

T E N N E S S E E ' S B A P T I S T & REFLECTOR

Volume 166/Number 1

Statewide Edition

January 5, 2000

During 1999

Missions in Rio, leadership changes top TBC news

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Top Tennessee Baptist news stories in 1999 centered around missions, changes in leadership at three Tennessee Baptist Convention-related institutions, and an effort to give colleges more flexibility in trustee selection.

One of the major stories in 1999 centered around Tennessee Baptists' partnership with Baptists in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In May, 337 Tennessee Baptists participated in Crusade Rio '99, the largest effort of the Tennessee Baptist Convention held overseas.

Tennessee Baptists helped lead about 5,000 Brazilians to make professions of faith in six days. They also saw 2,182 people rededicate their lives to God and witnessed to 7,498 people who said they would be open to another visit from Baptists.

Three Tennessee Baptist-related institutions changed pres-

idents during 1999.

In January Cordell Maddox announced his retirement after serving as president of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City for 22 years. Though he planned to retire in July he will continue as president until Feb. 1 when James S. Netherton will assume the presidency. Netherton, provost at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., was elected unanimously Dec. 2 as C-N's 21st president.

In April, William E. "Bill" Troutt resigned as president of Belmont University to become the 19th president of Rhodes College in Memphis. Troutt had served as Belmont's president since 1982. Jerry Warren, Belmont provost, was named as interim president. The search is continuing for a new president at Belmont.

In May, Gerald L. Stow announced his retirement as president of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, effective Dec. 31. Stow served as TBCH presi-

dent for 15 years. In October, the TBCH board selected Bryant Millsaps to succeed Stow, effective Jan. 1, 2000. Millsaps, who was on the TBCH staff as assistant to the president, is a former secretary of state for Tennessee.

A proposed bylaw which would have given Tennessee Baptist colleges more flexibility in the selection of trustees was narrowly defeated by messengers at the TBC annual meeting in November. The proposed Bylaw 5, which was developed by the convention's Constitution and Bylaws Committee after months of work and study, needed a two-thirds majority to pass. It received 62.3 percent of the votes.

Other major stories of 1999 involving Tennessee Baptists included:

► For the fifth consecutive year, Tennessee Baptists gave a record amount through the Cooperative Program in 1999. Churches gave \$32,602,373 through the CP for 1998-99, an

increase of 5.7 percent over the previous year.

► As has been the case in recent years, Tennessee Baptists once again were quick to respond when natural disasters struck. Volunteers were on the scene when tornadoes struck Jackson and Clarksville last January. They also responded to help hurricane victims in North Carolina and Nicaragua. Tennessee agreed to serve as the coordinating state in a Disaster Relief Response partnership in Nicaragua. It was the first time that a Disaster Relief response overseas was cast as a partnership, according to Terry Sharp of the TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group. Tennessee Baptists will continue to help Nicaraguans rebuild homes through December of this year. Baptists also did Disaster Relief work in Kosovo and other places throughout the year in response to needs.

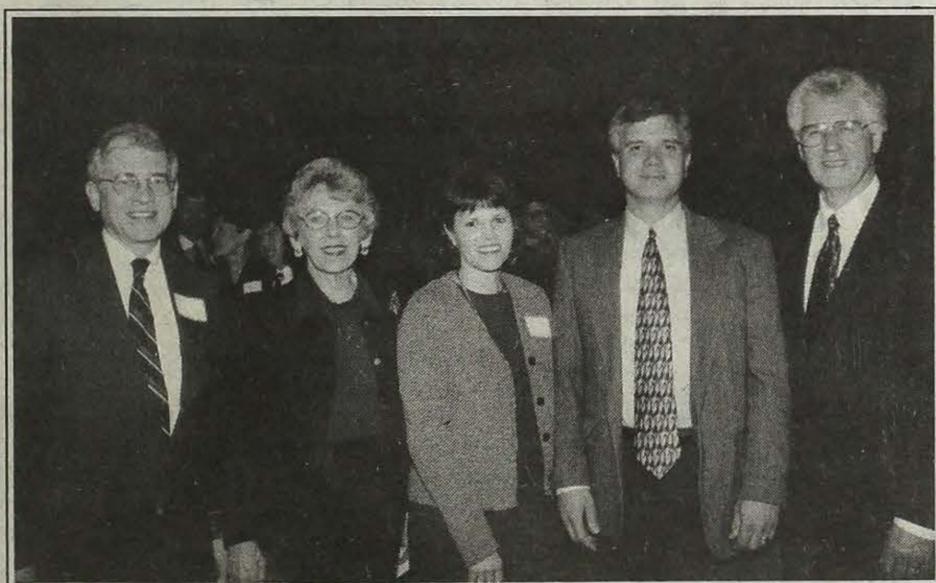
► At the TBC annual meeting, messengers celebrated the

125th anniversary of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. The meeting featured a new history (*Tennessee Baptists: A Comprehensive History 1779-1999*), written by Albert W. Wardin, a retired Belmont University history professor.

► In September evangelist Billy Graham announced plans for a Nashville area crusade to be held June 1-4, 2000 at Adelphia Coliseum.

► During the TBC annual meeting in November, messengers agreed to conditionally release 1998-99 escrowed funds for Carson-Newman College provided the college would allow the convention to elect its trustees for 1999-2000.

► Although churches of the Southern Baptist Convention reported a membership decline for the first time since 1926, Tennessee Baptist churches reported an increase of 1.16 percent in membership in 1997-98. Total membership in TBC churches reached 1,131,504. ■



Baptist Homes for Exceptional Persons Annual Banquet

The 1999 Banquet of Baptist Homes for Exceptional Persons held Dec. 9 drew about 160 people, including, from left, Kenny Cooper, president, Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes, Brentwood; Joy Nabi, president, BHEP, of Bellevue; Susan Johnsey, recreation coordinator, Stoneway Acres, Lebanon; Mark Anderson, TBAH; and Art Burcham, retired from LifeWay Christian Resources, of Brentwood, who was the keynote speaker. BHEP, which develops Christian group homes in middle Tennessee for persons with developmental disabilities, began a campaign during the banquet to establish a home for women. BHEP has started two homes for men, Stoneway Acres, which are managed by TBAH. The event was held at Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville.

Information needed from churches for church staff compensation study

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptist churches are asked to respond to a survey which they will receive in January concerning the salary and benefits of their staff. The church staff compensation study is being conducted by the church staff/support team in the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Church Staff Leadership Group.

"Each year during your church budget planning time, you are probably asked a lot of questions regarding how your church compares with other Southern Baptist churches in the area of salary and benefits for church staff personnel," said Richard Skidmore of the Church Staff Leadership Group.

"Many of you have called for assistance in answering these questions and we have been able to give you help."

The latest study was conducted in 1998. It is repeated every other year to provide up-to-date information, Skidmore related. "The success of the study will depend largely upon the response from the churches," he added.

The 2000 compensation study survey will be mailed to pastors and trea-

surers of each TBC church in January.

"You may copy the form or call for additional copies," Skidmore said. "When you have completed a form for each staff position, return them in the self-addressed envelope provided. We realize this is confidential information and have designed the survey with this in mind," he said.

Skidmore noted that it is important that sufficient data be received on churches of all sizes and staffs to have a usable survey. **Forms need to be returned by Feb. 16.** Beginning in June 2000, churches may request a general compensation study report or a customized study report.

"We encourage your church to participate in this survey. We believe when your church approaches budget planning time next year, you will find this up-to-date study very helpful," Skidmore said.

Questions about the study may be directed to Skidmore at (615) 371-2009 or Lana Rose at (615) 371-2008. ■



SKIDMORE

about your newsjournal

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► **Publisher** — Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board

► **Convention Communications Committee:** Mattie Mullins, chairman; Benny Keck, vice chairman; Randall Cummings, Mark Gregory, Jerry Legg, Mark Mangrum, Wallace McGill, Bob Osburn, Vern Powers, Glenda Roach, Michael Smith, Joseph Sorah, Thomas Vinson, Ambers Wilson

► **Postmaster** — Periodical postage paid at Brentwood and at additional mailing office. (USPS 041-780) POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024.

► **Frequency of issue** — Published weekly except for the weeks of Christmas, New Year's, Fourth of July, and Labor Day.

 Printed on recycled paper

Nashville church hosts summit on 'New Millennium'

By Mary E. Speidel
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist pastors and lay people from about 275 churches embraced a challenge to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth during The Summit for the New Millennium, held Dec. 14-16 at Opryland Hotel here.

The summit — a global missions networking conference sponsored by Nashville's Two Rivers Baptist Church — linked more than 550 pastors and laypeople with about 160 missionary strategy coordinators targeting unreached people groups in The Last Frontier, the part of the world where people have little or no access to the Gospel.

"The whole purpose of the summit was to put tools in the hands of churches, to say this is how you can connect and be a part of fulfilling the Great Commission during the next millennium," said Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers and instigator of the conference.

During most of the summit, teams of church representatives and strategy coordinators met in small group sessions, where they discussed and prayed about how churches could help missionaries implement strategies for taking the Gospel to unreached people

groups. Participants also heard challenges from several Southern Baptist missions leaders, who reminded them that the entire body of Christ is responsible for obeying the Great Commission.

"As we look at the literally millions of people to be reached, we must realize that a handful of missionaries and strategy coordinators can't get the job done alone," International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin said during the summit's opening banquet.

"I've often said it's not the responsibility of the International Mission Board to do missions on behalf of Southern Baptists. The Great Commission was given to every believer, every church, and every denominational entity. Our responsibility as a denominational missions agency is not to do missions on your behalf but to facilitate your being obedient to the Great Commission."

"This is the first time in the history of the world where the technology is in place to take the Gospel to every unreached people group, every nation, in this world," said Sutton in a missions sermon. "For the first time in history the pieces of puzzle are all together. But the question is this: Will we do what Jesus has told us to do?"

During the summit, participants also heard from missionary strategy coordinators — serving with the International Mission Board — who told of God at work in amazing ways to draw the world's unreached people to himself.

Missionaries urged church representatives to take a "vision trip" to The Last Frontier to see for themselves how God is moving there.

"If you want to see the power of God, like you've only read about in books and wondered what it would be like to be there, then you come on" said a strategy coordinator working among a responsive people group in former Soviet Central Asia.

At meeting room tables and in hallway conversations, participants sensed God was at work during the summit, too.

Meanwhile, the conference even made a difference for some of the nearly 130 lay volunteers from Two Rivers who

helped during the event. At the close of the summit, one of those volunteers committed her life to serve as a missionary among an unreached people group overseas.

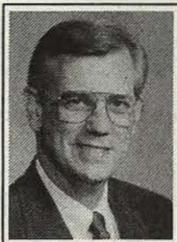
"Honestly, I don't think we'll know the full impact of the summit until we get to heaven," said Jerry Highfill, Two Rivers' minister of missions and evangelism.

"There's no way to project the eternal consequences of what has happened here," added Phil Claiborne, a layman from Two Rivers who helped coordinate the event. "There are untold people who will be reached for Christ because of the contacts that have been made here. I'm thankful that the Lord birthed this idea in the mind of Brother Jerry (Sutton) and that he was sensitive enough not to push it aside."

In fact, God gave Sutton the idea for the summit after he took a vision trip to Asia and led his church to adopt an unreached people group in that region. Later he approached IMB administrators with the suggestion for the summit as a way to help missionaries network with local churches in the task of global missions. The IMB cooperated with Two Rivers to plan the event, but the church committed to fund the entire summit. ■



SUTTON



RANKIN

About future

Poll shows Americans optimistic

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Most Americans are optimistic about life in the new millennium despite threats of devastating events, according to a recent Pew Research Center survey. More than 80 percent of Americans feel confident life will get better after the year 2000, the study said.

Even Americans who fear potential disasters involving the environment, epidemics, natural disasters, and international terrorism find hope and optimism in the anticipated "triumph of science and technology" in the future. Still, those surveyed said serious challenges lie ahead.

Global warming and shortages of food and resources caused by a growing world population cause concern for a majority of Americans, according to the Pew research.

Democrats were more likely than Republicans (81 percent to 68 percent) to believe global warming is a potential problem. More than a fourth of Americans (28 percent) believe global warming will definitely happen, while 48 percent say it will probably happen, according to the research.

Two-thirds of the public believe a se-

rious terrorist attack on the United States is imminent.

Older adults are even more concerned about terrorism — 72 percent feel it is a major threat.

One third of those surveyed said they fear a nuclear war.

Despite such concerns, most Americans believe science and technology will continue to make the world a better place.

A majority of Americans — 79 percent — feel a cure for AIDS will be discovered in the new millennium. Eighty-one percent believe there will be a cure for cancer.

While a majority said they rely on science to solve problems in the next millennium, slightly less than half are looking to small business and organized religion to improve life in the future.

More women (50 percent) than men (39 percent) believe organized religion will play a major role in future success of American families and the nation.

Forty-four percent think Jesus Christ will return to Earth during the first half of the 21st century. One in five think Christ will definitely return.

The nationwide survey of 1,546 adults was conducted in April and May of 1999. ■

Evangelism conference for bivocational ministers scheduled

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Tennessee Bivocational Evangelism Conference will be held Jan. 14-15 at Gladeville Baptist Church, Gladeville. The theme of the weekend meeting is "Celebrate Jesus 2000."

Speakers include Fredrick Brabson, Billy Murphy, James Porch, Bill Stafford, Johnny Carr, Larry Robertson, and Phil Glisson. Special music will be provided by Michelle Looper, Gladeville Church, and Heather Pollitt.

Conferences will be offered during breakout seminars on a variety of topics including building an evangelistic youth group, creating an environment for worship, evangelistic praying, evangelistic preaching in the 21st century, finding direction for your church's future, pastoring the larger bivo church, staying calm in a stressed out world, the first two years (establishing priorities in your first pastorate), using your Sunday School to grow your church, and women mentoring women.

The conference is sponsored by the TBC Evangelism/Missions Strategies and Church Staff Leadership Groups. F

or more information, call Ray Gilder at (615) 371-7907 or 1-800-558-2090, ext. 7907. ■

Nelson 'dresses down' to focus on needy

By William H. Perkins Jr.
For Baptist Press

CLINTON, Miss. — His clothes were worn and ill-fitting, and his tennis shoes ragged when he walked into the church and took a seat close to the front just before the Sunday morning worship service. Toboggan hat in one hand, he clutched an old Bible firmly in the other hand.

His large frame wasn't the only reason he stood out in the crowd gathering for worship. Obviously, he didn't "look" like other folks in the room. He was different — the type of mostly invisible people one hurriedly passes by every Sunday on the way to church.

A street person, maybe, or an alcoholic who wandered in because he had no other place to go on a chilly fall morning in Clinton, Miss.? A convict just out of prison, possessing only the state-issue clothing on his back? A mentally ill man in search of who knows what?

He was none of the above. He was Steve Nelson, former pastor of First Baptist Church, Lafayette and now director of hunger concerns for the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville. He was at Clinton's Parkway Baptist Church to cast a spotlight in a unique way on the needs

of the impoverished.

With his real identity known to only pastor Ken Anderson and a few others, he sat quietly through the opening of the service and sprang from his seat at the appointed time for the sermon.

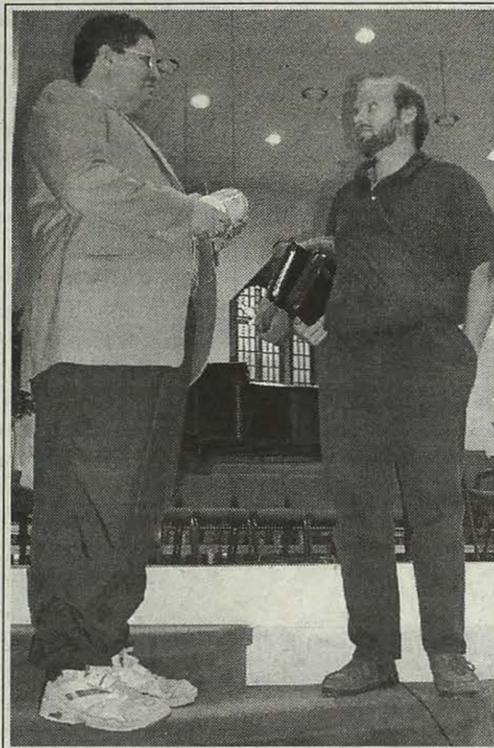
"What you see is not always what you get. The Bible says we may be entertaining angels," he told the Parkway crowd.

Nelson commended the congregation for accepting him into the worship service, even though he dressed and acted differently from the typical Sunday morning visitor. He said when he visits Baptist churches in his street person garb, he usually has a pew all to himself.

"Several of your ushers made me feel welcome. There were some dear sisters who walked over and sat next to me," he observed.

Focusing on Southern Baptists' World Hunger Fund, Nelson told the congregation that well-meaning people often feel overwhelmed or inadequate for the task of feeding the hungry.

"Ministry to the poor is relegated to the dingiest closet in



STEVE NELSON, left, a former Tennessee Baptist pastor who is director of hunger concerns, Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, talks with Michael Black, a member of Parkway Baptist Church, Clinton, Miss., after Nelson spoke at the church dressed in shabby garb to raise awareness concerning the poor. — Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.

the church. Seventy to 80 percent of Southern Baptist churches are 'plateaued' [not growing]. Why? We get so busy with church work that we forget about the work of the church.

"God cares for the needy," he said.

Nelson advocated that Baptists rediscover the concept of gleaning, as found in Leviticus 19:9-10: "When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the Lord your God" (NIV).

"This is not a tithe or special offering. This is the discipline of gleaning," Nelson explained.

In an interview after his October visit to Parkway, Nelson said he came up with the idea of showing up at churches in scrubby clothes to make a point about the needy to be found in every community.

"It takes us out of our comfort zone and raises our awareness that we can't judge people. We can't 'pigeon-hole' people," he said.

How do Baptists respond to his shabby appearance?

"Some people are uncomfortable. Some people show the love of Christ. A lot of peo-

ple just look away."

Nelson was a homebuilder for 11 years before surrendering to the ministry. He was a pastor for five and a half years before accepting the position of ERLC's director of hunger concerns.

"I want Baptists to know the joy that comes in ministry to the 'least of these.' That is when we are near to God," Nelson said.

Christians should be well aware of God's concern for the needy, Nelson counseled. "If we refuse to hear the cries of 800 million hungry people, we can't hear the still, small voice of God," Nelson said.

The Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund is a partnership effort by the International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, and ERLC. One hundred percent of the special offering is used for hunger relief, with 80 percent going to IMB ministry evangelism projects and 20 percent to NAMB initiatives.

For more information, contact Nelson at ERLC, 901 Commerce Street, #550, Nashville, TN 37203-3696; telephone, (615) 782-8409 or 1-800-475-9127. ■



TBAH notes anniversary; begins campaign

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes board of directors, staff, and 100 guests from across Tennessee joined together Dec. 2 to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Adult Homes' ministry and to begin a five-year, \$3 million capital campaign for residential facilities, programs, and services.

TBAH is a benevolent Christian ministry providing quality residential care for senior and developmentally disabled adults.

Two long-time Tennessee Baptists (Tom Madden, retired executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and J.L. "Pete" Ford, retired president of TBAH) reminded those present the agency began with a rocky start. The two men have a historical perspective of the early years of TBAH.

Yet, despite the rocky beginning, TBAH has grown to include four retirement facilities and in 1989, added the developmental disabilities ministry to the program. That ministry now includes three facilities on two campuses.

Current TBAH President C. Kenny Cooper credits the growth to the leadership of Madden, Ford, and others along with the cooperation and support of many Adult Homes board members and convention leaders through the years.

The strong commitment of Tennessee Baptists to the needs of senior and developmental-

ly disabled adults has made it possible to take a new step in strengthening the future of the TBAH ministry, according to Cooper.

Cooper announced that following the approval of the Adult Homes board of directors and the TBC Executive Board, TBAH has begun a \$3 million campaign to improve current programs and facilities, augment endowment funds for residents who may need financial assistance, and supplement annual operating budgets of the various facilities.



COOPER

Pat and Jimmie White of Nashville will co-chair the campaign. Pat White is a former TBAH board member and has been involved for many years with the Stoneway Acres facility in Lebanon. Jimmie White is a retired Nashville businessman.

The campaign announcement included a report that more than \$220,000 already has been committed to the \$3 million goal. The capital funds effort will be titled "Called to Care."

During the celebration service, Cooper also announced the approval by the Tennessee Baptist Convention of a Father's Day Offering for TBAH to begin in 2001. Funds received through that offering will be used for resident support. ■

Exploding car adds impact to Christmas presentation

Baptist Press

HIXSON — At first, the annual Christmas production seemed to be a combination of the usual elements — a robed choir, drama, and creative movement.

Except for a car exploding on stage.

For Central Baptist Church, here, it was just another routine Christmas production created by pastor of music Fred Guilbert.

Titled "Under the Influence," the production included a 450-member cast, a \$40,000 budget for professional television filming, pyrotechnics, the exploding car, and funeral caskets.

"We wanted to make an impact in people's lives," Guilbert said. "What better time of year to invite someone to hear the Gospel than at Christmas?"

"Under the Influence" tells the story of two teenage boys — one Christian and the other a non-believer. The climatic moment arrives when the boys crash into a utility pole on the

way home from a church service. The huge explosion jolted the audience from their pews.

Guilbert, who wrote the drama, said the Lord gave him the idea for the crash while he was waiting at a stoplight. "I went to our technical guys and told them the idea and they told me it could be done. We even went out and bought the car for \$300."

The technical crew used a slight-of-hand trick to pull off Central's first car crash in a sanctuary. While the audience was watching a video of events leading to the crash on large video screens, the crews rolled out the actual car and utility pole onto the stage. At the moment of impact, the sanctuary filled with smoke, bright lights, and pyrotechnics.

But the spiritual impact was even greater, said Ron Phillips, pastor of the 5,000-member church. More than 650 people made professions of faith during the production and more than 100 rededicated their lives to Christ. ■

Says tourist site is mission field

Former Tennessean serves in Cancun

By Wally Poor
For Baptist and Reflector

CANCUN, Mexico — Mention Cancun and most people think of luxury hotels, beaches of white sand, and clear, blue-green Caribbean waters.

But for former Tennessee resident Doug Millar, an International Mission Board missionary, Cancun is a harvest field.

Millar lived in Jackson shortly after he became a Christian.

He made a profession of faith at a youth camp while he lived

in South Carolina. He moved with his parents to Jackson during his high school years.

The family joined West Jackson Baptist Church. Millar said Carroll Griffin, recreation/youth minister there, "had a big influence on my life."

Griffin, currently director of admissions, Union University, admitted the church from 1972-82 and is still a member of West Jackson Church. He remembers Millar as a committed young Christian, which led Griffin to use him as a leader.

Millar arrived in Cancun in

January 1996. The IMB, in coordination with the Mexican Baptist Convention, assigned him rural evangelism in the states of Quintana Roo and Yucatan.

After a year of visiting Mayan villages, showing the "Jesus" film, but receiving only limited response, Millar began to identify the need to reach the flood of people being drawn by job opportunities in the Cancun area.

"Ten years from now, the villages will still be about like they are now, but the area from Cancun south along the

Yucatan Peninsula to Tulum is changing rapidly," he said.

The booming tourist trade in Cancun means good jobs. The prospect of a better job and a better life attracts about 1,000 Mexicans a week to come from poor states like Chiapas or Campeche and settle in rapidly growing areas near the resort areas.

"More and more people are going to be coming to this area. I feel like we need to catch them within the first six months to a year. If we don't they get set in their ways," Millar says. He noted at some point companies will realize no more hotels are needed and stop building them, which will slow hiring.

"I'm thinking you're going to see five more years of growth and then five years of instability. But after that you're going to see a stable area. It's going to be more like other parts of Mexico. Then it will be harder to reach," Millar says.

Thirty years ago, Cancun was a village of 148 people and a few coconut palm trees. It is estimated that a million people will live in the Cancun area by 2004.

Millar and the other members of the Cancun-Tulum Corridor team of the IMB have the vision of establishing four large cell group churches (small

groups meet away from the church facility), 40 conventional churches, and 400 house-based churches in the Cancun area. Millar explains how he came up with the 4-40-400 formula:

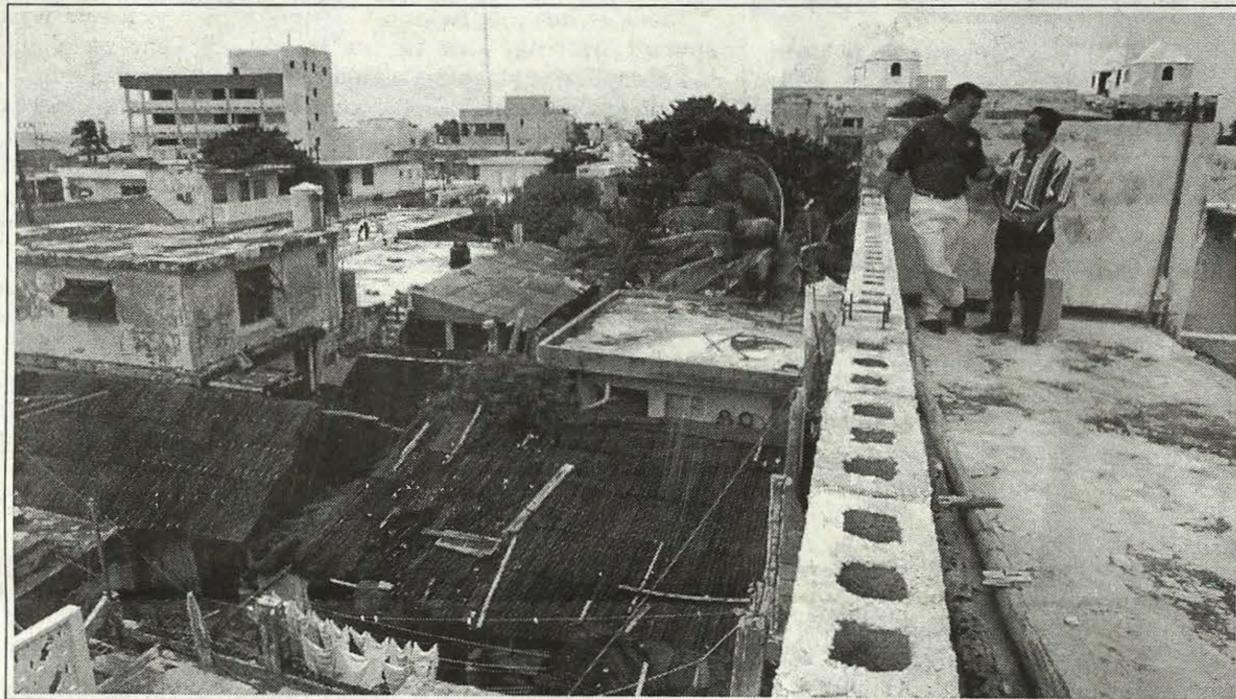
"I began asking God in prayer, 'What would it take to truly impact this area for Christ?'"

"Then I asked a second question: 'How many Baptist churches would we need by the year 2004 if only one per cent of the projected population of one million would be part of a Baptist church?' [That would be] 10,000 new believers gathered into Baptist churches in the Cancun-Tulum Corridor. We would need four churches of 200 or more, 40 churches of 70 or more, and 400 house churches of 15.

"I hope God will do even more than this, but even the 4-40-400 is not possible without a great act of God. Neither we (missionaries) nor the IMB can do it. It is a God-sized vision."

Millar has a dream of recruiting more Christian businessmen to start businesses in the area. This would provide jobs for bivocational pastors.

He also invites Baptists to come as volunteers. "We've got to do something to get more people down here," he says. ■



MISSIONARY DOUG MILLAR, left, discusses plans to renovate a church building with Luis Hernandez, pastor, Cristo Viene (Christ is Coming) Baptist Church on Isla de Mujeres (Isle of Women) 10 miles off the coast of Cancun, Mexico. Volunteers will help with the renovation work. — IMB photo by Don Rutledge

In Beulah Baptist Association

West Tennessee churches begin Hispanic congregations

By Chris Menees
For Baptist and Reflector

UNION CITY — Two churches in Beulah Baptist Association based here are bridging the language barrier to spread God's love through new Hispanic ministries in the Spanish language.

First Baptist Church, Union City, holds Hispanic services on Saturday evenings, according to Jerry Essary, director of missions, Beulah Association. Both endeavors have received support from the association and the Tennessee Baptist Convention, he noted.

Two Hispanic men have been saved and baptized since First Church, Martin, began its Hispanic ministry the first of March, and many others from differing backgrounds have made professions of faith. At Sunswept, 20 people have made professions of faith since its language services began about six months ago.

First Baptist Church, Martin

Roger S. Oldham, pastor, First Church, Martin, said services there currently draw an average of 24 Hispanic participants. Others participating are Rogelio (Roy) Soto from Henry, pastor of the Hispanic congregation; his family; and

about 10 volunteers from First Church. Many other churches assist the ministry by providing childcare, food for meals, funds, supplies, and conversation in English to help the participants learn the English language.

Oldham said the church will work with the TBC to establish a new church from the Hispanic group. A Spanish-Language Ministry Team has been formed to oversee the new congregation. And the church has adopted a policy statement for the ministry.

Oldham added he has noticed the impact of the Gospel on the lives of the Hispanics attending the services, as well as the good impact of the services on the lives of the volunteers who have become involved with the Spanish-language ministry.

Sunswept Baptist Church, Union City

James A. Kinsey, pastor, Sunswept Church, said an average of 15 Hispanics are attending the Spanish-speaking services there on Saturday nights, but attendance has been as high as 36. And a recent service drew 30 adults and 10 children.

The evening services are preceded by conversational English classes led by volunteers, and meals or refreshments also

are provided.

Kinsey said the Hispanic congregation leaders are teaming up with Sunswept members to conduct regular visitation in areas where Spanish-speaking residents are living. Sunswept provides the transportation and the Hispanics provide music to announce the visitation teams in the neighborhoods.

The congregation found a pastor through a relationship Sunswept had with Brownsville Baptist Church, Brownsville. David Herrera, a member of the Hispanic congregation of Brownsville from Honduras, was enlisted as pastor.

Kinsey said although he cannot understand the Spanish language, he feels



WORKING TOGETHER during conversational English classes at Sunswept Baptist Church, Union City, are from left, David Herrera, Hispanic pastor; Rose Reagan, Sunswept member; Hermila Montelongo; Billie Ragsdale, member of First Baptist Church, Union City and volunteer coordinator of the English classes at Sunswept; and Hector Gonzalez.

God's presence in the Hispanic services he has attended.

"There have been times that people would stand and pray aloud to receive Christ, and even though I didn't understand the language, my spirit bore witness." ■

Let's make prayer one resolution we keep

Reflections

by Lonnie Wilkey,
editor



2000 — the start of a new year. I won't mention century or millennium. There are some who argue the new century and millennium do not actually start until 2001. Since they may be right and I don't really know, I will just call it the start of a new year. I know that's correct.

Anyway, the beginning of a new year is the time many of

us make those resolutions to do the things we should already be doing.

Over the years I have resolved to lose hundreds of pounds of weight. And I have. Unfortunately, I have regained those hundreds of pounds, plus a few more over the same time span.

Why do we make resolutions?

I think it is a sincere desire to do what needs to be done — no matter what facet of life it may be.

It is so easy, however, to lose focus after a period of time. In my case, a candy bar here and a candy bar there, and my diet was shot. The

weight I had lost came back. I did not keep my focus.

I received a press release last week from Baptist Hospital in Nashville. The release offered some suggestions in keeping New Year's resolutions. The first piece of advice was to be realistic and to set goals that are clearly defined and realistically attainable.

According to Diane Seaman of the Baptist Center for Health and Wellness, resolutions "require commitment and, often, lifestyle changes."

Commitment is the key.

When the resolution is made, most people have the desire. Desire and commitment are two different matters. De-

sire is what we want; commitment is what sees us through.

In the year 2000 I will once again resolve to lose weight. Hopefully, I will be more committed to accomplishing that goal this year.

Another resolution I will make and I would encourage all Tennessee Baptists to make is to commit to a more serious prayer life.

No matter where any of us are in our prayer lives, there is always room for improvement.

Prayer is going to be a point of emphasis in the Tennessee Baptist Convention in the year 2000.

Let's all make prayer a point of personal focus as well. **B&R**



just for today

by Fred Wood,
pastor emeritus,
Eudora Church,
Memphis



Start with a smile

Little Johnny to mother: "Who's your best friend?" Mother: "Your father, I suppose." Johnny: "He doesn't count." Mother: "Why not?" Johnny: "Cause he's your husband. You have to like him."

Take this truth

"I slept and dreamed that life was beauty. I woke and found that life was duty."

Memorize this Scripture

"Fear God and keep his commandments; for this the whole duty of man." — Ecclesiastes 12:13

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me remember when I have done all my duty to God, I am still unworthy of his blessings." ■

Happy New Year — and may you avoid the 'bug'

that's life

by Linda Jackson Roebuck



Another New Year is almost here. Time to stay up and watch the Big Apple fall in Times Square, listen to a big band rendition of "Auld Lang Syne," followed by a discussion of what in the world "Auld Lang Syne" means, then flip channels for a while because we're too tired to get up and go to bed.

Meanwhile, those leftover holiday goodies scream my name until I've nibbled and grazed and packed on those three extra "challenge pounds"

for that New Year's diet.

This time is a little different though. All four digits in the year are changing. We're going to see something that only happens every thousand years. There's been a lot of discussion on the significance of such a thing and where we fit in in the great timeline of humanity; how the world has changed in the last millennium and how it might change in the next.

But mostly we've heard about this Y2K bug and how it's going to potentially mess up our lives. I have to admit, I haven't done a lot of worrying about it (Although I have had a vision of my next article coming to you by way of a big Bedrock pterodactyl flying in through your window and chiseling the words into a heavy,

granite slate). But whether or not I worry, I can't avoid the topic. Everywhere I turn it's Y2K ready, Y2K compliant, Y2K Survival Kit, Y2K — The Movie, Y2K the action figure, Y2K the official cleanser of the next millennium, Y2K the yummy cookies.

In a hospital emergency room recently I noticed Y2K Ready stickers on all the equipment — including one chair. Hmmm. This must be some whopper kind of bug that can render our chairs non-functional if we don't prepare them. What would happen if you didn't get your chairs ready? I mean, would you just keep falling off as you tried to sit down or what? I guess I just don't have the computer-wizard mind it takes for this stuff.

But what are we missing as we obsess over the "bug?" We've become so preoccupied with this computer glitch that we're missing the big event.

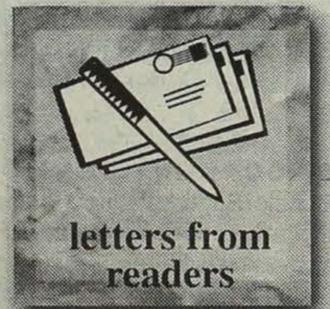
Stepping back and pondering a thousand years makes God's bigness so evident. To think of his greatness in creating the human race. To imagine all of the individual people he's loved. To realize the awesome achievements of mankind in that time — achievements inspired by him.

I think I'll make it through the glitch. I pray I'll take time to allow the wonder and majesty of our Lord to affect me. Our God is an awesome God. ■ — Roebuck is a freelance writer in Nashville where her husband, Jon, serves as pastor of Woodmont Baptist Church.

Partnership Prayer Requests

January

- 1 — Pray for Dave Qualls, the new discipleship ministry team leader, Baptist State Convention of Michigan.
- 2 — Pray for Guy and Elena Key, missionaries in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- 3 — Pray for Vancouver Baptist Church in British Columbia, Canada. Members are considering buying a building and property.
- 4 — Pray for Joe Norris, a church starter strategist in Michigan.
- 5 — Pray for Scott and Sandra George, missionaries to Portugal.
- 6 — Pray for Ann Sprouse, missionary to Rio, who is on medical stateside assignment.
- 7 — Pray for Pastor Lou Leventhal in Canada.
- 8 — Pray for Brenda Hallock, missionary, as she becomes volunteer coordinator for the Tennessee partnership in Brazil.
- 9 — Pray for Andrew and Susan McCaskill, ISC missionaries to Portugal.
- 10 — Pray for Michael Raybould as he leads Christ in the City Church in Verdun, Quebec, Canada.
- 11 — Pray for Sandy Bowman, a consultant in Michigan, recovering from brain surgery.



Y2K commandments

As we prepare for the future we are reminded that Hebrews 13:8 tells us Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. God will not change for the new millennium.

I have prepared the following Y2K commandments.

You are 2 Knot have no other gods before me.

You are 2 Knot make unto thee any graven images.

You are 2 Knot take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

You are 2 Keep the Sabbath day holy.

You are 2 Know to honor thy father and thy mother.

You are 2 Knot murder.

You are 2 Knot commit adultery.

You are 2 Knot steal.

You are 2 Knot bear false witness.

You are 2 Knot covet.

But, beloved, be not ignorant of the one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (II Peter 3:8).

Sandra Cross
Jackson 38305

Changes opinion

Several years ago it was my strong belief that the only way to resolve the strong differences between the liberals and the conservatives in the Southern Baptist Convention was to split and each group go their own way.

However, the changes in leadership, the return to basic principles, and the resolutions in regard to the sanctity of marriage and family life are very encouraging and I am convinced that I was wrong with my first opinion.

Norma Cox
Camden 38320

Still the same century

I remember I started my education in public schools more than 60 years ago. In each classroom, above the black board, was the number system — 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0. I wondered why the zero was not before the one.

Before writing this letter I drove to our latest built school in Milan and walked into a second grade classroom that no one was in. On one wall was the number system, no change: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0.

About that time, one of the school educators, walking down the hall saw a stranger standing alone in the second grade classroom. She asked if she could help me and I told her why I was there and thanked her.

Again, some years later I wondered why in the 1900s, we were in the 20th century. I found the fact that the 20th century began in the year 1901. Then I knew why zero never goes ahead of one.

This 20th century will end in 0 — 2000, not 1999. The next



Arizona foundation announces plans

Baptist Press

PHOENIX — The Baptist Foundation of Arizona will liquidate its assets in an effort to repay nearly \$600 million owed to investors.

The decision was announced following recent meetings with more than 4,000 investors, according to foundation spokesman Lew Phelps.

Phelps said the polled investors overwhelmingly rejected the foundation's restructuring plan proposed as part of its Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing in early November. In Chapter 11 bankruptcies, a company is protected from creditor suits while it develops a plan of financial reorganization acceptable to the court and its creditors.

According to court documents, the foundation listed liabilities of \$640 million. About \$590 million is claimed by 13,000 investors while estimates of the BFA's assets range from \$160 million to \$200 million.

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Under the original plan, investors would have been given two options: "cash out" where investors would receive 20 percent of their original investment, or invest in a new publicly-held company that would be formed to hold and manage the foundation's assets.

Instead, the spokesman said the restructuring committee will propose a new company, with liquidation shares instead of stock. The sole purpose of the new company will be to sell off the company's assets and distribute the proceeds to investors. The BFA's proposal is pending approval from a committee representing investors and the foundation's restructuring committee before it goes to Bankruptcy Court.

Phelps said he anticipates an orderly liquidation of the foundation's assets, which includes real estate, subdivisions, and golf courses. The entire process could take several

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years to complete.

The BFA has no relationship to the Tennessee Baptist Foundation or the Southern Baptist Foundation. ■

Baptists aid flood victims in Venezuela

Baptist Press

CARACAS, Venezuela — Baptists have mobilized to help victims of massive flooding that devastated Venezuela's Caribbean coast a week before Christmas.

Missionaries in the country

CLASSIFIED

PRESCHOOL/CHILDREN: Stevens Street Baptist Church in Cookeville, TN is seeking a part-time minister for preschool and children. Send resume to Tim Frank, 327 W Stevens St., Cookeville, TN 38501 or call/fax (931) 526-8128.

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REGISTRATION BEGINS JANUARY 17, 2000




are calling on Southern Baptists to pray that the country's worst natural disaster would turn hearts to Jesus Christ.

At least 10,000 people died and 200,000 were left homeless when torrential rains lashed the South American country the week of Dec. 17. A wave of earth and rocks crashed down from rain-soaked, 8,000-foot-high mountains onto a 60-mile stretch of coast that was home to 350,000 people.

Entire towns were buried under yards of boulders and rubble.

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The SBC International Mission Board released \$80,000 to help purchase food, water, medicines, and mattresses that will be distributed by missionaries and Venezuelan Baptists through a network of Baptist churches located in the area. ■

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HOUSEPARENTS: Missions-at-home job opportunity. The Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes in Chattanooga and Cleveland are seeking a Christian married couple (preferably Baptist) to serve as Relief Houseparents. Can have no more than two children living at home. High School diploma or GED required. Full or part-time employment. Contact Dr. Bob Segrest or Bill Dockery at (423) 892-2722.

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Bakers Grove Baptist Church, Hermitage/Mt. Juliet area, part-time. Call (615) 883-5039 or fax resume, 889-7453.

CHILDREN/YOUTH: Full-time minister of children/youth opportunity. Resume to PCBC, Box 376, Brownsville, TN 38012 or request job description.

WANTED: Church group from Minnesota searching for MC5 coach or similar. Call (507) 834-9731 or 834-6601.

MUSIC/YOUTH PASTOR: Seeking full-time music/youth pastor. Send resume to First Baptist Church, ATTN.: Tammy Jackson, P.O. Box 10, Norphlet, AR 71759.

BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR: Buffalo Baptist Church is seeking a bivocational pastor. Resumes will be accepted until Jan. 31, 2000 at: Buffalo Baptist Church, c/o Dennis Whittaker, Rt. 1, Box 201-A1, Rutledge, TN 37861.

MUSIC/YOUTH: Seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. A mission-minded person for established work, seminary preferred. Send resume to Calvary Baptist Church, 785 First St., Idaho Falls, ID 83401 or calvary@srv.net.

MUSIC MINISTER: Growing evangelistic church is seeking a creative minister of music to lead 100+ choir, praise and worship, graded choir program, audio/visual ministry, and dramatic productions. For more information send resume to: P.O. Box 15148, Greenville, S.C. 29610.

Life and Work Lesson

How valuable is time?

By Wayne Rowan

Focus Passages: Psalm 90:12, 103:15-16; Ecclesiastes 3:1, 17; Ephesians 5:8-17

"It's my time and I will do what ever I want to do with it!" Have you ever made that statement? I'm sure you have. It took me many years to learn to appreciate time. When it happened, I began to use my time more wisely. This lesson deals with the necessity of a Christian using their time wisely. We all must become aware of the scarcity of time in our lives and determine to let God help us manage what time we have to be used for his glory.

Your time is brief (Psalm 90:12; 103:15-16). These verses reveal to us that mankind is mortal. We are to live a certain days and then we die. God is eternal and we are not. We sometimes live our lives as if we are going to live forever in this body. In my 20 years of ministry, I have seen just the opposite of this kind of thinking. I have seen life end at three months and 96 years of age. I have had the services of children eight years old and teenagers. Life is so uncertain. We are a frail creation subject to all forms of mortality. We must learn to manage the time we have each day. Each day we live we must learn to be more wise and faithful to God. Let's not become so busy that we forget to celebrate life as God intended. We celebrate life by worshipping the creator of all life.

You can waste your time (Ephesians 5:8-17). These verses give us the contrast between those who are in darkness of sin and those in the loving light of the Lord. Wise living is righteous living. We are the children of the light and we are not to be associated with the darkness of sin. Too many of God's children waste their precious time living on the opposite side of the righteousness of God. When we fail to seek God's will in the way we live, we many times make wrong decisions that can effect our lives for years. Look at all the wasted time going down the wrong road in your life. Just like the children of Israel and the 40 years they spent in the wilderness. All because they rebelled against God. What a waste of time that journey was for them. Let's not follow their example. Look for the will of God in everything that you do and you will find extra time to serve and work for the Lord.

You will give an account (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 17). These verses tell us that we are going to have to give an accounting of our time and how we have used it to the Lord. What a scary thought. Just to think of having to tell the Lord why we wasted so much of the precious time we were allotted. When you buy a perishable product at the grocery store, do you always check the expiration date? Well, I do. It is important to know. Too bad we don't have a date stamped on our face telling us that we only have this much time and then we go. If it was there we would probably live our life differently. We should live our lives that way at all times. We have no promise of another day. But do we really believe this? Many of us live as if we have no thought of just how frail our lives really are.

So, what should we do? I believe that each of us should start living each day with a new and excited relationship with the Lord. Start by letting God know how thankful you are for the life you have been given. God gave you time to do the things that he would have you to accomplish. Learn to make the most out of each and every day.

Remember that a wise person is a person who knows that God is the righteous judge and he will judge us all someday and that when we rely on him to lead our lives we will be judged righteous. But the wicked people live their life apart from the Lord and they too will be judged. But, their judgment will not be the same as the righteous. They will reap the rewards that only this life offers and will be found wanting at God's final judgment. — Rowan is pastor, Calvary Hill Baptist Church, Ripley.

Focus on prayer

By Thomas James

Focal Passage: Matthew 6: 1-15

Not long ago our family took a trip to Georgia. On the way home all the children were asleep so I drove as far as I could without stopping for gas. I watched the needle get closer and closer to "E" before I finally had to stop. For many of us, that is a description of our prayer life; we go and go without stopping to spiritually "refuel." The Lord Jesus in today's passage tells us how to use prayer as a means of spiritual strength.

Family Bible Lesson

First, the Lord speaks about the sincerity of prayer. In verse 5, he refers to the "hypocrites" and their manner of praying. The word "hypocrite" is a word that meant pretender, one who "play acts" as something. They were acting as though they had a personal relationship with the Father. They prayed to be seen by others and the Lord says that is their reward. In verse six Jesus addresses the prayer life of his disciples. He says, *and you, when you pray.* Notice Jesus does not say you "might" want to pray, or "if you pray" but rather "when you pray." He assumes that those who follow him will spend regular time with the Father.

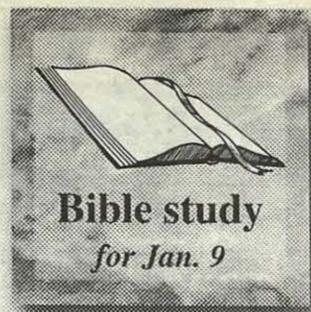
Secondly, notice the simplicity of prayer. In verses seven and eight the Lord told his disciples to use honest, open, and simple prayers from the heart. We can bare our heart to the Lord as he *knows the things you have need of before you ask him.*

The great emphasis of this passage is found in verses nine through 13. Here the Lord deals with a sample

prayer. In Luke's account of this the disciples have asked the Lord to teach them to pray and this is his answer. Jesus begins the prayer with the inclusive word "our." If we can think of a race or economic class of people that were they to claim Christ as Savior would not be welcome to worship with us, that we could not openly embrace as brothers in Christ, then we cannot pray this prayer as we stumble over the word "our." Then the Lord refers to God as "Father." I find it amusing that many "main-line" denominations are deleting any reference to God as being masculine. In their earthly wisdom they have decided that God is "gender neutral." Whenever a debate like this arises, I try to base all I believe on the ultimate source of authority, the holy Word of God. If the Word of God says the Lord Jesus referred to God as "Father," I will stand on the word.

"Hallowed be thy name" is another way of saying "holy" be any reference to your name. I am appalled at the use of God's name in vain, often times by those who claim to be of the family of faith. In all that we do and say our witness is to reflect the holy nature of a holy God who lives within us. "Thy kingdom come" is a phrase of anticipation. The older I get the more I look forward to the soon coming return of the Lord Jesus. "Give us this day our daily bread" recognizes the ability of God to meet our daily needs. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us" is to be prayed with caution. When praying this you are asking God to forgive you only as much as you are willing to forgive others.

I don't think the Lord wants us to pray this exact prayer all the time. He was sharing with the disciples the elements found in a prayer life with the Father. Spend some time today refueling spiritually, talk to your heavenly Father who loves you dearly! — James is pastor of Alpha Baptist Church, Morristown.



Pursuing love

By Kevin Shrum

Focal Passage: I John 3:11-24

In seminary we used to tell a joke that contained more than a grain of truth: A liberal is a person who loves the world (feed it, cloth it, educate it), but hates his neighbor (don't let 'the world' get too close to me); while a conservative is a person who hates the world (the world is going down the tubes), but loves his neighbor (historically, evangelical, conservative churches have been involved in benevolent ministries). Whether true or not, the believer is supposed to love the world, beginning with his neighbor. Love is the central characteristic of the believer. Active love is an indicator of a mature believer. The text before us lays out the nature and scope of this kind of Christ-like love.

Love and the other person (vv. 11-15). Two men were talking one day about the difficulties of dealing with other people. One was heard to remark, "Life would be O.K. if it weren't for other people!" "Yes," said the other man, "but it sure would be boring." Christians are to learn not only how to deal with other people, but to love them, as well. This is why the text states in verse 11, *We should love one another.* We are not to be like Cain, whose anger bubbled over into murderous action toward Abel.

We are to demonstrate that we have overcome death through Jesus Christ *because we love our brothers* (v.15). Hatred and murderous acts do not reflect the eternal life that we

Explore the Bible Lesson

have in Jesus Christ.

Love and gracious activities, (vv. 16-18). Love is more than mere words. The day in which we live finds many unbelievers and believers alike giving lip-service to love rather than a love in action. For example, *just as Jesus Christ laid down his life for us...we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers* (v. 16). Love may require personal sacrifice. Further, we are not to deny sharing our material possessions with others (v. 17), showing our love not *with words or tongue but with actions and in truth* (v. 18). A lifestyle of love demonstrates that we belong to the truth and have eternal life.

Love and the security of the believer (vv. 19-22). True, active love does more than benefit one's neighbor. Love benefits the person who loves, as well. How many times have you helped someone and ended up being helped yourself? For example, if a person loves with a Christ-like love the world will know *that we belong to the truth* (v. 18). And even if our hearts condemn us, we can rest assured in the presence of God for *God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything* (v. 20). Often, believers have insecurities and doubts about many things, including their relationships with other people. But if a person is truly saved, God will secure

that person so that they are free to love in the power of the Spirit.

Love and obedience, (vv. 23-24). John closes this section of Scripture by reiterating one of the constant

themes of I John - the necessity of obedient love. In fact, the believer can have *confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him* (vv. 21-22). This is why John declares a two-fold command: 1) *to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ,* and 2) *to love one another as he commanded us* (v. 23). As we obey Jesus it demonstrates that Jesus lives in us and we in him (v. 24). And what is the evidence of Jesus' presence? The person of the Holy Spirit which produces in us the love and life of Jesus Christ (v. 24, see Galatians 5:22).

Love is the "hard work" of the Christian life. It is one thing to say that we love others; it is quite another to actually demonstrate love through deeds of kindness and mercy. Finally, love does not compromise truth. Rather, true, Christ-like love places a premium on the need for truth that reflects the character of Jesus himself (Ephesians 4:15). Love gives evidence of a secure salvation and of the Spirit's presence in the life of a believer.

So, let us love as Jesus loved: without pretense, pride, or personal gain. In doing so we will demonstrate that we belong to Jesus and that he belongs to us. Immanuel! — Shrum is pastor, Inglewood Baptist Church, Nashville.

leaders

■ **Ray Maynard**, director of missions, Union Baptist Association, for 12 years, has been called as director of missions, North Valley Baptist Association, based in Thompson, N.D.

■ **Freedom Baptist Church, Sparta, called Jerry Womack as pastor, effective Dec. 12.** Womack also worked at a McMinnville telephone company.

■ **First Baptist Church, Doyle, called Tyree Smith as pastor, effective Dec. 12.** He also teaches in a public school along with his wife, Joyce, in Warren County.

■ **Jack Carver, pastor, First Baptist Church, Madison, for nine years, has been called as pastor of a church in Hickory, N.C.** Carver is a member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board.



VELMA HOLLIS, a member of First Baptist Church, Iron City, was honored by the church recently during the centennial anniversary of the church. Hollis, 98, was honored for being the oldest member of the church. She has held several jobs in the church.



PASTOR Larry Chatman, left, pastor, Holt's Corner Baptist Church, Chapel Hill, gives a gift to **Elizabeth Oates**, recently retired missionary to Brazil, during her visit to the church Dec. 5. Oates spoke about her ministry of 42 years in Brazil and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The gift was in appreciation for her service.



BARRY CAPPS, left, pastor, Sidonia Baptist Church, Sharon, stands with leaders of the church honored recently by the congregation for more than 10 years of service on Worker's Appreciation Day. They are, from left, G.W. Cooper, trustee; Susie Lee, treasurer; and Claud Hawkins, trustee.

■ **Edsel West** has resigned as pastor, South Harriman Baptist Church, Harriman, where he served for 21 and a half years. He currently is vice chairman of the board of trustees of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. West is available for part-time and interim work in churches. He can be reached at (865) 717-0372.

■ **Charles Livingstone**, pastor, Donelson View Baptist Church, Nashville, will retire Jan. 31.

■ **Michael Lester**, pastor, North Etowah Baptist Church, Etowah, was called as pastor, First Baptist Church, McCaysville, Ga., effective Jan. 2.

■ **Gene Nelson**, minister of education and youth, First Baptist Church, Rogersville, has been called as pastor, Cherokee Hills Baptist Church, Morristown.

■ **First Baptist Church, Maryville**, recently recognized **Charles Ballard** for serving



BREAKING GROUND at East Union Baptist Church, Jackson, Nov. 7 for a new sanctuary are, from left, Tom Dean, chairman of deacons; Gary Jack, treasurer; Bessie Stanford, oldest member; Ernest Holland, building committee member; and Randy Honey, building committee member. Looking on is Conroy Ryan, left, of Madison-Chester Baptist Association. The congregation also celebrated the church's 39th anniversary that day.

10 years and **Robbie Tindell** for serving five years as organist. Ballard is associate pastor: education/senior adults.

■ **First Baptist Church, Obion**, has called **Dave Crutchfield** as youth pastor.

■ **Ben Cripps** has been called as interim youth minister, First Baptist Church, Milan.

■ **Darryl Marcle** has resigned as youth minister, New Bethlehem Baptist Church, Dyer.

■ **Avondale Baptist Church, Humboldt**, has called **Bill Whitman**, interim pastor, as pastor.

■ **Jimmy Sorrell**, pastor, Center Baptist Church, Trenton, was ordained Dec. 5.

■ **Don Bowery**, pastor, First Baptist Church, Mountain City, has been called as pastor of a church in Anchorage, Alaska.

■ **Gearin's Chapel Baptist Church, Greenfield**, has called **Chris Merritt** as youth director.

■ **Benton Williams** resigned as pastor of First Baptist Church, Ridgetop, due to health problems. The congregation called **Mike Duff** as interim pastor. He is serving Dec. 12 - Feb. 27.

■ **Clifton View Baptist Church, Johnson City**, has called **Claude Babb** as pastor.

■ **Antioch Baptist Church, Johnson City**, has called **Mike Hearn** of Marietta, Ga., as minister of students and education.

■ **Sherrel Nave** has been called as interim pastor, Mountain View Baptist Church, Johnson City.

■ **Holly Davis** has been called as preschool ministries director, Towering Oaks Baptist Church, Greeneville.

■ **Towering Oaks Baptist Church, Greeneville**, has called

Chris Hillard as minister to students.

■ **Charles E. Orr**, minister of education, First Baptist Church, Paris, for 51 years, will retire Jan. 31.

state events

■ **The Tennessee Baptist Convention** will hold an English as a Second Language Worship Feb. 11-13 at the William Carey Baptist Association Center in Fayetteville. The training equips people who wish to teach English. Deadline to register is Feb. 3. Cost is \$20. For more information, call Judy Hurst, TBC, (615) 371-7916 or 1-800-558-2090.

associations

■ **Members of Robertson County Baptist Association** churches gave Christmas gifts to children and youth who are clients of the Freeda Harris Mission Center, Lookout, Ky.

■ **Gibson County Baptist**



LEADERS of the Baptist Men's Ministry, First Baptist Church, Paris, give a used van to David Mitchell, left of center, and Marsha Mitchell, right of center, Southern Baptist Mission Service Corps volunteers in Puerto Rico for 15 years. Participating are, from left, Carlos Owens, Sam Knott, and Chuck Bullock, of the ministry; David Mitchell; Marsha Mitchell; Linda Cathy, of the church; and Jerry Massey, pastor. The Mitchells minister to deaf people in Puerto Rico. The men's ministry prepared the van for use in Puerto Rico and the church provided funds for shipping and taxes.



Association, based in Trenton, will hold MissionsLive for youth Feb. 3. A creative arts and worship group from the North American Mission Board, Alpharetta, Ga., will perform.

churches

■ **First Baptist Church, Strawberry Plains**, had a revival recently which resulted in 21 people making professions of faith and six people making other spiritual decisions. Morris L. Anderson of Manna Ministries spoke.

■ **First Baptist Church, Athens**, will host John Jacobs and the Power Team Jan. 12-16 at 7 p.m.

■ **The East Tennessee Creation Science Association** will meet at **First Baptist Church, Concord, Knoxville**, Jan. 20 at 7 p.m. The group will gather in the church's Fireside Room and hear Geoff Stevens. For more information, call (423) 986-6784.

■ **Edgefield Baptist Church, Nashville**, will host John Kurtz, retired pastor, Nashville, and his dummy, "Prof" for a revival Jan. 16 from 10:55-noon. The duo also will lead a session for children at 9:30 a.m. For more information, call the church at (615) 255-0468.

■ **Indian Springs Baptist Church, Kingsport**, gave \$45,208 on a recent Sunday to its building fund.