

# Baptist and Reflector

January 10, 1996

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STATEWIDE EDITION

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## 1,700 participate in study at FBC, Hendersonville Resources help people to determine 'right from wrong'

By Charles Willis  
For Baptist Press

**HENDERSONVILLE —** Making morally right decisions today involves a world of too much gray and too little black and white, a Southern Baptist wife and mother of three children lamented recently.

But Tammy Hayes has been encouraged by the commitment her church, First Baptist of Hendersonville, has made to lay a strong foundation of moral absolutes for all generations of the congregation.

This fall approximately 1,700 people from first grade through senior adults participated in a study of "Right from Wrong," a series of resources for adults, youth, and children developed by lecturer and author Josh McDowell and published by the Baptist Sunday School Board. The study was held during the time normally allocated to Bible study on Sunday mornings.

The resources were generated from a study by McDowell revealing many people who have made professions of faith and personal commitments to Jesus Christ are participating in immoral and illegal behavior.

He demonstrated the need for teaching the biblical, moral absolutes for decision-making during an event to begin the study at First Church.

"Is it wrong to lie," McDowell asked a young person in the congregation. "Yes," she replied. "Why?" he countered. "I don't know," she confessed.

The church's minister to adults, Brad Thompson, said the entire church staff was impressed by the message of McDowell's book on the topic, and pastor Glenn Weekley had decided to preach a sermon series on the Ten Commandments. Scheduling the study to go along with the sermons seemed a good choice.

"The case for our inability to make moral decisions is very compelling," Thompson said. "We wanted as a church to help the next generation and ourselves to make moral decisions."

Thompson said he likes McDowell's point that right moral choices often have negative short-term consequences, but people should take the long view rather than looking for an easy fix.

"When you teach children, high schoolers, youth, and adults to make right choices,



**DISCUSSIONS OF THE** moral absolutes addressed in 'Right from Wrong' materials have become important to. From left, Craft, Jonathan, Caleb, Tammy, and Chas Hayes. All of the family members have studied the materials in classes as First Church, Hendersonville. — Photo by Jim Veneman

down the road it will make your church and your community stronger," he said.

While children, youth, and their parents readily embraced the study, Thompson observed senior adults were "a little resistant." But he said they determined, after trying the materials, to stretch the study to last a full quarter. After all, he said, senior adults are role models and influencers, too.

Ray Bowles, one of the senior adults, agreed he had

some initial concerns, since in today's mobile society not all grandparents see their grandchildren often. But he later concluded the study is "an opportunity to take those principles we grew up with and have reinforced for us the importance of telling the plain old truth."

"Sometimes our beliefs have eroded and been watered down," he continued. "It has been refreshing to have them brought back to me again." □

### Snow, icy roads hamper church services, work

Tennessee's first snowstorm of the winter brought travel to a standstill over the weekend, causing many churches to close.

The Baptist Center in Brentwood was closed Monday, though the *Baptist and Reflector* staff made it to work to finish production on this week's edition.

Tennessee Baptists were reminded by church leaders to get their regular offerings to the churches.

The snow piled up all across the state, with depths reaching double digits in northern areas of the state.

Roads were still hazardous on Monday. □

### State paper wants YOU on the team

## Finding answers for questions, problems

Are you tired of wrestling with the increasing costs of postage and paper? Weary of paying for changes of address and such?

Do you want answers to some family or church questions? Want to see how other Tennessee Baptists manage current situations?

*Let's make a team!* The *Baptist and Reflector* staff can help your church, but we have to make it a team effort.

When you choose to use the Church Page News Plan for subscriptions, you will: save substantially on subscription costs, production, supplies (paper, postage, etc.), and staff time. You will send to your church families news of Tennessee Baptists — and of your own church.

The church will have complete control of content for its personal church page. That is the best package you can buy — and you get news tailored for Baptist leaders and families of all Tennessee Baptists!

In 1996, the *Baptist and Reflector* will continue reporting on Vision 2000 progress, and work of the TBC and its Executive Board staff.

In addition, the staff plans to serve families

and churches in particular by:

- ✓ Helping families stay together; finding sources of help for troubled families.
- ✓ Standing strongly against child abuse.
- ✓ Actively combatting drunk driving.
- ✓ Exposing bogus claims of supporters of lottery and other gambling efforts.
- ✓ Assisting churches with specific needs as much as possible.
- ✓ Promoting positive ideas for assisting with these and other family/church problems as offered.

*How does a church become a team member?*

To learn more about the Church Page News Plan, call us at (615) 371-2003, or write to the editor at *Baptist and Reflector*, P. O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tennessee 37024.

It is easy, simple, economical, and beneficial to church families. Ask about the Every Family Plan also. It's a winner.

Let's make a winning newsjournal team, working together in providing help for families and churches. □ — Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

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# Baptist Men's Day focuses on prayer for pastors

Baptist Press

## BAPTIST MEN'S DAY

January 28, 1996

**"Living God's Word"  
Special Emphasis:  
"Pray for Your Pastor"**

MEMPHIS — Ever since the first Baptist Men's Day in 1933, Southern Baptist laymen have been recognized for their contributions in magnifying the ministries of their churches.

On Jan. 8, Baptist men "turned the tables" and began a 40-day season of prayer for their pastors based on the Brotherhood Commission's latest guided prayer booklet, "Pray for Your Pastor."

"This Baptist Men's Day emphasis underlines a longtime core belief of the Brotherhood Commission that pastors are the most important people in Brotherhood work," said James D. Williams, president of the Memphis-based agency. "That's because missions education must have the support of pastors if Southern Baptists are going to maintain their commitment to world evangelization."

There's another reason for this year's emphasis: pastors just need to be lifted up.

"American churches need strong, visionary pastoral leadership, and it's time for us to support them," said Jim Burton, director of Men's Ministries at the Brotherhood Commission. "We know that being the pastor is a very difficult and sometimes lonely job. They face high levels of

stress and burnout. A pastor needs the spiritual intercession of his congregation, and they need to be ready to intercede for him."

The booklet is similar in size and format to the "Pray for the President" booklet, introduced by the Brotherhood Commission in 1993. More than 350,000 copies of that booklet have been sold.

"Pray for Your Pastor," authored by Edwin E. Scott, pastor of Goodwood Church, Baton Rouge, La., provides a daily routine of Scripture reading and specific prayer suggestions. For example, "Day 1" directs the reader to Ephesians 6:4 and then asks

him to "pray for your pastor as he shows Christ to his children and family ... and for the witness of your pastor's family in their neighborhood."

"All the requests are focused on the particular needs that the pastor has," said Don Aycock, a former pastor who now directs special projects for the Brotherhood Commission. "Not only does it help the pastor, but it also helps the people in their prayer life by putting them in the shoes of the pastor for a while."

The process can also defuse some of the tension that may exist in certain situations, Aycock said.

"It can draw people closer to the pastor, defusing some of that tension. It works both ways, too. When the pastor knows that his people are praying for him, naturally he would feel closer to them."

He added that deacon chairmen or church Brotherhood directors should take the lead in using "Pray for Your Pastor" and order a copy for every active family in the church.

"Can you imagine what would happen in our churches if our people were praying for their pastors over 40 days?" Aycock asked.

To order "Pray for Your Pastor," call the BHC at (800) 727-6466. □

## Renewed spiritual interest evident on college campuses

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Is God making a comeback on campus?

After decades of rebellion, apathy, and often outright hostility toward religion, reports from media and ministers in the field seem to indicate a renewed interest in spiritual matters at American colleges and universities. Consider the following evidence from 1995:

(1) A worship service at a Brownwood, Texas, church included testimony, confession, and repentance from a Howard Payne University student which sparked a spiritual renewal that touched churches and college and seminary campuses in several parts of the country, including Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, and Minnesota.

(2) The number of students reached by Southern Baptist student ministry programs totaled 236,344, up from 188,323 in 1994. In addition, SBC student ministry work was done on 16 more campuses in 1995 than in 1994; students gave \$3,158,519 to missions in 1995, compared to \$2,782,732 the previous year; and students helped start 346 churches, missions, or Sunday Schools in 1995, up 153 from 1994. There were some decreases, however, in number of student conversions, minority student involvement, and international student involvement was down.

(3) According to the *Boston Globe*, religious activism is on the rise at three Boston-area universities. Examples cited included a doubling of students in religious activities over

eight years at one school, a standing-room-only Catholic mass at another, and a doubling of membership in a Gospel choir at the third.

(4) An article in a recent issue of *Leadership Journal* quoted a graduate student who said while religion used to be a "taboo" subject, it is now mentioned in almost "every class."

Why the new focus on spirituality among today's students?

Fear about global upheaval, a desire for stability in a rapidly changing and complex world, declining economic opportunities, and wounds from growing up in broken homes are just a few of the reasons cited by media and ministers.

"Today's students are looking for something that can be counted on. They want something secure and stable," said

John Moore, student ministry director for the Louisiana Baptist Convention. "They are more hungry for Bible study and discipleship than ever before. They'd rather hear someone teach the Word than read a devotional. They are looking for teachers, not preachers."

Bill Henry, director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's national student ministry, said he believes another key to renewed spiritual emphasis on campus is more direct church involvement in reaching students. "I've been getting an overwhelming response from churches who are interested in college students," Henry said. "I've formed prayer partnerships with several of them. People are starting to realize campuses are the greatest mission field in the world." □

## Daily Partnership Prayer Requests

January

- 10 — Pray for the financial needs of the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary. Funds are needed to complete the new building.
- 11 — Praise the Lord for the good health and protection of Barbara and Charles Layton as they coordinate the Poland partnership volunteers.
- 12 — Continue to pray for the Laytons and Baptist pastors in Poland as the Laytons respond to their invitations to visit their churches and catch their vision and understand their needs to reach Poland for Christ.
- 13 — Pray for the beginning of a new Korean work in Grand Rapids, Mich.
- 14 — Pray for the four regional Start Something New motivational rallies taking place in Michigan Jan. 15, 16, 18, and 20.
- 15 — Pray for three new Baptist Student Ministries directors in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver, Canada. They have never been directors before.
- 16 — Pray for the search for a team of four people (two from Tennessee and two from Canada) for a summer missions youth ministry team.



## W.B. Oakley of Dyer dies

W.B. Oakley, 85, staff evangelist at First Church, Dyer, died Dec. 11.

A native of Dyer County, Oakley surrendered to the Gospel ministry in 1946. Over the next 50 years he served in pastorates and evangelism in Tennessee, Michigan, and other states. He served almost 15 years as secretary of evangelism and stewardship for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan.

Oakley spent the past 20 years in vocational evangelism. During his ministry he conducted between 800 and 900 revivals and preached more than 15,000 sermons.

He was a graduate of Union University Jackson, which also gave him the doctor of ministry degree in 1991, and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

He is survived by his second wife, Juanita, and two children, William P. Oakley and Sue Oakley Hankins, five grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Oakley's first wife, Dorothy, died in 1991. □

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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# 'The Book' — 998 changed lives and still counting

By Angie McGregor  
For Baptist and Reflector

HIXSON — Those who attended this year's Christmas musical/drama at Central Church, Hixson, were expecting Christmas carols, three wise men, a star, and Baby Jesus.

What they got was a heart-pounding, eye-opening, look at the Holy One, the Evil One, and the reality of heaven and hell.

"The Book" was scheduled for six performances beginning Dec. 1. Tickets were printed for crowd control, and an extensive advertising campaign was planned.

Before the print and television ads could hit the marketplace, however, all but a few hundred tickets were gone. Word already had spread that this program was going to be different.

Three additional performances were added. Thirty minutes before the ninth, and what was supposed to be the final performance, was to begin, the auditorium had to be closed. Two hundred people were placed in a makeshift overflow area and hundreds of people were turned away.

Word continued to spread through the southeast. The program was extended through Dec. 17, with more than 21,000 people in attendance during the 14 performances. Of those who attended, 998 prayed to receive Christ as Savior and 54 people rededicated their lives. The youngest saved was age 4; the oldest was 76.

Fred Guilbert, minister of music at Central, wrote "The Book" with the assistance of Angie McGregor, media director; Scott Austin, audio/video engineer; and Scott Monroe, music associate.

"I have prayed my entire life for this type of harvest from a musical," Guilbert said.

More than 220 cast members, technical and staging personnel and hundreds of ushers, parking lot attendants, and greeters worked tirelessly to give "The Book" as a Christmas gift to the Tennessee Valley.

However, the presentation impacted more than a city. Pastors from across the southeast are calling the church, asking for a manuscript of the program.

Other churches are having special services to baptize new converts from their congregations who were saved during the presentation.

An extensive follow-up plan is underway at Central. Letters have been sent to all who responded. Two hundred and sixty-three churches have been notified that people from their

churches made decisions.

Central volunteers have telephoned everyone who made a decision for the purpose of discipling them. And, church members personally called the people they counseled.

"The Book" also has been a gift to Central Church. "Never have I seen the staff and church body display such dedication, unity, and singleness of purpose," said Senior Pastor Ron Phillips, a former president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Since Oct. 1, more than 100 people have joined Central by letter and 81 people baptized. Fifty-one of those baptisms



CENTRAL MEMBERS perform a scene from 'The Book.'

were during December.

During the 1994-95 church year there were 539 additions to the church, putting the congregation over the 5,000 mark in membership. □

## Wanted: Offering success stories

For Baptist and Reflector

The staff of the *Baptist and Reflector* is interested in "success" stories regarding the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

Did your church do something unusual to meet its goal? Did it go over a high goal by a substantial margin? Was it the first time the church ever met its goal? These are just some of the questions to ask to determine if you have a "success" story.

Send your story and why you think it is a success, along with your name and daytime phone number to: *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024. Please give as many details as possible when sending in your story.

We need the stories by Monday, Jan. 22. They will be compiled into a news article for the Jan. 31 issue. The staff may have to edit stories for space purposes.

Let other Tennessee Baptists know what the Lord has done at your church. □

## Graham targets 2.5 billion via TV

Baptist Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Evangelist Billy Graham announced Jan. 3 that the Global Television Series — to be broadcast at prime time during the month of April in every country of the world — will bring the Gospel to more people on a single day, April 14, than on any previous day in history.

"Through the Global Television Series, we anticipate reaching 2.5 billion people, most of whom we could never reach in our usual crusade ministry," Graham said. "I believe this will have a far

greater impact than anything we have ever done before."

A special evangelistic preaching program featuring Graham will be broadcast in 42 languages on national television networks in more than 160 countries. It will also be broadcast on two of the largest intercontinental satellite networks in the world, STAR-TV and BSKYB, which cover approximately two-thirds of the world's population — including some countries traditionally opposed to the proclamation of the Gospel.

STAR-TV in Hong Kong will first broadcast the program to

East Asia, from the Philippines and Vietnam through China and Nepal to Pakistan. Another broadcast on a separate channel will reach viewers from Indonesia to India and the Middle East. Later that day, the program will be transmitted across Europe's Sky Television network, reaching a potential viewing audience of 65 million homes from as far north as Finland and as far south as Egypt.

The telecast will include cameo testimonies by former President Jimmy Carter and U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young. □

## Millington congregation honors pastor

For Baptist and Reflector

MILLINGTON — First Church, Millington, honored its pastor and wife, Dr. and Mrs. Ray Newcomb, on Jan. 7, Newcomb's 20th anniversary at the church.

At the worship program were Bob Sorrell, associate pastor, Bellevue Church, Cordova, and Newcomb's longtime friend, Gary Watkins, pastor of First Church, Collierville.

Another special guest was Millington Mayor George Harvell who proclaimed Jan. 7 as "Rev. Ray Newcomb Day" in Millington.

A reception followed the program. Among the special guests were the Newcomb's son, Brent, of McKinney, Texas.

During his tenure, Newcomb has led the church in growth through evangelism and discipling. During the 20 years average atten-

dance has increased from 500 to more than 900 and baptisms have averaged over 100 each year.

The church plant has expanded from three to five buildings with renovation of the older units and complete remodeling of the sanctuary. Newcomb has led the church through these expansions to be debt-free in each phase. The church is now looking at long-range plans.

The church, under Newcomb's leadership, has cultivated good community relationships, particularly with leaders of Millington High School, located across from the church. He is a member of the Millington Chamber of Commerce.

Newcomb has been active in all phases of the denomination. He is a trustee of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and serves on the Executive Committee of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He was president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1993-94. Newcomb also was moderator of Shelby County Association in 1991. □



NEWCOMB

## SBC CP giving down

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for the month of December were down from a year ago, but designated gifts continued to climb, according to Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

For December 1995, CP gifts totaled \$11,292,845, compared to the same month in 1994 of \$12,218,783, a 7.58 percent decrease. Executive Committee finance officials said the drop likely was due to delays in receiving gifts from state conventions during the holidays.

For the year-to-date, CP first quarter gifts totaled \$32,974,184 compared to the

same period a year ago of \$34,494,918, a 4.41 percent decrease.

Designated gifts continued to climb as December gifts totaled \$3,510,249, compared to \$3,309,045, an increase of 6.08 percent. Total designated gifts for the year are \$8,343,108, up 18.05 percent over 1994.

For the year CP gifts are 6.87 percent below the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget of \$35,407,281.

The SBC Cooperative Program total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions, and fellowships. Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, world hunger, and other special gifts. □

# Ford retires from TBAH, leaving a solid heritage

By Wm. Fletcher Allen  
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — They threw a retirement banquet for J. L. "Pete" Ford last month, but like the tradition which was his leadership pattern, it was appropriate but not flamboyant.

Honored by the Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes board of directors and friends, Ford was recognized for 10 years of stellar service as executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's adult care institution.

It was "homey." Several friends and colleagues touted his work in building up the institution, and family members provided musical entertainment.

In between the banquet meal and the final farewell, there was time for guests to take note of the growth of TBAH under Ford's leadership.

A few days later, as Pete Ford packed up personal belongings from his Baptist Center office, there was time for an interview, a look at the results of the 10 years, and assessment.

Board chairmen and members acknowledged readily that Ford was the man for the times.

His philosophy of leadership for

he is of infinite worth. And not because he produces something, but because he is made in God's image," he says.

Ford adds that the role of the Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes is to "help seniors to be all God wants them to be."

During Ford's tenure, the TBAH added to the care of senior adults, care for developmentally disabled adults of any age.

So his reference to life fulfillment is applicable also to that group.

Pete Ford strongly believes in the role of the Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes system. Referring to a dark era in human history, he said, "In Nazi Germany and other places, children, older people, and mentally impaired adults have been deemed unworthy of life because they could not produce.

"That is wrong. That is not the Christian way. Most adults can provide their own homes for most of their lives, but sometimes an appropriate care-giver must be found."

Here, he believes is where the TBAH fills the gap.

Ford gained a definitive sense of caring as he served as pastor for churches in Jackson, Woodbury, and Nashville.

For example, at Eastland Church in Nashville, 25 percent of the church membership was made up of senior adults.

"That is double the national average" he says.

His concern for senior adult care took him back to school where he earned a D.Min. degree in 1977. His thesis was entitled "A Ministry to the Senior Adults of Eastland Baptist Church, Nashville." It

was an extension of his deep interest in senior adults and their special needs.

His earlier education includes degrees from Union University, New Orleans Seminary (M.Div.), and Middle Tennessee State University (M.A.).

Ford's service with Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes began in 1985 during his 20th year as pastor of Eastland Church.

He was named interim executive director that year, and in 1987 was named executive director/treasurer.

As interim director, Ford already had initiated the establishment of a ministry with residents of Deer Lake Retirement Community in Nashville's Bellevue community.

In December 1987 a management agreement was signed with Deer Lake.

That same year, after careful study,

Ford recommended to the TBAH board that TBAH use a trust fund to purchase land in Johnson City adjacent to Southwestern Church. As a result Baptist Village of Johnson City was completed later, and currently provides housing for several retired Baptists.

Expansion of Baptist Health Care Center in Lenoir City began later that year, to include a chapel and administrative offices. The work was completed in 1988.

In November 1988, Tennessee Baptist Convention messengers voted to implement a concept of the TBAH board, calling for a residential ministry to developmentally disabled adults, and assigned the new responsibility to TBAH.

Two other Baptist initiatives were underway that year regarding homes for developmentally disabled adults. BHEP built and later gave a group home in Lebanon to the management of TBAH. It has been expanded since then.

BHRA, a group owning Rainbow Acres in Jacksboro, turned over management of the 15-bed facility to TBAH.

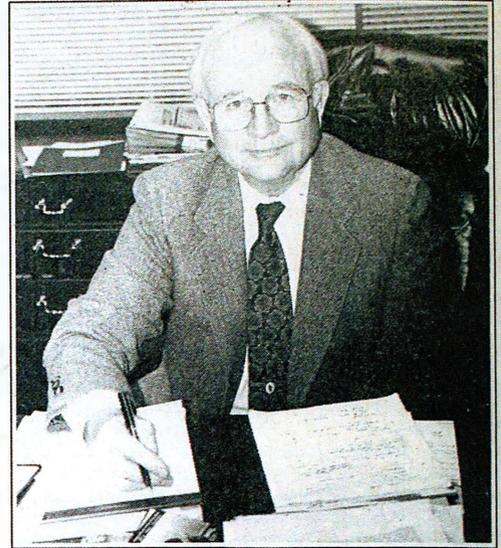
During this period (1989), Mark Anderson was employed to direct the new ministry.

Later a child care center was added to Baptist Health Care Center at Lenoir City, a landmark event. The center became the first facility in Tennessee to have such an "intergenerational" ministry.

Mortgages to Rainbow Acres and Stoneway Acres (Lebanon) were retired in 1992, with much help from individual supporters. TBAH officially assumed responsibility of ministry at both facilities in 1993.

Also in 1993, indebtedness for enlargement of Baptist Health Care Center was paid.

After study and planning, TBAH began operation of Scott's Hill Retirement Home in January 1995, the first TBAH



J. L. FORD on his last day in office — he has sense of accomplishment, but sees more challenges in future.

work west of the Tennessee River.

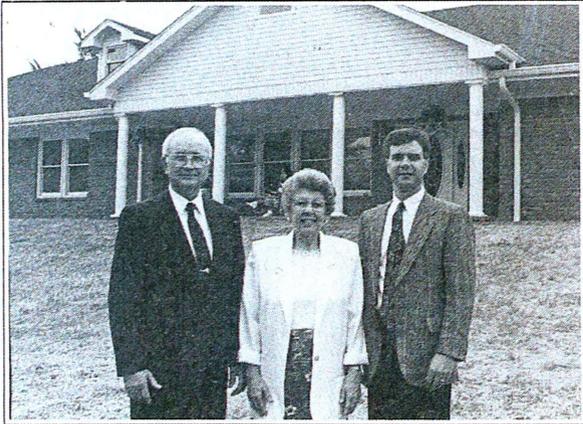
It is true that Pete Ford has a private life with his family. He is married to the former Mary Gentry, and they have a son and a daughter, Brian Ford and Martha Robinson. There are six grandchildren, who anticipate having more time with Pete and Mary.

Besides the family involvement, he plans to be busy, keeping in touch with Baptist work, helping where he can. He plans to continue gardening, doing wood work in his shop, and filling pulpits as much as possible.

Ford has dreams for the ministry he helped develop. "In the near future, much more attention needs to be given to seniors," he says. "They will be living longer. Here is an opportunity, a challenge for Tennessee Baptists to increase this ministry to a group that needs them."

He added, "It is our Christian responsibility. It is good stewardship for the convention. God hears the prayers of those who are oppressed. We can't be selfish. We must be responsible."

Ford was succeeded by Kenny Cooper, who was pastor of Bellevue Church, Nashville. Cooper was elected in time to work with Ford several weeks before his retirement. □



PARTICIPATING IN THE dedication service of Baptist Homes for Exceptional Persons' second group home at Stoneway Acres in Lebanon last September were, from left, J.L. Ford, Joy Nabi, president of BHEP, and Mark Anderson, TBAH staffer.

adults is simple. "I believe that everyone needs a home," he says.

"And everyone needs a home that is appropriate to his needs at that point in life. I remember watching birds building a nest in a climbing rose bush. Their eggs hatched, and the little ones grew. They began to fly, and the parents helped them out of the nest — to make their own homes.

"We must remember that no one type home suits everyone. There are special needs," Ford says, "and sometimes it takes more than personal funds and family help.

"My feeling for adult care comes from what I believe about the nature of mankind," he adds.

"Man is made in the image of God, he is of infinite worth, not because of what he does but because of what he is.

"Whether a baby or a senior adult,

## TBC receipts up after two months; slight decrease in December gifts

Tennessee Baptists' gifts to the Cooperative Program are up 9.5 percent after two months of the fiscal year.

So far Tennessee Baptists have given \$4,507,744, an increase of \$391,182 over the \$4,116,562 given over the same period a year ago.

In December gifts totaled \$1,955,932, compared to \$2,540,495 given in December 1994.

CP gifts thus far are \$12,865 above the two-month budget requirement of \$4,494,879.

"Our financial situation at this point is very good," said TBC Executive Director James Porch who expressed his thanks to Tennessee Baptists for their faithful giving. □

# Don't save this lesson for later; act now

An old adage reminds us to strike while the iron is hot. That probably originated when a blacksmith heated the metal to the right point for forging, then delayed his work and it couldn't be done.

It is a good example. Delaying action when action is needed is dereliction.

Tennessee Baptists enter 1996 with opportunities to make a difference. Too often it is easy to think of making that difference in the carnal world, seeing the task as too difficult, and backing off.

Listen, Tennessee Baptists, don't save this lesson for later! Strike while the iron is hot, and the iron should be ready for use all the time. We can always make a difference, always.

Of course there are times that are more opportune, but we should always be poised for whatever action is needed to save the world and those closest to us.

Tennessee Baptists can make a difference not only in the carnal world, but in our own churches and families.

Let this be a year when we never relax, never desert our defense posts, never let down our guard, and always stay on the attack.

What an emphatic "dare" Christ gave us when he said that the battened down gates of hell would not be able to overcome his church!

This church is an aggressive church, ever on the offense against covert and overt chicanery of Satan.

This church strikes while the iron is hot, and this church does not save life's

lessons for later.

What are some of life's lessons? How do we strike while the iron is hot?

Well, the issues and problems of the world never change, only the methodology changes. Evil panders to our weaknesses, wearing an attractive mask.

Evil whispers for us to delay until the iron is cold, until we lose interest in action in the name of Christ.

What are some issues that beg for Tennessee Baptists' involvement?

We listed on page one some ideas needing total involvement, asking Tennessee Baptist churches and people to help form a team for action.

No, the team wouldn't have meetings; the team would just stay busy attacking those hell gates, which Jesus Christ said would never prevail in hand-to-hand combat with the church. Is not that amazing?

The church is guaranteed by its Master that the victory is in hand, already accomplished. In what ways can this paper jointly with Tennessee Baptists serve the churches?

We need your help in performing our role in assisting. Tell us about successful ways you are helping families. We listed six emphases, only six, and of course there are others.

✓ *Helping families stay together, finding sources of help for troubled families.* We talk much about how to keep families together, especially when they encounter trouble beyond the ordinary.

We need to share with each other sug-

gestions for proven ways to help.

✓ *Standing strongly against child abuse.* This evil strikes church families as well as those outside the church. Why should Christian families be invaded with this problem?

✓ *Actively combatting drunk driving.* Drunk driving is more common than most people think. We should be on the alert, report abusive actions. And we can try to help those who drink alcohol.

✓ *Fighting against lotteries and other gambling.* Gambling is insidious and breeds corruption. Gambling interests never rest, they are constantly on the prowl for new ways to paint this evil as a way to the "good life." Affirm legislators and other leaders who oppose gambling, arm yourself with the truth about it.

✓ *Assisting churches with specific needs as much as possible.* Many churches need help with building repairs and construction, instruction and "how to" strategies, ideas on unique ministry needs.

We pledge to focus on positive ideas for assisting families and churches, but we need team members. The Executive Board staff can and does help in many ways that are common knowledge.

But the staff also can be helpful with problems that are unique.

We can improve our teamwork by relating to each other as churches, staff members, laity, and people who are specialists without titles.

Let's make that team. Share with us your ideas on solving any of these problems. Hand in hand, we are stronger. □

■ one word more  
By Wm. Fletcher Allen  
editor

## Surprise, surprise!

Our God often has been called "the God of great surprises."

The designation is true, he indeed is the god of great surprises. And, if he were not an all-knowing god, I would say that many times to him, we are people of great surprises.

His humor surprises those who see him as stern, scowling, ready and eager to slam anyone who strays.

But he does delight in surprising his children. I am glad he does.

In our family we have traditions, just as many families do. (If you don't have traditions,



ALLEN

make some.)

When our first grandchild was born to Jennifer, she knew sister Amy would be a mother in a matter of months.

Someone, probably Jennifer, established a tradition when she called her Wesley *The Baby*. Get that, *The Baby!* Meaning, of course, the most important, the newest.

He wasn't *The Baby* very long, because Jessie came to grab the title. The other five came through the years, one by one, and each had a turn at being *The Baby*.

When Betty and I visited three of our daughters and their families in South Carolina during Christmas time, we marveled at how the kids had grown since we saw them last.

First we stopped for a quick visit with Amy and Roger and their Jessie and Ezra. They hurried us into the house and back to the kitchen to see a *surprise*.

It was a baby goat, just a few days old. He was in the kitchen because he had an injured leg and needed special care. They named him Jubal.

On Christmas day all of us were together at Jennifer and Bill's home with their three boys, plus third daughter Monica and husband Ray.

Yes, Jubal made the trip too. Roger kept close watch on him and fed him milk several times during the day.

Jubal even had a role on the family video. I won't say he was *The Star*, but someone quickly tagged him *The Baby*. It is hard to stop a tradition as enduring as that one. □

■ just for today  
By Fred Wood  
pastor emeritus  
Eudora Church, Memphis

## Taking an inventory for the year's end

■ families matter  
By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

One of my childhood memories of this time of year is the experience of taking inventory for Mr. Selby's hardware store where my twin brother and I worked.

My father also ran a building supply business and we helped him with inventory. Mr. Selby wanted us to count every nut, bolt, and washer in his hardware store.

My dad did it more efficiently by weighing a pound of the particular item, counting the number in the pound and multiplying it by the number of pounds of the object.

We liked Daddy's way best. But since we were being paid by the hour, we counted Mr. Selby's inventory as he wished.

I read an article in the journal, *Thanatos*, that gave me an idea about the way we can take inventory in the family as we face the new year. As we look back, there will inevitably be rejoicing and regretting.

Looking back at 1995 we might ask ourselves three questions:

What have I done that I am proud of having accomplished? Did I complete a project? Did I build a deeper relationship?

The second question is what did I leave undone?

We all have a list of things we meant to do but never got around to doing them. Some of these things will seem of little importance now. Others will need to be added to the to-do list for 1996.

The final question is what regrets do I have? Our regrets for 1995 will give direction to 1996 by either providing a list of pitfalls to avoid or purposes to achieve.

As we enter 1996, I suggest that we make four lists. These are not so much New Year's resolutions as New Year's suggestions that will give us a direction that will prevent us from floundering through much of the new year.

My first list would be this:

As I go into 1996 I choose to leave behind ... This list might include some of the regrets from 1995. It also might have vengeance, hatred, mistakes, failures, etc.

The second list would be like this: As I go into 1996 I hope to accomplish ... This is where I would list my goals and dreams.

It is better to aim at something and miss it than to hit nothing square on the head.

My third list would be this: As I go into 1996 I choose to take with me ... This is the place where I would list the blessings that God has given me spiritually, emotionally, financially, materially, and in a family way which I value taking with me into 1996.

My fourth list would be this: As I go into 1996 I will assume responsibility for my own life in these ways ... In our day of entitlement and give-me attitudes, I think it is important for each of us to begin to take control of our own lives more by taking responsibility for ourselves. □

### Start with a smile

Hospital patient to pastor visiting him: "Preacher, I have inflammatory rheumatism. Do you know of any physical ailment that makes one suffer worse?" Pastor: "To have it and St. Vitus Dance at the same time!"

### Take this truth

Do you believe any problem you have could get worse? Let me suggest another thought. Any problem you have can get better. Take your burden to the Lord but do one more thing. Leave it there! No need for you and the Lord both to carry it. He will if you will let him.

### Memorize this Scripture

"My God will supply all your need" (Philippians 4:19).

### Pray this prayer

Lord, help me to realize when it gets dark enough, the stars come out. □

# Union, West Tennessee associations offer extension courses

For Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — Union University, in cooperation with local associations, will offer 10 seminary extension courses this winter in nine West Tennessee cities.

Regular university entrance requirements are waived for the courses which are open to persons 16 years of age or older.

Course work leads toward a diploma in pastoral ministries or Christian leadership. Up to eight hours of credit may be

transferred to Union for college credit.

Seminary extension classes should not be confused with Union's seminary studies program, a joint project with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Seminary studies credits may be applied directly toward a seminary degree rather than a diploma.

Following is a list of locations and meeting dates. For

specific information on courses, teachers and cost, contact the local association or Union's office of religious affairs at (901) 661-5162.

Ardmore Church, Memphis, Jan. 18, 7-9 p.m.

Beech River Center, Lexington, began Jan. 9, 7-9 p.m.

Big Hatchie Center, Covington, Feb. 5, 7-9 p.m.

BSU Center, Dyersburg State Community College, (two courses), Feb. 5, 5-7 p.m. and Feb. 5, 7-9 p.m.

Gibson Center, Trenton, Jan. 29, 7-9 p.m.

Hardeman Center, Bolivar

(for details, call the Hardeman Association office at (901) 658-9378).

Shiloh Center, Adamsville, Feb. 29, 7-9 p.m.

Weakley Center, Dresden, Jan. 16, 7-9 p.m.

Western District Center, Paris, Feb. 8, 7-9 p.m. □

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**Life and Work Series  
for January 14  
Focal Passage:  
Matthew 5:13-20**

## Making a difference

By Charles Parker

Jesus' teachings dropped like a bombshell into the lives of his hearers. Some of them became his disciples, while many became hardened into angry opposition. Although long years of hearing his words have worn off some of their edge, it is still true that following Jesus' teachings makes a difference in the world around us. G.K. Chesterton said that the teachings of Jesus have not been tried and found wanting; the problem is that they have not really been tried. What if we really tried, with God's power, to live as Jesus taught?

Jesus makes a difference in Kingdom people by turning us into persons who live for others (vv. 13-16). Jesus uses two humble analogies from everyday life to demonstrate this truth.

A pastor bringing a children's sermon asked what Jesus said about salt, expecting, of course, to hear "You are the salt of the earth." Instead, little Fred replied, "Jesus said, 'If you eat too much salt you'll get high blood pressure!'" (Mike L. McGee, *Church Administration*, August 1978). Salt in Jesus' day was not the refined product we find today on our grocery shelves. It was usually sea salt, recovered by evaporation and apt to be mixed with other minerals. Such salt, said Jesus, could "lose its savor," or ability to season or preserve. While this world needs some seasoning from Christians, our primary task is preservative, to keep the world from spoiling and going so bad it is beyond redemption.

Kingdom people are also called "the light of the world." There are many dark places that need the difference light makes. Of course, some place a basket over their "candles" (actually "lamps," olive oil in clay receptacles), thus defeating the purpose of light. Later, Jesus would call himself "the light of the world" (John 8:12), since he is the source of light and we reflect his light.

Why do we not sometimes make a difference? Salt must leave the shaker. Light cannot be hidden from view. We must be Christians more than just in the church house. We have to do our work in the world, though we are not of the world. I know of a church building built into a hillside so that it is mostly underground. While this design may have been aesthetically pleasing and environmentally sound, it seemed to me a negative parable for a church to be "underground." Too many Christians are already trying to "lay low."

Jesus also makes a difference in Kingdom people by moving us out from under the burden of law to living under the way of grace (vv. 17-20). The Jewish world had been made distinctive by the observance of Jewish law. Jesus endorsed the Old Testament "law" and "prophets" (vv. 17-19), yet there is an implied criticism of the Jewish teachers who had embellished the law and the prophets with their own interpretations. They had tried legalism, but it had not worked. So Jesus points to the realm of grace as a means of exceeding "the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees." Grace completes the law. It is not immorality, but behavior based on love. It is not pious, outward religiosity, but true righteousness within and without.

The remainder of Jesus' sermon is in a sense a commentary on verse 20, contrasting the Kingdom way with the way of the scribes and Pharisees. □ — Charles Parker is pastor of First Church, Jacksboro.

## The servant's mission

By Kim Allen

The problem scholars and Christians have had with this passage of Isaiah is the elusiveness of the servant's identity.

The Hebrew word for "servant" means a person at the disposal of another to do his work, represent his interest, and to carry out his will. The word is found often in the Old Testament to describe the servants of a king or a god. People of faith have referred to themselves as servants of the Lord. We have already seen in the Book of Isaiah the use of the word servant in distinctive ways. The New Testament often quotes these passages to present Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies of the servant of the Lord. Isaiah's reference to the servant give us the title for this week's lesson, "The servant's mission."

Let us try to identify the servant and describe his mission.

### The testimony of the servant

(1) Called of God (v. 1) — In Isaiah 42, God was the one speaking while the servant is the speaker in chapter 49. In verse 1 the servant is speaking to the nations as a representative of the Lord God.

The servant described his call in verse 1 in language similar to Jeremiah's, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee" (Jeremiah 15:1).

If these words applied to Jesus, his conception was not only planned by God but miraculously achieved by God's spirit in the womb of a virgin (Luke 12:36-38).

(2) Equipped to speak (v. 2) — Two ideas appear in verse 2. One, the servant testified that God had equipped him to speak words that are like a sharp sword or a polished spear. Second, God protected the servant.

(3) Commissioned to glorify God (v. 3) — This verse identifies Israel as a servant of the Lord. In any case

**Convention Uniform Series  
for January 14  
Focal Passage:  
Isaiah 49:1-6**

the mission of both Israel and the servant were to glorify God. When Jesus came he reflected the glory of God; likewise God's people of every age have this as their ultimate mission in life.

(4) Encouraged to perse-

vere (v. 4) — Discouragement is natural in man when things do not go at our pace or in our time and Israel often lamented and cried unto the Lord in this way.

Jesus who was tempted as we are, must at times also have been tempted to grow discouraged as he faced difficulties and opposition. His prayers often reflected his struggles with such feelings. We must remember that our fate ultimately rests in the hands of God, not in human hands.

### Scope of the mission — vv. 5-6

(1) To Israel (v. 5) — Verse 5 makes three points: (1) the Lord formed the servant in the womb; (2) the Lord gave the servant the mission of bringing Israel together; (3) the Lord promised to provide honor and strength to his servant. The complexity of this passage demands that the servant be other than Israel, since Israel could not restore Israel. The Old Testament promise is the restoration of a remnant of Israel through the servant whom God would send to Israel.

(2) To all the world (v. 6) — What was the "Light Thing" of which God spoke? It was the servant's mission to restore Israel. The point is that the restoration of Israel is only a small part of the servant's mission, which includes the whole world.

Isaiah saw Israel's call as a worldwide mission. God wanted from the beginning to call all people to come to him.

The importance of this lesson is still the call and the mission is still the same to bring all people to the light. □ — Kim Allen is pastor of Little West Fork Church, Clarksville.

## Holding fast to Christ

By Phil Lovelace

The theme topic of chapter 2 is "completeness in Christ." This chapter comes to the heart of the problem, for here Paul denounces the false teachers and asserts clearly the sufficiency of Christ for every need. Paul sounds three warnings and these warnings are needed just as much today as in Paul's day.

### Beware of empty philosophies — vv. 6-10

So burdened was Paul that he was in spiritual conflict, wrestling in prayer against Satan who was seeking to lead these believers astray. Paul knew how to overcome Satan — prayer and the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17-18). Paul longed to see the saints united in Christ, enjoying the riches of blessing in him. The false teachers had their fascinating philosophies, but in Christ we have "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Any man-made philosophy that has no place for Christ is unworthy of consideration. We are rich in him; why lower ourselves to follow man-made doctrines!

Man's philosophies are attractive. They give a show of wisdom and intelligence, and too often young Christians are "beguiled" by these "enticing words" (v. 4). How tragic it is when young people go off to secular schools and fall prey to man-made philosophies that deny Jesus Christ and the Bible. "Beware lest any man take you captive" (spoil you — v. 8), warns the apostle.

1. Walk in Christ (v. 6) — "As ...

**Bible Book Series for January 14  
Focal Passage: Colossians 2:6-20**

so" — as you were saved by faith, so walk by faith. As you were saved by the Word, so walk according to the Word. As you were saved through the work of the Spirit, so walk in the Spirit.

2. Grow up in Christ (v. 7) — Have roots that dig down into the riches of the Word. Have foundations that are strong, laid upon Jesus Christ. How important it is to be taught the Word of God! Every believer will fall prey to religious philosophies unless he is rooted in Christ, grounded in the Word, and built up in Bible truth.

3. Make Christ the test (v. 8) — Test every high-sounding religious philosophy by asking, "Does it give Christ the place of pre-eminence?" Almost every religious system today gives Christ an eminent place, but only true Bible Christianity gives him the pre-eminent place.

4. Draw on his fullness (vv. 9-10) — Realize that there is no substitute for Christ, and in him we have all that we need. When a believer goes into the world, or is taken prey by man-made systems, it is always because he feels he lacks something that Jesus Christ can supply. "Ye are made full in him!"

### Beware of religious legalism — vv. 11-17

These false teachers had mixed oriental mysticism with Greek philosophy and Jewish legalism. But the

flesh loves to be religious, so long as that religion does not have a cross to crucify the flesh. The Colossian believers were into Jewish legalism — rituals, diets, holidays, etc. "You are going out of the sunlight into shadows!" Paul cries (v. 17), "You are forsaking the reality (body) for the symbol!" Like the child who admires his father's photo while he ignores his father's presence, so these Christians had turned from the fullness of Christ to the ABCs (elements — vv. 8, 20) of the world.

All that we need has been accomplished by Christ on the cross.

### Beware of man-made disciplines — vv. 18-20

Our relationship with Christ is a living union — Christ is the head, we are members of the body. You cannot operate a body with laws! Often we think the Christian life personally, and the church collectively, can be made spiritual by carnal regulations. We do believe in standards ("Love not the world") but we do not believe that outward obedience to standards necessarily produces inward spirituality.

We are dead to the elements of the world, we are alive in Christ — and Christ is all we need.

**Conclusion:** Yes, we hold fast to Christ but really he holds us fast. He is all we need. "We are made full in him!" □ — Phil Lovelace is pastor of First Church, Somerville.

**■ the people**

■ Lyons Park Church, Church Hill, ordained **Ronnie Cassidy** to the ministry Jan. 7. He has been called as associate pastor of the church. The church will ordain **Ed Winegar** and **Mark Skelton** as deacons Feb. 11.

■ **Mark McAlister** was ordained as a deacon by First Church, Greenfield.

■ **Danny Vaughn** will be ordained to the ministry Jan. 14 at Shepards Chapel Church, Rogersville.

**■ the leaders**

■ **Becky Sumrall**, church and community missions director, Nashville Baptist Association, has been called as interim director of recreation, Crieve-wood Church, Nashville.

■ **Jere Adams** of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, has been called as interim minister of music, Mount Hermon Church, Murfreesboro, effective Jan. 1, instead of as minister of music, as earlier reported.

■ **Munford Church**, Munford, has called **Rick Talley** as minister of music, effective Jan. 7. He is from First Church, Covington.

■ **Stephen Williams** has celebrated his first anniversary as pastor of Macedona Church, Ripley.

■ A reception for **Mike Adams**, new pastor of Lincoya Hills Church, Nashville, will be Jan. 14 from 2-3:30 p.m. at the church.

■ **Kenyn Cureton**, pastor, Alice Bell Church, Knoxville, has been called as pastor of Buffalo Trail Church, Morristown, effective Jan. 14.

■ **Northwood Church**, Nashville, has called **Maston**

**E. Jackson** as pastor effective Dec. 10. He is from Lochwood Church, Dallas, Texas.

■ **First Church**, Pigeon Forge, has called **G. Wayne Cook** as minister of education and outreach.

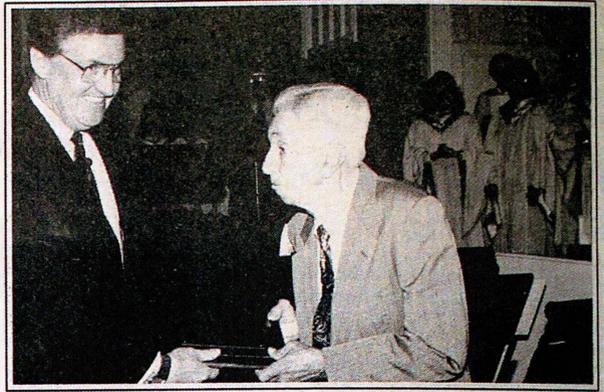
**■ the churches**

■ **First Church**, Nashville, will host the Grammy-nominated African Children's Choir Jan. 14 at 6:30 p.m. The choir performs to support orphaned or deserted children in East African countries including funding orphanages and training orphanage workers in Rwanda. They also fund programs for children in Africa, Albania, Bosnia, and Croatia through Friends in the West, a relief organization.

■ The Woman's Missionary Union of **First Church**, Kingston, led an effort which resulted in 102 gift bags being sent to prisoners for Christmas.

■ **Red Bank Church**, Red Bank, will send a team to work in Honduras Feb. 17-24.

■ **First Church**, Dresden, will dedicate its new activity center Jan. 14 after the morning worship service. A luncheon in the new fellowship hall will follow. Also several members of the church have done missions work. **Gerald Parham** worked in Mali, Africa, Nov. 15 - Dec. 19 and **Tommy Moore** and **Rhonda Gardiner** will work in Honduras with a medical/dental team from Union University, Jackson.



**RECEIVING A PLAQUE** is Amos Leroy Hendrix, right, of Grace Church, Knoxville, for more than 50 years of service as Sunday School director from Ron Stewart, pastor. Hendrix was honored on Dec. 17, which was his 88th birthday. He received a standing ovation from those present.

■ Fifty-three Royal Ambassadors and Girls in Action of **Two Rivers Church**, Nashville, held a bike-a-thon for a missions offering that supports the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions and the Annie Armstrong Offering for Home Missions which raised \$1,200.

■ **South Knoxville Church**, Knoxville, has reported an increase of 33 percent in average attendance at Sunday morning worship services and a 46 percent increase in evening worship over last year.

**■ the schools**

■ **Union University**, Jackson, will host its annual West Tennessee Pastors' and Wives' Valentine Banquet Feb. 13. Guest speaker will be James Messer of Theodore,

Ala. Cost is \$6 and tickets are available from directors of missions or reserved by calling Union at (901) 661-5160. Deadline for reservations is Feb. 9.

■ **Union University**, Jackson, will offer courses through its seminary studies program. On Mondays from Feb. 12 to May 13 Introduction to Christian Theology will be offered from 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.; Survey of Christian Ethics will meet from 2-5 p.m.; and Greek Syntax and Exegesis will meet from 5:45-8:45 p.m. For more information call (901) 661-5160.

**■ the associations**

■ **Weakley County Association** will hold an Evangelism Conference Jan. 29 at First Church, Dresden. Junior Hill, evangelist, will speak.



**HONORING GREER RUBLE**, right, at an awards banquet of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, is **Bill Taylor**, director of the Bible teaching-reaching division. Ruble has worked 12 years in the Sunday School department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Jan. 2 he will begin working in the executive office of the TBC.

**Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights**

**God has blessed 1996**

By Bruce Yates, pastor  
Dixie Lee Church, Lenoir City

Psalm 65:11, "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness . . ."

1996 is before us. What will it hold? I don't know. And I hope I have reached the point in my life where I realize that I cannot live a year, a month, or even a week at a time. No, God has given us this day in which to live. In II Corinthians 6:2, we read, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

What am I going to be doing this time next year is not the question before me. I must answer this question, What am I going to do with today? What am I going to "take time" to do today?

I agree with the thoughts of an anonymous writer: Take time to laugh. It is the music of the soul. Take time to think. It is the source of power. Take time to play. It is the source of perpetu-

al youth. Take time to read. It is the fountain of wisdom. Take time to pray. It is the greatest power on earth. Take time to love and be loved. It is a God-given privilege. Take time to be friendly. It is the road to happiness. Take time to give. It is too short a day to be selfish. Take time to work. It is the price of success.

If we will take time to do what God wants us to do, I know that 1996 will be a great year. □

**Curious new year custom**

By Glenn Hester, director of missions  
ALPHA Association

I am told that the Koreans have a curious new year's custom. Instead of making new year's resolutions, each person decides the bad habits he would like to eliminate and the past deeds he wants forgiven. He then writes the names of these evils on a kite and flies it high up in the sky. When the kite is

almost out of sight, he cuts the string. As the "paper bird" takes a nosedive and disappears from sight, he thinks all his faults and previous transgressions are forever gone.

You and I know that there is a better way to start the new year. We can take all our sins to Jesus Christ, the Savior whose birthday we have just celebrated. Through confessions and repentance we are cleansed and, indeed, our sins are forever gone.

I want to start 1996 with a clean heart and new commitment to Jesus Christ who saved me. Will you join me in that decision? □

**A new appearance in new year?**

By Philip M. Young, pastor  
Rocky Hill Church, Knoxville

As we begin 1996, many of us will make new year's resolutions with the

hope that our lives will be changed or improved in some way. I am reminded of a story I read by Joyce Dundas.

She writes, "I got married in the summer one year following a year of teaching school. When I returned to teaching in September, I informed my first graders, most of whom I had taught in kindergarten, that they were to call me Mrs. Dundas rather than Miss Dolan. That afternoon the mother of one of my pupils asked her daughter her teacher's name. 'She says her name is Mrs. Dundas,' the child replied. 'But she sure looks like Miss Dolan to me.'"

Maybe the most significant change of 1996 needs to come in a way that people can see the "new you" in the way you live. Paul encouraged, "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" Ephesians 5:1, NIV.

May 1996 bring you an abundance of God's love, grace, and peace. □