

# Baptist and Reflector

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## During SBC in Orlando

# Mission boards underscore God's work, people's need

By Barbara Denman  
For Baptist Press

ORLANDO — Southern Baptists are experiencing God through missions, through the lives of home and foreign missionaries, the commitment of missions volunteers, and the investment of prayer and financial support.

That report of God's activity was presented during the joint

Southern Baptist Convention presentation of the Home and Foreign Mission boards June 15 at the Orange County Convention/Civic Center.

It can be seen from events of the past, said Henry Blackaby, HMB special consultant for prayer and spiritual awakening, citing the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, shortly after Southern Baptist leaders had issued a call for prayer and solemn assembly.

Blackaby observed that "God is mightily at work in the midst of us as a people. From one part of our nation to the other I see God at work. He's calling us to be of mission with him," Blackaby said.

"God has always been at work," Blackaby reminded, but "God's people have not always been at work with him."

Throughout the FMB/HMB multi-media presentation that combined personal testimonies from missionaries, video, drama, and song, the boards introduced God's work



**EXPERIENCING GOD** through Missions, a joint presentation of both mission boards was a spiritual highlight of the convention. Said Henry Blackaby, "God is touching hearts of Southern Baptists. He calls us to work with him." — Photo by Wm. Fletcher Allen

among Southern Baptists through missions.

A call for support was issued by HMB President Larry Lewis. There has never been an obstacle that can't be overcome by prayer and sacrifice, he said. "We'll never out give our Lord. There's only one place on earth where you can invest and have eternal dividends — the kingdom cause."

FMB President Jerry Rankin asked, "As we're confronted with needs of a lost

world, why should you be blessed to know him" while others in the world may never hear? "The needs of the lost world continue to call."

Citing the slaughter of lives in Rwanda, government corruption and warfare, Rankin said missionaries are risking their lives to carry out their responsibilities. Their work is made possible "because you too have been responsible as called people with the resources." □



**ENJOYING THE** convention together were James Robertson, pastor of Sharon Church, Knoxville, and his daughter, Debbie Graf, a member of Ball Camp Church, Knoxville.

## FMB president says vote to refuse CBF funds shouldn't hurt missions

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin expressed gratitude June 21 "for the faithful support of many churches" that gave money to the Southern Baptist missions agency "for whatever reason" through the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

But he said the vote by Southern Baptist Convention messengers meeting June 14-16 in Orlando, Fla., directing convention agencies to refuse funds channeled through the CBF is "appropriate in defining and clarifying procedures" for supporting SBC causes.

"We support the autonomy of each local church and its freedom under the Lordship of Christ to follow God's leadership in missions support,"

Rankin said in a statement released to Baptist Press.

"We are confident each church will continue to be obedient to God in the matter of supporting the Home and Foreign Mission boards through the Cooperative Program or designated gifts. I trust that no individual or church will withdraw support from more than 4,000 foreign missionaries representing Southern Baptists and serving our Lord Jesus Christ around the world because they may disagree with me or other SBC leadership." The FMB stopped accepting CBF gifts June 17.

Convention messengers in Orlando passed a motion directing SBC agencies to refuse funds from the CBF, an organization of Southern Baptist moderates who oppose the current SBC leadership.

The FMB receives far more money channeled through the CBF than any other SBC agency. Fellowship-channeled gifts to the board totaled more than \$1.6 million last year. More than \$500,000 has come through the CBF this year to the FMB.

Rankin mailed a letter June 20 to missionaries overseas to reassure them. He urged them not to "react prematurely to this action nor to presume there will be negative ramifications financially."

In an interview after the statement Rankin appealed to Southern Baptists to keep the real priorities in perspective.

"What it's all about is the work of the missionaries," he said, noting personal or organizational squabbles shouldn't "sabotage" their crucial ministries. □

### Tennessee volunteers minister in Albania

Eight Tennessee Baptists, led by Cameron Byler, Brotherhood director for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, are in Tirana, Albania.

The volunteers arrived in Albania June 20. They will be staying from three to six weeks.

The team is building base camps for about 400 students who will be doing evangelistic work in Albania this summer.

The work is in response to a request for volunteers from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Volunteers include John and Virginia Cole, Huntingdon; Ed Simpson, Trezevant; Dick Staggs, Jackson; Tommy Nevills, Atwood; Carl Lord, Lenoir City; and Omer Painter, director of missions, Tennessee Valley Association. □

# Permit problems imperil Baptist work in Zambia

By Craig Bird  
For Baptist Press

LUSAKA, Zambia — Southern Baptist mission work in Zambia faces serious disruption or even suspension following aggressive action by Zambia Baptist convention leaders to have missionaries' work permits denied.

After months of appeals and negotiations, a decision by the Zambia immigration office June 17 not to renew work permits for missionaries Joe and Gloria Turman and Lonnie and Fran Turner led the Baptist Mission of Zambia to file a legal appeal June 22. The Turmans are from Tyler, Texas, and Brownsville, Tenn., respectively. The Turners are

from Harlan, Ky.

The Zambian government may allow missionaries with expired work permits to remain in the country during the appeals process. However, the government has yet to make this ruling, said area mission officials.

Organized in 1959, the Baptist Mission of Zambia, the official organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Zambia, includes 45 Southern Baptist workers. They relate to the Baptist Convention of Zambia, formed in 1974.

The central issue in the dispute is the convention's request to approve all renewals of work permits for Southern Baptist missionaries, although the mission is a separate legal

entity registered with the Zambian government. Unlike most other African countries where Southern Baptist missionaries work, the Zambia mission has for years sought convention approval for any new missionaries assigned to Zambia. But renewal of permits for established missionaries has never been a part of the working agreement with Zambian Baptists.

The conflict has caused serious breaches in the Baptist Convention of Zambia. In protest of the elected leaders' actions, many churches have announced plans to withdraw from the convention and have suspended financial support.

"I continue to grieve over this break in relationships at a time

when Baptist work is moving forward in Zambia in significant ways and after a history that had made Zambia a model for missionary-convention relationships," said John Faulkner, who directs FMB work in Eastern and Southern Africa.

A crusade in Livingstone, Zambia, where the Turmans work, last year resulted in 950 people becoming Christians. In Zambia's Cooperbelt area, 320 people accepted Christ in a May evangelistic effort. Also in May, a team of five workers from Haywood Association worked with Linda Baptist Mission in Livingstone, which is attempting to start two missions.

Faulkner said the problem "is not in the best interest of anyone." □

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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## NAC draws approximately 14,000 teens to Birmingham

By Roy Jennings  
For Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Almost 14,000 Southern Baptist teenage girls and their leaders filled the coliseum at Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center for four days of experiences in contemporary Christian missions.

The occasion was the fifth National Acteens Convention, held every five years under the auspices of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Acteens is the missions organization in Southern Baptist churches for girls in grades 7-12.

Program planners drew on pageantry, missionary commissioning and testimonies, an Acteens birthday party, and 37

conferences on topics of interest to teenagers to communicate the Christian message.

To show their concern for others, the girls brought 5,000 stuffed teddy bears and 7,000 pairs of canvas shoes for their missionaries to give to needy children where they work.

Texas Acteens led states in attendance with 1,957, followed by South Carolina, 1,446; Tennessee, 1,181; and Alabama, 1,070.

The teenagers opened the convention in downtown Birmingham by learning a new song, "Heart of the Journey," sung by Michele Wagner, a contemporary Christian singer from Cleveland, Ohio. The song served as the theme of the convention.

## New writers enlisted for summer quarter

Two current Tennessee Baptist pastors join a recently retired minister as Sunday School lesson writers for the summer quarter.

Clay Frazier, who retired earlier this month as pastor of Alpha Church, Morristown, will write the Life and Work Series.

Writing the Bible Book and Convention Uniform series, respectively, are Carl Scarlett of LaVergne and Randall Cummings of Ripley.

Frazier, a native of Blaine, retired June 5 after serving churches in Tennessee, Oklahoma, Texas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina.

He holds degrees from Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

He has been active in all levels of denominational work. He is a former president of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio and has served on the

executive board of three state conventions — Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. He also has served on the SBC Foreign Mission Board and the SBC Committee on Boards.

He and his wife, Pearl, have three grown children.

Scarlett has been pastor of Miracle Church in LaVergne since 1973.

The Cookeville native surrendered to preach at the age of 19 and has been preaching for 32 years.

Other Tennessee pastorates include Falls City Church, McMinnville; Wilhite Church, Cookeville; and Southside Church, Lebanon.

He attended Tennessee Tech University, Cookeville, and Belmont University, Nashville.

He served as president of the Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference in 1993 and has served on the TBC Credentials Committee and Committee on Boards.

A procession of flags of 126 countries where Southern Baptist missionaries live and work led to a challenge for the girls to commit themselves to take the Christian message to others.

Testimonies of missionaries ranged from the difficulties of sharing the Christian faith with Navajo Indians in New Mexico to reaching out to apartment complexes and mobile home parks in Jackson, Miss., through Vacation Bible Schools, tutoring, and cooking classes.

At the closing session the girls witnessed the commissioning of Lori Fitzsimons of Lanette, Ala., as a new home missionary, and Sharon Williams of Charlotte, N.C., as

a new foreign missionary. Fitzsimons will work in Charleston, S.C. while Williams will serve in Taiwan.

Southern Baptists have about 7,000 missionaries serving in the United States and 126 foreign countries.

In a series of specialized conferences, the teenagers were reminded of True Love Waits, a Southern Baptist-sponsored program which encourages sexual abstinence until marriage.

Other conferences dealt with issues such as race relations, homosexuality, gangs, dating, AIDS, and more.

NAC leaders said 600 girls made commitments to mission service and another 900 asked for special counseling. □

## Gambling still live issue in Memphis

MEMPHIS — The Shelby County Election Commission voted June 21 not to allow a gambling referendum on the Aug. 4 local primary ballot. State election commissioner Will Burns told the commission their previous decision to allow a referendum would be illegal.

A successful referendum would have opened the door to gambling which earlier this year had received a negative vote by the state General Assembly.

Earlier the same day in a meeting here Baptist activist Ed McAteer and others met to consider the Memphis referendum attempt and another move by Sen. Steve Cohen to bypass the General Assembly.

Sens. Curtis Person and Tom Leatherwood told the group that gambling interests would likely persist. □

# FMB prepares for 1997 in Hong Kong HMB to study state CBF ties; affirms Lewis' leadership

By Robert O'Brien  
For Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees took actions on missionary property in Hong Kong, noted Jerry Rankin's first year as FMB president, and heard reports of worldwide advances in missions during their meeting prior to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando, Fla.

The board, meeting June 10-11 in Orlando, earmarked \$5 million for the purchase of apartments in Hong Kong for missionary housing. That amount will be more than repaid by the sale of a missionary residence, which cost the board \$35,586 in 1968, for its current market value of \$7.7 million.

Over the next two years, the Hong Kong mission will request trustee approval for a number of these types of transactions as the missionaries prepare for 1997 when China's government takes over Hong Kong, explained Faye Pearson, area director for missionary work in East Asia.

Hong Kong missionaries will not leave or scale back, as some had feared, but shift resources from ownership of land and housing mainly to ownership of apartments and office space, Pearson said. That will save thousands of dollars because China says it will raise Hong Kong land taxes significantly. The shift also pre-empts any legal questions regarding rights of land ownership under China's rule.

"We don't have the resources to pay these taxes," Pearson said. "So we felt this was the time to develop a strategy for moving our people into apartments. China isn't interested in our apartments; they're interested in land. In China, the source of your wealth is your land.

"If for some reason after 1997 we're asked to give up our property, we wouldn't have funds to house all our missionaries," she said. "So by selling the land and property now and relocating our missionaries, we're assuring that our people will be in place in 1997 and beyond. Once we have this behind us, we'll focus on the reason we came to Hong Kong — evangelism, planting

churches, and ministering to people."

Currently about 58 Southern Baptist missionaries work with 45,000 Hong Kong Baptists in 115 churches and chapels. Hong Kong Baptists have a goal of expanding to 200 churches with 100,000 believers by 2000.

Trustees also heard reports from Rankin and other FMB administrators on advances in worldwide missions.

"The Gospel isn't just a message — it's something that's happening" in a big way around the world, said Rankin, who just returned from his first overseas trip since becoming FMB president. He and his wife, Bobbye, spent three weeks traveling across the African continent.

In a report looking ahead to mission personnel composition in the 21st century, Thurmon Bryant, vice president for mission personnel, predicted the career missionary will continue to be the stack-plate around which foreign missions outreach will be built beyond the year 2000.

But he believes assignments in short-term ministry will "increase appreciably." □

## HMB to study state CBF ties; affirms Lewis' leadership

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — The executive committee of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board narrowly OK'd a study of how the HMB should cooperate with "state conventions that channel designated funds to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and other non-SBC entities."

The motion to conduct the study was made by Greg Martin of Long Beach, Miss., near the conclusion of the June 13 executive committee meeting and was a surprise to most committee members as well as HMB President Larry Lewis.

"I was not aware this action was coming and did not have any part in initiating it," Lewis told Baptist Press. "It is apparently an effort to study our relationship with state conventions, and I do not anticipate any negative repercussions from such a study."

Anticipating, however, that state conventions might interpret the study as a threat to HMB funding, Lewis told Baptist Press, "I do not anticipate any change in our relationship with the states. We have enjoyed a good and productive relationship for many years with the state conventions and expect that will continue."

Martin told the executive committee the study would deal only with those states that have decided to be "brokerage firms" for the CBF, a group of moderate Southern Baptists. "We need to send a message to those conventions — don't be uncooperative."

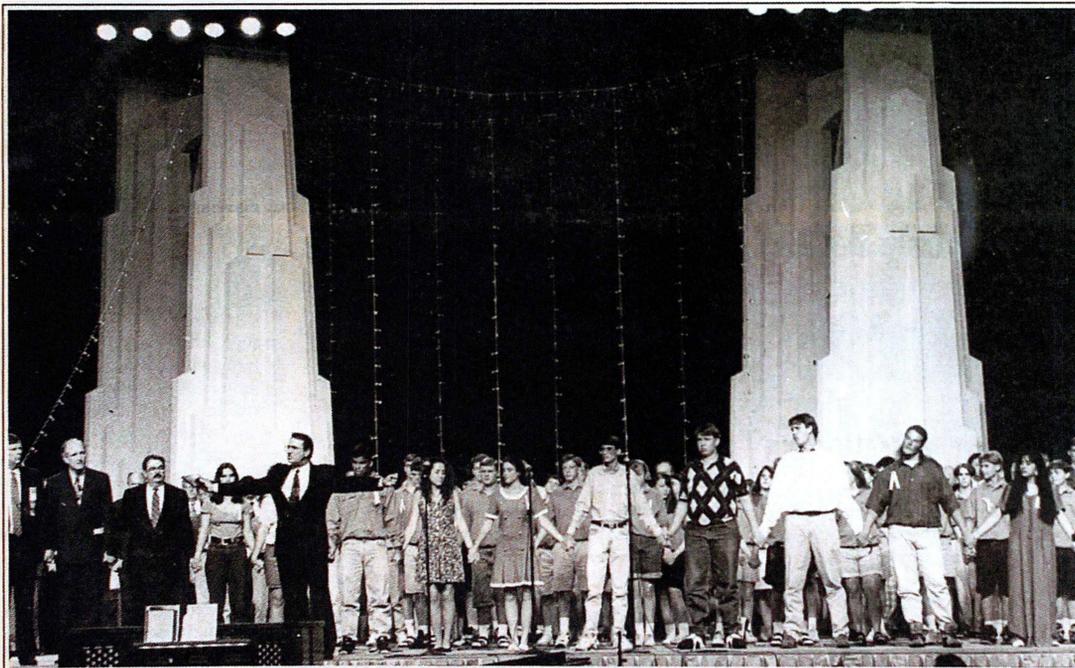
"I think we need to re-think how we do missions in the states that refuse to be loyal to Southern Baptists," he said. "Should we be in partnership with them in the present way?"

Martin declined to identify specific state conventions which would be targeted, saying his intention was to study any convention which receives gifts designated for the CBF.

The motion, approved by a 12-9 vote, directs the chairman of the HMB, Bob Curtis of Missouri, to appoint "a special study committee to make a study and bring a report with recommendations" with no additional guidelines as to committee composition or reporting deadline. The executive committee spent most of its meeting discussing a response to a document on Roman Catholic/evangelical relationships endorsed by Larry Lewis, HMB president.

Members passed a resolution affirming the agency's commitment to evangelization which was seen by many as affirmation of Lewis' involvement. They rejected a call by one board member for Lewis to withdraw his support of the document.

In other business, the committee approved 15 new home missionaries and three staff changes, including election of Tennessee native Lura Sheppard as director of employment services for the agency. □



YOUTH FROM Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, front row, joined hundreds of other youth and Baptist Sunday School Board President James T. Draper Jr. and staff during the board's "Building Bridges for a Changing World" report to SBC messengers. The youth were part of a True Love Waits emphasis. — Photo by Van Payne

## BSSB bridge builders meet challenges of future

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Building bridges that span relationships, meet human needs, and serve the needs of churches are necessary to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

As we "long to be like Jesus, we will become bridge builders and build bridges," said drama worship consultant Ragan Courtney, who narrated the Baptist Sunday School Board's annual report

to the Southern Baptist Convention June 14.

"Building Bridges for a Changing World" was the focus of the multi-media presentation that mixed drama, video, personal testimonies, and featured recording artists Cynthia Clawson of First Church, Nashville, Amy Roth, Friends IV, and Steve Gatlin of Brentwood Church, Brentwood.

But the highlight of the presentation came when 1,000 teens from seven states

flooded the stage to demonstrate their commitment to True Love Waits, a campaign that encourages teens to abstain from sex until marriage. The cheering group of teens recited the True Love Waits pledge while an ensemble from First Church of Barlow, Fla., sang the True Love Waits theme song.

Earlier in the day, 102,000 True Love Waits commitment cards signed by teens across the nation were posted outside the Orange County Con-  
vention/Civic Center, attracting local and national news coverage. These cards will be exhibited again in Washington, D.C., July 29 during a national, interdenominational rally.

During the report, a video clip reviewed the media coverage of the campaign and response of teens, which "delighted, thrilled, and surprised" the Sunday School Board, said Courtney, who cited it as an example of "helping build bridges to young persons." □

# Messengers approve 12 resolutions, including ones on document, trustees

By Tom Strode  
For Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Most discussed of the 12 resolutions adopted by messengers to the 1994 Southern Baptist Convention were two dealing with relationships with Roman Catholics and the SBC trustee system.

One called for cooperation with Roman Catholics in addressing moral concerns while reasserting Southern Baptists' commitment to share the Gospel "with all people everywhere." The other affirmed the SBC trustee system while asking trustees and administrators of agencies to govern according to biblical principles.

Messengers also approved resolutions:

- favoring the deletion of the category of religion from proposed federal guidelines on harassment in the work place;
- supporting efforts to reform health care in the United States but opposing any plan which includes such aspects as abortion and rationing of medical care;
- condemning the Clinton administration's effort to introduce RU-486, the French abortion pill, into this country and

urging support for a boycott of companies responsible for production of the drug;

- commending the 1993 Theological Study Committee report to the convention's agencies and institutions;

- opposing experimental educational programs, such as Outcome-based Education, which potentially undermine biblical values and "traditional standards of excellence";

- commending the veterans of World War II on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of D-Day and remembering God sovereignly rules over all countries;

- affirming teenagers who have made commitments to remain sexually abstinent until marriage as part of the True Love Waits campaign;

- calling for Southern Baptists to recommit themselves to meet the needs of the hungry;
- encouraging Christians to minister to those with AIDS;

- expressing appreciation to the host city, Orlando, and Southern Baptists helping with the meeting.

Only the resolution on health care reform passed by less than an overwhelming margin. Messengers still approved it comfortably.

The resolution on religious harassment in the work place even prompted a letter from President Bill Clinton before it was acted on by messengers.

On June 15, Clinton, a member of a Southern Baptist church, sent by facsimile a letter to H. Edwin Young, SBC president, and Richard Land, executive director of the Christian Life Commission, expressing his willingness to work with the CLC and other organizations on the proposed regulations by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The president stopped short of making a commitment to remove religion from the guidelines. Clinton reiterated his support for religious liberty and said he was confident a new EEOC chairman, upon taking office, would review public comments and work to issue rules which are consistent with the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

RFRA, which Clinton signed last year, restored a long-held standard on free exercise of religion cases, thereby providing more protection for religious liberty.

The CLC and other organi-

zations have expressed concerns the guidelines could have a "chilling effect" on religious expression in the work place. The harassment guidelines, which also cover race, color, gender, national origin, age and disability, could result in harassment charges against employees or employers for witnessing to fellow workers or subordinates, or it threatens to prompt employers to stifle all religious expression to prevent lawsuits, the CLC and others have warned.

CLC staff expressed appreciation for the letter from the president but said it did not satisfy their concerns. The letter from the president was not read from the platform before or after the vote.

Although there was concern there might not be a quorum for the final resolutions session on June 16, there were enough messengers in attendance to conduct business.

The resolution on "Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics" provided the most debate. It affirms that justification is based on "grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone." It also encourages the interfaith witness department of the Home Mission Board to contin-

ue Southern Baptist-Roman Catholic conversations.

Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, and Larry Lewis, president of the SBC Home Mission Board, joined evangelical and Roman Catholic leaders earlier this year in signing a document, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium." It has been widely debated, especially because of concerns the document may undercut missions and evangelism.

The trustees' March firing of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Russell H. Dilday Jr. prompted the resolution on trustees and administrators.

The resolution expresses gratitude to trustees and administrators of SBC agencies and institutions. It also asks them to govern with diligence, to demonstrate love and service in their work, and to use biblical wisdom in facing "potentially divisive issues." It encourages them to manifest wisdom which, according to James 3:17, is "pure, peaceable, reasonable, conciliatory, and filled with compassion and kind actions." □

## Daily prayer requests for Chile/Tennessee Partnership



June-30 — A new 24-week Bible study group in Vitacura had 40 ladies present.

- July-
- 1 — Terry Sharp begins serving as director of partnership missions today.
  - 2 — Our missionaries are preparing to travel to Santiago for a semi-annual mission meeting, July 7-13.
  - 3 — Wanda Dobbins is leading a discipleship group with five new Christians.
  - 4 — Mary Jo Cooke is trying to involve Celia, who is not a Christian, in a Bible study on Thursday mornings.
  - 5 — Remember the missionaries with responsibility during the mission meeting.
  - 6 — Traveling mercies for the missionaries going to Santiago today.

## Annuity report addresses abortion issue

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — To the best of its ability, the nation's second-largest church pension board is investing in stocks which are morally and ethically accepted by Southern Baptists, according to the leader of the Dallas-based board.

Paul W. Powell, president of the SBC Annuity Board, reiterated in his report to the Southern Baptist Convention the board does not invest in alcohol, tobacco, gambling, pornography, or abortion.

In response to a motion at the 1993 Houston convention to study the ramifications of the board owning stock in companies whose products or services are generally viewed as being incompatible with the moral and ethical posture of Southern Baptists, Powell said the board is attempting to find an "abortion free" fund for investing purposes.

In a survey of more than 2,000 annuitants, Powell said 128 responded they would be interested in investing their money in such a fund, with only 22 re-

sponding they would invest "all their money" in such a fund. He said that represents 1 percent of all annuitants. He said he believes the other 99 percent are "satisfied with our policies and practices."

"As fiduciaries (one who manages another person's money) we cannot impose our social standards on another if it adversely affects their earnings. We can offer alternative funds and we are monitoring some outside funds. If after a period they prove effective, we will offer such a fund on a voluntary basis," Powell said.

Powell said he consulted with Richard Land, director of the SBC Christian Life Commission, about investment policies. Both agreed it was the Annuity Board trustees' duty. "We cannot and will not give up that responsibility," Powell said.

"I didn't take this job to play Mickey Mouse games. Persons on our staff are not Goofy. We're not going to let Goofy and his friends invest your money.

"Your money will be managed professionally, legally, responsibly, and morally as long as I am there," he said. □

## Sufferers yet comforters

— Continued from page 11  
was powerless to help himself (v. 9). If a person can learn early in life his weaknesses, he is better fitted for life. Paul was in such a trial when it became apparent he could not take care of himself. It was then, he put everything in God's hands. He learned God would even raise the dead (v. 9).

**Key to helping those who suffer — v. 11**

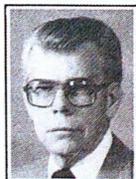
Paul in verse 10 says God has (past), God does (present), and God will (future) deliver, but the sentence is not closed with a period. There is a colon. He indicates we can help. He says, "You also helping together by prayer." Is it possible to get on the inside of a person's mind and spirit? I believe it is by prayer. Can you reach across barriers of space, culture, and language? I believe verse 11 says we can. Paul is clearly saying you can help by prayer. Often people say they have felt our prayers. Do they really mean that, or is it just a figure of speech?

In my own life, I have been strangely awakened in the middle of the night with an anxiety to pray for a specific person. Later, I have found out that a deliverance took place in his/her life at the time of prayer. How important it is to intercede for those all around us. □

## West Tennessee director of missions to retire

JACKSON — Herbert R. Higdon, director of missions for Madison-Chester and Crockett County Associations since 1982, will retire June 30.

Born in Arkansas, Higdon moved to Tennessee at the age of 7. He is a graduate of Union University, Jackson, and holds two degrees, including a doctor



HIGDON

of ministry, from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

He has served the following Tennessee churches as pastor:

Allen Church, Brownsville; First Church, Celina; Scenic Hills Church, Memphis; First Church, Dyer; and Lockeland Church, Nashville.

Higdon has been active at all levels of associational and state convention work. He is a former trustee of Union University and past member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention

Executive Board. He served as first vice president of the TBC from 1987-88.

Higdon and his wife, Mary Lou, have three daughters: Anita, Nancy, and Susan.

In retirement Higdon will serve Cross Roads Church, Bells, as pastor. He and his wife will continue to live in Jackson. □

# Why do Americans have religious liberty?

O. K. and Marjorie Armstrong, in their little book, *Baptists Who Shaped a Nation*, explain some of the intricate and dedicated weavings in the making of the United States.

Looking to the celebration of the birth of the Declaration of Independence next week, there is much evidence to support the reasons for thanking God for that document.

It plays a vital role in not only the founding of a nation, but it establishes for the world perhaps the best example of the stated meaning of freedom.

And, along with the national Constitution, it provides a sound basis for the continuance of the American republic.

But as the 218th observance of Independence Day nears, all is not well. Like churches and families, as a nation grows larger numerically, the potential for problems increases. People are not always in agreement, and even though the goal may be acceptable to most, the route taken to achieve that goal is not the same.

The Armstrongs wrote that James Madison was elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention in 1776 — at the age of 25. He was the youngest delegate. Madison shocked the aristocratic gentlemen of the establishment by proposing a change in the Declaration of Rights. He wanted to substitute "relig-

ious liberty" for "toleration." He then lectured them on the difference between toleration and liberty.

He explained that toleration presumed a favored church or religious organization, established by governmental recognition and deriving some of its support from the public treasury, while permitting others to exist in an inferior status.

Religious liberty, Madison pointed out, means freedom of conscience and worship without either governmental interference or support. The gentlemen of the "establishment" had no answer.

The amendment passed, and it just happened to be the Baptist position on the subject.

There should be no surprise that the establishment had not seen it that way before. But why should it have? When the powers-that-be are not considerate, they tend to think they are always right.

The proposed Constitution for the new nation which was suffering birth pangs was insufficient to John Leland and other Virginia Baptists. They said so. Leland even considered running against his friend Madison, to strike a decisive blow for religious freedom. Madison eventually became a delegate for Virginia in ratifying the Constitution.

Where is the nation now? How do citizens of the United States of America act

and react to the proposition of a new democratic government "of the people, by the people, and for the people"?

J. B. McMasters wrote that the history of American democracy "is a gradual realization, too slow for some and too rapid for others, of the implications of the Declaration of Independence."

The American Revolution was a rebellion against legally established authority. The Declaration of Independence was a statement of reasons for the rebellion by reasonable men.

For Baptists in particular, there is cause to recommit to the zeal of our forefathers who had a hand in forming the nation and putting together an orderly republic with safeguards for all the freedoms ordained by God.

There is also cause to recognize with honor and dignity July 4, Independence Day, as a time of somber recollection as well as joy and celebration.

We have made the celebration the primary object of attention, reflecting all too little on the reasons and sacrifices of the struggle that made it possible. There is a need for re-learning, and time is not friendly in this instance.

Rather than ridiculing leaders and government, rather than whining about differences, recognition of blessings should be paramount. We have no less reason to defend freedoms now than did those who were on the original front lines. □

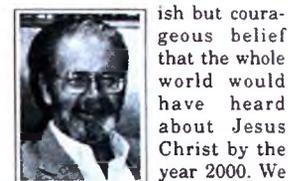
■ one word more  
By Wm. Fletcher Allen  
editor

## Spiritual wake-up

Spiritual awakening for America has been forecast for many years.

It has been admitted also that if Southern Baptists want to be in that great event, we had better stop playing the role of the Lone Ranger.

When we launched Bold Mission Thrust (hopefully with the strength and blessing of God's Holy Spirit), we took an audacious view that we might even be able to do it by ourselves. There was the foolish but courageous belief that the whole world would have heard about Jesus Christ by the year 2000. We would tell everybody.



ALLEN

But a not-so-funny thing happened along the way. Baptists drifted apart, leadership changed. Cooperative Program giving did not increase as it should. We turned inward.

So the Berlin Wall came down, but other things continued to eat away at unity and cooperation. Baptists began to falter.

Even so, God still reigns. He wanted churches to pray for Albania's closed borders to open and for this most atheistic nation in the world to have revival and sense the positive possibilities.

The Foreign Mission Board asked churches to pray for certain countries. My church chose Albania as the subject of our concerted prayer for some unknown reason (could it be that God spoke?).

We began to pray for Albania — the people, the government, physical and spiritual conditions.

The rest of the story is becoming evident. The borders are open. People want to hear the Gospel. There is freedom of expression. Needs are great, perhaps moreso than any other place.

And now — some Tennessee Baptists, including one of ours, are joining with others to go to help Albania.

My, how God blesses! This group, bathed in prayer, is joining God where he is working in Albania. So Bold Mission Thrust moves on through the power of God in answered prayer — and a willingness to go. Albania will know! ✠

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

## ■ just for today

By Fred Wood  
pastor emeritus  
Eudora Church, Memphis

### Start with a smile

A man traveling in a balloon yelled down to a farmer bailing hay, "You there, feller, where am I?"

The farmer looked up and shouted, "You're right up there in that little basket."

### Take this thought

Where we are now is not as important as in which direction we are headed. If we do not know where we are going, it doesn't matter which path we choose at the crossroad. Jeremy Taylor said, "The best theology is rather a divine life than a divine knowledge." Live for something! Have a purpose!

### Memorize this Scripture

"That I may know him and the power of his resurrection" (Philippians 3:10).

### Pray this prayer

Lord, rule my willful heart and guide my wayward feet. I want life's latter part to have sweet memories. □

# Helping children handle death

## ■ families matter

By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

A reader asks that this column address the issue of death and grief. We will try to discuss and answer some compelling questions.

How do children handle death? What are they capable of understanding? What can adults do to help children deal more effectively with death?

This time I will try to deal with what makes children able to deal cognitively and affectively with death.

And then next time we will see how adults can help children face death, especially the death of a loved one.

Age is primary in dealing with children and death. Preschool children are very concrete in their understanding. They are not yet able to cope with the abstractness of death's finality.

Watching television, playing games, and movies teaches them that people who get killed don't stay dead. They come back to life and the game continues. Often times older people try to explain death as "sleeping" and the child simply thinks their loved one will wake up. On the other hand older children may be afraid to

go to sleep because they are afraid they might not wake up.

In the first few years of school (first to third or fourth) the child may begin to understand death as meaning the end, but they still do not universalize it. They don't see it as inevitable and certainly don't see themselves as ever dying. Even though the finality of death is recognized, it is still considered remote or removed from the child and his or her family.

By the time a child reaches fifth or sixth grade, children begin to see death as universal; it happens to everyone eventually. Personally, I know I will die some time. This new understanding of death will lead to many difficult questions. The questions should be handled honestly and sensitively.

Adults need to be reminded of what the Apostle Paul said about death in I Corinthians 15, "Death is a mystery."

I remember something that

one of my seminary professors said about questions from the class. "There are two kinds of questions," he said. "Questions you answer and questions you admire. That certainly is a nice question," he said.

In answering questions about death, we need to be honest enough to admit the limit of our knowledge and not feel obligated to bluff our way through.

Avoiding, evading, or simply dismissing the child's questions about death can heighten the anxiety, fear, or trauma of death. In severe cases it may lead to problems later.

A woman suffered from claustrophobia and agoraphobia. Analysis determined the source was the experience of watching the coffin closed on her grandfather and seeing it buried without having her questions answered about the experience.

Questions about death must be answered honestly, openly, with awareness of the child's level of understanding. □

Dr. Barkley welcomes questions for discussion here on this page. — Editor



BARKLEY

# Ed Young, Bobby Boyles, James Sullivan address messengers

By Connie Davis  
*Baptist and Reflector*

ORLANDO — Southern Baptist Convention President Ed Young said the United States is great, just as the Aramaean army officer Naaman was great in Old Testament times. And just as Naaman was sick, so is America, he declared.

Young also addressed the denominational struggle during his presidential message to the convention, stating, "We've gone through theological reform and we're ready for spiritual reform."

Southern Baptists need to help save America, said Young, who is completing his second term as president. The depth of America's sickness can be measured by Supreme Court decisions legalizing abortion and banning prayer in public schools and by the increasing numbers of births out of wedlock.

Young, who is pastor of Second Church, Houston, added that every minute and a half an abortion is performed in the U. S. and every minute a teenager attempts suicide. Violence is another symptom of America's sickness, he continued, noting the U.S. is the "most dangerous place to travel in the world."

Just as Naaman was commanded to dip himself in the Jordan River to cure his leprosy, America must cleanse itself. Americans are trying politics, psychology, social action like education, and cults, he detailed.

One result of the desperation in America can be seen in the number of ministers — 18,000 of 62,000 ordained

Southern Baptist ministers — who left their work last year, reported Young.

Desperation is often needed for revival, he said.

He turned to the course of the denomination.

"Over 14 years ago the Southern Baptist Convention came to see by and large that we had a theological cancer," he said.

Young said he knew of Southern Baptist professors who "did not believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ."

"We have not been in some kind of preacher fight," he said, but a "battle over the Bible." The messengers applauded.

Young cited actions taken by the convention to affirm the Peace Committee report and the Baptist Faith and Message.

"We have decided the Bible is the infallible, authoritative, inerrant Word of God." The statement received a standing ovation.

Southern Baptists should abandon the terms "moderate" and "fundamentalist," said Young. A fundamentalist is described as bigoted, like Ayatollah Khomeini. A moderate is thought to be lukewarm, he added.

Southern Baptists should take stands like Mother Theresa when she spoke against abortion while attending a meeting this year with other religious leaders and President Clinton, said Young.

Concerning the president, he asked, "Could it be we have elected a man who is simply a reflection of America at this time in history?"

He asked Southern Baptists to respond to the challenges

around the world as the Foreign Mission Board has logged record baptisms and volunteers last year.

### Boyles speaks

Christians "are losing America" and much of the fault lies with "passive preachers," said Bobby Boyles during the convention sermon.

Preachers should be "ambassadors of God's will rather than good will" although they have been "relegated to the corners of society," said Boyles, who is pastor of Eagle Heights Church, Oklahoma City.

He cautioned Christians to be prepared for accusations that they are trying to force morality, lifestyle, or religion on others. Instead, immorality is being forced on Christians, he declared.

Barriers to preachers include the belief one can't preach on sin in today's society, people won't come if I really preach, and "I won't get elected," said Boyles.

He noted the prophet Elijah, John the Baptist, the Apostle Paul, Martin Luther, Paul Bunyan, and even Jesus was hated by men because they preached the Gospel.

### Sullivan speaks

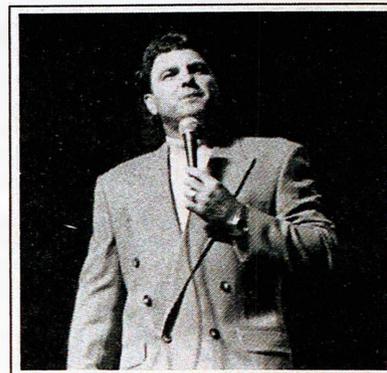
James Sullivan of Nashville, retired president, Baptist Sunday School Board, responded to the welcome to the convention.

He said he has been a Southern Baptist preacher for 68 years and is happy to support the Cooperative Program because he is obligated to the denomination.

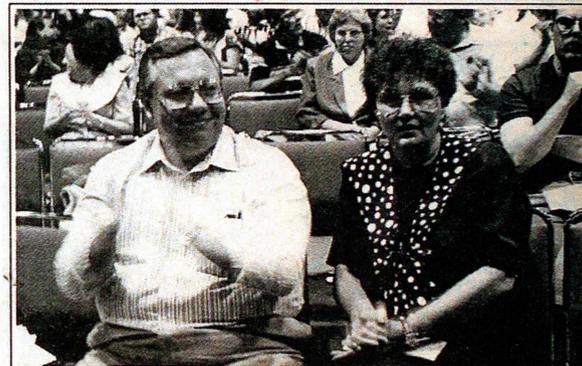
The convention is a democracy, he noted, which is made up of individuals who "don't have to be twins to be brothers." □



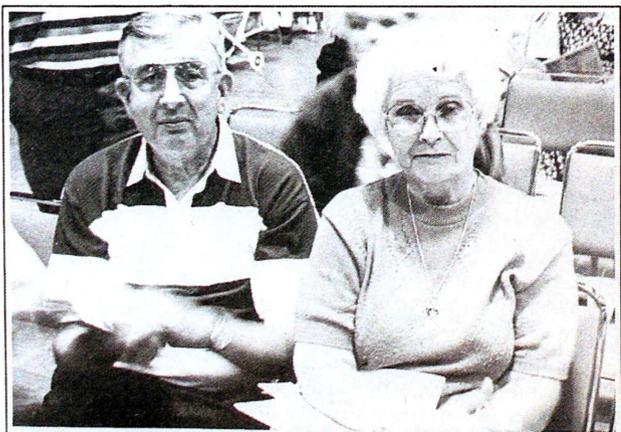
**TERRY BRADSHAW**, left, pastor, Memorial Church, Maryville, with **William Haynes**, member of Zion Hill Church, Sevierville.



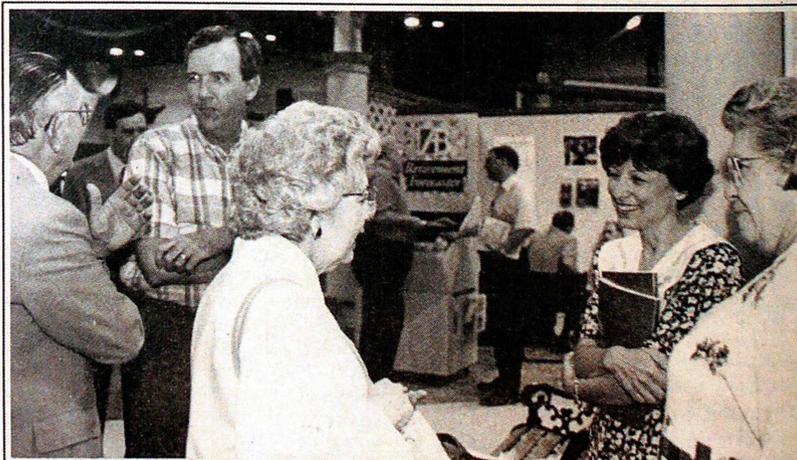
**STEVE GATLIN**, performing artist who is a member of Brentwood Church located in a Nashville suburb, sings and gave his testimony during the report of the Baptist Sunday School Board. Gatlin told the crowd how God had freed him from addictions to drugs and led him to a solo singing career.



**PASTOR JACKIE KAY** of Bartlett Church, Bartlett, applauds a convention action as his wife looks on.



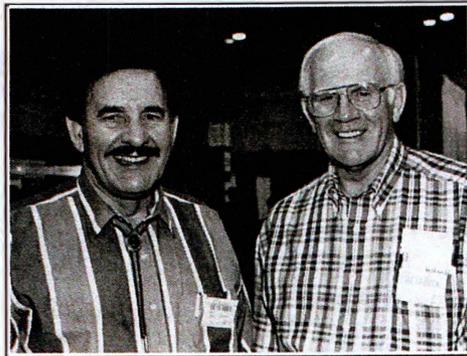
**PASTOR AND MRS. Ronell Owensby** of First Church, Rogersville, were among approximately 1,500 messengers from Tennessee.



**JUD HAYS**, second from left, pastor, First Church, Old Hickory, visits with Gerald McNeely of Louisville, Ky., as June McNeely, center, of Louisville, visits with Cookie Hays, second from right, of Old Hickory, and Laverne Hunt, member, Two Rivers Church, Nashville.



**JOHN WALLACE**, a layman from First Church, Morristown, led a devotion during the organizational meeting of the SBC Executive Committee on June 15.



**DIRECTORS OF MISSIONS** Raymond Atwood, left, Loudoun County Association, and Roy Davis, Cumberland Plateau Association visited during the SBC.

## TEENS FROM NASHVILLE

Lucy Gama and Rob Ladd spoke to about 1,000 teens who attended a True Love Waits rally at the convention. They are from Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory.



**RON DAVIDSON**, left, pastor, First Church, Grand Junction, Charlotte, left of center, and Jeanenne Davidson, and an animal character from the Sunday School exhibit.



**CHRIS AND CHRISIE WARD**, pastor of Ninth Street Church, Erwin, and wife.

## Tennesseans respond

■ I feel that we are still going in the same direction. However, with the election of Jim Henry I feel that there may be a more inclusive spirit. I definitely feel there is a slow movement toward the center taking place. — **Jerry D. Oakley, pastor, Springfield Church, Springfield**

■ My impression was from one day's attendance, Tuesday, June 14. Union University's display booth was well attended and the Union dinner was well-attended, warm and enthusiastic. The election of a president not officially endorsed was great! May this be the beginning of the return to a former traditional pattern. — **Hyran E. Barefoot, president, Union University, Jackson**

■ I thought Ed Young did a fair and gracious job in moderating. Considering the effort put in to getting Wolfe elected, I was surprised when such a majority elected Henry. I'm grateful to have someone serve in this position whose church is a strong supporter of the CP. Unfortunately this is the exception rather than the rule for our largest churches. — **Gary A. Gerhardt, pastor, First Church, Church Hill**

■ The SBC of 1994 was like a spiritual Disneyland experience. Ed Young wielded a magic wand of kindness and firmness in moderating the meetings; the "He is Able" theme testimonies sprinkled the whole convention with the stardust of hope; our Sunday School Board will bridge us into God's Tomorrow Land; the prayer time for our country produced magic in my heart; the awesome accomplishments of our FMB and HMB reminded me that the SBC is not a Mickey Mouse outfit; and the sea of True Love Waits cards was not a Fantasy Land but a Treasure Island. — **Billie Friel, pastor, First Church, Mount Juliet**

■ Excellent convention. A strong spirit of harmony. I especially appreciated the fresh challenge for missions and soul winning. I think Dr. Ed Young did an excellent job as president and moderator. — **Don Long, pastor, Chamberlain Memorial Church, Chattanooga**

■ It is always good to see friends from across the country. I was glad that Jim Henry was elected to the presidency. I was frustrated at this misinterpretation and the lack of action to reprimand the trustees of Southwestern for their deplorable action. The mission reports were the highlight of the convention. Missions is what is the best about our convention, our strength. — **Chris Ward, pastor, Ninth Street Church, Erwin**

■ A great convention! Ed Young presided in a cordial and spirit-filled way. The emphasis on missions in the Pastors' Conference and convention was thrilling. The decision about upholding our Cooperative Program and traditional offerings and excluding CBF and other competing channels was long overdue. — **David B. Ray, pastor, First Church, Parsons**

■ I rejoice over the kinder and gentler spirit that prevailed at the convention this year at Orlando. There was not the tension in the sessions that has been there in the past several years. I also praise God for our new officers. I believe we have made a tremendous statement to the world. We as Southern Baptists are reaching out to all mankind everywhere with the Gospel of Christ. — **Billy Hammonds, pastor, First Church, Trenton**

■ I had a supervisor in my student job at Samford University who would remind me of this: "There is just enough good in the worst of us and just enough bad in the best of us that it does not behoove the rest of us to speak evil of any of us." That sums up my impressions of the SBC. — **Leighann McCoy, homemaker, Thompson Station Church, Thompson Station**

■ I really enjoyed the convention and was well pleased with the manner it was conducted. I am happy Jim Henry was elected as president. This will probably be my last convention. My prayer is the convention will move away from a few controlling our boards. — **Raymond Atwood, director of missions, Loudoun County Association**

■ Great. We seemed more focused this year concerning our main purpose, the Great Commission. — **Terry D. Bradshaw, pastor, Memorial Church, Maryville**

■ What a privilege to hear the theme testimonies. We were assured by those to whom we could relate that "Our God is Able." The report of new believers and new churches and many mission fields, along with the generous Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, along with the response at the missions invitation, brought joy to our hearts. — **David Cooper, retired U.S. Navy chaplain, First Church, Bolivar**

■ I was very impressed with the unity and good spirit of the convention. The moderator, Ed Young, was very courteous and considerate. The evening presentations by the FMB, HMB, and BSSB were all very creative and interesting. — **Philip Dougan, pastor, New Providence Church, Clarksville**

■ I felt there was an unusually sweet spirit throughout the convention. We continued to move in a strong, conservative direction. Dr. Young presided with grace and fairness. — **Hollie Miller, pastor, Sevier Heights Church, Knoxville**

■ It was a wonderful gathering of Southern Baptists with a great spirit permeating each session. Dr. Ed Young is to be commended for such a gracious spirit towards each messenger that spoke during the business sessions. — **Charles Pratt, director of missions, Haywood Association**

■ I really appreciated the spirit Dr. Ed Young expressed during the meeting. I hope and believe Dr. Jim Henry will continue with such a spirit. I also thought the commissioning service and HMB and FMB reports were highlights. — **Greg Long, pastor, Pleasant Grove Church, Maryville**

# Missionaries underscore WMU's role of support

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Christians who expose themselves to the needs and pains of people will find their lives left with not only scars, but tender, new growth given by God.

Baptist women serving in their hometowns and missionaries serving in the world's painful places repeated that message throughout the June 12-13 national annual meeting of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Love stretches as far as it can and "then flings it on over" like a person doing a cartwheel, said Barbara Joiner, a WMU writer and speaker from Columbiana, Ala., who delivered theme interpretations each session based on the meeting's theme, "Growing in Love."

A young woman expecting her ninth child and who lived in poverty-stricken conditions within sight of the steeple of Joiner's church couldn't be helped until she saw the church's people instead of its steeple, Joiner said.

"Missions is God's love calling forth our love," said Heather Barron, a Baptist woman active in missions efforts in Lexington, Ky. His love allows us to follow Christ's example of making friends with outcasts and feeding the hungry — from Appalachia in the United States to the starving masses of Somalia.

Home missionary Diane Lewis of Benton, Ark., said her ministry taught her a lesson in sacrifice when poverty-stricken people she worked with in Arkansas re-

sponded with gifts of their own when they learned about starvation in Somalia.

The women scrimped and saved to collect \$30.88 to contribute to Southern Baptist hunger relief.

That money, part of \$2 million Southern Baptists have used to combat hunger, has made a difference in Somalia, said Ken Perkins, strategy coordinator for work in Somalia.

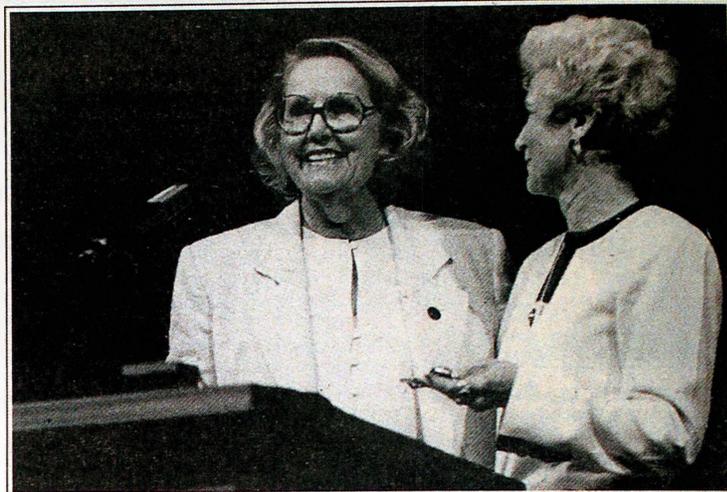
William Harrington, a medical missionary in Tanzania, reminded the WMU audience of the divine power that allows missionaries to endure the heartaches they encounter daily.

"Most of us recognize that we have faced difficulties which are greater than our human ability to overcome them, but repeatedly we have seen the faithfulness of God redeem many disastrous situations," Harrington said. "It's awesome to realize that the creator of the universe has intervened in your work."

Christians aren't visible in the world until they begin living out their faith in love, he said.

"If we don't take risks, our conformity will continue to camouflage us, and we Christians will remain invisible. We can shout what we believe at each other or from the mountaintop, but until we risk enough to be what we preach, the world will refuse to listen to the good news we claim to represent," Harrington said.

Heberto Becerra echoed Harrington, declaring, "If we decide to return to the Scripture and to love and to the lordship of the Holy Spirit, the impact that this



MAYOR PRO TEM Frankee Hellinger, left, of Orlando, a former Southern Baptist representative to Bangalore, India, welcomed Woman's Missionary Union Executive Director Dellana O'Brien by presenting her a key to the city and affirming the historic role of WMU. Orlando's city council declared the opening day of the WMU annual meeting "WMU Day." — Photo by Paul Brock

needy world would receive would move the very gates of hell.

"We are a people with the potential to set off a spiritual bomb stronger than those launched in World War II," said Becerra, a Spanish-speaking home missionary working in Plantation, Fla.

"The gunpowder is in the hands of men but the flames are in the hands of WMU. The order to detonate has been

given. What are we waiting for?"

During the annual meeting, the WMU re-elected its two national leaders.

Carolyn Miller of Huntsville, Ala., was re-elected national WMU president.

Martha Wennerberg of DeFuniak Springs, Fla., was re-elected national WMU recording secretary.

Both have served since 1991. □ — Robert O'Brien and Susan Doyle

## WMU board approves coeducational missions options

By Brenda Sanders  
For Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — A recommendation to provide coeducational missions options — including organizations and resources — for adults, youth, and children was adopted by the executive board of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union during their meeting June 11.

The recommendation, presented by Evelyn Blount, executive director of the South Carolina WMU, prompted some discussion and questions from members of the board before unanimous approval.

In response to a question concerning perceived competition with the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, Dellana O'Brien, WMU executive director, noted she had already made Brotherhood President James Williams aware of the proposed recommendation and said, "This is a day when options are in order. We're simply trying to provide more options for churches to get their people involved in missions."

Blount pointed out the Brotherhood Commission already provides missions education for women and girls, but emphasized, "We do not need

### Brotherhood president responds to WMU coeducational initiative

By Art Toalston  
For Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission President James Williams issued a two-page response to Woman's Missionary Union approval June 11 of coeducational missions organizations and resources for adults, youth, and children.

Apart from its preschool programs for boys, WMU traditionally has offered programs of missions education for women. The SBC Brotherhood Commission, which traditionally had responsibility for missions education of men, has added a coed dimension to its work in recent years.

Williams, in his June 13 statement, voiced surprise at the WMU action and hope for a continued cooperative relationship with WMU.

"I was not aware of the nature of the recommendation concerning coeducational missions education options presented to the WMU Executive Board yesterday (June 11). I was aware that

to move into coed missions organizations because of what the Brotherhood Commission or any other agency is doing. We need to do it because of the leadership of God and to meet the needs of WMU."

Names approved for the new coed organizations were Adults on Mission, Youth on Mission, and Children in Action.

O'Brien stressed WMU's primary focus still will be to provide quality missions edu-

the task force would be completing their work, reporting, and bringing recommendations to this Board meeting, but I was not aware of the specific details of the recommendation until I received a copy of the Baptist Press release.

"In spite of that reality, I would hasten to say we have had a very fine relationship with WMU in the arena of coeducational missions education options. I want to affirm our historic partnership with them in missions education and missions support. We are committed to working together to develop coeducational missions education strategies. Their action in this Board meeting is certainly in keeping with the commitment we both have to presenting viable missions education options to Southern Baptist churches.

"We do have, by mutual agreement, policies for handling coed options initiated by either agency. We have the utmost trust that any specific plan, program, or product resulting from WMU's Board action will adhere to and honor those policies. ... " □

with administrators at Samford University to consider the development of a Women's Institute for Ministry at the school's Birmingham, Ala., campus. O'Brien noted, "There are many needs in our country, and we want to explore new ways that we might be involved in equipping women with the skills that are necessary to meet those needs."

She said the development of a women's institute might in-

clude a graduate degree program focusing on social ministries and a continuing education approach.

The executive board also approved the long-range planning committee's recommendation that a national WMU volunteer service coordinator be secured by Jan. 1, 1995, to plan and direct a national volunteer program. O'Brien said the committee desires that the person filling this position be a volunteer who would provide their own living expenses.

In other business, board members voted to focus materials and projects for 1997-98 on racial and cultural prejudice.

The board approved a 1994-95 budget of \$14,635,000, a 3.9 percent revenue decrease from 1993-94. The expected \$700,000 deficit includes one-time costs incurred in launching a membership campaign and new curriculum pieces, national training resulting from organizational redesigns, and postal increases.

Also approved was a goal of \$100 million for the 1995 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions and a goal of \$42 million for the 1996 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions. □

## ■ the people

■ **Charles "Shorty" Owens** was named Senior Adult of the Year of Blue Springs Church, Rutledge.

## ■ the leaders

■ **Jim Hunt** has been called as pastor of First Church, Andersonville.

■ First Church, Greenfield, has called **Kevin Buchanan** as minister of children and youth.

■ **John Andrew "Andy" Milam** began serving as director of music and youth at First Church, Savannah, on June 5. Milam graduated in May from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, where he earned the outstanding student award in the master of music program.

■ **Robert Prouse** has been called by Mount Carmel Church, Signal Mountain, as minister of music and youth, effective June 5.

■ **Warren Barron**, pastor, New Home Church, Martin, has resigned to attend seminary in Memphis.

■ **Joe Thomason** has been called as pastor of Enon Church, Halls, effective May 29.

■ **Ken Coleman**, minister of education and youth, Macedonia Church, Ripley, has been called to the staff of a church in Ohio.

■ **Rick Roberts**, pastor, Dallasburg Church, Wheatley,

Ky., has accepted the call of First Church, Smithville, as pastor. Roberts is a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.



**ROBERTS**

■ **Kerney L. Bailey**, pastor, Inglewood Church, Nashville, has announced his retirement, effective Sept. 30.

■ **Howard Olive**, pastor, Monte Vista Church, Maryville, has announced his retirement, effective Jan. 15, 1995. He has served the church for 29 years.

■ **Eugene Gregory**, a recent graduate of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, has been called as pastor of Willingham Memorial Church, Ridgely.

## ■ the churches

■ **Galilee Church, Knoxville**, extended its May 15-18 revival one more evening. Seventeen people made professions of faith and 22 recommitted their lives. Four joined the church by baptism and one by letter. Scott Dawson led the services.

■ **Baptist Men of Lincoya Hills Church, Nashville**, held their second annual fishing tournament to raise money for missions. Cody Mitchell, 8, who competed against adults, caught the largest fish. The entry fee went to the new home for special adults being built by Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes in Lebanon.

■ U. S. Congressman Bob Clement will speak July 3 at 6:30 p.m. at **Lincoya Hills Church, Nashville**. Music will include that of members of the Nashville Symphony. A full color guard from Fort Campbell will perform. A dinner will begin at 5:30 p.m.

■ **Oakland Church, Rutledge**, dedicated its new educational building May 29 in conjunction with a homecoming.

■ **Indian Ridge Church, Blaine**, has started a food bank to help the needy in the community, held a True Love Waits rally at Rutledge High School June 4, and a tractor pull at the Indian Ridge school grounds May 28 for its building fund.

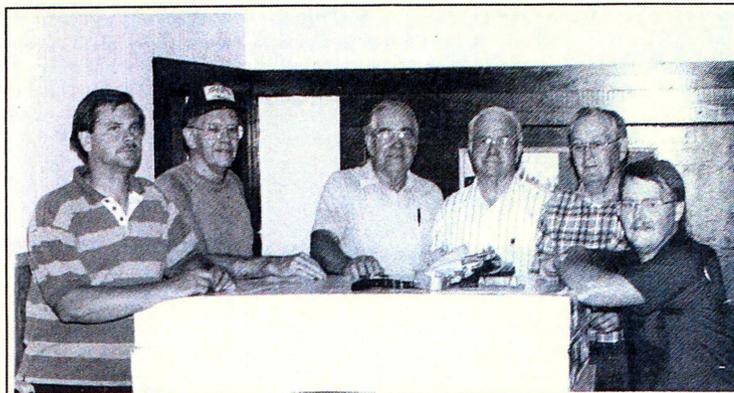
■ **Head of Richland Church, Bean Station**, held revival May 8-13. It was led by Jimmy Dockins.

■ **Blue Springs Church, Rutledge**, held a May 15-18 revival led by Gary Vandergriff, pastor of Union Church, Knoxville.

■ A tent revival will be held by **Union Hills Church, Goodlettsville**, July 11-13. John Christian, former pastor First Church, Goodlettsville, and Mike Headrick will lead it.

■ **First Church, Huntsville**, will hold homecoming July 3, beginning at 10 a.m.

■ **Wilsonville Church, Newport**, is leading a campaign for the first Sunday after D-Day to be named a national day of recognition for widows. Adam Sanders, pastor, was influential in getting the mayor of Newport and executive of Coker County to sign a joint city and county proclamation designating June 12 as Widow's Day in Newport and Coker County. The church held its first Widow's Day June 12.



**MEN WHO HELPED FIRST INDIAN CHURCH, RIPLEY**, install ceiling tile and lights, included, from left, Roger Betty, First Church, Waverly; Art Martin, Bellevue Church, Cordova; Howard Luster, Bellevue Church; M. B. Howard, moderator, Big Hatchie Association; Jeff Koonce, Brotherhood director, Big Hatchie Association; and Keith Nix, First Church, Waverly. Other volunteers came from Audubon Park Church, Memphis, Calvary Church, Jackson, and First Church, Dyersburg.— Photo by Mike Powers



**OFFICERS OF THE 1994-95 WEST TENNESSEE PASTORS' CONFERENCE**, from left, Kenneth Basham, First Church, Medina, secretary; Billy F. Hammonds, First Church, Trenton, vice president; Ron Davidson, First Church, Grand Junction, president; and Henry G. Simpson III, minister of music/education, First Church, Huntingdon, song leader; met with conference members at Union University and heard Jerry Rankin, president, Foreign Mission Board.



**GATHERED FOR THE SIGNING** of a proclamation naming June 12 as Widow's Day in Coker County and Newport by Newport Mayor Danny Wester, left of center, and Coker County Executive Harold Cates, right of center, are widows of Wilsonville Church, Newport, and pastor Adam Sanders, center, standing. Widows are, from left, Kathryn Lovell, Garnett Campbell, Echo McMahan, Arolla Johnson, Kathleen Killion, Winnifred Clevenger, Lorene McClanahan, and Elizabeth Samples. — Photo from Newport Plain Talk

The Girls in Action of the church hosted a dinner for widows following the service. (See photo.)

■ **First Church, Tracy City**, held groundbreaking for its new auditorium June 12. The church has four acres adjacent to its current site which is paid for and a building fund of \$72,000.

■ **Brint's Chapel, Middleton**, will hold homecoming July 17. The Gant family will sing in the afternoon.

■ **First Church, Middle-**

**ton**, will hold homecoming July 24.

## ■ the associations

■ **Dyer Association** will lead a mission team to India Sept. 7-21.

■ **Carroll-Benton Association** is raising money for its direct missions project. Church members are asked to give \$10 twice a year in July and January. The association's goal is for 1,000 church members to give twice a year.

## ■ the work

■ **Calvary Church, Jackson**, is sending a youth group to Arizona to do missions work.

■ A youth group from **First Church, Woodbury**, is participating in the World Changers missions program of the Brotherhood Commission by working in Tuscaloosa, Ala.

# Gregory book to detail experiences at First Church, Dallas

Baptist Press

DALLAS — Joel Gregory "harbors no ill will or bitterness," and will not "trash" the church or its senior pastor, W. A. Criswell, but he is writing a book about his experiences at First Church, Dallas, where he abruptly resigned a 21-month pastorate Sept. 10, 1992.

*Too Great a Temptation:*

*The Seductive Power of America's Super Church* is the title of the book to be released in early October by The Summit Group, a Fort Worth publisher Gregory said contacted him about writing it.

Gregory and officials of the publishing house held a press

conference June 10 to counter what they called "inaccurate rumors" prematurely circulating about the book's contents.

Gregory said he accepted a proposal to write the book for several reasons — that it is best for him to tell the story, he has insights into the 15-year South-

ern Baptist controversy, and he hopes it will make a positive contribution to the church and the kingdom of God.

The book will deal with the superchurch, not strictly FBC, Dallas, and will confront the question, "Is this what Jesus Christ came to found as the

church in the world?" Gregory said. □



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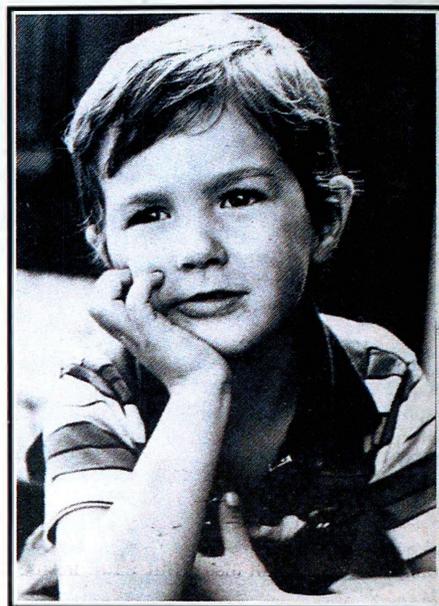
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# ■ Sunday School lesson commentary

## □ Satan's testing of Job's faith — Bible Book Series for July 3

By Carl Scarlett, pastor, Miracle Church, La Vergne

The Book of Job is as contemporary as today's news. Satan is still our adversary. He opposes everyone and everything that is good. He is still "going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (v. 7).

Most Christians I've known at some point in time or circumstance will ask, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" Sometimes followers of Christ will let the trials and tests of their faith affect them in such a manner as to make them bitter toward God and their fellow man. Job is a great example and role-model for every Christian to take note of.

Many of life's questions may never be answered while we live our earthly life but if we

trust God, most of our questions will not need an answer.

### Satan's accusation — vv. 9-11; ch. 2:4

Satan was confident that he could destroy Job's faith by attacking and destroying all of Job's earthly possessions (vv. 9-11). He accused Job of serving God only for the blessings that God had poured out upon him and his family.

### God allowed Job's faith to be tested — ch. 1:13-19

God gave permission to Satan to touch everything Job possessed. Satan destroyed Job's animals, servants, and 10 children. All of this destruction probably took place in one day's time. The only thing Job had left was his life and his wife. The only thing that saved Job

was God's hand of security (v. 12).

After Job's earthly possessions were destroyed, he prepared himself physically and spiritually and fell down before God and worshipped (v. 20).

After all Job endured and experienced, he sinned not nor cursed God (v. 22).

Satan did not concede to God in regard to Job. He accused Job to God a second time. Satan was confident that if he could touch Job's body with disease that Job would give up and curse God. God granted that request but reminded Satan that he could not touch Job's life (vv. 4-6).

Satan afflicted Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown (ch. 2:7). In

anguish Job scraped his sores with a piece of pottery. No doubt many if not most of his friends shunned Job in fear that they might be afflicted with his disease. It is hard to imagine the anguish of body and mind that Job endured.

Job's real character shows when his wife suggested he take the situation in his own hands, curse God, and die (ch. 2:9).

God's love through the lips of Job admonished and chastised his wife to not speak as a foolish woman (v. 10). When one's faith is tested the real character of the person will be spoken through his or her lips.

### Job's friends arrive — vv. 11-13

Just when life seemed to be collapsing around Job, three of

### Focal Passages Job 1:8-12, 20-22; 2:4-10

his closest friends came to comfort and strengthen him (v. 11).

True friendship is like the eternal security and love of God. It never changes.

Job's friends sat with him, "for seven days and seven nights, and none spoke a word unto him" (v. 13).

Often times especially in times of sorrow, grief and loss, our presence is more valuable to our fellowman than what we say.

Friends are more valuable than earthly possessions. The friendship and personal relationship Job had with God was the most valuable possession he had. Satan cannot destroy what God possesses! □

## □ Bread from heaven — Convention Uniform Series for July 3

By Randall Cummings, pastor, First Church, Ripley

Israel has traveled into the wilderness for about a month at this point. Their immediate destination is Sinai to meet with God to worship him and to establish a covenant. At Sinai they will be given the 10 commandments, including the commandment for Sabbath rest. However, as Israel comes to this Wilderness of Sin (a name possibly derived from Sinai) the principle of Sabbath observance will be established. Israel will also learn that God is aware of their need.

### The people grumbled

Exodus 16 continues in the account of Israel's pilgrimage to Sinai and later wilderness wanderings. Moses' record of Israel's grumblings are found in Exodus 15, 16, and 17; Numbers 14, 16, and 17. These incidents dealt with the availability of supplies, questions of leadership, and concern over their ability to enter

the promised land. They have faced tremendous hardship. The people grumbled because they feared death from starvation in the desert wilderness. Though well provisioned when they left Egypt, the month-long trek toward Sinai has depleted their rations. Still Moses, following the cloud of God's presence, leads them deeper into the desert.

Israel's concern seems valid. But Paul, noting their grumblings in I Corinthians 10:10, warns us not to grumble as they did. The sin behind the grumbling is its denial of God's ability to provide. The people became nostalgic about their former lives as slaves. It's not that Israel simply romanticized their recollections of Egypt. They did not believe that God was able to provide. That was a dangerous position for a people living between slavehood and nationhood.

### Focal Passage Exodus 16:2-7, 13-18

"Why did people who witnessed God's powerful deliverance from Egypt just a month before have such a lack of faith now?" We who have seen lives miraculously transformed by the power of Christ have trouble trusting God to help us in our times of trials. What Israel needed and what we need is for God to get our focus off the problems and on him. Then faith can assert its power over fear and nostalgia.

### The Lord provided

God immediately replied through Moses. He would provide the people with food, but he would also make it a test of obedience. The blessing would bring with it an opportunity for growth. Israel would be expected to treat the provision as a stewardship.

First God sent quail. These quail still migrate from Egypt into the desert wilderness. Slow, low flying birds, the quail are exhausted when they get to the far side of the Red Sea, and fall to the ground. The miracle was that they came when God said they would come. The second miracle was the manna. If there were any questions about God's ability to miraculously provide for the needs of his people, the daily appearance of the manna answered that. The manna had to be gathered and cooked by the people, but its abundant supply came from God.

If anyone tried to stockpile manna by gathering more than was needed for the day, they would find it spoiled and wormy on the next day. But when the Sabbath was approaching, the manna could be gathered and prepared for Sabbath without the manna spoiling. God insisted

that along with his provision, the children would also observe Sabbath rest.

Not only did God give the manna, he also gave the Sabbath (v. 29). Both gifts were to be received with gratitude. Both were God's provision for the people of Israel. Both met important needs. The day of rest was for reflecting on the things of God and worshiping God. Israel had complained about not having bread. God supplied them with bread for the body and for the spirit.

God is under no obligation to respond to our grumblings and lack of faith. How fortunate we are that God is patient with us when we grumble and complain. When God graciously does respond to our complaints, we are likely to find his answers not only meet our needs but also draw us closer to him. □

## □ Sufferers yet comforters — Life and Work Series for July 3

By Clay Frazier, retired pastor, Morristown

No experience in life is of greater significance or mystery as suffering. It is an age-old problem that has engaged the most brilliant minds of the past and the present. Still we have modern men and women agonizing and searching for answers, and a balm for their hurt. Here in II Corinthians we have some light and some comfort.

### The greeting — vv. 1-2

There are key words in the greeting that we should give careful attention. "Apostle of Jesus Christ" — The church at Corinth had belittled Paul's apostleship. Here he makes it very clear that he had seen the Lord Jesus, and he is not one who is self-sent. He makes the statement stronger yet, saying he is a "sent-one" by the "will of God." He is very clear as to the ones to whom he is writing, "the church of God at Corinth" and "all saints" which are "in Achaia" (Greece). Saints is used regular-

ly by Paul when he refers to Christians. If we are believers, we are saints. The modern church has some difficulty in accepting our sainthood. Maybe we need to accept who we are in Christ, and then, maybe we will live like a saint.

Paul plunges right into the subject which occupies his mind and heart, tribulation or trial.

### Source of comfort — v. 3

Paul says God is the source of comfort, not tribulation. Many of us say, "God took him," or "God brought suffering." We need to be more careful ascribing to God certain happenings. Trial may be a judgment or an event that God allows. Trial may be brought on by others whom God allows to exercise their free will. Paul does write that God is the source of comfort. The Father of our Savior is the Father of mercies and comfort. The very nature of God is to show mercy. Mankind has tried many things

to bring balm to his wounded spirit, but has ignored the only one who can give comfort.

### Stewards of trial and comfort — vv. 4-7

Paul clearly says God comforts us that we may comfort others (v. 4). We are to be good stewards of our suffering and our comforts. We may be better stewards of our possessions than we are of our sufferings. Many people waste their suffering experience. We miss wonderful opportunities to praise God for comfort when we continue to ask, "Why me?" We should perhaps ask, "Whom can I comfort with the comfort God has given me?" In verse 5, Paul says that there is no shortage of God's comfort. We can know for sure that regardless of how deep the trouble that comes to us, the supply of comfort will be unabated. How do we suffer? This may be the real test of Christians. The high times of our lives may

### Focal Passages II Corinthians 1:1-11

prove easy for us, but the difficult times are the real test.

### Suffering made personal — v. 8

Paul shares an experience of suffering he has had. He uses words full of meaning, "trouble," "pressed out of measure," "above strength," and "despaired of life," words wrought with hurt. Here is a mighty missionary who has seen Jesus and had challenged the world with the Gospel of Christ, confessing an experience that almost unhinged him. He does not theorize suffering and comfort. He has been in the very grip of despair. This shared experience makes his testimony of comfort authentic. Years ago when we had a son die, I remember a big Texan coming to me. He almost squeezed the breath out of me, and said, "Preacher, I know, I know." I knew he did. I

had buried one of his own, and he was then in the hurt which I had shared, experiencing. After 38 years, that man's comfort is still fresh in my mind.

### Lessons learned in suffering — vv. 9-10

I once had a friend who had suffered much, physically, spiritually, and mentally. He died in his early 50s. He once said, "We learn only by suffering." I am not sure I fully agree with that statement, but I am sure that the most lasting lessons are learned through suffering. Paul is a mature man and without doubt one of the most learned men of the first century, yet he indicates that he learned from his suffering. We walk in the sunshine, enjoy it, but no great lesson we learn. We walk in the shadows, and we see things in a new light. Paul says suffering and danger came to him and he learned a great, good lesson; he — See Suffers, page 4

## Secular media taps True Love Waits as top SBC story

Baptist Press

ORLANDO — Among many of the approximately 300 media representatives reporting on the 137th meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, the big story was the success of the True Love Waits campaign.

"True Love Waits is the largest story of national interest," said Associated Press religion writer David Briggs.

Organized and sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board, the campaign is designed to encourage young people to abstain from sex until marriage. Almost 103,000 signed chastity cards were displayed outside the Orange County Convention Center June 14.

Gayle White of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* agreed. "Actually, what I got on the front (page) was True Love Waits, and the presidential race was carried inside on the regional page," she said. □

## Quayle autographs books at SBC exhibit

Baptist Press

ORLANDO — Former Vice President Dan Quayle reiterated the family values theme of his 1992 Southern Baptist Convention speech as he arrived at the SBC exhibit hall in Orlando's Orange County Convention/Civic Center June 14 to sign copies of his new book, *Standing Firm*.

"I articulated a vision for our children. I had the audacity to say it is best to have both

a mother and father raising children. I was right then and I'm right now," he said.

Several hundred Southern Baptists greeted Quayle's arrival with applause, armed with copies of his book, flash cameras, and video cameras. For two hours, he signed copies with his right hand while shaking hands with his left.

Baptist Book Store spokesman Chris Rodgers said approximately 1,000 copies of Quayle's book was purchased during the two-hour signing period. □

## SBC day camp enrolls largest number ever

Baptist Press

ORLANDO — More than 370 children and staff participated in this year's SBC Missions Day Camp, making it the largest in history.

Sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, the Day Camp offered elementary school children an alternative to convention proceedings.

"The SBC Missions Day Camp gives children a chance to learn about missions and the work of the convention in a way they can understand and appreciate," said Tim Seanor, national Royal Ambassadors director and day camp coordinator. □

## Missions booth bridges continents

Baptist Press

ORLANDO — It was just two old friends chatting. One was in a red British-style phone booth in the middle of the Southern Baptist Convention's exhibit hall in Orlando,

and the other was at home in Wales. The conversation symbolized the SBC Foreign Mission Board's leap into interactive missions understanding.

The booth was utilized during the convention to provide SBC-goers with approximately 10 hours a day of long distance telephone contact with missionaries around the world.

Outside the phone booth was a phone directory of all 4,000 Southern Baptist missionaries. Participants were given five free minutes on the phone with whomever they wanted to talk with — after being reminded that in certain areas of the world the missionaries were sound asleep.

Don Sewell, director of special projects for the FMB's public affairs office, said the entire FMB exhibit used the interactive mode. In addition to the phone booth (for which they received a price break), messengers could interview missionaries who were present. Those 10-minute interviews were taped and placed at the end of a Foreign Missions Update video program so the interviewers could take the tapes back for use in their home churches. □

## Executive Committee re-elects three officers

Baptist Press

ORLANDO — Members of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee re-elected all three of its 1993-94 officers during their organizational meeting June 15.

They are Fred Wolfe, Mobile, Ala., chairman; Eldridge Miller, Sallisaw, Okla., vice chairman; and T. C. Pinckney, Alexandria, Va., recording secretary. The committee's next meeting will be Sept. 19-21. □

## Baptists aid avalanche survivors in Colombia

Baptist Press

CALI, Colombia — Baptists are providing food, medical care, and materials for temporary shelter to some of the 11,000 or more people left homeless by an earthquake and avalanche in Colombia's Cauca state.

The June 6 quake has been called the worst natural calamity in Colombia since 1985 when the Nevada del Ruiz volcano erupted and buried the town of Armero, killing about 24,000 people.

At least 600 people died and nearly 1,700 are missing and presumed dead in the recent quake and resulting mudslides.

A team of Southern Baptist



## Directors of missions fellowship

Directors of missions Ken Sparkman, left, Gibson County Association, and Ralph Hoover, Central Association, visited during the recent DOM meeting held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. With them is Hoover's wife, Jean.

missionaries and Colombian Baptists traveled June 9 to several towns accessible by land to assess needs and determine how Baptists could help.

Food and other supplies were distributed in mid-June. Another team was expected to distribute additional relief supplies June 21-23.

So far, \$5,000 in Southern Baptist disaster relief funds has been used for the project, and missionaries have requested an additional \$10,000 in disaster funds from the FMB. Colombian Baptists and the Baptist World Alliance also have committed \$5,000 each in relief funds. □

## Budget shortfall sidelines SBC agency

Baptist Press

ORLANDO — Due to an ongoing budget shortfall, the SBC Historical Commission did not have an exhibit at the SBC meeting in Orlando.

Executive Director-Treasurer Lynn E. May noted the commission has not had an exhibit the last several years.

"To man an exhibit we would need more people and more funds," May said, noting they could "communicate more effectively through other media."

May said the agency would have a sesquicentennial exhibit honoring the SBC's 150th year during the 1995 SBC annual meeting in Atlanta. □

## BSSB eliminates nine jobs in ethnic, black church growth area

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Nine positions are being eliminated from the Baptist Sunday

School Board's ethnic and black church growth department, effective July 1 in preparation for a redesign of the department.

Ramon Martinez, department director, said five persons will be affected, and four positions are vacant. Conception "Chuck" Padilla, a 14-year employee of the board, will take early retirement. One professional employee will be reassigned, and three other professionals will receive career transition and outplacement assistance, along with severance pay based on years of service.

Resizing and redesigning the department is part of the church leadership, worship, and ministry division's reorganization to achieve greater economy while retaining the most effective field services and materials needed by the churches, Martinez said. □

## CLC supports restoration of federal abstinence program

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission is supporting an effort to restore the only federal program promoting teenage sexual abstinence.

Sen. Slade Gorton, R-Wash., and Rep. Lamar Smith, R-Tex., are leading an attempt to fund the Title XX Adolescent Family Life program in the 1995 budget. They are asking for \$7 million, the same as in the current budget.

The Clinton administration's removal of the program from the proposed budget promoted the congressional effort.

Members of Congress and advocacy organizations decried the proposal recently. □



## Friends meet in Orlando

The SBC annual meeting provided Larry Parrott, right, pastor of Pleasant View Church, Talbot, the opportunity to visit with Willard and Mary Ellen Ryans of McPheeters Bend Church, Church Hill, where Parrott formerly served as pastor.