

# Baptist and Reflector

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STATEWIDE EDITION

NEWSJOURNAL OF THE TENNESSEE BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Shackleford, Martin decline offer to resign at BP

By Lonnie Wilkey

NASHVILLE — Baptist Press representatives Al Shackleford and Dan Martin "have respectfully declined" a second invitation to resign their respective positions as director and news editor of Baptist Press.

Shackleford and Martin were both contacted July 7 by two officers of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee (Sam Pace and Charles Sullivan).

Pace and Sullivan restated a previous offer that if Shackleford and Martin would voluntarily resign from Baptist Press they would recommend a generous severance package and Pace, as chairman, would cancel the called meeting of the Executive Committee July 17.

The two officers requested the resignations, effective Sept. 1, be on the desk of Harold Bennett, president of the Executive Committee, by July 9.

Pace and Sullivan, according to the statement released by Martin and Shackleford, said they were offering the same severance package as proposed earlier (six months salary and benefits) with the addition of the possibility of negotiating an extension based upon hardship.

In prepared statements, both Shackleford and Martin declined the proposal July 9 following a conference call with the two officers. Also in-

*A statement from Charles Sullivan, a Tennessee Baptist on the Executive Committee, is printed on page five.*

Involved in the call was Frank C. Ingraham, Nashville attorney who is representing the two Baptist Press staffers.

Shackleford said, "I came to the position of vice-president for public relations because of two strong convictions: (1) that God had clearly revealed to me that it was His will that I accept this position; and (2) that my God-called ministry to which I have given 35 years of my life is Baptists' right to a free flow of information.

"To resign would mean that I would turn my back on these two convictions."

Shackleford also noted in his statement that the issue "is not to control Baptist Press nor its director, but to control the right and responsibility of Baptist church members to know what is going on in their denomination.

"An indication of such control is the recent directive that Sam Pace's (See Shackleford, page 5)

## Editors pledge support to BP staff

By Wm. Fletcher Allen

IRVING, Texas — In the wake of the SBC Executive Committee's call for the resignation of top Baptist Press personnel, Southern Baptist newspaper editors pledged here to support Al Shackleford and Dan Martin, and agreed to strengthen their six-year-old networking system of news-gathering.

The editors (SBPA) met July 6-7 to act in the face of the imminent firing of Al Shackleford and Dan Martin.

The editors also affirmed Baptists' "right to know." SBPA, composed of the editors of the convention's 38 state newsjournals, passed a resolution expressing concern with the move to "suppress a free religious press," commended Shackleford and Martin, and urged the Executive Committee to give the two a "fair and open forum for a discussion of any charges against them."

The request for Shackleford and Martin to resign were made by the officers of the SBC Executive Committee, which houses the central office of Baptist Press, the convention's news service. Shackleford is director of BP and Martin is news editor. Both have been with BP several years.

A meeting is scheduled for July 17 in Nashville called by the Executive Committee officers, with the dismissal of the two BP leaders the main agenda item.

Former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Herschel Hobbs, in Jackson, for a pastors' conference, responded to Executive Committee actions with approval of Baptist Press.

"I think it's tragic — and shouldn't be done," said the longtime proponent of free Baptist press. Hobbs, noted theologian and writer, said he has known the two men for years.

"They are proven and faithful newsmen," he said. "Dan Martin was press liaison for the Peace Committee. He was faithful and true in every sense. He recorded every word and maintained the highest level of integrity.

"Al Shackleford was one of our finest editors when he edited the Baptist and Reflector. He has continued that same professionalism with Baptist Press. He represents the best we know in keeping a free press.

"If this comes to pass (the firing), it will be a tragic day for Baptists. It is tragic when the press is muzzled. Baptist Press should be free to report all the news. We always need a free press."

Editors said they took separate actions because the possible firings of Shackleford and Martin demanded immediate, specific response and the affirmation of Baptists' right to know represents a larger concern, which

should be addressed at this point in the convention's history.

The right-to-know statement was adopted unanimously. Its preamble states: "Based on Biblical and historic Baptists principles, we, the members of the Southern Baptist Press Association, believe in the right of and need for Baptists to have full, free access to the news and information of their denomination. We believe in the vital role Baptist Press fulfills in securing that right."

Those beliefs lead to the four affirmations, the statement notes. They are:

• "We affirm our desire to continue the partnership with Baptist Press news service, which has served Southern Baptists well since 1946. We also express our strong desire for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee to recognize this partnership by seeking ongoing input to the operation of Baptist Press from the Southern Baptist Press Association, the members of which are the primary users of this news service.

• "We affirm the Operating Guidelines for Baptist Press, adopted by the SBC Executive Committee in 1986. We call upon the Executive Committee to ensure that Baptist Press be operated

according to these guidelines and base all evaluation of Baptist Press employees upon these guidelines.

• "We affirm our commitment to enhance the six-year-old networking system of sharing news among the 38 Southern Baptist newsjournals. This includes having a representative of the Southern Baptist Press Association present for meetings of Southern Baptist Convention entities. It also includes covering and sharing news of national interest in our areas.

• "We pledge to Southern Baptists to work for the full, free flow of responsible, balanced, accurate information about Baptist witness and ministries in our respective states and the Southern Baptist Convention."

The resolution on Baptist Press, adopted with one dissenting vote, was passed less than two weeks before the July 17 called Executive Committee meeting to determine the fates of Shackleford and Martin.

Committee Chairman Sam Pace, a director of associational missions from Lawton, Okla., called the meeting "to consider the termination of the employment" of the two journalists, according to an announcement by committee President Harold C. Bennett.

(See Editors pledge, page 5)

## Resolution on Baptist Press

Adopted by the Southern Baptist Press Association  
The Harvey Hotel, Irving, Texas  
July 7, 1990

WHEREAS, unrestricted access to news and information, provided in an objective and balanced manner, is essential in maintaining the health and vitality of any organization, and especially those committed to democratic polity, including the Southern Baptist Convention; and

WHEREAS, Baptist Press has ably and consistently provided such information for Baptist state papers, as well as other media outlets, since its inception in 1946; and

WHEREAS, during its 44 years of existence Baptist Press has been well served by C. E. Bryant, Albert McClellan, and Wilmer C. Fields, as directors; and by Theo Sommerkamp, James Newton, Robert O'Brien, James Young, Norman Jameson, Craig Bird, and Marv Knox as assistants; and

WHEREAS, Director Alvin C. Shackleford since 1987 and News Editor Dan Martin since 1980 have continued this tradition of professional service with exceptional skill and commitment to Southern Baptists throughout the world and the larger Christian community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the editors of Baptist state papers, meeting in Irving, Texas, July 6-7, 1990, express their heartfelt appreciation for the quality service rendered by Baptist Press for the fair and equitable manner in which it has reported events in the SBC during the past 12 years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the editors record their profound disappointment and grave concern with the attempt by certain members of the SBC Executive Committee to suppress a free religious press and restrict the flow of indispensable information to Southern Baptists around the world; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Southern Baptist Press Association wholeheartedly commends Mr. Shackleford and Mr. Martin for the excellence of their respective ministries; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Southern Baptist Press Association expresses grave concern with publicly announced plans to remove Mr. Shackleford and Mr. Martin from their key positions of responsibility; and calls upon the SBC Executive Committee to provide Mr. Shackleford and Mr. Martin a fair and open forum for a discussion of any and all charges against them, with full opportunity for response from Messrs. Shackleford and Martin in that forum.

MOVING? Cut out and mail this address label to the Baptist and Reflector, P. O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024 along with your new address.

900-904-0127  
SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION ARCHIVES  
901 COMMERCE ST. SUITE 400  
NASHVILLE, Tennessee  
Nashville, TN 37203

## Editorials

# The world cannot forever resist democracy

There is something enduring about our nation — it's always around when someone wants to kick it or praise it.

Summer soldiers are eager to fight off critics or combatants — whether or not they use live ammunition. Flag waving sometimes gets hysterical, and at times it is ridiculous.

Some years ago, a favored bumper-sticker carried the message, "America, love it or leave it." Now we are engrossed over ascertaining whether burning the flag in protest is appropriate under the First Amendment.

It is noteworthy that no one is compelled to go to a celebration on Independence Day, and no one is obliged to march in a parade or applaud the participants. No one is compelled to sing the National Anthem, and no one has to salute Old Glory.

That's America.

We are a trifle late with an editorial about Independence Day, but July is a month for feeling patriotic — all thirty-one days. Last week, it was July 4 all around the world.

We noticed two headlines in the daily paper that day — both on the op-ed page. The contents were not as intriguing as the titles: "A world that couldn't resist democracy," and "Patriotism is more than waving a flag."

The first title caught our attention because the first half of 1990 so vividly announced the inevitability of freedom. Though the world (or parts of it) may live in darkness of dictatorship temporarily, freedom will come. And

when it does, there is a revitalization of the population.

When the Belgian Congo won independence early in the 1960s, a Southern Baptist missionary came for a visit within a few weeks. We expressed excitement about how the scene was played out — with that liberty given to the people.

The missionary explained, with tears. She said many of the people excitedly met the train when it rolled into the station on that great day. They were disappointed — because they expected freedom to arrive on the train — freedom in a box.

Democracy came to the Congo — but only a few were prepared for it. But still, after witnessing the burgeoning of independence across Eastern Europe and even into the USSR in 1990, we've learned that the world cannot forever resist democracy.

But we must remember that the United States of America does not hold sole claim on democracy. In fact, we are still trying to make it work. But democracy, freedom, liberty, and the government of the people are gifts from us to the world.

"Patriotism is more than waving a flag." While flag waving may be more indicative of good citizenship than flag burning, both can be done until our courts tell us to cease.

If we are truly sincere about the importance of individual freedom — we will guard each other's rights as devotedly as we do our own.

July 1 was observed by many Southern Baptist churches as Christian Citizenship Sunday. In a commentary about that special recognition, Larry Braidfoot, former citizenship concerns person for the Christian Life Commission, wrote about the limitations of government:

"Government is ordained of God," he said, using Romans 13:1-7 as his text. "It exists to serve His purposes. God established other human institutions such as the home and the church. Each institution, and those who participate in it, has a special calling. Those callings are different.

"Government is limited," he said. "God has not given it the purpose of the home or the church. God's purposes are bigger than any government, any party. To expect too much of any government, to claim too much for any ruler, is to deny God's ordination of those powers and His ultimate sovereignty."

He observed a final truth about government and rulers: "They are ordained of God to do His purpose among humankind. They hold their power, not by right, but by gift from Him."

It was July 4 all around the world last week. But only in America, where we believe "In God We Trust" and where we sing of the broad stripes and bright stars, where we agree and disagree — only in America was it Independence Day of the July 4, 1776, variety. God does indeed have the whole world in His hands, and that is assuring to know. — WFA

# Freedom to report, have access to news, is on trial

The Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee is facing a self-inflicted dilemma. Its officers, in calling for the resignation or dismissal of Al Shackleford and Dan Martin, mainstays of Baptist Press, face several thorny issues as a result of that action:

(1) Baptist Press has an outstanding record of 44 years as a fair and honest Baptist news agency. It is the major distributor of Baptist news to 400 media points in the nation, and Baptist state papers depend on Baptist Press for news outside their area.

(2) The call for resignation or firing has made martyrs of the two men and the agency — no matter the outcome. It has provoked a great outcry of support, even rage, from grassroots Baptists.

(3) A no-win situation has been created — for the Executive Committee and for Baptist Press. Because of the apparent insensitivity for the men and for Baptists' right to know, future actions of the Executive Committee will be subject to question.

(4) The idea that Shackleford and Martin have been given opportunity "to resign with dignity" is a hollow claim. Christian dignity demands faithfulness to God's call, and faithfulness to stand against attempts to stifle a free press.

Dignity also requires that the two journalists have ample opportunity to defend themselves against charges of biased reporting.

(5) In attempting to squelch the BP staff (Executive Committee officers have ordered that Baptist Press distribute no more stories related to the call for resignations), the Executive Committee is exhibiting power.

This attitude has been suspected of some Executive Committee members, but current strategy reveals a willingness to exercise that kind of control.

(6) The existence of Baptist Press as a reliable news agency will be placed in jeopardy if professional Christian journalists, with experience and integrity, are not at the helm. This free press is indispensable in ensuring Southern Baptists access to all the news.

Martyrs are not needed in a Baptist society where individuals and their rights are respected, and where priesthood of all believers is protected. We have had our martyrs — and they have paid the price. Martyrs are made when Christian principles are violated. Martyrs know when to say, "Here I stand."

Because of this unprecedented act by the Executive Committee, we must realize we live in perilous times. But such times call for decisive actions. When freedom of information is threatened, we are challenged to stand for that free flow of information.

An unhindered Baptist Press is a necessity for Southern Baptists. We must defend the right of every Baptist to know all the news. An open and independent society cannot function without a free press and the freedom to have access to that press.

As this is written, the July 17 called meeting of the Executive Committee is still scheduled. It is possible that the committee will cancel the meeting — but no one knows what the exact outcome of the meeting will be. There is also opportunity for the entire matter to be dropped. In either case — Baptist Press is on trial, as are the careers of two distinguished Baptist journalists. Southern Baptists also are on trial.

We do not know the specific charges against Al Shackleford and Dan Martin, but if there are such charges, they must be heard in an open meeting where those "on trial" are allowed to answer each charge and given sufficient time to do so. And Baptists have a right to observe the meeting.

We call on the Executive Committee to make public each charge and to ensure an open and fair hearing. We have gone too far along the road of secrecy. — WFA

## Baptist and Reflector

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Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor	Betty Williams, Bookkeeper
Lonnie Wilkey, Associate Editor	Pam Gibbs, Administrative Secretary
Connie Davis, Assistant Editor	Rita Gambill, Production Assistant
Connie Umstead, News Assistant	Susie Edwards, Church Pages

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# Dilday issues statement clarifying SBC comments

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)— A statement of clarification about comments made during the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans has been issued by Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Dilday said the statement is intended as a response to "persons who misinterpreted my intention in the comments I made in answer to a question during the Wednesday morning session (June 13) of the convention."

The seminary president said he has received "a strong response of encouragement from across the convention." However, "there have also been numerous letters and calls" from Southern Baptists who have asked for

## Alabama Baptists tap Troy Morrison

MONTGOMERY (BP)— Troy L. Morrison of Montgomery, Ala. has been elected secretary-treasurer of the 1-million-member Alabama Baptist State Convention.

Morrison, 58, was elected July 2 by the 125-member Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions at a called meeting.

He was the unanimous choice of a search committee named last September to seek a successor to A. Earl Potts who will retire Sept. 1, 1990, after six years in the post. The committee was headed by Gerald H. Lord of Florence.

Morrison has been director of church-minister relations for the Alabama convention since 1985. Before going to the agency, he was pastor of Twelfth Street Church in Gadsden, for 17 years (1968-1985). Previously, he was pastor of churches in Kentucky and Alabama.

a clarification.

Dilday's original comments came during a question from messenger Michael Haley of Lakeland, Fla., who said he overheard a press interview in which Dilday referred to actions in the SBC as "satanic and evil."

In his clarification, Dilday said the comment — "that crass, secular political methodology used in the takeover of the convention these past 12 years has satanic and evil qualities to which I am desperately opposed" — was "only one response I gave to many questions from reporters in a hallway interview."

The statement of clarification continues, "For 12 years I have publicly denounced political activity on both sides in the convention as contrary to our Biblical mandate. My statement to reporters in New Orleans was an attempt to say again that political activity in the Lord's work is wrong. It has engendered a decade of hostility which in turn threatens Bold Mission Thrust, damages missions and evangelism, weakens our testimony to the lost world, and divides not only the SBC, but state conventions, associations, churches, friends and even families."

Dilday said his statement in New Orleans "was an attempt to express the same concern the Peace Committee raised when it said, 'The extent of political activity in the convention at the present time creates distrust, diminishes our ability to do missions and evangelism, is detrimental to our influence, and impedes our ability to serve our Lord.'"

Dilday referred to Matthew 16:23, explaining, "when we use the ways of the world and not the ways of God, we become satanic; we become stumbling blocks to his work. The Bible says

God's people should renounce "disgraceful, underhanded ways, and refuse to practice cunning (2 Corinthians 4:2)," Dilday wrote.

"It is my belief that no matter how noble a cause may be, we must not use unrighteous methods to accomplish that cause. The end never justifies the means," Dilday said in the clarification. "Therefore, political methodology on any side is wrong."

In the section of the statement titled "apology," Dilday said "it is obvious to me now that 'satanic and evil' have different connotations to different hearers, and that my choice of words blurred the intent of my statement, leading some to assume I had labeled fellow believers as satanic. That was not my intention, and if my statement

was so perceived, I am truly sorry."

Dilday said he wanted Southern Baptists to understand that "I did not call the conservative movement in the convention satanic. I am a theological conservative and I am as determined as anyone to preserve our denomination's longstanding commitment to the Bible as God's perfect word. I did not speak in judgment of persons or motives — only methodologies and strategies that have been used by both contending groups."

The statement further states, "I certainly did not want to contribute to further erosion of our effectiveness in missions and evangelism, which is the very danger I have spoken against these past 12 years."

## Missionaries not 'alarmed'

MANILA, Philippines (BP)— Southern Baptist missionaries in the Philippines have made no formal plans to change their activities following the apparent abduction of a Peace Corps volunteer by communist guerrillas.

The missionaries say they have no reason to become alarmed, since attacks are not aimed at them. None of the 170 Southern Baptist workers assigned to the Philippines has received threats or knows of missionaries from other organizations who have.

"Right now it's business as usual," said missionary David Cartwright, chairman of the Luzon station of the Philippine Baptist Mission and a church planter on Luzon, the northernmost of the two largest islands in the Philippines.

The Peace Corps said June 27 it was removing its 261 volunteers from the Philippines to protect them from being killed or abducted by communist rebels. Intelligence reports revealed that the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Philippines' Communist Party, had directed its guerrillas to regard the volunteers as "open subjects of direct assault," according to news stories.

It is unclear just how long United States officials have known about the June 13 abduction of Timothy Swanson, 26, from his home in the village of Patag. Swanson reportedly communicated with his wife that his plight might be improved if she told no one of his kidnapping.

Clarence Stewart, Tennessee Baptist Convention Partnership Missions Director, reported the upcoming Aug. 2-15 trip by Tennessee volunteers to the Philippines is still scheduled. Twenty-five workers will help lead an evangelistic crusade in Mindanao.

"Even though there continues to be unrest in certain parts of the country the Foreign Mission Board and the leaders on the field indicate that everything is safe where these teams will be going," said Stewart.

On a case-by-case basis, some Southern Baptist missionaries are becoming increasingly cautious and more selective about where they go, especially in areas where the NPA activity is strongest. As one missionary put it, "We need your prayers. We appreciate the concern of our families and friends back home, and we ask your prayers that we may take advantage of the evangelistic doors God opens during times of tension and uncertainty."

The NPA has been fighting for 21 years to establish a Marxist government in the Philippines. The Philippine military said in late June that rebels in Manila plan to target Americans and other foreigners for assassination and kidnapping during the next six months.

Since May Americans have been cautioned by the U.S. State Department to be careful traveling in the Philippines, but they have not been told to stay away or to leave. "We have advised Americans that a threat exists against U.S. government personnel and facilities," said Philip Covington, a State Department spokesman quoted by an international news service.

## Tennessean: Liberia faces 'most difficult period'

By Connie Davis, assistant editor  
Fighting in the Monrovia area of Liberia has become so intense that missionaries like Bradley Brown on leave in Morristown fear Baptist offices and homes will be looted and damaged.

Since Christmas Eve 36 missionaries have left the country. "So-called rebels" or members of the Liberian Patriotic Front, explained Brown, are trying to unseat President Samuel K.

Doe and have triggered inter-tribal bloodshed.

Six missionaries, including Tennessean Gwen Wilkinson of Ardmore and Chris Wilkinson; Ed and Frances Laughridge; and Kenneth and Joyce Nicholson; remain because they live isolated from the fighting and near borders.

Brown, executive director of the Liberian Baptist Mission with 27 years experience in the country, and his

wife, Carolyn, have been on leave in the missionary house of First Church, Morristown, since May 25. They planned to stay a month while visiting a son who is studying at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City.

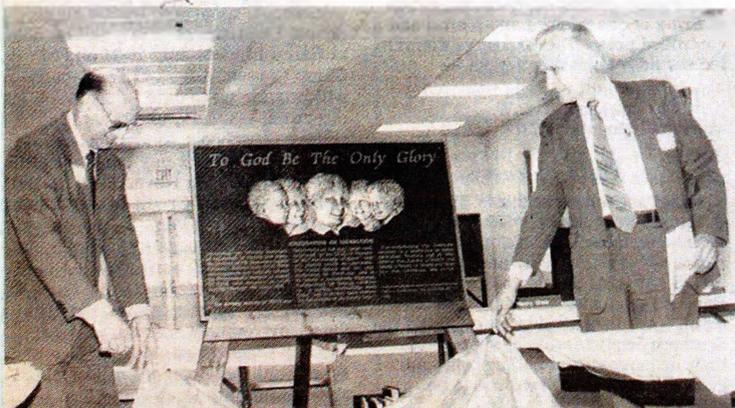
"We're facing the most difficult period we've faced during my time in Liberia as we face the negative, tragic effects of this civil war," said Brown.

Those fighting are not antagonistic toward missionaries, but the danger is in living around the fighting, he explained, noting that a missionary couple of another denomination was killed.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board reported phone and utility services have been discontinued in Monrovia and the airport has been closed. Brown also learned from friends a prominent Liberian Baptist man had been killed in the fighting.

Because of the country's peaceful history, Baptist work and opportunities had grown each year, said Brown. He asked for prayer for the Liberian people who are suffering and the leaders. About 200,000 Liberians have escaped the country as refugees. Brown noted the Krahn and Gio tribes need prayer. Because President Doe is a member of the Krahn tribe, it is pitted against other tribes, he explained.

Other missionaries to Liberia on furlough in Tennessee are John T. McPherson, Knoxville; Mark and Jeanine Coleman, Memphis; and Daryl and Glenda Cox, Lake City.



**PLAQUE UNVEILED** — James Best, left, chairman of the board of trustees for the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, and Frank Ingraham, legal counsel and trustee for TBCH, unveil a plaque that honors a landmark 1984 judicial decision which ruled that TBCH was exclusively religious in its child-caring function. The U.S. Court of Appeals, 6th Circuit, upheld the verdict in May 1986. The bronze plaque was unveiled at the recent meeting of the TBCH board of trustees, held at the Memphis TBCH campus.

# Our Readers Write

## God loves both

I am retired from the newspaper business after 41 years. I did not always agree with our paper's stand on certain issues, but I was free to disagree without fear of being dismissed.

I cannot believe what is taking place with our Baptist Press being controlled by one group. This way is not news, this is slanted journalism (like it used to be in Russia). When are we going to wake up and say "enough is enough"? This group seems to fear the truth being made public, so they just fire anyone who dares disagree.

There has to be a time when we (the laymen) take back control of the SBC. One thing about it, we could not hurt it. We need to quit telling what someone else believes and key in on our own beliefs.

Let God judge. I don't qualify, do you?

Thank God for a pastor like mine, a man who has an opinion, but when I represent my church in any convention, he simply says, "Vote the way you feel God wants you to vote."

Until God gets back control of our SBC, everything we try to do for our Lord will suffer. Just because we drag, push, or bus more bodies to vote for a certain man is no guarantee. This is not pleasing God.

You know what? I believe God loves both sides and until we learn to do the same, Satan is the winner.

Harold Wayland  
7822 Shoffner Lane  
Knoxville 37938

## Controlled press

I find it abhorrent that those who contributed most to religious freedom in America would attempt to further limit freedom by firing those who refuse to be intimidated.

Isn't it strange indeed that freedom loving Baptists have become a people who demand a controlled press?

Howard G. Olive, pastor  
Monte Vista Church  
Maryville 37801

## Who can heal?

Grave damage has been done to Christian fellowship, and I hear no one saying, "I am sorry. Let's talk about it."

In the brighter days of the Southern Baptist Convention, brothers and sisters could disagree, vote in different ways, and still remain friends. But in recent years a spirit has crept in that God says He hates: "one who sows discord among brothers" (Proverbs 6:19; see verses 16-19). Grave damage has been done. And only the hurt ones seem sorry about it.

A part of this is the "branding" of brothers who disagree. A vote against Dr. Chapman was interpreted as a vote against the Bible and for liberalism. The smear sheets have done it for years, and even our president was quoted as saying as much. The name automatically given to opposition is "liberal." Our Lord warned against this very thing:

"I tell you: whoever is angry with his brother will be brought before the judge; whoever calls his brother 'You good-for-nothing!' will be brought before the Council; and whoever calls his brother a worthless fool will be in danger of going to the fire of hell (Matthew 5:22, TEV).

The Bible, interpreted through the Spirit of my Lord, is my absolute authority. Yet some would call me names because I disagree with everything about the movement and vote for a different candidate. How dare them!

No one is saying, "I'm sorry. Please forgive me." Through the years hands

have reached out with offers of reconciliation, but those hands seem always to have been from one side. Who is more like Jesus?

A grave damage has been done. Who can heal it?

Wesley Ellis, pastor  
Forest Hill Church  
3048 Forest Hill Rd.  
Germantown 38138

## 'Road not taken'

Those who voted in New Orleans to continue down the path Southern Baptists are headed now will live to regret their action. "The road not taken" will haunt us in the days and years ahead.

By our action we have announced to the churches and to those who have marveled at the tremendously effective way Southern Baptists have worked together for the furtherance of the Gospel that we are coming apart. No amount of cheerleading and wrong-hearted praying can reverse the avalanche. Only a miracle — for that I pray.

Zenona F. Harris  
218 Five Points Drive  
Talbott 37877

## Modus operandi

"Buy-out," "cast-out," or "push-out," seems to be the way of any who have an insatiable thirst for power. It appears that if one will not go head first then apply enough pressure and it may be that he will go feet first. The desired result is the same — OUT.

Is this the modus operandi of the powers that be to get rid of two well-trained, experienced, dedicated, Christian journalists at Baptist Press or anyone else who gets in the way?

Joseph T. Nickell  
Route 3, Box 470  
Maryville 37801

## Unrecognizable heritage

I have been a Southern Baptist all my life. The events of recent years in Southern Baptist life grow more alarming and unbelievable daily.

Baptist principles such as priesthood of the believer and separation of church and state seem to have been discarded and now it appears that a free press is dangerous and undesirable.

It is with great sadness that I look at a denomination I have called my own, and an important part of my heritage, and find it becoming unrecognizable and foreign.

Employees of Southern Baptists agencies who have given their lives to this denomination deserve our support and our gratitude, not uncaring and demeaning treatment.

Janelle L. Hamilton  
305 Hildreth Court  
Nashville 37215

## Flow of information

It has long been the practice of totalitarian regimes, whether secular or ecclesiastical, to consolidate their power by controlling the flow of information. If I can tell you only what I want you to know, to a large degree I can bend you to my will. This explains the decision of the SBC Executive Committee to ask for the resignations of Baptist Press executives Al Shackleford and Dan Martin.

Widely respected throughout the com-

## Southwestern gifts

FORT WORTH, Texas — Two foundation grants and a \$1 million-plus anonymous gift have paved the way for the construction of a new music library at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

munity of professional journalists and beyond, these two men have done a superhuman job of reporting SBC controversies in a thorough and objective fashion.

T. J. Walsh  
Suite 1200  
67 Madison Ave.  
Memphis 38103

**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.**

## Wrong date?

I have just been glancing over my official "Annuity Board pocket calendar" 1990 edition. I noted on June 3 we observed Religious Liberty Sunday; on July 1 we observed Christian Citizenship Sunday; on July 4 Independence Day. Between the former and the latter our Southern Baptist leadership was busily working to silence the free Baptist press.

I wonder what we will observe in 1991 on June 2? My official "Annuity Board pocket calendar" says Religious Liberty Sunday. That can't be right, can it?

Gary Baker  
First Church  
Sweetwater 37874

## Death knell

A headline in the May 9 Baptist and Reflector may have been more prophetic than anyone realized at that time — "Baptists' right to know may not be guaranteed." The reference was to a Southern Seminary trustee meeting.

That headline is most applicable to the Baptist Press. Al Shackleford and Dan Martin are respected journalists. The Chattanooga Times (June 27, 1990) story "Baptist Press chiefs told to quit or force 'harsh' alternatives" appeared appropriately on the obituary page!

Our nation has just celebrated its 214th year of independence and freedom. Suppression of a free press, whether it be in a nation or a religious convention, sounds a death knell to freedom in the nation or the convention.

I strongly protest even the suggestion of firing of Shackleford and Martin and a controlled press. The Executive Committee should rethink its position.

Anne Nolan  
1103 Crownpoint Rd. W.  
Signal Mountain 37377

## Right to know

"What are they afraid of?" That is the question I keep hearing. What are the "fundamentalist" leaders in our denomination so afraid of? Why are they determined to fire Al Shackleford, director of Baptist Press, and Dan Martin, news editor? Are they afraid that rank and file Southern Baptists will not approve of their denominational political shenanigans if those actions continue to be reported?

A fair journalist must report events — the bad as well as the good. Southern Baptists have a right to know what is going on in our denomination. We have a right to know all the news, not just the "parts" of the news our leaders want us to know. I feel that Al Shackleford and

Dan Martin have done an excellent job of leading Baptist Press to continue its fine tradition of reporting all the news in an unbiased fashion. They should be commended rather than fired!

When taking control of a country one of the first things that leaders of a totalitarian government do is to try to control the press. In such a situation the press ceases to report news accurately, and becomes instead an instrument for propaganda. If our leaders are not ashamed of their actions, and if they are doing what is good and right, then why do they want to suppress the news by controlling Baptist Press? Why are they so angered when Baptist people are given the opportunity to read the simple facts? Think about it!

Steve Witt  
1001 Mountain Creek Road  
Chattanooga 37405

## Wants free press

I am appalled at the action of our six SBC Executive Committee officers in regard to Al Shackleford and Dan Martin of Baptist Press. Even if their dismissal by SBC Executive Committee action is a foregone conclusion as the old saying goes, "the opera's not over until the fat lady sings." There is no SBC Executive Committee Bylaw or Southern Baptist precedent which allows for these officers to act as a body or to elect or dismiss staff members of the Executive Committee.

Baptist Press since its founding has consistently received high marks from secular as well as SBC related journalists for its objective, balanced, and fair presentation of Baptist news without fear or favor. Both of these men each having more than 30 years of journalistic experience have served us and our denomination in an exemplary manner.

Al Shackleford left an outstanding legacy as editor of the Baptist and Reflector as he consistently fought to not muzzle, silence, or control the news. His goal is and has been to keep all Southern Baptist information of all SBC news that's "fit to print."

The ideal has been a free press, in a free church, in a free state. Perhaps the Baptist Press can employ editors from Pravda as the winds of openness are beginning to blow there.

Mike Young, pastor  
Pleasant Grove Church  
7634 Gann Rd.  
Hixson 37343

## Weekday education workshops planned

The church weekday education workshops, sponsored by the Sunday School Department, TBC, will be held at Camp Linden, July 20-21 and at Camp Carson, Aug. 3-4. The faculty will provide up-to-date information for directors; teachers, and others in church preschools, kindergartens, day care, and mother's day out programs. "Good Beginnings Never End" is the workshop theme. Credit for eight hours of study will be given.

Directors of programs will receive information on all aspects of administration. Conferences for teachers include Developmental Art, Creating a Safe Environment, Language Arts, Science Discoveries, Music/Movement, Emotional Development of Preschoolers, Tuning into Each Child.

Sessions begin with dinner at 5:30 p.m. on Friday and conclude at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday. For registration and information, contact Sunday School Department, TBC, P. O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024; phone (615) 371-2054.

# Editors pledge support to Baptist Press . . .

(Continued from page 1)

The editors' resolution states: "Unrestricted access to news and information, provided in an objective and balanced manner, is essential in maintaining the health and vitality of any organization, including the Southern Baptist Convention. . . .

"Baptist Press has ably and consistently provided such information for Baptist state papers, as well as other media outlets, since its inception in 1946. . . . (Shackleford and Martin) have continued this tradition of professional service with exceptional skill and commitment to Southern Baptists throughout the world and the larger Christian community."

The resolution notes that the editors express their heartfelt appreciation or the quality service rendered by Baptist Press for the fair and equitable manner in which it has reported events in the SBC during the past 12 years" of convention controversies.

"The editors record their profound

disappointment and grave concern with the attempt by certain members of the SBC Executive Committee to suppress a free religious press and restrict the flow of indispensable information to Southern Baptists around the world."

The press association "wholeheartedly commends Mr. Shackleford and Mr. Martin for the excellence of their respective ministries; and . . . expresses grave concern with publicly announced plans to remove Mr. Shackleford and Mr. Martin from their key positions of responsibility; and calls upon the SBC Executive Committee to provide Mr. Shackleford and Mr. Martin a fair and open forum for a discussion of any and all charges against them, with full opportunity for response."

The lone dissent to the resolution was made by Tammy Ledbetter, managing editor of the *Indiana Baptist*.

She later told her colleagues: "While

## Cumberland Association taps Pitts

R. Wesley Pitts has been elected director of missions of Cumberland Association, effective July 2. He succeeds Leslie Baumgartner, interim director since Jan. 29, and Harold boulders, who retired from the position after 16 years.

Pitts, who was serving as interim pastor in Adamsville, was pastor of First Church, McKenzie, from 1983-89. He also was pastor of First Church, Collierville; West Shiloh Church, Stanville; a Mississippi church; and was

an interim pastor.

He is a graduate of Clarke College, Newton, Miss.; Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss.; and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Pitts has been chairman of the Tennessee Baptist Convention resolutions committee; a board member of Union University, Jackson; and has served in several associational roles.

He and his wife, Diane, have one child.

there is much in this statement that I endorse, I cannot in good conscience affirm every element of this resolution. . . .

"I am of the opinion that there have been failures on the part of Baptist Press in the reporting of our denomination. This resolution fails to acknowledge any problem. Furthermore, I believe it to be not only the prerogative, but the stated responsibility of the Executive Committee to address such matters and deal with them."

The editors' meeting was called because of the crisis at Baptist Press, said press association President J. B. Fowler, editor of the *Baptist New Mexican*.

"The SBPA had originally intended to meet in September to further develop our networking system, which has been in operation for the past six years," he said. "But when the future

of BP became uncertain, this meeting was called.

"It was called to ensure that the SBPA has a free flow of information to share with the people in the pews."

The meeting was called after Shackleford and Martin had been told to resign but before the July 17 Executive Committee meeting had been called. Editors from 22 state papers attended.

The editors also named a committee to "work out options" for sharing news stories among themselves. They are editors James Watters of the Northwest, Quentin Lockwood Jr. of New York, and Fletcher Allen of Tennessee, and associate editors Toby Druin of Texas and Greg Warner of Florida.

Marv Knox, editor of *Kentucky's Western Recorder*, contributed to this story. — Editor

## Missionaries cope with civil strife

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP) — A degenerating civil war situation in Ethiopia and deadly food riots in Zambia have led missionaries in the two African countries to limit travel and maintain low profiles.

Southern Baptist missionaries in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Lusaka, Zambia, said in late June that things were tense, but none felt in immediate danger.

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital, is awaiting a threatened attack by forces of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front. In a rebel radio broadcast monitored in Nairobi

by Kenyan news agencies, the EPRDF claimed to have killed 22,000 government troops in three weeks in June.

Two other rebel groups also are fighting the Ethiopian army. Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam told international reporters in late June that the country was "on the verge of collapse," and ordered a general mobilization.

All Southern Baptist work up-country has been suspended since last November, when rebels captured the region where missionaries operated feeding stations and development projects. The missionaries evacuated to Addis Ababa.

# Shackleford, Martin decline offer to resign . . .

(Continued from page 1)

clarification statement was "not to be edited in any fashion" and distributed through Baptist Press and establishing new policy that no other news releases on this subject would be released through Baptist Press."

Shackleford noted Baptists have historically adhered to the principle of freedom of conscience."

"We have trusted our Baptist church members with the right to discern truth and on the basis of that discernment, the ability to make proper decisions," he said.

Martin, in his statement, said he listened carefully and prayerfully" to the latest offer from the Executive Committee officers.

"I heard them describe 'irreconcilable differences' between Executive Committee leaders and Baptist Press. I have waited for a legitimate effort at resolution and reconciliation of our differences.

"In an hour-long discussion with Sam Pace in May and again when he brought me out at the annual meeting in New Orleans, I indicated a willingness and a desire to resolve the conflict regarding Baptist Press.

"I was ready then and am ready now to sit down with honorable men of good will and common sense to discuss the whole issue, including perceptions and even the possibility that I may not be news editor."

Martin noted that instead of working toward resolution of differences, he was presented with "instructions to

resign or be fired.

"Rather than discussion and dialogue, I have a demand to leave. I had counted on the integrity and Christianity of the leaders of the Executive Committee to want to deal with the issues, not simply hand down a request that I resign or be fired."

Martin said he is committed to "a news service that is impartial, credible, trustworthy, and honors the right of individual Baptists to have the best information possible."

Both men said that because of their convictions and commitment to a free

flow of information, they declined to offer their resignations.

Shackleford told the Baptist and Reflector that the July 9 conference call with Pace and Sullivan was beneficial and that it was conducted with a Christian spirit and attitude.

"Despite the fact it didn't resolve anything, it was a rewarding experience to discuss these serious matters in a caring forum," Shackleford said.

During the conference call, Ingraham restated to the officers his desire to "present some facts on the

behalf of Shackleford and Martin that otherwise the Executive Committee would not have in order to make a fair determination."

Ingraham said Pace told him he would consider that request and get back to Ingraham.

The Nashville attorney also said Pace told him he was working with Eldredge Miller, an Executive Committee member from Oklahoma, on the wording of a statement and a motion of termination to be read during the July 17 called meeting of the Executive Committee.

### Executive Committee member

## Sullivan statement on Baptist Press

Reached at First Church, Lenoir City, Monday afternoon by the Baptist and Reflector, Charles Sullivan, chairman of the Executive Committee's Administrative and Convention Arrangements Subcommittee, made this prepared statement:

"The current situation surrounding Baptist Press, Al Shackleford, and Dan Martin, has evolved due to an effort on the part of the Executive Committee officers to live out inerrantly the word of God, when it says, 'by this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.'

Learning that a motion was forthcoming in the organizational meeting of Executive Committee in New Orleans to call for the immediate termination of the above

two men, the officers attempted to demonstrate brotherly love by trying to derail that motion before its presentation and by agreeing with Dr. Harold Bennett that he should offer these men — not require them — the opportunity to resign on Sept. 1; so as to avert a similar experience in the regular September Executive Committee meeting. It was also expressed to Dr. Bennett that there should be no charges placed against the men, the problem being a matter of perception in the presentation of news. If you have three people looking at a picture, each one will see something different. To ask conservative leaders to continue to accept 'a moderate-eyed' news coverage is like asking President Bush to accept the press

secretary of President Jimmy Carter.

The officers of the Executive Committee are for a free press. The severance package that Dr. Bennett offered was in no way offered as a means for silencing the press. It was also clearly recognized by the officers that any interpretation that the "press" desired could be made of the current situation.

Baptist Press will continue to be a vital part of the Executive Committee. It will continue to provide Southern Baptists a full and complete picture of Baptist news.

It is my opinion that the Executive Committee in its July 17 meeting will act in Christian love and fairness, but it will act resolutely." — Charles Sullivan, pastor of First Church, Lenoir City.

## Big Emory Association presents case on camp

NASHVILLE — Representatives of Big Emory Association presented their case regarding the use of the association's camp property during an administrative hearing July 5 in Nashville.

Judge Marion Wall heard almost three hours of testimony from Big Emory Association and the Tennessee Department of Health and Environment.

Wall announced, however, a decision would not be rendered on the case for at least two weeks. In the meantime, Big Emory's Camp Howard is to remain closed, Wall said.

The case revolves around whether the association's Camp Howard is an "organized" camp making it subject to a \$50 annual permit and conforming to the rules of the state of Tennessee's camp laws. For background information, see the June 6 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*, page five.

J. W. Bargiol, director of missions for Big Emory Association, based in Harriman, maintains the property never has been used for organized camp programs. Instead, the property is for member churches to use as they see fit, primarily for picnics and recreation, Bargiol noted.

Officials from the state health department believe, however, the property does fall within the intent of the Tennessee camp law because it has "permanent or semi-permanent structures established or maintained as living or sleeping quarters." Also, the state contends, the property is used for religious instruction which is specified in the camp law.

Nashville attorney Frank C. Ingraham represented Big Emory as legal counsel during the hearing.

Bargiol, called as a witness by Ingraham, emphasized that for almost 30 years the association has not used the camp for organized programs and has no intention of doing so. He also stressed he feels that it would be "unethical" for the camp to apply for a permit because the association would be unable to make the facility conform to the camp law.

The state produced evidence that showed Big Emory had been issued permits from 1965-87. A permit fee was not in effect until 1987. The documents produced (both permit applications and inspection reports) bore the signature of Tommy Davis, caretaker of the property.

Bargiol said he was not aware the

documents existed until about a week before the hearing. He said Davis had never been authorized by the association to sign any permit applications.

Questions were raised regarding the signature which Bargiol noted was not that of Davis. Ingraham acknowledged later that Davis knew about the signature which was signed by his wife, but did not concede that Bargiol knew about the matter.

In a closing statement Ingraham pointed out the state had made no attempt to close the camp until May of 1989 despite no fees being paid for 1987 and 1988.

The state's attorney, David Harbin, concluded the facts show Big Emory operated a facility which provided "an outdoor living experience" at least 12 to 13 times last year and that the camp was used for religious instruction.

Wall's ruling will address whether or not Camp Howard falls under the state's camp law. He also will address three questions raised by Bargiol in his testimony.

- Can the state issue a permit without a request or application?
- Can the state force us to apply and/or accept a permit which would put us in violation of the law when the permit was issued?
- Can the state force us to apply for something and accept a permit to do something we do not want to do?

Wall said he would answer those questions in the ruling he will render later this month.

Big Emory's attempt to contest the state came approximately one week after a called meeting of the association June 26 at Trenton Street Church in Harriman.

Approximately 184 messengers from 37 of the association's 48 churches voted overwhelmingly not to pay the permit fee.

Messengers expressed the opinion that the churches have the right to use the property as they see fit without interference from the state.

During the meeting two representatives of the state health department

— Billy Bottoms and Steve Blackburn — were on hand to answer questions. They emphasized the state was trying to tell the association how to use the camp. "We're only interested in the health and safety of those using the facilities," Bottoms said.

During the called meeting, messengers also were asked, "What do we do with the property for the future?" In a close vote messengers approved the establishment of a special committee which would survey the churches and formulate a recommendation to the regular, annual meeting of the association in October regarding future use of the property.

— Lonnie Wilkey

## Southeastern alumni elect Rogers to office

Sandy Evans Rogers, a member of Woodmont Church, Nashville, has been elected secretary of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's national alumni organization.

Rogers was elected June 14 during the seminary's national alumni luncheon in New Orleans, held in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting.

Luncheon speakers included Lewis A. Drummond, seminary president; Bruce Powers, professor of Christian education; and Randall Lolley, outgoing alumni president and former seminary president.

## DOM Terry Geren resigns

Terry Geren has resigned as director of missions at Riverside Association, based in Livingston.

Geren has accepted the pastorate of Baptist Grove Church in Fuquay-Varina, N.C., effective June 24.

Geren has been director of missions at Riverside since 1986. He was previously pastor of Allons Church in the association. He also served as pastor of Benton Station Church in Polk County.

Geren and his wife, Lucille, are natives of Cleveland. They have two sons.

### Through video

## Dyer church doubles ministry

Even small churches can make use of today's technology if following the example of New Bethlehem Church, Dyer.

Because of the church's video ministry nearly twice as many people worship with New Bethlehem Church as attend in person.

"People don't realize how simple it is," said Pastor Randy Latch. "It's as simple as buying a camera and setting it up," referring to a camcorder. He noted many people already own personal videocassette players and TVs which can serve as monitors.

Video tapes of Sunday morning worship services are provided to shut-ins, members unable to attend, and five nursing homes. Latch estimates about 150 view the tapes. About 175 attend

morning worship service at New Bethlehem.

"These people in the nursing home just look forward to seeing it come," explained Latch "So far we haven't had anyone use it as a crutch," he continued, referring to absenteeism.

The ministry also reaches others, Latch added. Families and friends view the tape and become aware of the church.

The two-year-old ministry, the brainchild of member Toy Poyner, was funded by private donations. The church started out with a camcorder, video player, and color monitor — worth about \$1500. Today it has a camera with a black and white monitor, 11 videocassette players, three videocassette recorders, and three color monitors.

Some of the elderly members have bought personal VCRs because of the ministry. And because the church has a color monitor in the nursery, workers aren't as hard to get, reported the pastor.

The other color monitor is used in another aspect of the church's media ministry — church education. Video tapes produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board, Foreign and Home Mission boards, and other outlets are viewed during church programs.

Another avenue the technology offers is broadcast of tapes over a cable TV company, added Latch, which is being pursued by the church.

"I'm not in it for the glory. I'm in it for the ministry," Latch stated.

Jarvis Hearn, Tennessee Baptist Convention Telecommunications Director, encouraged other churches to contact him at 615-371-2027 for assistance and information on available videocassettes. Nearly 1000 tapes are available through associational directors of missions or the TBC, reported Hearn. — *Connie Davis*

## First Church, Cookeville hosts training seminar

First Church, Cookeville, will host a training seminar Aug. 3-5 for anyone interested in crisis pregnancy work or in beginning a crisis pregnancy center.

Andy Merritt, associate pastor, missions, at Edgewood Church, Columbus, Ga., will lead the seminar. Merritt has been involved in crisis pregnancy work for nine years. The center at Edgewood Church is one of the largest in the country and averages 110 clients per week.

During the seminar, Merritt will use the new training manual developed by five directors of successful centers across the country. The manual was developed in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta.

Registration fee for the seminar is \$10. Breakfast and lunch will be served on Saturday, Aug. 4. Reservations should be made by July 30.

For additional information, contact Janice Allen, director of the crisis pregnancy center of First Church, Cookeville, at (615) 526-5525.

## TeamTalk

By D. L. Lowrie

I have kept a Baptist Press news release on my desk for several months. It contains a report on a speech that Larry Lewis, the president of the Home Mission

Board, made. He spoke on the difference Woman's Missionary Union can make in the local church and the state convention.

His report conflicted with much that I have heard over the years about WMU. The criticism usually has blamed WMU for some problem, or accused it of trying to run the church. I never acknowledged that as a pastor. I often benefited from WMU help. I have heard the women criticized and maligned in a thousand different ways. While WMU is not perfect, it has been productive.

Larry Lewis reported that a study in one of our state conventions indicated that the churches who have a WMU

give 123 percent more per member to the Cooperative Program than do the churches without a WMU. He also indicated that they gave 83 percent more per member to home missions through the Annie Armstrong offering than the churches without a WMU.

Lewis concluded, "I think this affirms that which all of us know. There is nothing more important in a church than mission action, mission support, and mission education." Surely we would agree with him.

You will understand why I thank God daily for Katharine Bryan and our Tennessee Baptist WMU team. They are prayerfully seeking to help every church have an ongoing mission action and mission education program in their church. I salute their efforts and pray for their success.

So to all Tennessee Baptist women who are carrying the burden in our churches and associations, thank you. Our Lord will repay you for your good labor when we stand in His blessed presence. May the Lord increase your number.



LOWRIE

# Salem Association Baptists beat the heat, build new facility

By Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor  
**LIBERTY** — When Baptists in Salem Association met June 30 in Liberty, they had a heated meeting — literally. Fortunately, however, the heat was generated by a hot sun, not hot tempers.

The object of the meeting was to begin construction of the association's first office building. The office is currently housed in the basement of Director of Missions Thurman Seber's home.



**WHAT'S NEXT** — Thurman Seber, right, director of missions for Salem Association, took a minute's rest to visit with Jewel Johnson, a member of Covenant Church, Smithville.

Association messengers voted last October to begin construction of a 2240-square-foot building from the same plans used by Haywood Association in Brownsville as soon as funds were available.

Since the October vote churches have responded financially. Seber said they have received about \$28,000 thus far. The response has been so encouraging, association leaders are hoping to finish the building as funds come in, making it debt-free when completed. Seber estimated that with the volunteer labor that has been provided, the building can be completed for \$50,000 or less.

As for the work day, it began at 6 a.m. and lasted until around 7 p.m. Seber estimated more than 100 people participated in the project at various times throughout the day.

When the last nail of the day had been driven, the walls were up and the roof was on.

Seber and other leaders in the association said the project created a lot of interest and excitement in the two counties served by the association.

Tom Britton, pastor of Faith Church, Smithville, said the fellowship created by the project "will do as much to enhance the Baptist work in Dekalb and Cannon counties as anything we could have done."

Britton, a former construction worker, and Seber helped prepare the way for a successful workday by laying the blocks on the foundation and beginning the flooring.

He noted the goal was to get the building "in the dry" in one day. "A lot of people didn't think we could do it, but we knew we could," Britton

said.

Several pastors in the association donned aprons filled with nails and hammered away with the best of them.

Charles Olson, pastor of Sycamore Church, Woodbury, said the project "provided an opportunity for churches to work together."

Richard Buckner, pastor of Mt. Zion Church, Liberty, agreed, noting the cooperative venture provided not only "great fellowship," but also an opportunity to "get a lot of work done for the Lord."

The project drew a number of participants; some skilled carpenters, others who were just willing to do what they could as needed.

The variety of skills and willingness to work paid off, Seber said. "We had an accident free day and had no quarrels about how things should be done," he said.

Dave Butterbaugh, a deacon at Prosperity Church, Liberty, and a contractor, supervised the building project. He agreed with Seber's assessment.

"Willing workers are hard to beat no matter what the job is," he said.

One of the participants was a politician who "took the day off" from campaigning.

Kenny Edge, a deacon at Dry Creek Church, Dowelltown, and a candidate for road supervisor in Dekalb County, noted "we haven't been in each other's way."

"The Lord has really been in this project from the beginning and it is showing up today," he added.

And, the workday was not for men only. Seber noted several women in the



**HAMMERING IT IN** — Mark Shinnett, pastor of Prosperity Church, Liberty, took part in an association-wide workday.

association prepared food for the workers. They "worked like beavers" getting everyone fed, he affirmed.

Since that Saturday effort work is progressing well on the building, Seber said in an interview July 5.

He noted that between three to ten people have worked each day since June 30. Seber related three non-Baptist roofers who live in the community learned about the project and came over one day after work and volunteered to lay shingles on the roof.

"There has been a great spirit of cooperation," Seber affirmed, adding that "folks feel good" about the building effort.

While acknowledging there's still much to do, Seber expects to be in his new office in August.

## One Word More By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

On a hot July afternoon in 1954 in a sauna-like assembly hall, Fort Knox, Kentucky, I heard him.

Along with hundreds of other fresh college graduates, I had completed intensive summer "training" as the culmination of four years of Reserve Officers Training Corps schooling.

Some of the work had been drudgery back at the Furman University campus in Greenville, South Carolina. The ROTC classes served several purposes. You could bear the four years of classes if you were strong and could march straight and shoot almost straight.

And — if you should have to serve in the Armed Forces, you had enough military exposure to give you a head start. Those classes also kept you from being drafted — this was Korean "Conflict" time.

I survived the four years, some edifying, some exceedingly boring times. And at the end, Fort Knox waited for me.

I suppose there were two things that kept me going during those 100 plus degree days on the dusty compound. Betty was waiting "back home." Marriage and a life together were scheduled for August. That gave me hope.

The other reason was not known until a couple of weeks prior to our graduation. Then we were told, he was going to speak to our class.

Colonel Chuck Yeager already was one of my heroes. He was a test pilot, a WW II ace pilot, the first man to surpass the speed of sound in flight. What

a man!

You have seen him too. Now retired, he appears on television often, telling us the right parts to use for our car and giving other bits of advice and wisdom. You know, I believe him even now.

That day so many years ago, the ace told us about endurance, loyalty, integrity, fair play, character. I listened well. He said something too about knowing where you are headed — and being able to overcome surprises. I think he said something about holy leadership.

Heroes are made, not born. If a person turns out to be a hero, that person surely did not try to be one. Heroes are not perfect either, not even Chuck Yeager. Remember David, the killer of Goliath, the leader of all Israel, the man closest to God's own heart? He wasn't a hero when he had Uriah killed so he could marry Bathsheba, his wife.

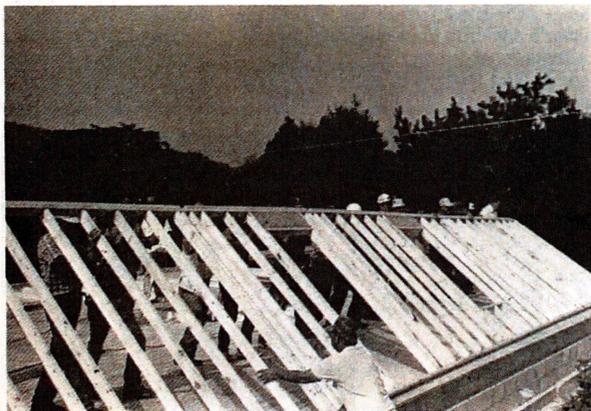
Today, Baptists need heroes. Today, the Christian world needs heroes. Today, the realm of humanity needs heroes. But we are more likely to find them among the quiet, inconspicuous unknowns — than among those who are trying out for the role.

Remember the shepherd boy with the slingshot?



ALLEN

**RAISING THE WALL** — Members from Salem Association churches helped raise the walls of their new associational office building.



**COMMITTEE MEMBERS** — The building committee for Salem Association did more than just plan; they took an active part. From left, Bobby Zumbro, First Church, Woodbury; James Daniel, pastor, West Main Church, Alexandria, chairman; Dave Butterbaugh, Prosperity Church, Liberty; Tom Britton, pastor, Faith Church, Smithville; Thomas Baines, pastor, Calvary Church, Smithville; Patty Seal, Elizabeth Chapel, Smithville; and Bobby Colvert, pastor, Covenant Church, Smithville.

# Volunteers build, give toward student center in Harriman

**HARRIMAN** — Work is progressing on a new building which will serve as the Baptist student center at Roane State Community College in Harriman. The facility will replace a mobile unit which has been in use for several years.

The building is being constructed on property owned by the Tennessee Baptist Convention, located across from the entrance to the college.

Funds for the building are being provided by the churches of Big Emory Association. Jim Hutson, pastor of First Church, Rockwood, and chairman of the association's Christian education committee, is pushing with the response. "It's a worthwhile project and to date about \$27,500 has been raised from the churches," Hutson said.

In addition, the actual construction is being done by volunteer labor from the churches. George Standridge, a member of Shiloh Church, Kingston, is supervising the work.

This method of constructing a BSU facility may be a first in the Tennessee Baptist Convention, said Ircel Harrison, director of the TBC's Student

Department.

Traditionally, the TBC has provided two-thirds of the cost for design, construction, and furnishing of a new BSU center. The local association provides the remaining one-third of the cost, Harrison noted.

Due to the current budget situation in the TBC, however, the convention could not provide funds at this time, Harrison explained.

Instead of waiting, the association's Christian education committee suggested an alternative plan which involved the area churches banning together to build the center.

Harrison noted other groups have worked on various BSU centers in the state. "But to the best of my knowledge, this is the first time a BSU building has been constructed using volunteer labor from the association," he observed.

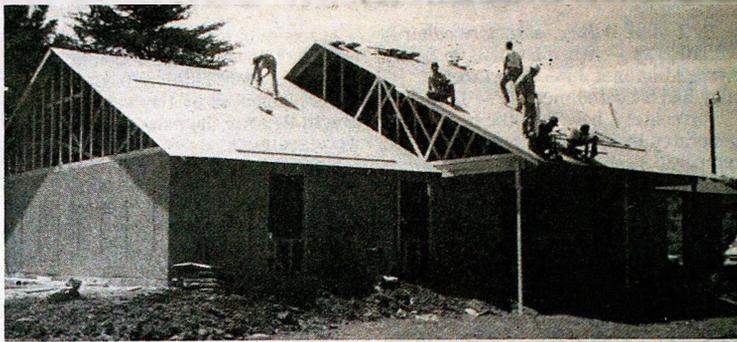
After the facility is completed the TBC will provide insurance, utilities, operation expenses, and major maintenance on the building just as it does with any other Baptist student center, Harrison said, adding the title of the completed building will be held by the TBC Executive Board. Also, the TBC will provide \$10,000 for furnishings over a three-year period.

Harrison expressed pleasure with the quality of the new facility. "It appears this will be an excellent building," he noted.

J. W. Bargiol, director of missions in Big Emory Association, said the BSU building will be debt-free when completed.

Plans are to have the facility completed in time for the fall term at Roane State. Lesia Nave is BSU director at the college.

Education Committee members in addition to Hutson are Ron Murray, pastor, First Church, Kingston, and Ken Milby, pastor of Beech Park Church, Oliver Springs.



**LABORERS** — Volunteers from Big Emory Association churches are continuing work on the new BSU center at Roane State Community College in Harriman.

Billy Edmonds, pastor of Pleasant Grove Church, Coalfield, is moderator of the association.

The BSU provides a ministry to all students at Roane State regardless of church affiliation.

## Texans recommend convention changes

**DALLAS (BP)** — The Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board at its June 5 meeting in Dallas approved a new state convention format doing away with pre-convention meetings and streamlining business sessions.

The new format will be presented to messengers at the annual meeting in Houston, Nov. 13-14, for their approval on a two-year trial basis beginning in 1991.

The revised schedule was recommended to the executive board by a 29-member Convention Related Meetings Study Committee, chaired by Wayne L. Allen, pastor of First Church, Carrollton. Creation of the committee was authorized by the 1989 BGCT in Lubbock following a motion by James Pleitz, pastor of Park Cities Church, Dallas.

The recommended format "gives priority" to the annual BGCT business meeting and "highlights the two official missions organizations of the convention," the Woman's Missionary Union and Texas Baptist Men, Allen said.

According to the revised format, the BGCT begins on Monday at 2 p.m. and ends on Tuesday evening, and the number of business sessions is cut from five to four. Annual meetings of Texas WMU and TBM are scheduled for Tuesday afternoon during a break in the annual meeting program.

The new format allows for no pre-convention general meetings such as WMU or TBM conventions or gatherings by groups such as the Texas Baptist Pastors' Conference, which held its initial meeting in 1989. The only official pre-convention meetings are business sessions of the TBM and WMU executive boards, scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

Although some executive board members said the Monday afternoon starting time would create a hardship for small church pastors in locations distant to the convention site, the board approved the committee's recommendations by a clear majority on a voiced vote.

## Church-related cases decided

**WASHINGTON (BP)** — The Supreme Court recently rejected appeals in three religion-related cases.

In *Eanes v. Maryland*, the high court refused to review a dispute over whether a Maryland law prohibiting "loud and unseemly noises" could be used to stop an individual from preaching in front of an abortion clinic.

Jerry Wayne Eanes, a Maryland resident, was found guilty of violating the state law after he preached, read the Bible, and handed out religious tracts on a sidewalk near an abortion clinic in downtown Hagerstown, Md.

The Maryland Court of Appeals upheld Eanes' conviction.

In *North Valley Baptist Church v. McMahon*, the justices refused to hear a case involving state licensing of church day-care centers.

The California congregation challenged the constitutionality of that state's day-care licensing mechanism. Although conceding California has a compelling interest in regulating child-care providers, the church argued

licensure is not the least restrictive means of accomplishing that interest.

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals held the burden placed on the church by California's licensing mechanism was justifiable because no other proposal would provide as high a level of accountability to the state.

In *Kirkland v. Northside Independent School District*, the Supreme Court turned down an appeal by a public school teacher who claimed he was fired unjustly.

Timothy Kirkland, who taught history, said the Texas school district's decision to dismiss him was influenced in part by a group of religiously fundamentalist parents who objected to the extra-credit reading list he assigned his classes.

The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled Kirkland's dismissal did not violate his First Amendment rights and the school district was not obligated to pay him back wages or reinstate him as a teacher.

**C-N PREACHERS' SCHOOL** — Participants of the Carson-Newman College Preachers' School held at the Jefferson City campus June 25-29 included, photo at bottom left, from left, Gene Riley, music leader, Saginaw, Mich.; Murray Mathis, TBC president, Murfreesboro; Ralph Cordell, director of missions, Campbell County Association; John Tresch, leader, Bluefield College, Bluefield, Va.; Tom Madden, C-N visiting professor, Murfreesboro; and Olin Baxter, Loundesville, S.C. Other participants were, photo to left, two daughters of registrants enjoying ice cream floats. The school drew 250 people.



**READING REFERENCE** — Pastor Ronnie Jones, Woodland Park Church, Oak Ridge, reads Bible during a session. — Photos from Carson-Newman College



# TenneScene

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

## Churches ...

Howard Murphy, a member of the first team to go to Russia on a mission trip, spoke June 17 at Clax Gap Church, Harriman.

Homecoming was celebrated July 8 at Calvary Church, Union City. Beulah Association Director of Missions William George delivered the morning message. Glory Bound performed in the afternoon.

Members of Williams Chapel Church, Springfield, observed homecoming July 8. A former pastor, Ron Carter, spoke during the special service.

Homecoming services will be held July 22 at Zion Grove Church, Sevierville.

The congregation of Hurricane Church, Lebanon, will celebrate the church's 175th anniversary July 22. Former pastors Sam Brooks, W. F. Oakley, and Billy Hill will speak.

Homecoming was celebrated July 1 at Trinity Church, Lebanon, and Mt. Olivet Church, Mt. Juliet, in Wilson County Association.

A ground breaking service was held recently for a new fellowship hall at Sunrise Church, Bluff City.

First Church, Shelbyville, is having special services on three consecutive Tuesday nights in July (17, 24, and 31). The services are called "Three Great Summer Nights" and will feature different evangelists each night. Kicking off the services will be David Ring of Orlando, Fla., followed by Ron Herrod of Fort Smith, Ark. Paul Jackson of Little Rock, Ark. will be the final speaker July 31. Complimentary meals will be served at 5:30 p.m. with ser-

vices beginning at 7 p.m. Paula Kinney will perform a pre-service concert at 6:40 p.m. For additional information or meal reservations, contact the church office at (615) 684-7962.

Green River Church, Waynesboro, will hold homecoming July 29. The morning service begins at 10:30 followed by dinner on the grounds. The Kinsmen from Collinwood will perform during the afternoon service after the noon meal. Everyone is invited to attend. Mike Kemper is pastor.

## Ordinations ...

Minister of education and youth Kenneth Webster was recently ordained at First Southern Church, Pikeville. His grandfather, Vernon Webster, retired director of missions for Sequatchie Valley Association, delivered the charge to the candidate.

Robert Rich was ordained as deacon July 1 at Westside Church, McMinnville.

## Revivals ...

Hilldale Church, Clarksville, reported 22 additions to the church during revival recently. David Ring led the services, and Bucky Phillips led music.

Graceland Church, Memphis, will hold revival July 15-18. Jimmy Dukes, associate professor of New Testament and Greek at New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary, will lead the services, and music evangelist Doug Scott will lead music.

Woodland Park Church, Chattanooga, began revival July 8 with Ron Dunn, Bill Stafford, and Wayne Barber. Services will end July 12.

Revival will be held July 16-22 at Sycamore Church, Woodbury, with Salem Association Director of Missions

Thurman Seber leading the services.

Holly Grove Church, Bells, will hold revival July 22-27.

Bradley Association reported the following churches held services during the simultaneous revival emphasis. They are Antioch Church, McDonald; Brittville and Gum Springs churches, both in Georgetown; Candies Creek Church, Charleston; and Beacon, Bellefonte, Big Springs, Blue Springs, Dalton Pike, Four Point, Maple Street, Mt. Carmel, North Cleveland, Oak Grove, Parkway, Philippi, Stuart Park, Tasso, Valley View, Waterville, and Westwood churches, all in Cleveland.

A spiritual awakening conference will be held July 11-13 at Calvary Church in Knoxville. The conference is sponsored by 21 Knoxville-area churches in association with the John McKay Evangelistic Association. Speakers during the conference include Ondie Brum, Fred Lowery, Darrell Gilyard, Junior Hill, John Ankerberg, and Bob- by Boyles. Morning services begin at 10 a.m. and evening services at 7:00 p.m. For additional information, contact Calvary Church at (615) 523-9419.

## Missions ...

A team from Round Lick Church, Watertown, left July 7 for Logan, Va., to do construction and remodeling work and conduct backyard Bible school.

A team of high school and college students from First Church, Clarksville, will be in Arizona July 19-30 conducting Vacation Bible School at First Church, Springerville, and

Alpine Church, Alpine. In addition, the mission team will conduct Christian sports clinics during the afternoons.

A youth mission team from Meridian Church, Knoxville, left July 7 for Roseville, Mich., to conduct a backyard Bible club at Antioch Church.

A group of 15 youth and four sponsors from First Church, Covington, conducted backyard Bible clubs and participated in church and campground services during June in Polk County.

A volunteer mission team from Parkway Church, Goodlettsville, will go to Zuni, N.M. July 13-21 to build an addition on to a trailer used for missions and to work with children.

A Loudon County Association volunteer mission team recently left for the Philippines to conduct a crusade.

## Leadership ...

Steve McCary has been called as associate pastor in charge of children at Woodland Park Church, Chattanooga.

Ebenezer Church, Greenbrier, called Jim Hightower as interim pastor.

Wildwood Church, Englewood, called Arliss Slack as interim pastor.

Bart Campbell recently joined the staff of Long Heights Church, McKenzie, as music director.

West Union Church, Darden, called Charles Pence as interim pastor.

Daryl Hall was recently called as summer youth director at North Johnson City Church, Johnson City.

# FMB appoints Tennessee Baptists

Three couples with strong Tennessee ties were among the 34 people commissioned as missionaries June 13 at a special service held during the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in New Orleans.



CAUSEYS

Guy and Tammy Causey will live in Burkina Faso, where he will work in agricultural development and together will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Causey attends Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. A native of Louisiana, Causey considers Humboldt his hometown and First Church, Humboldt, his home church. He is a graduate of University of Tennessee-Martin.

Mrs. Causey, a graduate of Jackson State Community College in Jackson, also considers Humboldt as her hometown. She is a former summer missionary in the state, sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

The Causeys have one child, Garrett Wayne.

David and Jennifer Hoglen were appointed missionaries to Spain. Hoglen will start and develop churches and the two of them will be involved in outreach ministries.

Hoglen, a native of Alabama, is the



HOGLENS

son of Southern Baptist missionaries who now reside in Maryville. Hoglen considers Maryville his hometown.

He is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southern Seminary.

The Hogleys have two children: Blair Morgan, and Jenna Marie.

Tennessee Baptist pastor David C. Shivar and his wife, Beverly, were appointed missionaries to the Philippines.

A native of Georgia, Shivar has been pastor of New Haven Church, Oneida, since 1987. He holds degrees from University of Georgia in Athens and Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis.

While in seminary, Shivar served as bus minister for children at Peabody Church, Memphis.

The Shivars have three children: Nathan Andrew, Lydia Marie, and Hannah Nicole.

The Hogleys will travel to Rockville, Va., in June for a seven-week orientation before leaving for the mission field. The Causeys and Shivars will attend orientation in August.

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# Wife of new SBC president has roots in Tennessee

Jodi Chapman, wife of newly-elected Southern Baptist Convention president, misses her native state of Tennessee, she told the Baptist and Reflector.

One of Chapman's earliest memories of church is of reciting the twenty-third Psalm in Sunday School at First Church, Columbia. She received a bookmark for her work, she added, laughing.

Chapman was born in Clarksville but her family lived in Dickson and Columbia before they moved to Memphis when she was seven years old.

Most of her memories are of Bellevue Church, Memphis, where she attended until she became a student at

Mississippi College in Clinton. She remembers her parents chose Bellevue because of its youth program with her teenage sister in mind.

"Those years formed who I am; it is where I learned the Bible. I sat at the feet of some of the greatest teachers in the world," said Chapman.

Bellevue pastors R. G. Lee and Ramsey Pollard made strong impressions on Chapman. "I believe I could preach 'Pay Day, Someday,' from memory I've heard it so many times," she said, referring to Lee's sermon.

She graduated from East High School in Memphis in 1962 and left to go to Mississippi College. But soon she

returned to visit with a new friend, Morris Chapman. Ramsey Pollard ordained Chapman and later married the couple.

The Chapmans have lived in Texas while attending Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth; Albuquerque, N.M.; and Wichita Falls, Texas, where he is pastor of First Church.

But Jodi Chapman's ties remain in Tennessee. Her father, John Elmer Francis, lives in Memphis and still attends Bellevue. She also has relatives in Nashville and Clarksville.

Concerning her new role, Chapman said she feels equally at home lending support to her husband or giving service to her denomination.

She served on the SBC Peace Committee from 1985-88 and recently completed eight years of service on the Baptist Sunday School Board. She sees advantages in having both marital partners active in denominational service.

"It broadens our perspective on SBC life," she said. "I understand a lot of things (about the SBC) a lot of wives would not."

She anticipates being the wife of the

SBC president might be similar to being "the pastor's wife of the largest church in the world." The task, however, does not overwhelm her.

"I love people and that's what it's all about," she said.

During her husband's pre-convention travels, Chapman, who is employed as a registered nurse, rarely had the opportunity to accompany her husband.

Yet she found those few travel experiences enjoyable because she "met all types of people from all types of churches." In the future, she wants to accompany her husband when he is on the road as much as time permits.

Chapman realizes being the SBC president's wife will raise her profile. She does not, however, relish the idea of being looked upon as the model minister's wife although she is aware her words and actions may influence others. — Connie Davis and Pat Cole

## One Woman's View By June McEwen

"Tell me a story about when you were a little girl." This is a request made at bedtime by grandchildren over and over again. The plea is more than just a ploy to postpone being left alone and in the dark — although it is certainly that. There is a genuine

hunger for knowledge of the long ago as it happened to someone important to the child.

The significance of telling these stories to children and grandchildren cannot be exaggerated. Family stories are loaded with meaning. These stories about the family and about the past help shape values, ideals, and an overall view of the world for the younger generation.

When I Was Young in the Mountains is a book for children that tells such a story. The manner of living and the way people related to their environment are described in terms suitable for little ones. An adult reading this book and looking at the illustrations will recall similar things from his or her past. Grandparents might even be inspired to create a small book about themselves for their grandchildren.

Thinking about such a project for

myself, I jotted down some ideas and memories which could be expanded. Each person's list would be different and would reflect a unique but valuable human experience. Here is part of my list.

The story of an uncle who went AWOL from the service but was forced to face up to his responsibilities by my strong but loving grandfather; my sister and me and our elaborate playhouses under the cedar trees — complete with mud pies, dishes made of acorn caps, and furniture made of lumber scraps; picking blackberries with my brother without much thought for snakes which could be lurking in the bushes; swimming in a cold mountain creek; cold cornbread and midday leftovers with milk at supper time; and revival meetings in tents.

You get the idea. So many of these kinds of things happened to us in a way that is gone forever, yet it is part of what makes us what we are. We can convey this to our little ones by telling them in bedtime stories, on cassette tapes, in handwritten journals, or on sophisticated word processors. The rewards are many.

Why not start now to respond to the request, "Tell me a story about when you were young." You can tell us much and you can demonstrate a lot of love.



McEWEN

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# Ruth is redeemed by Boaz

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

The Book of Ruth is far more than a story of girl meets boy, boy meets girl, boy and girl fall in love and are married. Within this wonderful story of God's providence for Naomi, Ruth, and the nation of Israel is also a very vivid picture of our redemption as believers. Every one of us was in the poverty of sin, destined to die without hope (as was Naomi). Then the Lord sacrificed His glory, humbled Himself, made it possible for us to be in His family through His sacrificial death, and made us heirs of all He is and has. (Just as Boaz sacrificed his estate for Ruth and Naomi).



HAUN

Chapters 3 and 4 can be divided into six sections:  
A strategy (3:1-5) Naomi had a

precise strategy to assure Ruth would be taken care of in the future. "Finding rest" was a term that meant finding a husband. Strangely enough, many women find husbands today, but often not much rest comes with the deal!

Naomi was a smooth operator. She instructed Ruth to "wash" (take a bath), "anoint" (put on some perfume), and "put thy raiment upon thee" (put on your nice clothes). Naomi knew Boaz was the best chance for Ruth to have a husband and the land redeemed. She also knew Boaz would be at the threshing floor. Naomi encouraged Ruth to allow Boaz to finish his meal and relax. Ruth was to "uncover his feet" and "lay thee down." This was a custom of making one's self available for matrimony. Every detail was planned.

A security (3:6-12) Ruth did as

Naomi suggested. Ruth's presence was a shock to Boaz. As Boaz woke up with sleepy eyes in the night, he said, "Who art thou?" Ruth identified herself in humility as a "handmaid." She further identified Boaz as her "near kins-

### BIBLE BOOK July 15 Lesson

Basic Passage: Ruth 3:1-4:22  
Focal Passages: Ruth 3:1-4:22

man." Boaz was overwhelmed by Ruth's kindness. But he was an old man. Ruth wouldn't be interested in him even if he was interested in her. But Ruth was proposing to old Boaz according to custom. Boaz assured Ruth that he would do everything possible to see the matter secured.

A substitute (3:13-18) One problem stood in the way of this plan. Another man was more closely related and had prior claim on the estate before Boaz. Boaz must have already considered marrying Ruth because his answer to Ruth showed great forethought. Boaz was willing to become the substitute, should this close relative refuse the arrangement. Boaz had much to lose in

Ruth's request because their first child would be Naomi's heir.

A sacrifice (4:1-12) Boaz likely knew of the financial and domestic situation of the man he met with. The man was anxious to claim the land, but he did not want Ruth. He didn't want to "mar his own inheritance." The first born son would not carry his name, but the name of Mahlon (Ruth's dead husband), thus he would lose his estate. Just as Boaz sacrificed for love, so was Christ willing to mar His inheritance to redeem us simply because He loved us.

A son (4:13-17) Boaz and Ruth were married and had a son, named Obed (servant). What a fitting name for parents who had both sacrificed their rights and served others before themselves.

A savior (4:18-22) The Book of Ruth ends giving an important genealogy. Jesus the Christ was given to this world through Ruth's family.

Conclusion. This book begins with a funeral and ends with a wedding. It opens with famine and closes with fullness. Truly our God can work together all things to our good and His glory if we will continue to love Him.

# Lessons from life

By John Henry Pippin, pastor; First Church, Savannah

This lesson is a group of loosely related principles for living which have come from observing life. Life is a good, though sometimes harsh, teacher. The wise person who would live the full life will observe life and learn. He will be even wiser to learn from those who have already learned by observation. The principles here come from an inspired observer of life. So this wisdom is more than practical; it is Divine.



PIPPIN

Verses 1 and 2 stress the value of character and favor over wealth alone. The poor may have the wealth of a good name as may the rich. But the priority must be having a good name because all stand on level ground before the Creator. His judgment is

based on what men are, not what they have.

Verse 3 contrasts the wise and the simple in anticipating evil and preparing for it. The wise, by faith, see the day of danger approaching and prepare for it while the simple take no thought except for the moment.

Verses 4 and 5 contrast the way of the humble and pious with that of the perverted. The one who lives humbly and in the fear of God will avoid the pitfalls of life and receive wealth, honor, and life from God (Matthew 5:5, 8, 9). However, the crooked, perverse person can expect difficulties all along the way.

Verses 6 and 15 speak of discipling the young. Verse 6 encourages the training of the young in the positive elements found in verses 1, 3, 4, and 5, but would likely include vocational training as well. This training needed for life should be given in the early years when habits and patterns of

behavior and work are set. Verse 15 adds the use of the rod of discipline which is needed to rid the boy of the folly in his mind. Folly does not refer to childishness, but to foolishness which is that inclination to evil. This disposition is so deeply ingrained that it cannot be removed without considerable effort and pain.

### CONVENTION UNIFORM July 15 Lesson

Basic Passage: Proverbs 22:1-16  
Focal Passage: Proverbs 22:1-16

Verse 7 is a realistic observation, so the wise should be alert. The poor man is constantly in the slavery of debt and the future of the borrower is not bright. The Christian is to shun that proud independence which scorns the gracious offer of needful help, but at the same time he is to avoid all needless obligations (Romans 13:8).

Verses 8 and 9 contrast the wicked's reward of utter and eternal disappointment with the generous one's reward of eternal blessings. Selfishness results in sorrow, but giving graciously results in the approval of God Who "loves a cheerful giver"

(see also 2 Corinthians 9:6).

Verses 10-14 pertain to words or talk. Those who scoff cause strife and should be expelled for the sake of the group. Their words stir up needless strife. On the other hand the pure in heart will have gracious words and are welcomed in the group, even by the king. The vigilance of God is infallible as He watches over knowledge and overthrows deceitful words. The preservation of His Word confirms this fact. The lazy man (v. 13) is a coward as he always finds words to excuse his sloth. Each should be careful of the words they heed. If heeded, the words of the scorner, the faithless, the sluggard, and the seductive woman will lead to disaster.

Verse 16 affirms that the one who seeks wealth by oppressing the poor or by courting the rich shall come to want instead of satisfaction.

Conclusion: The Christian life is to show forth Christ here and now and it does so in practical Christ-like living. Living by these principles will give fewer opportunities for the child of God to be a stumbling block to the lost and immature. It will also enable the believer to live the Christian life to the fullest.

# Evaluate your spiritual condition

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

When doing routine medical examinations, physicians carefully scrutinize the tongue because it is a good indicator of general health. The tongue is also a gauge of one's spiritual condition.

James wrote to Christians who were apparently suffering from spiritual problems as evidenced by their unbridled tongues. He warned them to "be swift to hear, slow to speak"



WREN

(chapter 1:19), and that the person who is unable to control the tongue is spiritually sick (chapter 1:26).

Since the tongue is an indicator of the spiritual well-being of a person, James reminded his patients of some serious issues concerning the tongue.

Power of the tongue (vv. 1-5)  
James raised a red flag about the responsibilities of teaching (vv. 1-2), including himself and all teachers. He

pointed out that we all stumble in various ways, including the misuse of the tongue (v. 2). Those who teach need to realize that with that privilege comes responsibility, with responsibility comes accountability, and with accountability comes judgment. Perhaps the prayer of one preacher is appropriate for all of us, "Lord, help me not to abuse, misuse, or misrepresent your Word."

The tongue, small but powerful, is like a bit in a horse's mouth, a rudder on a great ship, and a spark of fire. Powerful and huge horses are controlled by a tiny bit (v. 3); a small rudder is able to direct the course of a mighty ship (v. 4); and a little match can ignite a great fire (v. 5). The tongue is a small member of the body, yet it has the power to accomplish extraordinary feats or cause massive devastation. Solomon wrote, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Proverbs 18:21).

Problems of the tongue (vv. 6-8)  
The tongue defiles (v. 6). Jesus said,

"... that which proceedeth out of the mouth, this defileth the man" (Matthew 15:11). Most of us are not going to be guilty of sins such as robbery, adultery, or drunkenness; but, many of us are guilty of gossip, pride, slander, profanity, and hypocrisy.

### LIFE AND WORK July 15 Lesson

Basic Passage: James 3  
Focal Passages: James 3:1-12

The tongue destroys like fire (v. 6). Harsh, abrasive, cutting, ugly, hateful, and fiery words can destroy lives, homes, relationships, and churches. Some folks who would never stoop to profanity and vulgarity destroy by gossiping, criticizing, and condemning.

The tongue is dirty (v. 6). The word "fire" is the Greek word "Gehenna" which was the garbage dump of Jerusalem. The trash and filth that come from the mouth are fueled from the garbage dump.

The tongue is defiant (vv. 7-8). We can tame and train all types of

animals, but the tongue remains undisciplined. As a Christian dies to self, submits to the Holy Spirit, and presents the body as a living sacrifice to the Lord, the seemingly impossible becomes possible. The tongue becomes a purified, docile instrument that can be used to exalt, encourage, edify, evangelize, and educate.

Paradox of the tongue (vv. 9-12)

It is amazing what happens on Sundays 15 minutes after the benediction. Worshipers who praised God got out and curse, gossip, criticize, fuss, scream, and condemn. A fresh spring does not produce salt water and fig trees do not yield olives. For either to do so is an impossibility in the natural world. It should be just that impossible for blessings and cursings to flow from the same mouth.

If our speech is wrong it simply means we have damaged "hearts" and are in desperate need of spiritual medicine. Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34b).

Evaluate your spiritual condition by examining your tongue. Some of us need to confess and experience forgiveness and cleansing.

**(BP) BRIEFLY**

Compiled from Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention

**Southern Baptists to boost Eastern Europe personnel**

KLAUS, Austria — Southern Baptists plan to have almost 100 workers assigned to Eastern Europe within the next several years, a tenfold increase. New workers will be deployed as soon as personnel can be located, trained, and sent. The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board plans 88 new, full-time workers to begin assignments in Eastern European countries, plus scores of short-term workers to help with construction, evangelism, teaching, and other ministries.

The new plans were developed May 28-June 1 as Southern Baptist administrators met in Klaus, Austria, with the ten Southern Baptist workers now assigned to Eastern Europe ministry. Intensive talks with Baptist union leaders in the region preceded the planning session.

Personnel requests likely will increase even more in coming months as discussions continue with leaders in several countries, said Keith Parker, the Southern Baptist Foreign Board's area director for Europe. This major personnel increase follows a \$1 million appropriation by the Foreign Mission Board last December that is helping European Baptists with Bibles, evangelism-related programs, equipment, and material. Much of the material provided is either already in use or being delivered.

Also, the board rushed 246 tons of seeds, desperately needed for spring planting, along with more than 50 tons of herbicides, a necessity to cut the traditional large crop losses caused by weeds. The allotment resulted in more than 10,000 acres of land around Bacau, Romania, being planted in corn and alfalfa. The quick effort sparked a letter of thanks from the government agricultural minister for the area. In all, hunger relief projects made possible by Southern Baptist donations may exceed \$1 million.

**Chapman makes first agency visit to BSSB**

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention President Morris Chapman predicted times of disagreement in the denomination are coming to an end and called for increased commitment to cooperative missions and reaching the world for Christ during participation in new trustee orientation at the Sunday School Board June 21-22.

The visit was Chapman's first to an SBC agency since his June 12 election as president of the 14.9-million-member denomination. As president, Chapman is an ex-officio member of the board of trustees of each SBC agency. "I come to you today to say I affirm you as one person and on behalf of Southern Baptists," Chapman, whose wife, Jodi, just completed eight years' service as a trustee, told employees during a chapel service.

"As we stand on the Word of God, I pray we are in a position to move on with the things that are our priorities — reaching people for Christ and Bold Mission Thrust," the SBC goal of sharing Christ with every person in the world by the year 2000. "I pray God will bring revival to Southern Baptists and through us to the world," said Chapman.

Board President Lloyd Elder expressed appreciation to Chapman for making time to visit the board so soon after his election. "I deeply appreciate his presence and his expression of commitment to this board and its ministry," said Elder.

**Baptist teachers denied Vietnam visas; other CSI work continues**

HONG KONG — Five Southern Baptist teachers planning to work in Vietnam this summer have been denied visas to enter the country. But other Southern Baptist medical and agricultural work continues in the country, according to Jack Shelby, Hong Kong-based administrator for Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist aid organization.

The visa denial marks the second time the Vietnamese government has refused visas for teachers with CSI. Shelby speculated the visas were denied because Vietnam's government fears current unrest in other parts of the world. In recent weeks Vietnamese security officials have denied visas for Americans, except tourists in organized tour groups.

"Because of the current security sweep, foreign English teachers are unfortunately caught in the situation," Shelby said.

**Sunday School Board workers reject unionization attempt**

NASHVILLE — Employees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board rejected representation by the Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU) June 20 by a four-to-one vote of 143 to 36.

The GCIU attempted to organize approximately 200 shipping and receiving, order filling, postal and maintenance workers at the board as part of an effort this year to organize several Middle Tennessee printing and publishing companies.

The election was the first such attempt at the board since 1959 when the Teamsters petitioned to organize some employees. At that time the National Labor Relations Board dismissed the petition, ruling there was insufficient interest among employees.

In a letter to employees following the vote, Board President Lloyd Elder called the union rejection "a vote of confidence in the board" and urged employees to continue to "build on our 100-year heritage so that the days ahead will truly be our greatest times of productivity and service."

**Messianic Jews form fellowship within SBC**

NEW ORLEANS — Messianic Jews within the Southern Baptist Convention have formed a new fellowship. During the denomination's annual meeting in New Orleans, about 30 messengers formed the Southern Baptist Messianic Fellowship. That brings to 22 the number of ethnic fellowships relating to the SBC.

Ethnic fellowships are independent, autonomous groups that relate to the denomination primarily through the Home Mission Board's language church ex-

ension division. The Messianic Fellowship also will relate to the HMB's interfaith witness department.

The fellowship's president is Jim Hendricks, pastor of Immanuel Church in Princeton, W.Va. Currently Hendricks knows of fewer than ten Messianic congregations within the SBC; most are small, struggling congregations with 20-30 members. Those who have been interested in Messianic work have been frustrated by lack of support in the past, he said. "We felt like nobody was interested."

However, formation of the fellowship and support from the HMB will foster opportunities to strengthen existing congregations and start new ones, he said. The fellowship has set a goal of having 1000 Messianic Jews within the SBC by the denomination's June 1991 annual meeting in Atlanta.

Hendricks said the Southern Baptist Convention is the first denomination to reach out to Jews in any organized fashion. The SBC is the most ethnically diverse denomination in America with congregations worshipping each week in 101 languages among 97 ethnic groups and 97 American Indian tribes.

**WMU is 'conscience' of church and convention, HMB leader says**

RIDGECREST, N.C. — Women and girls in Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union are in many ways "the conscience of our convention," a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board vice president said. Margrette Stevenson, vice president of services, spoke to more than 1600 women attending WMU conferences at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center June 24.

The women should create "spheres of influence" within their churches and then use that influence to take the message of missions to the very heart of the church, she said. "In many ways, you are the conscience of our convention. You draw us to where we ought to be," Stevenson said.

WMU "should not be an appendix to the church," she said. "It should not be an addendum or even an auxiliary to the church. It must be the heart and conscience of the church. 'I'm afraid far too long we have stood outside the building, and we have surfaced about three or four times a year,'" she said.

**Norris' congregation seeks Southern Baptist ties**

FORT WORTH, Texas — First Church, Fort Worth, Texas, the congregation once headed by J. Frank Norris, has voted to seek membership in Fort Worth's Tarrant Baptist Association from which it was ousted 68 years ago.

Pastor Bill Ramsey attended the Tarrant Association Pastors' Conference June 18 and announced that the evening before some 400 adult members of his 2000-member congregation had voted on the matter of rejoining the association — and Southern Baptists — and 80 percent had approved. The vote came on the first Sunday after Ramsey had attended his first Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, he said. "I came home with a peace in my heart that the time was a good time to pursue this within our church," he told the Baptist Standard in a telephone interview.

According to the Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists, First Church, Fort Worth, was led by Norris to discontinue use of Southern Baptist literature in 1920. A year later he began to attack Baylor University for teaching "evolution and infidelity." "Because of his spirit, methods, acts of non-cooperation, and the unbaptistic practices of his church, the association in 1922 withdrew fellowship from the church. The Baptist General Convention of Texas censured Norris in 1922, refused to seat him in 1923, and, after he had increasingly directed his criticisms against Baptist leaders and institutions, permanently excluded him in 1924," according to the encyclopedia. Norris continued his criticisms from outside the denomination, forming his own World Fundamental Baptist Missionary Fellowship. He was pastor of the Fort Worth congregation until 1950. He died in 1952.

**Canadian Southern Baptists appoint first missionaries**

EDMONTON, Alberta — The Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists appointed its first foreign missionaries June 21 to work in Nigeria as members of the Southern Baptist missionary forces.

Morris and Nancy Tenkink, of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, will work as agricultural specialists in the Nigerian state of Gongola as career missionaries with the U.S.-based Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

"The appointment service was a highlight for me," said Mark Harvey, a missionary candidate consultant for the Foreign Mission board. "Many compared this to the first missionaries sent out by the early Baptists and the Southern Baptists in the 1800s."

**Church growth meeting announced for 1992**

NASHVILLE — A National Church Growth Conference has been announced for Aug. 31-Sept. 3, 1992, by officials of two Southern Baptist Convention agencies and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Gary Cook, vice president for church programs and services at the Sunday School Board; Darrell Robinson, vice president for evangelism at the Home Mission Board; and James Semple, director of the missions commission of the BGCT are spearheading plans for the conference to be held in the Dallas/Fort Worth area at a site yet to be determined.

"We are combining the energies and resources of these three SBC entities to generate a new concerted effort toward church growth among Southern Baptist churches," said Cook.

He said program content will deal with helping churches grow through improved efforts in evangelism and Sunday School, as well as extension growth through starting new Sunday Schools, satellites, and missions.

Robinson said the conference is being planned with the hope that churches will send a team including the pastor, staff, and key lay leaders.

"It is our hope that we can project a model or style of church growth that will impact the nation," Robinson said.