

BAPTIST FEATURES

PRODUCED BY BAPTIST PRESS
NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

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March 2, 1963

Editor's Note: This is the fifth in a Baptist Press series on Southern Baptist Convention agency heads and other leaders. This article tells about C. C. Warren, former SBC president now directing the Convention's church extension drive.

Nobody Dares Discard
Warren's Blue Sweater

By John E. Roberts
For Baptist Press

C. C. Warren and the four-year-old girl were huddled together in a corner of his study, their eyes fixed on a Walt Disney character selected from a well-filled shelf.

The toys told a story of carefree fun, but the paneled walls, the array of office machines and file cabinets and the hundreds of theological books told a story of things more serious.

"Now watch closely," said Warren in a well-modulated voice. He pointed to a "Professor Ludwig" character, and continued, "When he gets mad, somethings happens." Suddenly the doll-size character "blew his top," neck stretching and head bouncing skyward.

The gray-haired man and the four-year-old girl laughed convulsively together, oblivious to others in the office and having a delightful time.

Casper Carl Warren, director of the 30,000 Movement for the Southern Baptist Convention and permanent vice-chairman of the Baptist Jubilee Advance committee, was showing a side familiar to friends and family but not generally known to 10 million Southern Baptists.

A former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, he has been director of the 30,000 Movement since 1958.

Leaving their toys behind, Warren and his small visitor walked across the office to a sun-filled picture window that opened onto a hedge-enclosed back yard. (The office suite is attached to the Warrens' comfortable but modest home in a quiet residential section near the heart of Charlotte, N.C.)

A ragged opening in the otherwise neat hedge bore the mark of the six grandchildren whose back yard joins the Warrens. "They hardly know which is home," he chuckled, admitting that their mother gets no help from him in matters of discipline or visiting habits.

When he returns from one of his frequent trips the war cry next door is "Grand-daddy's home." The stampede is on to see who is first to perch on his lap, go through his bags for a new toy, talk into his Dictaphone and find other ways to have a rollicking good time.

As director of the 30,000 Movement, Warren is away from home approximately two-thirds of the time. Most of his efforts are in the "pioneer areas" of Southern Baptist work.

"Our greatest opportunities are in California and other West Coast areas, the Great Lakes region and Florida," he said. He sees these burgeoning population centers as beckoning emphatically.

Will the Convention reach its goal of 30,000 new churches or preaching stations by the end of 1964? "I won't say we will do it, but I will certainly say we can do it," he stressed.

"Southern Baptists must revise their concept of a mission," said Warren. "Far too many of us think of it as a large group. A mission is anywhere one or more members of a sponsoring church or churches are sent at regular intervals to teach and preach."

Again his eyes twinkled as they had when he was playing with the youngster. Enthusiastically he named hospitals, fire stations, homes for the aging, jails and other places in every community where the local church can establish missions.

Born in 1896 on a cotton farm in Sampson County, N. C., Warren earned a law degree from Wake Forest College (Baptist) in 1920 and hung out his shingle in Dunn, a small town some 40 miles from the state capital.

J. N. Barnette, the Sunday school pioneer who was to become secretary of the Sunday school department for the SBC Sunday School Board, was working in that area and Warren became vitally interested in improving the Sunday school.

"We had one of the first standard Sunday schools in the state at First Baptist Church in Dunn and I was superintendent," Warren proclaimed. "It led me to answer God's call, so I closed my law practice and went back to school and seminary."

That call took him to a 10-year pastorate at Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, Danville, Ky.; and five years at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, Ark. In each state he was trustee of various Baptist institutions and served in responsible posts of the state Baptist conventions.

In 1943 Warren was called as pastor of First Baptist Church, Charlotte. His home state soon had him hard at work.

He was president of the Baptist State Convention in 1946-47, president of the general board for three years beginning in 1950, and chairman of a committee which raised \$1½ million through the churches for the new Wake Forest College campus in Winston-Salem.

But it was in Charlotte that he became obsessed with the need for missions in saturating every community with the gospel. The church began nine missions which grew into churches, and kept others going in various parts of the city.

Warren challenged his association to "double its preaching and teaching stations during the next 10 years." They exceeded the challenge.

It was on the strength of his victory that, as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, he challenged the 1956 meeting in Kansas City with the same goal.

Later, Warren was asked to head the undertaking. "I am too old," he pleaded, but Convention leaders persisted and he began the work on Jan. 1, 1958.

The man Warren is a graying paradox. Criss-crossing the continent a dozen or so times each year, he hardly stirs from the house when he is at home. Always among the best dressed when he travels, he comes home to retreat into an old blue sweater which nobody dares throw away.

He likes city life, however, and is far from a hermit. Though born on a cotton farm in Sampson County, N. C., he voices no interest in hunting, fishing or hiking and has not been loose in the wide open spaces in years. "I sometimes play a little golf, but not often."

He once scored a 183-foot hole-in-one and had the ball mounted on an ashtray with the event properly inscribed. "But only to quiet my golfing deacons," he insisted.

He treasures a collection of 40 Bibles, each of which has particular sentimental value or marks a major event in his life. A library of 2000 volumes was perhaps three times that large until he retired from the pastorate and gave most of the books to fellow pastors.

Warren's daughter and two sons have presented him with a total of 10 grandchildren who, he declared, are the delight of his life. His first wife, the former Mary Strickland of Danville, Va., died in 1960. A year ago he married Mrs. Sibyl Brame Townsend, widow of a Baptist preacher. Her youngest daughter, Grace, is now a high school senior in Charlotte.

When Southern Baptists reach their goal of 10,000 new churches and 20,000 missions ---and when the Baptist witness becomes really strong in populous California and the Great Lakes areas---much of the credit must go to C. C. Warren who left his old blue sweater at home to follow a vision across the country.

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**NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
WATCH FOR THE (BP) CREDIT LINE**

Cutlines to Warren feature

(3-2-63)

Baptist Press Photo

BLOWS HIS TOP--Professor Ludwig, the toy character on the shelf, is about to blow his top, much to the joy of some children watching C. C. Warren put Ludwig through his paces. Warren, former president of the SEC, charmed the youngsters in his Charlotte pastorate "who just happened to drop into his study" to see Ludwig and his companions. (BP) Photo