

Baptist and Reflector

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STATEWIDE EDITION

NEWSJOURNAL OF THE TENNESSEE BAPTIST CONVENTION

By Executive Committee officers

Shackleford, Martin told to resign at Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Al Shackleford and Dan Martin have been told to resign as director and news editor of Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The six officers of the SBC Executive Committee instructed Harold C. Bennett, president of the Executive Committee, to tell Shackleford and Martin to either resign or they would be "dealt with harshly." A statement issued by Executive Committee Chairman Sam Pace appears on this page.

On June 19, Bennett conveyed the message to Shackleford and Martin. They were told if they resigned quietly, they would be continued on the payroll through the end of the fiscal year, Sept. 30, but would neither attend nor report on the Sept. 17-19 meeting of the Executive Committee.

Ingraham appeals to SBC committee for two journalists

Frank C. Ingraham, Nashville attorney and former member of the SBC Executive Committee, has sent an open letter to Sam W. Pace, Executive Committee chairman; to the chairman of its Administrative and Convention Arrangements Subcommittee, and to others on the committee.

Al Shackleford and Dan Martin, both of Baptist Press, whom the Executive Committee's officers have asked to resign, sought Ingraham's counsel and advice.

Copies of the open letter were also sent to state paper editors and other interested and/or involved Southern Baptists.

In another development, a special meeting has been called by officers of

(See *Ingraham*, page 3)

Three events have occurred since this story broke June 26 — Executive Committee Chairman Sam Pace released a statement regarding the story; a called meeting of the Executive Committee has been set for July 17; and Nashville attorney Frank C. Ingraham has written an "open letter" to Pace and Charles L. Sullivan of the Executive Committee regarding the termination of Martin and Shackleford from their posts. All three events are reported in this issue.

Shackleford and Martin also were offered "up to six months" salary and benefits after September if they were unemployed, but only on the condition they kept silent and no state Baptist editor came to their defense.

By late June, neither Shackleford nor Martin had responded to the request.

The future of Baptist Press is unclear, since Shackleford and Martin are the only professional staff members producing the news service. The third member of the professional staff, Marv Knox, resigned June 1 to become editor of the Western Recorder, news-journal of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Shackleford told a reporter from The Tennessean, Nashville's morning newspaper, "If you desire control, you can't allow freedom.

"This is a violation of a treasured Baptist principle, and I believe Baptists have a right to know that these officers don't trust them with the discernment of truth and are seeking to deprive them of their access to a fair, objective, and balanced news service," he said.

Martin, in the same article, noted, "It's apparent the 'conservative' leadership wants its own minister of information.

"They've redefined the terms of objective reporting to mean telling the story their way, and anyone with another opinion is a troublemaker.

"It'll be a controlled press, and the average Baptist will be the loser, especially in a denomination that is democratic by its very nature," Martin continued.

The six officers gave Bennett the instructions during a special called meeting at 3 p.m., Wednesday, June 13, just prior to the annual organizational meeting of the Executive Committee, at 4 p.m. in the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Orleans, site of the 1990 annual meeting of the SBC.

During the organizational meeting, three of the officers were re-elected to second terms. They are Chairman Sam Pace, director of associational missions in Lawton, Okla.; Vice Chairman Paul Pressler, a state appeals court

judge from Houston; and Secretary Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Church in Mobile, Ala.

The other three officers are appointed to chair the three subcommittees of the Executive Committee by the elected officers. They are Charles Sullivan, pastor of First Church, Lenoir City, administrative and convention arrangements subcommittee; David Hankins, pastor of Trinity Church, Lake Charles, La., business and finance subcommittee; and William F. Harrell, pastor of Abilene Church, Martinez, Ga., program and budget subcommittee.

Under Executive Committee bylaws, the officers as a body have no stated authority to elect or dismiss staff members of the Executive Committee.

Baptist Press, which has received high marks from secular and

(See *Shackleford*, page 3)

On Baptist Press

Executive Committee chairman issues statement on actions

An attempt was made by the Baptist and Reflector to contact Charles Sullivan of Tennessee, but he was on vacation. The Oklahoma Baptist Messenger provided the following statement released by Executive Committee Chairman Sam Pace of Oklahoma.

"The three officers of the Executive Committee and the chairmen of the three subcommittees met with Harold Bennett on Wednesday, June 13, at 3 p.m. in an effort to avoid a very unpleasant confrontation in the plenary sessions scheduled to begin at 4 p.m.

"Reliable information indicated that the matter of Baptist Press and the two principle personalities employed there was to be brought to the floor of the meeting and that the services of Dan Martin and Al Shackleford were going to be requested to be terminated. The officers anticipating that such an action would pass by a strong majority felt that the situation and the denomination would be much better served by handling this quietly and graciously through the good offices and regular channels of the president of the Executive Committee. After prayerful and serious discussion, Bennett agreed to facilitate the suggestions of the officers in the most loving and considerate manner possible.

"In view of a prospective reorganization of the Executive Committee staff, it was deemed an appropriate time to make these major changes.

"The officers of the Executive Committee deeply regret the unfortunate, ill-timed and inaccurate

press release written and released by Al Shackleford and Dan Martin on their own behalf. They also regret the breakdown of confidentiality agreed upon with Bennett in the handling of the situation as well as the lack of objective, journalistic ethics demonstrated in the writing of the Baptist Press release of June 26 by the very men about whom it was being written.

"The fact is that Dan Martin specifically requested by telephone and in person that the chairman of the Executive Committee provide for him an honest appraisal of the opinion of Executive Committee members concerning his continued employment with them at this time. Martin did this two weeks prior to the convention and again during the New Orleans meeting.

"(In 1987) following the defeat of a motion to delay the matter of his employment by a 29-29 tie vote, Al Shackleford was approved by a narrow majority to be vice president of public relations of the Executive Committee of the SBC. He then requested that the Executive Committee give him a year to prove he would be fair, equitable, and balanced with Baptist Press.

"After more than three years, the ever increasing perception of the vast majority of Executive Committee members is that the very opposite has proved to be true.

"Knowing the strong sentiments of the majority of the Executive Committee members, the six officers sought a course of action that would better serve the cause of peace and fairness for the denomination, had that course of action been allowed to take its designed direction."



TENNESSEE TRUSTEES — Newly elected Sunday School Board trustees from Tennessee, Jerry Sutton, left, pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, and Robert Pitman, right, pastor of Kirby Woods Church, Cordova, met with BSSB President Lloyd Elder during two days of trustee orientation June 21-22 in Nashville.

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Editorials**Executive Committee to determine Baptist Press future**

Though the poet says otherwise, the darkness has not yet passed, the storm has not abated, and the fog has not passed us by. The night is long, yes, and the pain abides.

Many Tennessee Baptists know by now that Baptist Press, Southern Baptists' reliable and honest news reporting arm, is under attack and its leaders are going to be fired if they don't resign.

News media for several days have informed Tennessee Baptists (and people everywhere), that Al Shackleford and Dan Martin are being forced out of their jobs.

Baptist and Reflector readers are encouraged to read the news stories in this issue. The Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee has determined that Baptist Press leadership must change — and that means that Shackleford and Martin must go.

Shackleford, a Baptist state paper editor for twenty years prior to being named to his current post in 1987, is well known by Tennessee Baptists. He edited the *Baptist and Reflector* for ten years prior to being elected by the Executive Committee as vice president of public relations and director of Baptist Press.

Dan Martin joined Baptist Press as news editor in August 1980. Both men have distinguished careers in Baptist journalism. Both are extremely well qualified for their positions. Both have the ability to write and report Baptist news with competence and integrity.

The cause of this confrontation is philosophy of what a news agency should be.

Evidently, the officers of the Executive Committee believe a news agency should be more like a public relations office.

Shackleford and Martin know the difference between presenting a good image to the public and telling the truth about news events. Presenting a good image is acceptable, even desired — if it does not hide the truth.

We believe Baptists want to know the news — reported with honesty, clarity, and integrity. News cannot be twisted to suit the whims of any group or any leaders — news is news — just that.

Events happened quickly, beginning with Executive Committee President Harold Bennett's telling Shackleford and Martin — as instructed by the six officers of the Executive Committee — they should resign.

A statement was later issued by Executive Committee Chairman Sam Pace of Oklahoma, and it is carried in this issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*.

Two later developments affect the situation. The Executive Committee has been called into a July 17 special session in Nashville. Not only is this meeting two months in advance of the regularly scheduled September meeting — it will also cost about \$50,000.

Shackleford and Martin have asked for counsel and advice from Frank C. Ingraham, Nashville attorney and former member of the Executive Committee. They met with Ingraham who has sent an open letter to Chairman Pace and Charles W. Sullivan, pastor of First Church, Lenoir City, and chairman of the EC's Administrative and Convention Ar-

rangements Subcommittee; and to other EC officers, SBC attorney James Guenther, Bennett, and Baptist state editors.

The letter from Ingraham, on behalf of Shackleford and Martin, asks for "an honorable and fair format" for the special July 17 meeting. The letter also asks that the two journalists be given opportunity at the subcommittee and plenary sessions to answer charges of biased reporting.

The EC officers have complained about Baptist Press reporting which they perceive as favoring "moderates" in the Southern Baptist controversy. Reliable sources say Shackleford and Martin have never been given opportunity to sit down and discuss such charges with the Executive Committee.

Baptist state paper editors' organization, Southern Baptist Press Association, meets in Dallas July 6-7 to discuss the situation. Efforts can be made to bring together the two men and the Executive Committee. A determination must be made as to what direction state papers take if Baptist Press no longer functions as a free and open news reporting agency.

Much will depend on the wisdom, under God, of all concerned, and how important truth and integrity are. Baptist journalists, like most secular journalists, desire to report accurately, reliably, completely — with honor and integrity.

Prayer for us all is a vital necessity. We must be courageous enough to strive for God's complete will to be done, and for the day to yet be fair. — WFA

Supreme Court strikes down parental notification law

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Supreme Court has struck down a Minnesota law requiring minors to notify both parents before obtaining an abortion. But the court also said such laws are constitutional if they include a judicial bypass provision.

The high court split 5-4 on both parts of its June 25 decision in *Hodgson v. Minnesota*. Justice John Paul Stevens wrote for the majority — which also included Justices William J. Brennan Jr., Thurgood Marshall, Harry A. Blackmun and Sandra Day O'Connor — that held the Minnesota statute unconstitutional.

Requiring a pregnant minor to notify both parents is "not reasonably related to legitimate state interests," Stevens said.

Although part of the majority voting to strike down the abortion restriction, O'Connor joined the court's four other

members in upholding the two-parent notification requirement as long as the law gives minors the opportunity to ask a judge to waive that requirement.

O'Connor — along with Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and Justices Byron R. White, Antonin Scalia and Anthony M. Kennedy — held the addition of a judicial bypass option corrects any constitutional problems, contained within the two-parent notification requirement.

In an effort to show how divided the court is over abortion-related issues, Scalia outlined an analysis of the justices' opinions in the Minnesota case, as well as in a related Ohio case. He said those opinions show:

- One justice holds two-parent notification is unconstitutional without judicial bypass, but constitutional with bypass.

- Four justices hold two-parent notification is constitutional with or

without bypass.

- Four justices hold two-parent notification is unconstitutional with or without bypass, although they apply two different standards.

- Six justices hold one-parent notification with bypass is constitutional, although for two different sets of reasons.

Southeastern not on ATS probation

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — An accrediting agency has decided not to place Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary on probation, the school said. The news from the Association of Theological Schools came as a relief to the seminary at Wake Forest, N.C., which has been under fire from its two accrediting agencies for almost three years.

Southeastern still is waiting for a ruling from its other accrediting agency,

- Three justices hold one-parent notification with bypass is unconstitutional.

In the Ohio case — *Ohio v. Akron Center for Reproductive Health* — a six to three court upheld a state law that requires physicians to notify one of a minor's parents before performing an abortion on that minor.

the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, which issued an official warning to the seminary in December. That ruling could come this year.

Accreditation is, in effect, a seal of approval for a school. If a school loses it accreditation, its graduates could have trouble finding jobs or being admitted to graduate programs.

The Association of Theological Schools has been monitoring the seminary closely since October 1987.

575 professions recorded in New Orleans

ATLANTA (BP) — The total number of professions of faith in Christ recorded in Southern Baptists' door-to-door witnessing effort in New Orleans increased by 54 when all associations reported.

During the convention, 521 professions of faith were reported, but three associations had not turned in their results. The total reached 575 when all reports were made.

Volunteers recruited by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board worked with 113 Louisiana and Mississippi churches to canvas neighborhoods and share the Gospel on Saturday prior to

the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

The total compares with 471 decisions for salvation made during the one-day evangelism emphasis before the SBC annual meeting in Las Vegas last year. However, last year 9.9 percent of the 20,423 messengers participated in the door-to-door visitation, compared with 3.54 percent of the 38,416 messengers this year.

Similar witnessing efforts are being planned by the Home Mission Board prior to the SBC annual meeting in Atlanta next year and in Indianapolis in 1992.

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Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor
Lonnie Wilkey, Associate Editor
Connie Davis, Assistant Editor
Connie Umstead, News Assistant

Betty Williams, Bookkeeper
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Rita Gambill, Production Assistant
Susie Edwards, Church Pages

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Sets five goals

TBC abortion issue study committee holds first meeting

By Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor
The abortion issue study committee of the Tennessee Baptist Convention held an organizational meeting June 25 at the Baptist Center in Brentwood and established an objective statement and five goals.

Ten members of the 15-member committee were present. Howard Olive,

U.S. Supreme Court rejects 'right to die'

WASHINGTON (BP)— The Supreme Court has ruled the U.S. Constitution contains no absolute "right to die."

In a 5-4 decision, the high court held a state may require "clear and convincing evidence" of an incompetent person's wishes in deciding whether to discontinue nutrition and hydration of that person.

The court also held the Constitution's due process clause does not require a state to accept the "substituted judgment" of close family members in such decisions.

The decision blocked a request by the parents of Nancy Cruzan, a 32-year-old Missouri woman who has been in a "persistent vegetative state" since a 1983 automobile accident, that their daughter no longer be administered food and water artificially.

Writing for the court in Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Department of Health, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist said the question before the court was whether Cruzan has a constitutional right that would require a hospital to withdraw life-sustaining treatment from her.

Although the court assumes the Constitution would grant a competent person the right to refuse lifesaving hydration and nutrition, Rehnquist wrote, an incompetent person is unable to make an informed and voluntary choice about such treatment. That right of choice, he added, must be exercised by some sort of surrogate.

Ingraham appeals to SBC . . .

(Continued from page 1)
The Southern Baptist Press Association, the organization of Baptist state paper editors. The meeting is scheduled for July 6-7 in Dallas. On the agenda is the situation with Baptist Press, Shackleford, and Martin.

In his letter, Ingraham says, "The power of the Executive Committee in this matter is clear but the question of how it will exercise that power is the concern of all Baptists."

He asks for equal time to be granted the two journalists to answer any charges brought against them, and that the meetings will be open to the public.

"This hearing demands a public forum, including waiving the background rules in the subcommittee, in order that all may see and report fair, honorable, and exemplary dealing of the Executive Committee . . ." Ingraham wrote.

"We note that a special meeting has been set and specified time is allotted for each session. This call for a special meeting two weeks hence must reflect the officers' urgency to fully deal with these professional journalists," said Ingraham. "I am certain you have carefully considered the time and expense of the meeting. Is the urgency to

president of the TBC Executive Board, also attended as an ex-officio member.

Committee members were reminded of their assignment by Olive and D. L. Lowrie, TBC executive director. The committee, chaired by Anne Nolan of Signal Mountain, was named by Olive and TBC President Murray Mathis upon the recommendation of the TBC Executive Board at its meeting last December.

Both Lowrie and Olive emphasized the group was not formed to be a political action committee. "We do not see you as a mobilization group, but as an information channel," Lowrie said.

Olive agreed, noting the committee "is a study group." He added that the committee needs to find out what is being done, what can be done, and then report their findings to TBC churches.

Lowrie reminded the committee "we can't make anybody do anything," but "we can make recommendations" on how churches can respond to the abortion issue.

Gerald Stow, president of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, gave an overview of what is being done through the TBCH's ministries to unwed mothers in Greeneville, Franklin, and Memphis.

He also noted there are crisis pregnancy centers at First Church, Cookeville; Woodland Church, Jackson; Bellevue Church, Cordova; and Nolachucky Association, Morristown.

"We've tried to help churches establish crisis pregnancy centers," Stow said, noting the TBCH "is not structured to offer such services."

Stow, a member of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, also shared information about what is being done at the state level to combat the problem of teenage pregnancy.

He acknowledged the abortion issue is volatile and that people have differing views, but noted the "one thing we

limit the free flow of information between now and the scheduled Sept. 17 meeting, or what is the urgency?"

He noted that the stated purpose of the meeting "lacks specificity sufficient to allow responses unless the intent is to dismiss these journalists without cause."

He also asked for timely notification of the charges, opportunity to face those who made and attempt to maintain the charges, and equal time for each position to be presented. He noted that Martin and Shackleford are ordained ministers and have served long as Baptist journalists. "Certainly, they will be treated as graciously and lovingly in public as they were offered in private."

He said the Executive Committee "will set the example for other Baptist entities who may deal with their professional employees." Ingraham asked for answers to his questions and points,

At press time Monday the Baptist and Reflector learned that Ingraham received a fax reply from the office of Guenther and Jordan, attorneys for the Executive Committee, that Pace had asked them to prepare a recommended procedure for the July 17 meeting and assured Ingraham that the officers will respond to Ingraham's letter.

can all agree on" is positive steps must be taken to combat premarital sex which can lead not only to abortions, but other serious problems as well.

After some discussion, committee member Steve Martin suggested five goals for the committee to consider:

- Report on what is presently being done within and without the TBC including resources by the SBC, the state of Tennessee, and related para-church organizations;
- Assess Tennessee's legal/regulatory situation currently and anticipated changes;
- Identify available resources appropriate to increase awareness regarding the issue; i.e. books, tapes, videos, schools, conferences, seminars, etc.
- Determine what churches might do in response to the issue and as a means of prevention, advising churches of existing ministries, and identifying new ministries needed, both topically and geographically; and
- Develop a methodology for this

study that can be prosecuted by other state conventions.

Committee members approved the goals unanimously; then adopted the following objective statement presented by Ida Miller: "In an attempt to minister to the total person in a spirit of Christian love, the abortion issue study committee sets the following goals."

Nolan divided the committee in subcommittees by regions to meet and obtain information on what is being done in their area and to determine what needs to be done.

Subcommittee chairpersons are Linda George, west; Ida Miller, east; and David Smith, middle.

Committee members present were Nolan; Linda George, Union City; John Holland, Knoxville; Robert W. Leonard, Nashville; Steve Martin, Chattanooga; Ida Miller, Knoxville; Paul Moody, Erin; Bobbie Patray, Nashville; Frank Samuels, Memphis; and David Smith, Nashville.

The next meeting of the full committee will be scheduled at a later date.

Shackleford, Martin told to . . .

(Continued from page 1)
denominational journalists for its objectivity, balance, and fairness in the midst of the theological/political turmoil of the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination, has been under increasing fire from the new "conservative" majority.

The officers' instructions to Bennett came one day after "conservatives" won their 12th victory by electing Morris Chapman, pastor of First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, as president.

Baptist Press, which was founded in 1947 at the request of the editors of the state Baptist newspapers, has been housed at the Executive Committee since its inception in an effort to protect it from efforts to muzzle, silence, or control the news.

Currently, it carries more than 1200 news and feature stories about the events, personalities, agencies, and work of the SBC. It circulates daily to more than 400 outlets, including 38 state Baptist newspapers with a combined circulation of 1.8-million, as well as to all members of the Religion Newswriters Association, composed of religion specialists on newspapers, magazines and broadcast media.

Shackleford and Martin each has more than 30 years of journalism experience.

Shackleford, 58, was elected vice president of public relations and director of Baptist Press in February 1987

on a 32-26 vote.

Previously, he was editor of the Baptist and Reflector, newjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention; the Indiana Baptist, newjournal of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana; and on the staffs of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

Martin, 51, came to Baptist Press as news editor Aug. 1, 1980. Previously, he was on the staff of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the Texas convention.

On June 29, Baptist Press ran the statement issued by Pace (see page 1), but an additional paragraph was added. The paragraph read:

"Bennett stated that, in talking with Shackleford and Martin, he did not use the terms 'instructed' or 'instructions' in reviewing his conversation with the Executive Committee officers on June 13, 1990. In addition, he did not state that the staff members would be 'dealt with harshly' if they did not resign. He told them of the possible six months salary and benefit provision. Bennett also reports that the Executive Committee officers felt they should not penalize either Shackleford or Martin for what other people may say but they hoped the two would not precipitate a conflict."

This story was compiled from a Baptist Press article written by Dan Martin and Al Shackleford and other reports.

Tennessee Baptist Convention

June CP lower than last year

June showed a \$66,019.38 decrease in Cooperative Program gifts through Tennessee Baptist Convention churches.

The decline marked a sharp contrast to the healthy \$154,000 increase in May.

Total June CP gifts totalled \$2,031,472.64. Total CP budget gifts for the first eight months of the budget year amount to \$17,031,533.01,

which is an increase of \$626,501.83.

The 1990 budget is up by 3.82 percent over last year, but giving still falls 4.67 percent short of the budget goal.

The budget goal for the first eight months (November through June) is \$17,865,240. CP gifts thus far are under that mark by \$833,706.99, which makes for a continuing tight budget.

Our Readers Write

Thanksgiving

With hopes that all of us will share more often our appreciation to those who affect our lives positively, we want to publicly thank:

Our parents who raised and trained us in homes committed to Christ.

Our professors at Carson-Newman College who taught us how to question and search for answers within a Christian context.

The current administration, faculty, and trustees of Carson-Newman College who are ministering with integrity, patience, and love to the students.

The church staff and our fellow believers at First Church of Jefferson City who create a positive Christian environment where our family can worship, learn, and minister.

But most of all, our Lord who gives us the freedom to believe, worship, and minister according to the guidance given us by the Holy Spirit.

Greg and Diane Sharp
710 Cynthia Drive
Jefferson City 37760

BJC still at work

We are convinced that Southern Baptists as a whole believe profoundly in the separation of church and state and support vigorously the principled, non-partisan, focused work of the Baptist Joint Committee.

Baptists have never needed the BJC more. The Congress threatens both separation and free exercise with child-care legislation that would pump billions of dollars into church daycare programs. The Supreme Court has gutted the First Amendment in its *Oregon v. Smith* case by dismissing the free exercise of religion as a legal luxury.

The BJC's view of the proper role of religion in the public school was vindicated by the Supreme Court in an 8-1 decision June 4, 1990. The Equal Access legislation which we helped to draft, pass, and defend was held to be constitutional. Now it must be interpreted and implemented.

Southern Baptists have simply decided in six SBC votes and two dozen votes in various state conventions over the last

six years that they will fund the BJC in a different way. That fresh funding approach will be closer to the people, truer to our Baptist heritage, nearer to those who believe in church/state separation, and freer of secular party pressures.

Because of the encouragement and tangible support of hundreds in Tennessee we shall continue with you to defend freedom. The Baptist Joint Committee will be stronger and freer.

With the Lord's strength, and this support, the BJC's best days are ahead.

James M. Dunn
Baptist Joint Committee on
Public Affairs
200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Words questioned

Every year I become irked because of the adverse publicity the news media gives to the Southern Baptist Convention.

This year I was all set to write a letter to the editor of my local newspaper for the inappropriate descriptive words the reporter used in his articles to stir the emotions and create adverse opinions of the readers. The reporter used such words as battlefield, struggle, war, battle lines, grip, etc.

Then I received my June 20 edition of *Baptist and Reflector*. Here are words I saw: forces, tightened control, juggernaut (definition: an object that crushes everything in its path), dominance, slash, strenuously fought, and battle.

I put my letter in the waste basket. I figured I would be wasting my time as long as the editor of our own publication "shoots ourselves in the foot."

May we expect better next time so we will not lose the basis for a legitimate complaint against inflammatory reporting next year should it occur?

Jim Milford
4771 Sea Isle Rd.
Memphis 38117

Two challenges

Challenges come in different ways. I read in the *Southwestern News* the other day concerning Paul Powell, new Annuity Board president, concerning a teacher saying to him, "You will never make it." Thank God he has made it and is now in one of the most important positions in the Southern Baptist Convention.

I refer to the article because I had an experience that challenged me to continue my education, but it was different from what was said to Dr. Powell.

I became a Christian when I was almost 19. I had only finished the third grade. Through the influence of my pastor and a dear Christian lady I enrolled in Chilhowee Baptist Academy, starting in the sixth grade. I had a hard time trying to learn how to study. I went to one of my teachers, W. F. Hall, and told him I was having a hard time with English and was very discouraged. He said, "Son, you are going to make it." I thought to myself if he really thinks I can make it I will try harder. I thank God I had the privilege of graduating from Chilhowee Academy, Union University, and Southwestern Seminary. Challenges come in different ways.

I am in semi-retirement now but when I look back over my ministry . . . as a chaplain in World War II, then pastor of several churches including 20 years at Whitehaven Church, Memphis, those words often come back to me . . . "Son, you are going to make it."

Thank God for the challenge!

Lewis D. Ferrell
1422 Oakwood Drive
Memphis 38116

— Lewis Ferrell is pastor emeritus at Whitehaven Church, Memphis. — Editor

Single pastor

I am a single Baptist minister. For quite some time, I've been searching for pastoral opportunities. I know for a fact I've been turned down only because I am single.

I would like to pose two questions to pulpit committees who insist on not having single pastors:

(1) Where in the Bible does it say that a pastor has to be married?

(2) Should someone in my situation who is called by God to preach marry just so we can pastor a church; or should we wait on the Lord to send that special someone if He will at all?

All we ask is an opportunity to serve the Lord. Should we be so concerned about a criterion which is not addressed in God's Word?

J. Keith Taylor
742 Greenwich Drive
Maryville 37801

GUIDELINES: Opinions of Tennessee Baptists on religion-related subjects are welcomed. Letters should be brief and concise, no more than 250 words. Letters may be shortened and edited at discretion of the editor. Unsigned letters will not be read or used, but writer's name may be withheld for sufficient reason. There must be at least six weeks between publication of letters from the same writer. Letters must not make personal attacks on the character or integrity of anyone. Writers are encouraged to write in a positive, Christian manner. Short letters are preferred. Address and phone number must be included.

Different meetings?

I was taught as a child that you get out of an activity what you put into it. Obviously, you expected a "battle" in New Orleans. According to your editorial of June 20, that is exactly what you got out of the meeting. Let me say, that is not the way I perceived the convention. There was a greater unanimity in this meeting than in any of recent years.

On the other hand, I went to New Orleans expecting a "blessing." My wife and I went down to New Orleans two days early to participate in the mass witnessing project. We had the privilege of seeing 24 people saved at the inner-city Grace Church of New Orleans. Across the city, a total of 521 professions of faith were recorded. This news received a four-paragraph mention, hidden on the bottom of page four.

You get out of what you put into a meeting. The SBC was a "blessing" not a "battle!"

Mark S. Hearn
113 Smother Rd.
Seymour 37865

— The witnessing event, a paramount blessing of the New Orleans week, was on page one the previous issue. It was mentioned in several message responses. Nothing is hidden in the paper. — Editor

Used by others

The *Baptist and Reflector* comes to my mail box weekly, and is one of the first things I read. I am amazed as I look at the different articles in the editorial section to see that most of the squealing comes from those who represent the moderate to liberals in our convention, who are obviously a minority.

Obviously, they have not awakened themselves to the course our messengers have chosen for us. The average person sitting in the pew believes the Bible and personally I have not met a liberal church (SBC), just liberal-leaning

pastors. There is no takeover in our convention just a take back. I do not understand why one who calls them serves conservative theologically would allow themselves to be used by liberals.

Our churches do not want men like Randall Lolley, former president of Southeastern Seminary who prayed the opening prayer of dedication to the Schlitz Brewery in our leadership. Our average churches do not want anyone teaching in our schools who deny the Genesis account of Adam and Eve.

These are the ones the moderates are protecting and I ask myself why are people allowing themselves to be duped. As I see it Southern Baptists are just tired of this liberal garbage and those who are being used need to wake up.

Randall J. Runions, pastor
Mount Horeb Church
Route 2
Ethridge 38456

Way to vote

Recent comments from some of those who attended the recent Convention indicate the belief that "Southern Baptists" have done or elected such and such or so and so. I dispute this! A meeting of a small segment of Southern Baptists packed with bussed-in messengers declared their will, but I can't believe they spoke for the majority of us.

Perhaps it is time for newsletters covering issues and candidates for office to be sent to every known Southern Baptist Church, let those churches vote on these things, and the total vote be reported and binding on the Convention. Then it may truly be said that Southern Baptists did it. Then we can truly decide if we still belong in a Southern Baptist church or not.

Until this is done, I don't intend to let anyone who would insist we believe their truth or be denied opportunities to serve on convention committees or teach in our colleges or seminaries, drive me away simply because I still believe in our God-given privilege of interpreting the Scripture as He gives us the light to do so! Freedom in Christ — yes! Dictation by self-appointed unofficial popes — never!

Milton A. Anderson
8301 Hunterhill Drive
Knoxville 37923

Read my lips!

In the June 20 paper, it was reported that one of my favorite Baptist laymen had made a statement.

Jerry Clower, Grand Ole Opry star, made the statement, "Watch my lips: I do not worship the Bible. I had a personal experience with Jesus Christ when I was 13 years of age. I am in love with and worship Jesus . . . Folks are going to die and go to hell while we decide who believes the Bible."

I totally agree with Mr. Clower's statement. There's not a Southern Baptist anywhere that does not believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God given to man. It is for our instruction, inspiration, and comfort. Yes, the Bible (in any version, language, or dialect) has been the most influential book in the world. Yet we are letting the "politics" of inerrancy, if there is really such a thing, send the lost to hell. By wasting our time bickering and politicking, we are letting hundreds, no thousands, of lost and dying people go to hell without our witness.

Yes, Mr. Clower, while we are "wasting daylight" the lost of our world are not receiving the Message of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Peggy Hawkins
2826 Barclay Drive
Nashville 37206

SBC messengers give impressions

There are three aspects of the convention that stand out in my mind. First, the appointment service of the Foreign Mission Board. I wish we could do it every year. Second, the miraculous way God is working through prayer. We just need more emphasis on the use of the prayer room. Third, the renewed excitement about reaching the lost with the Gospel. The evangelistic thrust at the beginning of each convention is making an impact. — Mike Madewell, North Johnson City Church, Johnson City.

The votes affirm that Southern Baptists are first a people of the Book and the people believe the inerrant Word must be taught from the pulpit to the classroom. Truth is the basis for cooperation and adhering to this principle; truth must be spoken in love (Ephesians 4:15). I'm confident that our greatest days of evangelism and missions are before us as we move forward under Christ's leadership. — Larry Gilmore, College Heights Church, Gallatin.

Tennesseans see results of Brazilian investment

By Connie J. Umstead, news assistant
A group of 24 volunteer missionaries from Englewood and Liberty Grove churches, both in Jackson, returned May 30 from a two-week mission trip to Brazil, where they saw first-hand how Cooperative Program dollars are used in missions.

The churches provided funding for chapels to be built in two northern Brazilian towns, and then sent crews to erect the churches, which were pre-cut in a Brazilian factory. The Brazilian factory itself was constructed with Lottie Moon offering dollars, said Philip Jett, pastor of Englewood Church.

Jett, who traveled to Brazil last year to organize the recent trip, said the work they completed in Brazil "is directly relating our Cooperative Program money, which puts our missionaries on the field, and our Lottie Moon Christmas offering, which funds new work. It ties in with our volunteer mission program."

Englewood Church gave \$5000 to build a chapel in Janauba, a town of 60,000 people, and Liberty Grove Church gave the same amount for a chapel in Porteirinha, a town of 25,000. Both towns are in the state of Minas Gerais.

Although there was already one Baptist church in Janauba, the church built by Liberty Grove workers was the first Baptist church in Porteirinha.

Jett said the congregations in the two towns were begun by foreign missionaries Wade and Sherry Akins through open air meetings. According to Jett, the Akins have started more than 60 ministries in Minas Gerais, a state the size of Texas.

"A work began. A congregation was formed. A pastor was called. Property was bought, and we constructed the chapels," Jett said. "We didn't just go over there. It was a long term plan and our missionaries cut the trail."

"They are doing a marvelous work. They get up on top of a truck and preach. Thousands will come to hear the Gospel and stand for three hours listening," Jett said.

Glen Ellis, pastor of Liberty Grove Church, said the night before his group began building the church in



TRADITION CONTINUES — After receiving the keys to the newly-built chapel of Memorial Church in Janauba from Les Weatherman, far right, retired missionary and volunteer worker in Brazil, Philip Jett, center, pastor of Englewood Church, Jackson, passed them on to Gilberto Penido Bertho, left, pastor of Memorial Church. Tradition calls for the pastor to turn and unlock the door to his congregation's new chapel.

Porteirinha, they met with the congregation under a light on a dead end street. There were 35 people present. At the dedication service five days later, 300 people crowded into the new chapel, which comfortably holds 150,

and 200 more stood outside and listened to the two-hour service through open doors and windows.

A crew from a television station 100 miles from the town heard about Americans building a chapel and came

Young Memphians work in Portugal

A group of eight Memphis Southern Baptists recently introduced a new form of ministry in Portugal, when they traveled there recently to assist Carey and Lynne Bates, foreign missionaries.

Seven people from the college and career department at Cherokee Church, Memphis, and one from Union Avenue Church, also in Memphis, returned May 20 from the mission tour of Portugal.

Covering six Portuguese towns and making 14 presentations, the volunteers used puppetry, pantomime, and testimonials to witness to the people of Portugal.

Evonne Siemer, who along with her

husband Don is director of the college and career department at Cherokee Church and trip leader, said "we accomplished more than we ever hoped to. We planted seeds and encouraged people."

Presentations were made at open-air town markets, festivals, town squares, and parks. Each presentation began with Bates, who was formerly minister of youth at Cherokee Church, singing a country-western song in English and Portuguese. After a crowd assembled, the mission team presented a puppet show, and then offered their testimonials. Team members not directly involved in the presentation mingled in the crowd and handed out tracts in Portuguese.

Puppetry and pantomime were new to Portugal as a means of witnessing. Puppet shows targeted the need for prayer, acting like a Christian, finding God, and beginning a new life with Jesus. Siemer said they plan to send puppets to the Bates for use in their on-going ministry.

Pantomime was used to enact parables, such as the good Samaritan, the lost sheep, and the lost coin, as the stories were read to the crowd.

Siemer said the group accomplished three things. They encouraged the people to remain steadfast in their faith, even when the work is slow. They introduced a new form of ministry, pantomime and puppetry; and they returned to the United States with renewed faith and recognition of the importance of the ministry of local churches.

"We were impressed by the faithfulness of the people there. We realized we needed to come back and do some things here," Siemer said.

Volunteer missionaries were the Siemers, Priscilla Archer, Sharon Huffman, Rachel Terry, James Hall, Richard Bushart, and Steve Herriman.

to film the service.

According to Ellis, six people made professions of faith that night, including the wife of the mayor of Porteirinha.

"We hope more Tennessee churches will become involved in the work in Brazil, as they are a nation of people hungry to hear the Gospel," Ellis said.

After the construction crews worked during the day, they attended worship services and made door-to-door visits. They handed out more than 17,000 tracts printed in Portuguese.

In addition, the mission team participated in worship services at seven churches in Belo Horizonte, the capitol of Minas Gerais, which has a population of three million people. Team members either delivered the message or gave their testimonies. They also reported to the Brazilian Baptist congregations about their activities.

"We needed to report on our work to encourage Brazilian Baptists to start new works," Jett said.

The mission team had three goals they hoped to accomplish on the trip, Jett said.

They wanted to build chapels, evangelize the cities, and establish a long-term plan to continue building chapels wherever they are needed.

They accomplished all three goals. According to Jett, Gary Taylor a contractor from Jackson, worked with the executive director of the Minas Gerais Baptist Convention and Bill Richardson, who oversees missionaries in Brazil and the Caribbean, to expand the chapel-building program so that it extends into the 1990s.

"We thank the Lord for meeting our goals," Jett said.

Unrest forces relocation

MONROVIA, Liberia (BP) — Six more Southern Baptist missionaries left Liberia June 10 as Liberian religious leaders called for peace between battling government and rebel leader.

The missionaries flew from the Liberian capital, Monrovia, to Abidjan, Ivory Coast, on one of several U.S. Embassy-chartered flights.

The six missionaries are Robert and Pat Bellingier of Carbondale, Ill.; Jim and Jane Park of Paducah, Ky.; and Fred and Mary Lou Levrets of Abilene, Texas. The Bellingiers and the Parks planned to temporarily return to the United States. The Levrets planned to travel on to Nigeria. More than 50 Southern Baptist missionaries were in Liberia in early May, before the rebel offensive gained momentum. They hope to return when the fighting ends.

Six Southern Baptist missionaries remained in Liberia June 29 in towns outside Monrovia. They are Ed Laughridge of Rock Hill, S.C., who remained in Mano River; Kenneth Nicholson of Magdalena, N.M., and Joyce Nicholson of Seaside Calif., in Voinjama; and Chris Wilkinson of Gainesville, Fla., and Gwen Wilkinson of Ardmore, Tenn., also in Voinjama.

Liberian religious leaders and government officials said the rebels of the National Patriotic Front have agreed to peace talks, according to press reports. The Liberian Council of Churches, made up of Christian and Muslim leaders, would mediate the talks. Levee Moulton, president of the Liberian Baptist convention, is a member of the church council.

Tennessee churches affected by BTN closure

The shutdown of the Baptist Telecommunication Network Oct. 1 will affect about 750 churches who have access to BTN from 98 satellite dishes across Tennessee.

But the churches, associations, and agencies subscribing to the Baptist Sunday School Board network will not suffer a financial loss. Jarvis Hearn, Tennessee Baptist Convention Telecommunications Department director, reported that the Baptist Sunday School Board will give the dishes to those which hold lease agreements.

"The churches are going to be the losers because of the very vital, pertinent materials that were on BTN. . . . They had access to the most learned and best teachers in the areas of Sunday School and Discipleship Training in the entire denomination right at their fingertips," said Hearn.

Satellite dish users can access ACTS, the entertainment-oriented programming on cable systems produced by the Southern Baptist Radio-TV Commission in Fort Worth, Texas, noted Hearn.

The BSSB will investigate selling video tapes of programs in Baptist Book Stores. It also will study the possibility of joint projects with the ACTS network, Hearn added.

BWA to aid Iran

McLEAN, Va. — The Baptist World Alliance has sent a message of condolence to the government of Iran and designated funds for the relief efforts following the recent massive earthquake.

On behalf of the alliance, BWA President G. Noel Vose and General Secretary Denton Lotz sent the following message to Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani:

"The Baptist community worldwide joins with all men and women of goodwill in sending our sincere sympathy and condolences at the terrible loss of life, devastation, and injury due to the tragic earthquake. Please be assured that our people are contributing aid and shall join in prayer for your people. Out of this tragedy, we pray that all of us will experience the peace and compassion of a merciful God."

TenneScene ... From Raus, through Ozone, on to Turtletown ...

Churches ...

Members of **Beacon Church, Parsons**, celebrated the 40th anniversary of the church June 17. Wade Carver, an organizer and founder of the church, delivered a message.

Homecoming was held June 3 at **Flatwoods Church, Holladay**.

The congregation of **Twin Oaks Church, Cedar Grove**, celebrated homecoming June 24.

Work was recently completed on a new fellowship hall at **Fisher's Creek Church, Rogersville**.

Homecoming services were held June 24 at **Calvary Church, Newport**.

The congregation of **First Church, Clinton**, recently celebrated the church's 150th anniversary.

A 50th anniversary celebration was held recently at **New Mountain View Church, Oliver Springs**.

Leadership ...

Pat Fife recently resigned as pastor of **English Creek Church, Newport**, to accept the pastorate of **Central Church, Altavista, Va.**

Holston Valley Church, Abingdon, Va., a member of **Holston Association**, recently installed **Steve Rapp** and **James Brown**, as deacons.

Jim Millsaps accepts pastorate in Maryville

Pleasant Grove Church, Maryville, recently called **Jim Millsaps** as pastor.

Millsaps served 24 years as an Air Force chaplain and attained the rank of colonel. During his military career, he served in 13 countries and at nine United States bases. He is now retired.

Millsaps is a graduate of **Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City**, and **Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas**. Before beginning his military duty, he served churches in Tennessee and Texas.

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Kevin P. Minchey has been called as summer minister of youth to **First Church, Madison**. He is a graduate of **Belmont College, Nashville**, and a student at **Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.**

Steven H. Simpler is acting dean of the **School of Biblical Studies and Ministry at Belmont College**. In his fourth year of teaching at **Belmont**, he was named **June 1**.

Education ...

Two Tennesseans were recently elected officers of the **Student Government Association at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.** **Belmont College, Nashville**, graduate **Tina Pugh**, a social work student from **Nashville**, was elected president. **Sharon Adkerson**, a Christian education student from **Nashville** and a **Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville**, graduate, was elected vice president/secretary.

A weekend college program will begin this fall at **Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City**. The two-day program provides an alternative for adults who are unable to attend regularly scheduled day or evening classes. All courses may apply toward a degree.

Missions ...

David and Laura Moench, Nashville, Baptist representatives to **Scotland**, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service. They can be reached at **Central Baptist Church, 12 Rattray St., Dundee, Scotland, DD1**.

Missionaries to the **Philippines** **Jim and Rae Morehead** have completed furlough and returned to the field. She is a native of **Dandridge**. They can be reached at **P. O. Box 7, Baguio City 0201, Philippines**.

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Crea Ridenour, missionary to **Colombia** since 1945, has retired from active missionary service. She served as a professor at the **International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali, Colombia**, since 1954. A native of **Westbourne**, she may be addressed at **P. O. Box 3731, Knoxville, Tenn. 37917**.

A volunteer mission team from **First Church, Tullahoma**, will go to **Lake City, Mich.**, July 7-14 to conduct **Vacation Bible School**.

A youth mission team from **First Church, Nashville**, will go to **Rochester, N.Y.**, this summer to work with home missionaries **Rusty and Becky Sumrall**. They will lead backyard Bible studies and participate in other projects. A team of college students will travel to **Ocean City, Md.**, to work with home missionary **Lyn Davis** in a resort ministry.

A mission team from **Giles County Association** will be in **Lake City, Mich.** July 6-14 conducting **Vacation Bible School** and doing construction work.

Six youth from **First Church, Lawrenceburg**, will serve as summer missionaries this year. **Deana Dace, Matthew Daniel, and Cheryl Winters** will serve in **East Tennessee** in **Appalachian Outreach**. **Amy Mashburn** will serve in **New Orleans, La.**, at the **Baptist Friendship House**. **Joshua Redd** and **Tim Wallace** will work in church assistance in **Ralins, Wyo.**

Revivals ...

Lyle Lane Church, Nashville, will hold a tent revival July 8-13 with evangelist **Eldridge Miller** and music director **Julian Suggs**.

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New Hope Church calls Michael Smith as pastor

Michael A. Smith began serving as pastor of **New Hope Church, Hermitage, July 1**.

The **Gladeville** native was formerly chief editor of general religious books and the general editor of **The New American Commentary for Broadman Press**. **Smith** served as pastor of **First Church, College Grove**, and other churches in **Tennessee, Indiana, and Kentucky**.

Smith earned a bachelor's degree from **Belmont College, Nashville**, and a master of divinity and doctoral degrees from **Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.**

Smith and his wife, **Grace**, have two children.

Shelbyville church calls Drew Hayes as pastor

First Church, Shelbyville, called **Drew A. Hayes** as pastor **June 10**.

Hayes comes to **Shelbyville** from the pastorate of **First Church, Loretto**. He also served as associate pastor at **Beechland Church, Louisville, Ky.**, while he was a student at **Southern Baptist Theological Seminary**. He earned a master of divinity degree while in **Louisville**.

In addition to being a **Southern Seminary graduate**, **Hayes** graduated from **University of Alabama**, and he is working on a doctor of ministry degree at **Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis**.

He and his wife, **Susan**, have two children.



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God's provision for Ruth and Naomi

By H. Dean Haun, pastor; First Church, Sparta

Do the everyday tasks we perform and the kindnesses we show really mean anything? Does it really help to have a good attitude and a servant spirit in this life? Ruth would resoundingly say — yes! For it was through the menial, tiring task of gathering grain that she met her future husband and became an ancestor of a king and the Messiah.

There was no doubt that Ruth and Naomi's return to Bethlehem was part of God's plan. In fact, the Book of Ruth could very well be called the Romans 8:28 of the Old Testament. With their return to Bethlehem, the position of these two women was reversed. Naomi was in her native land and Ruth was the foreigner. Both of them were widows with a great need. In chapter two the goodness of God unfolds like a brightly unwrapped package.



HAUN

Initiative (vv. 1-2) — When life knocks you down, you can either stay down or get up and fight. Ruth was a fighter in the sense that the financial reversals she and Naomi had experienced were not about to drown her in a pool of hopeless despair. Instead, she took the initiative and said "I'll get us the food we need to survive."

The grain harvest provided the one means to supply their basic need for food. According to Leviticus 19:9-10, 23:22, and Deuteronomy 24:19-22, the Mosaic law directed grain farmers and vineyard owners to leave something for the gleaners (widows, orphans, poor, and foreigners). This was a kind of welfare system where the poor would not starve if they were willing to work. Ruth was!

Intervention (vv. 3-4) — George Mueller, who literally ran an orphanage in Europe on prayer, said, "A hand to mouth existence is not so bad when it's God's hand and your mouth." Not only did God provide barley — He provided Boaz. It was no accident that Ruth just happened to begin gleaning

in Boaz's field ... it was divine intervention. Boaz was a wealthy kinsman of Naomi's husband Elimelech. We have no indication Naomi directed Ruth to this field. Looking back we can

BIBLE BOOK
July 8 Lesson
Basic Passage: Ruth 2:1-23
Focal Passages: Ruth 2:1-23

see the hand of God in this event.

Impression (vv. 5-18) — Ruth's hard work made an impression on Boaz. When he came out to see how the harvest was going, his attention was drawn to Ruth. This hardworking foreigner aroused his curiosity. When Boaz asked his servants who she was they told him about Ruth's devotion to Naomi and her work ethic.

Foreigners were not always welcome in Israel, but Boaz gladly welcomed Ruth. Ruth's past actions earned her a good reputation.

Boaz went far beyond the "gleaners law" in showing kindness and generosity. Not only did he let Ruth

glean in his field, but he also told his workers to purposely break off some grain and let it drop in her path. She ended up with a whole bushel of barley.

This should remind us we are blessed with abundance so we might share, not store up. God says to us, "Don't just meet the basic requirements of the law — exceed it!" (Not just a tithe — but an offering as well.)

Inspiration (vv. 19-22) — What a change in Naomi's attitude! From being called Mara (bitter), she went back to Naomi (pleasant). Naomi's heart of bitterness was replaced with a heart of blessing. Her new found inspiration was due to God's intervention.

Investment (v. 23) — God was at work in Ruth's life in ways she didn't imagine. As she kept the course, remained loyal, and was faithful to her convictions, she made large investments in her future which would have world-wide impact.

Remember, God can take ordinary people and make us extraordinary people if we will be faithful! Just as God provided for Ruth and Naomi beyond their expectation, so can He do for us (Jeremiah 33:3).

Wisdom — the Creator's delight

By John Henry Pippin, pastor; First Church, Savannah

"As old as the hills" is an expression from my youth that describes something or someone very old. Proverbs 8 deals with something older than the hills — wisdom. In fact, wisdom's origin predates even the foundation of the hills. Such an ancient existence commends wisdom to men and emphasizes its authority and power. It has the authority of God and the power to direct meaningful everyday living. So, the person who would live a full life should delight in wisdom.



PIPPIN

Wisdom's glory is seen in its primeval existence and relationship to God. Wisdom was the first of God's creative acts, created even before the earth (vv. 22, 23). Thus it has a priority to everything and everyone in creation except God. It was not made by man and cannot be changed by man. Man can only learn, receive, and live by wisdom.

Wisdom, as everything else except God, is a child of the Creator, "set up" (v. 23) and "brought forth" (v. 26) by Him. Yet unlike man, who also was "brought forth," it was His "daily delight ... rejoicing before Him always" (v. 30). This impressive relationship enhances wisdom's status to one that should be desired by men. The man who lives by wisdom is God's dai-

ly delight and rejoices before Him always.

Wisdom is a witness to creation, but not the agent of creation. God is the agent of creation. Blind force and

CONVENTION UNIFORM
July 8 Lesson
Basic Passage: Proverbs 8
Focal Passages: Proverbs 8:22-36

chance played no role in creation. Wisdom was the witness to this Divine creative activity (v. 27). Men need this eminent witness for ordinary living. Sorrow will come, but wisdom can say, "I am older than sorrow." Temptation will come, but wisdom can say, "I am older than temptation." As the elder statesman, it bears witness to God's plan, God's love, God's justice, and God's thoughtfulness. People need that

witness for victorious living.

Appeal of wisdom (8:32-36)

On the basis of its origin and care for men, wisdom urges people to listen to instruction. (The effect of hearing instruction is to be wise.) None in this imperfect state have acquired such a full knowledge of Biblical truth that they need no further assistance for knowing more. Each needs to pursue that knowledge of the Word in daily personal study and regular attendance at the house of God where the Word is taught.

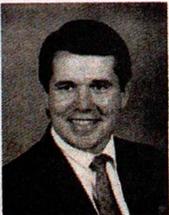
Those who listen are promised happiness (vv. 32, 34), life (v. 35), and favor from the Lord (v. 35). However, the one who sins against wisdom, whether by neglect or direct disobedience, is guilty of moral suicide and shows a contempt for life and happiness. What a tragedy that multitudes refuse the wisdom of God! Do not be one of those! Listen to instruction from God! He delighted in wisdom; man should do no less!

Demonstrate your faith

By Joe R. Wren, pastor; First Church, Sevierville

There are many things one can do without faith, such as riding a bicycle, building a house, making a million dollars, or becoming a super-star. There are, however, two things one cannot do without faith. One cannot experience the new birth in Christ Jesus without faith. And, one cannot please God without faith. Therefore, genuine faith has to do with beliefs and actions.

Christian faith is the commitment of one's life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul emphasized this in his letter to the Ephesians. Some think James wrote to correct the teachings of Paul concerning justification by faith. However, they do not contradict one another, but are in agreement. They believed salvation comes by faith alone and produces good works (Ephesians 2:8-10, James 2:17). Paul talked more



WREN

about the provision of our salvation and James talked more than the proof. The issue is not faith or works. James wanted everyone to understand that real faith is demonstrated by actions. Christian faith and works are inseparable.

Adequate rhetoric (2:14-17) James did not write, "If a man has faith," but "If a man says he has faith." Words alone do not prove the genuineness of faith. It is possible to be a "professor" without being a "possessor" of real faith.

John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, presented a character named Talkative. In describing him, Bunyan said, "Religion has no place in his heart, or house or conduct; all he has lies in his tongue, and his religion is just something to make noise with."

Genuine faith demonstrates Christ-like compassion, concern, and conduct. Dr. H. H. Hobbs remarked, "No matter how loudly you may proclaim your faith, it is subject to doubt if it is not supported by the way you live." Some-

one said, "Faith is like calories: you can't see them, but you can see their results."

James posed a very interesting question, "Can faith save him?" (v. 14).

LIFE AND WORK
July 8 Lesson
Basic Passage: James 2:14-26
Focal Passages: James 2:14-26

This question requires a negative answer because a faith that produces no good works is worthless and inadequate."

Insufficient reasoning (2:18-20)

James reminded that mere intellectual agreement with certain facts does not produce saving faith. Genuine faith, not rational belief, instills in a person the ability to live up to his profession. Demons exercise rational belief to the degree that they tremble (v. 18), but they are not saved by that belief. Head faith does not lead one to commit one's life to the Lord Jesus.

Mere rationalization is insufficient in the regeneration process. It can reform, but not transform. It does not produce a change of heart.

The faith that James is describing is one that regenerates and reforms. This

faith bring about change of life and lifestyle. A faith that is unable to do this is insufficient.

Irrefutable realities (2:21-26)

Genuine faith and works are inseparable and serve as irrefutable proof of one's commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Such faith denies self, loves others, and pleases the Lord Jesus. This faith is obedient, alive, and active.

James used Abraham and Rahab as illustrations of genuine faith. He reminded his readers that the faith of Abraham and Rahab moved their hearts and regulated their lives.

Faith and works are inseparable. They are as close as the union between body and soul (v. 26). Even as the body is dead without the spirit so a faith without works is dead. The only way you can prove your faith is to demonstrate your faith. Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Conclusion

How can you prove your faith? Weigh it? Examine it under a microscope? Measure it? There is only one way to prove faith exists — by actions. James said mere words and mental assent do not demonstrate genuine faith.

FMB committee plans for clearer belief statements

By Art Toalston

NEW ORLEANS (BP)— A Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustee committee has adopted guidelines to help missionary candidates write clearer statements of belief during the application process.

The trustees' mission personnel committee adopted the guidelines during the board's June 8-9 meeting at Tulane University prior to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in the Louisiana Superdome.

The guidelines stem from trustee action last August creating a committee to annually review the missionary appointment process. The guidelines will be listed in a cover letter to accompany a "Sharing of Christian Beliefs" questionnaire traditionally used in the Foreign Mission Board's screening of missionary candidates.

The two-page questionnaire, which has undergone periodic revision by the agency's staff in the past, has asked applicants to state their beliefs about God, Jesus, the Bible and other doctrines as well as Southern Baptist cooperative work.

Now, the guidelines will list specifics to be addressed in each section of the questionnaire.

The section on the Bible, for example, previously asked candidates to: "Describe your views of the Bible. How do you use the Bible in your personal life?" Now, the guidelines for the Bible section ask candidates to address: "Inspiration, authority, reliability, purpose, miracles, historical narratives, use in your personal life."

Regarding Jesus Christ, the new guidelines ask for comments on his nature, uniqueness, birth, life, death, resurrection, second coming, and "your relationship to Him."

Trustees also expanded the questionnaire to include a separate section on cooperative Southern Baptist work, which previously was part of the sec-

tion on the church. The cooperative work guidelines ask missionary candidates for their views on association, state, and national conventions, Cooperative Program, and "your involvement." The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' longstanding channel for churches to fund foreign and home missions and other denominational causes.

The mission personnel committee, in adopting the guidelines, "did not have a desire to fit anybody into a certain mold," said its chairman, Paul Sanders, pastor of First Church of Geyer Springs, Little Rock, Ark.

But the committee did want missionary candidates "to be more

definitive in writing their beliefs," Sanders said, "so the staff and trustees know what (the candidates) believe about basic Baptist doctrines."

Sanders stated that Foreign Mission Board staff members handle most of the screening of missions applicants and that the staff often has had to seek amplification of initial written statements.

Harlan Spurgeon, Foreign Mission Board vice president for mission personnel, agreed that staff often has requested clarifications from missionary candidates.

Spurgeon noted that the proposed guidelines were drafted by staff members.

CLC Washington D.C. office to expand

By Jim Newton

NEW ORLEANS (BP)— Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Com-

State colleges honored

Tennessee's three Baptist colleges are among 19 Southern Baptist-related colleges and universities named to two honor rolls of distinction by the John Templeton Foundation.

The honor rolls, selected by presidents and development directors from more than 1400 colleges and universities, is named for John Marks Templeton, an investment expert.

One of the honor rolls list schools that excel in building moral and spiritual character and the other lists institutions with a commitment to teaching "the traditional Western political and economic philosophies" generally known as "free enterprise."

Eleven Baptist schools, including Belmont College, Nashville, and Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, were cited on both lists.

Union University, Jackson, was recognized as a top character-building school. — BP

mission, outlined plans for extensive expansion of the CLC office in Washington, following adoption of a \$300,000 increase to its budget June 13.

Land said the action of the Southern Baptist Convention to add religious liberty and separation of church and state issues to his agency's program statement would greatly strengthen Southern Baptists' influence in the nation's capitol.

He discounted as unfounded any fear that the Christian Life Commission would send messages to Congress that would conflict with the voice of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, which represents nine Baptist bodies on religious liberty and church/state separation issues.

Both Land and James Dunn, executive director of the BJC, answered questions during press conferences following SBC actions which cut the budget of the BJC by 87 percent and increased the budget of the CLC by 40 percent.

Dunn said the action would free the BJC to raise money from other sources, to reorganize its board to give more representation to other Baptist groups, and to project a more sophisticated agenda.

"It will also free us of a certain amount of harassment," Dunn said. He added that the BJC plans to continue its operation.

The BJC and CLC might send conflicting messages to Congress, but "we will just have to live with that," Dunn said.

The CLC, which also is assigned to handle social and moral concerns for Southern Baptists, will maintain its national headquarters in Nashville but strengthen its operations in Washington.

Land announced plans to add three members to the staff of the CLC's Washington office: the general counsel/Christian citizenship director, a news media director, an administrative assistant, plus the current director of government relations, Jim Smith.

Belmont cites E. W. Wendell

E. W. Wendell was inducted recently into the Belmont College Collegiatus Society.

Collegiatus is Belmont's equivalent of an honorary doctorate degree. Wendell was named because of his support for higher education. He is president and chief executive officer of Opryland USA, and serves on the board of advisors for Belmont's graduate school of business.

The trustee committee, before its vote to adopt the guidelines, expanded them to include the matters of creation and salvation. Spurgeon said the guidelines are neither "an adding to nor a taking from" the standards missionaries traditionally have been called to meet.

Sections on personal witnessing and the Baptist Faith and Message underwent little change. The old and new forms asked applicants to relate an encounter in which they had led someone to faith in Christ, for example, and to affirm their agreement with the statement of beliefs adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 and reaffirmed in recent conventions.

Land said about 35 percent of the agency's \$1.2 million budget would support the new Washington office. The CLC is negotiating for more office space within walking distance of Capitol Hill, he added.

"My perspective," said Land, "is that we have a two-pronged assignment: to speak to Southern Baptists as the denomination's prophetic conscience on moral and social issues, and to ascertain what Southern Baptist views are and bring those Baptist convictions to bear before policy-making groups in Washington."

The CLC will follow the wishes of the SBC as stated in convention-adopted resolutions such as those on abortion and prayer in public schools, Land said.

The CLC will focus on issues and not endorse candidates for political office, he added.

Since the CLC opened its Washington office in 1987, it has cooperated in writing at least four joint statements with the BJC on such issues as child care legislation, he noted.

"Before yesterday's action (by the SBC), we could not address the religious liberty and church/state separation issues," Land said. "Now we can, and this frees us to work more closely with the Baptist Joint Committee on joint statements."

Land pointed out that both he and Dunn always have been careful to point out they do not speak for all Southern Baptists, or represent Southern Baptists. "No one can do that," he said.

The conflicts between the CLC and BJC will be far less than most people might suppose, he predicted.

Filipino to head school

DAVAO CITY, Philippines — Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary has elected a Filipino as president for the first time in its 35-year history. Severino Fabila, who served in higher education for more than 20 years, was elected to a three-year term beginning in May. Formerly he was president of Southern Baptist College in M'Lang.

Founded as the Davao Baptist Bible School in 1955, the seminary has been directed by Southern Baptist missionaries. But with Fabila's election, the seminary's entire administration is Filipino. The seminary averages 133 full-time resident students. The school's extension program has more than 2000 students enrolled.

The Tennessee Baptist Convention is involved in a three-year missions partnership with the Philippines.

TeamTalk

By D. L. Lowrie

Have you heard about the Final Four? Actually they are the Final Three now. This has nothing to do with sports, but rather has to do with the final three months of this associational church year — July, August, and September. These are the final three months to make a significant push toward our Sunday School enrollment goals.



LOWRIE

Beulah Association has taken this assignment seriously. Under the leadership of Bill Wolfe, Sunday School director, and Bill George, Director of Missions, they are pushing toward the goal. I spoke to more than 200 Sunday School workers at a dinner in the fellowship building of the Calvary Church in Union City. Their associational Sunday School team had prepared well. Many of the pastors of the association were present. My heart was uplifted by what I experienced.

How many new members has your class enrolled in Sunday School this

year? Have you enrolled more than you have lost? In the last church I served, we had to enroll about three people to gain one. The movement of people will make this necessary. Make sure that your class ends the year on the positive side. If every class in Tennessee just gained one during the year, we would make a giant step forward.

I learned as a pastor that the number of new members in Sunday School was the most important statistic of the Lord's Day. This indicated whether or not we were reaching new people, and influenced how many people would be saved in the weeks ahead. No new members in Sunday School was a bad sign for the weeks ahead. Several new members put anticipation in my heart.

It is an awesome thought, but true. Something as simple as enrolling a person in Bible study can be the beginning of a saving work of God in a human life. There is not a Baptist Christian in our beloved state that could not influence someone to be enrolled in Bible study.

Let's make the Final Four the Fruitful Four.