrying out God's will.

Jesus becomes our Savior and friend and when we recognize our need for Him, trust Him, and obey Him, and fellowship with Him.

As I have been writing, I have kept repeating, "What a friend we have in Jesus."

TBCH continues plans for home despite Kingsport opposition

The Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc. is continuing plans to locate a home for boys in Kingsport despite action by the city's planning committee on Sept. 17 that denied rezoning on a proposed location for the home.

The city's planning commission also had recommended rezoning on the location, a nine-bedroom home on almost seven acres of land that included a swimming pool.

"I believe that most people who are afraid of us simply do not understand who we are," said Gerald Stow, executive director-treasurer of TBCH. "We do not

operate a detention facility for juvenile delinquents. We offer care for children who desperately need a helping hand.

"We are disheartened that our application was not approved, but we will continue to search for a home site in Kingsport," said Stow. "We were very well represented by supporters at the zoning meeting and we fought a good fight."

The TBCH board of trustees has voted unanimously to establish a home in Kingsport. The Kingsport Times-News, the city's major newspaper, has editorially endorsed the establishment of a children's home in the city.

The TBCH staff has met with the Kingsport mayor and vice-mayor, and the staff of the Kingsport planning commission. In addition, Stow has hosted a meeting of area pastors to explain the status of the proposed home.

Once established, the TBCH Kingsport campus will provide care for eight boys between the ages of 13 and 16. The program will help the boys meet academic, social, physical, and spiritual goals. A typical stay at the children's home is expected to be 15 months.

Once in operation, TBCH will spend about \$80,000 a year in caring for the children. In addition, three full-time and two part-time staff members will be hired.

"I honestly can't see anything but benefits from our taking the ministry to Kingsport," said Stow.

Shelby elects new leader

John B. McBride has been named director of missions for Shelby County Baptist Association.

McBride, a native of Jackson, Miss., and currently director of Cooperative Missions department, Mississippi Baptist Convention, will take the missions position on Nov. 1.

He was elected at an associational meeting Sept. 21.

McBride is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton; New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary; and McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago. He is married to the former Ora Lynn Luster and they have four children, all grown.

He served as pastor of churches in Mississippi and Louisiana from 1951-62, and as director of missions in three associations in his home state.

McBride was on the Home Mission Board staff from 1966-71. He served as director of Cooperative Ministry with 19 denominations in 13 Appalachian states from 1971-81, with the Commission on Religion in Appalachia.

The newly elected missions director is an active evangelist and frequently serves as interim pastor. He is a former chairman of Southern Baptist state missions directors and former president of the New Orleans seminary alumni of Mississippi. McBride will succeed Gordon Crocker.

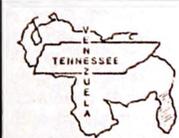


Ruth Trotter Boone dies on Sept. 3

Ruth Trotter Boone, widow of William Cooke Boone, died Sept. 3. She was 93 years old. Her late husband was pastor of First Baptist Church in Jackson from 1932-1940 and founded Woodland Baptist Church in Jackson in 1961. He died in 1970.

The funeral was Sept. 5 at First Baptist Church in Jackson with Warner Earle Fusselle, Boone's son-in-law of Jackson, officiating. She was buried in Forest Hill Cemetery in Memphis.

Memorials may be made at First Baptist Church in Jackson.



Tennessee/Venezuela prayer net partnership

—Missionary Hugh Redmon, who is on furlough in the U.S., has a birthday on Sept. 25, and Missionary Bill Goff, a seminary teacher in Los Teques, celebrates his on Sept. 26. Venezuelan home missionary Alcira Lion has a birthday on Sept. 23 and home missionary Helen Montoya celebrates hers on Sept. 28.

—Venezuelan Hector Navarro, director of the missions department at the National Baptist Convention of Venezuela, and his wife Judith, train and supervise mission volunteers who help churches teach, visit, disciple, and work with youth. The volunteers work a maximum of two years.

—Pray for missionary homemakers who are teaching their children in their homes as they try to maintain a routine and complete their many jobs.

—Visas for new missionaries have not been granted yet.

Editorials

Letting the past go

Last week's meeting of the Christian Life Commission in Nashville turned out to be more than an ordinary session.

The commissioners spent most of the Tuesday agenda maneuvering around the single decision of whether to fire Larry Baker, the executive director with a nine-month tenure.

Finally, at about 8 p.m. and after hours of intense discussion, Baker escaped immediate dismissal by a vote of 15-15. The tie vote came by virtue of Chairman Lynn Clayton's vote — which he had promised to use.

During the entire process, Mrs. Baker sat along with about 25 other interested persons in Room 350 of the Executive Building, SBC, listening and watching the events. One can but wonder about the agony she endured.

We say that Larry Baker escaped *immediate* firing, because in a statement the next day, a majority of the commissioners verified that he is still under the gun. If his performance is not consis-

tent with and expressive enough of the convictions of that majority, they may still oust him. Particularly in question are his personal views on abortion, capital punishment, and ordination of women, which were not acceptable to some commissioners in January.

Baker's performance the past few months was not enough for those who voted to fire him "immediately." While some said the Christian Life Commission's performance against abortion has improved substantially, they still questioned Baker's personal beliefs and some were still rankled by the close vote which elected him in January. It is time to put the past behind us.

So here we are. Southern Baptists have arrived at a point where reconciliation is practically impossible, where the end justifies the means. Molders of Peace Committee recommendations must be wringing their hands.

Persons at last week's meeting speculated about Baker's reasons for refusing to bow to

pressure, even at the threat of firing. We did not investigate whether this has happened before in such a short tenure, but we don't remember one.

Decent and determined as he is, Larry Baker has probably prayed through the matter. He went into the meeting knowing he could be fired. But evidently he has conviction that God can use him in his position for whatever time he has, to lead Southern Baptists as implacable foes against abortion and other evils.

The moral scene is one in which Southern Baptists have a poor track record. We have passed many ineffective resolutions, but have not acted very often as a convention. We have not cared enough to become seriously involved except on scattered issues.

We urge Tennessee Baptists to pray for the Christian Life Commission and its leader, and for the reconciliation that is necessary if we are to be leaders, or even sincere participants, in the moral struggles that face us. — WFA

Undertaking a reader study

Increased circulation is the subject of a news article elsewhere in the Baptist and Reflector.

Probably the one goal that all editors can agree on is that of sharing the news with more readers. In the world of secular journalism there is also the goal of selling more papers — and making a profit.

But for denominational papers, the primary reason for wanting more readers is to give news of what God's people are doing for Him in the local church, the association, the state convention, the Southern Baptist Convention. It is a worthy goal.

Therefore we seek constantly to improve the paper, to set higher standards, and to be the Baptist voice that is needed and wanted.

Furthermore, we believe Baptists of Tennessee have a right to demand a newsjournal that tells the news and speaks the truth in love. There is a catch, perhaps a flaw, somewhere between producing the paper and getting it to the people.

The old adage says even the horse that is led to water cannot be forced to drink.

The catch, the fly in the ointment, is that no matter how worthy the paper may be, no matter how good and inviting the appearance, the potential reader has first to pick it up and look at it. Reading comes next.

Sometimes we may prepare a paper for thousands of Baptists who never see it. Assessing the reasons for their not reading the paper is a challenge.

We hasten to say that this is true not only in Tennessee, it is true in almost all state conventions.

The research study that we are undertaking will help us determine and remedy the reasons. Putting themselves in the places of readers, the interviewers will search them out.

One reason stands out. There is every indication that fewer people today read anything. Many

do not read the daily paper, books, magazines, nor the Sunday School lessons. Many do not study the Bible. To expect them to subscribe to and to read the Baptist and Reflector is to expect us to do what monied publications cannot do.

Nonetheless, we will try. We will certainly try to produce the kind of paper that is readable and interesting, newsy and inspirational — and believable. The local church and pastor are the keys — they want most of all to read about Baptist life where they live.

We will try to reach out and touch those lives, and reflect to other Baptists around Tennessee the work of the local church, a proper place to start.

Meanwhile, even as the study is underway, current readers can share the Reflector with non-readers (we shudder to mention the word) and help them become subscribers. Pastors and church leaders can lead the way. Try it, you'll like it. — WFA

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Houston Baptists launch FMB campaign

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board officials will meet with Baptists in Houston, Texas, on Oct. 1 to launch a nurture campaign they hope will spread to every church in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Nurturing is similar to a gardener caring for plants — it takes place in a church when Christian role models help other Christians in their spiritual growth or guide them toward church work or mission work, said Joyce DeRidder, director of the board's nurture department.

If the conference is successful and the printed materials motivate people to move ahead with a nurture campaign, then the materials will be sent to every association in the Southern Baptist Convention, DeRidder said. The materials are

designed to be duplicated easily on copy machines so that associations can send copies to churches.

"Nurture is more than spiritual development, development of ministry skills or awareness of gifts," DeRidder said. "It's being willing to sit down with someone after their first missions trip, or after they had a really bad experience trying to help someone, and reflecting with them on what happened."

The result, DeRidder said, will be

that Christians will help each other "find God's direction for their lives. It may be to foreign missions, home missions; it may be to some church vocation or to some secular position."

FMB President R. Keith Parks will speak during a special session for some 400 Houston area pastors. Others invited are Woman's Missionary Union directors, Brotherhood directors, chairmen of deacons, and chairmen of missions committees.

Board elects Harrison as student director

Ircel C. Harrison Jr. was named director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Student Department at the Executive Board meeting Sept. 11.

He has been program associate in the department for three years.

Harrison was approved unanimously by the Executive Board, and took office Sept. 15. He succeeds Glenn Yarbrough who retired after serving as director since 1969.

The new director lives in Murfreesboro and is a native of Alabama.

He was a Baptist Student Union director at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, and director of campus ministries at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, previously.

Harrison and his wife Rita have three children.

He is a graduate of University of Southern Mississippi, Southwestern Seminary, and received the D. Min. degree from Southern Seminary in 1984.

Baptist and Reflector brings you the news first

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.

Applauds PAC

This is the first time I have written you. I am absolutely appalled at the people that are against the Public Affairs Committee's resolution supporting U.S. Supreme Court nominee, Robert H. Bork. I think the Public Affairs Committee deserves a standing ovation. It surprises me how the general public swallows the media's liberal bias and censorship, hook, line, and sinker.

There is no such thing as separation of church and state in the Constitution as stated. It says that Congress shall not establish any religion. This only means that they cannot set up a state church. Christians not being involved in government is what has let it get in such bad shape and be distorted beyond recognition.

Our Constitution holds the view that there are fixed, absolute principles, and meanings and it must be interpreted as such. The Constitutional interpretation debate is no mere academic or legal matter. Rather it is a major battle between two conflicting philosophies, two conflicting religions, and two conflicting world views.

Through an evolutionary interpretation the Supreme Court has been changing the original intent of the founding fathers, not by interpreting the law, but by making new laws. Judge Bork believes in a literal interpretation of the Constitution, not in rewriting. Judge Bork is uniquely qualified for this position. That used to be all that counted, but now they must believe a certain way also, the liberal way.

Thanks again, Public Affairs Committee for taking a stand for Christianity; for right instead of wrong, even when it's unpopular. God will surely reward you. I challenge other Christians to investigate for themselves, don't take the liberal media's word as fact. They weren't worried about a balanced Supreme Court when most on it were liberal.

Mike Davis
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Camden 38320

Questions PAC action

I have read with concern and alarm several stories about the action of the SBC Public Affairs Committee in your Sept. 2 issue. The story of main concern is the one where this committee, by a vote of 7 to 5, urged the confirmation of Robert H. Bork as a U.S. Supreme Court Justice.

Where were the other six members of this 18-person committee when the vote was taken? This means that just seven people have taken a historic and very dangerous position in presuming to speak for more than 14-million Southern Baptists.

The PAC also took this course in spite of serious questions about their authority and duties in the first place.

This is a matter of principle — it doesn't matter if the man's name is Bork, Snork, or John Doe. The PAC's action is a dangerous adventure into an area where

we have no business and one that imperils our mission as Baptists and Christians. There is a political process in which all people can and should participate — but not through our church organizations.

Our image as Southern Baptists is tarnished enough already by our own misguided machinations. The course urged by the PAC will result in our paying the price to the Congress, state and federal courts, the IRS, and the media.

Apparently the SBC Executive Committee has some authority in this matter. Let's pray that it will put its thumb on the PAC and keep it there and let the chairman "preside over his piece of paper." Who knows what mischief they will come up with if allowed the two other meetings they requested?

Alvin C. Blake
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Students should be active

It was with joy that I read and heard of the conciliatory mood of those attending the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis. At last I felt that there was indeed a chance for peace, renewal, and reconciliation, and indeed even the president of my chosen seminary, Dr. Roy L. Honeycutt, made published remarks advancing these ideas.

Therefore, you can imagine my chagrin and consternation at the reported statements offered by Dr. Honeycutt in the convocation speech to the students and faculty at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Instead of taking this opportunity to advance the cause of peace by offering previously agreed-to positions in the debate on biblical inerrancy as outlined by the Peace Committee Report, Dr. Honeycutt responded with an absurd analogy about whether pickles have souls and the need to teach the same if the majority of the people demanded it. This is another typical example of the liberal license for litigious, libertine, loose-thinking.

I am sorry Dr. Honeycutt has chosen this time to respond in this fashion, but by this letter it is my desire to express that not all students or faculty at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary kowtow to the craziness of those opposed to conservative theology. It is my hope that those conservative students at all seminaries would take an active part in advancing the healing process in our convention and not raise hilarious hypothetical hyperbole such as this.

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'Fundamental' is sound

I am increasingly disturbed by the loose, critical, and false use of the term, "fundamental" in news media today. The term is being broadly and nastily applied to many groups from the liberal biblical believers to the far-out extremists and false cult groups. Anyone with common sense knows there is more than a fine line of distinction between many of these beliefs. A look at the dictionary will confirm the error of such labeling. In no way is fundamental defined as being a dirty word. Instead, it is a sound, foundational, basic, and necessary word.

I am glad to be a fundamental Bible-believing Christian; one who believes that God was able to give us His Word as He meant it to be, and to preserve it down through the ages for our knowledge and practice to the end of time. It is an absurdity to think that the Bible will ever be

outdated. I understand that more and more archaeological discoveries are confirming literal biblical interpretation. No doubt, there will be many red faces among so-called Christians when we come to the end of the ages.

Some are saying that we should forget our differences on biblical interpretation and concentrate on following and serving Jesus. Are these persons talking about the Jesus Christ of the Bible, or another Jesus? If a person does not believe in the reliability of the one book from where comes our knowledge of Jesus Christ, then it stands to reason that another Jesus is being referred to.

It seems to me that a preacher or missionary who goes out to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ from a Bible that he does not have full confidence in will be trying to build on a sandy foundation (Matthew 7:26). Jesus said that such a building will not stand.

Norma Cox
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Church-head is Christ

Pope John Paul II's attempts to build bridges across differences to Jewish Orthodox, and Protestant leaders, in Columbia, S.C., while commendable, is an unconscious expression of the age old dream of the papacy from the very beginning to achieve its goal of one world with one religion, i.e., Roman Catholicism.

According to Lord Acton (1834-1902, John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, Oxford University English historian), a Roman Catholic, "Power corrupts (especially spiritual power), and too much power concentrated in one man, corrupts most assuredly."

God in His infinite wisdom has seen to it that this world has many religions with divisions in each religion as a challenge and a safeguard to us.

The triune God made Jesus Christ as head of His Church, and the Vicar of the Christ on earth, the Holy Spirit dwelling within us in our hearts if only we let Him, because only God is incorruptible. To insist and persist in trying to put a holy man, no matter what his title is, and no matter how well intentioned, as head of His church on earth, is antiChrist, because it goes against God's grain and man is corruptible.

God permits persons to pray for each other (Matthew 6:9) asking for intercession on our behalf to God, from a physical plane, but from a spiritual plane; God is a jealous God (Exodus 20:5). He does not believe in diluting His spiritual authority. Only Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5) has been mandated by God on a spiritual plane, as the only intercessor between God and man. Mary and the saints, are out of the intercession business, from a spiritual plane.

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Freedom to teach?

Lately I have heard talk of allowing the faculty of the various schools freedom to provide a quality education. I agree with this, but feel that there are certain perimeters that need to be set.

I find it ludicrous. I presume that academic freedom at our schools requires that we permit the faculty to teach the views of men who do not believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus (R. Bultman). Nor should we permit the faculties to hold up as orthodox the concept that there is little or nothing that we

can ever know about Jesus from the N. T. (Bultman, Tillich, among others).

All that I am asking, along with others, is that the teachers choose the works of scholars and others that hold to the very basics of the biblical account as being both trustworthy and true; rather than assuming that it is unreliable without the subjective reinterpretation of these so called scholars.

Surely there must be men of great learning and faith who accept and believe the Bible as being a true account of God's dealings with humanity. If they do not feel that there are any within the Baptist heritage (though there are many) then we should pray that God will raise up such men today.

And yes, I have attended and graduated from a SBC seminary.

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Challenge to give

Recently the Christian Life Commission sent to SBC pastors a brochure on World Hunger. Information in that brochure made me sad. The giving of SBC churches declined 23 percent from 1985 to 1986. It appears the decline will be greater again this year. Surely Southern Baptist people know we still have a world hunger crisis. Other information made me even sadder. Tennessee Baptists with a per capita gift of 21 cents for 1986, was next to last of all state conventions.

Twenty-one cents is a frightfully small yearly gift. What will it buy? One-third cup of coffee or Pepsi! One-fourth loaf of bread! A small hamburger patty! Three eggs! Nine pounds of corn! One pint of skim milk! One-fourth pound of potatoes!

How is that for a year's rations? Surely Tennessee Baptists don't mean to say to our hungry world, "Here are two dimes and one penny. Feed your hungry stomach or hungry child for the next 365 days with that." If just one-tenth of our members gave a dollar a week in 1987-88, we would give over \$5-million!

We must become better stewards of: The information we have on world hunger.

The channel to meet hunger needs through our mission boards.

The bountiful provision God has given us.

Do I hear a haunting voice saying to Tennessee Baptists, "I was hungered and you gave me no meat?"

Clay J. Frazier
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Believing is important

To believe or not to believe. The importance of believing is stressed throughout the Bible; too many places to mention here. Paul told the Philippian jailer to believe on the name of Jesus and be saved. John said, "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God."

To believe is not simply believing that Christ exists. The devils believe and tremble, but there's no indication that they will ever be saved.

The Bible errancy issue is quite simple to me. One cannot believe in Christ and not believe in His Word, all of it.

Some say that since the Bible was written by men, it is subject to errors but even man cannot make errors while following God's guidance and instructions. Errors come from our own misinterpretations, while relying on our own intellect, without God's guidance.

Baptists are being criticized for being reluctant to accept those who find errors in the Scriptures or to put it bluntly, those who do not believe God's word.

Ellis Howell
Silerton 38377

Improve relationships, Bennett exhorts pope

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP) — The cause of Christ would be improved if Roman Catholics would seek to understand Southern Baptist missionaries, a Southern Baptist leader told the pope Sept. 11.

Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee, and Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the convention's Woman's Missionary Union, were among 27 non-Catholic U.S. religious leaders who met with Pope John Paul II on the campus of the University of South Carolina.

Following the presentation of papers by the non-Catholics and the pope, Bennett was one of four Americans to address the pontiff.

"One of the pope's major points had to do with Christian unity," Bennett said. "I prefaced what I said by noting the Roman Catholic Church is promoting a program of outreach, and I paralleled that with a report on Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust — our effort to share the gospel with the whole world by the year 2000.

"I told him: Southern Baptists have mission work in 111 countries of the world. In some of these countries, there is a need for better relations between Roman Catholics and our own missionaries. I feel this would give a much more positive witness for Christ if relationships could be improved."

Both Bennett and Weatherford have been criticized by some Southern Baptists who have said they should not grant an audience with the Catholic leader. But both

said they had specific reasons for participating in the gathering.

"My invitation came with no mention of being Southern Baptist," said Weatherford. "It came to me as a leader of a women's missions organization. In fact, I was presented to the pope as executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, with no mention of the Southern Baptist connection. I went as a representative leader, not as a representative voice for Southern Baptists or WМУ members."

Only two of the 27 American leaders were women, Weatherford said, adding someone noted that fact to the pontiff. "He made that point during a discussion of the role of women in religious life today, and he emphasized the need for all religious groups to address that issue," she said.

Bennett told Baptist Press that five reasons compelled him to participate:

• "A Southern Baptist should be present for such a meeting and to talk about the state of Christian churches in the United States, since the Southern Baptist Convention is the largest non-Catholic denomination in America.

• "Article 14 of the Baptist Faith and Message is on cooperation between Christian denominations. I interpret the Baptist Faith and Message as having a friendly spirit toward other religious groups.

• "I believe it was important for the pope to be told that we have missionaries in 111 countries and that he be told about the need for improved relations between Roman Catholics and our missionaries.

• "Prior to the meeting, I talked with R. Keith Parks (president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board) and asked if my participation would hurt Southern Baptist foreign mission work. His response was that it would not. I also asked if my participation could be helpful to our mission efforts. He said that it

would — that it's always good to build relationships and that this could help our missionaries.

• "It is important for me to develop a better understanding of the Roman Catholic Church, which this meeting afforded."

One Word More

By W. Fletcher Allen

Will the real church stand up? Who and what is the real church? The real church must be something like the body of believers described by an anonymous writer in



Allen

"The Epistle to Diogenetus" written about the middle of the second century after Christ.

It is an unforgettable portrait of what he observed in the lives of the Christian community. "The Christians," he wrote, "are distinguished from others neither by country, nor language, nor the customs which they observe... they dwell simply as sojourners. As citizens they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners.

"They have a common table, but not a common bed. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, yet surpass the laws by their lives. They are poor, yet they make many rich; they are in lack of all things, yet they abound in all.

"They are reviled and bless, they are insulted and repay with honor; they do good, yet are punished as evil-doers. What the soul is in the body, that the Christians are in the world."

Who and what is the real church? It must be made up of people such as this, described by Anthony Campolo. "To be Christian is to be found in the way of Christ," he said. "One becomes loving, alive, by association with someone who has those qualities. If you want to be like him, remember that the resurrected Jesus confronts you and me in an unusual and mystical way — He is my neighbor."

Will the real church stand up? If the real church were to stand up, it would be filled with people like Aristides described in his defense of the Christian way as he wrote to the Roman emperor Antoninus Pius also in the second century.

"The Christians, O King, in that they go about and seek the truth, have found it. They know and trust God, the creator of heaven and earth. Wherefore they do not commit adultery or fornication, nor bear false witness, nor covet what is held in pledge, nor what is not theirs. Their oppressors they appease and make friends of them; they do good to their enemies. Verily this is a new people, and there is something divine in it."

The new people have received power from God. That made their lives different. Accurately described by the letter writers, Christians quickly found themselves in the forefront of every onslaught to kill thought and memory of Jesus Christ.

They were the victims of fierce atrocities. They suffered. But they endured. They did indeed stand up! And that is why both writers recognized them as the new people.

The same power that enfolded the Christians then is available today. You and I know it as believers everywhere know it. It has been said that the greatest curse given to a teacher is that a disciple would misinterpret his teachings. Christ suffered this indignity — because we have perverted His Way. We have made it the easy way.

There's an old story about a farmer who one morning decided to plow the south 40 acres. His tractor needed oil, so he started to the barn to get it. On the way he noticed that the pigs hadn't been fed — and so on and on until the end of the day — and he still hadn't plowed the field or oiled the tractor.

Christ says to us that the fields are so ripe for harvest that they appear to be white — but we have perverted His Way, and appoint committees to select and train workers to be harvesters.

Will the real church stand up?

Christian Life Commission's Baker survives . . .

(Continued from page 1)

and hearts are unresponsive."

Most who spoke in favor of the motion stressed they were not speaking against Baker personally, but against his personal views. Atchison said, "It is not personal, not political, not against Larry as a person. Our group met last night and, yes, we caucused. But let's debate the issues, not just talk about lack of love."

Larrey Noia, California, said he had voted against Baker in January, "but I judge people on performance. Nothing has come from the Christian Life Commission since January that I could not support. Why are we doing this?"

Tennessee's Ben Mitchell, pastor of Middle Valley Baptist Church, Hixson, said, "I'm a rookie. I have nothing against his person or character. He is truthful and

courageous. I'm not against the procedure (in selecting Baker), and I don't care about the secular press, but his views, as I have read them in LIGHT, would lead me to vote for the motion."

Time was extended several times, and a motion by Rudy Yakym, Indiana, to postpone the motion until 8:30 Tuesday was lost. A motion later by Cledith Campbell, West Virginia, also was defeated. It would have allowed Baker to stay at least until March 1988 when the commissioners could look at performance and conviction.

Don Blanton, Maryland/Delaware, reminded the group that "Baptists are hungry to hear a word of reconciliation from you. This is a good opportunity. Our attitudes and actions will affect profoundly our beloved convention."

Before the last two critical votes on the substitute and main motion, Chairman Clayton told the group he would be voting as allowed by Robert's Rules of Order. Only one commissioner was absent, Thomas Bolard of Georgia.

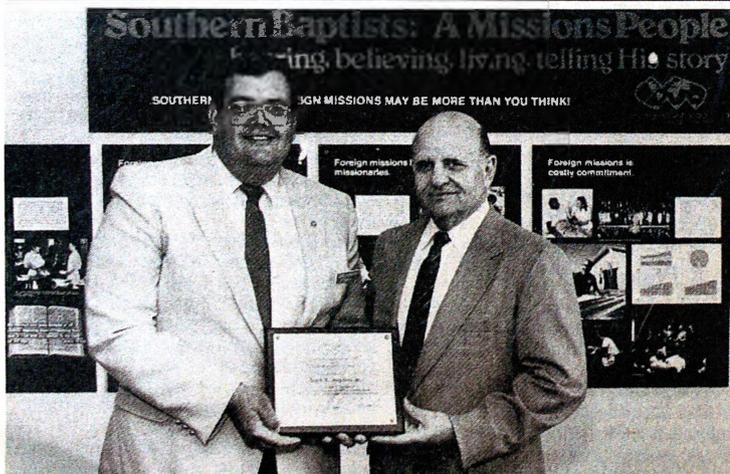
In his address Monday afternoon, Baker said he was proud of the first months of his tenure. "A commissioner told me recently that 'we have done more in six months than has been done in previous Southern Baptist history regarding abortion,'" he said.

He enumerated initiatives for the CLC in 1988: additional initiative against abortion, aggressive action on AIDS, increased attention to citizenship concerns, increased action on pornography, action on substance abuse, diversified program emphases, expand LIGHT publication, expand resources to more than publications, aggressive marketing of products, more attention to world hunger, emphasis on fighting gambling.

"We have remarkable opportunities ahead of us," he said. "We can have our finest year, helping people to change the world as never before."

Atchison, who had made the motion to dismiss Baker, later acknowledged he was disappointed with the outcome but said he would accept the vote and work with Baker: "I think there's a good spirit on our board, and we have been able to accomplish some things we had on our conservative agenda. . . . We did give the staff some guidelines they never had before and thus accomplished what we would have had with a man with those conservative concerns."

Asked if Baker's tenure would be challenged next year, Atchison, new CLC vice-chairman, said: "I have no idea; it's not in my mind at all. Probably that question will have to be answered in what we see this year. We've given him another year to give the leadership we feel Southern Baptists need in this place."



NEW FMB MEMBER — David Stephens (left), pastor of Zion Baptist Church, Powell, receives a certificate of recognition from R. Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board. Stephens was elected by the Southern Baptist Convention in June to serve a four-year term as one of the board's trustees.

Senior adults top attendance at meeting

By Connie Davis

The largest group to attend a single Tennessee Baptist Senior Adult Conference — about 850 persons — gathered Sept. 9-11 in Pigeon Forge. It is the biggest attendance since the Tennessee Baptist Convention church training department began holding one statewide conference.

Setting the tone for the conference, Johnnie Hall Jr., TBC church training director, began each session by recognizing the winners of a drawing based on numbers that appeared on each person's program. Hall also called to the front of the huge conference center those who were the oldest, who had the most grandchildren, who had been married the longest and the shortest lengths of time, and others.

Besides giving gifts that often bore the slogan, "Senior Adults Have More Fun," Hall bantered with them, asking them questions about their churches and their lives.

The participants were led in four Bible study sessions by Charles Page, pastor of First Baptist Church in Nashville, and in storytelling sessions by Robert Hastings, retired editor of the Illinois Baptist and an author.

Special music was presented by "Echoes of Praise," a men's quartet, and Tip Roberts, both from First Baptist Church in Pigeon Forge. Julian Suggs, TBC church music department director, led the gathering in choruses and hymns that often dated before many currently popular hymns were written. He was accompanied by Don Campbell, minister of music at Union Baptist Church in Knoxville.

Another special feature of the program was a dramatic "hillbilly" monologue by Paul Cates, retired assistant professor of education at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City.

Special seniors

Parker and Lucille Sandifer of White Oak Baptist Church in Chattanooga were recognized by Hall as the couple in attendance who had been married the longest — 62 years.

Currently the trip chairman of the "Live Long and Like it" (LLL) group of



STORYTELLER — While weaving his fictional and true stories based on his childhood during the depression, Robert Hastings, retired editor of the Illinois Baptist, holds the crowd's attention.

senior adults from White Oak Baptist Church, Parker Sandifer helped start the group about 12 years ago. He planned the trip to Pigeon Forge, and has coordinated a recent trip to Holland, Michigan, and Niagara Falls.

But Virginia Keenum, a member of their church, pointed out that the Sandifers are best known as "people who help others." Sandifer retired in 1970 from his work at a building materials company because he could no longer drive after dark. He has lost nearly all the sight in one eye, but is still able to drive. Lucille Sandifer also has very limited vision and suffered injuries in a car wreck last year.

The Sandifers visit the county nursing home about three times a month, taking bakery snacks to residents and workers as they visit with them. They also take cassette tapes to one resident and read to others.

"We don't enjoy seeing the people like that," said Lucille Sandifer, but their ministry is "really a blessing."

The couple, who never had any children, also regularly visits persons from church and other friends.

"We keep active all the time," said Sandifer. He is 83 and she is 82 years old.

"I'll tell you, the Lord's been good to us," said Sandifer.

William Branyan is minister to senior adults at Union Avenue Baptist Church in Memphis and manager of Union Avenue

Baptist Towers, a high-rise apartment building that provides government-subsidized housing for the elderly. Built in cooperation with the U.S. government Housing and Urban Development department, the towers is a non-profit corporation with a church-elected board of trustees.

Some of the senior adult ministries Branyan helps coordinate include outings such as the trip to the senior adult conference, to a cafeteria once a week, to a shopping area once a month, and to special events like to see the panda recently exhibited at the Memphis zoo. He also works with a theater to arrange for the senior adult group from the towers and the church to attend the dress rehearsals of shows free of charge.

The retired military chaplain who has served on the church's staff for the past 16 years, shared that he receives a lot from the people he tries to help. He cited his recent experience with Roxie Gaulding, a member of Union Avenue Baptist Church and a retired schoolteacher. Branyan took Gaulding, who is now in a wheelchair, to see the Ramses exhibit of Egyptian artifacts and learned from her knowledge of the exhibit.

Branyan also arranged for the church facilities to be used by the Metropolitan Interfaith Association of Memphis as a site for their subsidized lunch, which costs 75 cents.

Mavis Borthick of First Baptist Church in Springfield does a lot of things for other people, but said "running is for me."

She won a silver medal for placing second in the 1500 meter run at the first United States National Senior Olympics in St. Louis, Mo., this summer. Just last month she won gold medals in the 400 meter dash, 1500 meter run, and the 10 kilometer run at the Tennessee Senior Olympics in Cookeville.

Borthick, who runs about 21 miles a week, is 72 years old. She started competing in the senior olympics events six years ago, when it only offered walking events in the track and field competition. When running events were offered the next year, she was interested, especially since she had been disqualified in her walking event for allegedly running at one point in the race.

After 42 years as a public school counselor, Borthick said she only retired because of the mandatory retirement rules in effect at that time. Last year she worked with 30 elementary students as a counselor contracted by the school system.

She is a volunteer teacher of two Adult Basic Education classes sponsored by the public school system and she developed and leads the Senior Friends program. The program trains senior adults to spend time with elementary students during the school day and will involve about 10 senior adults this year, reported Borthick.

She also helped start the Robertson County Senior Citizens group, serves as its executive secretary, and is a member of the Robertson County foster care review board.

Conference highlights

Robert Hastings demonstrated storytelling by telling both true and fictional stories. Some took place in the imaginary setting of Tintytown, which, he said, was just south of Pretence, and was the only town with an unlisted zipcode.

During his teaching session, Hastings encouraged the participants to write down experiences, and give them to relatives and libraries. Sessions for senior adult workers and to inform participants about the Tennessee Baptist Foundation and the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc., were also offered.

Exhibits of Baptist Book Store materials, senior adult ministry resources, American Bible Society materials, and crafts made by participants were also a part of the conference.



HILLBILLY HUMOR — Paul Cates, retired assistant professor of education at Carson-Newman College, transformed himself into a hillbilly for a monologue at the conference.



OLDEST SENIORS — The oldest participants (from left), Ezra Searcy of First Baptist Church in White House who is 92 years old, and Ben Felts of First Baptist Church in Murfreesboro who is 94 years old, were recognized by Don Mauldin of the TBC church training department.



MOST YEARS OF MARRIAGE — Parker and Lucille Sandifer of White Oak Baptist Church in Chattanooga were recognized for their 62 years of marriage.

Labor Day weekend effort helps Saragosa rebuild

SARAGOSA, Texas (BP) — The Labor Day weekend became a weekend labor of love for more than 700 volunteers who helped the tornado-ravaged western Texas town of Saragosa experience physical and spiritual rebirth.

In an around-the-clock effort Sept. 5-7, the volunteers — mostly Southern Baptists from Texas and surrounding states — joined in a "Labor Day Workathon" to

rebuild the Hispanic Catholic community of 350 people that was leveled by a tornado May 22.

By sundown Sept. 7, Baptists, Menonites and other volunteers had repaired 30 homes, built two new houses and brought 19 other new homes to within 80 percent of completion.

A group of retiree builders and several other individual volunteers continued

working in Saragosa through Sept. 11.

As a result of personal visits and the impact made by volunteer builders, 29 people at Saragosa made professions of faith in Jesus Christ. Two people who joined in the building effort also made commitments to Christ.

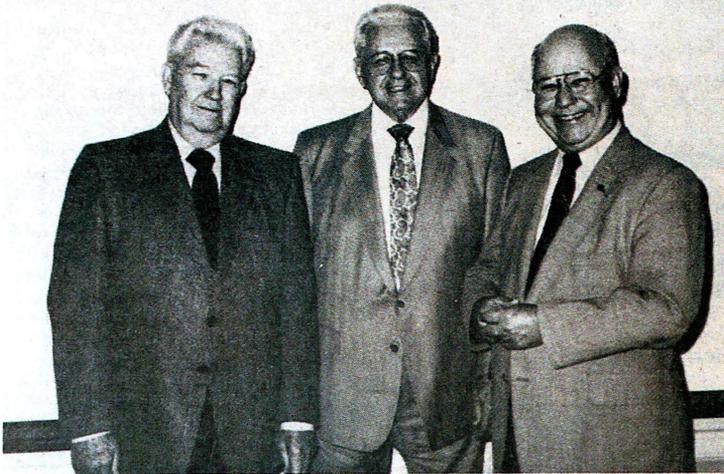
Two home Bible studies also were established in the town, which had no Baptist church prior to the tornado.

"Wisdom is seeing Saragosa as God sees it; understanding is responding to the needs here as God would," Bob Dixon, executive director of Texas Baptist Men, told the volunteers. "When Jesus walked the earth in His physical body, He went where people were hurting. As the body

of Christ today, we should be found around the world in places like this."

"When it is all over and the people of Saragosa think back on this weekend, my prayer is that they will remember a group of people who loved God and who showed His love to them," said William M. Pinson, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

In the near future, a community center is expected to be built in Saragosa using local labor under the supervision of the church building and support section of the Texas Baptist State Missions Commission, said D. L. Lowrie, commission director. Funds for the project will be provided by a grant from the Dallas-based Meadows Foundation.



140 YEARS OF SERVICE — These three men have given a total of 140 years of vocational service to Southern Baptist churches, boards, conventions, and various meetings. They participated in the recent Sunday School Leadership Conference in Memphis where 1,303 enrolled for the first of seven regional meetings providing leadership training. From left, Henry Love, executive director of the Baptist Medical/Dental Fellowship, Memphis; Elmer Bailey, Germantown Church, Memphis, a special consultant for churches; and Keener Pharr, Church Growth Priorities Inc., Jacksonville, Fla.

Interpretations

The agonizing Christ

By Herschel H. Hobbs

"My soul is exceeding sorrowful" (Matthew 26:38a).

Gethsemane is a synonym for extreme agony. There Jesus agonized in prayer as He faced the cross. He kneeled to pray (Luke 22:41). But so great was His agony that He then fell on His face (Matthew 26:39). His struggle was not with Satan who does not appear on the scene. Neither was it a struggle of His will against that of the Father. It was a struggle within His own will that it might be one with the Father's.

Three times He prayed that, if there were any other way to save man other than drinking from the cup, that it might pass from Him. But always He prayed for the Father's will, not His, to be done.

What was this cup? It was not death on the cross, for He was not afraid to die. It was not that the Father would raise Him after His death. He knew that would be done. It was what drinking the contents of the cup involved. It was that He was to be made sin on our behalf — not sinful, but sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). His sensitive, sinless soul drew back in horror at the idea of His being made sin. (The Greek

of 2 Corinthians 5:21 reads, "The one not having experiential knowledge with respect to sin, on our behalf sin He [God] made.") All the sin of the world was reduced to one bitter brew. And the Father handed the Son the "cup" to drink it.

When it was evident that there was no other way, Jesus accepted the cup. "O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, They will be done" (Matthew 26:42).

With this, Jesus' will became one with the Father's will. And the final march to the cross began.

C-N to hold events

Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, has planned two special days on successive Saturdays.

Parents of current students will be hosted on Sept. 26, as campus events include a reception, entertainment, a campus life forum, lunch, and the Carson-Newman vs. Elon football game.

On Oct. 3, RAs, GAs, and Acteens from East Tennessee churches will be honored on campus. They may attend the football game with Catawba at a group discount.

For information on both Saturdays, call (615) 475-9061.

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cordially invites all former members and friends to a reception honoring Rev. David A. Butler and his family, Sept. 27 — from 3-5 p.m.

Reverend Butler is starting a new ministry in Jefferson County, Kentucky. In the seven years of his ministry at Sevier Heights Baptist Church, he began an outreach bus ministry, a weekday ministry, a family life ministry, a mission ministry, "Upon This Rock" television and radio ministry, a deaf ministry, UT campus ministry, a tape ministry, and Starlite ministry.

Tennessee

LEADERSHIP . . .

Nolan Barham has resigned as minister of music and education at East Commerce Baptist Church. James Hickey is pastor of the Lewisburg church.

Sanders Whaley resigned as pastor of Iopewell Baptist Church in Maryville. His resignation was effective at the end of August.

Central Baptist Church in Martin has called Ron Harper to serve as minister of music and youth. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark. Previously, he was youth minister at Calvary Baptist Church in Benton, Ark. Raymon Carneal is pastor of the Martin church.

Toone Baptist Church, Toone, has called Norman Culpepper to serve as interim pastor.

Mike Headrick recently joined the staff of Radnor Baptist Church, Nashville. He is working in the areas of youth and activities at the church where Paul Durham is pastor.

Richard Loveday resigned as pastor of Igeon Valley Baptist Church, Hartford, and accepted the pastorate of Blantyn Baptist Church near Hendersonville, N.C.

Roger Orman, minister of students at First Baptist Church of Longview, Texas, has accepted the call of Central Baptist Church of Bearden to serve in the same capacity. Larry Fields is pastor of the church in Knoxville. Orman is a native of West Point, Miss. He is a graduate of Mississippi State University in Mississippi State, Miss., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

First Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet, called

Paul Bunger as minister of education. Billie Friel is pastor. Bunger is a native of Clarksville, and comes from Little Rock, Ark., where he was principle of a school affiliated with First Baptist Church in that city.

Plez Richards, volunteer music director at Bloomingdale Baptist Church in Kingsport, for the past 27 years, has resigned. The church where Joe Byrd is pastor had a special day of recognition for Richards Aug. 30.

John Cox has resigned as minister of music and youth at First Baptist Church, Gatlinburg, to accept a position with Southside Baptist Church in Griffin, Ga. Marvin Cameron is pastor of the Gatlinburg church.

West Lonsdale Baptist Church, Knoxville, has called Steve Shepard as minister of music. Bruce Robinson is pastor.

PEOPLE . . .

Neely's Bend Baptist Church in Madison recently honored their pastor, William Q. Williamson, on his 25th anniversary with a reception.

In commemoration of his 97th birthday, W. E. Chadwich recently preached during morning services at First Baptist Church, Martin. He is a member of the church where Roger Oldham is pastor. Chadwich has served as pastor of churches in Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Missouri. Tennessee pastorates include Bethel Baptist Church, Greenfield; New Home Baptist Church, Martin; and Oakwood Baptist Church, Milan.

J. L. and Myra Brown, residents of Baptist Health Care Center in Lenoir City, recently celebrated their 78th wedding anniversary. The couple is the longest married known in the state.

CHURCHES . . .

Parkway Baptist Church of Knoxville has approved plans to build a \$650,000 educational building. Construction is scheduled to begin in Feb. of 1988 for the 16,000-square-foot project. Walter Davis is the pastor.

Prescott Memorial Baptist Church, Memphis, was presented the Good Neighbor Award by the National Conference of Christians and Jews at an awards breakfast Sept. 16. The church is the first in the city to receive such an award, which commends their community involvement. Nancy Hastings Sehested is pastor of the church.

Eastland Baptist Church, Nashville, had a music dedication service, coordinated by Rick Sims, minister of music, Sept. 20. As a special feature, Louise Martin, church organist, presented a recital commemorating her 10th anniversary at the church. J. Ralph McIntyre is interim pastor of the church.

Keith Springs Baptist Church in Belvidere, is completing a \$25,000 building project that was begun a year ago. Members of the 103-member church have done most of the labor on the building that includes a pastor's study, classrooms, and a new front entrance. Johnny Bradford is pastor of the church.

Chalk Level Baptist Church in Camden will have revival services Sept. 29 through Oct. 4. Evangelist for the week will be Gerald Hedges from Aberdeen, Miss. Jimmy Brown is the pastor.

REVIVAL PRAYER REQUESTS . . .

Revival services are set for Sept. 26-30 at Carr's Chapel Baptist Church in Speedwell. Ralph Duncan, pastor of Mt. View Baptist Church in Antioch, will lead the services. R. C. Tennyson is pastor of Carr's Chapel Baptist Church.



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BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for Sept. 27

The new Jerusalem

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

Basic Passage: Revelation 21:1 to 22:21
 Focal Passages: Revelation 21:1-5a, 21-22; 22:1-2; 10-12, 17

Though Revelation is a book of encouragement and hope, most of the book tells about the struggle of the faithful and the works of the devil and his forces.

We have seen awful pictures of terrible events. If someone were to translate those word pictures into visual images, much of this book would look like a horror story to rival anything created in Hollywood.



Nail

As we close this book study we come to the pictures which calm the soul. These closing words of the Bible call on us to focus our eyes, not on the gruesome things, but on the glory about to be revealed. Then we may say with the apostle that, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed to us" (Romans 8:18).

All things made new

For some reason, in all the talk about going to heaven, there is almost no mention of the fact that God is making a new heaven and a new earth! I would not begin to speculate why He is making a new earth if He has no purpose for it.

Notice that in this new earth there is no sea. The sea has for centuries been a symbol of evil and separation from God. There will no longer be anything to come between God and His people. There will be the kind of communion He had in mind which existed once before in Eden.

Notice also that the new Jerusalem will come down out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband. In the New Testament, and more especially in this book, the most often use of the term "bride" is in speaking of the purified church which Christ has redeemed. I think it is possible that this new Jerusalem is a term John is using to speak of the sanctified body of Christ.

The new Jerusalem

This new Jerusalem, which I will assume is the body of redeemed persons throughout history, is remarkable for the things which will not be a part of it.

First of all, there will be none of the signs of pain and suffering and anguish all of us have known during our journey on this planet. There will also be no temple in the holy city. There will no longer be any need for a place to represent the presence of God with His people because He will be with them.

The light of His countenance will provide all the light necessary. There will be no night there. There will be no absence of knowledge of God for we "will know even as we are known."

There will also be none of the taint of sin which has been so characteristic of life on this earth. Only those who have been washed clean in the blood of the Lamb will be allowed in that place.

John describes the city in incredibly beautiful terms. He uses all the words for beauty he can imagine. He is seeing a sight which words cannot adequately describe. Yet he is grouping together all the beautiful word pictures he can.

He seems to measure out the dimensions of a great city. And yet the building materials and the dimensions do not seem to be for an actual city at all. Perhaps he is giving us another clue that he using symbolic language.

He is describing something beautiful that is now absolutely complete. John had heard God say, "It is done." No more is needed to make the picture complete. All who wished to enter by faith have done so. The city is finished. The bride is adorned for her husband, the Christ.

Life in eternity

In the beginning of chapter 22 John describes his vision of life in eternity. Much of it is described in Genesis in conjunction with the Garden of Eden.

The river of life is pictured in at least two ways in the Old Testament. In the Psalms it is that source of life for the nearby trees in the first Psalm. In Ezekiel it had its source in the Temple of God and flowed out into the desert places.

In the New Testament, the water of life came only from Jesus Christ Who spoke to the Samaritan woman about it bringing an end to her greatest thirst.

Water is a precious necessity in that part of the world. It is fitting that it should be considered the source of life. It is also true that a tree of any kind is never found, except near a bountiful supply of water.

Life in eternity is living near the source of life itself. All that we need to flourish we have found in God through Jesus Christ.

Some closing words

In closing this mysterious and exciting book, John includes some final words from his angelic guide, the Lord Jesus and some words of his own.

The angel gave a word of encouragement by reminding John that it will all come to pass very soon. Jesus adds His own words of hope by saying that His coming will be very soon.

John says that many of us in trouble say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." May that be our prayer. May it also be a challenge to us to be about the Father's business because the time is indeed short.

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for Sept. 27

Quest for fame and power

By John N. Meadows, professor
 Union University, Jackson

Basic Passage: Genesis 11:1-9
 Focal Passage: Genesis 11:1-9

The tower of Babel was an expression of human pride. It is also a frightening commentary on an extreme course of action that is open to nations — revolt against God.

Disobedience
 (11:1-4)

Genesis 11 speaks of a time when that which united people was stronger than that which separated them, a time when the unity God intended in creation was again possible — possible until man once again proposed to be his own master. Helmut Thielicke wrote, "Whenever we cease to be men who serve, men who praise God in everything we do, the same thing always happens: we make gods of ourselves."



Meadows

Why were the city and tower built? The builders answer that it was to make a name for themselves and to stop migration over all the world (11:4).

What was it about the tower that forced the Lord's hand? First of all, the action was the reversal of God's intention for man, who had been made to reflect the glory of God in dominion over the earth (1:28). The tower-builders erected a monument that mirrored the glory of its builders! Secondly, the action was a defiance of God's explicit will for man after the flood: "fill the earth" (9:1). The monument makers decided to stay in one place.

Disruption (11:5-7)

"And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower." What satire — that "mighty" tower, reaching into the clouds like one of our modern skyscrapers, is depicted as being so tiny that the Lord had to come down a distance before He could evaluate it! Such is the Bible's way of decrediting the whole enterprise.

The Lord's remark that "nothing that they propose to do will be impossible for them" (11:6) is one of several biblical notes that speak of the freedom given to man. To some extent that divine assessment is a compliment to man. Where there is a will, man finds a way — unless the Lord stops him.

Why did the Lord disrupt the endeavor of the people of Shinar? The people were united, were they not? Could it be, as Derek Kidner concluded, that the Lord did not reckon unity to be an ultimate good if it came at the price of collective apostasy? The Lord halted the building of a monument erected by a mania for power and fame.

Dispersion (11:8-9)

God's plan was accomplished despite the builders attempt to circumvent it.

Those who willed to stay in one place and speak the same language found themselves "filling the earth" against their wills because they could no longer understand each other. To this day the name "Babel" is a reminder of that primeval judgment of God. It is ironic that a term meaning "gate to God" will always connote "confusion." Where there is sin there is confusion, and where there is confusion the potential for unity is destroyed.

What does this sacred record say to us? Among many things, it declares that God will accomplish his purpose and that He allows us the choice of joyful participation or costly revolt.

This story is also a rebuke of all human endeavor that relegates God to the periphery of life, no matter how civilized, humanitarian, artistic, or intellectual that work may be. Indeed, this story suggests that the very arrogance of a work can lead to its destruction.

There is also a warning in this passage about our vanity. The Chinese mystic, Watchman Nee, taught that works while spiritual in intention end up being self-edification in reality — and that we are usually unaware of it! The desire to be powerful and famous comes in disguise and knocks persistently at everyone's door.

Furthermore, we are told something about monuments, especially the ones we dedicate to God. Does the size of the monument glorify God or the monument builder? Has "the bigger, the better" mentality affected church architecture and evangelism? Is my church willing to be dispersed for the glory of God, or must we stay in one place because of the mortgage? Does the Lord want us to scatter and be a blessing, or do we build and risk Babel? Sometime an edifice complex wrecks outreach.

Finally, this record of revolt points to the need for The One to Whom the history beginning with Abraham points, the One Who made the one language of Pentecost possible, the One Who humbled Himself and was obedient even to death on the cross, the One Who came as a servant but was given the greatest of names — Lord.



SCHOLAR — Timothy W. Smith (left), a former member of Mt. Herman Baptist Church, Savannah, is congratulated by Vernon Davis, Midwestern seminary's academic dean, upon receipt of the Dunwoody Baptist Church Foundation Scholarship. Smith is now pastor of Union Baptist Church, Malta Bend, Mo.

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September 27, 1987

Faithful to the word

By John Lee Taylor, pastor
West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson

Basic Passage: 2 Timothy 3:1 to 4:22
Focal Passage: 2 Timothy 3:14 to 4:8

This lesson concludes the twofold study of ministry in this particular unit. Through these several weeks we have refreshed our spiritual awareness that all who are called to salvation are also called to minister through our Lord, Jesus Christ.



The passage is the farewell message of Paul to his young son in the ministry, Timothy. In this account, Paul reminds Timothy of the utmost value of the Scripture for his life, the character of God's Word, and Timothy's opportunity and obligation to preach and to teach it. Throughout the text, there is the obvious undertone of Paul's unqualified commitment to the Word of God.

Taylor

most value of the Scripture for his life, the character of God's Word, and Timothy's opportunity and obligation to preach and to teach it. Throughout the text, there is the obvious undertone of Paul's unqualified commitment to the Word of God.

The Scripture (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

Paul urges Timothy to continue in the things he has learned, believed, and practiced. In 2 Timothy 3:1-13, Paul reminds Timothy of how he has undergone great suffering as a result of his faithfulness to the truths of God. His example is a guide for Timothy to continue in his own faithfulness to God's revelation. The word continue means to remain or to abide. Its verb tense expresses a command and a sense of urging.

One commentator says that 2 Timothy 3:16 is one of the clearest statements in the Bible concerning the Bible. For Paul and Timothy, their Bible was the Old Testament and the New Testament. Paul's insight of the Scripture is as valid for us today as it was for Timothy then.

"Inspired of God" is from a Greek word that means "God-breathed." It is most in-

teresting to note that the word "all" is without the definite article. Hobbs says, "It means every single part of the whole. Thus it may read, 'Every single part of the whole Scripture is God-breathed.'" The Word of God profits us in the areas of doctrine, reproof, correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

The proclamation (2 Timothy 4:1-5)

Paul calls Timothy to a very solemn charge, and he calls God and Christ as the witnesses. His charge is to "preach the

word." The word "preach" is used to indicate one who is a herald or proclaimer. Preachers are proclaimers of His Word, but all believers are called to be proclaimers of His truth.

Timothy is to be "instant" which means he is to have a sense of urgency about his proclamation. The opportunity of proclaiming His truth should never be "out of season." Timothy should be alert and sensitive, always on duty for the Lord.

His proclamation is to have three elements about it: to reprove, to rebuke, and to exhort. All of these are to be carried out with longsuffering and doctrinal teaching.

Conclusion (2 Timothy 4:6-8)

As Paul writes his epitaph, he shares with Timothy the reason why he has made such a strong, insistent appeal. He knows that he is near the edge of death. He senses that his death is certain and imminent. The awesome burden of ministry

must now be borne by Timothy.

Lucien Coleman points out six word pictures in these verses:

- 1) A sacrifice: "I am already being poured out as a drink offering."
- 2) A ship: The Greek word for "departure" in "my departure has come" was used of a ship casting off its lines in preparation for sailing.
- 3) A boxing or wrestling match: I have fought "a good fight."
- 4) A race: "I have finished the course."
- 5) An athletic event: "I have kept the faith" means "I have kept the rules."
- 6) A victor's prize: "Crown of righteousness" refers to the laurel wreath awarded to a victor in athletic games.

Paul is to receive the crown from the Lord on the final judgment day, and Paul says that other crowns are waiting for all who "love His appearing." What a wonderful goal that calls us again and again to be "faithful to the Word!"

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The Home Mission Board thanks all Baptist churches in Tennessee, especially these who gave the highest per capita offerings in 1986:

China Grove Baptist Church, Kenton	\$28.41
Hickman Baptist Church, Hickman	24.26
Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet	15.25

Marshall Hill Baptist Church, Niota	13.97
Immanuel Baptist Church, Murfreesboro	13.18
Pilgrim Baptist Church, Maryville	12.68
Southside Baptist Church, Newport	12.64
Maxwell Baptist Church, Belvidere	12.33
Oak Grove Baptist Church, Mt. Carmel	12.21
Buffat Heights Baptist Church, Knoxville	12.14

The Home Mission Board also thanks these Baptist churches who gave the highest dollar amounts in the state in 1986:

Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville	\$30,308
Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis	30,000
Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville	24,919
First Baptist Church, Memphis	24,108
Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville	19,418
First Baptist Church, Knoxville	19,069
Ridgeway Baptist Church, Memphis	16,696
Brainerd Baptist Church, Chattanooga	15,728
First Baptist Church, Nashville	14,730
Central Fountain City Baptist, Knoxville	14,573

(Figures from state convention offices and from Uniform Church Letters.)

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Coads plant for harvest of churches in Mali

By Scott Collins

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — After a day of ministry in Mali, Africa, Norman Coad goes home and takes a shower. Besides removing the dirt of the famine-stricken land, the shower also washes out the pain and human suffering Coad has seen that day.

Coad's wife, Beverly, handles the pressure differently. "I just weep," she said.

More than half the Coads' 15-year career with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has been spent in countries suffering from drought — first in Burkina Faso and now in Mali.

The Coads spent the past year in Fort Worth, Texas, where he is working on a doctor of ministry degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. But even in the comfort of their Texas home, the Coads replayed vivid images of death in Africa.

"Every single day you are faced with death and hunger," she said.

"Every old man and old woman are your grandparents, every child is my child. You just can't live in that type of environment without doing something. I could not have stayed there if in some way I couldn't minister to human needs."

So rather than leave Africa, the Coads decided to do something.

Although assigned to Burkina Faso as music missionaries, the Coads didn't take long to realize music was not the country's major need. People were dying every day from starvation.

He began traveling to the bush around the capital city establishing water resource projects. Soon he was teaching the villagers to dig their own wells.

All this time, Mrs. Coad was teaching music to 75 students, mostly Muslims. Five students accepted Christ and now are church leaders.

When Southern Baptists began work in Mali, the Coads' pioneering spirit seemed perfect. Since their appointment, he had earned a degree in theology from Southwestern, which allowed them to become official church developers.

But again the Coads were overwhelmed with human needs in their new country.

He recalled the teaching of Cal Guy,

First, Nashville, sponsors seminar

NASHVILLE — Professional advice from seven experts in child behavior will be offered in a one-day seminar, "Parents: Shaping the Future," Sept. 27 at the Stouffers Hotel in downtown Nashville.

Sponsored by First Baptist Church of Nashville as part of a month-long "First Loves Nashville" campaign, the seminar will provide an opportunity for mothers and fathers to enrich their parenting skills and to gain a better understanding of their children.

The seminar fee of \$10 (\$15 for a couple) includes a program booklet, buffet supper, and the opportunity to participate in the general session and three selected conferences. The seminar begins with registration at 1:30 p.m., followed by sessions at 3, 4:15, and 7:30 p.m.

Keynote speaker is Ross Campbell, author of the widely acclaimed books, *How to Really Love Your Child* and *How to Really Love Your Teenager*. Campbell is director of the University of Tennessee's Division of Pediatric Training and Child Psychiatry.

For more information, contact First Baptist Church, Nashville.

distinguished professor of missions emeritus at Southwestern. "He said to find out what God is doing and where the Holy Spirit is moving and latch onto it," Coad said. "My job as a servant is to find what the Lord is doing and do it."

The Coads are perhaps best known in Mali for the responsibility they carried in distributing grain that fed 1.3-million people in 1984 and 1985. That grain distribution has given the Baptist mission a good image, Mrs. Coad said.

Mali citizens sometimes refer to the Baptist mission as "Makarikelaw," which means "the people who are so deeply moved by compassion when they see the suffering of others that they do all in their power to try to alleviate it."

The Coads see their work in church development and meeting human needs as the same. "We never separate the gospel from doing good works. Faith and

works — it's so natural," he said.

And that combination of faith and works really does work. In the area where he first began ministering in Burkina Faso, eight churches existed. Today there are more than 40 churches, and 1,000 new converts are baptized annually.

Now that the Coads have returned to Mali, they will begin another innovative ministry in connection with his doctoral project. They will live with Africans for three days a week. She will cook over three rocks. The couple will dress like the Mali people. And when the Muslims answer the 5 a.m. call to prayer, he plans to get a mat and pray to God.

Their goal is to establish house churches in the Africans' own surroundings. The use of house churches is a low-key approach to witnessing, said Betty Kay Abell, the Foreign Mission Board's associate area director for West Africa.

Witnessing through family courtyards and neighborhoods is likely to be more effective than through a church building because Islamic law prohibits members of that religion from attending services in a Christian church.

Although this method would appear to be effective, it is new in Mali and therefore has no record of failure or success, Abell said. So the results will be determined by prayer, Coad said: "Bless the missionaries' is not enough. We need spiritual warfare."

Before leaving Southwestern, the Coads enlisted 500 prayer warriors. "You don't know their names," Coad said. "They're just people who spend a lot of time at home and in church praying."

Those prayers remind the Coads "that we really are not in control. God is in control."

New course helps prepare counselors

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE (BP) — A sermon has ended, the invitation hymn begins, and people with varied types of special needs walk to the church altar in search of healing, help, and answers.

At the front of the church stands the pastor who spends a few seconds counseling each one. Due to the press of time, he directs those who have come to the altar to church members who fill out name-information cards and render a compassionate smile or pat on the back.

The next few minutes could mean spiritual life or death for those who have made religious decisions, said Leonard Sanderson, a Pineville, La., evangelist and author of a course to train church members to be spiritual counselors.

"Often people who come forward really don't know why except that they are hurting," said the author of "Decision-Time: Commitment Counseling," a 13-week Lay Institute for Equipping course prepared by the church training department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. "This is the reason we spend 13 weeks of study creating the best-trained counselors we have ever had in (Southern Baptist) history."

"Instead of spending two to three minutes with someone, a counselor can spend 20 to 30 minutes helping them understand their decision and then advising them to talk to the pastor."

Sanderson believes "that all of us need more help" learning counseling techniques. And taking this Lay Institute for Equipping course — to be offered to churches in October — provides church members with simple biblical strategy for immediate decision counseling, he said.

Sanderson said he fears one reason churches are losing 50 percent of their members — 30 percent, non-resident; 20 percent, inactive — is because many people do not understand the religious decisions they have made.

"It (loss of church members) says something is basically wrong with the whole decision-making experience," Sanderson said.

Churches could combat membership loss by training members to lead the person who has just walked down the aisle toward a better understanding of his or her commitment, he said. The result would be "growing, maturing Christians and more faithful church members."

The DecisionTime course does not stop at merely producing effective counselors, Sanderson said. It prepares witnesses for

all areas of the Christian life, including home and hospital visitation, camps, retreats, and revivals.

"Christians who have completed the course no longer need to fear biblical questions," he said. "DecisionTime will take the average person who doesn't feel he has the gift of gab and turn him into a Christian who is comfortable sitting down and talking with people about Christianity."

"A person who has biblical training has a freedom — he is not scared of questions or afraid he won't know what to do. Just think about what this will mean to Sunday School and church training when church members have confidence in counseling."

Professor challenges Baptists to unconditional commitment

Each Southern Baptist's personal commitment and responsibility to tell the world about Jesus must be so unconditional that the question of risk is never asked, according to a Southern Baptist seminary missions professor.

"It's time we ask questions such as, 'Will more people be won to the Lord because of this?'" said W. Bryant Hicks, the Theron Rankin Professor of Missions at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Speaking to Woman's Missionary Union leaders at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, Hicks told them, "If there are people in other countries who haven't heard the gospel, we are all responsible to go tell them."

If more Southern Baptists took seriously that responsibility, Hicks said, there would be no problem in reaching the world with the gospel.

"I think it is high time that we call ourselves back to the commitment that we don't ask, 'Is it safe?' but 'Is it what God wants?' The level of our commitment has become conditional," he said. "If we came to that kind of unconditional commitment, we wouldn't have a goal of 5,000 (foreign) missionaries by the year 2000, but 50,000. And, we wouldn't fall short of (mission) offering goals."

Hicks also urged the women to look beyond themselves and "lay the claim of missions" before their churches. He affirmed WMU as being the "conscience" of Southern Baptist churches.

"We must use every possible creative

Sanderson said making counselors out of church members could become a great relief to pastors: "The pastors have done a good job (of counseling), but it's impossible for one person to do it all. And this course fits so nicely into the emphasis on laity."

As an interim pastor, Roy Edgemon, director of the church training department, said many times he has needed the talents of trained counselors at the end of a service.

"This course will multiply a pastor's ministry manifold," Edgemon said.

"It will give him assurance in knowing those people are being dealt with by trained counselors."

way to get missions before the congregation — not just in December and March when we bring in a fireman to lay it on for 15 minutes and make announcements for 20 (minutes)," Hicks said.

Hicks cited the New Testament woman Priscilla as a model because she used opportunities in her home to host, welcome, encourage, and pray with persons who came her way — including the apostle Paul.

Hicks also asked women to consider Priscilla's willingness to risk life itself in spreading the gospel and to model her role of prayer supporter. "She risked her very neck for Paul. It wasn't just a matter of being willing to help out. She was willing to risk her very life," he said.

Hicks affirmed WMU's history of prayer support and encouraged members to set the current convention controversy in the context of prayer — calling them to "not blast but bless."

"When we disagree with people, we need to pray for ourselves first, that we will have a right attitude in the relationship. This eliminates room for unfair criticism and anger," said Hicks.

"I would encourage you to criticize all the leaders in our convention if you agree to give equal time in prayer (for them). I invite you to criticize if you agree to this."

During WMU week at Ridgecrest, 1,942 participants gave \$3,747 to the Cooperative Program. It was the largest offering taken during summer conferences at Ridgecrest. — BP