

# Baptist and Reflector

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STATEWIDE EDITION

NEWSJOURNAL OF THE TENNESSEE BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Executive Committee fires BP's Shackleford, Martin

By Wm. Fletcher Allen

Al Shackleford and Dan Martin, top editors of the Southern Baptist Convention's news agency, Baptist Press, were fired July 17 by action of the SBC Executive Committee. The dismissal was effective "immediately," and was discussed behind closed doors in executive session as off-duty policemen stood guard.

Shackleford, former editor of the Baptist and Reflector who had been BP director for three and a half years, and Martin, news editor for ten years, were dismissed as the committee held a called meeting in Nashville.

The two men had been asked twice to resign or be fired. They refused to resign, forcing the called meeting. Specific charges were not brought, and the men were given five minutes each to speak.

Approximately 300 Southern Baptists gathered for the meeting, only to find several armed plain clothes "ushers" guarding stairs and elevators to the third floor of the SBC Executive Committee Building in downtown Nashville.

The "ushers" were off-duty Nashville Metro policemen hired by officers of the Executive Committee ostensibly for "crowd control."

Supporters of the two men had no trouble gaining access to the third floor and most stood outside the meeting room for five hours as a subcommittee and the Executive Committee discussed Shackleford and Martin.

The committee's administrative subcommittee, which oversees the work of Baptist Press, met behind closed doors from 8-10:15 a.m. Shackleford and Martin were allowed five minutes.

As they came from the meeting, each man told those outside that they had stated they could not participate in a closed meeting and gave the committee chairman, Charles Sullivan of Lenoir City, a written statement.

Their statements were later

presented to news media and interested Baptists in a news conference. Shackleford and Martin have been counseled by Frank Ingraham, Nashville attorney and a member of First Church, Franklin, during the month since they were notified of the intended action.

At the conclusion of the meeting (1 p.m.), Sam Pace, chairman of the Executive Committee, issued a statement which was read at the press conference by Ernest Mosley, Executive Committee vice president. Committee members voted by secret ballot 45-15-1 for the terminations, and agreed to keep their deliberations secret.

"The Executive Committee has voted by a margin of three to one to terminate Al Shackleford and Dan Martin from their duties at the Executive Committee and Baptist Press effective immediately," said the statement attributed to Pace, a director of associational missions from Lawton, Okla.

Two-thirds of the document dealt with the committee's decision to conduct its business in a closed session.

"We chose to meet in executive session even while recognizing the intense



**STANDING ROOM ONLY** — Members of the press and others concerned about the fate of Baptist Press staffers Al Shackleford and Dan Martin wait outside the third floor room where the SBC Executive Committee met in executive session.

interest of Southern Baptists in matters which concern their right to information and a free press," it said.

"We held these deliberations in private to preserve the Executive Committee's privilege of conducting a full and free debate on personnel matters without fear of causing our employees a legal injury. ...

"Today, the Executive Committee felt the need to permit its members to debate the Southern Baptist Convention's business freely, without fear that lawsuits would be filed against them for expressing their opinions and without fear that their comments would needlessly damage the profession." (See Executive Committee, page 5)

## Missionaries stranded by Philippines quake

By Mary E. Speidel

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines (BP) — Five Southern Baptist mission workers and several Philippine Baptists remained stranded July 18 on a road leading into Baguio City, Philippines, after the July 16 earthquake in the area.

The mission workers — Robert and Janet Nash, John and Helen Thomas, and Julia (Judy) Yost — were traveling on the southern route into Baguio City when the temblor, measuring 7.7 on the Richter scale, hit about 4:30 p.m., July 16. The quake killed close to 300 people, according to news reports.

Yost and a Philippine Baptist woman were traveling home from Manila and the others were returning from preaching services at Clark Air Base, according to reports.

Southern Baptist mission officials received reports that the workers were not injured, but have been unable to travel on the road because of landslides caused by the quake.

"We are having to assume some things," said Sam Waldron, administrator for the Southern Baptist missionary organization in the Philippines. "We do know food and medical supplies have been dropped into the area by helicopter. We're assuming that there are more people than just this group."

Mission officials were trying to get a helicopter into the area to evacuate the Baptist group, but all available helicopters were being used for emergency needs, said Waldron. Reports on the group came from U.S. Embassy contacts and through a phone call from a person affiliated with Voice of America based at Clark Air Base, said Waldron.

By July 18, mission officials had heard from all Southern Baptist missionaries in the area hit by the quake except for Terry and Michaelle Buford in Urdaneta, about 30 miles south of Baguio. Buford is from Bells, Tenn. Mrs. Buford is from Elgin, N.D.

Two relief teams of Southern Baptist missionaries were to travel July 19 from Manila to San Jose and Baguio City, two areas heavily damaged by the quake, Waldron said. One of the teams will check on the Bufords. Officials think the Bufords haven't been able to contact other missionaries.

because of downed phone lines in the area.

Each relief team has received \$5000 in disaster relief funds that probably will be used for food, medicine and temporary shelter for quake victims, said Waldron. Team members will work with Philippine Baptists and missionaries in the area to assess needs. The teams also will take emergency supplies into the areas, Waldron said.

Southern Baptist missionary David Cartwright will lead a team into Baguio, traveling on the only passable road into the city.

In Baguio, some damage has been reported at the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary, said John Ingouf, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board administrator. Ingouf said several dormitories at the seminary may have to be condemned because of damages sustained in the quake. Reports indicated no students were injured.

The Southern Baptist mission office in Manila sustained minor damage, including some cracks in the building.

In San Jose, the home of Southern Baptist missionaries Dennis and Linda Singletary was damaged, but the family has not had to evacuate, Waldron said. The family's water tower also was damaged; they have no running water or electricity, but do have phone service, he said.

Any financial support to the needs of the Filipino people and Baptists affected by the earthquake should be mailed to the Foreign Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, Richmond, Va., designated for the Philippine earthquake need.

### Prayer proclamation

The following prayer proclamation is issued by Murray Mathis, Tennessee Baptist Convention president, and pastor of Third Church, Murfreesboro:

There are 181 Southern Baptist career missionaries presently serving in the Philippines.

The Tennessee Baptist Convention has been involved in a partnership mission with the Philippine Baptist conventions since 1989. This partnership will continue through the early part of 1992. During the past months 137 Tennessee Baptist volunteers have served our Lord sharing in the Philippines. On Aug. 3, 25 volunteers will arrive in the Mindanao Convention in the southern

islands to do evangelism including door-to-door visitation and evangelistic preaching.

Because of political unrest in the Philippines, the devastating earthquake in the area of Manila and Baguio, and the mission volunteers from Tennessee arrival Aug. 3, I am asking our Tennessee Baptist churches to designate Sunday, July 29, as a day of prayer for our Philippine partnership. Pray for the many families affected by the earthquake. Pray for our missionaries who are responding to the needs of the people. Pray that God will use our volunteers in a very positive evangelistic effort.

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.

900-00410-0127  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 400  
NASHVILLE TN 37203

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

## Editorials

# Living by principle of freedom, losing a job

In a Nashville press conference last week, speaking to Baptist state paper editors and other concerned Baptists, J. B. Fowler said, "This is a sad day.

"Since the days of Roger Williams, John Leland, and Isaac Backus, Baptists in America have fought for, been persecuted for, and died for freedom.

"To these three Baptist forefathers we owe more than we can tell," said Fowler, editor of the Baptist New Mexican and president of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

"It was they who went to James Madison and President George Washington insisting on a Bill of Rights that would assure freedom of worship, freedom of assembly, and freedom of the press for all Americans."

Well, a little piece of freedom died July 17. To those who care, an important principle supported that little piece of freedom.

When Al Shackleford and Dan Martin were fired as editors of Baptist Press, a longstanding feud came to an end. The two Baptist journalists, who have devoted their lives to the denomination as competent and honest newsmen, lost in a battle to keep their jobs — but they won in principle.

Paul Pressler, Texas, and other members of the Executive Committee, have been at odds with Shackleford and Martin for almost four years over interpretation of news. During that time, the committee never discussed differences of opinion with the men. Instead they were constantly accused of biased reporting and slanted news writing by individual committee members.

Executive committee officers said there

were irreconcilable differences and twice asked for their resignation.

People accused of breaking laws are guaranteed a day in court, according to our nation's laws. They are allowed opportunity to present a defense; they are innocent until proven guilty.

In the case of Shackleford and Martin, they were never formally charged, and they were not allowed to participate in the meeting in which differences and their futures were discussed. The meeting was closed to all except the Executive Committee, and plainclothes policemen who guarded the doors.

Shackleford and Martin will be remembered. In standing up for press freedom and individual rights, they made their names synonymous with two words familiar to Baptists, courage and liberty.

Accepting the seven months severance package offered by the Executive Committee would have been easy for some who would have argued they had done all they could do. But the two journalists did not whine or plead — except to ask for fair treatment and opportunity to answer critics.

The immediate future of Baptist Press is less than promising. With the June departure of feature editor Marv Knox to become Kentucky's Western Recorder editor — and now with the loss of Shackleford and Martin, the BP office has no journalist on staff.

Until Baptist Press begins fullscale operations again — and no one knows when that will be — the secular press will be limited in the scope of Southern Baptist news, except that which is provided by state papers and a limited Baptist Press.

The Executive Committee has promised that Baptist Press will continue to be a reliable and honest news agency, one that will continue sending Baptists their customary reliable news, good and bad. Filling the three positions will be difficult, but the committee has a great opportunity to dispel criticism.

The action toward the two journalists makes that promise less believable. The Baptist and Reflector expects to continue using Baptist Press as a news source, however. We pledge to Tennessee Baptists that the paper will persist in presenting all the news — honestly, fairly, and with journalistic integrity. If Baptist Press does not meet the same criteria, it will not be reliable.

Some memories of July 17 will fade gradually — but it will be hard to forget the sight of off-duty policemen guarding doors and stairwells in a Baptist-owned building. It will be difficult to forget the failure of Executive Committee officers to answer vital questions in a press conference — such as the future of Baptist Press. It will be hard to forget that two capable journalists were fired without specific charges.

We feel sadness for all those involved in the July 17 affair — the men on "trial," Executive Committee members, those barred from the meeting, and every Southern Baptist. The anger expressed by so many is understandable — but we can overcome even that, and work and pray for a brighter future, a future unhindered by closed meetings. That future will be well-lighted by freedoms that Baptists know well and which cannot be snuffed out. — WFA

## Maryland/Delaware member resigns from Executive Committee

By Bob Allen

OCEAN CITY, Md. — Maryland/Delaware's member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee is resigning from the group because of its handling of the July 17 termination of Baptist Press employees Al Shackleford and Dan Martin.

Terry L. Davis, pastor of Ocean City (Md.) Church, said July 19 he planned to submit his resignation to Harold C. Bennett, president of the Executive

Committee.

Davis said the firings of Shackleford, director of Baptist Press, and Martin, news editor, along with the committee's decision to act in executive session and instructions by the SBC's attorney that members not discuss anything that went on in the meeting, prompted his decision.

"I had scores of letters and several phone calls," before leaving for the called business meeting, Davis said. "Not one was in favor of what we were

doing. I had the impression it was the same for the other members of the committee. I do not think they are listening at all to Southern Baptists. That is very disturbing to me, but there is nothing I can do about it."

Davis, who was elected to an unexpired term on the committee in 1986 and re-elected to a full four-year term in 1989, admitted his resignation will be welcomed by some leaders of the Executive Committee as the departure of one more "moderate" member. He disdains the label. "I have been labeled because I have opposed some of the actions of the Executive Committee," he said.

"Being a Southern Baptist and being

on the committee and not having a voice there, I think I know how Southern Baptists feel without a voice in convention matters," Davis said. He said he is glad he has served on the committee to speak on behalf of Southern Baptists who otherwise would have been denied a hearing. "I apologize to them that I cannot continue.

"The situation is such that I don't want to be a part of the Executive Committee any longer," he said. "When people say 'Terry Davis is a member of the Executive Committee,' I am embarrassed."

Davis said he plans to stay home and work at his church.

## Tennesseans support Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — About 100 Tennesseans gathered July 17 at the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee building to show support for Baptist Press Director Al Shackleford and News Editor Dan Martin.

They joined about 200 more Baptists and journalists waiting for more than five hours outside the meeting room of the Administrative and Convention Arrangements Committee and the Executive Committee. The meetings were closed.

Because most committee members declined to respond to questions after the meetings, the bystanders moved to the press conference immediately after the meetings. Ernest Mosley, executive vice president, Executive Committee, and Shackleford and Martin made statements.

Additionally, a statement representing 32 Tennesseans was read by Raymond Langlois, pastor, Judson Church, Nashville.

The statement deplored the cost of

the special meeting, that charges were not publicly stated, the meetings were closed, and armed guards were employed to secure the meeting.

After the session, about 40 Tennessee church staff and members, including most who had signed the statement, gathered at Crieveewood Church, Nashville, to pray and discuss the meeting, reported Pastor Joel Snider. "We don't want the exclusivity that is being displayed in the Southern Baptist Convention to happen in this state," said Snider.

"We want to see, at least in our state convention, that all Baptists who want to cooperate together can."

"There was no place for us to express ourselves. We kind of needed a place where we could get together and do that," stated Snider.

The statement, which also was signed by two Georgians, received support by word of mouth. The group has no plans for a future meeting, added Snider. — Connie Davis

## Baptist and Reflector

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Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor	Betty Williams, Bookkeeper
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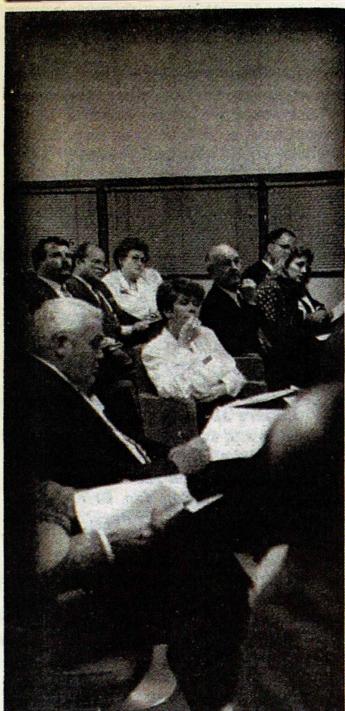
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**BEHIND CLOSED DOORS** — Executive Committee members met in executive session July 17.

## SBC Executive Committee issues statement

NASHVILLE (BP) — In executive session Tuesday morning, July 17, the SBC Executive Committee voted 45 to 15, with one abstention, to terminate the employment of two Baptist Press employees — Al Shackleford, vice president for public relations, and Dan Martin, news editor.

A June 29 letter from Harold C. Bennett, Executive Committee president, had informed Executive Committee members of a called meeting for the purpose of considering the termination of these employees.

At the conclusion of the meeting, held in the SBC Building in Nashville, Sam Pace, chairman of the Executive Committee, issued the following printed statement, without comment, to press representatives who were present:

"The Executive Committee met today to consider in private a matter which has had much public attention. We chose to meet in executive session even while recognizing the intense interest of Southern Baptists in matters which concern their right to information and a free press. We held these deliberations in private to preserve the Executive Committee's privilege of conducting a full and free debate on personnel matters without fear of causing our employees a legal injury. The Executive Committee has previously declared that it must address some subjects privately in order to address them completely but with respect for the rights of others.

"It is further understood that the Ex-

ecutive Committee and its subcommittees have the right and responsibility to conduct executive sessions in unusual circumstances, such as the consideration of certain delicate personality and personnel matters which could not be handled wisely in open session without unnecessarily embarrassing individuals (Press Relations Policy for Meetings of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, adopted September 22, 1985).

"Today the Executive Committee felt the need to permit its members to debate the Southern Baptist Convention's business freely, without fear that lawsuits would be filed against them for expressing their opinions and without fear that their comments would needlessly damage the professional reputations of two Christian journalists. Our meeting was a time when all Executive Committee members could freely express themselves, and Al Shackleford and Dan Martin could express their own views without interruption. This could not be done in a public forum.

"We believe in the fundamental need for Southern Baptists to know how we are conducting ourselves and their business. We chose the only course open to us which secured our right to unrestrained debate, which protected the reputations of Christian brothers from false or defamatory attacks, which preserved our responsibility to keep our Convention

free from expensive and destructive litigation, and which would diminish the efforts on the part of any group to suppress the Cooperative Program. The Executive Committee affirms the value of a Southern Baptist Press which honors the virtues of objectivity, credibility, balance, and Christian deportment in journalistic pursuits.

"Al Shackleford and Dan Martin have a number of additional years to serve our Lord, and probably, our Convention as well. To bring public charges and hear defenses and counter-charges would be damaging to Al and Dan as well as to our Executive Committee and to our denomination. Most are convinced that such a procedure would not bring us together. Accordingly, the Executive Committee has voted by a margin of three to one to terminate Al Shackleford and Dan Martin from their duties at the Executive Committee and Baptist Press effective immediately. The Executive Committee has approved a severance arrangement for these men which provides for them to continue receiving their full salaries plus their normal retirement, medical insurance, and life insurance benefits for a period of seven months, which includes accrued vacation.

"Our Executive Committee has taken this action and is now ready to continue to focus our energies on the ministries that are calling out for Southern Baptists to fulfill."

## Baptist and Reflector to use BP, other news sources

Announcement of a new Baptist press agency was made July 17 after the Executive Committee fired Al Shackleford and Dan Martin.

However, in a later meeting Baptist state paper editors agreed on the concept presented by Jeff Mobley, a Nashville attorney, and not the agency itself.

The Baptist and Reflector will continue to depend on a viable Baptist Press, said Editor Wm. Fletcher Allen. Allen said the Tennessee paper and most other state papers will give Baptist Press a chance to prove its reliability under new leadership.

"We have never said we would abandon Baptist Press," Allen said. "But

we want to know that it will continue as a reliable news source — without bias toward any group."

Mobley said in the press conference that Associated Baptist Press was chartered in Tennessee, would be autonomous, would have a board of directors, and would provide Baptist entities with Baptist news. He did not answer queries about founders or sources of income, but said it could start up in September.

Allen said Baptist state papers for several years have had a networking system which assigns a staff member to trustees' meetings of seminaries, mission boards, agencies, and other Southern Baptist entities — as well as scheduled meetings and conferences.

"We will continue to have competent systems for news gathering," Allen said. "We hope Baptist Press will be one of them."

Meanwhile, Baptist Press bureau chiefs met last week, and pledged to "recommit ourselves to the historic Baptist tenet that Baptists have a right

to know, and to the high standards of fairness, openness, balance, and integrity that are essential to a free press in a democratic society."

They said they were willing to continue bureau work "as long as Baptist Press can continue to operate with journalistic integrity with historic guidelines."

Current bureau chiefs are James Newton, Atlanta (HMB); Bob Stanley, Richmond (FMB); Tom Brannon, Dallas; Kathy Palen, Washington; and Lloyd Householder, Nashville (BSSB). Newton was chosen to work as liaison with Baptist editors.

Bureau chiefs expressed appreciation for Shackleford and Martin for "the history of excellence and integrity they have demonstrated as professional journalists, administrators of Baptist Press, and as Christian ministers."

They also commended Polly House, Maria Sykes, and Doris Elliott, who continue to work in the BP office in downtown Nashville.

## Lowrie defines TBC policy on CP

The autonomy of the local Baptist church and that of the Cooperative Program do not usually conflict with each other. Since 1925 each church has decided whether it wanted to give to mission causes represented in the Cooperative Program, and then how much it wanted to give.

From time to time a local church has not felt comfortable supporting some institution or program represented in the program. Whenever this has happened, the church used its autonomy to design its support to the causes it could comfortably support. After a while things have changed, and the church has usually used its freedom to begin giving full support to the Cooperative Program again.

Some churches are asking questions about the Cooperative Program and mission support. Let me review with you the policy of the Tennessee Baptist Convention as set forth in our financial plan and Constitution.

First, the Convention is committed to the Cooperative Program as our plan for financing our work. This involves an agreement with the churches to send on to the Southern Baptist Convention once each month a specified percentage of the money received from churches.

Second, the Convention will

receive and distribute money from the churches to any agency or institution of either the Tennessee Baptist Convention or Southern Baptist Convention, and to any cause represented in the budget of either convention. We cannot receive or distribute funds designated to any institution or cause not represented in either the TBC or SBC.

Third, designated funds cannot be reported as Cooperative Program funds. Designated funds will show up in our report as designated funds.

Let me express concern to all of our churches. Let's make sure that we base all of our actions on principles and not on personalities, on truth and not on rumors, on love and not on revenge, on kingdom principles and not on the principles of this world. We are involved in a work of God. The Lord God has assured me that "The Keeper of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps."

Let me remind Tennessee Baptists that the need of the work that we are doing together in Tennessee has never been greater. We are on a threshold of our IMPACT Tennessee thrust for the Lord. Let's move forward and not look back. — D. L. Lowrie, executive director/treasurer, Tennessee Baptist Convention.



**FIRST LOOK** — Al Shackleford, left, and Dan Martin read the statement issued by the Executive Committee during a news conference. It was the first official notice that they had received that they had been terminated from their positions as director and news editor, respectively, of Baptist Press.

# Our Readers Write

## Appreciates WMU

As a member of Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union, I want to express appreciation to you and Dr. Lowrie for "TeamTalk" in your July 11 issue. I, too, thank God for Katharine Bryan and her Tennessee Baptist WMU team. How fortunate we are to have such a dedicated, Godly group of women leading Tennessee WMU.

I am proud to be a part of an organization that takes the Great Commission personally, an organization dedicated solely to missions.

Lola Byrd  
Early Drive, Route 2  
Powell 37849

## Reason together

As a Christian and a Southern Baptist, I am concerned over the recent firings of Dan Martin and Al Shackleford.

I have had the privilege of working with Dan Martin at Baptist Press, and during that time I got to know Al Shackleford. Both are fine Christian men with the highest ideals for reporting the truth. I am embarrassed that the Southern Baptist name is being talked about and lowered. Those in SBC leadership roles should have had an open door meeting and reasoned together.

Hopefully enough pastors will be strong enough to take a stand and inform their churches of what is really going on. For some churches the only way to know what is really happening is through the printed page. Let truth prevail.

Polly Scutt  
110 East Marthona Road  
Madison 37115

## Verses deal with SBC

These verses deal with our Southern Baptist Convention, and are straight from an Open Bible, King James version.

SBC leaders, both sides, and all Baptists should read them. It might make them stop and remember that we are one in Christ Jesus our Lord and that it is Satan who is causing all this trouble.

First Corinthians 12:12-17, especially verse 12: "For as the body is one and hath many members and all the members of that one body being many, are one body so also is Christ."  
Matthew 12:22-30.

Christopher O. Land  
608 Woodward Ave.  
Athens 37303

## Called for fairness

All "conservatives" have ever asked for is fairness. "Conservatives" asked Al Shackleford for fairness in reporting when he was editor of the Baptist and Reflector, but never got fairness except for the few weeks prior to Shackleford's election to lead Baptist Press.

"Conservative" asked fairness of Baptist Press even before Shackleford went there, but instead got deplorable political maneuverings wherein W. C. Fields quickly retired so that his replacement could be named while there was still a "moderate" majority on the Executive Board. After a motion to delay the selection failed on a tie vote, Shackleford was elected by a 32 to 26 vote.

Shackleford pledged to be fair, objective, and balanced and asked for a year of grace. All "conservatives" have asked was fairness, but fairness and balance have been as elusive for BP as these seem to be for the Baptist and Reflector.

The recent problem with BP is the same problem that has caused the entire SBC controversy — an unresponsive attitude toward "conservative" concerns. Whether it be Dunn, Shackleford, Martin, Allen, or myself — even when a man is

convinced in his own mind that the charges are false — when 50 percent of the people perceive there is bias and slanting, steps should be taken to change that perception. When none are taken, the people must solve the problem, which they are doing through their duly elected Executive Board.

Steve Linginfelter, pastor  
First Church  
P. O. Box 326  
Benton 37307

**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.**

## Political act?

From the outset the architects of the takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention have repeatedly denied the observation that the current controversy in the convention is political in nature. Yet the most recent development in this controversy proves the observation valid: the two men from Baptist Press who were fired have not had their theology called into question. The conflict between the Executive Committee and Baptist Press is purely political. This has been made by the past chairman of the Executive Committee . . . "To ask 'conservative' leaders to accept a 'moderate'-eyed news coverage is like asking President Bush to accept the press secretary of President Jimmy Carter."

This seems to be the first official admission that the controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention is indeed political. May God help us.

M. Emerson Wiles Jr.  
404 South Elk Ave.  
Fayetteville 37334

## Spending questioned

For years proponents of "fundamentalism" within the Southern Baptist Convention promoted their cause by convincing many Baptists that there was a "liberal" under every rock in Baptist life. Now paranoia has reached the stage of being even more ridiculous, namely, the employment of security guards at the recently called meeting of the Executive Committee of the SBC.

I wonder if committee members from Tennessee would tell Tennessee Baptists who authorized the spending of Cooperative Program money for this purpose. Spending \$50,000 to have a called meeting was bad enough, but that some mission money was used to secure guards for a Baptist meeting is beyond belief.

Dillard A. Mynatt  
Route 2, Box 529  
Gatlinburg 37738

## Closed meeting

I witnessed something on July 17 which I never expected in Southern Baptist life. Out of concern for Al Shackleford and Dan Martin, and intense interest in the deliberations about Baptist Press, I went

to the Executive Committee office in Nashville to attend the Executive Committee meetings. I encountered "ushers" whom I discovered to be armed off-duty police officers. What is going on in the SBC which requires the expenditure of millions dollars for police to exclude some Baptists from meetings?

Is the SBC now a police state?

Shackleford and Martin repeatedly requested three things: (1) an agenda of the procedure to be followed in dealing with them, (2) a statement of the charges against them and an opportunity to respond to those who made the charges, and (3) that all meetings would be open. One might expect no less consideration in the business world. There was little response to the request. Who is hiding what?

Can we trust a committee that works behind closed doors without due consideration for those individuals involved or the presence of other interested Baptists? The kind of Baptist Press envisioned by the current leadership may not print stories which cast them in any bad light. Baptists will learn of more closed meetings without knowing the facts about the meetings.

C. Kenny Cooper, pastor  
Bellevue Church  
101 Cross Timbers Drive  
Nashville 37221

## Gospel expanded

I write on behalf of people I know. We work hard to support ourselves and the church, and the Baptist Convention. We resent the way the SBC Executive Committee is spending the money we send them.

There are many deserving needs to be met, but this committee takes \$50,000 to call a meeting to fire two men whom they don't like — in order to enhance their position.

We don't care about the politics, "conservative" or "liberal." We do care about the expansion of the Gospel as Jesus taught. This committee should live the Christian life as Christ taught us.

Edwin L. Woodard  
Ridgetop Church  
Ridgetop 37152

## Wrong behavior

What the Executive Committee of the SBC did July 17 is unacceptable behavior to me and our church. The same day Russia lifted the muzzle on the press, the Executive Committee applied the information muzzle to the SBC. Southern Baptists have sat on the sidelines and allowed a group of Baptist leaders to mislead the SBC. I will fight back. This has never been a theological battle; it's a power struggle. Southern Baptists have stood for freedom of the press and that includes our own. We can read and believe for ourselves.

Here I stand. I will be outspoken during the days before us. I plead for the lay people of the SBC to join with others to preserve our convention. We need to rally the troops who are not in either camp.

Calvin T. Harvell  
8361 Chimney Rock  
Cordova 38018

## BP may suffer

It was with great sadness that I read a feature article on the front page of the Knoxville News-Sentinel this morning. The headline "Fundamentalist Baptist leaders fire top editors," and the attention grabbing box that the article was in, jumped out at me simply because of the exposure it received.

Having followed the related events for the past few weeks, I was not shocked at the outcome. It only serves as another self-inflicted blow to the already bruised

and battered body of Southern Baptists.

If Baptist Press is from this point intended to be merely a public relations agency, then it will have a difficult task in seeking to make Southern Baptists "look attractive" to a lost world. If its function is to be a news agency, its task will be equally difficult — a controlled press is usually looked upon with a critical and unbelieving eye. In either situation, BP will likely suffer from a lack of credibility.

Our "historic new day" has begun with a stumble. The "tent of involvement" seems to be narrowing instead of broadening.

Greg Miller  
Stock Creek Church  
8106 Martin Mill Pike  
Knoxville 37920

*Letters about the Executive Committee and BP situation are used in ratio to the views represented. More letters have been received than could be used thus far. Brief letters get preference. — Editor*

## After the convention

The "moderates" got a lickin' at every convention session and returned home with the "post convention blues." Confused even as to how to refer to themselves, the "moderates" are disappointed as well as disgusted that they did not have a victory to gloat over the "conservatives." Therefore, they resorted to childish tactics.

One such example was the Cafe du Mond gathering. Some of the "conservatives" chose this spot to celebrate because this was the previous meeting place for the Paul Pressler/Paige Patterson meeting. Knowing this, the "moderates" attended for the specific purpose of making a scene. As the "conservatives" broke out in song, the "moderates" shouted, "Shame! Shame!" What inappropriate behavior for adults — especially for those who supposedly have some character about them!

When asked, "When will the controversy end?" I replied, "Not until our Lord returns, because then the 'moderates' target of attack will be removed." Until that time they will still be moaning the blues.

Vaughn Denton  
4480 Kirby Parkway  
Memphis, 38115

## Who knows what?

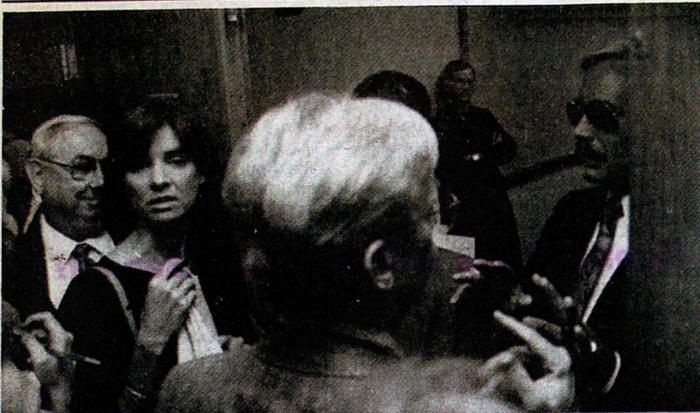
You said more than you can possibly know in your editorial of July 11, when you said: "We do not know the specific charges against Al Shackleford and Dan Martin . . ." For weeks I've been waiting for some evidence to surface that would either justify or junk this latest furor in our beloved convention. But nothing yet!

The Baptist Press issue reminds me of the days of the Iran-Contra Affair and a particular inquiry made by one congressional investigator: "What did the President know, and when did he know it?" Let's bring that same inquiry home and ask: "What do Al Shackleford and Dan Martin know and when did they know it?"

It seems to me that the Executive Committee must fear a great deal more than this being just "a matter of perception in the presentation of the news." Something is news! And I for one demand the opportunity to make up my own mind on the matter.

The "stone throwers" and the condemned are all that seem visible in this tainted picture. But wait, who's that kneeling and writing in the dirt? And what's that sound I hear, stones falling?

Richard Cassidy, pastor  
Henard's Chapel Church  
Route 3, Box 4230  
Rogersville 37857



**ON GUARD** — An off-duty Nashville metropolitan policeman kept observers and members of the press from entering the room where the SBC Executive Committee met in executive session.



**BAPTIST PRESS SUPPORTERS** — From First Church, Oak Ridge, were from left, Betty Galloway, Irene Rankin, and Larry Dipboye, pastor. — Photo by Connie Davis

## Executive Committee fires Shackleford, Martin . . .

(Continued from page 1)  
sional reputations of two Christian journalists."

The statement's expressions of concern for Shackleford's and Martin's welfare are a "false guise," said Ingraham.

"My clients have asked for openness and charges and the opportunity to answer," he said. "This information about protecting their interests, their embarrassment is a farce."

Shackleford's statement noted his 35 years as a Southern Baptist journalist and 41 months with Baptist Press. "I have long held to the historic Baptist adage, 'Tell the truth, and trust the people,'" he wrote. "For this adage to operate properly, Baptist leaders — whether in a church or denominational body — must fairly and objectively present all information to the members or messengers who will decide.

"A part of my trust of the Baptist system is that Baptists — the person in the pew — can be trusted with the truth, even when that truth is unpleasant. I believe Baptist state papers and Baptist Press itself must be as open and honest as possible with grassroots Baptists. Our people are smart enough to understand and to interpret for themselves the significance of an event or an issue. . . .

"The real issue you face today is not the control of Baptist Press nor its director, but the control of the right and responsibility of Baptist church members to know what is going on in their denomination. . . . Your vote today must not be based on your perception of the journalistic abilities of Dan Martin and me, but on our commitment to trust our fellow Baptists and on your willingness to allow their right to discern truth as presented to them through an objective, free news service."

Martin's statement noted his ten years at Baptist Press and cited his commitment — made to "conservative" leaders his first week on the job — to be fair and to provide open access to Baptist Press.

"Baptist Press is a news service," he wrote in his statement. "The purpose of a news service is to inform, inspire, educate, and even entertain its constituents. The events and personalities should be understandable to the person in the pew, who must have accurate information on which to base informed decisions. Sometimes the facts are hard and difficult, but never require intentional injury or hurt to in-

dividuals. In the words of (the apostle) Paul, we have not rejoiced in iniquity, but have rejoiced in the truth."

After the committee adjourned, members declined to discuss the issue and say why the staff members were fired.

Shackleford told reporters, "We were not given cause when we were told to resign (June 19) and have not been given cause since then." Last year, Baptist Press carried 1298 articles, and the staff was challenged on ten or less of them, he said.

"I think we were fired because they want their own minister of information," Martin said. "They're going to want somebody who's going to be a 'spin doctor,' who's going to put the spin on stories the way they want them."

One of the "ushers" confirmed to the Baptist and Reflector that he and four of the other six were off-duty policemen. The five policemen were armed with concealed weapons. They were instructed to keep people off the third floor, but were told not to touch anyone, one of the "ushers" said.

Regarding the addition of extra security guards, Charles Sullivan, Executive Committee member from Lenoir City, said the "committee was threatened that its meeting would be disrupted and not allowed to meet in executive session."

He said the committee had copies of a letter sent out on "Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Conven-

tion" stationery. One paragraph in the letter suggested Southern Baptists attend the called meeting of the Executive Committee. "By our presence, we can let our leaders know we do not approve of a controlled press. Be prepared to resist executive session which would put us out. However, be Christian even in resistance."

Sullivan said the extra security guards were needed "so we could conduct the meeting without harassment from outsiders." He said he did not know if the security guards were armed, adding their services were secured by Executive Committee attorney James P. Guenther.

In other actions:

● Shackleford and Martin said they do not know what jobs they will hold next. "We felt we needed to get beyond this meeting today," Martin said. "Now it's past, and we'll start looking at options."

● Martin noted the irony of the situation. In the prepared statement he said, "In my first week on the job (1980) I called the two leaders of the 'conservative' resurgence (Paul Pressler and Paige Patterson) and told them, 'I do not guarantee that you will like everything that I do, but I do guarantee I will be as fair as is humanly possible to be. I will always give you an opportunity to respond, and you will have access to the news service of the SBC.' I have lived by that commitment."

Martin told those attending the press

conference, "They want to deny to others what they have demanded and received in the past."

● The day's action was covered by most Baptist state papers and a score of secular news media personnel.

● Ingraham said he has "never been engaged (by the two journalists) to consider any legal action. I was asked to be an agent of reconciliation."

● Their severance arrangement "provides for them to continue receiving their full salaries plus their normal retirement, medical insurance, and life insurance benefits for a period of seven months, which includes accrued vacation" of four weeks each, Pace's statement said. Ingraham provided the committee with an independent study of fired executives in middle Tennessee. It indicated people with responsibilities and salaries comparable to Shackleford's and Martin's got an average of 12 months' pay and benefits.

Pace and Committee President Harold C. Bennett were unavailable for comment after the meeting, but Mosley said the actions regarding Shackleford and Martin were the only ones taken.

"By counsel and vote of the Executive Committee in executive session, I am prohibited from sharing information from the meeting," he said. "I believe . . . I am free to say there was no other business." — *Lonnie Wilkey and Marv Knox contributed to this story.*

## Two state churches change CP giving plans

By *Connie Davis, assistant editor*  
NASHVILLE — Two Tennessee churches have changed their allocation procedures to the Southern Baptist Convention because of the July 17 SBC Executive Committee action to fire Baptist Press Director Al Shackleford and Editor Dan Martin.

First Church, Oak Ridge, voted July 19 to cut Cooperative Program allocations going to the Christian Life Commission, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Executive Committee and Baptist Press, and the Home Mission Board.

Saturn Drive Church, Nashville, voted July 19 to escrow its Cooperative Program funds until a formula is developed by which Tennessee Baptists can give support to the Cooperative Program "without compromising their integrity," said Pastor Mike Mayo.

Oak Ridge Pastor Larry Dipboye

reported the change, which was recommended by the church's denominational relations committee, only affects the amount of funds sent to national causes and not those that remain in the state.

Of each CP gift, the TBC sends about four percent to the Annuity Board, a preferred budget item; uses 64.2 percent in the state; and sends 35.8 percent to national causes.

Dipboye explained the church will simply send two checks — one for TBC causes and one for the SBC — instead of one. It is withholding 11 percent of the SBC 35.8 percent — the total amount recommended for the Christian Life Commission, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and the SBC Operating Account, and a partial amount from the recommended Home Mission Board percentage — from 19.5 to 4.6.

The withholding will amount to about \$100 a month. The church gives ten percent of its \$420,000 operating budget.

Saturn Drive's decision to withhold all CP funds came on the heels of the pastor's first comment on the 12-year-old denominational controversy and a report on the Executive Committee meeting, said Mayo.

"I'm not a 'moderate,'" he said. "As a 'conservative,' inerrant, loyal Southern Baptist, I am saddened that we have come to this point."

In a letter to D.L. Lowrie, Tennessee Baptist Convention executive director, the church asked that the formula "preclude all such factions as the Southern Baptist Executive Committee."

The church, which runs about 100 in Sunday School each week, has given about ten percent of its \$124,000 1990 budget to the Cooperative Program.

## Not to discuss meeting

# Tennessee members honor Executive Committee's decision

By Lonnie Wilkey and Connie Davis  
NASHVILLE — Tennessee's six representatives on the SBC Executive Committee are honoring the committee's decision to enter executive session by not revealing any details of the meeting.

Charles Sullivan, pastor, First Church, Lenoir City, said the committee voted to go into executive session. "We have to abide by that," he said, adding that when we "voted to go into executive session, we were instructed as to what that involved."

Sullivan did say he felt it was a good session. "There was opportunity for freedom of expression within the meeting," he said.

James Cooley, a layman from Chattanooga, said he voted his convictions, noting he was on his knees in prayer the night before until after midnight.

In a prepared statement released to the Baptist and Reflector following the July 17 session, Cooley noted Executive Committee members are changing the personnel, not the principle, of Baptist Press.

"In fact, it is an affirmation of freedom of the press and responsible journalism.

"This is not a first amendment problem. This is a problem of accountability and responsibility to all Southern Baptists.

"Baptist Press is not a gossip column where all the soiled linen is aired.

We need not float in a murky stream of hostility, hate, distrust, and rancor by publicly airing our faults and differences that distort who we really are as believers," Cooley said.

Cooley added that he hopes there are "enough inspiring events, gifted people, and exciting churches to fill the pages of our Baptist Press and our state papers that could bring great joy to the many fine people of our convention."

David Atchison, new member of Nashville, said the committee acted in a "Christlike, and open, and fair way."

"It was not a good situation. It shouldn't have gone this far. . . . In any other situation like this it would have been dealt with in a confidential manner," said Atchison, a member of Two Rivers Church, Nashville. "They (Shackleford and Martin) chose to make it a very big public thing. It was unfortunate from that angle."

"Although the newspapers disagree with me it wouldn't have been fair for them to be in the meeting and it wouldn't have been fair for Dan and Al to have been in the meeting," stated Atchison, who was elected convention recording secretary at the June annual meeting defeating Martin Bradley of Nashville.

Joe Warwick said he wished "Dan and Al the best and hoped they would be able to find employment soon." The Knoxville layman added he approved

of the severance package offered to the two men. "I hope there won't be a hardship for them and their family during the transition."

Doug Westmoreland, pastor of Tusculum Hills Church, Nashville, said, "That was an executive session

and out of respect for that I refer my comments to the press release."

After the meeting Don Whitt, pastor, First Church, Milan, stated, "I voted how I felt God would want me to." He could not be contacted later in the week.

## Baptist Press will continue: Bennett

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Executive Committee President Harold C. Bennett said he plans to continue publication of Baptist Press.

In a telephone interview with the Baptist and Reflector July 18, Bennett acknowledged "nothing is in place," but noted a process will be established to "publish Baptist Press with the staff we have left. We will keep it going," he said.

A Baptist Press release, dated July 18 was issued the day following the termination of Al Shackleford and Dan Martin as director and news editor, respectively, of the convention's news service. The BP release contained statements issued by the Executive Committee, Martin, and Shackleford.

Bennett affirmed that the three remaining BP staffers — Doris Elliott, Polly House, and Maria Sykes — are not in danger of losing their jobs.

"I met with the ladies this morning (July 18) and told them they are absolutely secure, with my personal request that they stay where they are and get the job done."

Bennett said Executive Vice President Ernest Mosley would work with the remaining BP staff at the present time.

Mosley affirmed that he "is working with the staff to keep BP flowing."

He said he and Bennett have met with Jim Newton of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board who serves as chief of the Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

"Our anticipation is the bureau chiefs will continue to send stories through Baptist Press," Mosley said. (Newton also is serving as a bureau liaison with Baptist state paper editors.)

On July 20 Newton released a statement on behalf of the five bureau chiefs in Atlanta, Nashville, Dallas,

Richmond, and Washington.

The bureau chiefs said that "as long as Baptist Press can continue to operate with journalistic integrity within historic guidelines, we pledge our efforts to cooperate within the system."

The statement noted that the absence of professional journalists at the central office of Baptist Press "places greater responsibility on each of us in bureaus to maintain journalistic integrity and credibility."

Mosley said that "lacking a professional journalist at the present time, the staff will rely more heavily on stories provided by the bureaus and other news writers."

Mosley added that he assumes "an interim BP director will be employed as soon as the process can be completed."

Charles Sullivan, chairman of the administrative and convention arrangements subcommittee of the Executive Committee, told the Baptist and Reflector Bennett will have the responsibility of finding people to fill the positions vacated by the termination of Martin and Shackleford and the recent resignation of Marv Knox, former features editor, who left to become editor of the Western Recorder in Kentucky.

Bennett said he did not know if he would have any recommendations for the Executive Committee members when they met in September. "I will have gone through the process and will try to fill the positions," he said.

Regarding the firing of Martin and Shackleford, Bennett said, "I felt Al and Dan did a good job."

Bennett declined to comment further about conversations with Executive Committee officers regarding Martin and Shackleford or the closed meeting of the committee on July 17. — Lonnie Wilkey



**MIDDLE TENNESSEE MINISTERS** — The Summer Ministers' Conference at Belmont College, Nashville, held July 9-11, drew 86 to its opening session in which Nashville Association Pastors' Conference also participated. Attending the luncheon were, from left, Leonard Markham, pastor, Bluegrass Church, Hendersonville; David George, pastor, Immanuel Church, Nashville; Joe Mayberry, director of missions, William Carey Association, conference president; Marty Bell, professor, Belmont College, conference teacher; Carl Duck, director of missions, Nashville Association; and Bill Trout, president, Belmont College. Ministers' wives were led by Katharine Bryan, Tennessee WMU executive director. — Photos by Connie Davis



## TeamTalk

By D. L. Lowrie

Every Christian has a testimony. Your testimony is simply what you have experienced of the Lord. When you tell what God has done for you, you are giving testimony.

There is power in testimony. The Apostle Paul regularly shared with others what God had done for him. Your experience may not be as dramatic as that of Paul, but it can still be powerful. The unsaved are defenseless against a personal testimony.

How long has it been since you shared your testimony with someone else? If it has been a while, why not share it with a fellow Christian this week. You will bless them if you sim-

ply ask, "Have I ever told you about how I became a Christian, and what Jesus has meant to me since?" They will be encouraged by your testimony, and will probably share their testimony with you.

Then share it with an unsaved friend. Pray about it. Be natural as you share it. Avoid being preachy. Don't look down on them, because your experience with God is an expression of His grace. Be personal. Be brief. You should be able to sum up God's saving work in a couple of minutes. Remember, there is a difference between a testimony and a biography. The testimony focuses on what God has done.

I cannot help but wonder how much spiritual energy would be released in Tennessee if each person reading this article gave testimony this week. I am asking God for an opportunity to do it. Will you join me in this prayer?



LOWRIE

# Texans help build church for Clarksville congregation

**By Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor**  
**CLARKSVILLE** — A Texas flag flapping in the breeze would not be that unusual — unless that flag was found in Clarksville, hundreds of miles from the Lone Star State.

But at least for one week the Texas flag flew proudly over the building site for Maplewood Church's new 6200-square-foot sanctuary and educational wing.

The flag was raised by about 50 volunteers, the majority of whom are members of Old First Orange Church in Orange, Texas. They were joined by some other Texans and volunteers from Ohio and North Carolina.

Bobby Spross, pastor of Old First Orange Church, led the group as he has for 20 years.

Spross, who came from a construction background before surrendering to the ministry, noted the first trip he made was a "mission vacation" with a few members of the church.

The group has grown steadily and now does several projects each year, some close to home, others which require a week-long trip.

"We have built 50 churches in 20 years," Spross said, noting groups from his church have traveled to Washington, California, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Wyoming, Colorado, Montana, North Carolina, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kentucky, and now Tennessee.

"We started out primarily in pioneer mission areas to help churches begin their first unit," Spross explained, but noted that in recent years they have

worked on several projects in "the Bible Belt."

Many of the volunteers from the church are now retired, while others use their vacation time. The group, including the pastor, pays its own way. No Cooperative Program funds are used to finance the trips, Spross emphasized.

He noted many who volunteers have RVs which they drive to camp in. In addition, the church being helped will supply lodging for those who need it and two meals per day for the entire group, he added.

In recent years, it has been common for the group to include volunteers from churches which have been helped in the past. "It's gratifying when people from churches we've helped volunteer to help on other projects," Spross said.

The Texas pastor said the construction projects give people "an opportunity to use their talents and abilities for the Lord."

He added that not everyone who participates is experienced in construction, but noted "it is amazing what people who are not builders can do with a little instruction and direction."

The Texans learned about the need in Clarksville from a former colleague. Gerald Robertson, a member at Maplewood, is a retired minister of education from First Church, Orange, Texas. He also served on an interim basis at Old First Church, Orange, so he was well aware of their ministry and willingness to help churches build



**BUILDING IN CLARKSVILLE** — Assisting Maplewood Church in constructing a new sanctuary were, from left, Pastor Howard Lee; Bobby Spross, pastor of Old First Orange Church, Orange, Texas, and Gerald Robertson, a member of Maplewood's building committee.

their first unit.

Maplewood was begun as a mission in 1979, but never constructed a permanent facility. Church members have met in a converted seven-room house.

Pastor Howard Lee said the church's growth from 50 to 125 members in a year-and-a-half necessitated a building program.

The church sold \$150,000 in bonds in only one week, Lee reported. Those funds gave the church about \$173,000 in the building fund, but Lee and other church leaders knew volunteer labor would be needed in order to build.

In addition to the group from Texas which put the building "in the dry," others from the church and community

have volunteered their time to help finish the building. Lawrence Byard, a builder who is a member of nearby Spring Creek Church, offered to oversee the construction, Lee noted.

The Texans' willingness to come to Tennessee to build has been an inspiration to the Clarksville congregation, Lee said.

"This has been good for our church because it has lifted our spirit 100 percent," he affirmed.

The Clarksville pastor predicted the church will continue to grow from the experience.

"It's a new beginning for Maplewood Church," Lee said.



## Shoe Strings

"the kid's fun page"



Created by

Rob Sauls July 1990  
 Darrell Vandergriff  
 Lib McCluskey

### Jesus Heals A Sick Man

Read in your Bible Mark 2:1-12 and Luke 5:18-26, then answer the following questions:

- The sick man was:
  - Blind
  - Had Leprosy
  - Paralyzed
  - Flu
- To reach Jesus, the four friends:
  - lowered the sick man through the roof
  - crawled through a window
  - waited for Jesus to come outside
  - bribed the doorkeeper
- A friend is someone who:
  - Turns away when someone needs help
  - Talks bad about you when you are not present
  - Helps someone in need

4. Write your own definition of a friend

\_\_\_\_\_

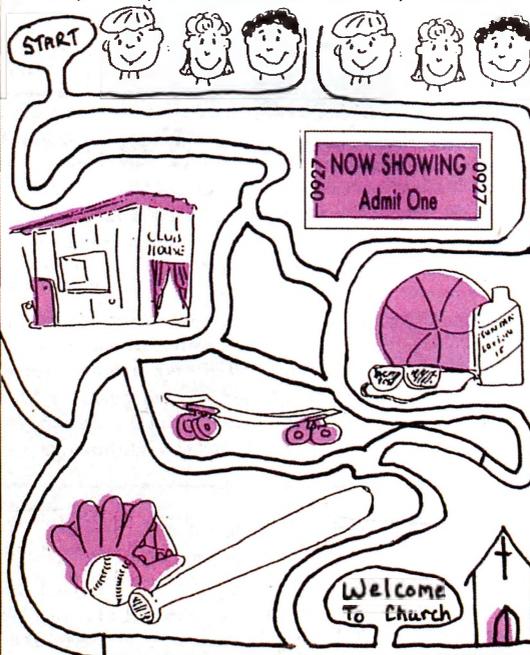
\_\_\_\_\_
- Friendship is shown by:
  - visiting someone sick
  - praying for someone
  - running errands for someone
  - inviting someone to church
  - None of the above
  - all of the above
- List ways you will help a friend this month:
 

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Can you help the friends find their way to church?



### More Adventures

"That's my baseball card," yelled Darren. "No," shouted Joshua, "it's mine! My brother gave it to me!" Both boys stood up ready for a fight. Darren kicked Joshua's stack of cards everywhere. Joshua picked up Darren's cards and threw most of them in the trash can.

Punches started flying as they fell to the floor and rolled on the cards mixing them up good. As soon as the fight started, the boys started laughing at what must have been a very funny sight — two "grown" eight-year-olds on the floor like "kids."

The loud laughing caused Mrs. Hampton to walk out and ask, "What are you two doing?" "Nothing," said Joshua between giggles. "We're just solving our trade dispute."

"Joshua," said Darren, "remember what our Sunday School teacher said about sharing?" Joshua nodded. Darren continued, "Let's share this baseball card. You keep it this week, and I'll keep it the next week." "Sounds good to me," said Joshua. "Let's get our cards back in order."

Put the words to this Bible Scripture in the correct order.

with another one Have

Mark 9:50

peace



Dr. Gerald L. Stow  
Executive Director/Treasurer  
Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes

## New outfits help give youth new hope

"I know you — you're one of those kids from the Children's Home."

This is the kind of taunting statement that can cause emotional wounds to the children in our care. Even though our houseparents and support staff provide the most loving, Christian home environment possible, there is still a stigma attached to a child who lives in institutional care.

Our boys and girls don't want to feel different. They want to be like their friends in school and church.

One way we can help our children is to provide them with clean, cheerful clothes that fit. There are many times when a child comes to us with only the clothing that he or she is wearing. We have to start from scratch to outfit the child for church, school, and play.

You'd be amazed by how our children react to new clothes. Some have never had an outfit that wasn't a hand-me-down. To have something of their very own — something in which they can take pride — is one small way we can help build a child's self-esteem.

The children in our care have been separated from their parents, most often because of child abuse or neglect. Whatever the reason, the emotional scars from a divided family are often difficult to heal. Our children already feel "different" because they aren't with their families. If the children are further ridiculed or shunned based on how they are dressed, that will only add to the rejection in their lives.

Jesus said, "And when did we see You a stranger and invite You in, and clothe

You?

"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'" (Matthew 25:38, 40)

Your gift of \$25 will buy a pair of school shoes; \$50 will purchase a complete outfit for a boy or girl. These gifts are investments in the self-esteem of the boys and girls in our care.

Let's send our TBCH children back to school with a good self-image, a time to learn, and a hope in their heart from our Lord, Jesus Christ.

## Back-to-school clothes bring smiles at Baptist Children's Homes

Preparing children for the school year can put a major dent in any family budget. Imagine the total cost for clothing, shoes, and school supplies for a family of more than 200 children.

It seems overwhelming, yet the task of outfitting dozens of youngsters is exactly what the staff members of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes are facing this August.

"New clothing is so important to our children," said Jerry Blasingame, regional director of the Franklin TBCH campus. "We don't want them branded as 'Home kids' because of inadequate clothing. It's important that they feel good about themselves, and part of that is having a nice appearance."

Blasingame, along with the other TBCH regional directors — Rev. Burl McMillan of Chattanooga, Rev. Jim Henry of Johnson City, and Dr. Gene Gafford of Memphis — are juggling budgets and donations to outfit more than 200 children for the return to school. It's a yearly task that consumes the major portion of each campus's clothing budget.

When a child is brought into the TBCH ministry, he or she is taken to the clothing room on campus. There, staff members help the child select such apparel as jeans, shirts, dresses, or coats from donated goods. Some children return to their cottage home with several outfits; others are unable to find any suitable clothes in their size.



A new outfit for school brings a smile to the face of this teenage resident of the Children's Home. Each boy and girl brought into the ministry is provided with clothing for church, school, and play. (TBCH photo by Jim Veneman)

The problem is that many of the donated clothes are outdated.

"Of course, we're thankful for the items that are donated. But some of the clothes we receive have been sitting in closets for ten years," explained Bill Dockery, director of cottage life at the Chattanooga TBCH campus. "We're just not able to use outdated clothing because the

children are made fun of. It brings them negative attention at school when they're not dressed like the other kids."

So whenever possible, the children are provided with new clothing. Not all of it is purchased. Some businesses — such as Sears in Memphis and Buster Brown Manufacturing Company in Chattanooga — will occa-

sionally donate new apparel. Still, most of the new items must be bought — a fact that strains already tight budgets.

"Right now, our clothing budget is running very low," said Gafford. "We're doing what we can, though, because it helps so much for our children to have something that is personally theirs — something that hasn't been worn by anyone else."

There are also needs for donations of basic toiletry items, such as shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and soap. For the teenagers, there are needs for items such as deodorant, disposable razors, and hair spray.

Each of the four TBCH regions has a special clothing fund for children. Donations may be mailed directly to each campus. Please indicate on the check that the money is to be designated for the Clothing Fund. The addresses are:

Northeast Tennessee Region — TBCH  
209½ University Parkway  
Johnson City, TN 37601

East Tennessee Campus — TBCH  
6623 Lee Highway  
Chattanooga, TN 37421

Middle Tennessee Campus — TBCH  
P. O. Box 519  
Franklin, TN 37065

West Tennessee Campus — TBCH  
6896 Highway 70  
Memphis, TN 38134

Centennial  
1891-1991  
Tennessee  
Baptist  
Children's  
Homes

Chattanooga • Franklin • Memphis • Johnson City • Greeneville • Burrville  
Kingsport • Millington

Central Office  
P. O. Box 728 • 5001 Maryland Way • Brentwood, TN 37027  
1-800-624-8591

A ministry of the Tennessee Baptist Convention

(Advertisement)

# TenneScene

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

## Churches ...

Homecoming will be held Aug. 12 at Prairie Plains Church, Hillsboro. Special music will follow luncheon.

Old New Hope Church, Fairview, will hold homecoming July 29. There will be a covered dish dinner and special music by The Laborers and The New Tradition.

Members of Fredonia Church, Crossville, will celebrate homecoming Aug. 12.

The congregation of Pleasant Valley Church, Cottontown, will celebrate the church's 113th anniversary and homecoming Aug. 12. Former pastor L. J. Hatcher will be guest speaker. Special music in the afternoon will be presented by L. C. Gray and the group Redeemed.

Blairland Church, Loudon, will sponsor Vacation Bible School July 30-Aug. 3 at Loudon High School.

Volunteers from Parkview Church, Jackson, recently conducted a backyard Bible club in their community, and hosted Vacation Bible School July 16-20. In addition, the membership broke ground recently for a new parking lot.

Members of Friendship Church, Buchanan, will hold homecoming services Aug. 5.

The membership of Mansfield Church, Mansfield, celebrated homecoming June 24.

For his 12th anniversary as pastor of Calvary Church, Elizabethton, Ray Sorrells, and his wife, Bonnie, were given a surprise gift of a trip to the Holy Land.

Members of Brentwood Church, Brentwood, adopted a resolution July 15 supporting Al Shackelford, who was terminated two days later from his position as director of Baptist Press. The resolution noted Shackelford has been a church member since 1977 and

'has been consistent and faithful throughout the years in all aspects of 'churchmanship.' "

Homecoming was recently held at Russwood Church, Springville.

The congregation of Green River Church, Waynesboro, will celebrate homecoming July 29.

## Leadership ...

Jesse Newton recently celebrated his 79th birthday by preaching at Greenhills Church, Collierville. He is pastor emeritus at the church. Newton has served 52 years in the ministry.

Bobby Zumbro, pastor of First Church, Woodbury, has announced his plans to retire Sept. 1. Zumbro has pastored the church for 18 years. He began his pastoral duties in 1955 at Rucker Church, Murfreesboro. He has served as pastor of Whiteville Church, Whiteville, and came to Woodbury from First Church, Dunlap. He has also served on the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board. During his tenure in Woodbury, the church purchased two houses adjoining the church property, renovated the fellowship hall, and began a senior adult activities group. A reception will be held for the Zumbros July 29, 2-4 p.m.

Fruitland Church, Humboldt, called Jerry Smothers as interim pastor.

Bill Henard, pastor of First Church, Lawrenceburg, has resigned to accept the pastorate of Ridgecrest Church, Birmingham, Ala.

## Missions ...

A volunteer team from Central Church, Chattanooga, will be in Maracay, Venezuela Aug. 3-14 to work with ten churches in the city. The team also plans to participate in a city wide crusade.

Lynn Sloan, from Madisonville and a student at University of Tennessee,

Knoxville, and Amy Martin, a Motlow State Community College student from Tullahoma, are serving as summer missionaries with Concord Association.

A team from Loudon County Association plans to make a mission trip to the Philippines Aug. 2-14.

Sixteen adults from First Church, Goodlettsville, recently spent a week at the Zuni Mission, Zuni, N.M., doing construction work. In addition, a special worship service was held.

Ronnie and Lisa Barron, Baptist representatives to Mexico, can be reached at Apartado Postal C-67, Chihuahua, Chihuahua, 31170, Mexico. Both consider Nashville their hometown.

Missionaries to Ghana John and Pat Gordy have arrived in Alabama on furlough. Gordy is from Chattanooga and his wife is from Morristown. They can be reached at 310 Evergreen, Birmingham, Ala. 35209.

Maurice and Laurie Graham, Baptist representatives to the Arab Gulf, are in the field and can be reached at P.O. Box 80, SAFAT, 13001 KUWAIT. Graham is a native of Shelbyville.

## Ordinations ...

Butch Stapleton was ordained to the ministry July 8 at Bethlehem Church, Crossville. He is pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Crossville.

Trace Creek Church, New Johnsonville, ordained Wayne Purcell to the ministry recently. He is the pastor of Hurricane Creek Church, Erin.

Steve Gipson was ordained as deacon at Cash Point Church, Ardmore.

## People ...

Sallie Mae McLeary and the congregation of Highland Heights Church, Memphis, celebrated her 100th birthday July 1. McLeary has a long history of service to Highland Heights Church.

Fred C. Tubbs, former pastor of First Church, Somerville, and Oak Grove Church, Covington, is living in Memphis after residing in Texas for several years. He is available for supply, interim pastorates, revivals, and Bible conferences. He may be called at 901-357-4288. He recently received his doctorate from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

James C. Austin, former pastor of First Church, Hendersonville, has retired as vice president for institutional advancement of Shorter College, Rome, Ga.

The Personal Collections Section, Z. Smith Reynolds Library, Wake Forest University, recently established a collection for the personal and professional papers of Owen Meredith Smaw, Nashville. Smaw was graduated from Wake Forest University School of Law and awarded his Juris Doctorate in 1957, and is an attorney-at-law. His papers and files contain information relating to the Court of Last Resort; human rights for prisoners; the death penalty; and other related topics.

## Revivals ...

Concord Missionary Church, Ten Mile, began revival services July 23 with evangelist Ray Tate.

Gibson County Association reported the following upcoming revivals. Antioch Church, Humboldt, Aug. 5. Tom Madden; China Grove Church, Rutherford, Aug. 12. Greg McFadden; New Bethlehem Church, Dyer, Aug. 12. Kyle Rudd; First Church, Rutherford, July 29. Don Hicks; Salem Church, Trenton, July 29. Garry Burkacki; Eldad Church, Trenton, Aug. 19. Frank Kemper; and Poplar Grove Church, Trenton, July 29. Frank Kempler.

Revival services will be held every Sunday night during August at First Church, Nashville. Pastor Charles Page will deliver the messages.

Revival will be held July 30-Aug. 4 at Old New Hope Church, Fairview. Randy Franklin will lead the services and Frank Daughtery will lead music.

## New Tazewell church calls Turner as pastor

John Turner recently began service as pastor of First Church, New Tazewell.

Before coming to New Tazewell, Turner was pastor of Shellsford Church, McMinnville. While at Shellsford Church, he served as moderator and stewardship director of Central Association. In addition, Turner has served as pastor of First Church, Whitesburg.

Turner is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He and his wife, Brenda, have two children.



TURNER



**LITERACY WORKERS** — Three Tennesseans joined literacy workers from 24 states and Canada at the Literacy Missions Leadership workshop held recently at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. The annual program is sponsored by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Pictured with HMB literacy missions director Kendale Moore, right, are from left, Tony Vandye, Fairview Church, Paris; Melanie Tidsworth, Salem Springs Chapel, Murfreesboro; Robin Barr, First Church, Jefferson City. Workshop participants are now equipped to train other workers to teach adults to read and write, tutor young people and teach English to foreigners.



**GROUND BREAKING FOR ADDITION** — Members of New Hope Church, Palmersville, broke ground recently for a 2953 square foot addition to their church. It will provide education, office, and fellowship space. The growth and expansion committee are pictured in front from left: Brenda Means, Billy Marey, Chairman Bryce Pettit, Pastor G. W. Moon, and Bill Taylor.

# \$1.56 million verdict returned against FMB

By Art Toalston

RICHMOND (BP)— A Richmond Circuit Court jury has awarded \$1.56 million to four children of a former missionary couple in a lawsuit against the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The jury's verdict July 13 followed a five-day trial.

The lawsuit, filed by the children's mother, Diana Sue Wade, contended board officials learned her husband, G. Thomas Wade Jr., was sexually abusing their oldest daughter but did not disclose it to the mother so she could halt the molestation. The lawsuit contended Wade continued to abuse the daughter as well as a second daughter, who was adopted, and that he began molesting a third daughter. The couple also has a son. The sexual abuse began in 1979 in Botswana, Africa, when the oldest daughter was about ten years old.

Defense attorney Lewis T. Booker of Richmond argued that board officials who handled the family's case acted reasonably under the circumstances. The first official to learn about the

abuse confronted the father, who agreed to tell his wife and undergo counseling with his family, according to testimony in the case. The missionary subsequently failed to act on the promise. The official then ordered the missionary to return to the United States with his family for counseling.

Mrs. Wade, 40, of Anchorage, Alaska, had sought \$141 million when she filed suit in April 1988 in Virginia, where the board is located.

The jury awarded \$850,000 to the adopted daughter, \$350,000 to each of the other two daughters and \$10,000 to the son, for a total of \$1.56 million.

An Aug. 20 hearing is scheduled in the circuit court on motions by the Foreign Mission Board to dismiss the verdict. One key contention is that missionaries do not have written contracts stipulating specific expectations of the board.

If the court denies the motions, the

Foreign Mission Board will have 30 days to file a notice of appeal with the Virginia Supreme Court and three months to file its formal petition.

Mrs. Wade, a missionary with the board from 1976 until her resignation in February 1986, filed suit in behalf of her four children, who now range in age from 17 to 22. Virginia law permits Mrs. Wade to file another suit on her own behalf within a year of the start of the children's trial.

She and her husband, an agriculturist, worked in Kenya and then Botswana. They returned from Africa in April 1984 on a furlough and

then went on leave of absence. Wade, now 49, was arrested for sexual abuse of his daughters in June 1985 and is serving a 12-year sentence in Highland Mountain Correctional Center in Eagle River, Alaska. Mrs. Wade divorced him after the arrest.

During the trial, Mrs. Wade claimed that the Foreign Mission Board promised to protect the family's "health, welfare, and safety" when she and her husband were appointed as missionaries. Under cross-examination, she acknowledged that such care may be limited by the information and resources available to board officials.

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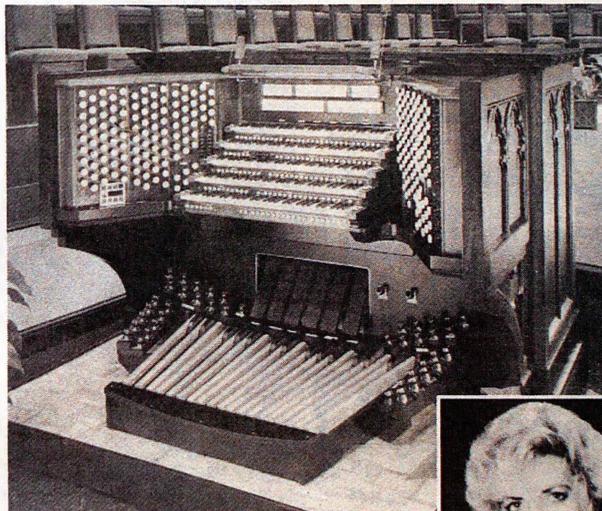


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# The Philistines and the ark

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

What happens when God's people turn away from God and cling to a form of godliness? What are the consequences of using God as a "good luck charm?" What does the future hold for those who live off past victories? The nation of Israel could answer those questions.

The assumption (4:1-5)

Rather than continually renewing their relationship with God, Israel carelessly assumed God's powerful presence would be with them though they strayed from Him. The Ark of the Covenant, where the "presence of God" resided, had become a good luck charm.

Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, desecrated the tabernacle by removing the ark. They assumed they could sin against God and yet win the victory.



HAUN

The attack (4:6-22)

The Philistines were frightened by Israel's attack. They remembered the stories of the past, how God intervened for Israel when they left Egypt. Somehow they gained courage to fight against Israel and found victory. God's glory had departed His disobedient children. Thirty thousand men of Israel were killed. Hophni and Phinehas died. Israel retreated and the ark was captured.

When Eli heard the report, he fell backward and broke his neck. When Phinehas' wife heard the news, her labor pains began. She gave birth to a child and evidently hemorrhaged. As she lay dying, she instructed them to name him Ichabod (the glory is departed).

The accurse (5:1-12)

The Philistines worshipped many gods, and Dagon was the chief god. They felt the more gods they had in their possession, the more secure they would be. Thus the ark became a great prize for the Philistines. But it was a

source of power beyond their control. Evidently, the Lord didn't like "spending the night" with Dagon. Dagon kept falling on his face and losing arms, legs, and his head.

The Philistines didn't understand the implications until a plague swept the cities. So severe did the plague become that no Philistine village wanted anything to do with the ark.

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Basic Passage: 1 Samuel 4-7

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The acknowledgement (6:1-21-7:21)

In typical heathen fashion, the Philistines began to acknowledge their repentance in time of trouble. They offered five gold models of tumors and five gold rats, thinking this might placate the anger of God. This was a kind of guilt offering (Leviticus 5:14-6:7).

They came up with a test to see if the plague was of God or coincidence. Two cows who had recently given birth were attached to the ark. The cows' in-

stinct would prevent them from leaving their calves. If they crossed the border, the Philistines would know it was all of God. The Philistines would be left with a clear message — the Hebrew God is a mighty God!

The cows crossed the border at Beth Shemesh (House of the sun). The Jews were so overjoyed to see the ark, 70 men disobeyed God and looked inside. They were slain. The people of the small town requested the ark be moved. It was put in the house of Abinadab where it remained for 20 years.

The appointment (7:3-17)

Because people witnessed the judgment of God and kept hearing the prophetic voice of Samuel, there was a deep conviction among Jews. They gathered at Mizpah. Such were the numbers at Mizpah that the Philistines mobilized and advanced their army. God delivered the people from the Philistines and it was at Mizpah that Samuel was appointed the last of the judges (political and religious leaders). He became one of the best of the judges because he always kept a heart for God.

# All is vanity

By John Henry Pippin, pastor; First Church, Savannah

Despair, doubt, and frustration characterize so many, even churchgoers, in this present generation. Old ways of thinking and living are being discarded like old shoes. Values of long-standing are being readjusted like a waistband after overeating. Questions are being asked about the meaning and direction of life. The "teacher" in Ecclesiastes confronted these same issues and questions. His lessons can assist one in dealing with some of these difficulties.

The theme  
Ecclesiastes' theme is the futility of life. The Hebrew word translated "vanity" means breath or vapor and



PIPPIN

indicates the instability and emptiness of life. All the things that are considered to give permanence and substance to life are no more than an early morning fog disappearing before the sun. It all means nothing, goes nowhere. Such are the feelings of multitudes.

Vanity in the cycle of life (1:3-7)

Life is vanity because it requires painful labor, but returns no profit in material wealth or lasting pleasures. The sphere of this vanity is "under the sun," which refers to man's life on earth. The teacher observed that generation follows generation, but the earth never changes. The human race is going nowhere; it simply repeats the tiresome routine of life and death. Every generation is a new cast, while the stage, the earth, remains the same. Three witnesses are called which

confirm this weary, profitless repetition. The sun which is constant in its routine, the wind which is constant in its circling, and the sea which is never filled all show the frustration and meaninglessness of life.

Vanity of human wisdom (1:12-17)

The teacher investigated all human activities, deeds by which people try to make life productive and satisfactory.

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Focal Passage: Ecclesiastes 1:1 to 2:26

His search yielded a disappointing conclusion. He discovered that trying to improve things was like feeding on wind. No amount of struggling and striving would change one thing.

The tool in this search was wisdom. He had gained wisdom and experienced folly, but both were like striving with the wind. Wisdom is useful (1:13), but it becomes a liability when it is the goal of one's life.

The solution (2:24-25)

The teacher then gave a partial solution to this problem. His suggestion is to enjoy the everyday pleasures of life, not the sensual life, but the simple life. Simple pleasures come from God as does the ability to enjoy them. This joy may be experienced by all who will receive it as a blessing from God, or as verse 26 indicates, all who "please Him."

The frustrated, despairing, and doubting should heed the Lord's invitation to come to Him and find rest (Matthew 11:28). They should hear His promise of satisfaction to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6). Those who refuse His invitation and promise can expect life to be empty and meaningless. God extends the offer, but He gives man the choice of accepting the offer or refusing it. Man can live by God's abiding values and find meaning or the world's passing standards and find emptiness. Be wise and choose the peace that passes all understanding!

# Live as God's special people

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

Do we have the right to determine how we live our lives? When we become God's special people, we surrender ourselves to live according to His plan. Peter indicated that Christians should respond properly to the call for spiritual growth, service, and conduct.

Call to spiritual growth (2:1-3)  
The Christian life begins with a spiritual birth through faith in Jesus.

Growth is the expected result, since birth does not produce a fully grown Christian. As physical birth produces a physical infant, spiritual birth produces a spiritual infant. No one is to remain an infant physically or spiritually.

Peter warned of the danger of assuming spiritual birth automatically creates spiritual maturity. He pointed



WREN

out that spiritual growth required a willingness to exercise discipline and receive nourishment.

To grow spiritually, Christians should learn to eliminate traits that are unbecoming to children of God. "Laying aside" (v. 1) implies the act of casting aside undesirable traits.

Spiritual nourishment is found in the Word of God. As the Holy Spirit used the Word to effect spiritual birth (1 Peter 1:23), He wants to use the Word to sustain.

Christians are to desire the "sincere milk of the Word" (v. 2). By feeding on all the Word, we are strengthened and enabled to live as God's people. There is no way a Christian can grow and live properly if he neglects to feed his soul on God's Word.

Call to spiritual service (2:4-5, 7-10)

Christians are saved to serve. They have made a personal commitment to the One who is described as a "living stone" (v. 4). People who receive Him as the chief cornerstone of faith and of

the church become "living stones ... a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices" (v. 5). Believers are living stones used in the construction of His church.

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July 29 Lesson

Basic Passage: 1 Peter 2:1-12

Focal Passages: 1 Peter 2:1-12

Peter pointed out that many rejected Jesus as the chief cornerstone. He was not the kind of Messiah they were anticipating. Though sent by God to His own chosen people, they "received Him not" (John 1:11). Because Israelites thought they were superior to Gentiles, opposed God's representatives and their messages, and rejected and crucified Jesus, God turned to a new Israel, the church. Many believe that prior to His death, Jesus indicated the termination of Israel's special position in the words, "Therefore I say to you, the Kingdom of God

will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it," (Matthew 21:43). Peter announced that Christians occupy that special position as God's chosen people (v. 9).

Our mission as God's people is clearly defined in verse 9. We are to proclaim to the world how God brought us out of darkness into His light. We are to share His salvation with a world that needs to hear the Good News.

Call to spiritual conduct (2:11-12)

Peter pleaded with his readers to live in such a way that there will be a noticeable difference between them and non-believers. He reminded them they were "strangers and pilgrims" (v. 11) traveling through this world to their permanent home in heaven. They were instructed to be faithful in their service and deeds, regardless of what others did or said (v. 12).

Christians should glorify God by allowing His will to be accomplished in their lives. Their speech, behavior, and interest should reveal they are God's possession. Since they belong to Him, they are to conduct themselves to bring honor to the Lord. Since God is depending on us, we are encouraged to "live as God's special people."

# Directors of missions examine roles during conference

By Sarah Zimmerman

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)— In the midst of denominational conflict, some Southern Baptist associational directors of missions see themselves as the "glue that can keep churches on track for missions and ministry."

About 25 DOMs met for a church conflict management seminar during home missions week at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center. The last hour of the two-day seminar became an informal dialogue among participants as they focused on their response to the Southern Baptist Convention controversies.

Because of the pressure they feel from conflicting churches, none of the participants would allow their comments to be attributed for this story.

"How can we address this (in the association) intelligently and maintain our integrity?" one DOM asked the group.

Another reported that churches in



## Poll: pro-choice views create confusion

A recently released opinion poll shows that many Americans misunderstand the term "pro-choice" and that many who consider themselves to be "pro-choice" actually oppose most abortions that are performed in the United States.

The study was released by the Wirthlin Group. It shows over half of all Americans oppose the vast majority of all abortions. The poll also found that many holding these views misidentify themselves as "pro-choice."

— Evangelical Press

his association are saying, "We're no longer represented; why should we keep giving?"

One man responded: "We have to ask ourselves why we are giving to missions. Because I am not recognized at the top does not relieve me of my responsibility to give to missions."

Such answers did not seem to satisfy at least one man who said that attitude was like "sticking your head in the sand."

Their concern about missions giving centered around the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' unified budget. Together, the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, and six Southern Baptist seminaries received about 90 percent of the convention's \$137 million annual Cooperative Program receipts.

Some "moderate" churches have announced plans to reduce or withdraw giving to the Cooperative Program because they believe "moderates" are no longer represented on the convention's governing bodies.

In the conflict environment, one DOM asserted that "we can intervene to be the glue that holds us together. We have to try to keep our churches on track for missions and ministry."

George W. Bullard Jr., the seminar's leader, said, "As denominational servants, we have to find ways to work with all the churches. I must do everything I can to keep everyone I serve on mission for God's kingdom." Bullard is state director of missions for the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

To be effective, Bullard said associational directors of missions should refrain from taking a side in the convention controversy. "If we become identified with one group, we lose our right to be servant of all."

The key to associational integrity, Bullard said, is to maintain fellowship among pastors and churches.

The group applied principles from the past 12 years in the Southern Bap-

tist Convention. To simplify the discussion, participants used the terms "fundamental conservative" and "moderate conservative."

Bullard said when the conflict began, "moderate conservatives" acted as though 'fundamental conservatives' would be willing to stop with balance." However, people in extreme positions on each side of the issues have "belief systems that are so intense they won't allow for balance," Bullard said.

One thing that prevents the conclusion of the controversy is the lack of a middle ground, Bullard suggested. "Southern Baptists have clearly de-

finned the difference between a 'fundamental conservative' and a 'moderate conservative.' But no distinction between a 'moderate' and a 'liberal' has been defined. Without it, the middle has no way to emerge."

Bullard said both "fundamental conservatives" and "moderate conservatives" are loyal to the Southern Baptist Convention, noting "many denominations split in fewer years of controversy."

He said the fact that the SBC has not split "shows a high level of commitment to what we're about as Southern Baptists."

## Break down walls, Parks urges

By Mark Wingfield

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)— Explaining that one-fourth of the world's population has never heard the name of Jesus, Keith Parks urged Southern Baptists to break down the walls that divide them and give sacrificially to missions.

Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board, issued the appeal in a July 1 sermon to about 2000 people attending "Jericho: A Missions Festival" at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

He called on Southern Baptists to break down walls built by ego, fear, and ignorance.

Speaking from Ephesians 2:11-22, Parks said Southern Baptists have built walls that keep them from reaching a lost world with the Gospel. "The reason we do not move from our personal experience of salvation to sharing the Gospel is because of these walls," he said.

Through Jesus Christ, God has broken down every barrier that separates mankind from God, Parks said, although humans continue to build walls that hinder the flow of the Gospel.

"The wall that previously had been a separation between God and man is gone, but it is still up in the minds of many people," he said. "Nothing separates any human being from God in God's viewpoint, but there still are barriers between people."

"The walls that I build will prevent the spread of the Gospel to the person next door or to the ends of the earth."

Because of these self-made walls, Christians have become inwardly

focused and fail to see the great needs in other parts of the nation and world, Parks declared.

"We are so turned in ourselves that we seal off the reality of a lost world," he said. "Through self-indulgence we are seeking our own comfort."

On the whole, Christians spend 97 cents of every dollar earned on themselves while one-fourth of the world goes to bed hungry every night, Parks said.

He compared the spending of American Christians to the lavish purchases of Imelda Marcos of the Philippines or the Ceausescu regime of Romania. "I ask you: How do you think God distinguishes between those kinds of lifestyles and how you and I as Christians are living?" he asked.

"Even that tiny bit we give to the Lord, we take \$99.90 of every \$100 and spend it on ourselves," Parks stated. Of the remaining ten cents, nine cents goes to reach the 40 percent of the population that has heard the Gospel and rejected it, while only one cent is spent to reach the 26 percent of the population that has never heard the Gospel, he said.

Parks urged: "Give more than you've ever given before — I'm talking about money — to reach people who have never heard."

At the conclusion of the service, Parks invited people to make commitments to go as missionaries, to increase their giving and to increase prayer support. The congregation gave an offering of \$5771 to the Cooperative Program, the largest Sunday offering received at Ridgecrest this year.

## Knoxville volunteers build in Kentucky

WILLIAMSBURG, Ky. — Fourteen members of Inskip Church, Knoxville, recently participated in Cumberland College's Mountain Outreach program constructing a home for a family in Whitley County, Ky.

Mountain Outreach was formed in 1981 by two Cumberland College students who saw the need for improving the housing and environmental conditions of the mountain people of southeast Kentucky and northeast Tennessee.

They began their work by repairing homes and providing other needed assistance. Then, in the summer of 1983, Mountain Outreach built six homes in Whitley County. Since that time, Mountain Outreach has built homes for 38 Appalachian families and has repaired homes for numerous other families.

The homes are not given as "hand-outs" to the families. The families are charged for the costs of the materials

in small monthly payments which may be spread over a 20-year period.

This summer nearly 300 volunteers from 13 churches in eight states will build six houses.

Members of Inskip Church who participated were Alice Cockrum, Becky Harrell, Brent Howell, Erin Lang, Robbie Leam, Laura Lynch, Kristi Mauk, Carrie Morris, Ed Rains, Kristi Rains, Kym Rains, Tim Reeves, Mike Segers, and Amanda Walker.

## Selmer church calls Mike Crouch as pastor

Falcon Church, Selmer, called Mike Crouch as pastor.

Falcon Church is Crouch's first pastorate. He began his service July 1.

Crouch is a 1990 graduate of Union University, Jackson.

## One Woman's View

By June McEwen

One of the charms of summertime is having extended visits from grand-children. Recently our five-year-old and two-year-old granddaughters were with us for several days. Our activities included fishing, a picnic, feeding the ducks, a movie, swimming, Sunday School, Fourth of July parade, and a birthday party.

Intending to compliment the older girl's prowess as a swimmer, we told her, "You are just like the Little Mermaid." She loved the Disney movie. To our surprise, she thought a moment, and then said, "I don't want to be the Little Mermaid. I'm Emily." On another occasion, two-year-old Rebecca had insisted, "I'm Becca" when told she was "a sweet little girl."

At first glance we dismiss this insistence on being called only by one's true name as merely a child-appropriate and child-centered response. But upon reflection don't we all want to be called by our true name and identified as our true and unique self?



McEWEN

I know that I resent being labelled in my church life. Names such as "moderate," "liberal," "conservative," "fundamentalist," really cause us to bridle. No one likes being called "names." Sisters and brothers in Christ should be above name calling. To apply a label is to treat another person as a stereotype. A stereotype is a way of expressing prejudice and of treating persons as a despised class, a means of putting distance between "them" and "us." Such behavior is dehumanizing and makes suspect the uniqueness of the person so labelled. Being labelled robs us of our specialness as God's children.

Like my granddaughters, I insist that you see me as who I am: "June, a child of God and a sister in Christ." Each of us is a valuable human being who has been redeemed by the grace of God. The only acceptable label for God's child is "Christian." Christian reflects our status as sons and daughters of God, the Father of our Lord and brother, Jesus Christ.

As we extend the love and courtesy of addressing our grandchildren by their true names, may we also treat our Christian brothers and sisters with equal dignity and respect.