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Policeman Trades Badge;  
Goes Into SBC Ministry

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By Jim Fisher  
For the Baptist Press

DADE CITY, Fla. (BP)--Police Lt. James T. Parrish is trading his badge for a Bible.

The 35-year-old police officer in this Central Florida city has worn his badge for a little more than seven years. Now he is shucking it to enter the Baptist ministry.

What made Parrish decide upon this course of action after belonging to a church, any church--for only two years?

"The Lord did," he says simply.

Parrish was on his way up in the police department, and his wife was doing well as a long-time employee of General Telephone Co. here.

"To step out on faith and faith along takes your breath away," he said.

He plans to enter the Baptist Bible Institute at Graceville, Fla., for three years of study, and hopes to go on to a theological seminary for more study. The Florida Baptist Convention will pay half his tuition, provided he maintains academic standards, he said.

Parrish is licensed for the ministry, but is waiting until he gets his first church to be ordained.

Lt. Parrish has been in charge of administration and investigation at the police department here. He is a graduate of the Police Academy at Orlando, Fla.

When asked how he could be active in church and be a police officer at the same time, Lt. Parrish replied: "They don't have to subtract from one another. They can actually be an asset to one another."

Parrish referred to Jesus' remark about rendering to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. "When you transgress against man's law and when you transgress against God's law, there should be similarities," he said.

Lt. Parrish said he felt that by working in the police department, he could reach some people that even a preacher couldn't reach. In effect, he was a minister on the police force.

As time went on, however, he grew more miserable and felt he should be making a life of the ministry. The idea of becoming a minister took hold last year.

His pastor, John H. Davis of North Side Baptist Church in Dade City, had an influence on him, Parrish said.

The police officer is a deacon in the Dade City church, director of Training Union, and is a Sunday School teacher.

He feels his police experience has been helpful.

"Police work can give you an insight into the condition of many people," he remarked. "You get the feeling that God's word is really needed."

Response to the news of his leaving has been overwhelming, he said, and he has been getting remarks of encouragement from unexpected areas.

One other thing: he's not only turning in his badge, but he's also turning in his pistol; trading law enforcement for the persuasion of love.

Jim Fisher is staff writer for the Lakeland (Fla.) Daily Ledger. This feature was adapted from one appearing originally in that publication.

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BP Photo mailed to state Baptist papers

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May 3, 1967

Asks 'Permissive' Plan For  
Clergy In Social Security

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WASHINGTON (BP)--A second bill affecting Social Security coverage for ministers has been introduced in the 90th Congress by Rep. Byron G. Rogers (D., Colo.) who says Social Security coverage for ministers should be "entirely permissive."

The bill intends "to provide that a church and its minister may elect to have such minister treated, for Social Security coverage and tax purposes, as an employee of such church regardless of his coverage as a self-employed individual (or his lack of coverage)."

Rep. Rogers' bill is identical to the one introduced in the 89th Congress by Rep. Roy H. McVicker (D., Colo.) who said the bill did not bind either the minister or the church to such an arrangement if the minister moved to a new church.

Earlier during this session of Congress, a bill was introduced by Rep. George M. Rhodes (D., Pa.) which would make Social Security coverage for all ministers as self-employed persons automatic unless they individually applied for exemption.

According to the Rhodes' bill, ministerial exemption from Social Security would be acceptable only if the minister objects on grounds of conscience. Provisions in this bill would leave the minister in the self-employed status and would not directly affect churches or church agencies.

Adoption of the Rogers bill would mean, if church and minister agreed, that the church would pay the Social Security taxes along with the minister.

Under the present laws, the church pays no Social Security tax at all for the minister who chooses coverage as a self-employed individual.

A staff report of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, reported earlier by Baptist Press, questioned why ministers in congregational churches should not be treated like other church employees rather than as self-employed persons. Other church employees, if two-thirds approve, are covered in the same way as employees in general.

Walfred H. Peterson, director of research for the Baptist Public Affairs Committee said the proposal by Rep. Rogers moves in that direction.

And since the coverage would be optional and apparently effective only during the period of one minister's employment, nothing in the staff report issued earlier would seem to argue against the bill introduced by Rogers, Peterson concluded.

Both proposals have been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee. Congressional staffs are not able at the present to estimate the prospects for either bill.

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Robertson Joins Staff  
Of Sunday School Board

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Festus G. Robertson Jr. has joined the staff of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention here as young people-adult music consultant in the church music department.

He will assist churches, associations, and state conventions in their church music programs, particularly as it pertains to young people and adults.

A 1956 graduate of Murray State College, Murray, Ky., Robertson earned the bachelor and master of church music degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Prior to coming to the board, Robertson was minister of music for First Baptist Church, Fulton, Ky., 1957-59; Audubon Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., 1959-62; and First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., 1962-67.

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SBC Missions Gifts  
Continue To Climb 396

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist missions contributions for the month of April continued their upward climb, bringing total Cooperative Program unified budget contributions for 1967 to \$8.3 million, an increase of \$564,930 over last year's gifts for the same period.

An additional \$14.9 million has been contributed to designated SBC missions causes so far during 1967, bringing the grand total SBC missions contributions to nearly \$23.3 million.

The missions contributions were itemized in a monthly financial report from the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee here.

During the month of April, a total of \$1,962,140 was contributed through the Cooperative Program unified budget plan that supports SBC missions causes. An additional \$2,019,212 was given to designated SBC missions causes. Total gifts for the month, both Cooperative Program and designations, were \$3.9 million.

For the period from January through April, the total Cooperative Program contributions reached \$8,322,150, an increase of 7.28 per cent over contributions for the same period last year.

Designated gifts for the first four months totaled \$14,962,573, an increase of 3.68 per cent over designated contributions for the same period last year.

The over-all grand total of \$23,284,724 was a 4.94 per cent increase over last year's contributions, the report indicated.

Figures in the report include only amounts given to support Southern Baptist Convention-wide missions efforts, and do not include amounts given to local and state-wide Baptist missions causes.

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James Sapp Named Editor  
Of Public Affairs Bulletin 397

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WASHINGTON (BP)--James M. Sapp has been named the new editor of Report From the Capital, according to announcement by C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. His new duties begin with the May issue of the bulletin.

Report From The Capital, published 10 months during the year by the Baptist Joint Committee, is designed to set forth information and interpretation about public affairs that are relevant to Baptist principles, Carlson said.

Sapp succeeds W. Barry Garrett, who has been editor since 1958.

The new editor is director of correlation services of the Baptist Joint Committee. He will continue in this capacity.

Garrett is director of information services for the Baptist Public Affairs Committee. He will continue in this role but will devote more time to news reporting and news analysis of events in the nation's capital.

For the past 10 years Garrett has reported the Washington scene to Baptist publications throughout the nation. He serves as Washington regional editor for Baptist Press (BP) and as editor of Baptist Public Affairs (BPA), news services for communications media.

Sapp is a native of Tulsa, Okla. He graduated from Oklahoma Baptist University and studied at Duke University. He came to the Baptist Joint Committee in 1964.

Prior to that he was director of promotion and director of program development for the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention during the period 1952-1964.

Sapp comes to his new responsibilities with a wide range of experiences in public relations, religious education and public affairs, Carlson said. He is accredited in the Public Relations Society in America, a member of the Southeastern Religious Education Association and a past president of the Baptist Public Relations Association.

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CORRECTION: Story mailed 4/28/67, "Whitlow Elected Editor of Baptist New Mexican," change graph 6 to read:"Tulsa University, Tulsa, Okla.", (not Tulane University). Thanks.

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