

Baptist and Reflector

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Approach media positively: critic

Baptist Press

LOS ANGELES — "Working together with people of good faith and good conscience, we can once again have a popular culture as decent as the people in this great country," a nationally known film critic told members of the Religious Public Relations Council recently.

Michael Medved, chief film critic for the *New York Post*, co-host of a PBS movie review show, "Sneak Previews," and author of books and articles on media and society urged members of the national interfaith organization to greater efforts at affirming positive developments in mass media.

"I do believe religious faith is one of the most pressing interests of the American people," Medved, a devout Jew, said. "America wants to come home. America wants to come

back to decency."

He offered a three-step formula: less complaining/more creating, less confrontation/more communication, and less attitude/more gratitude.

Medved charged that too many creative, religious people abandoned writing and producing for television and films instead of using their talents and influence for good.

"A few individuals can make a great difference," he emphasized. For example, he said the most popular TV series for 1994, "Home Improvement," and the most popular film, "The Lion King," share in common the fact that both were originated by evangelical Christian producers.

Rather than boycotting films that might not otherwise have drawn an audience, Medved said religious people need to counter the fact that many people in the media

don't know anyone in the religious community. Communication is the key.

"The important thing is to let people see it's possible to be modern, creative, and religious," Medved said. "If you can talk to people, it changes stereotypes."

Finally, he suggested, an attitude of gratitude for miracles taking place in the world is needed to counter the "pessimistic messages of media culture."

"We become obsessed with bad news. Today's crybaby, whining culture is one which we as religious people above all must resist," Medved emphasized.

"Nothing corrodes the soul more than failing to say things," he said. "We owe a debt of things to our parents, the country, and above all to the Almighty. Too many don't know how to say thank you." □

FMB pulls out of Albanian mission group

Associated Baptist Press

TIRANA, Albania — After three years of close cooperation among Baptist mission groups in Albania, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has withdrawn from a joint mission committee and will operate independently in the former communist country.

Dan Panter, FMB associate area director for East Europe, announced the change during the March 23-26 meeting of the Albania Committee, a joint planning group sponsored by the European Baptist Federation. Panter told the committee the decision was part of an administrative restructuring of the FMB's work.

But Roger Briggs, the Foreign Mission Board's associate area director for Europe, told Associated Baptist Press the FMB wants to be "more aggressive in evangelism" than he felt other EBF team members want to be. For in-

stance, FMB missionaries want to be involved in "direct witnessing" and hold invitations following worship services. The EBF is not eager to do that, he said.

However, Briggs downplayed any "rift in relationship" with the EBF team. "We're still friends," he said. He added the four Baptist churches in Albania would not be forced to choose between competing groups for ministry assistance. "We're all together on that," he said.

The Albania Committee is composed of representatives of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Baptist Missionary Society of England, Canadian Baptist Ministries, Italian Baptist Union, and Swedish Baptist Missionary Society. All five groups have mission personnel working in the once-atheistic country.

The committee expressed gratitude for the help of the Virginia-based FMB. □

Senate dumps two plans to offer lottery vote

For Baptist and Reflector

Tennessee's Senate last week dumped two proposed bills that would allow Tennesseans to vote on a state lottery.

Though some observers say that a successful lottery vote this term is now unlikely, the General Assembly will be in session for about four more weeks. In other words, gambling bills are still possible during this term.

A bill has to gain 17 votes to

pass the 33-member Senate.

One bill to allow a constitutional convention to deal with a state lottery was defeated 16-15. Another bill calling for a constitutional convention to deal with a lottery and a state income tax lost by 19-11.

As usual, lottery advocates argued that legislators should give citizens the opportunity to vote on the issue.

Some gambling opponents suggest that would mean citizens should be allowed to vote on a state income tax as well

and other major issues.

Tennessee's constitution, written in 1834, prohibits lotteries. The state attorney general has ruled that most gambling violates that.

Also last week the House State and Local Government committee approved legalization of video poker and blackjack. There is divided opinion whether this violates the constitutional lottery (gambling) ban. Contact your legislator to express your opinion on this issue. □

New dawn, Baptists ask for renewal

The drought is severe, penetrating, long in time.

The land is thirsty. Its people, all across the earth, are hungry for God's Word; thirsty for new wine, ready for better-fitting garments to clothe the soul, longing to awaken in a new light.

People are asking about spiritual renewal. Henry Blackaby, Home Mission Board, tells of renewal and awakening in many places. Others bear witness that God is working and calls his people to revival, renewal.

Blackaby says the evidence can be seen when we look through spiritual eyes.

And Job answers Bil- dad's accusatory statements with exclamations of God's power, glory, creative genius, and then adds this:

"Behold, these are the fringes of his ways; and how faint a word we hear of him. But his mighty thunder, who can understand?" (Job 26:14).

Listen to Isaiah 35: 1-2a: *"The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy."*

What is God doing around us? What are the evidences of his Spirit in the awakening, renewing work?

Look. Listen. God is at work in Tennessee. Tell us about it. Report Good News!

The *Baptist and Reflector* invites readers to share renewal news. Tell us about evidences of spiritual awakening around Tennessee. □ — From the Editor

SBC must go back 300 years for roots: pastor

Associated Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Yes, Baptists need to return to their roots, but those roots go deeper than the 19th-century founders of the Southern Baptist Convention, a Kentucky pastor proclaimed.

To be true to their tradition, today's Baptists must return to the faith and practice of their early forebears — English Separatists, Anabaptists, and Mennonites — who preceded the SBC by more than 200 years, said Jim Holladay, pastor of Clifton Church in Louisville.

Holladay gave the keynote address, "A Call for Baptist Renewal," at the Clarence Jordan Award banquet, sponsored by Long Run Baptist Association in Louisville.

The annual award honors the memory of Jordan, former

superintendent of missions for the association, who later founded the interracial Koinonia Farm near Americus, Ga., and led in the civil rights movement.

Holladay noted some Southern Baptists have called for the convention to return to its roots. However, he contended, those Baptists point specifically to individuals who helped start the convention in 1845 and who were influenced by John Calvin, a 16th-century Swiss theologian most closely affiliated with Presbyterian and Reformed denominations.

"Our roots are in the Radical Reformation in England and Europe," Holladay said, stressing Baptists aren't natural heirs of Calvin.

The first Baptist preachers, John Smyth and Thomas Helwys, were English Separatists, who believed that even the re-

forms of the Puritans did not go far enough, he reported. When Smyth and Helwys immigrated to Holland to escape persecution in England, they encountered their theological kin, the Mennonites and Anabaptists, who contended the reforms of Calvin and Martin Luther also "did not go far enough in restoring authentic Christian faith and practice."

These forces shaped key elements of the Baptist faith and tradition, Holladay insisted. They include:

- "An emphasis on the immediacy of our relationship with God — that each person can experience God directly through the presence of God's Spirit," he said. "From this, Baptists developed a doctrine of soul competency."

- "An emphasis on Christianity as a life of discipleship," he added. "The key

question ... was not, 'How can I get saved?' but, 'How should a Christian live?' The key desire was to become a follower of Jesus Christ through active love of one's neighbor. This life would call for continual internal renewal and suffering."

- "A distinct teaching on the corporate nature of Christian living," he said. "They recognized the mutual neediness and interdependence of all persons [and] union with Christ is found in community."

Summing up the early elements that shaped Baptist life, Holladay stressed, "Baptist life springs from the desire to move beyond mere external reform to internal/communal reform, which results in changed people [living] in changed communities, working to liberate persons from the bondage of sin and its effects." □

Look to Jesus, not Calvin: Herschel Hobbs

Associated Baptist Press

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. — Baptist Calvinists who cite the views of early Southern Baptists such as James Petigru Boyce ought to listen instead to the words of Jesus, according to Herschel Hobbs.

Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City, and chairman of the committee that drafted the *Baptist Faith and Message* statement, recently issued a written rebuttal of five-point Calvinism.

"I am more interested in what Jesus said and Paul wrote than what Boyce ... wrote," said Hobbs, considered one of Southern Baptists' most influential modern theologians.

Boyce was the first president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The

seminary's current president, Albert Mohler, often has cited the views of Boyce and other 19th-century Baptists as support for his own endorsement of five-point Calvinism.

Five-point Calvinism is a shorthand term used to describe a theological system developed primarily by the 16th-century theologian John Calvin. Five-point Calvinist assert that God selected certain people for salvation — and therefore others for damnation — before the creation of the world.

In an interview with the *Western Recorder* last fall, Mohler defended his Calvinistic views, saying he believed the same views were held by the Apostle Paul.

In his recent statement, Hobbs asserted that anyone who believes the Apostle Paul

was a Calvinist is "putting the cart before the horse about 1,500 years."

Calvinism's teaching that certain people have been predestined to salvation and others to damnation "is contrary to the very nature of God," Hobbs said. "Those who follow Calvin say that only the elect believe in Jesus as Savior. As I understand it, the opposite is true. Believers are the elect."

Hobbs said he agrees with a statement by Southern Baptist theologian Frank Stagg that election is not a "rigged television show."

God's salvation through Jesus Christ is available to "anyone, anywhere, any time," Hobbs said, citing Jesus' words in John 3:16 that "whosoever believeth" may be saved. □

Survey results show need for more counseling

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — For every person baptized due to a first-time commitment to Jesus Christ, another person is baptized after making a rededication, according to a survey of 1,350 Southern Baptists.

The survey indicates the need for more counseling of those seeking baptism and supports the need for a diversity of evangelism approaches, said Darrell Robinson, HMB vice president for evangelism.

Conducted by the Home Mission Board's research department in cooperation with the evangelism division, the study included people ages 18 years and older who were baptized between Oct. 1, 1992, and Sept. 30, 1993.

Participants were asked to cite one of several reasons for their recent baptism. Their responses were conversion, 40.5 percent; rededication, 40.4 percent; and transfer of membership from another denomination, 13.7 percent.

If the survey results represent the 150,000 adults baptized in 1993, then only 60,000 baptisms represented conversions of the lost to Christ, according to the study's findings. An almost equal number were baptized for rededicating their lives to Christ.

Rededication as a motive for baptism raises serious questions, according to the study's authors. "Are pastors assuming responsibility for clarifying the response of people to the invitation call? Is the pressure to baptize so great that pastors are encouraging people to be rebaptized rather than counseling them on assurance of salvation? Is the true meaning of baptism being taught in our churches?"

When asked for names and phone numbers of adults baptized in 1993, the 840 churches in the survey indicated they had lost contact with more than one-third of the people they baptized that year. □

Larry Baker dreams of new generation of prophets

Baptist Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — In a world of brokenness and pain, the church is called to fulfill its ministry by sharing God's word of hope with hurting humanity.

How can this be accomplished? By raising up a new generation of prophets, according to N. Larry Baker, pastor of First Church, Pineville, La.

During the recent C.W. Scudder "School of the Prophets" Lectureship at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., Baker, a former academic dean of the institution and former executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, urged ministers of the 1990s to "rediscover the Old Testament prophets."

"All of them served in days of darkness and tragedy," Baker reminded an audience

of Midwestern students, faculty, and staff. "The whole stretch of their ministry was one of almost unbroken calamity. ... Each of them confronted a social order that was full of corruption and a political situation that would invite despair on the part of anyone. ... Yet the prophets came under the call of God. ... They uttered God's truth as it was given to them to know, and they did so in utter disregard of the popular mood. They brought their message to bear on political and social problems; they spoke ... urgently to definite moral emergencies in personal and social life. They related their understanding of the person and the will of God to concrete human situations."

The social and personal sins which the prophets condemned are, in essence, the same as those that "degrade" people and "corrupt" society, he said. □

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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RTVC trustees express concern with restructuring

apist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Trustees of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission flirted April 11 with the idea of restructuring the commission by creating a separate agency rather than being merged with the Home Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission as proposed in the "Covenant for a New Century."

But when the rhetoric had cooled, they settled for a watered-down resolution to be sent to the SBC Executive Committee along with a list of "serious concerns" which they said need to be resolved before the matter is voted on by the Southern Baptist Convention in June.

Among the concerns, which they said have not been answered to date, are the cost of the move and how much it will save, why the need for relocation and why Atlanta, the number and division of trustees from each of the current three boards who will serve on the

new board and is there a proper understanding of the differences and uniqueness of the ministry of the RTVC.

A motion asking for a study of the current effectiveness of the RTVC and the effect of the proposed merger with the results to be given to SBC messengers was referred to the RTVC executive committee.

The proposed "Covenant" to be considered by the SBC in Atlanta, June 20-22, would reduce the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12 and the RTVC would be one of the casualties, apparently losing its separate identity in a merger with the Home Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission in a new North American Mission Board. The RTVC, which was moved from Atlanta to Fort Worth in 1955, would move back to Atlanta.

The RTVC trustees were to be briefed Monday evening, April 10, by a member of the Program and Structure Study Committee, which drafted the

proposed restructuring, and by two members of the SBC Executive Committee, which approved it and will recommend it to the SBC annual meeting.

The two Executive Committee members, Richard Cagle of Alabama and James Merritt of Georgia, were at the briefing, but Rex Terry, the PSSC member from Arkansas who is also an Executive Committee member, was unable to attend because of bad weather. Because of Terry's absence, one commission member told the *Texas Baptist Standard* newjournal, many of the trustees' questions went unanswered, and many of the answers given by the SBC Executive Committee members were qualified by "I think."

When the trustees convened in their first plenary session Tuesday morning April 11, Jerry Holbert, trustee from Springfield, Mo., presented a statement asking the trustees to go on record saying they could not at present accept the merger; that it would downsize the

RTVC, whose ministry needs to be enhanced rather than jeopardized or minimized; and called on the SBC Executive Committee to amend the study to retain the RTVC as a "separate communications agency" of the SBC.

Holbert said the statement was intended to give the Executive Committee an indication of where the trustees stand on the merger question and was not meant to reflect on the position of RTVC President Jack Johnson, who in statements following announcement of the proposal had indicated general approval. Holbert said he felt his (Holbert's) statement reflected the position of those who had asked questions the previous evening.

Commission trustees followed with adoption of a substitute motion approving largely unchanged the statement of their executive committee.

A list of concerns from the Monday evening discussion also will be included in the resolution. □

HMB gives revival priority over proposal to reorganize SBC

apist Press

ATLANTA, Ga. — Prayer for revival took precedence over discussion of a proposed restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention during the Home Mission Board directors meeting April 10-12.

Two sessions were planned for board members to discuss the SBC Program and Structure Study Committee report which will be presented to the SBC in June. That report recommends combining the HMB with the Brotherhood and Radio and Television commis-

sions. A question-and-answer session with three members of the SBC Executive Committee was held as planned on Monday evening. HMB directors said the session was very productive.

However, instead of discussing the proposal again the

next evening as scheduled, directors spent the time listening to news of revival and in prayer for revival. John Avant, HMB director and pastor of Coggin Avenue Church, Brownwood, Texas, told how revival has spread through his church, city, and state since

January. The board's final session Wednesday was consumed by necessary business affairs, leaving little time for discussion of the proposed reorganization. A special called meeting for that purpose will be held in May. □

Spring break reports point to revival

apist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Evidence of a national spiritual awakening is becoming even more convincing.

So says Dan Crawford, professor of evangelism and director of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's Spring evangelism practicum program. More than 40 professions of faith were reported as a result of Spring Practicum students' ministries over this year's spring break.

The number of reconciliations and confessions in churches exceeded previous years, Crawford said. He noted more than 274 public dedications were made in response to over 15 sermons given by the students.

"I think this is linked in God's sovereignty with what he is doing around the country. Usually, when these things happen, God revives his people and evangelism follows," Crawford said.

This year's 36th annual Spring Practicum focused on 25 states, the District of Columbia and Canada. All of the ministry sites were outside the Bible Belt.

Kevin Perrigan, a master of divinity student, described each day of his experience at Kalamazoo Church in Washington state as "a new adventure."

Every night, Perrigan saw "people convicted, hearts softened, and public commitments to God's service." He said the experience showed him the changes commitment brings in people's lives. □

... people convicted, hearts softened, and public commitments to God's service.

— Kevin Perrigan, SWBTS student

Workshop set by TBC, board on church legal issues

Baptist and Reflector

The Church Annuity Programs Department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, Dallas, Texas, will host its second annual Church Legal Issues Workshop May 25 at Ridgedale Church in Chattanooga. Topics for discussion will in-



BLOSS



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clude church employment practices, the church employee handbook, church incorporation, reducing the risk of child sexual abuse, and safety. Speakers include Julie Bloss, attorney, Annuity Board; Jack Kelley, vice president, Preferred Risk Mutual Insurance Company, Des Moines, Ia.; John Dudley, vice president, Property and Casualty Insurance, Annuity Board; William Maxwell, TBC central administrative division; and Gary Rickman, TBC church annuity programs department.

The workshop is free of charge and a lunch will be provided for those who register by May 23. For more information, contact the church annuity programs department at (615) 371-2008. □

Gingrich sends another signal to prayer amendment supporters

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich has sent apparently new signals on the issue of religious expression in public schools, and proponents of a constitutional amendment to protect students' religious rights confess to some confusion.

Gingrich, R-Ga., said April 9 Congress could solve religious speech problems in schools with a new law rather than an amendment.

"I am told it is not necessary," Gingrich said on CBS' "Face the Nation" of a religious freedom amendment. "I am told that we can create a legal framework that allows us to recognize that this is a profoundly religious country, but there is no state church."

Two days later, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, fresh from announcing his candidacy for the 1996 GOP presidential nomination, said he would prefer a legislative remedy to

an amendment. Either way, it is doubtful the Senate will have time this year to act on such a proposal, he said.

Gingrich's comments marked a switch from a position he had taken months earlier. Before the November elections, Gingrich said when, not if, he became speaker the House of Representatives would vote by July 4 on a school prayer amendment. After the Republican Party gained a majority in the House in the elections, making Gingrich the speaker, he repeated his pledge. While he since has retreated from the timetable, Gingrich had not rejected an amendment as the solution.

Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said he still thinks an amendment is necessary. A statute can be declared unconstitutional, but an amendment can only be interpreted by the courts, not discarded, he said. □

SBC messenger cards mailed

Messenger cards for the Southern Baptist Convention meeting, June 20-22 in Atlanta, Ga., have been mailed to association offices throughout Tennessee.

Contact your local director of missions for more information. □

■ about letters to the editor

- Make it concise, no more than 250 words. Letters may be edited for length.
- Name may be withheld for sufficient reason. Include address and phone number.
- Avoid personal attacks on the character or integrity of anyone.
- Send original copy. Form letters and "open" letters will not be published.
- Only one letter in a three-months period per writer will be published.
- If letter does not conform, it will be returned.
- Opinions and ideas expressed in letters are not necessarily shared by the *Baptist and Reflector* and its staff. □

Autonomy, cooperation

With other state convention presidents, I attended the SBC Executive Committee meeting Feb. 20. I listened to the Brister Committee report on proposed restructuring. Since then, I have been pondering what I had heard about Southern Baptist life.

I'll not try to predict the future SBC life if the report is approved this year and next. I do register a deep concern, about Southern Baptist life as I have experienced it. The concern relates to the meaning of two words: autonomy and cooperation.

Every level of Southern Baptist cooperative life originated in and has been sustained by autonomous Baptists. This is true for churches, associations, conventions, and Woman's Missionary Union. Autonomy and cooperation are necessary twins in SBC identity.

If one is threatened or weakened, the other is endangered, and becomes anemic. Destroy one and the other cannot survive. Autonomy keeps cooperation from becoming coercive; cooperation keeps autonomy from becoming independent.

In the Brister committee report, I listened to the justifications for change — the need for efficiency and greater effectiveness, etc. Some of that is needed; change is a fact of life. Pervasive in the massive amount of restructuring and elimination material, I sensed continued erosion of the twin dynamics which God has used to make us a great in-

terdependent people. The autonomy is being weakened. WMU autonomy, church autonomy, and church member autonomy seem to fade in the face of presidential, trustee, and pastoral authority.

This sense of the centralizing and narrowing decision-making power, whatever its motivation, is an unhealthy neglecting of autonomy.

The neglect will not create chaos immediately. Historical shifts rarely do. A shift as process is happening, which in time will change the autonomy/cooperation balance.

Cooperation may flourish for awhile with the centralization of power. When the imbalance finally penetrates to the core of SBC identity, and is experienced as reduced autonomy, cooperation will be weakened by the anemia of its inseparable twin.

I'm convinced there are many salt-of-the-earth Southern Baptists who want to cooperate.

This they have done for decades all across our Baptist landscape.

They want to do it as free and autonomous Baptists. Cooperate they will, but they will do it where their voices are respected, listened to, and honored.

Can free Baptists be heard at the annual SBC meeting in Atlanta, June 20-22? Cooperation and autonomy are at stake. Go and vote for both!

Frank Hawkins, president Tennessee Baptist Convention Pastor, First Church, Kingsport

Grave concern

As a product of a missionary family, I am gravely concerned about the implications of the proposed plan to restructure the SBC. The number of persons who have decision-making responsibilities would be greatly reduced and the Executive Committee of the SBC could possess unprecedented power-control of all entities and the monies.

The document virtually ignores Woman's Missionary Union and fails to acknowledge the work of millions of women who have faithfully taught missions in their churches.

Those teachings resulted in one of the strongest mission forces in the world. WMU has led this denomination to give more than a billion dollars through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, and its members "modeled servanthood in thousands of Southern Baptist churches."

The document also fails to recognize the potential of WMU as an auxiliary — a helper, a supporter — to the SBC in accomplishing our mission tasks. Instead it reassigns missions education and the promotion of the offerings to other entities. Is this theirs to give away?

After a thorough study of the document, I am concluding that this report has overwhelming implications for WMU and "what

affects WMU, SBC will affect Mission Friends, Girls in Actions, Acteens, and Women on Mission in our churches eventually."

Our challenge in the days ahead must be to pray earnestly and fervently for our SBC leadership, the leaders of WMU, our missionaries and for ourselves; to be informed by reading the entire document, write letters to the members of the Program and Structure Study Committee and Executive Board, speak out in local churches.

By our silence we give approval. Become a messenger from your church to the SBC in Atlanta to vote your conscience.

Carol Richardson Memphis 38018

God is in control

There are two stories in the Bible that remind me of the actions of the seven man committee, Covenant for a New Century, and the plan which bypasses the WMU.

King Ahab had much land, cattle, and servants, his neighbor Naboth had a small piece of land that had been in his family for many years. He did not want to sell his heritage, so Ahab wouldn't eat.

He wanted the land so badly. Jezebel his wife had Naboth killed. This was not hidden from God. II Kings tells of his punishment.

Another King, David, had everything a person could want. But, one of his soldiers had a beautiful young wife Bathsheba. King David wanted Bathsheba so badly he sent her husband Uriah to the front lines so he would be killed. David took Bathsheba for his wife, but this was not hidden from God. His punishment is in II Samuel 12.

Well, you get the story. WMU has never wanted to do anything but to serve the Lord. WMU through mission service, not for glory, has served more than 100 years for the Lord and the Southern Baptist Convention. This committee now says we don't need you anymore.

This is not hid from God. Let us get ready for the conflict. God called us to missions; He is not through with us yet. God is in control (Proverbs 21:30-31).

Keep praying, He's not failed us. Maybe He has bigger, better, and greater things He wants us to do for him. He said He would be with us always. I believe Him.

I have been a member of WMU for 48 years.

Juanita Kemp Jackson 38301

Making choices

I am greatly disappointed in the April 5 issue of our *Baptist and Reflector*. I feel we have reached an all time low by the article "Charles Stanley's wife refuses for divorce," found on page 2.

We are the only "so called" Christian community that shoot

their own wounded. As a pastor's wife I take great offense to the running of this article. The problems that the Stanleys are having should be among themselves.

It should not be a matter that we discuss as if we know all the problems that are in their lives or how they should be solved.

These two people are human beings and should be treated with kindness, understanding, and love. We should not take sides nor run either person down.

I realize the article did not place blame but the people read and don't know the whole story may be tempted to do just that. By running this article there is a great possibility that Dr. Stanley's effectiveness as a great preacher will be affected forever.

As a preacher's wife of 33 years, I am disappointed that we do not realize the fact Anna Stanley has a side to this story also. Preachers nor their wives are perfect. We do not belong on a pedestal. We are Christians, just as I hope most of the readers of this paper are Christians. All people are subject to making some mistakes.

We can pick up our local papers everyday and read the bad news of our world. I do not believe we should have to use our Baptist paper for such things. Please give us some hope in a time of despair that when we pick up our state paper we will find uplifting news that will lead us to be more Christ life and less critical of others.

I feel an apology should be given to both Dr. Stanley and his wife Anna for this invasion of their privacy.

Alice Bond Pulaski 38478

Most state papers have already or will run this news item. The article was distributed by Baptist Press, the official news agency of the SBC Executive Committee. Perhaps many readers will know how to pray specifically for the family and church. For each such news item in our papers there are scores of uplifting news and feature items. The article did not take sides or judge. The Baptist and Reflector is careful in handling such items. — Editor

Deep feelings

As a lifelong Southern Baptist, involved in every facet of my church's ministry and in all areas where women are allowed to participate, I have been afforded many opportunities to both contribute and be a recipient of the numerous ministries in the traditional Southern Baptist church. In my daily life, as I witnessed to the lost and unchurched, it was with humble pride that I could say, "I am a Southern Baptist," urge people to accept Christ as Savior and invite them to church.

When the upheaval started in the Southern Baptist Convention in the 1980s and now has continued for many years, my witness has been eroded. The secular

press has well documented the firings of most of our Southern Baptist seminary president heads of many of our agencies well known professors and denominational workers, as well as dozens of other incidences in the power struggle in our denomination. To see these things happen has grieved me — much as the death of a good friend or family member. The hurt has been very real and very deep!

Now to see a seven-member committee, behind closed doors, restructure the entire Southern Baptist Convention with no input from its 15 million members would be more than I could comprehend had I not made it a priority to keep myself informed of dangerous trends in our convention. Then, to have 64 of 67 members of the Executive Committee vote to accept restructuring of this magnitude within 24 hours after hearing such a comprehensive report is unbelievable!

The contempt shown for Woman's Missionary Union is inconceivable to me! To assign program/ministry of Woman's Missionary Union to others is just another effort to give control to select few. Leaders in the Southern Baptist Convention may be through with Woman's Missionary Union, but God isn't!

Appropriate words elude me as I try to express deep concern for events which have and are taking place in our Southern Baptist Convention, not because of the "players in the drama," but because of the effect our fighting is having on a lost world.

God help us!

Doris June Larg Knoxville 3791

Volunteers needed to assist health care mission to Poland

Volunteers are needed for a health care team scheduled to depart Nashville May 31 for Poland.

According to Terry Sharp, TBC Partnership Missions department director, the team will return to Nashville June 10.

Dr. Dewey Dunn, veteran missions volunteer, will lead the group of medical personnel.

The group will work in Poland where medical needs are evident.

Sharp says Dunn's team still needs two physicians, two dentists, four nurses, two dental assistants, two pharmacists, and an ophthalmologist/optometrist.

The group will dispense eye glasses. Those who have glasses to donate should contact the Partnership Missions office at (615) 371-2021.

Sharp urges volunteers who are interested in the May 31 Poland trip to contact his office right away.

The team will depart and return to Nashville. □

Restructure has some good points; merits study

This is a discussion of a report which will be put to SBC messengers in June. Others may follow in the interim. Tennessee Baptists are encouraged to give their views — Editor

The Program and Structure Study Committee has made some impressive recommendations which, if approved, will reshape the face and heart of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The document is attractive and authoritative, and deserves consideration.

Though what is not said may be of more interest than what is said, it does have some good points.

The committee is a child of the SBC's Executive Committee. It is a product of a motion made by a convention messenger, C.B. Hogue, executive director of the California Southern Baptist Convention, asking for a "study of program statements" and an evaluation of "existing structures."

While the route taken by the Executive Committee in naming a committee (which would recommend such broad and drastic changes) is questionable, we are sure the committee wants all Southern Baptists to understand its sweeping recommendations.

To earn cooperation from convention messengers and all Southern Baptists, the document must be thoroughly explained — in detail. Remember, Southern Baptists do not have bishops nor any other hierarchy, so consensus is vital.

And that consensus must continue. No

one owns the SBC; no group can control it completely or for a long period of time. Baptists believe in cooperation — but not at any cost. More than that, Baptists believe in autonomy of the local church.

Individuals and churches, when excluded from decision-making, inevitably go their own way.

Thus there must be thorough discussion of the plan, and the committee must answer all questions put to it. The Executive Committee should explain why it chose not to study and evaluate, and then report to the convention.

The committee has spent too much time and prayer on the recommendations to simply toss the document to Baptists and expect acceptance without scrutiny.

A document understood as God-blessed and Spirit-conceived, will be accepted, and also it can bear examination.

When Baptists ask for reasons or estimated cost savings, they should receive a knowledgeable answer. The vast scope of suggested changes begs for discussion.

When Baptists ask for explanations relating to agencies which will be changed substantially or eliminated, they should receive thorough answers.

When Baptists offer a well-conceived amendment, it should be received with courtesy and genuine consideration.

When Baptists want to know anything about any part of the document, they deserve a complete and sympathetic reply.

One guideline of the *Baptist and Re-*

lector is that informed and educated Baptists make intelligent and sensible decisions. These decisions will be based on sound and thorough information, sans politics, with no arm-twisting.

In short, the recommendations of the Program and Structure Study Committee must be subject to honest query and investigation. The committee should not fear suggestions or amendments. The same God to whom they prayed for guidance will hear the prayers and thoughts of other Southern Baptists.

The committee and Executive Committee leaders should not avoid close inspection nor other ideas. These recommendations, if passed by two consecutive SBC annual sessions and then implemented, will be the Southern Baptist structure for years to come. Why not allow honest discussion, honest debate and suggestions, and honest answers?

If messengers in June should be reluctant to ask questions, the Executive Committee should not misinterpret such as total endorsement. Messengers have a history of being reticent in challenging leadership, especially in the past 15 years. They are wary of being squelched and/or stonewalled.

It would be wise for convention leaders to allow discussion first and hold off voting for at least 24 to 36 hours. To do less would seem foolhardy. Haste often does make waste.

Southern Baptists again have a golden opportunity for reconciliation. We must not forgo the moment in June. □

■ one word more
By Wm. Fletcher Allen
editor

No ordinary legacy

It has been noted previously that this is the 160th year for the existence of an authentic newspaper.

The *Baptist and Reflector* began as a personal venture by a Baptist statesman in 1835.

Robert Boyte Crawford Howell came to Nashville from Norfolk, Va., to be pastor of First Church. Nashville then had about 6,000 citizens.

Baptist numbers in Middle Tennessee had been decimated

by the ravages of Campbellism. Howell found that only a few members remained with the church, and they were discouraged.

Howell responded by launching a constructive 16-page paper. It served to strengthen Baptists and help them recover their educational emphasis and their missionary and evangelistic outreach.

By the way, Howell helped in founding the Southern Baptist Convention and followed William B. Johnson as president. He never stopped serving the denomination in elected and salaried positions. He probably held more top positions than anyone in SBC history.

Howell's successor, J.R. Graves did more than change the name of the paper to *Tennessee Baptist*.

He became the champion of Landmarkism and plunged himself and the paper into constant controversy. He was editor for 40 years.

The *Tennessee Baptist* merged with the *American Baptist Reflector* of Chattanooga in 1889 with Edgar E. Folk as editor. Folk was a leader in Tennessee for education and temperance — and was founder of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

The paper was bought by the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1921. John D. Freeman was editor for eight years until he was named executive secretary of the convention's Executive Board.

I wonder why that precedent was abandoned!

The paper has a rich heritage, a history that we will delve into all through this 160th anniversary year. If you have memories of note, share them with us. □



ALLEN

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Christian view of counseling

■ families matter

By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

As a Christian counselor sometimes I am in the position of the man without a country.

There are many non-Christian counselors who do not understand how one can be a Christian and be academically and intellectually honest or trained. They look haughtily at anyone who would claim to be a Christian.

On the other hand, I have some Christian friends who do not understand how anyone claiming to be a Christian could study and have any belief in what they view as the secular humanistic field of psychology. They would say that all we need is Jesus and not counseling.

I will certainly admit that there are some really weird people in counseling.

I would never refer anyone to such counselors, because I do not agree with their methods.

Recently I discovered that there was a counselor at a fellow Christian counseling group that was using some of the most blatantly "new age" techniques that I have ever seen.

I called a friend of mine at the agency and this person was quickly discharged of duties.

But I know many fine, well-trained Christian counselors who "rightly divide the word of truth" in their counseling practice. I do not see Christianity and sound psychology at odds any more than I see Christianity and medicine at odds.

Proverbs 11:14 says, "Where no counsel is, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety." I think Christianity and sound psychological principles can be mutually supportive.

I definitely believe in and practice the power of prayer (I always close every counseling session with prayer).

I do not believe that a person who has cancer when they are saved can stop going for chemotherapy or radiation therapy just because they were saved.

Neither do I believe that a person who has emotional or psychological problems when they were saved is cured of them automatically.

I have also known committed Christians who became

physically ill and went for medical treatment. I did not think less of their Christian commitment. By the same token, I believe that Christians can develop problems with depression, anxiety, or other psychological issues without abandoning their faith.

One of my fervent Christian commitments is that God uses people to reach and minister to people. I don't know of anyone in the Bible who was saved without human instrumentality. If I knew of someone who had electrical problems and believed that God

could use me to minister to them in the name of Jesus in order to win them to Christ or restore their fellowship, I had to know something about electricity before I attempted to repair the wiring.

Some people have caused more damage when they tried to counsel because they did not know what they were dealing with.

The best guidance a friend can offer is to advise someone to seek professional help from a Christian caregiver. □



BARKLEY

■ just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Gus: "I saw you fussing a few minutes ago. What was the matter?" George: "Some fellow passed a phony quarter on me. Can you imagine anyone so low down?" Gus: "Yeah, that's a pretty sneaky trick. Let me see it." George: "I don't have it now. I put it in the Coke machine. But you can imagine..."

Take this thought

Have you ever noticed that some people who would never steal from an individual think nothing of stealing from an impersonal thing like a company or a machine?

Memorize this Scripture

"Thou shalt not steal" (Exodus 20:15).

Pray this Prayer

Help me to practice the words of Jesus who said, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matthew 7:12). □

Member supports Counce church for 93 years

By Roberta Cude
For Baptist and Reflector

COUNCE — Beulah Counce Parnell began her Sunday morning, March 26, the exact same way she's begun her Sunday mornings for the past nine centuries plus. She got up early, dressed in her Sunday best and went to Sunday School and church at First Church, Counce.

The only difference was that at the age of 93, she had to push a little harder ... put forth a little more effort ... to make it. She had celebrated her birthday on March 25.

She has a good memory and can remember her early years at the church when her mother laid her on a pallet between the seats during the services. Her mother, Ellie Elizabeth Roberts Counce, scolded her when she got noisy, patted her when she fretted, and generally taught her to be quiet and reverent when she was in the house of the Lord.

She joined the church at the age of 13 and has been a member for 80 years.

Her roots go deep in the church and in the community which was named for her forefathers. Not only did she give of her time, talents, and offerings through the years, she

and her husband, Bob, who is now in a local nursing home, gave the seven and a half acres on which the present church stands.

Through the years, the church was more to her than just a place of worship. At first it was called Bethel Church, and during those early years, it also served the community as a school. Beulah received her early education there. "We went to school for three and a half months out of the year," she said.

Community singing schools were also held in the church. It was at one of these singing schools — where singing to shaped notes was taught — that she met her husband. He sang bass and about half a dozen girls were "after" the curly-headed guy who was such a snappy dresser. Beulah was the shyest of the girls at the singing. But her shy ways appealed to Bob, and she won his heart. "I think he knew I'd always be good to him," she said with a smile.

The singers "teamed up" in marriage in August 1919. This year they will celebrate their 76th anniversary.

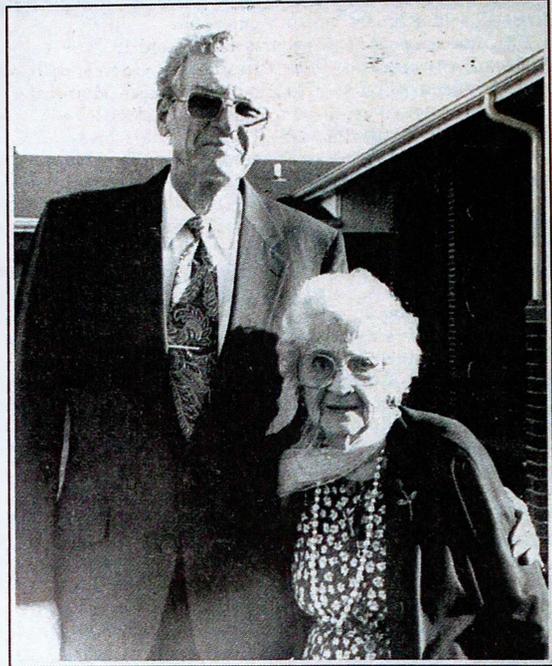
Beulah describes the church she attended in her youth. "It wasn't much of a building, and was pretty dilapidated, but we

tried to fix it up pretty. There was a little table which the minister used as his podium, and we had lots of kerosene lamps sitting around. There was an "amen corner" in the church and she and several of her uncles sat in those important seats and lent spiritual and vocal support to the minister.

"The people who sat in the amen corner were the backbone of the church. We had some shouters there, too," she said with approval. "I believe that if a person is overflowing, he should let it out.

At that time the church was affiliated with Landmark Baptists, she said. Later it became Southern Baptist, which she likes because she believes "in giving a lot to missions, whereas the Landmark Baptists didn't give to missions." The church, which is 191 years old, gives about 28 percent of its budget to missions.

Through the years the



ON THE DAY SHE WAS HONORED by her church Beulah Parnell stands with Lauren Locke, interim pastor of the church and her cousin.

church has been the nucleus of Beulah's life. Shortly after she and Bob married, he became a Christian and joined the church. The church people were there for the couple when their first son was stillborn and when they lost three more sons. "I guess the Lord didn't mean for us to have children," she said with acceptance,

adding she was glad she had the Lord to turn to in troubled times.

Bob was a deacon in the church and she held a variety of positions. And she remains active, having worn out three Bibles.

"It's been a long journey," she said. "It's been a long and a good Baptist journey." □

Divorce, not immorality, biggest threat to family: Campolo

By Keith Currey
For Baptist Press

JACKSON — While the term "family values" has become a political buzzword across the nation, evangelist and author Tony Campolo believes issues other than homosexuality and adultery are destroying the American family.

Campolo visited Union University's campus April 5-7 to lead the 24th annual Spring Bible Conference/Jones Lecture Series. Drawing from his experiences as a sociology professor and as founder of the Wake Up America! movement, Campolo shared insights on the conference's theme, "Courtship and Love, Marriage and Family."

"Family values is used to campaign against homosexuality, but it's used more for political purposes than for moral causes," Campolo said in an interview following one of his sermons. "The media loves to paint a picture of America going down the tubes, but incidents of sexual immorality are declining. America is a moral nation, and it's probably becoming more moral."

Citing a University of Chicago study, Campolo noted only six percent of married American men committed adultery last year, while only one percent of the population had a homosexual encounter. Despite these statistics, Campolo said he believes family advocates still have reason for concern.

"People are more moral today, but immorality has been replaced by a pious, mean egocentrism which may prove more damaging than crime or homosexuality," Campolo said. "Divorce, not gays and lesbians, is what will destroy the American family."

"Americans today are more selfish

mance wears off," Campolo said. "After a wedding, the intense romance in a relationship only lasts about a year."

Using Christ as the model for a marriage partner, Campolo described the attributes necessary for a love relationship.

"Love isn't a feeling that 'just hap-

America's Christians in other areas, as well.

"Now that communism is gone, no one is critiquing capitalism," Campolo observed. "It has become an unrestrained monster, and now we believe the poor are not our problem."

Campolo noted Christianity exists in two realms, the abstract and the physical. Abstract Christianity is based on theological concepts, while physical Christianity is practiced through feeding the hungry and caring for the sick and suffering.

"We have become like the Pharisees of Jesus' time; placing greater emphasis on bickering about the abstract than caring for the physical," Campolo said. "The church shows hypocrisy when it passes strong resolutions against homosexuality but maintains a lax position on divorce and remarriage. We have a tendency to pick on the things we don't do."

Church involvement, tithing, and a solid system of beliefs are important for Christians, according to Campolo, but more important is the promise to serve.

"Being a Christian is about keeping promises," Campolo said. "Whether standing by your mate or embracing those in need, commitments establish identity. If you have no commitment, then you have no identity. Only one thing takes precedent over a calling; that's a promise." □

The church shows hypocrisy when it passes strong resolutions against homosexuality but maintains a lax position on divorce and remarriage.

— Tony Campolo, evangelist and author

than ever before," Campolo said.

"Christians are quick to condemn drugs, crime, and homosexuality, but slow to acknowledge their own shortcomings. Pious, insensitive attitudes concerning issues like poverty and discrimination are contributing to the overall decline of the family."

Campolo emphasized the importance of marriage and promise keeping throughout the conference, underscoring his words with the themes of love and grace.

"Every wedding creates the possibility for a marriage; the secret is knowing how to love one another after the ro-

pens'; it's a decision to do the right thing; to do what Jesus would do in your situation," Campolo said. "In the midst of cultural definitions of what a man or woman should be, we've forgotten what Jesus is all about. We all need to know the meaning of the word 'grace.'"

"Loving someone is about looking into them, not at them," Campolo continued. "If what you see is what you get, then you're not a Christian, because Christians get something that cannot be seen."

According to Campolo, "looking at" rather than "looking in" has plagued

In response to Youth Evangelism Conference

Youth begins prayer meeting at high school

By Tom Bailey
For Baptist and Reflector

MILLINGTON — About 6:50 a.m., a few students gather on the grass at the northwest corner of the Millington Central High School campus.

By 6:55, still 20 minutes before classes start, a section of sidewalk is covered with books and backpacks the youths have put down to free their hands as they gather.

No, they aren't gathering for another racial fray like the one that stunned MCHS Feb. 14. This time, they want to hold hands and pray.

"Everybody, let's gather around," yells Mike Gill, 18, as most watches strike 7 on this Friday. By now, 74 students are forming a circle.

The nameless fellowship started with five students before school the previous Monday, growing to 24 Tuesday, 50 Wednesday, and 60 Thursday.

Last month's disturbance did not directly cause the prayer gatherings, but it seems to only bolster the motivation for them.

While public prayer in public school is prohibited, voluntary prayer before or after school, even on school grounds, is not a problem in Shelby County Schools, said system spokesman James Hayslip. "As long as it's outside school hours and nothing is forced on anybody," he said.

"OK, we're going to start with a word of prayer and afterward we're going to move in a little closer," instructs Gill, looking comfortable in khaki

shorts and a T-shirt.

The students complete their circle by holding hands. Kasey Booker, 16, steps a yard inside the ring where she prays aloud, asking God to help the students not be ashamed to witness their Christian faith and to "give us the words to say."

Gill had said that while the morning activity does not have a name, it has a motto: "Not to be ashamed."

"We're praying for Christians in school to go out and witness," he had said before the prayers.

A Baptist youth evangelism conference in Nashville inspired the gather-

ings, Gill said. A number of youth from First Church, Millington, which neighbors the school, participated in the conference, including Gill.

After Booker's prayer, Gill steps to the center of the circle and reads Bible passages and a short devotional. He rotates so all can hear him above the traffic on Wilkinsville Road and a passing railroad train several blocks east.

Just as Gill begins to tell the students to break up into smaller groups, a boy in the ring speaks up, "There's a guy named ... who got saved in fourth period yesterday."

Applause breaks out. Gill asks how many others witnessed their faith the day before. About a dozen hands rise.

"Get into groups of people you don't know," Gill says.

After the small groups pray together the large group reassembles at 7:10 and stretches its handheld circle to a diameter of about 25 yards. Curious students inside the school building look down from second-floor windows.

Gill announces, "We're going to be doing this again after we get back from spring break." Another prayer is sent up, and the students head inside. □

© 1995, Memphis Commercial Appeal

Mike Gill, 15, reports how youth prayer group started

For Baptist and Reflector

MILLINGTON — Mike Gill, 15, attended the Tennessee Youth Evangelism Conference March 10-11 with about 120 other youth from First Church, Millington.

He had never been to such a meeting, which drew about 26,000 youth, he said. God spoke to him especially during an evening devotion time for his church's group, which lasted about three hours because of youth sharing, said Gill.

"I realized I wasn't really standing up for Christ in my daily walk," he said.

The Monday after he returned Gill and a friend decided they would have

a devotion out in front of Millington Central High School. Some fellow students drove by and honked and yelled at them, said Gill, but they persisted and later that day he found out three other students were doing the same thing in the school's parking lot.

They decided to rally their forces and pass the word to invite others.

The next morning there were 24 students, said Gill. Now almost every morning about 70 students join the gathering. Because of the numbers involved, he's had to move the time to 6:50 to allow enough time, he explained.

He's amazed, he said, admitting he thought interest would diminish, but he keeps praying that it keeps going,

he said.

A group of about 42 even met the one morning it has rained, reported Gill. The students may have been unaware of the meeting place, he explained, which was under a covered walkway of the church.

Gill gives a devotional each morning, explaining he gets the ideas while working with animals on the Double B Ranch, a Tennessee Baptist Children's Home institution near Millington for boys where his parents work.

One result of the prayer group, Gill reported, is that students are witnessing and many are becoming Christians. Another result is that a teacher's prayer group plans to begin meeting. □

Baptists give snacks, spiritual food at Bristol raceway

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

BRISTOL — When the National Association of Stock Cars or NASCAR comes twice a year to the Bristol International Raceway, its 80,000 seats are filled and its campground becomes the third largest city in the state of Tennessee, noted Bob Fleming, director of the Raceway Ministry of Bristol.

It's a great opportunity for Christians, said Fleming, who directed the 115 Baptist volunteers working at the March 30-April 2 event.

"If Jesus were in Bristol on race weekend, where would he be?" asked Fleming. "If the Scriptures are correct, he would be where the crowds are. That's the way we look at it."

Baptists provide food to fans, which is "different for the fans who are used to being gouged for \$4 hamburgers and \$2 drinks," said Fleming. The volunteers provide rides via golf carts, a racing schedule with a brief Gospel message, of which 25,000 were distributed

during the last event, and the *Racing for Kids* magazine. They also lead a morning worship service at the campground, which was attended by 135 folks from 16 states on April 2, said Fleming. The service included singing and a testimony from a NASCAR personality.

The workers, who are members of Virginia Avenue Church, where Fleming is minister of music, Volunteer Church, which is in Bristol, Va., get their inspiration from race enthusiasts like the man who stopped by the ministry's tent in the campground area to renew acquaintances.

He told them he went home last August after seeing his first NASCAR race to tell his friends that the most impressive thing he experienced were the Christians at the red and white tent "who offered him fellowship, spiritual guidance,

and took care of his needs while he was there," said Fleming. This is a man who not only traveled hundreds of miles to the event but paid about \$80 for a ticket to an event which is televised all over the world. Fleming added some races at the Bristol track, which is considered the world's fastest half-mile track, have a waiting list of 12,000.

The ministry is an outgrowth of the Charlotte, N.C., based Motor Racing Outreach.

MRO ministers to drivers, crew members, and their families across the country. When Fleming learned about that ministry, he approached the Bristol raceway owner with the concept of a ministry to the fans. The raceway owner and manager encouraged him and the result is the largest raceway ministry in terms of volunteers in the nation, reported Fleming.

Based at their signature tent wearing raceway ministry

T-shirts, this year the volunteers gave out 8,400 cookies, 550 bags of popcorn, 2,000 cups of coffee, and almost 1,000 cups of hot chocolate in addition to the literature.

"We try to provide a Christian atmosphere for people while they're away from home. If people have a problem, we're here to help them. We pray with them if they have a specific problem," said Fleming.

While a few fans can get a bit rowdy during the race weekend, he noted, it retains a family atmosphere. "By and large, we get a very positive response to what we're doing."

The raceway ministry volunteers will be back in October at the next NASCAR event. "Our folks look forward to this every year," he noted. "We've done it enough to where it works like a well-oiled machine now."

The ministry is supported by the churches and the Tennessee Baptist Convention Golden State Missions Offering which funds such resort ministries. □ — Allen Gregory of the *Bristol Herald Courier* contributed to this article.

Schools sponsor meetings to help area ministers

For Baptist and Reflector

Both Union University and Carson-Newman College are hosting meetings for pastors in their area. The West Tennessee Pastors' Conference will be May 2 at Union and the East Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference will be April 27 at Carson-Newman.

The meeting at Union will begin with fellowship at 10 a.m., followed by the conference at 10:45 in the Harvey Lecture Hall. Murray F. Mathis, pastor of Third Church, Murfreesboro, will speak about "Meeting the Challenge of the Minister's Family." The Minister's Wives' Fellowship also will meet.

The meeting at Carson-Newman will begin at 9 a.m. in the Thomas Recital Hall and include Joe Stackel, pastor, Belmont Heights Church, Nashville, who will speak on "The Pastor as Leader of the Contemporary Church," and Paul Baxter of First Church, LaGrange, Ga.

Lunch will be provided by both of the schools. □

Jesus ... would be where the crowds are.

— Bob Fleming, director, Raceway Ministry of Bristol

Burundi's people face tear, uncertain future

Baptist Press

BUJUMBURA, Burundi — The tragedy waiting to happen in Burundi has Southern Baptist missionaries and the Foreign Mission Board's rapid response team wondering what to do and where.

That wonder grows against the backdrop of a new wave of ethnic killings in Burundi that has the potential of escalating into the genocide which occurred last year in neighboring Rwanda between the same ethnic groups, the Hutus and Tutsis.

The violence in Rwanda sent untold thousands fleeing as refugees and resulted in a million-dollar-plus relief effort on behalf of Southern Baptists by

the Foreign Mission Board.

The current feeling in Burundi is that short-term Baptists relief efforts should focus on refugee camps in Tanzania if the need arises, rather than try to operate in Burundi in the middle of what one observer calls "civil murder."

Meanwhile, career missionaries working to establish and strengthen churches and preaching the Gospel in the central African nation are perplexed about their long and short term futures.

"We're supposed to leave for furlough in the United States in July but right now we don't know if we can leave our work in Burundi or what," missionary Cathy Brandon said April 9. "We'll just have to sit down and talk and pray

about what to do."

Brandon was scheduled to return to Burundi April 11 to join her husband David at their home in Gitega in the northern part of the country. Both are from Elizabethtown, Ky.

Brandon and the only other SBC couple assigned to Burundi, Steve and Tara Smith, from Texas, flew back to Burundi April 3. They were in Kenya for their mission meeting when the latest round of violence exploded in Bujumbura, Burundi, March 24. It left hundreds dead and sent tens of thousands of refugees surging across the nearby Zaire border.

The Foreign Mission Board survey team, scheduled to go to Burundi before the latest outbreak of killing, ar-

rived April 6 to see what Southern Baptists should prepare to do if ethnic war escalates. It has been simmering for some time. The United Nations reported extensive gunfire and exploding grenades around the capital both nights the survey team was there.

"On the surface, if you didn't know how things normally are you'd think Bujumbura was normal if you just drove through the city," said missionary Tad Tadlock, assigned to Uganda but deeply involved in working with Rwandan refugees in Zaire.

Entire neighborhoods and markets are abandoned in pockets of the city and foreigners are advised not to travel out of the capital and not to walk anywhere. □

Kentucky editor charges defamation by Baptist Press news story

Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — The editor of a Kentucky Baptist newsjournal has charged that he was defamed by a Baptist Press news story.

Marv Knox, editor of the *Western Recorder*, said in a memorandum to state Baptist newspaper editors he had consulted with legal counsel but will not press charges.

At issue is an April 7 Baptist Press story, "Southern trustee chairman counters editor's criticism of Mohler," reporting on an open-letter response by Richard White, chairman of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's trustees, to a March 28 editorial by Knox decrying Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler's dismissal of Diana R. Garland as dean of the 117-student Carver School of Church Social Work.

"Legal counsel I have received leads me to believe any court would agree that the material as printed in the BP story is defamatory," Knox wrote to fellow editors.

Herb Hollinger, vice president for convention news (Baptist Press) for the SBC Executive Committee, said the story, written by Baptist Press editor Art Toalston, was one in a continuing series of stories on the seminary developments.

Hollinger said the story was "far from defamatory."

"The seminary trustee chairman has a right to respond to criticism in the editorial and we (Baptist Press) have a right and responsibility

to report it," Hollinger said.

Knox complained that a paragraph in the story quoting White seemed to include him, Knox, as someone who opposes the seminary's efforts "to stand for biblical moral values and conservative theological positions."

White wrote: "There are those within the secular culture and even a few within our own denomination who do not want Southern Seminary to stand for biblical moral values and conservative theological positions. They have rightly perceived Dr. Mohler as one who opposes their efforts to transform our culture, and have attacked him at every opportunity for his faithful adherence to the values many of us hold sacred."

In the Baptist Press story, the paragraph appeared after paragraphs recounting:

■ four requirements for faculty nomination that a semi-

nary administrator, David Dockery, vice president for academic administration, said reflect a strong consensus among trustees: 1) affirming women in ministry and their giftedness but restricting the role of women in the church from the office of senior pastor; 2) affirming the exclusiveness of salvation in Jesus Christ alone; 3) being clear that the Bible teaches that all homosexual behavior is sinful; and 4) acknowledging that the sanctity of life is pro-life and against abortion except in the most extreme circumstances.

■ portions of Knox's editorial stating "Jesus couldn't teach church social work at Southern Seminary. He isn't orthodox enough"; implying Mohler could lose his support among trustees and be forced to leave the presidency "if, or when, accreditation is threatened, enrollment falls, and contribu-

tions dry up"; and assessing that the students were worried their degrees — necessary for obtaining required licenses and getting social work jobs — will be worthless. Faculty and student morale throughout the seminary is shot. Candidates for vacancies in other seminary schools are having second thoughts, if not backing out altogether. Alumni are recoiling in horror."

Baptist Press then cited White's comment.

Knox noted White's "insinuating sentence" in the open letter was "not similarly juxtaposed" to Knox's beliefs.

Knox stated he believes homosexual activity to be sinful; that life begins at conception and abortion is wrong; and he

affirms the *Baptist Faith and Message's* assertion Scripture "has truth, without mixture of error, for its matter."

"I do indeed disagree with Dr. Mohler about women in ministry, but in so doing I stand alongside thousands upon thousands of Southern Baptists and many of the most committed conservative evangelical scholars of our day," Knox wrote.

With the Baptist Press story first mentioning the four specific issues, then quoting White, Knox contended the implication is "unseemly, malicious, and a personal affront."

The Baptist Press story quoted solely from White's letter and Knox's original editorial. □

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■ the missionaries

■ **Larry and Cheryl Keathley Cox**, missionaries, are on the field and can be reached at Waldeckstr. 57-1, 79400 Kandern, Germany. He serves as associate to area director for Europe. She is from Memphis.

■ **Robert and Veronica Erwin**, missionaries to Brazil, are on the field and can be reached at Caixa Postal 61, 17, 760-000 Inubia Paulista, Brazil. He grew up in Oak Ridge and Knox County.

■ **Guy and Tammy Graves Causey**, missionaries to Ghana, are on the field and can be reached at P.O. Box 400 Accra, Ghana. She was born in Memphis and both consider Humboldt their hometown.

■ **John and Deborah Dorr**, Baptist representatives, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service and can be reached at P.O. Box 835, 6307 Larnaca, Cyprus. He considers Maryville his hometown.

■ **Clay and Debbie Porter**, missionaries to Hong Kong, are on the field and can be reached at Hong Kong Baptist Mission, 169 Boundary Street, Kowloon, Hong Kong. He was born in Newbern and she is from Somerville.

■ **Patricia Stooksbury**, missionary to Bolivia, is on the field and can be reached at Casilla 3168, Santa Cruz, Bolivia. She is from Knoxville.

■ **John and Sandy Mar-**

tin Silver, missionaries to Paraguay, are on the field and can be reached at Casilla 264, Ciudad Del Este, Paraguay. He was born in Morristown and considers Jefferson City his hometown. She is from Dandridge.

■ **William and Judy McCall**, missionaries to Togo, are on the field and can be reached at BP 4860, Lome, Togo. He is a native of Maryville.

■ the associations

■ The Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting of Big Emory Association will be April 25 at First Church, Kingston. Barbara Joiner of Columbiana, Ala., a writer for WMU publications and author, will speak. Joiner has written *The Dynamic Woman I Am, Yours for the Giving, Count It All Joy, With a Servant Heart, and Gloria*. The meeting will begin at 6:30 with a covered dish dinner. Joiner will speak at 7:30. For more information, contact Kathy Davis, associational WMU director, at (615) 882-9770.

■ the schools

■ **Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy**, Seymour, will hold its second session of the Mountain Empire Bible Training School in Kingsport. The school, for Bible students and ministers, begins April 25 and runs eight weeks on Tues-

day evenings. "Studies in Timothy and Titus" and "A Study of the Holy Spirit" will be offered. For more information, contact (615) 245-3141 or 573-8321.

■ **Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City**, awarded Kitty R. Coffey, dean of Applied Human Sciences and chair of the Family and Consumer Sciences Department, its 23rd annual distinguished faculty award. It is the highest honor given to a C-N faculty member. She has worked at C-N for 18 years.

■ 'Here's Hope' revivals

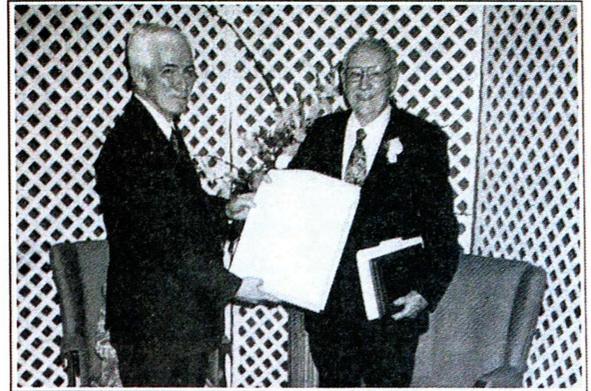
■ **First Church, Petros**, will be holding its revival April 23-26. Charles Parker, pastor, First Church, Oliver Springs, will speak.

■ **George Weaver of Selmer** will speak at the April 30 - May 5 revival of **First Church, Parsons**. Alan McCall of Parsons will lead the music.

■ **David B. Ray**, pastor, First Church, Parsons, will speak at the revival of **Columbia Avenue Church, Pontiac, Mich.**, to support the Michigan/Tennessee Baptist Partnership.

■ the churches

■ **Pleasant View Church, Talbott**, dedicated a new



WILLIE B. HATCHER, right, receives a book of remembrances from Ray Fowler, pastor of Highland Heights Church, Memphis, where Hatcher has served as church clerk continuously for 47 years. The presentation was made on Willie B. Hatcher Day, March 12. Other activities included music during worship services by family members and a reception.

Allen organ Feb. 26. It was a gift of a church family.

■ On April 23 **West End Church, Columbia**, will dedicate its renovated facilities with a service led by James Porch, executive director, Tennessee Baptist Convention. An Open House will follow from 2-4 p.m. which will include music from the church's adult choir, Keith Moore, director of the choir of First United Methodist Church, Columbia, and the Chamber Singers. The church's new building was St. Catherine's Catholic Church, Columbia.

■ **Bluegrass Church, Hendersonville**, will celebrate its 25th anniversary with the theme "Rekindle the Flame" in April. A "Ministry of

Song" will be held April 23 at 10:30 a.m. and feature the church's music ministry. The main celebration will be on April 30 during the morning service and followed with a luncheon. For further information, call (615) 824-0001.

■ **Fred Steelman**, pastor, Red Bank Church, Chattanooga, will lead an April 23-27 revival at **Bartlebaugh Church, Chattanooga**.

■ **Southeast Church, Murfreesboro**, has been using its new 7,268-square-foot educational addition which cost \$321,000. Instead of meeting in a gym, youth now meet in classrooms and an assembly area in the addition. It also includes adult classrooms.

Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

The two-edged sword

By Michael L. Shea, pastor
Parkway Village Church, Memphis

You have heard all sorts of reasons for spending time along with God. In spite of all the encouragements, both biblical and personal, many still find it difficult to maintain a consistent devotional life. Sometimes it's a matter of temperament; sometimes it's a matter of know-how ... but there is another reason we have difficulty.

The Scripture teaches us, "for the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from his sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do," Hebrews 4:12, 13.

No wonder it is difficult to meet with the Lord. The Word of God is sharp; it cuts us deeply and it pierces us. It discerns our hidden thoughts and our hid-

den motives. Everything about us is seen by him. This sort of discomfort is not inviting. We carry around with us our sense of fallenness, our sense of imperfection, and we know things about ourselves that we would rather stuff than admit.

What do we do? Sometimes we limit our reading to the "feel-good" sections of the Bible. After running out of those, many simply stop reading. This is a great tragedy. We cannot experience God apart from reading the Bible diligently and prayerfully.

This passage in Hebrews continues with this encouragement, "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need" (vv. 15, 16).

What do we need once we have been wounded? We need mercy (mercy means we don't get what we deserve) and we need grace (grace means we receive what we don't deserve). Where

are we going to get the help we need? At the throne of grace, from the one who has wounded us, from the one who understands us because he is one of us.

Don't shrink back any longer. After the pain is divine comfort. We need to experience the fullness of God. □

In the midst of revival

By Calvin S. Metcalf, pastor
Central Church, Fountain City, Knoxville

As I write this article we are in the midst of revival. Yet, there is a sense in which we should always be "in the midst of revival." When these days are over, and they will be by the time you read this, we should still be in the midst of revival. Hopefully the impetus of our days of revival will contribute to a continuing awareness of revival.

In reality, the purpose of every event of our church is to revive some aspect of our Christian lives. We come to Bible study to revive our interest and knowledge of God's Word. We come to worship to revive our spirits and celebrate the Gospel. We have a variety of activi-

ties to revive a sense of fellowship among us. We project a number of ministries to revive our willingness to join Jesus in reaching out to folk with various needs. We sing, we pray, we study, we play, we work, we witness, we sin, we repent, we apologize, we forgive, we laugh, we cry, we hurt, we heal, we hate, we love, we reach out, we reach up and the spirit of revival keeps us close to one another and to God.

Thank you for being a revival people as every time we gather, we stretch our minds and hearts toward God. Thank you for your investment in the reviving processes of our church. Our song indeed is "Revive Us Again" and again, and again, and again. □

Articles included in "Tennessee Sampler — views, insights" are written by Tennessee Baptist church and associational leaders. The articles are chosen for publication from newsletters of churches and associations. The *Baptist and Reflector* does not necessarily concur with the views expressed.

Work permit dispute involves Zambia VP, attorney general

Baptist Press

LUSAKA, Zambia — The impasse over work permits for Southern Baptist missionaries in Zambia has reached the offices of the country's vice president and attorney general.

The attorney general intervened and instructed the chief immigration officer to grant 30-day extensions to the work permits of four missionary couples after the immigration official's repeated refusals to obey a court order to do so.

He even refused after the Baptist Mission of Zambia filed a contempt citation in court on March 28 to keep four missionaries from being expelled March 31 while the mission continues efforts to resolve the dispute between it and the convention.

The attorney general's deci-

sion allows Ed and Linda Miller, Mike and Lindy Howard, Dwayne and Betty Mitchell, and Jim and Thelma Cooke, all from Texas, to retain their legal status at least until the end of April.

Zambian Vice President Godfrey Miyanda entered the discussion in early April. After meeting with leaders of the Baptist Convention of Zambia to learn their views, he invited missionary Bonita Wilson, acting administrator for the mission, to meet with him April 5.

Miyanda stressed at the meeting that it's not his role to solve church matters. But, as a Christian brother, he said, he's concerned about the two-year old problem that has only recently come to his attention.

Wilson shared a history of Baptist work in the country. That included (1) the work of

the Zambia Baptist Council which, until the dispute of work permits, coordinated and planned the evangelism work of the mission and the convention, (2) the Baptist position on autonomy of the local church and other Baptist organizations (such as associations, the convention, and the mission), and (3) the difficulty missionaries are having concentrating on anything other than the

work permit issue — especially the four families going through monthly trauma wondering if the permits will be extended.

An earlier meeting between leaders of the mission and the convention on March 24 surfaced basic differences between missionaries and the convention over the philosophy of mission financing and the nature of church autonomy.

Besides control over work

permits, the convention wants control of the budget and program of the Baptist Mission of Zambia and the authority to tell churches what to do. That fits more the pattern of a hierarchical form of church government than the Baptist congregational approach.

Wilson told Miyanda the mission cannot surrender basic beliefs, such as autonomy although it wants to reconcile. □

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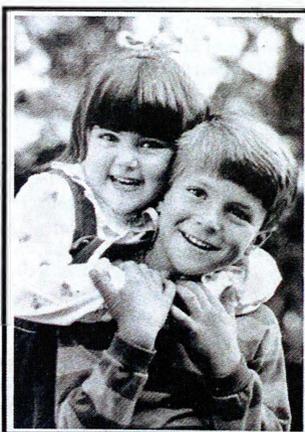
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■ Sunday School lesson commentary

**Life and Work Series
for April 23
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Acts 13:2-3, 46b-48;
14:21-23, 26-27**

Blazing new trails

By Chuck McElhannon

The church at Antioch is a model of creative ministry and missions. They were a sending church, a missionary-minded church; and they became the center of influence for the early growth of Christianity. Today's local churches can learn how to effectively reach our world for Christ from the example of this great church.

Sending out laborers — ch. 13:2-3

People may come to know Jesus in private settings, and they may pursue relationships with Jesus in private ways, but the local church is the sending organization. The church is where laborers are developed, equipped, affirmed, and sent forth. It was while the church was gathered for worship that Barnabas and Paul were called out by God for mission service. God had two individuals in mind, but he issued the call to the church, and the church affirmed it.

Believers today should worship with the same sense of calling and sending. Every worship service should ideally end with the understanding that we are all being called by God and sent forth by the church, on a mission of ministry and service. When the church truly focuses on God in worship, then God is able to inspire believers to creative service.

Reaching people — vv. 46b-48

There must be a sense of urgency in the spread of the Gospel. While it is true that God is patient and not willing that any should perish, there will come a time when we run out of time. Therefore, we should concentrate our best efforts on those who are most receptive to the Gospel. Paul and Barnabas didn't miss a beat when the Jews rejected their message. They simply heeded Jesus' earlier advice to his disciples (Matthew 10:14) and shook the dust off their feet and moved on to others (in this case, the Gentiles, who were very responsive).

Strengthening believers — ch. 14:21-23

The Great Commission is fulfilled as churches strengthen and equip its members to understand and accept their individual roles in God's overall plan. The following phrases in these two verses all reinforce the idea of equipping: strengthening the disciples, encouraging them, appointed elders, committed them to the Lord.

Evangelism does not end when people accept Christ as Savior. The work of strengthening and equipping must be done. Healthy churches are made of strong believers. The goal of the Great Commission is not just to baptize, but to make believers who are committed to observing and obeying all that Christ has commanded.

Being accountable to the church — vv. 26-27

Paul and Barnabas understood they were accountable to the church which sent them out. Laborers are not sent out with free reign to do whatever they please. Paul and Barnabas knew that God's movement among the Gentiles was not the kind of thing that should go unreported. There was the possibility that some members of the Antioch church would have questions about sharing the Gospel with Gentiles, so Paul and Barnabas were open about what God had directed them to do.

There are several benefits for reporting mission activity to the local church. (1) The laborers can be affirmed if the work is going well, or encouraged if the work is difficult. (2) The church can be motivated to continue or increase its level of support for the workers. (3) Everyone can rejoice with a sense of partnership with God. There is a place for each one of us in God's work. We can worship, encourage, labor, send, go, serve, witness, pray, and give. God will use anyone who makes himself available. □ — Chuck McElhannon is pastor of Valley View Church, Nashville

Exercising liberty wisely

By Brian Courtney

Christians agree that there are certain activities that are right. It is right to tell the truth, minister to others, love each other, and worship God. At the same time there are activities that are wrong. It is wrong to give a false witness, steal, or commit adultery. But what about those activities where there is no clear biblical injunction? Is social drinking, use of birth control, or attending movies right or wrong? Serious Christians have strong opinions on these and many more issues. How does a Christian relate to another Christian who has a different opinion? How can harmony and unity exist in the context of strong opinions?

The discussion of the issue — vv. 1-8

Paul writes I Corinthians in response to certain questions raised by the Corinthian church (ch. 1:11). In chapter 8, Paul addresses the issue of food offered to idols. The question comes to Paul out of a difference of opinion in the church about whether or not a Christian should eat food that had been sacrificed to some god. One group thought that it was alright since the god did not exist (v. 4). The other group thought that such eating violated the second of the Ten Commandments (v. 4; see Exodus 20:4). Which opinion is correct?

For Paul it is not a matter of who is correct. In verses 1-3 Paul indicates that Christians need to let love, not knowledge, be the deciding factor in such issues. Knowledge has the tendency to make people proud. Love has the tendency to help people be considerate of others and "builds up" the church. And further, love indicates "one is known by" God. For Paul, the issue is submitting knowledge to love.

Based on this submission, Paul sets forth the implications. In verses 4-6 Paul agrees with those who know nothing is wrong with eating meat sacrificed to idols. He agrees with them that an "idol has no real exist-

ence" (v. 4) and there "is only one God" (v. 6). He further states there is no spiritual benefit from food because "food will not commend us to God" (v. 8). The conclusion is that Paul knows there is nothing wrong with eating meat sacrificed to an idol.

Paul's "however" (v. 7) introduces another matter. There were church members who did not know

there was only one God. Therefore, eating meat sacrificed to an idol meant worshipping that god. They saw the practice as wrong because of their background or level of spiritual maturity. Paul implies that what is right for one Christian is not right for another. How is such conflict of opinions resolved?

Implementing a principle — vv. 9-13

Paul resolves this conflict by addressing those who see nothing wrong with eating meat sacrificed to idols. He warns them not to let this "liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak" (v. 9). He further suggests those who see nothing wrong with eating sacrificed meat are responsible for destroying the weak (v. 11). He even adds that by sinning against a weaker person in this way they are sinning against Christ (v. 12). Paul's principle is clear: each Christian needs to be concerned about their opinions and conduct upon the spiritual life of other Christians.

The principle applied

How can Christians apply this principle? Ask yourself a basic question. Do I have any habit, amusement, or practice that would cause another Christian to stumble? The local church can ask the same question about opinionated issues: Is what we are doing causing someone to stumble? And the list could go on. But remember three things: (1) Every person has an opinion on issues and opinions will clash; (2) knowledge must submit to love; and (3) do not cause someone to stumble. If a Christian does, he/she sins against Christ. □ — Brian Courtney is pastor of First Church, Sneedville.

Convention Uniform Series for April 23 Focal Passage I Corinthians 8

Early controversy

By Thomas Vinson

A naive young man stood in the art gallery criticizing the Mona Lisa. "Young man," said the administrator, "the Mona Lisa is not on trial, you are." His critical spirit said more about himself than anything else. The same is true of the critics of the Lord Jesus (Mark 2:1-3:6). The conflict with evil moves from the wilderness to the city as Jesus begins His spiritual invasion of the well fortified domain of religious misinterpretation.

Mark selects five confrontations to illustrate the rising level of opposition which Jesus encounters. Like a stalker, the adherents to legalistic religion dog his every step. The good news he brings challenges the drudgery of the law. His authority threatens the Scribes. His concern and compassion for people tears at the tradition of putting law above human need. Hammered out on the anvil of confrontation, Jesus' ministry takes on a five fold focus.

Ministry of forgiveness — vv. 1-12

Jesus' reception back in Capernaum was enthusiastic. The pronouncement of the forgiveness of the sins of the paralytic caused the critical eyes of the Pharisees to squint with disapproval. They did a masterful job of thinking logically to the wrong conclusion. They were

Bible Book Series for April 23 Focal Passage: Mark 2:1 - 3:6

right in declaring, "only God can forgive sins" (v. 7). They were tragically wrong in failing to recognize that the One before them was God. His introduction of the term "Son of Man" (v. 10) had obvious Messianic overtones (Daniel 7:13). Blindly these teachers thought forgiveness could only come through what McKenna calls "the rut of their ritual."

Ministry of hope — vv. 13-17

Levi would probably have won the "most hated man in Galilee" contest. He had amassed wealth by bleeding his own people. Spiritually and socially he was a loser. Just as Michelangelo saw potential in raw marble, so Jesus saw potential in this unrefined tax collector. This should give us all hope. Peter could go back to fishing if things got bad, but Matthew was walking away from a lucrative job and burning his bridges behind him. Who are the hated, hopeless classes to which Jesus wants us to bring a ministry of hope?

Ministry of Joy — vv. 18-22

Because of Pharisaical abuse, fasting had lost its original meaning and their religion had lost its joy.

Jesus' analogy of the "bridegroom" introduces the note of jubilation. To put on a mask of mourning in the presence of the bridegroom was totally inappropriate. There will be a legitimate time for fasting after the bridegroom is gone (v. 20). Perhaps this is a veiled announcement of his forthcoming death.

Ministry of grace — vv. 23-28

The Pharisees are lurking behind every blade of grain. Jesus uses an illustration from the Old Testament (vv. 25-26) to show that their narrow interpretation of the Sabbath blurred God's intention. The Sabbath was meant to benefit not deprive man of well being and health.

Ministry of mercy — ch. 3:1-6

Jesus further escalates the controversy by healing this man on the Sabbath. By implication Jesus is saying that if he failed to heal the man, even though it was the Sabbath, he would be doing evil (v. 4). This lesson should challenge us to emulate our Lord by allowing our ministry to others to be characterized by forgiveness, hope, joy, grace, and mercy. □ — Thomas Vinson is pastor of Leawood Church, Memphis.

Arkansas director Don Moore announces retirement plans

Baptist Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Don Moore, 62, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Conventin since 1982, has announced his plans to retire by Feb. 29, 1996. Moore made the announcement March 30 to the ABSC executive board operating committee, which will serve as the search committee for his successor.

Looking toward the future, he said, "I can't help but have some good hopes but I think the tendency toward independent churches will create some difficult times. I feel that 98 percent of our churches desperately need the assistance the state convention can give and that we need to be careful to not structure denominational life around the few mega-churches that are self-contained."

Operating committee chairman Billy Kite, director of missions for Ashley Association, will chair the search committee seeking Moore's successor. Nominations for the position of executive director may be mailed to Kite at P.O. Box 1184, Crossett, AR 71635. Kite requested that full biographical sketches be included with each nomination. □

Pastor in Missouri withdraws nomination by S.C. college

Baptist Press

ANDERSON, S.C. — A Missouri pastor withdrew at the last moment after he was named the unanimous choice of a six-member search committee for the president of Anderson College, a Baptist school in Anderson, S.C.

The college's search committee was to meet in special session April 4 with Gary E. Parker, pastor of First Church, Jefferson City, Mo., as the nominee. His last-minute withdrawal left the committee without a candidate.

The committee had enthusiastically selected Parker from more than 80 candidates. When other trustees received his resume a week before the meeting, however, opposition developed.

"But it was only one or two, one especially," Jack Ellenburg of Anderson, vice chairman of trustees and the search committee, told the *Baptist Courier*, newjournal of the South Carolina Baptist Convention. Parker said he was aware of

the opposition but it was "so intense" that it would have affected his administration.

Wayne Dickard, pastor of Southside Church, Greer, and a second-year trustee, told the *Courier* he was opposed to Parker. "He is not conservative," Dickard said. □

CSI reports answers to couple's death due in two months

Baptist Press

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — Results of the investigation into the deaths of the Southern Baptist couple serving in Khabarovsk, Russia, will not be released for at least two months.

That's the opinion of a Cooperative Services International (CSI) representative who was in Russia recently to expedite return of the bodies.

The couple, Chu Hon and Kei Wal Yi, were found dead in their Russian apartment on March 28 by local police. At that time they reported that Yi, 60, had sustained several blows to his head and Mrs. Yi, 59, had been strangled.

The Yis had served in Khabarovsk since June 1993. He was a retired cardiologist who had received local acclaim for his work with the Khabarovsk Medical Institute, where he taught in conjunction with an exchange program sponsored by CSI, a Southern Baptist aid organization. There was no sign of forced entry and it appears robbery was not the motive. □

Study shows majority of adult baptisms are rebaptisms

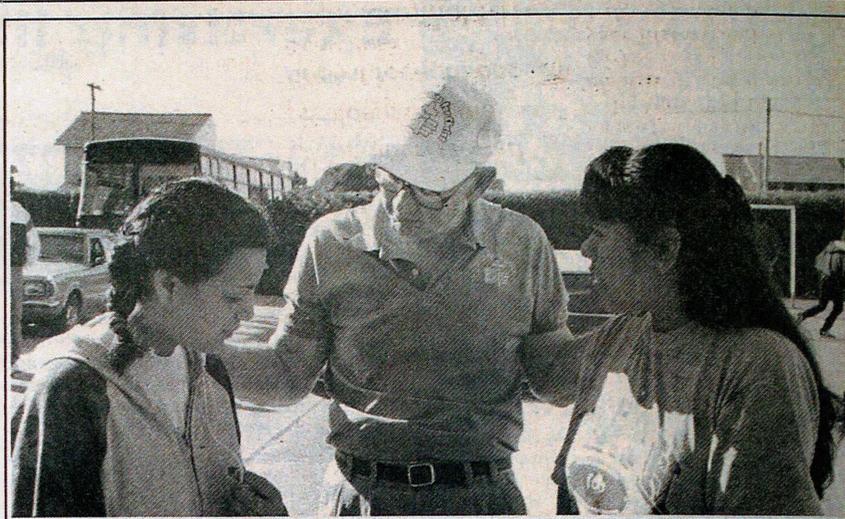
Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA — More than 60 percent of adults baptized in Southern Baptist Convention churches in 1993 had been baptized before, according to a nationwide scientific survey by the SBC Home Mission Board.

Further, of those who were rebaptized, 35.8 percent were receiving their second immersion in a Southern Baptist church. Overall, rebaptism of Southern Baptists accounted for one of every five baptisms reported in the 1993 church year.

The study raises questions about the common practice of using baptism statistics as a measure of evangelism effectiveness, its authors say.

The research, reported in "A Study of Adults Baptized in Southern Baptist Churches, 1993," was conducted by the



Baptists go for 'real gold' at Pan Am Games in Argentina

Argentine Baptists Gabriela Ferreyra, left, and Zulema Arias, right, practice English lyrics to a song they later performed during an evangelistic outreach at the recent Pan American Games in Mar del Plata, Argentina. Southern Baptist volunteer Leonard Smith from Fort Worth, Texas, "coaches" them on their English. Smith was among a team of Texas Baptist volunteers who helped Argentine Baptists and Foreign Mission Board missionaries in Baptist outreach at the games. At least 60 people accepted Christ, including some affiliated with the Cuban delegation, as a result of the effort. — Photo by Betty Poor

HMB research division in cooperation with the HMB evangelism section. The primary purpose of the study was "to examine those influences that lead a person to a decision to follow Jesus Christ." □

Program featuring Tony Evans airs on Baptists' FamilyNet

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Tony Evans, one of the nation's most popular and influential African American preachers, can now be seen and heard every week on FamilyNet. Name of the 30-minute weekly program is "The Alternative with Dr. Tony Evans." Viewers should check local listings for time and channel number.

FamilyNet is the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission broadcast television service that reaches into more than 65 million homes. The RTVC also operates ACTS, a cable television service that reaches into almost 23 million homes. □

Missionary Herring dies at 90; served with Lottie Moon

Baptist Press

TAYLORS, S.C. — An early Southern Baptist missionary to China, who narrowly escaped death during the communist takeover in 1948, died April 7 in Taylors, S.C.

James Alexander Herring,

90, was the son of David Wells and Alice Rea Herring, Southern Baptist missionaries to China, 1885 to 1929, and contemporaries of famed Southern Baptist missionary Lottie Moon.

He and his wife, the former Nan Trammell, of Belton, S.C., started serving in China in 1935. When the communist revolution began in 1948 Herring escaped with two other missionaries from work in an interior city to Tenchow, only to come under heavy shelling from communist forces.

The trio took shelter in the compound of the Roman Catholic mission. After a shell exploded outside their room, they emerged to find the wall pocked by shrapnel where Herring had been sitting. The holes traced the outline of his body — he had escaped unharmed. Three days later, a mule cart carried them into nationalist-controlled territory.

Herring and his wife waited to re-enter China and finally served in Taiwan from 1957-70, when he retired.

Memorials may be made to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230. □

Oklahoman elected president of state Baptist foundations

Baptist Press

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Robert L. Ross was elected president of the Association of Baptist Foundations (ABF), which met March 26-28 here.

Ross, president of the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma since 1986, has served as president-elect for two years.

The meeting dealt with potential accessibility to financial interactive databases and high-tech channels that will enhance foundation work. Some channels are already being used. □

FMB marks milestones in mission personnel

Baptist Press

RICHMOND, Va. — The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board sent out a record number of 545 people in 1994 as missionaries.

Appointments at a December appointment service set the 1994 appointment record and helped push the board's total mission force beyond 4,000 for the first time.

The 545 total, which broke the 1993 mark of 498, includes 255 career and associate missionary appointments and a record 290 two-year International Service Corps (ISC) workers and journeymen. The 255 career appointment total was the highest in seven years; the record was set in 1985 with 304. The two-year worker total topped the 1993 record of 275.

In April 1994 the overseas missionary force topped 4,000 for the first time in its 150-year history and stands at 4,108, according to the latest available figures. That includes 3,518 career and associate missionaries and 590 two-year workers. □