

# Baptist and Reflector

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## May breach wall

### Government seeks court ruling on church and state issue

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Department of Justice has asked the Supreme Court to replace its long-held strict interpretation of the First Amendment's ban against governmental establishment of religion with one critics say would breach the wall separating church and state.

In a brief filed Feb. 22, the Justice Department asked the high court to overturn lower court decisions holding that invocations and benedictions during junior high and high school commencement exercises at a Rhode Island school district violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The government's brief also urged the Supreme Court to "reconsider the scope and application" of the Lemon test, a three-part standard long relied upon to limit governmental promotion of religion.

Under the Lemon test, governmental actions are required to have a secular purpose, neither advance nor inhibit religion and avoid excessive entanglement with religion. The lower courts in the Rhode Island case held that the graduation prayers violated the second prong of the test by impermissibly advancing religion.

The Justice Department's friend-of-the-court brief argues the Lemon test was developed to assess the permissibility of government funding for

plainly religious institutions and that it is inappropriate to apply the test across the board to Establishment Clause cases.

In cases involving what the brief described as "accommodation of religious heritage in civic life," such as the Rhode Island case, the Justice Department argued that the Lemon test should be replaced by a softer standard that would permit government-sponsored religion as long as the practice "is not coercive and not part of an establishment of an official church."

Two Baptist church-state attorneys said the Justice Department proposal represents a threat to the nation's long tradition of separation of church and state.

"The Justice Department has very shrewdly chosen to work its mischief in a case in which the result that it is seeking will be popular with most Americans," said Baptist Joint Committee General Counsel Oliver S. Thomas. "If the department has its way, however, we'll be seeing a lot more than graduation prayers. Mr. Jefferson's wall of separation will, for many purposes, cease to exist."

The Justice Department's proposed test "would allow government aid to religion as long as it does not threaten to establish a single national church or force persons to participate in religion



**RODEN HONORED** — Carson-Newman College recently honored Paul W. Roden who will retire this month after 26 years as an administrator at the college. Roden, a member of First Church, Jefferson City, has served as registrar and director of college records. From left, R. C. Fox, chairman of the C-N trustees and member of First Church, Oliver Springs; Roden, Lila Roden, and C-N President Cordell Maddox.

against their consciences," Thomas said.

"The department is asking the federal courts to take a hands-off approach to cases involving government aid to religion," he said. "And, as with last year's peyote decision, it would tend to subject people to the dominant religion in their communities."

Thomas challenged the government brief's contention that the Lemon test "has spawned persistent confusion in the lower courts, particularly in its application to practices with historical sanction.

"History alone is not an adequate guide to constitutional decision making," Thomas said. "Discrimination has a considerable history in this soci-

ety but it still violates the Constitution."

The Justice Department also contends the Lemon test is unworkable and results in wide disagreements in federal courts.

"The Lemon test isn't perfect, but the 'coercion test' which the Justice Department is offering will generate no less disagreement," said Brent Walker, BJC associate general counsel.

"These cases are inherently fact-  
(see Government, page 3)

### Graham hopes to assess Kuwait firsthand

By Connie Davis, assistant editor

Maurice Graham hopes to return soon to Kuwait to assess human needs which can be met by Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board relief funds.

He has contacted the newly-appointed consulate and ambassador of

the American Embassy in Kuwait City seeking a visa. Gail Rogers, the consulate, and Graham, a Southern Baptist worker in Kuwait, were hostages in the embassy after the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. The hostages were released after four and a half months on Dec. 9.

The Foreign Mission Board also may assess Iraq for needs, he reported.

Graham said he hopes to return to Kuwait within the next couple of weeks. When contacted March 4 by the Baptist and Reflector, he noted the country was without any governmental leadership or services like electricity and water. The government may choose not to issue visas for months, he said.

He has tried to place calls to Kuwait City to check on church members, but has not been successful.

Graham is not surprised by the atrocities visited upon the Kuwaitis. "I heard the executions while I was in the embassy. ... The secular press didn't believe it. But last week they saw body after body after body. I guess this is corroboration. ... I believe more will surface."

It is premature to plan to return to his ministry at the National Evangelical Church in Kuwait City, said Graham. He noted the country won't be environmentally safe for months. Land mines must be removed and power plants rebuilt to purify water, he added.

Graham's wife, Laurie, and sons, Peter and Aaron, returned to Nashville in September when they were released from the embassy. The family is living in a missionary house of Woodmont Church.

### Sharp to join TBC as missions associate

Terry W. Sharp, a native of LaFollette, will join the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Missions Department as language missions associate in early summer.

Sharp and his wife Kathy currently are missionaries to Brazil on furlough.

He will be on the job part-time prior to May. Sharp will fill the position vacated by James Redding when he became pastor of Gracey Avenue Church.

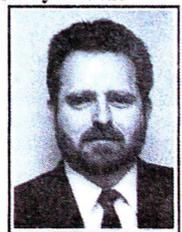
Clarksville, last fall.

Sharp will be responsible for ethnic church development, according to Jere Phillips, Missions Department director. Some of the work will involve camps and retreats, ethnic church starts, Scripture distribution, migrant ministries, refugee resettlement, deaf ministries, and interfaith witness.

Sharp is a graduate of Cumberland College, Williamsburg, Ky., and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary. With his wife, the former Kathy Chapman of Louisville, Ky., he served as missionary to Spain prior to being appointed to Brazil in 1986.

The new missions associate grew up in Hillcrest Church, Campbell County Association. He has served with churches in Louisiana, Florida, Mississippi, and Alabama before appointment to the mission field.

The Sharps have one child, Rebekah, who is eleven.



SHARP

### CP up slightly over February 1990

The February report for Cooperative Program budget receipts from Tennessee Baptist Convention churches shows an increase of \$19,461 over the same month in 1990.

The churches gave \$1,838,458.59 to all missions causes through the Cooperative Program, according to the report from D. L. Lowrie, TBC executive director/treasurer.

Total gifts for the 1990-91 budget year thus far (November-February) amount to \$8,026,987.63. This is \$670,409.36 less than the total given through the first four months of last year's budget, a decrease of 7.7 percent.

The budget goal for the first four months is \$8,932,620. Budget receipts are \$905,632.37 under budget needs, or 10.1 percent.

Cooperative Program budget approved last November by messengers to the annual convention is \$26,797,860. One-twelfth of the goal equals \$2,233,155.

"We continue to appreciate the generosity and good stewardship of Tennessee Baptist churches," Lowrie said. "We will continue to stay within our budget receipts and work together with the churches to accomplish the work assigned to us."

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## Editorials

# The ties that bind could be coming undone

The distinctive that has been the talisman of Southern Baptists for most of our history is at risk. We have been known as cooperating Baptists, a conglomerate of people who willingly trusted each other.

That trust and cooperation developed despite a propensity for individually speaking one's own opinion.

In last week's editorial we mentioned that members of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee could not reach agreement on the meaning of terms such as "cooperating Baptist church" and "in friendly cooperation with." In times past, that discussion about a referred matter might have been settled quickly because the element of trust was greater than that of distrust.

The cause for such indecision is that trust among us is rusty and tarnished. Whether we have abused it or let it wither from lack of use, it often is missing.

The January 1989 issue of "Baptist History and Heritage" reported agreement by three church historians that cooperation faces its greatest challenge in this decade.

They traced the history of Southern Baptist cooperation through missions, education, and stewardship — and discussed factors that now affect our cooperative spirit.

Cooperation is hard to come by, difficult to achieve. Even in formative stages of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Baptists did not easily cooperate. Some wanted emphasis on education —

others thought it insignificant. Some wanted a tight program of missions and evangelism, others wanted little organization. We struggled for trust and cooperation.

In that January magazine, Bobby Compton of the Foreign Mission Board staff in Richmond, said that the terms "Baptists," "missions," and "cooperation" have been a team in Baptist history. Compton wrote that Baptists "have cooperated financially for the effort of missions, and through prayer and multitudes of volunteer workers."

Fred Grissom, church history professor at Southeastern Seminary, noted that "cooperative stewardship has become the distinguishing characteristic for many Baptists." He said that identification with the Cooperative Program has created a denominational loyalty greater than our Baptist fathers would have believed possible.

Grissom noted that those bonds created by cooperation in stewardship were stronger than bonds of doctrine. But he also said the bonds are not unbreakable.

Claude Howe Jr. of the New Orleans Seminary church history faculty cited theological problems and partisan politics as contributors to the weakening of cooperation.

Howe cited the organization of partisan groups as a symptom of the disintegration of cooperation within SBC ranks.

He said some question whether "the average Southern Baptist could contribute a sacrificial gift in church freely, trusting that it would be used wisely and efficiently by his brothers and sisters in

Christ for mission and service around the world."

It was pointed out that voluntary cooperation for great tasks requires integrity and trust, freedom and responsibility, sacrifice and love under the Lordship of Christ.

Well, some Baptists do not want state papers to discuss such problems. Realistically, the problems of sliding cooperation and lack of trust must be faced.

Lack of trust limits the Southern Baptist mission. Lack of cooperation starves it. All the facts recognized that the "Baptist History and Heritage" articles are part of "conservatives" and "moderates." We are paying for losses of trust and cooperation.

Frank Mead wrote that despite the Baptist penchant for individualism, we have changed the world. About Baptists, he wrote:

"The world has done its best to stop them. We can trace their history more readily in the bloody footprints of their martyrs than in the ink of their historians. We have tried to shame them by whipping them, and they have made us ashamed of our whipping posts.

"We chained them in jail and discovered that the other end of the chain was fast about our own necks. We let their blood in Boston and the South, only to find the fairest American flowers we know growing from that very soil. Addepeated world! You tried to stamp them out, and all you got for it was to have them leave their stamp on you!"

Shame, everlasting shame on us if we betray that kind of heritage. — WFA

## Missionaries walk in Annie's footsteps

As Southern Baptist home missionaries in Baltimore, Don and Kay Gerlach are walking in Annie Armstrong's footsteps — literally.

Armstrong, namesake of Southern Baptists' annual home missions offering, was born July 11, 1850, in Baltimore, where the Gerlachs have had an active port ministry since 1975.

"She served right where we serve," Kay Gerlach said, "and is buried right here in this city."

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions was named in 1934. The money given through the offering now provides nearly half of the Home Mission Board's annual budget and is a major source of support for unique ministries like the Gerlachs'. Southern Baptists observe the Week of Prayer for Home Missions this year March 3-10.

The Gerlachs, who started their ministry as volunteers, operate a mobile Baptist center, which houses everything from Bibles to used clothing and is equipped with all materials common to traditional Baptist centers.

Because seamen are often virtually confined to their ships, a 1985 Ford van allows the Gerlachs to have a larger ministry than would be possible in a permanent building.

Like the Gerlachs, Armstrong witnessed to im-

migrants and seamen docking in Baltimore's port. "I don't know how she got to the water," Gerlach said, "but she visited ships and immigrants who came into Baltimore."

Armstrong helped immigrants get jobs as they came into Baltimore, Gerlach said. "For a woman back in those days, that was remarkable," she said.

The Gerlachs' port ministry started in the back of their own station wagon. With support from the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, they have been able to purchase the van and keep it stocked with supplies.

"The Home Mission Board is behind us 100 percent," Gerlach said.

The Gerlachs' ministry is not limited to the home mission field where they serve. The sailors, who come from all over the world, take gifts they receive from the mobile center to ports in other countries. One seaman reported to the Gerlachs that all the materials given to the sailors aboard his ship had been given in turn to people in South Africa.

Because it is possible to have seven or eight nationalities represented on a ship docking in port, the Gerlachs keep Bibles printed in 65 languages on hand at all times.

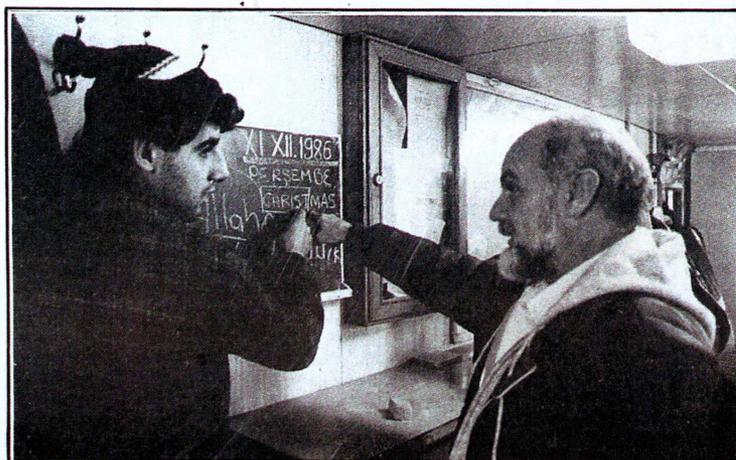
"No missionary can be in that many countries at once, but that's the field we're on. We don't even have to leave home. They come to us," Gerlach said.

The Bibles are in great demand among the seamen. "Have you ever seen anyone kiss a Bible?" she asked. "We can't keep enough Bibles. They go as fast as we can get them. Our biggest prayer request is for more Bibles."

Like Annie Armstrong, the Gerlachs hope to spend their entire lives ministering. Kay Gerlach said of her husband, "He'd rather be on ships than anywhere else. I tell him, 'You'll be going up gangways until you're 90.'"

For the Gerlachs, Annie Armstrong is more than just the name of an offering.

"We know people who are related to her. It makes it more interesting to read about her," Gerlach said. "A lot of times we read about missionaries who lived a long time ago. But Annie Armstrong is still here." — Kelly Capers



**WHERE ANNIE WALKED** — Don Gerlach (right) takes the Gospel to seamen in Baltimore's port, the hometown of Annie Armstrong, pioneer home missionary. Gerlach and his wife minister to crews docking every day. Here he explains to a Turkish sailor that Christ is in Christmas.

## Baptist and Reflector

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## 2000 new Christians

# Volunteers start church, lead Bombay crusade

BOMBAY, India (BP) — Southern Baptist volunteers and missionaries led 2062 people to become Christians and started a church during a recent crusade in Bombay, India.

The evangelistic results came primarily from open-air preaching services in three locations in the city of 11 million people. The services ran simultaneously for five nights.

The new church represents part of an effort to broaden the focus of Bombay Baptists by working with Christians in a high-rise, middle-class area. Most past evangelism there has aimed at poorer areas, said Arnold Tanner, a Southern Baptist from Lubbock, Texas, who coordinated the mission trip.

To help the new church succeed, Southern Baptist mission representatives asked an Indian church planter

to move into an apartment in the area. Worship services will be held there until the church moves onto its own property.

An affluent Indian businessman told Tanner he would donate money to buy property and pay construction costs for the new church. The project will be supervised by Southern Baptist missionary Jason Lee, who lives in Bangalore. As the growing congregation fills its new building, members will give money to start another church, thus beginning a continuing cycle, Tanner said.

Bombay is a city of contrasts. Some of the nation's richest citizens live there, and it holds much of India's wealth. At the same time, a huge population dwells in sprawling slums made of tin and cardboard.

During the evangelistic effort, 25 volunteers and three Southern Baptist missionary couples worked in phases to strengthen Christian witness in Bombay.

The first week of the project, 16 volunteers and a missionary couple traveled to a retreat center outside Bombay to train 102 Indian participants in church leadership skills.

The volunteers split into three teams the second week and participated in personal evangelism and revival services at churches in Bombay. During the third week, nine volunteers helped lead outdoor preaching crusades. Total attendance of about 12,000 was a little lower than expected because of fears resulting from the Persian Gulf war, organizers said.

For Tanner, the greatest promise of the campaign lies in the church-starting effort. Formerly the owner of a chain of retail stores, Tanner now arranges travel for volunteer teams and coordinates leadership training projects in cooperation with overseas churches.

During the past several years Tanner has sold or closed down his stores and real estate interests to concentrate on evangelistic projects. Besides the trip to India, he has coordinated three

projects to Brazil, two to Kenya, and two to Great Britain since 1989.

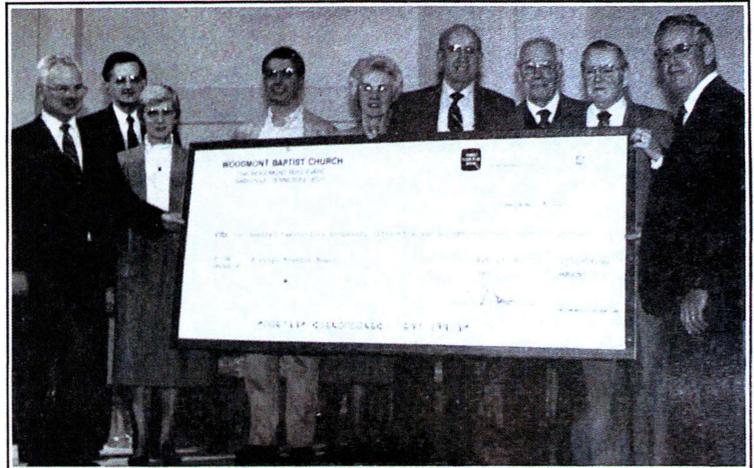
Tanner planned the India campaign with Gollapalli Krupananda, an Indian Baptist who leads church-starting efforts in Bombay for National Indian Ministries, a ministry sponsored through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. In cooperation with National Indian Ministries, missionaries unable to live in India make regular trips into the country to work with believers.

## Baptist doctrine conferences scheduled

Two Baptist doctrine conferences will be held this month, sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Discipleship Training Department.

The first conference will be held March 18-19 at West Jackson Church in Jackson. The second conference will be March 21-22 at Camp Carson, Newport.

This year's featured book is *The Doctrine of Lordship*. Either of the conferences will prepare the participant to teach the book. Both conferences will be led by Leon D. Simpson, editor of *Baptist Adults* at the Baptist Sunday School Board.



**BIG CHECK** — Don Kammerdiener, left, of the Foreign Mission Board, receives a representative check from members of Woodmont Church, Nashville, for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions totaling \$125,059. Presenting the check were, from left, Dewey Dunn, Bobbie Dunn, John Bryant, Ruth Dyson, Bert Dyson, G. Allen West, former pastor, Richard Sims, and Bill Sherman, pastor.

# Baptist Doctrine Study emphasizes Christ as Lord

By William H. Stephens

First of a three-part series

"Eternity" magazine published a debate in the September 1959 issue on whether a person must acknowledge Christ as Lord as well as Savior in order to be saved. The debate continues.

These two issues — repentance and lordship — are absolutely crucial to life itself, for nothing more profoundly affects a person's choices.

Southern Baptists will explore the doctrine of lordship during 1991 Baptist Doctrine Study to be conducted April 22-26 in many churches.

It is impossible to acknowledge

Christ as Lord without first repenting. The New Testament is quite clear on this point (Matthew 11:21-24; 12:38-42; Mark 6:12; Luke 3:10-14; Acts 2:38).

In the Luke passage cited above, John told his listeners they had to face up to the evil they had done and be willing to change. Without such willingness, no one can enter God's kingdom.

We must turn from sin if we are to turn to Him. Repentance is the process of facing who we are and being repelled by what we learn. The fall of man and subsequent sin so marred God's image in us that we cannot be what we were created to be without God's help.

If we reject this reality, we demonstrate a lack of awareness of how seriously flawed humans are and how mistakenly we direct our own lives. We must face up to our personal sinful reality and reject the life we have created for ourselves. That includes rejecting the thought processes that produced our actions. Only then are we prepared to surrender to Christ as Lord.

Evil permeates every life and every society, and every person in society contributes to society's sin. Evil is not just what people do; evil acts express who we are. A person does not just curse or lie or cheat or steal or commit fornication; a person who commits these sins is a profaner, a liar, a cheater, a thief, or a fornicator. These evils are part of us, and we are enslaved to them.

In repentance, we acknowledge this reality and give our lives to the One we know who can save us from that life.

As we repent, we accept Christ's lordship. It is true that no one ever in this life is yielded perfectly to the lordship of Christ, certainly not at the moment of conversion. Even so, at the moment of conversion we must yield all of ourselves completely to Christ's lordship insofar as we understand ourselves.

As time goes on, we discover other areas of life that are not yielded, and we have to wrestle with yielding those. The process of yielding is identical with the process of Christian growth. Much as salvation is both a point in time and a continuing process, so is

yielding to Christ's lordship.

The necessity of yielding to Christ as Lord in order to be saved is stated by many Scriptures (Acts 2:33-36; 3:11-26; 5:14; 10:36, 42-43; 11:20; 16:31; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Romans 10:9). It also undergirds the New Testament message. For example, in English, the word believe is limited to cognitive knowledge (facts, head knowledge). In Greek, the word includes the totality of personhood; it is from the same root as faith. To be saved, we must faith in Jesus Christ.

Choice also is inherent in the Biblical word believe. A person decides to follow someone or some cause. A person cannot just decide to be saved; a person must choose to follow the Savior.

The choosing of Christ precludes other choices and is related directly to repudiating that life from which we repent. The giving over of life to the lordship of Christ involves all of life.

While salvation knows all levels and varieties of commitment, one who does not intend at conversion to make Christ Lord of life in this deep, profound, Biblical sense is not saved.

The doctrine of Lordship also impacts personal and church evangelism and church government. These issues will be explored in the second and third parts of this series.

William H. Stephens is curriculum development coordinator in the Sunday School Board's Discipleship Training Department and co-author with Robert Hamblin of "The Doctrine of Lordship," the 1991 adult textbook for Baptist Doctrine Study.

## Government seeks ruling . . .

(from page 1)

sensitive. What the government really wants is to soften up the establishment clause to allow greater governmental support of religion," Walker continued. "The government's argument — if adopted by the court — would do to the establishment clause what Smith did to free exercise."

In the Smith case, the high court virtually abandoned its long-held requirement that government demonstrate a compelling state interest before it can limit free exercise rights.

In addition to expressing concern over the government brief's proposed new standard for weighing Establishment Clause cases, both attorneys took issue with the government's support of prayer in the public school ceremonies.

"One cannot imagine a more religious act than talking with God — even when 'dumbed down' to avoid giving offense and shorn of sectarian verbiage," Walker said. "Any prayer spoken at a school-sponsored, teacher-organized middle school graduation ceremony on school property has the effect of advancing religion."

Walker said religious Americans should be horrified by the government's posture. "To employ the means by which we are privileged to communicate with Almighty God to solemnize an ordinary civil ceremony cheapens prayer — not to mention Jesus' injunction against 'practicing piety before men.'"

The Rhode Island graduation prayer case is *Lee v. Weisman*.

# Our Readers Write

## Solemn assemblies?

Why "solemn assemblies" for Christian believers?

God told Amos, "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies... but, let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5:21, 24).

Evidently, "solemn assemblies" were easier than becoming channels for God's righteousness. Which is easier for us? To make confession to/before men, or, to name before the indwelling-risen-Lord that thing which grieves His Spirit?

Is this idea foreign to our leaders and pastors? One hears pastors praying ad infinitum (in public worship), "Lord, send your Spirit upon/among us." We

teach our congregations to sing, "Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly dove, stay right here with us." Bette Midlers' current hit single, "From a Distance" describes us to a T... "God is watching us from a distance!"

In Old Testament times, God's Spirit came upon his servants, empowering them for service. When they sinned, He left them (Samson). Not so in the religion of the new birth!

If the Holy Spirit has departed from us, what we need is not solemn assemblies; we need the birth from above!

Carl Bates  
Horse Shoe, N.C.

• Dr. Bates, retired pastor of First Church, Charlotte, N.C., is former SBC president. — Editor

## Applauds cease-fire

Thank God the shooting has ceased for now. America has become America again. When I was just a boy from the country, I served in the amphibious force during World War II, and fought in the Philippines, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. Patriotism is as it should be once again with overwhelming support for our president. Even in spite of "Peacenik" marches and demonstrations, Mr. Bush and our military pushed on and did what was right and necessary.

Here in Memphis a Baptist Peace Committee did their thing before the cameras, dishonoring our president and our military forces. I think. These people could not have demonstrated against Saddam Hussein had they lived in Iraq.

But we put up with every kind of Tweedledee and Tweedledum group. Sad indeed, some of them call themselves Baptist.

Our church praises God for Mr. Bush, Dick Cheney, General Powell, General Schwarzkopf, our troops, and our allies. On Feb. 27, our people agreed in a unanimous vote to make General Norman Schwarzkopf our "honorary Deacon Chairman." He can serve on any committee he wants, and especially the planning committee.

We put on our marquee out in front of our church: "Thank God America is a Man again."

Vaughn Denton, pastor  
Kirby Parkway Church  
4480 Kirby Parkway  
Memphis 38141

## Doesn't approve decision

Despite recent action by the trustees of Baptist Hospital to affirm the institution's relationship to our state convention, they have rejected the ultimate input of Tennessee Baptists.

They have set the worst possible example for our other institutions. What if every Tennessee Baptist institution followed suit?

Although we recognize and appreciate the contribution of the hospital's administrators, physicians, and trustees, that institution was and should continue to be the sacred trust of Tennessee Baptists. When the individuals who encouraged this decision and are responsible for it bail out a fledgling hospital, support it with their time, money, and credibility, as this convention has, then they will have a right to their "druthers."

I would question if an organization with this type of "credibility" should be interested in my health care. Some Middle Tennessee Baptists may consider taking their health care needs elsewhere.

The people in this convention who are responsible for recommending the names of trustees for convention approval should not appoint any trustee who voted for this motion to any other position. They have violated our sacred trust.

What about the eighth commandment?  
Leland E. Lyon, pastor  
Euclid Avenue Church  
1954 Euclid Avenue  
Knoxville 37921

## Supports Elder

I have read with dismay the sad account of the dismissal of Dr. Elder as president of the Sunday School Board. What I will not forget from this incident is that sad scene of Lloyd Elder being consoled by his wife.

We may use words like retirement and consultant and other euphemisms. But underneath it all we know that trustees of the Sunday School Board, elected by the churches, have dismissed one of our fine leaders with charges that are weak.

I pray for our denomination. I pray for all who feel under compulsion to lead this destructive crusade. And I pray for all the Lloyd Elders who have stood where he stands and have had their careers destroyed and their lives wrecked. Most do not have the salary settlement that will help ease the pain. I pray for us all.

Roger Lovette, pastor  
Second Church  
4680 Walnut Grove Road  
Memphis 38117

**GUIDELINES: Opinions of Tennessee Baptists on pertinent subjects are welcomed. Letters should be concise, no more than 250 words. Writer's name may be withheld for sufficient reason. Only one letter from the same writer will be considered for publication per quarter. Letters must not make personal attacks on the character or integrity of anyone. Form letters and "open" letters will not be published. Writers should send original copy. Writers are encouraged to write in a positive, Christian manner. Address and phone number must be included. Letters not conforming to these guidelines will be returned.**

## Has few restrictions

# Maryland abortion law may hinder pro-life efforts

By Tom Strobe

WASHINGTON (BP) — A newly-enacted Maryland abortion law may prove to be a setback not only for pro-life advocates but for religious liberty defenders as well.

The law was passed by the House of Delegates on Feb. 18 in Annapolis and signed the same day by Governor William Schaefer. It was approved by the Senate a week earlier.

The act, in practical terms, allows abortion with few, if any, restrictions. Even the limitations in the law appear to have loopholes permitting such practices as late-term abortions and bypassing parental notification if the physician performing the abortion so chooses.

A "conscience clause," which has been in effect in the state for more than 20 years, is altered by the act to expose physicians, nurses, and other health-care workers to civil suits and job discrimination if they decline to recommend an abortion. Hospitals with policies prohibiting referrals could be subject to the loss of accreditation. Under the new law, a health-care professional who did not refer for an abortion could be sued if there were problems later with the mother's health arising from the pregnancy. The clause maintains protections for health-care workers who conscientiously object to performing or participating in abortions, but removes protection for those who refuse to refer women for abortions.

A bill to restore protection formerly in the clause was introduced in the House of Delegates Feb. 22. An aide in the governor's office said Schaefer supported reinstating protection deleted from the "conscience clause"

but was uncertain if he would support the House bill.

"Religious liberty groups will be watching closely to see how the state of Maryland protects the First Amendment rights of health-care workers," said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

"I am appalled by this disgraceful bill," said Richard D. Land, executive director of the Christian Life Commission. "It is now clearly 'open season' on unborn babies in the state of Maryland.

"I am particularly disturbed by limitations on the conscience clause. If enforced, it will virtually eliminate pro-life people from the ranks of health-care workers in Maryland. It is a serious violation of the First Amendment freedom of religion and freedom of speech rights of pro-life, health-care workers."

Other aspects of the law, according to the National Right to Life Committee, are:

- Abortion is allowed without restriction until the unborn child is able to live outside the womb. Abortion after viability is permitted when the "health" or life of the mother is endangered. "Health," under the United States Supreme Court's 1973 ruling legalizing abortion, has been construed to mean nearly any reason offered by the mother.

- Parental notice is required for a minor, but it may be waived if the physician performing the abortion determines that (1) it is not in the girl's best interest to inform her parents, (2) the girl is mature enough to make the decision, or (3) she may be in danger of physical or emotional

abuse by her parents.

- A person performing an abortion is protected from liability if a woman desires to bring suit for damages caused by his or her failure to provide information about the procedure.

Among the amendments rejected was one that would have prevented abortions on the basis of the sex of the child.

"(The law) promotes the abortionist and his trade above children's rights, women's rights, and parents' rights," said Ann Philburn, state legislative

assistant for National Right to Life. "It promotes abortion on demand above freedom of conscience. It enshrines abortion advocacy into state law."

The Christian Life and Public Affairs Committee of the Maryland-Delaware Baptist Convention wrote the members of both committees considering the bill expressing opposition to abortion on demand and requesting a parental consent requirement, said Michael Cox, pastor of Georgia Avenue Baptist Church in Wheaton, Md., and chairman of the committee.

# TeamTalk

By D. L. Lowrie

When does a church get a return on its investment in Christian education? Some skeptics would say, "never." I witnessed a church get some return recently.

I spent a Sunday with Leewood Church in Memphis. Pastor Jerry Glisson had invited me to lead them in a one-day revival and to help ordain some deacons. Each one of the new deacons shared a wonderful testimony with the church.

One of the young men being ordained had grown up in that part of Memphis. He had been a non-church attendee as a child and teenager. He received a scholarship to Union University, our Baptist school in West Tennessee, to play baseball.



LOWRIE

Several of the baseball players began to share the Lord with him and it led to his Christian conversion. After the school year he returned to Memphis and joined Leewood Church. They disciplined and encouraged him and now he is serving as a deacon in the fellowship.

As I laid hands on him in that ordination service, I thanked God for the many Tennessee Baptists who regularly make a contribution to Christian education. They do this as their churches support Christian education through the Cooperative Program. Union University, Carson-Newman College, Belmont College, and Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy are performing the task faithfully and well.

I would like to personally, on behalf of the thousands that have been blessed by your gifts, thank you. You will never know how many you have blessed. Leewood Baptists know one for sure.

# Hawaii Baptists plan 30 new churches by 1995

Jim Newton

HONOLULU (BP) — Hawaii Baptists have issued a "Macedonian call" to Southern Baptists to come over to "the paradise islands" and help them start 30 new churches by 1995.

As one of the major goals of MISSION: Hawaii 2000, Hawaii Baptists plan to start six new churches each year for five years.

Currently, there are 100 Southern Baptist congregations in Hawaii, with total membership of about 16,300.

O. W. Efurd, executive director of the Hawaii Baptist Convention, said the goal is extremely ambitious for a convention composed of small churches with an average membership of about 150. Only a dozen churches have more than 300 members.

If Southern Baptists in Texas were to adopt the same percentage goal, Texas Baptists would have to start a thousand new churches in the next five years, Efurd said.

Yet the comparisons aren't really valid, because churches on the mainland are so much stronger, their resources are so much more abundant, and the costs are so much lower, Efurd said.

Starting new churches is only one part of the MISSION: Hawaii 2000 strategy adopted by the convention last November.

Using a strategy planning process developed by the SBC Home Mission Board for its Mega Focus City program, Hawaii Baptists have set am-

bitious goals in two priority areas: church growth and church starting.

Goals have been set to train effective leaders, increase church program enrollments and attendance, increase baptisms, establish new ministries to people in need, increase missions giving and stewardship, increase total church membership, raise \$5 million for at least ten new church sites, and have 70 constituted churches with 20,000 members by 1995.

Although Hawaii Baptists are committed to doing everything they can, help from the mainland is essential for success, Efurd said. He hopes Southern Baptists will see the vision of missions in Hawaii, and respond like the Apostle Paul when he saw a vision of a man in Macedonia pleading, "Come over and help us."

Veryl Henderson, director of missions for the Hawaii Baptist Convention, said everyone wants to come to Hawaii, because the beauty of the islands calls them to paradise.

"But when we talk to them about the realities, they all seem to disappear," Henderson said.

For example, it costs a church \$7000 to \$12,000 in moving expenses to call a pastor from the mainland. Search committees screen sermon tapes and decide if they want a prospective pastor before inviting him to preach in view of a call. "Once he is here, he's here to stay."

Most pastors can't afford to travel back to the mainland for at least three

years after arriving, Henderson said.

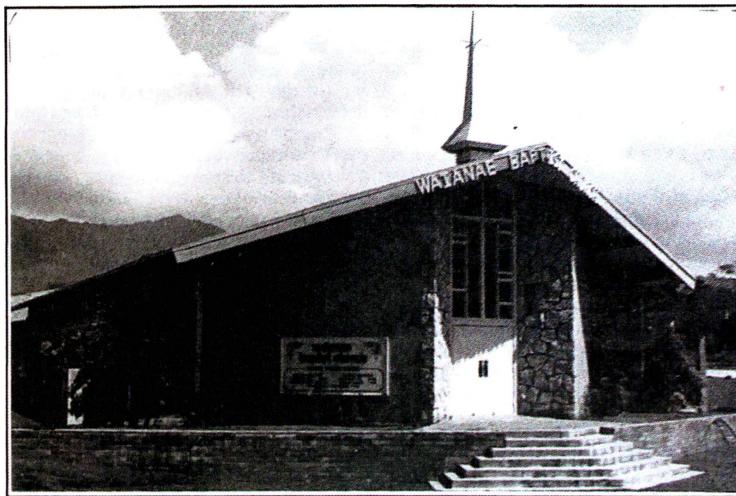
The cost of living in Hawaii is the highest in the nation, estimated at 26 percent higher than on the mainland. About 58 percent of the people rent because they can't afford to purchase a house.

Last year, the median price of a

home on the island of Oahu was \$355,000, more than three times higher than the mainland median of \$106,000, according to a report in the Honolulu Advertiser. Since 1970, median family income had increased three-fold, while the average cost of housing has increased eight times.

easy to recruit volunteers from the mainland to come to Hawaii for short-term mission projects. The difficulty is in providing housing for the volunteers in tourist-oriented society where hotel rooms average more than \$150 per night.

Both Efurd and Henderson said it is



NEAR BAPTIST CAMP — Waianae Church, on Oahu, is located near the Hawaii Baptist Convention's Camp Puu Kailua, a year-round camping center. — Photos by Wm. Fletcher Allen

home on the island of Oahu was \$355,000, more than three times higher than the mainland median of \$106,000, according to a report in the Honolulu Advertiser. Since 1970, median family income had increased three-fold, while the average cost of housing has increased eight times.

To qualify for a \$355,000 home, the buyer needs \$71,000 for a down payment, an annual income of \$100,445, and ability to make monthly payments of \$2536. Only 10 percent of the residents on Oahu meet these qualifications.

Because rent averages \$1500 a month for a three bedroom house and \$1130 a month for a two-bedroom apartment, most families have great difficulty saving enough for a down payment.

Henderson said most Baptist churches try to provide housing for their pastors, but salaries are low and most pastors' wives have to work.

In addition to the cost of living, some pastors from the mainland have difficulty adjusting the laid-back, hang-loose, multi-ethnic society, Henderson added.

Every person in Hawaii is part of an ethnic minority, Henderson said. No single racial group constitutes more than one-third of the population.

Only nine of the 100 Baptist congregations are predominantly Caucasian. More than 90 percent of the churches are predominantly ethnic, and about half of them worship in one of ten languages.

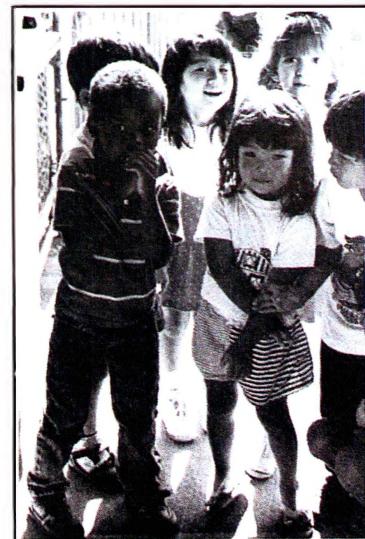
The Korean and Filipino missions are the fastest growing congregations with the most effective evangelistic outreach, Henderson said.

Last year, HBC churches baptized almost 700 new believers, including almost 300 who made decisions during "Here's Hope" simultaneous revivals in 72 churches and missions.

As part of the MISSION: Hawaii 2000 strategy, Hawaii Baptists have adopted goals to increase baptisms by five percent per year and baptize a cumulative total of 4000 new believers by 1995. Reaching the baptism goal will not

easy to recruit volunteers from the mainland to come to Hawaii for short-term mission projects. The difficulty is in providing housing for the volunteers in tourist-oriented society where hotel rooms average more than \$150 per night.

Efurd said the HBC is fortunate to own two houses purchased by the SBC Foreign Mission Board for missionary residences in the 1940s. When Hawaii became a state in 1959, the Foreign Mission Board turned over responsibili-



HAPPY CHILDREN — At Waipio Gentry Church on Oahu, a child care program is one of the ministries that is reaching out to the community.

ty for mission work to the Home Mission Board and gave the property to the Hawaii Baptist Convention. Now the homes are used to house long-term volunteers and furloughing missionaries.

Volunteers who come to Hawaii for short-term assignments often want to stay.

## One Word More

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Most Americans are not heroes. Even on big issues we are quiet, ordinary, simple people.

Most Americans are in the group catered to by politicians at the last minute, perhaps to swing an election — the grassroots, the silent, unheard-from masses.

We would all like to serve probably — in some helpful but unobtrusive manner.

But most are like Caesar Rodney of Delaware, steadfast, reticent, not glamorous or clamoring for attention, but certain of our love and loyalty for the United States of America.

Behind closed doors in Philadelphia's state house, the Second Continental Congress met in July, 1776. Ben Franklin was there, and John Adams. Tom Jefferson was present — John Hancock and the rest.

A committee of five was instructed to draw up the "declaration," and the voting was to begin after this was completed. The august committee went to work straightaway, combining knowledge, intuitive judgment, soul-searching, and awareness of the enormity of the task.

It was tiny Delaware that held the attention of that distinguished group. Of the three Delaware delegates, Read was against, McKean and Rodney were for. The last two could insure a positive vote.

But Caesar Rodney was not present. As head of the Delaware militia, he had been called home to fight Tories. It was a necessary assignment even though the Philadelphia meeting was forging a powerful argument for independence from the British Crown.

Unable to sway Read's opinion,

McKean sent a rider to bring Rodney back to Philadelphia for the crucial vote.

Rodney made that ride to Philadelphia, some eighty miles, getting underway at 2 a.m., without sufficient rest. Along winding paths, over muddy trails, across rain-swollen rivers without bridges, he made one change of horses and rode the eighty miles in eleven hours.

He strode into the hall, mud-spattered and dead on his feet, but his appearance commanded the attention of those assembled. The voting started, from New Hampshire down the line until it was Delaware's turn to answer the roll. Read? "Nay." McKean? "Aye." Rodney?

With riding crop in hand, the militia chief said loudly: "As I believe the voice of my constituents and of all sensible people and honest men is in favor of independence, my own judgment concurs with them. I vote for independence."

Well, you know the rest of the story. It was done. The Declaration was adopted. But what a difference it would make today if politicians of the 1990s would adhere to Caesar Rodney's simple statement — and listen for those same voices.

And what a difference it would make if Baptists and other Christians would express their loyalty to Christ in that same unswerving style.



ALLEN

## Giles Association benefits from missions involvement

By Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor  
PULASKI — Don't tell Carl Bond that the Tennessee/Michigan partnership is one-sided, with Michigan Baptists reaping the benefits.

He just wouldn't believe it. And with good reason. The Giles County Association director of missions has seen firsthand how volunteers from the association's churches have returned from Michigan eager and willing to do more at home.

In addition, the partnership, which has been in place since 1980, has produced three "home grown" pastors for Giles County churches.

One of the pastors — Stephen McCollum of Welcome Valley Church — accepted the call to ministry during the association's first trip to Michigan in 1984, Bond related.

The other two pastors — Dale Myers of Richland Church and Dwight Bevels of Minnow Branch Church — both credit their involvement in Michigan missions toward later decisions for the ministry.

And yet another volunteer, Randall Glass, also has been called to the ministry. Glass, a graduate of Union University, will enroll in a Southern Baptist seminary this fall for additional training. He is the son of Larry and Marjorie Glass. He is pastor of Minor Hill Church.

Bevels, who has been on all six teams the association has sent to Michigan, noted his call to the ministry was the result of "progressive growth."

His first trip to Michigan opened his eyes to the need for missions involvement, Bevels said. The association helped what is now Grace Church in Manistee, Mich., get started. "I saw what a great thing the Lord was doing and I wanted to be involved," Bevels said.

He remembered he first resisted the call to ministry because he felt "inadequate." Bevels said he finally realized, however, that "God calls people to serve Him."

"I'm grateful that the Lord called me," continued Bevels, who has been bivocational pastor at Minnow Branch for about one year.

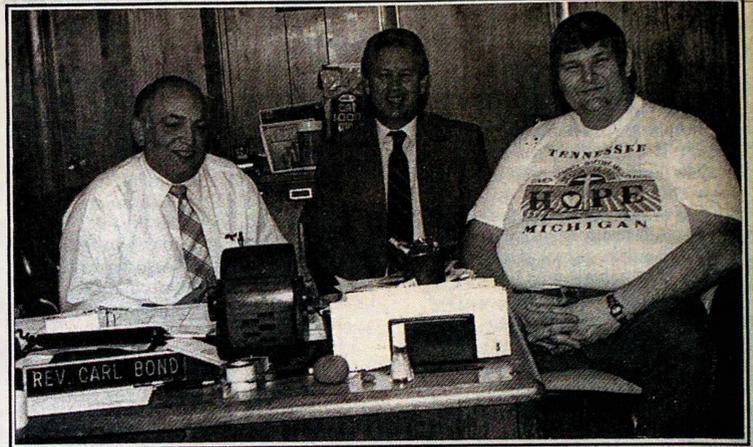
Myers, pastor of Richland Church since 1987, was also on the association's first trip to Michigan, but has not been able to return, although he has gone to Michigan twice to lead revivals.

"Michigan is a wonderful opportunity to go and serve and tell others about Jesus," he said, adding that the trip "made me more missions minded."

The Giles County leader agreed that what has helped make the trips effective has been the preparation and training required of all volunteers.

The volunteers, many of them young people, undergo ten to 12 hours of training, Bond said. In addition, the association holds Vacation Bible Schools in local housing projects, both before and after the trip, so volunteers gain additional experience.

Once in Michigan the days are long. Volunteers work 16-18 hours each day.



**MISSIONS SUPPORTERS** — Giles County Association pastors Dale Myers, center, and Dwight Bevels, right, credit their involvement in missions trips to Michigan as contributing factors to their call to the ministry. They visited recently with Director of Missions Carl Bond.

Some of the teams work in construction while others lead Vacation Bible Schools or do clowning and puppetry. "It's definitely not a vacation," Myers grinned. He and Bevels both agreed that no one seems to mind.

Both Myers and Bevels, along with Bond, are in full agreement that home missions trips are just as rewarding for those who go as they are for those who are served.

"A lot of laypeople come back from these trips on fire for the Lord in a way they have never known before," said Bevels, who uses his only week of vacation each year to make the trips.

Myers emphasized how the trips make people more aware of missions in Giles County. "If we just went to Michigan and didn't do anything local-

ly, it would not mean that much. What we do here makes it special," said Myers, who along with Bevels, serves on the association's missions committee.

Bond observed that the training and experience the volunteers received in going to Michigan have helped them assist their churches in establishing local ministries.

One of the highlights of the trip is the nightly devotionals led by team members, Bond said. "It is a time for spiritual feeding as our people get together," he said.

Bond estimated the association has sent about 250 people to Michigan since their first trip in 1984. The association has tentative plans for a trip July 5-13 to St. Helen, Mich., he added.

### Ethnic missions meeting

## Baptists' attitudes may hinder evangelization

CHICAGO (BP) — Evangelizing America's ethnics will require Southern Baptists to overcome several self-inflicted barriers, the denomination's director of language missions said.

Speaking to the annual gathering of ethnic missions leaders in Chicago, Oscar Romo quoted the cartoon character Pogo to say, "We have seen the enemy, and the enemy is us."

Romo characterized attitudes that have become "specks in our vision," preventing Southern Baptists from evangelizing ethnic America. Such attitudes include:

1. Everybody should speak English, so there's no need for language congregations.
2. New congregations should be planned by the association and not

started by ethnics as the opportunity arises.

3. Ethnic missions should be discouraged from organizing into churches because "they" might become more in number than "us" and "outvote us."

4. All missions must have a sponsor, missions may not sponsor other missions, and churches should not be admitted to associations if they don't own property.

5. Ethnic congregations are not a good investment because they cannot become self-supporting quickly enough.

6. If sharing facilities with an Anglo church, ethnics should learn to be "Americans like us."

7. It is acceptable for associations to recognize Anglo churches that deviate doctrinally, but not to recognize ethnic

fellowships that organize "by the book."

Romo also cited concerns with other SBC programs he said don't adequately represent ethnics and thereby create barriers to growth.

Too many ethnic pastors don't have retirement benefits or aren't contributing to the plans they enrolled in, he said, reporting that 43 percent have

### ... but three churches started daily

CHICAGO (BP) — Southern Baptists started about three churches per day across America last year.

Statistics on 1990 church starts were presented to state missions directors and church extension directors during the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's annual leadership conference in Chicago.

no retirement.

Romo questioned a decision by the SBC Radio and Television Commission to stop producing language programs, despite continued requests for the programs.

Finally, he expressed concern that some Southern Baptists don't trust the research data his division has compiled on ethnic population and churches.

### Celebrating two decades

## Union's Bible conference scheduled March 25-27

Union University's Spring Bible Conference will celebrate two decades of service during its March 25-27 program at the Jackson college.

Dallas pastor Manuel Scott Sr., and Birmingham seminarian Fisher Humphreys will be keynote speakers at the event. Special music will be provided by the Union music department.

Theme for the three-day Bible emphasis will be "Christ Above All." Conference sessions will be held in George M. Savage Memorial Chapel.

Scott has served as pastor of St. John Missionary Baptist Church in Austin, Texas, since 1982. He previous-

ly served as pastor of Calvary Church, Los Angeles for 33 years.

Scott has the doctor of divinity degrees from both Bishop College in Dallas and Texas College in Tyler, Texas. He has been a participant with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Graham's International Congress for World Evangelism in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Scott will be the worship leader and will preach at 10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Monday and Tuesday and 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. Wednesday.

Humphreys is professor of divinity at

Beeson School of Divinity at Samford University.

Humphreys will teach Colossians at 3 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Monday and Tuesday and 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Wednesday.

John Adams, vice president for religious affairs, said the college invites area churches to meet at the college for the Wednesday joint worship service.

Music will be presented by campus music groups "The Union University Singers," "Proclamation," "Witness," the Black Christian Fellowship Choir, and soloists from the Music Department.

The total number of church starts for the year is believed to be between 968 and 1201. Reporting mechanisms for number of church starts annually have not yet merged into one definitive database. In the past four years, the HMB and Southern Baptist Sunday School Board have been working together to perfect a reporting system for new church starts.

Last year's starts bring the total number of SBC churches and missions to 43,419 according to Uniform Church Letter data compiled by the Sunday School Board.

Southern Baptists have set a goal of having 50,000 churches and missions by the end of this century as part of Bold Mission Thrust.

In an address to state church extension leadership, HMB extension section vice president Charles Chaney called on Southern Baptists to increase church starts to four per day to meet the challenge of Bold Mission Thrust.

In addition to new starts, HMB statistics indicate 309 missions constituted into churches during 1990 and another 226 existing churches affiliated with the SBC for the first time.

# Kenyan missionaries give food, blankets to Somalians

By Craig Bird

MOMBASA, Kenya (BP) — Thousands of refugees from Somalia, most severely malnourished and many ill, are being fed and warmed by missionaries in Kenya while United Nations and Red Cross relief programs work through red tape.

The Somali refugees, escaping the apparent final stages of a lengthy civil war in the northeast African country, swarmed aboard rescue boats as the capital city of Mogadishu fell to a coalition of rebel groups in late January.

Southern Baptist missionaries in the Kenyan port of Mombasa heard rumors the weekend of Jan. 20 that boatloads of refugees were sitting in the harbor with little food. Less than a week later, \$45,000 from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board had been sent and 5000 people were eating, sleeping under warm blankets, and being offered Bibles and Christian tracts.

"What God is doing here impresses me the most but I also am really impressed by how quickly we were able to move to help people in need," said missionary Ralph Bethea, a church developer in Mombasa and head of the relief project. "It showed the strength of our cooperative way of doing missions. Muslim imams and mullahs who really resisted us doing anything for their people at first because we are 'infidels' keep coming up and asking, 'Why are you Christians doing this for us?'"

Somalia is an overwhelmingly Muslim country long hostile to Christianity. Mission researchers estimate there may be no more than a few hundred Somali Christians in a population of more than eight million people.

But the relief ministry is not an attempt to trade food for conversions, Bethea stressed.

"We have handed out Bibles and tracts to those who want them but our

evangelism approach has been very, very soft-sell," Bethea said. "First we just want them to see that Christians care about them and love them. That's an important start."

Missionaries in the camp have met 12 former ministers in the just-fallen government of Somali President Said Barre. They also discovered 22 children from a Somali orphanage who had slipped aboard one of the ships.

Food and blankets are being distributed to 79 groups of refugees temporarily housed at an agricultural fairgrounds and another 45 groups scattered around Old Town — the section of Mombasa built on an island. Blankets might seem unnecessary in a seaport near the equator, but the weak, often feverish refugees are used to 120-degree temperatures in Somalia.

The original relief plan had included carrying food onto the ships, but the Kenyan government authorized the use of the fairgrounds and let the refugees

come ashore. Bethea said one or two small fishing boats a day are still coming in loaded with refugees. The Red Cross has begun medical work on a small scale and the United Nations has announced a major feeding program, but it has not yet begun.

"Most of the people had not eaten in ten days or longer when we got to them," Bethea said. "There was not much food on the boats and Mogadishu had been under siege for a long time so food was scarce there too. There have been about 40 deaths even after we started feeding, so we feel there are a lot of people alive now who would not have been if we had not been able to respond so quickly."

Two trucks a day loaded with beans, rice, carrots, kale, pineapple, bananas, tea, sugar, and milk are delivered by Kenyan pastors and missionaries. "We could contract for drivers but we think it is important for them to see us caring about them," said Bethea.

## Pastors identify factors contributing to top SS gains

How did the churches gaining top numbers in Sunday School enrollment in Tennessee do it?

Germantown Church, Germantown, gained 549 members by realizing Sunday School is the only way to ensure that people receive ministry, said Pete DeMoss, minister of education/staff coordinator.

"The Sunday School is organized so that everybody is somebody's responsibility," he said. Neglect of people can be a pitfall of a 4500-member church which has three Sunday School time periods and three worship services, he pointed out.

The fact the church added its third SS session in January 1990 contributed to its enrollment increase, noted DeMoss. The Sunday School enrollment increased from 4074 to 4623.

Pastor Ken Story identifies SS as the major outreach arm of the church, he added. That growth is enabled by the development of new classes and departments in divisions, said DeMoss,

who also credited the church staff and teachers.

Success is just as real for Cooper's Chapel Church, McKenzie. It is the top-ranked church in percentage increase — 875 percent. Its enrollment grew from four to 39.

Keith Pence, a bivocational pastor, explained the church had been closed three months before he began serving it and some of the increase is response to its rebirth. But the former Cumberland Presbyterian minister is active in evangelism, one of the reasons he left the Presbyterian church. Thus he emphasizes a visitation program.

"Where there is no evangelism, a church is going to perish," he said.

Pence, who is a food inspector for the state Department of Agriculture, also attributed the increase to the church's leaders. He proudly reported Cooper's Chapel has adopted a building program.

Central Church, Chattanooga, Pastor

Charles McAlister was surprised to learn the ranking of his church when contacted by the Baptist and Reflector. The church ranked second among churches in the state in SS enrollment net increase.

He credited the gain from 1270 to 1648 to several factors: adoption of Bible Book curriculum, use of church growth ideas such as development of new classes and a pastor's class, and conversion of worship service to a less formal service.

The new church curriculum has unified the church because everyone is studying the same Scriptures. The outreach efforts and relaxed worship style has allowed the church to reach baby boomers — the large post-war generation born from 1947-64 who are now young adults. Many baby boomers also have children which has added to the increase, pointed out McAlister.

"If we don't get them grounded in Sunday School we're not really going

to see them be disciplined and growing in Christ," said McAlister.

Although the increase caused the church to add an additional worship service and Sunday School period last year, McAlister sees the move as positive because it led the church to be a better steward of its facilities.

He also credited workers such as preschool teachers whose work must be excellent to interest a child for a total of three hours on Sunday morning.

Greer Ruble, Tennessee Baptist Convention Sunday School Department Director, stated the state's total enrollment increase was 8524 or ten percent of the national increase of 83,140.

He attributed it to pastors and other church leaders, development of Associational Sunday School Improvement Support Teams (ASSISTeams), training, programs like Sunday School Growth Spiral and Outreach Bible Study, new Sunday Schools, and Vacation Bible Schools. — Connie Davis

## 1989-90 Top Tennessee Churches in Sunday School Enrollment Gain

Percentage Increase			Net Increase				
Church	Association	Pastor	Percentage Increase	Church	Association	Pastor	Net Increase
1. Cooper's Chapel	Carroll-Benton	Keith Pence	875.0	1. Germantown	Shelby	Ken Story	549
2. Northside	Cumberland	John Amyx	257.1	2. Central, Chattanooga	Hamilton	Charles McAlister	378
3. Copper Ridge	Knox	Joe Bullard	250.0	3. Bartlett	Shelby	Jackie Kay	306
4. Solid Rock	Midland	Corbin Munger	226.9	4. First, Franklin	Nashville	Richard White	258
5. Deep Gap	East Tennessee	Mike Sutton	188.9	5. Sevier Heights	Knox	Hollie Miller	257
6. Peterson Lake	Shelby	Jack Moore	163.6	6. Antioch	Holston	Richard Long	254
7. East Hickman	Judson	David Homan	150.0	7. First, Mt. Juliet	Wilson	Billie Friel	247
8. New Salem	Holston	Keith Whitehead	141.3	8. Blairland	Loudon	David Abernathy	222
9. Pioneer	Loudon	Thomas Compton	124.6	9. Tulip Grove	Nashville	Kenneth R. Clayton	212
10. Pleasant Hill	Midland	Lester Mullins	123.1	10. First, Donelson	Nashville	W. Roy Fisher	210
11. First, Normandy	New Duck River	Larry Sanders	119.6	11. North Cleveland	Bradley	Jay McCluskey	190
12. Primera Hispana	Shelby County	Jose Zepeda	109.3	12. Edgemoor	Clinton	Stanley Young	187
13. Johnson	Stone	William Baker	108.8	13. First, Alcoa	Chilhowee	Todd Zieger	182
14. Ridgecrest	Hamilton	Don Ferguson	98.0	14. Bayside	Hamilton	Robert C. Stitts	177
15. Central	Nashville	Curtis Beculhimer	94.4	15. South Clinton	Clinton	Ronnie Owens	173
16. Guaranda Dr.	Holston	David Shorter	93.9	16. First, Dickson	Nashville	Ronald McCoy	170
17. Ridge Grove	Beech River	Weldon Depriest	90.0	17. Hilldale	Cumberland	Verlon Moore	169
18. Blairland	Loudon	David Abernathy	88.0	18. First, Jackson	Madison-Chester	Gary Coltharp	151
19. Hunter Memorial	Watauga	Eric Wright	85.3	19. First, Collierville	Shelby	Gary Watkins	151
20. Bear Creek	Stone	Kenneth Blaylock	85.0	20. First, Clarksville	Cumberland	Dennis Newkirk	149
21. Red Bank	Sevier	Clarence Wilson	84.2	21. Grace	Knox	Ronald E. Stewart	149
22. Good Hope	McMinn-Meigs	Earl Graves	83.3	22. First, Henderson	Madison-Chester	Thomas D. Robinson	149
23. Sharon Missionary	Mulberry Gap	Donnie Shaw	80.2	23. Pleasant Hill	Midland	Lester Mullins	149
24. Cherry Creek	Union	Bobby Moore	80.0	24. Northside	Cumberland	John Amyx	144
25. Beacon	Bradley	Jim Parm	77.6	25. Hickory Ridge	Shelby	Walter Jackson	142
26. Pleasant Valley	Bledsoe	Jim Mayes	76.6	26. First, Benton	Polk	Steve Linginfelter	141
27. First, Palmer	Sequatchie Valley	John Coffelt	76.0	27. Guaranda Dr.	Holston	David Shorter	139
28. Pump Springs	Cumberland Gap	Gary Miller	74.2	28. Lucy	Shelby County	Bill Irvin	137
29. House Mountain	Knox	Steve Brasher	73.3	29. Tennessee Avenue	Holston	Joe Hudson	134
30. Open Bible	Salem	James Lassiter	72.1	30. Two Rivers	Nashville	Jerry Sutton	131

# NATIONWIDE BIBLE CONFERENCE

## BRIGHT LIGHT FOR DARK DAYS

### A CONFERENCE FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH

**April 17-21, 1991 • Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, TN**

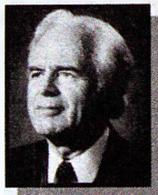
- Seminars for Pastors, Deacons, Staff Members, Lay Leaders & Ladies
- Panel discussions • Workshops • Praise Worship Services



### CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



**W.A. Criswell**, First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas



**Stephen Olford**, Encounter Ministries and the Institute for Biblical Preaching, Memphis, Tennessee



**John Phillips**, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, Illinois



**Darrell Gilyard**, Victory Baptist Church, Richardson, Texas



**Jerry Falwell**, Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia



**Joel Gregory**, First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas



**Ron Dunn**, Lifestyle Ministries, Irving, Texas



**Jim Whitmire**, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee



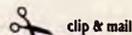
### AN INVITATION

A second Nationwide Bible Conference is being offered because of the many requests from the 1990 "Decade of Destiny" Conference. The 1991 theme is "Bright Light for Dark Days." Preachers and prophets are being assembled to proclaim His Word during these days which are becoming gloriously dark. Bellevue Church will host pastors, deacons, laymen, and wives from across our land for a time of superlative Bible preaching, panel discussions and practical workshops. In the Name of Jesus and with great anticipation, I invite you to this timely conference.

Adrian Rogers, Pastor

FOR INFORMATION CALL  
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Bellevue Baptist Church  
P.O. Box 1210  
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### REGISTRATION INFORMATION: Nationwide Bible Conference • April 17-21, 1991

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Bellevue Baptist Church  
P.O. Box 1210  
Cordova, Tennessee 38018

Name (Dr., Rev., Mr., Mrs., Miss) \_\_\_\_\_ (First) \_\_\_\_\_ (Middle Initial) \_\_\_\_\_ (Last) \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Position \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name (if attending) \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Denomination \_\_\_\_\_

Church Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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**PREREGISTRATION NOTICE:** While preregistration is not required to attend the conference, all who preregister by April 8 may purchase audio-cassette tapes of the conference sessions at a 50 percent reduction. Cut-off date for preregistration is Monday, April 8, 1991.

**CHILD CARE:** Child care for children ages birth through 3 is available by reservation. Call the conference office at (901) 385-5720.

# TenneScene

...Starting at Sharps Chapel, traveling west to Cottontown, and on to Reverie ...

## Ordinations ...

Dan Cummings was recently ordained to the deacon ministry at Bear Cove Church, Sparta.

Troy Donahoe Jr., was recently ordained to the Gospel ministry at Poplar Avenue Church, Memphis, where he is minister of education/evangelism.

First Church, Lenoir City, will ordain Farrel Green to the Gospel ministry March 10.

## E. V. Cullum dies

E. V. Cullum III, 68, died Feb. 24 at Knoxville Convalescent Center.

Cullum, a former World War II chaplain, was pastor of Grace Church, Karns, for 19 years before retiring in 1987. He was a member of Central Church, Fountain City, in Knoxville.

He was a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Cullum is survived by his wife, Dorothy, and five children and two step-children.

Moodyville Church, Byrdstown, ordained Raymond Van Meter as deacon Feb. 10.

Keith Smith was recently ordained to the Gospel ministry at Walnut Grove Church, Savannah.

## Institutions ...

Devotional services for Easter will be held March 25-29 at Willow Brook East, Madison, and Willow Brook South, Nashville, adult communities affiliated with Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes, Inc. Services will be at 10:30 a.m. each day. Devotional leaders at Willow Brook South will be Carl Duck, executive director of Nashville Association, on Monday, Thursday, and Friday; Clifford Horne, missions and ministries director of Nashville Association, on Tuesday; and Norris Hite, retired pastor of First Church, Old Hickory, on Wednesday. The leader at Willow Brook East will be Herbert Gabhart, chancellor of Belmont College, Nashville.

## Leadership ...

First Church, Hohenwald, called Billy Borre, a student at Aquinas Junior College, Nashville, as associate

pastor/youth minister.

Glenn Church recently joined the staff of Cedar Grove Church, Johnson City, as minister of music.

Jim Booth has been called as interim youth director to First Church, Martin.

Ivy Memorial Church, Nashville, called John Pickler as minister of music.

Brook Hollow Church, Nashville, called Martain Thielen as interim pastor.

Robert Orr recently joined the staff of First Church, Paris, as interim pastor.

Cliff Allbritton, editor of Christian Single magazine, produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board, is taking early retirement next month to begin a new ministry, Successful Living Institute for single and married adults. He has produced the first two of a planned 16 audio cassette tape series.

## Revivals ...

Revival will be held March 27-31 at First Church, Kingston.

Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Church, Woodstock, Ga., will lead revival March 17-21 at Central Church, Chat-



**SERVICE AWARD** — Bill Trapp, right, chairman of deacons at Colonial Heights Church, Kingsport, presented Sullivan Association's first Lifetime Royal Ambassador Service Award to Carson "Nick" Deskins recently. Deskins became a Christian in 1961 and immediately began leading young boys in the RA program. He has served in nearly all areas of RA leadership (church, association, and state levels). He is a member of Colonial Heights Church.

tanooga. The Griffin Family Singers will offer special music.

Two Rivers Church, Nashville, will hold revival March 17-20 led by James Merritt, pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga.

Spring revival will be held March 10-15 at Sharon Church, Knoxville.

First Southern Church, Pikeville, will hold youth revival March 8-10.

Mark Howard, associate pastor at Woodland Church, Jackson, will lead revival March 17-20 at Zion Church, Brownsville. Howard's wife, Becky, will provide special music.

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† Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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# Southern Baptists form child advocacy network

LOUISVILLE (BP) — A group of Southern Baptists has formed a network aimed at encouraging churches to be advocates for children.

The Southern Baptist Child Advocacy Network will try to motivate Southern Baptist churches to be advocates for children both within the context of church ministries and in the larger society, according to Diana Richmond Garland, a church social work professor at Southern Baptist Theological

Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and an organizer of the group.

"The purpose of advocacy is to protect children, help all children achieve their God-given potential and integrate children into the life and worship of the church community," she said.

Churches can be advocates for children through prayer and Bible study about children's issues, befriending children, "pleading the case" for children within social structures that

involved in the network. Representatives from state Baptist convention children's homes and the women's department of the Baptist World Alliance as well as Southern Baptist churches also will participate.

The idea of forming the child advocacy network surfaced at an October meeting hosted by Southern Seminary's Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry for denominational workers who deal with children's issues. The group reconvened at Southern Seminary in February and decided to move forward with plans for the network.

Staff members from the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, Sunday School Board, Brotherhood Commission, and the Christian Life Commission are in-

involved in the network. Representatives from state Baptist convention children's homes and the women's department of the Baptist World Alliance as well as Southern Baptist churches also will participate.

Statistics that address the overall welfare of children in the United States "have never looked so negative" in 30 years of monitoring, Garland said.

She said statistics reveal:

- The U.S. ranks 20th among nations in its infant mortality rate.
- 30 percent of American children receive inadequate medical care.

- Reported cases of child abuse tripled between 1976 and 1985. The increase is probably due to both higher rates of reporting and an increase in incidence, Garland said.

## HCBA Preachers' School begins final session

SEYMOUR — Preachers' School at Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy here has announced Saturday class sessions for the final segment of studies in the 1990-91 school year beginning on March 16.

Raymond Smith, Preachers' School director/teacher, will conduct classes at 8:00 each Saturday morning through the eight week session. Active ministers and prospective ministers from all walks of life may enroll for

these learning opportunities.

Students have no tuition costs. Benefactors have provided funds to pay tuition costs for properly certified ministerial students. The only expense to students is the \$3 cost for each textbook.

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# Jesus' last night before His death

By A. Ray Newcomb, pastor; First Church, Millington

Aside from the crucifixion itself, Gethsemane was the darkest hour of Christ's life. Friends misunderstood Him; armed soldiers came to arrest Him; one of His own followers betrayed Him; He agonized in the garden alone; and while three of His disciples slept, He went to His Father in prayer. He resolved, in the midst of His agony, to yield Himself to God's will.



NEWCOMB

Passover supper (vv. 15-17) Shortly after sunset Jesus and the disciples arrived at the upper room. Before they ate Jesus spoke of His desire to eat this meal with them before He suffered, for He would not do so again until the heavenly feast.

Jesus took the bread, gave thanks,

broke it, and gave it to them. The bread is a symbol of His body. He also took the cup and blessed it, teaching us the wine (fruit of the vine) is a symbol of His blood, which was shed for us.

Jesus' prayer (vv. 40-45) Jesus went to the Mount of Olives with His disciples to pray. The prayer begins with Jesus urging, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation," and ends similarly. In between the urgings we have the sweat-saturated struggle of Jesus in prayer. In verse 42 we see the high point of Jesus' surrender to the Father.

Luke the physician took note of the bodily need. He noted Jesus was in "agony." Jesus prayed so earnestly, "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

The victory won, Jesus arose from prayer. Returning to the disciples He found them "sleeping for sorrow." Jesus rebuked them for sleeping, and urged them to rise and pray lest they

fall into temptation.

Parade led by Judas (vv. 47-53) When Judas left the upper room, he doubtless went to the house of Caiaphas. He was ready to earn his pay. Jesus was speaking to the disciples when a multitude led by Judas came to Jesus. By previous arrangement Judas was to point out Jesus by kissing Him. There was both rebuke and pathos in Jesus' words, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?"

The 11 were stunned, and rallied to the occasion.

Jesus chided the chief priests, elders, and temple police for coming after Him with "swords and staves." Jesus asked why they had not bothered to arrest Him in the temple.

"But this is your hour, and the power of darkness." Even though God removed His restraining hand, He still triumphed over the forces of evil. God had His greatest hour when He raised

**BIBLE BOOK**  
March 10 Lesson  
Basic Passage: Luke 22:1-62

His Son from the dead to be the Savior of a lost world.

Peter's point blank denial (vv. 54-62) Peter had boasted he would never deny his Lord. Jesus told him to be careful what he vowed.

When they arrested Jesus and took Him to the high priest's house, Peter followed afar off. A fire was kindled in the courtyard and Peter sat. Three times Peter denied the Lord.

Just as Peter uttered his third denial he heard a rooster crow. When the rooster crowed, Jesus turned and looked at Peter. Jesus' glance plus the memory broke Peter's heart. So Peter "went out, and wept bitterly."

We learn three truths from Peter's denial: (1) The flesh is always the flesh, even in the most advanced disciple; (2) A disciple who truly loves his Lord may sin; (3) The Lord looks at His falling disciples at once, and then prepares for his restoration (John 21). We must learn to walk in the spirit.

**CONVENTION UNIFORM**  
March 10 Lesson  
Basic Passage: 1 Corinthians 6:9-20

# Sexual responsibility

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

FREEDOM! What a marvelous thought. In recent years we have seen nation after nation throw off the yoke of Communism and tyranny. They got a look at freedom or a taste of freedom and could never be satisfied until they devoured it for themselves.

The Bible teaches us further about freedom when it says "If the Son shall set you free you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Real freedom, then, is to be found only in Jesus Christ.



NAIL

But, as persons who get their first taste of freedom soon learn, freedom carries certain responsibilities. Any freedom which doesn't recognize responsibility becomes merely license and quickly costs us our freedom.

The early Christians had a problem

with their freedom in Christ. That problem is still alive today. When we begin to have to make new choices we often revert to our old ways of behavior.

The Hebrews who came out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses were so accustomed to the slavery of Egypt they longed to return to it in a time of crisis. When Christians, especially new ones, are faced with tough decisions, it is easy to go back to old behavior.

Set free from the power of sin In the fifth chapter of this book Paul alluded to a gross incident of immorality within the church. The individual and the rest of the congregation were patting themselves on the back for permitting such behavior — all in the name of freedom.

Paul reminded them that was the lifestyle they endured before they were delivered through their faith in Christ. They knew when they were converted that such a lifestyle led straight to hell. Their deliverance through Christ was a deliverance, not just from the

penalty of such sin, but from the tyranny of such a lifestyle.

He reminded them that they were "washed ... sanctified ... justified." After they were removed from that death-trap of sin, why on earth did they allow the abuse of their freedom to take them back?

"Nothing can hurt me now"

It is not unusual for all of us to put too much confidence in ourselves at times. The new Christian often falls into this trap. They sense the power of God dwelling in them. They feel there is nothing they can't conquer.

Many try to prove their new faith by putting themselves in a position to be tempted. Paul saw his spiritual children doing this to themselves. Perhaps it was because of some Gnostic influence that taught them things done in the body could not harm their spiritual life. Many scholars think so. But it doesn't take any influence of Gnosticism to get us to "try our wings."

"All things are lawful to me," they

were saying. But Paul warned them not to let anything become their master again. "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats," they said as they indulged their sensual appetites. But Paul warned that the body of the believer is the temple of God.

Our body is a temple of God

Christians seem to have a struggle with what to do about their physical bodies. So often in the history of Christianity we have paid most attention to getting all the spiritual things in order and have divorced the spiritual from the physical. We even speak of our spiritual self and our physical self.

Are there two of us? Do we have two distinct persons who dwell in our one body? Is it possible for God to redeem our spiritual self and leave our physical self to go on its merry way to hell?

I say that the answer to each of those questions is no. We cannot so neatly divide ourselves. We cannot fail to take responsibility before God for the deeds we have done in the body.

**LIFE AND WORK**  
March 10 Lesson  
Basic Passage: John 17

# Christian Mission

By John C. Compton, pastor; Oak Grove Church, Mount Carmel

How is our world going to hear the Gospel? Is our world going to come to a saving knowledge of Christ by listening to the Moslem teach obedience; the Hindu say behave and earn a better incarnation; the Buddhist teach the way is to control desires; the Confucious believer advocate ethics is the way? Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses are beating the doors down to say Jesus is not the Christ. Ninety-three percent of



COMPTON

our world is trying to get to heaven by some means other than faith in Christ. The world will hear the Gospel only when born again believers send and support missionaries with an urgency which comes from expecting our Lord to return soon.

Jesus came into the world with a mission. Before leaving He prayed to the Father that we would carry on the mission. Praying for missions is the most important thing we can do, but it is not the only thing we should do. If Jesus needed to pray, then our need for praying is much greater. In John 17:1-8, He prayed for Himself, and in verses 9-26, He prayed for us.

Jesus prayed for our joy. Jesus was a man of sorrow, acquainted with grief, but He was mostly a man of joy. He knew the joy of being in the will of the Father. We must understand joy is not a goal. It is a byproduct of being in the will of God. Joy comes with being on mission for God.

Jesus prayed for our safety. He did not pray for God to change circumstances, to take us out of this world, or to take evil out of the picture. He prayed for the Father to protect us. Satan's fiery darts will still fly

at us, but they will never be fatal. God is our defender. The safety of our missionaries overseas is a matter of serious prayer.

Jesus prayed for our sanctification. Jesus did not say sanctify yourselves. He asked the Father to sanctify us by the Word of God. Jesus taught we are cleansed by the Word (chapter 15:3). The Bible is a living Word which changes lives and values. It results in our loving sin less and loving God more. The more we love God, the more we love missions.

Jesus prayed for us to be sent. Jesus was not praying for the world (v. 9). He was not praying for the harvest because it was ripe and ready. He was praying for us, the laborers, which are few. There has never been a question about the harvest. The question is will we be obedient and go witness. If we witness, people will be saved. The reason people are not saved every Sun-

day is because church members are not witnessing every week. Hell is full of people asking why they weren't told the good news that Jesus is the only hope.

Jesus prayed for our unity. He knew every generation of believers needs prayer when it comes to living in harmony and one accord. One reason there must be unity among believers is to win the lost to Christ "that the world may believe." Nothing damages the church's mission more than disunity. Fighting church members do not have their hearts on lost people. They have it on making the other look less religious than themselves. The last place a lost man wants to come is to a church where members have problems getting along with each other. Jesus anticipated our need and prayed for unity. May our passion be for seeing how much we can go, give, and pray for missions.

**(BP) BRIEFLY**

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

**Plane crash survivor returns to China**

OKLAHOMA CITY — Southern Baptist teacher Erin Thomas plans to step back into her English class in Meixian, China, five months to the day after crawling from the smoking fuselage of a crash-landed Chinese airliner. Thomas left the United States Feb. 18 and was to return to her teaching post at Jia Ying University in Meixian five days before classes began March 2.

The Harrah, Okla., teacher became the focus of international media attention and Southern Baptists' prayers when the Chinese Boeing 737 she was aboard was hijacked Oct. 2 and crash-landed in Guangzhou, China. The fiery crash killed 132 people, including Thomas' Southern Baptist colleague and friend, Mary Anna Gilbert, 23, of Alexander City, Ala. The two, who were returning to their campus from a short holiday trip inside China, had been teaching in the country only one month.

Thomas, 30, has recovered from the injuries she suffered during the crash. She sustained a dislocated shoulder and several broken bones and developed pneumonia when she inhaled smoke from the burning plane. She also suffered second- and third-degree burns on her right leg. A cast from an earlier broken ankle protected her left leg from burns. She said she has full mobility of her right leg after two skin grafts, although the repaired skin is still tight.

From the beginning of her ordeal, Thomas knew she would return to China, she said. Yet some people seemed surprised when she told them of her plans to return. "Some have asked if I'm afraid of flying or returning to China," she said. "I guess I just don't think like that. I've flown six times since the crash and it hasn't bothered me too much. And I always knew I was going back."

**BSSB to release book in Russian language**

NASHVILLE — A 1977 Broadman book, *What It Means to Be Born Again*, is being published in Russian for distribution in the Soviet Union, according to the author, Johnnie Godwin, vice president for general publishing at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

The 140-page book has been translated into Russian and will be distributed at the International Book Fair in Moscow, Sept. 3-9. One-thousand copies of the book were printed free of charge as a goodwill gesture by Rose Printing Co., in Tallahassee, Fla., Godwin said.

Godwin said the book was written to coincide with the inauguration of former President Jimmy Carter. A Southern Baptist, Carter identified himself as a "born-again" Christian during his campaign for the presidency. Officials at the

Sunday School Board decided to publish a book to explain the term which was unfamiliar to many Americans, and Godwin agreed to author the manuscript.

The decision to translate the book into Russian was made after Godwin made several trips to book fairs in Moscow. "I've talked with many, many Russians — some believers, some agnostics, and some atheists," he said. "Many of the non-Christians told me, 'Yes, I have read the Bible. So, what?' This book answers that question for them by explaining what it really means to accept Christ."

The release of the book will coincide with a project to distribute four million New Testaments in the Soviet Union by next September. The distribution, dubbed "The Moscow Project," is an interdenominational effort to saturate the Soviet Union with the Gospel. "This means millions of Soviet citizens will have access to Scripture, and many of them will be asking questions," Godwin said. "Hopefully, this book will answer the most important question of all."

**Hall elected president of Hardin-Simmons University**

ABILENE, Texas — Edwin L. Hall, president of Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas, since 1989, was named president of Hardin-Simmons University by university trustees Feb. 22.

Hall will succeed Jesse C. Fletcher, president since 1977. Fletcher will become chancellor June 1 and continue as the Connally Professor of Missions. Hall, recommended to the board by a 16-member presidential search committee, will be the first layman to be president since the late Rupert N. Richardson, who served from 1943-1953.

**Without ethnic growth SBC would decline, Romo says**

CHICAGO — Without its ethnic congregations, the Southern Baptist Convention would have declined in number of churches and shown less growth on four other fronts over the past decade, according to Oscar Romo. Romo, director of language church extension for the SBC Home Mission Board, presented statistics on ethnic and SBC growth at the HMB's annual leadership conference in Chicago.

The data was compiled by Delbert Fann, national ethnic missionary for special projects. Fann, a home missionary for 30 years, used Uniform Church Letter statistics and information from ethnic church growth requests as the basis for the study. While the number of SBC churches increased 5.45 percent between 1980 and 1989, the number of ethnic churches increased 142.86 percent, the study reports. Without that large increase in ethnic congregations, the SBC would have recorded a decline of 2.99 percent in number of churches, the data showed.

In 1980, the SBC had 35,831 churches, including 2074 ethnic churches. By 1989 that number had increased to 37,785 churches, of which 5037 were ethnic. The percentage of SBC churches that are ethnic doubled during that period, from 5.79 percent to 13 percent.

**Christians should work for clean environment, leader says**

By Terri Lackey

ESTES PARK, Colo. (BP) — Just as Christians are responsible for keeping their bodies healthy and fit, so are they responsible for protecting the environment, a university professor of recreation said.

"The world is God's creation. He created it and said it was good, and then he gave us custodianship of that," said Sharon Baack, assistant professor of recreation at Southwest Missouri State University at Springfield.

While keeping the environment clean should become a responsibility of Christians, it is not their first responsibility, Baack said.

"The environment should not become the focus of what we do, because that focus should be a lost world," she said. "But we as Christians should make custodianship of the world our Lord

has made a top concern."

By showing concern for the environment, Christians can communicate "a little of who we are."

Baack led conferences during Church Recreation Lab at Estes Park YMCA Center in Estes Park, Colo., Feb. 22-27. Rec Labs are sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church recreation department.

Baack, a member and former recreation minister at First Church of Springfield, said keeping the environment clean can come in the form of a personal commitment or a group commitment, possibly a program of the church.

Personal involvement includes making oneself aware of the opportunities available and then taking action.

For example, Baack said, people could use coffee mugs rather than

Styrofoam cups, or they could drive less and walk more. They could buy more gas-efficient vehicles or begin recycling in small steps.

"Start recycling on a small level. Sort out at least newspapers," she urged.

Churches who want to start an environmental awareness program should not do it by "beating members over the head with it," Baack said. "Use a positive rather than a negative approach. Emphasize that we are Christians and ask them what we can do to care for the beauty of this world."

Churches could either start small by recycling in bits and pieces, she suggested, or "go all out" with a recycling or environmental emphasis weekend.

That might include planting trees in a certain area or selecting a park or a street and picking up trash, she said.

Churches choosing to start slow should begin with an awareness program, educating church members about what they can do.

"Walk through your church and see what you could begin recycling," she suggested. "Begin turning out lights. Put a recycling bin beside coke machines. Save computer paper. Just sit down and brainstorm what materials that could be recycled."

Churches could begin to think of ways to use the materials they are recycling to benefit some church programs, Baack said.

"RAS and GAS could raise money for missions or attending conferences," she said.

Neighborhood clean-up efforts could even be used as an outreach tool, she

said.

"If your church decides to have a neighborhood clean-up day, invite a non-Christian friend along who you know is concerned about the environment. This could really share a positive witness."

What a church can do with environmental clean-up efforts is only limited to the creativity of its members, Baack said. "Practical and useful ideas and applications for recycling will make it easier for people to become involved."

The key to beginning an environmental awareness program is changing mindsets and building attitudes, she said.

"Church members must be convinced there is no small effort when it comes to saving the environment."

She listed hints for saving the environment:

- Reduce purchases of single, non-recyclable items and those with excessive packaging.
- Purchase soft drinks and milk in returnable containers.
- Avoid products that are disposable, especially diapers, razors, lighters, and flashlights.
- Avoid using Styrofoam products, plastic tableware, plastic straws, paper napkins, cups, or plates.
- Use biodegradable garbage bags.
- Recycle paper, glass, aluminum, and plastic.
- Reuse items, including aluminum foil, plastic wrap, storage bags, and shopping bags.
- Pick up litter.
- Return junk mail to sender. Request to be taken off list.

**New England paper taps Martin**

NORTHBORO, Mass. (BP) — Joyce Sweeney Martin has been named editor of *The New England Baptist*, the monthly newsmagazine of the six-state Baptist Convention of New England.

Martin, a Kentucky native, assumed the editorship on Jan. 1. She has been on *The New England Baptist* staff since 1983, serving first as editorial/production assistant and then as associate editor.

Martin is a graduate of Georgetown College, Ky., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and has done further study at Andover Newton Theological School.

Her journalism experience includes interim assistant editor of *New England Church Life*, an in-

terdenominational newsmagazine in Boston, and 15 years as a curriculum and features writer for Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention. She is the author of two books including *You Are My Witness* published by New Hope Press.

In addition, Martin is an adjunct professor of Christian Education at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in S. Hamilton and at Southern Seminary's Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry in Northboro. She also has been a trustee of Southern Seminary.

Martin is married to Larry Martin, executive director of Greater Boston Baptist Association.