

January 20, 1963

**Billy Graham Upholds  
Bible As God's Word**

DALLAS (BP)--Evangelist Billy Graham told the Texas Baptist Evangelism Conference here that Southern Baptists should quit fighting over whether the Bible is God's word. They should instead start preaching it with faith.

"If you don't," he said, "you're dead."

Holding high in the air a worn Bible, Graham said, "We are faced today with the problem of whether this book is God's word or not. Is it reliable? Can we trust it?" he asked. "Emphatically, yes," he answered.

Graham said he believes the Bible is the infallible word of God even though the scriptures are being questioned as never before by liberal Bible scholars.

He said the issue is dividing not only Southern Baptists, but also causing controversy among Presbyterians and every other major Protestant denomination.

"I hate to see that our statistics (membership) have been declining in the Southern Baptist Convention," he said.

"The main reason for this seems to be a lack of faith in the word of God, and the lack of men filled with the Holy Spirit."

The famous Baptist evangelist brought the closing address at the Texas evangelism conference here. An overflow crowd of more than 16,500 jammed into Dallas Memorial Auditorium. Thousands were turned away without seats.

Graham argued no archaeological, theological or scholastic discovery has ever proven the Bible to be wrong. Many times, the Bible was right, the scholars were wrong, he said.

"Some scholars have said that Moses could not have written the first five books of the Bible because writing wasn't invented during the time of Moses," he said. "Then carved tablets were discovered in an archaeological excavation which proved writing existed hundreds of years before Moses."

"Every fact and scientific discovery adds luster and integrity to the word of God. It is not just a few shouting, fighting Baptists in the South who believe this."

"You can debate the Bible until the year 2,000 A. D. and not solve any problems," said Graham. "We can only accept this book by faith."

"If the Bible says that Jonah swallowed the whale, let's accept it and believe it; or, if the Bible says that two plus two is five, let's believe it."

"Brethren," he said, "let's get on with the job of proclaiming the gospel and stop fighting over stories about Goliath, Jonah, etc."

Graham said that Southern Baptists have always been strong because of faith in evangelism and in the Bible.

"I will guarantee that Texas Baptists can lead the Convention and the world if we take our stand that this is God's book," Graham concluded.

Missionaries Receive  
Home Board Commissions

ATLANTA (BP)--Five types of missionaries to work in the United States were commissioned by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention here.

The nine missionaries were commissioned following a four-day orientation period. This period prepared them for work in their respective areas of associational missions, chaplaincy, city missions, language missions and pioneer missions.

Receiving their charges and certificates were Charles L. Day as mountain missionary in Hawthorne, Nev.; Sidney J. Hall, chaplain and Baptist Student Union director at the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.; Keith H. Harris, chaplain at the U. S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.; Ralph W. Neighbour Jr., area missionary, Edison, N. J.; Marion O. Reneau, director of juvenile rehabilitation, Seattle, Wash.; G. W. Reppond Jr., area missionary in Grandview, Wash.; Mr. and Mrs. George W. Thomas, missionaries to the deaf in California; and James R. Wyatt, mountain missionary, Ridgecrest, Calif.

Day, originally from Blackfork, Ark., was educated at Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. Past experience includes social work at Sonoma County, Calif. He is married and has two children.

Hall, a native of Hartsville, S. C., holds degrees from Baylor University (Baptist), Waco, Tex., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He has served as recording technician for the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. He also directed the Baptist Student Union at Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Va., and at Virginia Military Institute in Lexington. He is married and has one child.

Harris, born in Providence, R. I., was educated at the University of Arizona, Tucson; University of Colorado, at Boulder; Texas Western College at El Paso; and at Arlington, Tex. He served as a pastor in Broomfield, Colo., and Covington, Tex.; and as youth director in Casa Grande, Ariz. He is married and has two children.

Neighbour, a native of Paw Paw, Mich., received his education from Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Northwestern College, Minneapolis, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, La. He has served as pastor in New Orleans; Pensacola, Fla.; and Rockville, Md. In addition he served as a staff member for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Reneau, originally from Norman, Okla., has studied at Oklahoma Baptist University; Fresno State College, Fresno, Calif.; and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served as a teacher-principal in Visalia and Riverdale, Calif., and as a teacher of mentally retarded children in Visalia. He has also been a pastor in Shawnee and Nash, Okla., and Woodville, Auburn and Vallejo, Calif. He is married and has two children.

Reppond, a native of Marion, La., holds degrees from Northwestern State College of Louisiana, Natchitoches, La.; and from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has held pastorates in Texas and Louisiana and has been superintendent of missions in Louisiana. He is married and has three children.

Thomas, born in Buffalo, Kan., has studied at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Furman University (Baptist), Greenville, S. C., and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served as a pastor to the deaf in Amite and Baton Rouge, La., and in Birmingham, Ala.

Mrs. Thomas, the former Ida Margaret Jackson, is a native of Sumter, S. C., and has served as a home missionary to the deaf in Baton Rouge, La. They have one son.

Wyatt, born in Waco, Tex., holds a degree from Baylor University. He has been a pastor in Barstow and Rosamond, Calif., and in Lorena, Tex. He is married and has five children, all married.

Evangelism Promoted  
By New Filmstrip

ATLANTA (BP)--"The waters of baptism are stirred and a new member finds a place of service. Each year thousands express their faith with the words, 'I know Christ died for me, and I accept him as my personal Saviour.'"

This narration begins "Church-Centered Evangelism," a new color filmstrip. It presents the year-round Southern Baptist program of evangelism as promoted by the Home Mission Board's division of evangelism.

The narration is printed in illustrated tract form. Extra copies of this tract also titled "Church-Centered Evangelism" are available free from the Home Mission Board tract service, 161 Spring St., N. W., Atlanta 3, Ga.

The 48-frame color filmstrip, free to missionaries on request to the Home Mission Board, is now available through Baptist Book Stores for \$3.50.

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Flying Parsons Meet  
To Organize Unit

(1-20-63)

LITTLE ROCK (BP)--Southern Baptist ministers who fly airplanes will meet here to organize the Flying Parsons of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The new organization will be open to ordained or commissioned ministers in the SBC. They must be licensed pilots or hold current student pilot permits from the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA).

Temporary president is Lewis E. Clarke, pastor, Maple Avenue Baptist Church, Smackover, Ark., one of the founders.

Other officers, all of whom will serve until the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention next May in Kansas City, are:

Ben F. Bates, pastor of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Ark., first vice-president; George Y. Williams, pastor of First Baptist Church, Attalla, Ala., second vice-president; and Bill McCrary, pastor of First Baptist Church, Smackover, secretary.

Purpose of the meeting here will be to plan for the organization meeting in Kansas City.

The aims of the Flying Parsons, to be acted on here, are:

To use aviation in spreading the gospel of Christ;

To render aid to persons in an emergency;

To fly missionaries to their speaking appointments;

To be of service to the Southern Baptist Convention;

To stand ready to serve the government in time of national or state need.

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Southeast Texas Survey  
Wins Popular Support

BEAUMONT, Tex. (BP)--An interdenominational religious survey in the Beaumont-Port Arthur, Tex., area by Southern Baptists has been called one of the most thorough ever conducted under the denomination's sponsorship.

Enthusiastic response rose from all the areas of religious faiths. 3,576 workers from the various denominations joined in the Jefferson County survey where Beaumont and Port Arthur are primary cities. 96.5 per cent of the homes were contacted. Population of the county is approximately 247,000.

The survey revealed that 75.4 per cent of the people are church members, with 74.5 per cent of the children under nine years of age enrolled in Sunday school or catechism. Baptist was shown to be the leading denomination, though by a very narrow margin.

Of the 55,446 homes surveyed, 62 per cent of the persons reported they attended church regularly, 13 per cent occasionally, 15 per cent seldom, while 10 per cent said they never attended. Less than 2 per cent refused to answer.

A listing of all unchurched persons was produced, including names, addresses, dates of birth and church preferences. All churches in the area received this data.

It was jointly led by Leonard G. Irwin, Atlanta, secretary of the department of survey and special studies of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Darwin Farmer, Dallas, director of the department of surveys, Baptist General Convention of Texas. The survey was reported on regularly by radio stations, newspapers, and TV stations of the area.

Irwin attributes the success of the survey to the local director, Charles Lee Williamson, Baptist city missionary of the area, and to excellent local cooperation and publicity.

Nine men from towns throughout Texas were trained during the survey to help conduct future work of this nature in the state. Two from out of the state also participated in the training.

Although Negroes of the area were invited to join in the survey, they declined to participate. Therefore the Negro population of 56,000 was not surveyed.

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**NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION**  
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